

# ALIVE!

JANUARY 2012

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN LOUISIANA

VOLUME XXXIV, NUMBER 1

## *A Christmastide prayer ...*



*“O God of wondrous mercy, as your Son is born, the exalted stars bend low in homage; humble oxen and donkeys gaze upon him. The humble and the exalted are entwined in this child, our Saviour. With Mary we treasure the birth of your Son; his birth gives us much to ponder. What do the squalor and the splendour of his birth portend? Shall he be King or Shepherd or both? What does the birth mean for us? Shall we, one distant day, grow up in grace, as he did? Shall we embody wondrous Spirit in a human frame? Shall our lives be a labour toward his birth within us? These are hard and mysterious questions, O Lord. As we celebrate his birth with delight, keep these questions before us. With solemn joy may we come to understand and treasure the grandeur of your Spirit poured into our humble*

*lives! Amen.”* [drawn and adapted from *All the Seasons of Mercy* 1987]

My brothers and sisters in Christ, may our Christmas and Epiphany journey be one that is shown the way by God’s guiding light, and the Good News of Christ Jesus shine in our lives through word and deed.

Faithfully in the Light of the Newborn King,

The Rt. Rev’d D. Bruce MacPherson, D.D.  
Third Bishop of Western Louisiana



THE RT. REV'D D. BRUCE MACPHERSON'S  
**AROUND THE DIOCESE**

This is written as we all focus on the closing days of Advent and make ready for the celebration of the Christ Mass across the diocese. Looking back, Advent has been a rich experience for Susan and me as we made our way "around the diocese." Visitations have embraced **St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport** and a wonderful large class of confirmands; **Good Shepherd, Lake Charles** where I was presented with another fine class; and **St. George's, Bossier City** where we shared in confirmation at the early service and baptisms at the latter service. The spirit amongst those being confirmed, received or making a reaffirmation was heartwarming in each of these visits, and for this I am most grateful.

Mrs. Vail Baldrige, widow of the Rev'd **William Baldrige**, has moved from her home of some forty plus years in Rayville, to a retirement community in Baton Rouge. This enables her to be closer to

family. We wish her well and send her forth with our love.

The Rev'd **James G. Benbrook** has resigned as rector at **Redeemer, Ruston** and is exploring other opportunities for ministry. His last day was December 4, 2011.

Activities surrounding clergy activities included the institution of the Rev'd **Matthew M. Frick** as rector at **St. Timothy's, Alexandria** on December 6, 2011; a wonderful reception for the Rev'd **Guido F. Verbeck, III** as the members of **St. Paul's, Shreveport** showed their appreciation for his fifteen years of ministry with them; and I will preside over the institution of the Rev'd **C. Jonathan Roberts** as rector at **Grace, Monroe** on January 5, 2012.

Within the life of the community, Susan and I had the privilege of participating in the annual Dolls and Toys program that is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Downtown Alexandria. This past Saturday almost 300 families were the recipients of presents for their children. This in turn

assured each of the almost 1,000 children of receiving at least one gift for Christmas. Needless to say, we were touched.

Lastly, Christmas and Hanukkah are sharing the same time frame this year, and it was my honour to participate with the **Congregation Gemiluth Chassodim** in the ceremony of the lighting of the first candle in the Menorah. It meant much to all for us to be able to share in this special service as they begin this Holy time within the life of their community of faith.

Permit me to leave you this month with the Collect for the Feast of the Holy Name (January 1) - "*Eternal Father, you gave to your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be the sign of our salvation: Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Saviour of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, on God, in glory everlasting.*" Amen. [BCP p.213]



**Epiphany**  
Epiphany means "revealing" or "showing forth" and begins January 6. The season begins with the showing forth of Jesus to the Gentiles, specifically the wise men of Matthew's Gospel, who are the first to know his divinity. Epiphany proclaims Jesus as Savior of the whole world and that God's promise of salvation now applies to all the people of earth.



