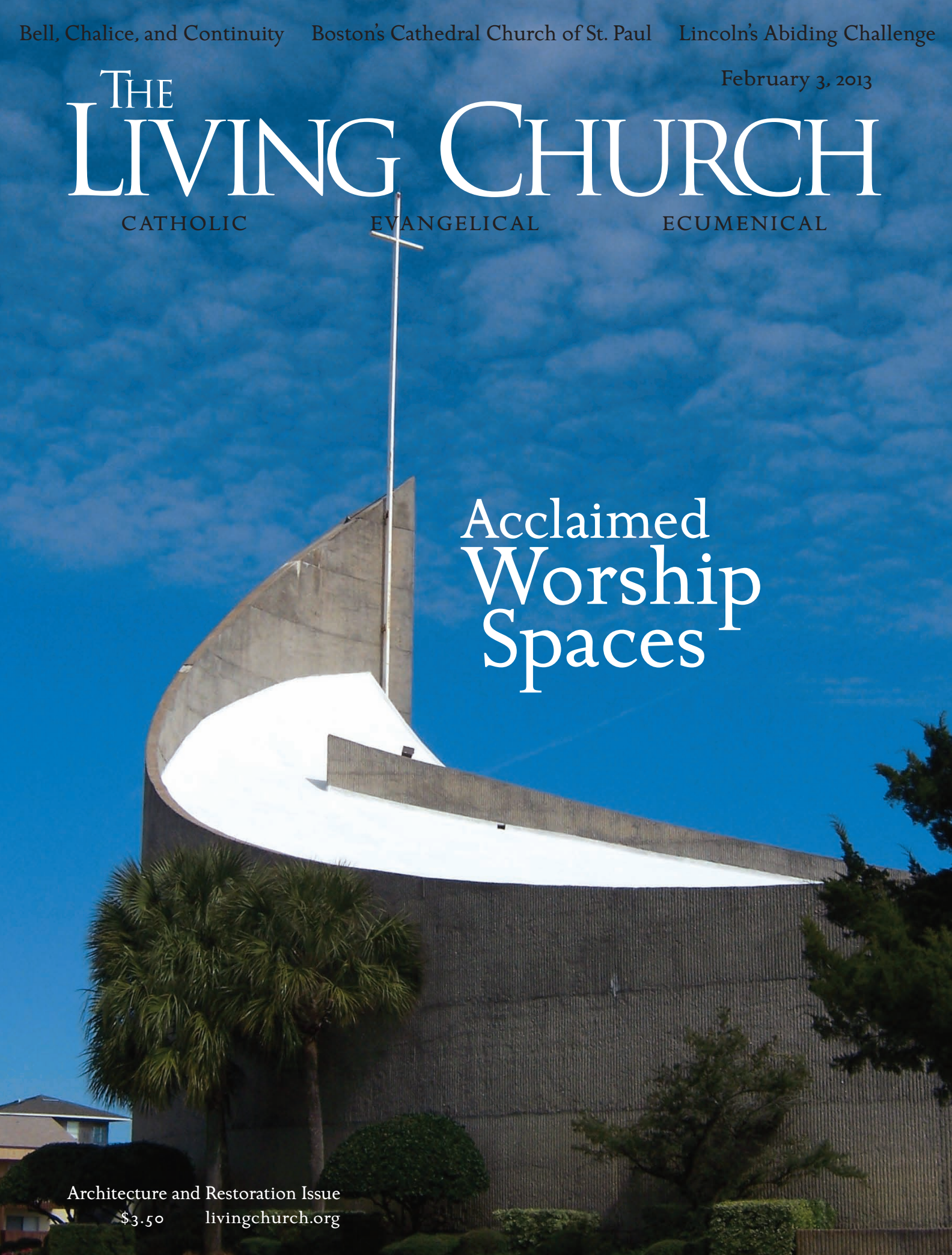
Bell, Chalice, and Continuity Boston's Cathedral Church of St. Paul Lincoln's Abiding Challenge

February 3, 2013

The Living Church

CATHOLIC EVANGELICAL ECUMENICAL



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ON THE COVER

The curved walls and roof of St. Paul's by-the-Sea, reminiscent of ocean waves, reflect the surrounding landscape in Jacksonville Beach, Florida (see "Five Acclaimed Worship Spaces," p. 10).

The Living Church

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The Living Church is published by the Living Church Foundation. Our historic mission in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion is to seek and serve the Catholic and evangelical faith of the one Church, to the end of visible Christian unity throughout the world.

MacDonald: Church Schools 'Swamped by Evil'

The church has been slow to account for the abuse of indigenous children in Canada's church-run residential schools because words for such atrocities do not exist, says the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald. But he has hope that the injustices will finally be addressed.

