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**A publication of
the Episcopal
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Tennessee
(ECSET)**

Winter 2007

Lou Garcia Retires from Metropolitan Ministry

The Rev. Lou Garcia, the metropolitan minister since 1995, has retired.

“It is with mixed feelings that the ECSET Board of Directors announces the retirement of the Rev. Lou Garcia after years of service to the Episcopal Metropolitan Ministry,” ECSET president Lisa McNeese said prior to Rev. Garcia’s departure.

“The excellence of the work he performed during his time as our metropolitan minister will be long remembered,” she said. “As his kindness has touched countless lives in the Southeast Tennessee area, we are thankful that now he has more time to continue his ministry to those in Haiti.”

On Feb. 9 Rev. Garcia was honored during the 2007 Diocesan Convention in Gatlinburg, which was his official retirement date. Other celebrations of his ministry are planned at the ECSET annual meeting on Feb. 26 and sometime in the spring.

ECSET is moving towards the parish model to fill the position of metropolitan minister and entered into an interim phase in midFebruary. “The board is very pleased to welcome the Rev. John Talbird as the interim metropolitan minister,” Ms. McNeese said. “John’s commitment over the next year will involve both EMM and ECSET, yet still allow him to continue other ministries.”

Rev. Garcia said recently that he had been metropolitan minister for several months before he realized the full impact and value of what he was doing. A woman

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The Rev. Lou Garcia, retiring metropolitan minister, is pictured with the Rev. John Talbird, who will be serving as the interim metropolitan minister.

Golf Scramble will Benefit Ministry

The words foursome, scramble and tee are taking on special meaning for the staff and volunteers at the Metropolitan Ministry.



Proceeds from the Collegiate/Amateur Scramble, a charity golf event sponsored by State Farm, will benefit the ministry.

The tournament, scheduled July 23-25 at Bear Trace in Harrison, Tenn., allows “collegiate players to play in a competitive environment in the summer to maintain their competitive edge,” said Al Carrico, agency field executive for State Farm, and a member of St. Paul’s Chattanooga.

The 18-hole scramble on July 23 will feature 30 four-person amateur teams paired with a collegiate player. The entry fee is \$500 per team or \$125 person.

The 54-hole Collegiate Players Tour event will include 36 holes of play on July 24 and 18 holes on July 25.

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In cooperation with its member churches, elected representatives, and the Bishop of the Diocese of East Tennessee, ECSET seeks to strengthen the ministry of the Episcopal Church by promoting fellowship and communication among member congregations and by providing financial and/or spiritual support for initiatives in the ECSET area. Those initiatives include the Metropolitan and Campus Ministries, St. Barnabas Apartments & Nursing Home, ECSET Youth Ministries, new worshipping communities, parishes with extraordinary needs, and other projects as approved by the general members and the Board of Directors.

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he had helped came up to him at a local mall, tugged on his sleeve and "you don't remember me, do you?" He didn't, but that didn't stop her saying he had "helped me change my attitude." She had returned to work and had turned her life around.

"She made me realize what we do to help somebody, even if we don't realize the situation, it's better not to judge, but go ahead and help them," he said. Whether the need is legitimate or not, "we should lean on the side of being positive about it." That realization freed him to go home, leave the burden of the work at the office and return to it the next day.

Throughout his tenure, Rev. Garcia has emphasized the need to respect the dignity of every human being, regardless of their circumstances, attitude, etc.

Due to his fund-raising skills, Rev. Garcia brought many thousands of dollars into the Human Needs Fund and spearheaded the purchase and renovation of the ministry's present building. He continued to be involved with a number of community organizations, ranging from the AIM Center to Landmarks of Chattanooga, and served as deacon and in other capacities at the Church of the Good Shepherd, including its outreach to Haiti.

In addition to all of that, Rev. Garcia continued to run the Vega Corp., a design/building general contracting company he started in 1970. Although he is retiring from EMM, he plans to stay involved in his company, community organizations and at Good Shepherd.

"Of all the many things Lou had done and accomplished, I would have to say first and foremost he is a lover of humanity," Rev. Talbird said in presenting Rev. Garcia with the 2006 Life Achievement Award in Mental Health given by the AIM Center.

"And that love is not just in the abstract, it is up close and personal," Rev. Talbird said. "Nowhere is this clearer than his work with the many mental health organizations, including the AIM Center, and his daily work with the homeless, the needy and those who have fallen on hard times at the office of the Metropolitan Ministry."

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"I am very grateful to Al Carrico and State Farm for recognizing and affirming the important work that EMM does in our community and beyond," said Rebecca Whelchel, EMM executive director. "The Collegiate Players Tournament not only supports and expands our current fundraising base, but also brings more visibility to the ministry.

"Both results enhance EMM's ongoing effort to raise public awareness and to continue serving the growing number of those who have nowhere else to turn for help," she said.

"We want this tournament to be an annual event and make a name for ourselves," Mr. Carrico said. "We are looking for what has become a 'wow factor' at other tournaments."

Since its inception in 1993, he said, the tour has become the only collegiate tour to donate over \$1 million to charities.

A fundraising committee is seeking sponsorships that range from \$500 to \$5,000. For more information call 624-9650 or 855-6706.

Parishioners Participate in New Ministry Training

Eight parishioners from several ECSET parishes are taking part in the new course being offered for those seeking a canonical license to become a preacher or pastoral care leader.

“Following completion of Old and New Testament studies, ‘individual track courses’ will be available that are designed for the specific ministry of these parishioners,” said Rick Govan, diocesan ministry development facilitator. “Among the additional offerings will be courses in homiletics and methods of exegesis for preachers and courses in pastoral theology and pastoral practice for pastoral care leaders.”