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Robert Harwell ..... Editor

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**THE BISHOP'S CALENDAR**

**Bishop MacPherson's Calendar for January and February 2012**

**January 2012**

- 1 *Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus*
- 1 St. James, Alexandria - *special visitation*
- 4 Standing Committee, *Diocesan House*
- 5 Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville - *Eucharist*
- 5 Grace, Monroe - institution of the Rev'd C. Jonathan Roberts as rector and celebration of new ministry
- 8 St. Matthias, Shreveport - *visitation*
- 9 Episcopal School of Acadiana, Cade - *Board of Trustees*
- 11 Northern Region Office, *St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport*
- 12 Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville - *Eucharist*
- 12 Commission on Ministry, *Diocesan House*
- 15 St. Andrew's, Moss Bluff - *visitation*
- 16 Diocesan Episcopal Church Women - installation of Board and Eucharist, *Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville*
- 18-25 *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*
- 18 Diocesan Board of Trustees, *Diocesan House*
- 19 Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville - *Eucharist*
- 22 St. Patrick's, West Monroe - *visitation*
- 22 Happening #50 Closing Eucharist, *Hardtner Camp and Conference Center*
- 26 Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville - *Eucharist*
- 29 St. Alban's, Monroe - *visitation*

**February 2012**

- 1 Standing Committee, *Diocesan House*
- 2 Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville - *Eucharist*
- 5 Ascension, Lafayette - *visitation*
- 6 Episcopal School of Acadiana, Cade - *Board of Trustees*
- 8 Northern Region Office, *St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport*
- 9 Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville - *Eucharist*
- 9 Louisiana Interchurch Conference - Faith and Order Commission, *Diocesan House*
- 11 8th Annual Bishop's Ball, *St. Timothy's, Alexandria*
- 12 Trinity, Cheneyville - *visitation*
- 16 Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville - *Eucharist*
- 18 Daughters of the King - Diocesan Assembly, *St. Timothy's, Alexandria*
- 19 St. Luke's, Grambling - *visitation*
- 19 All Saints' Chapel, Stonewall - *125th anniversary of Consecration*
- 22 *Ash Wednesday*
- 22 St. James, Alexandria - *Ash Wednesday Liturgy*
- 23 Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville - *Eucharist*
- 25 Son Rise retreat - Eucharist, *Hardtner Camp and Conference Center*
- 26 Trinity, Natchitoches - *visitation*
- 29 St. James, Alexandria - *Lenten Eucharist*

# News of the Diocese

## An Update from the Election Committee

(December 23, 2011)



### 1. What's Up?

The Election Committee continues to make progress in moving toward our April 21, 2012 election at St. James, Alexandria. We'll begin with a calendar update and reminder so that folks can plan ahead. At present, appropriate background checks are ongoing. After additional consultation between the committee and the nominees, and after completion of background checks, a formal announcement will be made no later than February 1, 2012 as to which nominees will go forward with the process leading to election.

The first scheduled event for the nominees will occur on February 6, 2012, when all nominees will be asked to attend an interview with the committee. Interviews will be captured by video production and the interviews will then be presented to the diocese by way of the diocesan website and by DVD to congregations for review at leisure.

At approximately the same time the nominees will be furnished with a written questionnaire. Once questions included there are returned to us, they will, as well, be published to the diocese, likely by March 1, 2012.

Next, in a manner similar to our last election, we will conduct two forums for the nominees during the week of March 18, 2012. Specifically, forums will be conducted at the Church of the Redeemer

in Ruston on the evening of Monday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM, with open reception to follow at the church. Participants in the forum will be free to speak to the nominees there. This event will be followed by a second forum in Lafayette, on Wednesday, March 21 at 6 PM at a location to be finalized.

We should also mention an additional opportunity for clergy only to converse with the nominees on Tuesday, March 20, with final arrangements pending. Everyone should stay tuned for updates on these opportunities. The Ruston and Lafayette forums will be conducted by question-and-answer format, with each nominee having the opportunity to respond to questions put forth by a moderator.

Following the forums, we expect a substantial degree of interaction within the diocese as it prayerfully determines who has been called to be the next bishop.