"The primary obstacle to Canada and the church's understanding of what happened is that we do not have a language that describes such horrific evil," said the Anglican Church of Canada's first National Indigenous Bishop. "The schools became magnets for pedophiles. A huge percentage of the children were sexually abused, physically abused."

Wearing his long graying hair in a ponytail and with colorful beads over his clerical shirt, Bishop MacDonald delivered the opening keynote address to 40 participants at Practical Peacebuilding, a new joint program of Candler School of Theology and General Theological Seminary. He spoke at a dinner held Jan. 10 at the Desmond Tutu Center adjacent to General Seminary.

From 1870 to 1996, 130 different residential schools, most run by Anglican and other churches, were built on military models, he said. Indigenous children were taken from their families at about age 5 and returned when they were 16 or 17.

"The purpose was to destroy the family bond, the connection to culture and language, and to make it impossible for indigenous life to continue into the future," he said. "It was for indigenous people to die out."

The death rate from tuberculosis and other diseases at some schools was 30 to 50 percent, he said.

General Theological Seminary photo

MacDonald: "Even people of kindness can become complicit in the worst type of evil."

"The prominent feature was the graveyard. Now in Canada they're spending thousands of dollars to find out how they died."

Those who made it through the schools call themselves "survivors," he said.

"The Christian church said its strategy is to make you disappear. Nobody tried to hide that."

Altogether 150,000 indigenous children went through the schools; 80,000 are still living, the bishop said.

The church's reaction is "a case study in when evil so swamps and floods a group of people they will deny it," he said. "The church doesn't have the capacity to describe or accept within itself what happened. There's a tremendous amount of denial."

He compared the physical punishment in regular schools and in those for indigenous children. "When you caned an English boy it was for him to accept his identity. When you caned an indigenous boy it was for him to deny his identity."

Scripture, with phrases like *powers and principalities*, is better able than psychology to describe such "systemic evil," he said.

"We are so wedded to our delusion of individual autonomy that when evil swamps our personal commitment, our piety, we don't have adequate ways to describe it. Even people of kindness can become complicit in the worst type of evil."

The first thing we as Christians must find is a way to speak about systemic evil, he said, because it still exists in issues of racism and sexism.

Second, Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission needs to envision a healing alternative.

"We have to find a way to speak of a future that's more than just a Christian future. Our task is to find a language that will translate our concerns to a broader public, the language of the land, ecology, and our relationship with land. There's an ongoing dispossession of the land. It's no longer the cavalry and John Wayne. It's the oil companies and mining companies with a precision and effectiveness John Wayne could only wish he had.

"When you can find the language you can create forward movement."

Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission is trying to make all citizens understand the poverty, suicide rate and multilayered trauma in the country's indigenous communities, he said, "to get them to understand it through the eyes of a child." He estimated about 25 such

commissions have formed worldwide, but says Canada's is the first exclusively on children and the first exclusively on indigenous people.

"I'm living in a lot of hope now. God is working among us. We have to develop the capacity to see what God is doing. People are beginning to listen, and listen big time."

He said they're recognizing that First Nations are nations, representing the fastest growing demographic.

"I've seen more change in the past year or two than in my whole life."

The church moves slowly, he said, mentioning that the first time the Anglican Church of Canada discussed calling an indigenous bishop was in 1854. His appointment in 2007 is significant, he said, because a bishop is the symbol of the people.

"It took awhile, 150 years actually, but it happened," he said. "I entered this job as a kind of midwife for a self-determining indigenous Anglican church."

Lindy Bunch, a seminar participant from Weslyan Seminary in Washington, D.C., said she had known a bit about the abuse of indigenous children before hearing the bishop's talk.

"Being a white American Christian woman, it's really powerful to hear these stories of how our nation was built," she said. "We really need to struggle with that."

Georgette Ledgister, a Candler graduate originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, also found it insightful. She said the church needs to learn lessons from the indigenous experiences in Canada to not act in a colonial manner and take over authentic traditions. "That hit most closely to home," she said.

Retta Blaney in New York

Sudan Policy Worse than Ever

A coalition of leading human rights activists and scholars has asked that Congress press the Obama administration to end the growing humanitarian crisis in the largely Christian areas of southern Sudan, saying that the administration's response to the crisis has been non-existent.

U.S. policy toward the continuing human tragedy in Sudan is "in the worst place it's ever been," said Mark C. Hackett, CEO and executive director of Memphis-based Operation Broken Silence. "It's extremely disappointing."

Hackett and other activists — at a Jan. 11 forum organized by the Hudson Institute in Washington,

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D.C. — said that they had spent Jan. 10-11 on Capitol Hill calling for the United States to intervene to stop the systematic attacks of villagers in the Nuba Mountains of southern Sudan by the forces of President Omar al-Bashir.

Reports from the region said the attacks have included government bombings of multiple Christian villages last month that have killed at least 11 people, as well as preventing international aid organizations from entering the region to provide food and medicine.