Dr. Rebecca Wright, professor of Old Testament at the School of Theology at the University of the South, is teaching the initial course of Old Testament foundations.

Participants from ECSET parishes are Malissa Burdick, Thankful Memorial; Joan Koch, St. Peter’s; Curtis Baggett and Bo Armstrong, St. Francis of Assisi; Karen McAvoy and Gaines Campbell, St. Thaddaeus; Janet Hale, St. Alban’s, and Ellie Pickett, St. Matthew’s Dayton.

The entire course for the two ministries is designed to take no more than two years. Continuing education in the subject area is expected prior to renewal of the license.

Classes are held monthly at St. Paul’s Chattanooga, and similar classes are taking place in the Knoxville area.

The training and formation for the licensed ministries is overseen by the diocesan Shared Ministry Formation Committee, which sends its recommendations to the Commission on Ministry and Bishop Charles vonRosenberg.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The **ECSET annual meeting** will be held Monday, Feb. 26, at Thankful Memorial. Eucharist will be celebrated at 6 p.m. and will be followed by dinner and the program, which will include remarks by Bishop Charles vonRosenberg, a celebration of the Rev. Lou Garcia’s ministry and information on a golf tournament to benefit the Metropolitan Ministry.

The **34th Annual Sparkman School of Religion** is scheduled for five Wednesdays in Lent beginning Feb. 28 and continuing through March 28 at St. Paul’s Chattanooga.

Topics and teachers are “The Evangelical Explosion,” concerning fundamentalists and Pentecostals, Dr. Charles Lippy, LeRoy A. Martin Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; “The Word is Made Flesh,” poetry of the Incarnation, Dr. Bryan A. Hampton, assistant professor of English at UTC; “The Long Search: Finding a Way to Stillness and Quiet,” a class combining spirituality and Yoga, the Rev. William L. Evans, interim rector of St. Paul’s.

“Jon Meacham’s American Gospel,” a study of the latest book by the Newsweek editor and Chattanooga native, led by Dr. Michael V. Woodward, Howard H. Baker Jr. Chair in American History at McCallie School in Chattanooga; “Biblical Story and Sacred Journey,” a discussion of Genesis

and Exodus led by the Rev. Judith Whelchel, assistant to the rector at the Church of the Good Shepherd; “Writing as a Spiritual Practice, Anne Bright, a communicant at Good Shepherd.

Participants may take two classes with the exception of the writing class, which will last two hours. The registration fee is \$20, and the cost of dinner for five nights is \$25.

Each evening will begin with an organ meditation at 5:30 p.m.; Eucharist at 5:45 p.m., followed by dinner at 6 p.m. and classes at 7 and 8 p.m. Call 266-8195 for more information.

Two additional performances in the **Presidential Arts Series** sponsored by St. Barnabas Senior Living Services have been scheduled. The Ensemble Amaracord, composed of five former members of the St. Thomas Boys Choir in Leipzig, Germany, will perform March 1, and pianist Paul Bisaccia on May 17. The programs will be held in Key-Andrews Hall at St. Paul’s Chattanooga and will begin at 7 p.m. Admission is free.

The **Rev. Joel Huffstetler**, rector of St. Luke’s Cleveland, will sign copies of his new book, “Pilgrimage Towards Healing and Reconciliation: A Windsor Report Study Guide,” March 3 between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. at Wild Hare Books on Signal Mountain. Call 476-5541 or 886-1360 for further details

Support Our Metropolitan Ministry

Area Episcopalians can band together to help those less fortunate than ourselves through the Episcopal Metropolitan Ministry's Human Needs Fund. This vital resource helps people who need assistance with food, utilities, prescriptions for the elderly and other critical necessities. Donations are tax-deductible and go directly to those in need, as all administrative expenses for the Metropolitan Ministry are funded through ECSET's budget. Please send your donation to:

**Episcopal Metropolitan Ministry
1112 McCallie Ave.
Chattanooga, TN 37404**

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

To make your contribution in memory of or in honor of someone special, please indicate on a separate sheet of paper (1) their name (2) "In Memory of" or "In Honor of" and (3) the name and address of anyone whom you would like us to notify regarding your gift.

What's UP/In the ECSET Region

The **Metropolitan Ministry** served 5,851 individuals during 2006, and a total of \$197,497 was dispensed from the Human Needs Fund for assistance with utility and rent payments, food, medications and other needs. A total of 3,105 volunteer hours were recorded for the year.

Over 100 families participated in the ministry's Sharing Christmas program. In addition, 144 filled shoe boxes were distributed to other needy families. The boxes were provided by Margaret Cate and other parishioners at St. Luke's Cleveland

Help Wanted

Several volunteers are needed to prepare the quarterly issues of Ecsetera for mailing. The job will involve attaching self-stick address labels and sorting the approximately 3,000 copies into zip codes. It will be done at the Metropolitan Ministry office and will require a time commitment of about two or three hours per volunteer. Volunteers will be needed in midMay. If you are interested, please call Emily McDonald, 622-3714, or Rebecca Whelchel, 624-6950.

EPISCOPAL COMMISSION OF SOUTHEAST TENNESSEE (ECSET)

**Episcopal Metropolitan Ministry
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Churches are asked to include **ECSETERA** on their newsletter mailing lists, as we may include items of general interest in our next issue. Send correspondence to: Emily McDonald, **ECSETERA** Editor, 724 Bacon Trail, East Ridge, Tennessee 37412.

PLEASE NOTE:

Send all *ECSETERA* address changes to:
Lynn Lazlo
Diocese of East Tennessee
814 Episcopal School Way
Knoxville, TN 37932
865-966-2110