See Election Committee Update, page 8



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Forward to: Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana, P.O. Box 2031, Alexandria, LA 71309-2031



## Bishop MacPherson's Office Days



In order to provide a more convenient setting for those in the northern portion of the diocese, Bishop D. Bruce MacPherson continues to be available for appointments with members of the laity and clergy on the second Wednesday of each month at St. Mark's Cathedral in Shreveport.

Those in the southern portion of the diocese are encouraged to make an appointment with Bishop MacPherson at Diocesan House in Pineville.

## News of the Diocese

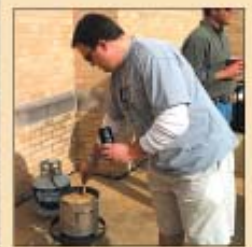


### Bishop MacPherson confirms eight during last visit to Trinity, DeRidder

Trinity Episcopal Church in DeRidder welcomed the Rt. Rev'd D. Bruce MacPherson for his last official visitation on Sunday, November 20. One of the highlights of the visit was the confirmation class of eight individuals that was presented to the bishop. Left-to-right, front row: Richard Crider, Rhonda Crider, Luke Breaux, Charlotte Crider and Tiffany Green. Back row: Trinity's priest-in-residence, the Rev'd James Lueckenhoff, Kaity Breaux, Bishop D. Bruce MacPherson, John Johnson and Whitney Green.

### St. Mark's "Men Gone Wild Gumbo Cook-Off"

St. Mark's celebrated its first "Men Gone Wild Gumbo Cook-off," an event for the Cathedral's men's ministry. The men of the church came together and competed in a gumbo competition for "manly" bragging rights. The gumbo left over after the judging went to the homeless ministry of Shreveport. There was a lot of fun had by the Men of St. Mark's, and they are already looking forward to competing next year.



# News of the Diocese

## The Cup is Half Full!



### JEYL retreat weekend celebrated at Hardtner November 18-20

This year's J.E.Y.L. weekend was held November 18-20. Approximately 17 campers and 17 staff members converged on Camp Hardtner for a weekend of positive fun and fellowship. This year's theme was "The Cup is Half Full! Staying Positive in an Unpositive World!" The dean of this year's JEYL was Jamie Simon.

### Large confirmation class greets Bishop MacPherson at St. Mark's Cathedral

Advent is a season of preparation and expectation, which was apparent at St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport when Bishop MacPherson visited the Cathedral on December 4, the Second Sunday in Advent.

The Bishop was greeted by a large confirmation class of both the young and adults, all expectant at the end of their preparation for this day.

Top photo: Sitting: Lindsey Humphrey, Hannah Love, Sarah Wagner, Dorothy Kalmbach. Standing: Frazier Horn, David Newtown, Brant Lewis, Patrick Owensby, Brooke Shemwell, Paul Naisbit, Katherine Jones, Roger Kalmbach, Emily Milner, Chistina Powell, Lauralee Davis, and Bishop MacPherson.

Bottom photo: Seated: The Bishop. Standing: Mario Villafuerte, Barbara Messier-Villafuerte, Rachel Schofield, Deborah Schofield, Holly Smith, Justin Smith, Elizabeth Peterson and Sean Peterson



# HARDTNER NEWS



THE  
HARDTNER CAMP  
& CONFERENCE  
CENTER

## Looking forward to an exciting 2012!

Happy New Year! It is going to be a wonderful year at Hardtner Camp and Conference Center. I hope you will be a part of it! We will start it off this month with Happening and Secretariat retreats here at Hardtner. We will also start accepting Summer Camp 2012 applications this month. You can register on line or by mailing in applications. Check out our website ([www.camphardtner.org](http://www.camphardtner.org)) for more details. Once again we will be offering the "No Foolin'" discount program. Simply apply and pay your full fees by April 1, 2012 to receive a significant discount. The savings are even greater this year than in the past, ranging from \$30-\$40 depending on the session. The base price for camp has not increased for the past two seasons. If enrollment continues to grow and people register early, it makes it possible to avoid price increases.