Nina Shea, director of the Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom, said at the forum that an excellent opportunity to get through to the administration will present itself when Sen. John F. Kerry (D-Mass.) appears at a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on his nomination as secretary of state. No date has been set for the hearing but it could be as early as this month.

Shea said that those concerned about Sudan should contact the offices of committee members to ensure that the issue is raised at the confirmation hearing. "Anyone with contacts on the foreign relations committee, now's the time to use them," she said. Kerry "needs to understand that there's a constituency on Sudan."

The attacks on Christians in southern Sudan through aerial bombings, forced starvation and targeted massacres have reportedly intensified since the territory seceded from Sudan in July 2011 and al-Bashir pledged to adopt a stricter version of Shariah and recognize solely Islamic culture and the Arabic language.

Last week, the Christian advocacy group Open Doors published its annual World Watch List of countries where Christians face the most severe persecution. Sudan rose in the rankings from 16th in 2011 to 12th last year.

Hackett said the Obama administration has done nothing in the face of this tragedy. He said he sent a copy of his organization's 45-minute documentary, *Across the Frontlines: Ending the Nuba Genocide*, to the White House but has heard no response.

Hackett said that activists have been particularly disappointed in the "silence on Sudan" from Susan Rice, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, who earlier in her career had been singularly active on Africa-related issues, and Samantha Power, a senior adviser to the President and director of the Atrocities Prevention Board, whose book *"A Problem From Hell"*: America and the Age of Genocide won a Pulitzer Prize.

Hackett said the path to the administration may now have to run through Congress, where, he said, the campaign for U.S. action in Sudan is having a "slow effect."

He said that *Across the Frontlines* — the result of a trip to Sudan, including the Nuba Mountains in South Kordofan, last June — attempts to put a human face on the suffering of the Nuba population. Several villagers interviewed by Hackett and his crew during the visit called on the United States to arrest al-Bashir, an indicted war criminal, saying that doing so is the only way to end the crisis.

Last August, under the auspices of Operation Broken Silence, 67 of the world's leading experts on genocide from 10 countries sent a letter to President Obama and other administration officials calling on the United States to put an end to the humanitarian blockade in South Kordofan by immediately airlifting aid supplies directly to the war-affected areas. They noted that 200,000 to 300,000 people were taking shelter in caves and living off insects, tree leaves, plants and roots.

A "Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities" issued by President Obama in August 2011 said that "preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security

interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States.

"America's reputation suffers, and our ability to bring about change is constrained, when we are perceived as idle in the face of mass atrocities and genocide. Unfortunately, history has taught us that our pursuit of a world where states do not systematically slaughter civilians will not come to fruition without concerted and coordinated effort."

Gary G. Yerkey

Policy Change as an Aside

These are Jonah days for the Church of England. Echoes continue from November's vote on admitting women to the episcopate. The chances of Parliament stepping in to insist on approval seem to have receded but fallout continues. On Jan. 18 General Synod's House of Laity will meet to vote on a no confidence motion against its chairman, Philip Giddings, who spoke and voted against the measure and is accused of misusing his office.

Now the church also is enveloped in controversy over bishops and civil partnerships. On Dec. 18 staff at Church House posted a succinct summary of the Dec. 10-11 meeting of the House of Bishops. Neither the archbishops nor senior Synod staff seemed to have spotted the implications of a blandly written seven-line entry in the document. It effectively heralded that the bishops had adopted a new policy: people in civil partnerships would no longer be disqualified from appointment as bishops.

Ahead of Christmas there is not much newsgathering in the U.K. The story may have gone unnoticed save that the vigilant *Church Times* reporter Ed Thornton spotted it and managed a notable scoop. A policy change of this importance normally is accompanied by a statement explaining the reasons for it. There was no statement until after the

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Church Times story, and the attempt to elucidate by the Bishop of Norwich, the Rt. Rev. Graham James, only threw more fuel on the fire.

"The House has confirmed that clergy in civil partnerships, and living in accordance with the teaching of the Church on human sexuality, can be considered as candidates for the episcopate," his statement said. "All candidates for the episcopate undergo a searching examination of personal and family circumstances, given the level of public scrutiny associated with being a bishop in the Church of England."

People from both sides of the sexuality divide attacked. Evangelical conservatives like the Rev. Canon Chris Sugden of Anglican Mainstream and the Rev. Rod Thomas of Reform wanted to know why the bishops had taken it on themselves to make a policy change of this magnitude without reference to General Synod. Critics of all persuasions wanted to know how the church could enforce a rule that accepted men in civil partnerships as bishops so long as they were celibate.

Reverberations extended throughout the Anglican Communion. "It is a great sadness that before the New Year has hardly begun, the life of the Anglican Communion has yet again been clouded by compromise with the secular preoccupations of the West," said the Most Rev. Eliud Wabukala, Archbishop of Kenya and chairman of the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans' primates council. The bishops' decision "will create further confusion about Anglican moral teaching and make restoring unity to the Communion an even greater challenge."

