

**The Rev. Simón Bautista and The Rev. Stephanie Spellers**  
**Chaplains to the House of Bishops**

February 27, 2012

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Lenten blessings and peace to you all! As your chaplains, we lift each of you in prayer throughout the year. Now we pray and plan in anticipation of the upcoming House of Bishops meeting at Camp Allen.

We're pleased to bear the good news that the House of Bishops Planning Committee has structured a truly spacious gathering, one that includes rich conversations on the most important issues facing our church but also provides the retreat space many of you have said you crave. We look forward to being present in a way that matches the tone of this gathering, serving as your companions in prayer, pastoral support and spiritual direction.

Each day of the week will focus on a unique aspect of your calling as bishops, featuring a retreat meditation on the theme by one of your own members:

- *Friday*: Spiritual discipline with Tom Shaw
- *Saturday*: Proclamation of the gospel with Michael Curry
- *Sunday*: Pastoral care with Porter Taylor (during Sunday Eucharist)
- *Monday*: Faith, unity and governance with Katharine Jefferts Schori
- *Tuesday*: Mission with Julio Holguín

We have worked closely with gifted liturgist and Leader of Song Dent Davidson to organize daily liturgies that complement these themes, hewing closely to the Lectionary and drawing on the rich Episcopal liturgical and musical tradition. A major focus for the gathering will be daily Morning Prayer, to be followed by the bishops' meditations and retreat time. The community will gather for three main Eucharists (Friday's Opening, Sunday mid-morning, and Tuesday's Closing), and those who desire may also attend Holy Eucharist at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday and Monday. We will close most days with either Compline or Evening Prayer.

As always, there will be ample opportunity for you to volunteer to serve as readers, chalice and paten bearers and as officiants for Evening Prayer or Compline. Dent will lead the HoB Choir (which will rehearse fewer times given the number of community Eucharists). Please look for the publicly posted sign-up sheets if you would like to assist with worship in any of these ways.

Because the emphasis is on meaningful conversation and space for retreat and reflection, we, your chaplains, hope to be especially available for spiritual support. This may take the form of the Rite of Reconciliation, intercessory prayer or spiritual direction/companioning conversations. We will also be happy to host group spiritual direction or group centering prayer for those who wish it. We will be present in your meetings, learning and listening by your side, ready to offer prayer or counsel to the House as needed. Finally, if you have a personal emergency, we will help the Presiding Bishop's staff and Camp Allen staff to offer support.

There is so much that you offer to the Church and to the world. Our prayer is that God will use our presence and use this time to refresh you, renew your calling and ground you in the love and power of the One who gathers and sends us all, Jesus Christ.

Your companions in his Way,

*Simón*

*Stephanie*

The Rev. Simón Bautista Betances

The Rev. Stephanie Spellers

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### **Your Chaplains**

The Rev. Simón Bautista Betances brings rich experience from his work as the Canon for Latino Ministries in the Diocese of Washington. Born in the Dominican Republic, he was ordained a priest in the Roman Catholic Church, serving in parish ministry and as head of a non-profit rooted in Dominican and Haitian communities. He moved to the United States, where he taught high school students, and he was received as a priest in the Diocese of Washington. Today, he balances work supporting Latino ministries with engagement in social organizations serving Latinos in the greater D.C. area. He is married to Amarilis Vargas and they have four children: María Teresa, Simón Antonio, María Leaquina and Amarilis de los Ángeles-Lili.

*Simón can be reached at 202-294-4256 or sbautista@edow.org.*

The Rev. Stephanie Spellers comes with a deep love for the Anglican spiritual tradition and contextual mission. A native of Kentucky, she is the founding priest for The Crossing congregation at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral in Boston and the Consulting Editor for Emergent Resources at Church Publishing Inc. She is also the co-chair for the Standing Commission on Mission and Evangelism, the author of *Radical Welcome: Embracing God, The Other and the Spirit of Transformation* and co-author of *Ancient Faith, Future Mission: Fresh Expressions in the Sacramental Tradition*. Though she travels and consults across the country, for nearly 20 years she has lived, studied, ministered (and served as godmother to many children!) in the Boston area.

*Stephanie can be reached at 617-312-5218 or revsteph@gmail.com.*