## Camp Hardtner 2012 Summer Camping Sessions

First Camp for grades 2-3 with a parent, June 1-3, \$130

Primary Camp for grades 4-5, June 7-12,  
\$370 per person

Senior High Camp for grades 11-12, Grads, June 15-22, \$460 per person

Junior High I Camp for grades 6-7, June 25-July 1, \$420 per person

Junior High II Camp for grades 7-8, July 10-16, \$420 per person

Middle High Camp for grades 9-10, July 19-25, \$420 per person

Family Camp, All ages with an adult, July 27-29, \$260 for 2 people,  
\$300 for 3 people, \$340 for 4 or more

Go to [www.camphardtner.org](http://www.camphardtner.org) to register on-line. Reduced prices for early registration (April 1, 2012).

The summer camp staff is being assembled at this time. I am very pleased to announce that Daniel Chapman has been selected to again serve as Head Counselor this year.



Daniel is a veteran of Camp Hardtner with ten years as a camper, three years as a cabin counselor and one summer as Head Counselor. He is from New Iberia, a graduate of LSU in communication studies and currently participating in the Episcopal Service Corps at Christ Church in New Haven, Connecticut. Daniel is participating in St. Hilda's House discernment, spiritual formation and service program until Summer Training Camp begins in May. Daniel will help the Summer Camping Committee

and myself as we assemble the rest of the Summer Staff. We are very fortunate to have Dan return again this summer!

Applications for counselors are available on line or from the camp office and should be submitted as soon as possible. All applicants are carefully screened and reviewed. Those selected to serve will have background checks, drug testing and training prior to serving as counselors. Many will have been Counselors-In-Training (CITs) from last summer.

Please remember that our annual giving campaign, "Fill the Canoe," will kick off again on March 18, 2012. We always try to kickoff on the Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day! This campaign helps raise needed funds to cover expenses not covered by camper fees, rental fees or other income. We ask each parish to conduct a "Hardtner Sunday" where camp is featured through speakers, displays, Camp Shirt days and other promotional ideas. Donations designated for Hardtner Camp and Conference Center are solicited either through giving envelopes or special collections. Most churches have someone with a special love for Hardtner who can serve as a coordinator but if you need a speaker to make a presentation at your church, contact a board member or the Camp office. Last year we raised over \$17,000 for camp through "Fill the Canoe." Please be generous and support the campaign this year as we strive to continue to carry out the many ministries that call Camp Hardtner home. A gift is also a wonderful way to say thank you for all the wonderful "camp experiences" of the past.



## A PAST HAPPENING

HAPPENING #49 for grades 9-12 at Camp Hardtner, January 20-22, 2012

Happening weekends seek to bring young people to a fuller personal knowledge of, and a personal relationship and deeper commitment to Jesus Christ.

During the three-day gathering, the participants will experience the love of our Lord Jesus Christ as shown through the sacraments and the ministry of fellow students, clergy, and lay adults. The teens are encouraged to take a new faith back into their worlds, and to make a friend, be a friend, and bring a friend to Christ.

To attend the weekend, students must submit an application that is signed by a parent and the student's rector. The Happening application is available on the diocesan Web site ([http://www.diocesewla.org/2011\\_11\\_Dio\\_Youth\\_Info\\_Packet.pdf](http://www.diocesewla.org/2011_11_Dio_Youth_Info_Packet.pdf)). The application link on the website has complete instructions on the submission of the application. For more information email: [thrans@bellsouth.net](mailto:thrans@bellsouth.net).



## The Bishop's Ball

St. Timothy's, Alexandria, February 11, 2012

The Bishop's Ball #8 will be held for all high school and college-age youth in the Diocese of Western Louisiana. The Bishop's Ball is sponsored by the Commission on Youth & Young Adult Ministry.

For more information email: [thrans@bellsouth.net](mailto:thrans@bellsouth.net).

## Province IV bishops call meeting with colleague 'honest, forthright'

*Conversation with Mark Lawrence did not yield complete agreement.*

by Mary Frances Schjonberg

[Episcopal News Service] Six of the 20 Province IV diocesan bishops said Dec. 15 that their meeting the previous day with their colleague, Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina Bishop Mark Lawrence, was characterized by "gracious hospitality and collegiality" but not complete agreement.