Analysts are still trying to piece together how the church landed itself in this predicament of poor media relations. Was there a management hiatus in the last days of Archbishop Rowan Williams's time in office? If so, why were no other senior staff members ready to ensure proper presentation? Or, more cynically, did an individual or group see this hiatus as an opportunity to enhance an agenda?

The other line of enquiry concerns the intentions of the bishops. The peg for the minute was that the House of Bishops had before it an interim report from a group chaired by Sir Joseph Pilling on the Church of England's approach to human sexuality. The Pilling final report was not due for some months. If the bishops had said they would await the final version no one would have asked questions.

In the process the bishops appeared to have alienated another working group, also in the pipeline and led by the Bishop of Sodor and Man, whose remit was to "include examination of whether priests in civil partnerships should be eligible for appointment as bishops." The minutes published Dec. 18 and the statement of the Bishop of Norwich effectively trumped the Sodor and Man working group, and its content and recommendations remain unknown.

Perhaps the bishops thought that by signalling intention to accommodate same-sex civil partnerships they would be in a stronger position to oppose Prime Minister David Cameron's plans to legislate for same-sex marriage in the U.K.

John Martin in London

Same-sex Weddings in Washington, D.C.

The Very Rev. Gary Hall, dean of Washington National Cathedral, announced Jan. 9 that the cathedral will, like other congregations in the diocese, offer wedding ceremonies to same-sex couples.

"Consistent with the canons of the Episcopal Church, the Cathedral will begin celebrating same-sex marriage ceremonies using a rite adapted from an existing blessing ceremony approved in August 2012 by the Church at its General Convention," Hall wrote. "In light of the legality of civil marriage for same-sex couples in the District of Columbia and Maryland, Bishop Mariann Budde announced last month that the diocese would now allow this expansion of the sacrament, which then led to my decision for the Cathedral's adaptation of the same-sex rite."

The dean added: "Only couples directly affiliated with the life of the Cathedral — as active, contributing members of the congregation; as alumni or alumnae of the Cathedral schools; as individuals who have made significant volunteer or donor contributions over a period of time; or those judged to have played an exceptional role in the life of the nation — are eligible to be married at the Cathedral."

S.C. Diocese Sues

The Diocese of South Carolina led by the Rt. Rev. Mark J. Lawrence and its trustees have filed a lawsuit that asks a South Carolina Circuit Court to guard its property, protected marks and historical names from the Episcopal Church.

"We seek to protect more than $500 million in real property, including churches, rectories and other buildings that South Carolinians built, paid for, maintained and expanded — and in some cases died to protect — without any support from the Episcopal Church," said the Rev. Canon Jim Lewis, Canon to the Ordinary. "Many of our parishes are among the oldest operating churches in the nation. They and this Diocese predate the establishment of the Episcopal Church. We want to protect these properties from a blatant land grab."

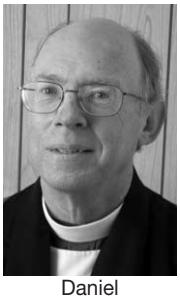
Neva Rae Fox, public affairs officer

for the Episcopal Church, told Episcopal News Service that church officials had "not received the legal papers in any such lawsuit in South Carolina and therefore cannot comment at this time."

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori has recommended that Episcopalians who will form a reconstituted diocese call the Rt. Rev. Charles G. vonRosenberg as their provisional bishop. She called for a special convention Jan. 26 to vote on that recommendation and to elect other new leaders.

Bishop vonRosenberg and his wife, Annie, live in the Daniel Island community of Charleston, where he retired in 2011 after serving for 12 years as Bishop of East Tennessee. Since October he has served on a voluntary basis as an adviser to a steering committee that formed in October to reorganize the diocese.

Bishop Daniel Called to Pennsylvania


Daniel

A special convention of the Diocese of Pennsylvania voted unanimously Jan. 12 in favor of Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori's recommendation that it call the Rt. Rev. Clifton Daniel III as provisional bishop.

Bishop Daniel, who has led the Diocese of East Carolina for 16 years, informed his standing committee Jan. 4 that he will resign his office Feb. 28.

"Bishop Daniel is a deeply Christian person who listens, builds consensus, works with Diocesan leadership effectively, and cares about the work and life of the congregations and missions of the Church," said an announcement letter from the Rev. Ledlie I. Laughlin, president of Pennsylvania's standing committee, and the Rev. Kathryn Andonian, standing committee member and rector of Church of the Holy Spirit in Harlesyville. "We believe that Bishop Daniel will bring healing and gracious leadership to our Diocese."

Five Acclaimed Worship Spaces

Compiled by Lauren Anderson

ST. PAUL'S BY-THE-SEA Jacksonville Beach, Florida

In 1967, 16 years after construction of its parish hall, St. Paul's by-the-Sea added a nave. The building's curved walls and roof, reminiscent of ocean waves, reflect the surrounding landscape. Designed by Ellis, Ricket & Associates, the building earned second place among the top five buildings in Florida in a recent vote by the American Institute of Architects.

Photo: Jerri Moats

MANDI'S CHAPEL

Camp Weed and Cerveny Conference Center
Live Oak, Florida

Mandi's Chapel, the centerpiece of the Diocese of Florida's Camp Weed and Cerveny Conference Center, was designed to be a sacred public place. Architect John Zona III designed the chapel with glass walls to create the appearance of the building floating between the lake and sky. Tom and Betty Petway donated the chapel, completed in 1995, in memory of their daughter Mandi, who died in 1992. The Florida chapter of the American Institute of Architects recently named Mandi's Chapel the top religious building in the state.

Photos: Joe Chamberlain

ST. PAUL'S

Indianapolis, Indiana

St. Paul's, originally constructed in 1949, underwent significant renovation in 2006, including a 180-degree reorientation and expansion of the nave. The renovations have allowed for a new organ and larger chancel. An enclosed garden connects the sanctuary and parish hall in a unified campus. The renovated building also houses a lobby, narthex, and bell tower. St. Paul's was recognized for its renovation and addition by *Faith & Form: The Interfaith Journal on Religion, Art, and Architecture,* in 2011.

Photo courtesy of Atkin Olshin Schade

BETHESDA BY-THE-SEA Palm Beach, Florida

Bethesda by-the-Sea Church hosts many visitors who come to see the building's impressive features, including its arches, madonnas, gargoyles, Tiffany window, and 6,000-pipe organ. Bethesda by-the-Sea completed construction on its original building in 1889. The current English Gothic Revival building was completed in 1927. The American Institute of Architects recently named Bethesda by-the-Sea among the top 100 buildings in Florida.

ST. BERNARD'S Bernardsville, New Jersey

A 2004 fire in St. Bernard's parish hall prompted a comprehensive rebuilding and restoration process, with the goal of restoring the building to its condition before the fire. In consultation with Historic Building Architects, the church replaced the roof, cleaned and repaired stone, and restored windows. Interior renovations included restoration of the wood truss systems, new finishes, acoustic improvements, and a new organ. Completed in 2008, the renovation has since won the New Jersey Historic Preservation Award in 2009 and *Faith & Form*'s Religious Architecture Restoration Award in 2011.

Photo courtesy of Historic Building Architects

Bell, Chalice, and Continuity

When St. Matthew's in Houma, Louisiana, completes construction on its new building there will be just two remnants from the original: a chalice and a bell.

The rest of the 1896 Gothic Revival-style church was destroyed in a fire two years ago. When the fire struck, the cypress wood building caved in on itself, the stained-glass windows were destroyed, and the bell tower and parish hall were seriously damaged in the flames.

"We lost just about everything. It was an incredibly intense fire," said the Rev. Craig Dalferes, rector of St. Matthew's since 2004.

In the days following the fire, parishioners searched through the ashes for any salvageable items. What remained was a fire-insulated safe, fortuitously purchased just a few months before the fire, containing a perfectly preserved chalice. The chalice had been created in the early 1900s by the melding of parishioners' donated silver and precious stones.

"They created a chalice that literally embodied the contributions of the whole congregation. It is precious and irreplaceable. When it was found it was a powerful symbol for us," Dalferes said.

In addition to the chalice, St. Matthew's bell survived the fire. Because the bell tower was the last part of the church to catch fire, there was enough time to save the bell.

Today the church is preparing to rebuild. With architectural plans complete, the church broke ground on Nov. 11, the second anniversary of the fire. Dalferes expects construction will begin soon and will take 12 to 18 months to complete.

The new building will resemble the original, but with modern materials. A new tower has been designed to house the bell, which is currently being refurbished by the manufacturer. The church also hopes to replace its stained-glass windows, one of the most distinctive features of the original building.

In the meantime, the congregation will continue to meet at nearby Grace Lutheran Church.

"There was a lot of grief initially dealing with loss, but now there is more excitement about what's ahead," Dalferes said. "I think people are ready to move forward. What we're going to have is fantastic."

Both the chalice and the bell, Dalferes says, will be symbols of the continuity between the original and new worship spaces.

"We can't wait for the opening day," Dalferes said. "We will ring that bell in celebration."

Lauren Anderson

Photos by David James © 2012 Dreamworks II Distribution Co., LLC and Twentieth Century Fox

President Abraham Lincoln pressures leaders of Congress to abolish slavery through the 13th Amendment.