The bishops of the Episcopal Church's Province IV had asked Lawrence Dec. 5 to meet with them "to have a clarifying conversation" about his decision to issue property deeds to each diocesan congregation.

At Lawrence's direction, Diocesan Chancellor Wade Logan Nov. 16 sent a quitclaim deed to every parish in the diocese. A quitclaim deed generally transfers ownership of the property from the party issuing the deed to the recipient.

In a statement e-mailed by Diocese of Upper South Carolina Bishop W. Andrew



**Bishop Lawrence**

Waldo and later posted on the South Carolina diocesan website, the bishops said that they were a "representative

group who were available at the appointed time and date."

In addition to Waldo and Lawrence, the bishops present at the meeting were Diocese of Georgia Bishop Scott Benhase, Diocese of North Carolina Bishop Michael Curry, Diocese of East Carolina Bishop Clifton Daniel III, Diocese of West Tennessee Bishop Don Johnson and Diocese of Western North Carolina Bishop G. Porter Taylor.

Daniel, the provincial vice president, had requested the meeting with Lawrence, saying that the other provincial bishops want to know under what canonical authority he proceeded, whether he involved the diocesan Standing Committee, and whether the members of the Standing Committee were in accord with his action. Daniel also asked who signed the quitclaim deeds.

The Episcopal Church's so-called "Dennis Canon" (Canon 1.7.4) states that a parish holds its property in trust for the diocese and the Episcopal Church.

Lawrence told *the Living Church* a week after the deeds were issued that he did so in part because "the threat of property disputes" should not be "the only thing that holds us together."

The statement from Waldo said the seven bishops at the Dec. 14 meeting prayed together "and participated in open, honest, and forthright conversation."

"Probing questions were asked by all, and it is fair to say that we did not agree on all matters discussed," the statement said. "For the visiting bishops, the gathering particularly helped to clarify the context of the Diocese of South Carolina's quitclaims decision. Where we go in the future is a matter of prayer and ongoing engagement of concerns before us, an engagement we embrace out of our love for Christ and his church."

On Dec. 9, the South Carolina Standing Committee issued a statement questioning the provincial bishops' motives

and saying they "have no constitutional or canonical grounds for these requests, which relate exclusively and entirely to matters involving the internal policies and affairs of this diocese."

"This diocese grows weary of the constant interference in its internal affairs that continues to disrupt our mission," the Standing Committee wrote, charging that Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori engaged in a "non-canonical intrusion" in February 2010 when her representatives attempted to determine what action Lawrence had or would take about South Carolina congregations that appeared to be threatening to leave the Episcopal Church.

The Standing Committee also noted that the church's Disciplinary Board for Bishops dismissed allegations by a group of South Carolina Episcopalians that Lawrence had abandoned the communion of the church.

"Yet, within less than two weeks of that decision, we have yet another attempt without canonical or constitutional support to inject others into the internal affairs of this autonomous diocese," the committee wrote.

—The Rev'd Mary Frances Schjonberg is a writer and editor for the *Episcopal News Service*.

### DIOCESAN DATES OF NOTE

#### January 2012

- 1 — *Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus*
- 1 — Bishop's special visitation — *St. James, Alexandria*
- 4 — Standing Committee, *Diocesan House*
- 5 — Grace, Monroe — institution of the Rev'd C. Jonathan Roberts as rector and celebration of new ministry
- 7 — Safeguarding God's Children Workshop, 9:00 a.m., *St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport*. Telephone 318-221-3360 for reservations.
- 8 — Bishop's visitation — *St. Matthias, Shreveport*
- 11 — Bishop's Northern Region Office Day, *St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport*
- 12 — Commission on Ministry, *Diocesan House*
- 15 — Bishop's visitation — *St. Andrew's, Moss Bluff*
- 16 — Diocesan Episcopal Church Women, *Installation of Board and Eucharist, Mount Olivet Chapel, Pineville*
- 18-25 — *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*
- 18 — Diocesan Board of Trustees, *Diocesan House*
- 20-22 — *Happening #49 Youth Retreat Weekend, Hardtner Camp and Conference Center*
- 22 — Bishop's visitation — *St. Patrick's, West Monroe*
- 29 — Bishop's visitation — *St. Alban's, Monroe*