Lincoln's Abiding Challenge

Review by Leonard Freeman

Audiences are clearly moved by director Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln*. At film's end, as credits start to roll, there is an almost stunned silence. It is not as if you've seen an actor portraying Lincoln as much as an experience of Lincoln himself with a deserved awe and a step back from the palpable brilliance, conviction, caring, sacrifice and burden of the man. Actor Daniel Day-Lewis is known for throwing himself into his roles: Sally Field, who plays Mary Todd Lincoln, says she received many notes and memos from "Lincoln" before filming began. Day-Lewis virtually channels the President, from his high-pitched voice to his gait and idiosyncratic sense of humor.

Lincoln
Directed by Stephen Spielberg
DreamWorks/20th Century-Fox

Lincoln is a lonely man. He knows it deep in his bones. Grief has been a part of his life since he decided that he and Mary would leave their dying son Willie alone while they participated in a required, crucial mid-war White House reception. His nights are often sleepless, torn by thoughts and emotions, and his dreams haunt his waking hours. He has a dream of himself on a boat moving at incredible speed through a night sky toward some end, "keenly aware of my aloneness." He usually has the boat dreams before battles, notes Mary, who sees herself as his "soothsayer," but this one, with its speed — when he usually sees himself as a "deliberate" mover whom others decry as "Lincoln the doddler, Lincoln the inveterate compromiser": this one, she decides, must be about the slavery amendment.

Based largely on Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Team of Rivals*, the film focuses on four months, January through April 1865, just after Lincoln's second election in the waning days of the Civil War. The President has decided to push for the passage of a 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will outlaw slavery "for all time," at the same time that he attempts to bring an end to the terrible war.

There are two problems. First, there can be no recognition that the South is a separate nation. It is not Southern *states* that are "out of the union," but only people within them who have rebelled.

But second, in issuing his Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln may have overstepped what his War Powers authorize. Mid-war he based it on his ability to "confiscate the property"

of an enemy nation. The post-war problem is that this is flimsy ground, for if the South really is not a separate nation then confiscating Southerners "property" might not stand up in court, and freed slaves might return to bondage.

Similarly, in the political calculus of the waning days of the war people are motivated to pass an amendment if it will help force the South to surrender, but after the war ends there may be much less heart for such an amendment. Slavery could in fact return. Decisions about opportunities to end the bloodshed will have to face into that hard calculus.

The President visits a Civil War battlefield in *Lincoln*.

Lincoln knows that the time is "Now, Now, Now!" but at great cost, as personified in painful family recriminations between Abe and Mary. The rough and tumble of political infighting, and Lincoln's walking a razor line of reasoning to keep his integrity while pressing on, is equally laid bare. The House of Representatives is "a rat's nest of hicks and hacks," Lincoln's closest adviser and friend, Secretary of State William Seward (David Strathairn), reminds him.

And Tommy Lee Jones as Pennsylvania Republican abolitionist radical Thaddeus Stevens (here Republicans truly are social progressives) almost steals the show as a man at the center of mobilizing votes, and tempering his own eloquence, to win the day. Closeted in a basement White House kitchen while a reception goes on above them, Lincoln asks Stevens to tone down his ardent abolitionist rhetoric for the sake of winning the necessary votes, reminding him that knowing the compass of true north is useful, "but if you're stuck in a swamp, what's the use of knowing true north?"

Not so thinly beneath lie subtle and real spiritual choices. "Do we choose to be born, or are we fitted to the times we're born into?" Lincoln asks a couple of young telegraphers in the wee morning hours, as he wrestles through to a key decision of his struggle. And, of course, there is the balance between "purity" and pragmatism.

At its heart Lincoln is as much about the courage and spiritual warfare of thoughtful decision-making, as it is about our coming to appreciate the greatness and uniqueness of a genuine American hero. Its parallels and resonance with current political, social, and religious wrestling are most likely not accidental. ■

The Rev. Leonard Freeman is a veteran film critic.

Artist's concept images courtesy of the Cathedral of St. Paul

COME AND SEE?

By Matthew Alderman

"Jesus is consistently startling," said the dean as small children shrieked and screamed somewhere behind me. It was drizzling lightly outside the sidewalk table umbrella, and across the way was a large storefront full of Muppet-themed tchotchkes. Due to chronic overbooking, I had stolen away from a winter family reunion at an Orlando, Florida, theme park to talk by phone with John P. "Jep" Streit, dean of Boston's Cathedral Church of Saint Paul. Even with the incongruous surroundings on my end, Dean Streit's enthusiasm was palpable.

Despite its prime location facing Boston Common, it is easy to walk past St. Paul's sober Greek revival portico and mistake it for a shuttered bank. Until now. The new renovation, the dean explained, would embody the parish's spirit of outreach with a bold design for the church's unfinished pediment. It would become a physical embodiment of Christ's words, "Come and see." And like Christ, the renovated structure would have that same arresting, inviting, and surprising touch.

As cathedrals go, St. Paul's is a bit of a historical accident. The church had been founded in 1818 by a collection of Boston patriots seeking to "create an edifice that was wholly American, and undeniably representative of its democratic ideals," as an official brief for the renovation notes. It was not designated a cathedral until 1912. Before then, Massachusetts had simply gotten along without one, despite the entreaties of architect Ralph Adams Cram, who fantasized about building one on an artificial "St. Botoph's Island" in the Charles. The sisters Mary Sophia and Harriet Sarah Walker later bequeathed a million-dollar-plus estate to the diocese for the construction of a proper mother church. Their money was redirected toward ministry support, and St. Paul's got the nod instead.

When the church was first designed by Alexander Parris and Solomon Willard, an appropriately classical relief of St. Paul preaching before King Agrippa was planned for the front. Funds ran short, and the pediment remained blank. Last March the diocese announced that a new design had been selected. The work of internationally recognized Philadelphia artist Donald Lipski, the new sculpture will be a "non-traditional" presentation of a "cross-section of a chambered nautilus" set against an illuminated blue glass background, an image meant to wed classical ideals of proportion to a spiral shape representative of a spiritual journey.

As cathedrals go, St. Paul's is a bit of a historical accident.

"We are doing something bold and extraordinary with the front of our cathedral church because what God has given us to share with the world in Jesus Christ is bold and extraordinary," Bishop Thomas J. Shaw, SSJE, has explained. The new pediment will accompany a number of alterations to the interior, including the installation of a new, environmentally friendly heating system, skylights in the nave, and a rearrangement of the narthex incorporating more glass and a new day chapel. The pews will be removed to create a more flexible worship space.

Official reactions have been almost universally affirming for this thorough makeover. Jen Mergel of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has been quoted calling the design's message of "limitless potential growth and inclusion" significant "not only for the mission of St. Paul's, but for the arts in Boston." Dean Streit does recognize the design has a few critics. A chorus of digital hecklers vented their frustration on Universalhub.com shortly after the official announcement. "This is an abortion!" cried one, and another described the design as a "Greek Revival casino." This was interlarded with comments of "beautiful," "nice!" and "cool." Elsewhere, commenters at archBOSTON.com criticized it as "empty street-view calories," "obnoxious," and resembling a Pythagorean meeting-house. (The discussion thread wandered off into a tangential discussion about local panhandlers and, for some reason, Howard Stern.)

Both the proposed interior alterations and the pediment have much to recommend them. While the skylights are a somewhat unconventional addition, they will certainly open up the dim nave, as will the addition of more glass to the narthex wall. The removal of pews, though, will unfortunately undermine the processional orientation of the interior, but the chancel will remain largely untouched. The pediment's design is, in purely aesthetic terms, imaginative and arresting — a true eye-catcher that will demand all to "come and see." Its "obnoxious" color scheme recalls the original paintwork of Greek temples and medieval church interiors, and will do much to liven up an otherwise staid façade. And the parish's desire, via such a showstopper bit of art, to promote its extensive program of community outreach and care for downtown's homeless population, is a laudable one.

But the "complex symbolism" praised by Bishop Shaw is more elusive than allusive. Dean Streit responded, when I asked him about comments that the design was "not overtly religious," by saying that yes, it lacked denominational and doctrinal specificity. The strength of the design, as both he and Lipski have said, is that its symbolism is "accessible to virtually everyone." But this universality gives it a disembodied, Rorschach-like quality. The geometrical elegance of the nautilus can symbolize God's hand in creation, but it only hints at the act of re-creation at the center of Christ's work on Calvary. A hanging cross planned for the portico will remedy this to a degree.

Lipski's *apologia* for the work does mention the "Madonna blue" background, derived from the robes of the Virgin and the flag of the Episcopal Church. This color he also sees as a symbol of Christ's humanity, derived from that of Mary. But this remains secondary to the spiral imagery of the nautilus, "the archetypal

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symbolism of cosmic force," which he links to proto-New Age psychologist Carl Jung and to Oliver Wendell Holmes's poem "The Chambered Nautilus." In the latter, the poet enjoins the sea-creature growing outward to "[l]eave thy low-vaulted past," suggesting anything but doctrinal continuity traditionally understood.

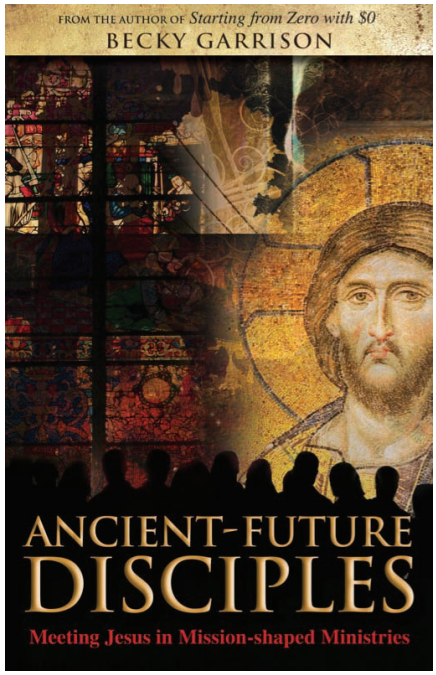
The dean has said, "Jesus invited people to become his followers by simply saying, 'Come and See,' not by identifying himself as the Messiah or detailing his theology." Yet the Christ of the Gospels is not always shy in asserting his divinity, as seen in John 6:62: "Does this shock you? What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?" As to doctrine, it is his injunction to "eat the flesh of the Son of Man" (John 6:54), a statement otherwise horrific, that his disciples find most shocking.