#### February 2012

- 1 — Standing Committee, *Diocesan House*
- 5 — Bishop's visitation — *Ascension, Lafayette*
- 8 — Bishop's Northern Region Office Day, *St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport*
- 9 — Louisiana Interchurch Conference — Faith and Order Commission, *Diocesan House*
- 11 — 8th Annual Bishop's Ball, *St. Timothy's, Alexandria*
- 12 — Trinity, *Cheneyville — visitation*
- 18 — Daughters of the King — Diocesan Assembly, *St. Timothy's, Alexandria*
- 19 — Bishop's visitation — *St. Luke's, Grambling*
- 19 — All Saints' Chapel, *Stonewall — 125th anniversary of Consecration*
- 22 — *Ash Wednesday*
- 24-26 — *Son Rise Youth Retreat Weekend — Hardtner Camp and Conference Center*
- 26 — Bishop's visitation — *Trinity, Natchitoches*

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## News of the Diocese

### Faithful service by Father Verbeck recognized by St. Paul's, Shreveport at special reception

The fifteen and one-half years of service as rector of St. Paul's, Shreveport will come to a close for the Rev'd Guido F. Verbeck, III at the close of 2011. At midday, December 4, the second Sunday in Advent, St. Paul's held a very well attended reception for Father Verbeck. Dozens and dozens of parishioners, and other well-wishers thanked the good Father for the part that he had played in their lives. A special treat was the appearance of Susan and Bishop MacPherson. Never at a loss for words, the Bishop recounted stories (mostly humorous ) of his years working with Father Verbeck.



### An Update from the Election Committee

*continued from page 3*

#### 2. What is a Letter of Agreement?

The Standing Committee of the diocese is charged with certain responsibilities in a bishop's election process. One of those is the preparation of a "Letter of Agreement" which has, as its point, to set forth the mutual understandings and expectations between a diocese and an elected, but not yet installed or consecrated bishop. This item is now a document required by the office of the Presiding Bishop. At present, the Standing Committee is working from other exemplars furnished by our process consultant to confect our LOA.

An adjunct to the LOA is a proposed compensation package for the new bishop. That package requires approval from Diocesan Council, and it is anticipated that the proposal will be considered by Council at its January 2012 meeting.

#### 3. Nominee Appearances in the Diocese

Obviously, the diocese is presently abuzz with conversation about who the nominees are and when folks will get to see and visit with them. That is normal and natural. The reason for the February 1 release date may seem cloudy. We have previously explained that this release date allows for completion of the background checks and a final determination by each nominee, not at all necessarily related to background checks, whether that nominee wishes to go forward to completion of the discernment process. Remember that even as we are beginning to learn about the nominees, they are, as well, learning about us...from our profile, from other information furnished to them, and through their own conversations with others.

One of the things the election committee must do is attempt to ensure that the discernment process on both fronts remains fair and has integrity. Commensurate with this goal we have asked all of the nominees not to make any kind of special appearances in the diocese. This is so to ensure that no one nominee gets an unfair advantage by special appearances through the diocese. There's another reason.....to prevent the perception, rightly or wrongly, that anyone is running a "campaign" for bishop.

We must remember that this is a holy process for a holy calling, so we ask that folks in the diocese not make special requests for appearances by any nominees known to you. We fully expect that the planned activities and interviews will provide the contacts you will need to make an informed and prayerful decision, and we hope you will honor this request.

#### 4. Delegate Certification

Everyone should have noticed by now the last entry on this site regarding delegate certification. Reported as an announcement from the election committee, this communication was actually a guidance from the bishop's office explaining how the diocesan canons work for this special convention. Thus congregations should consider the guidance carefully so that there will not be confusion come election time in April!

#### 5. Keep Praying

Really this should be item number one! We'll be back soon with more updates as things progress!