Lipski's nautilus is another of contemporary art's earnest attempts to grapple with the divine which fall back on the natural world and mathematical abstraction in their expression of religious experience. The results are intriguing but strangely inarticulate. Consider the elaborate but impenetrable symbolic geometries of Craig Hartmann's Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland, California, or Renzo Piano's peculiar Padre Pio Shrine Church in Puglia, Italy, with its unsettlingly Lovecraftian tabernacle and spiral floor-plan. Each time, the best and brightest of contemporary culture has struggled with God, and been only able to convey a vague and numinous *presence* rather than a true *Being*. Returning to review the storehouse of that "low-vaulted past" would have at least provided them with an artistic starting point as they wrestled with angels.

I admire Dean Streit's passion for the people who populate his parish community, and his desire to render the cathedral a conscience for downtown Boston. But the vision the new pediment presents is incomplete. The apostle Paul's mission was not just one of hospitality and good works, but the unglamorous, uncomfortable and countercultural act of preaching Christ, and him crucified. On the Areopagus, before a similar Greek temple, he unveiled the Unknown God to the city all around him. Christian art is not merely about expressing the believer's journey, but providing an encounter with God in the flesh. Like Christ, it is startling and inviting at once, but it is also incarnate and *highly specific* — revealing a Person rather than a platitude. "Come and see," but what, and Who? Christ's ministry begins with "Come and see," but our life in Christ begins with the angel's implied "Whom do you seek?" at the empty tomb. A truly startling image might have been a bold, glittering mosaic of the resurrected Christ in Majesty, gentle and strong — so old that it, like the Lord himself, is new again. ■

Matthew Alderman frequently writes and lectures on traditional church architecture. He works at Cram and Ferguson Architects in Concord, Massachusetts, a successor firm to that established by Ralph Adams Cram in 1889.

Emergent Episcopalians



Review by Matthew Townsend

Many believers engage in a daily struggle to advance into a bold Christian future while honoring a rich, worthwhile tradition. Episcopalians, especially younger ones, feel this struggle deeply, wondering how to meet an eternal Christ in a transient world. Early Christians must have faced the same questions.

Becky Garrison, known for her religion reporting and satire, explores serious engagement with this struggle in *Ancient-Future Disciples*. From Garrison's perspective, Episcopalians occupy a space between present and future, passionate for both tradition and context.

In *Ancient-Future Disciples*, Garrison shares stories from nine parishes and two dioceses that press boundaries on how we understand the Church. Garrison visits a Spanish-language mission in Florida, a feminist community in Texas, an open-air church in Massachusetts, a Celtic-flavored parish in Oregon, and 21st-century church plants in Washington.

The ministries Garrison examines may seem diverse, but there are ties that bind them together. From the outset, *Ancient-Future Disciples* focuses on ministries with a core of members who are dedicated and persistent enough to invest large portions of their time and treasure. Diana Fajardo, a Colombian immigrant, has made such an investment at Centro Hispano de Todos los Santos in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Fajardo speaks of the storefront church that she and other members built.

"When we walked in for the first time, we came with hammers," Fajardo says. "We did everything ourselves — cleaning, painting, putting in new tiling."

Garrison also highlights "clear commitment" at St. Hildegard's Community, a feminist congregation in Austin, Texas. She tells the story of Susan LaVieux, who brought her creative talents to St. Hildegard's:

> Over the years, she has donated bolts of material and fabric, and even a watering trough that they use to baptize people by immersion. Susan handmade the chasubles worn by the lay liturgist, a musician, two lay deacons, and the clergy during the services.

Church of the Beloved, a plant in Edmonds, Washington, started with a commitment to building community for people who did not fit in at megachurches or traditional environments. Garrison introduces readers to J. Paul Fridenmaker, one of Beloved's founders.

Garrison observes that relationships in the church have helped stir investment and a sense of belonging. "The well runs deep in this way," Fridenmaker tells Garrison. "We love the open-source approach to theology and Scripture as deeply sacred and deeply mysterious."

An even stronger thread throughout Garrison's book, visible in every story, is an explicit desire for incarnational service to the surrounding neighborhood.

Perhaps the best example is *common cathedral*, an ecumenical community that meets in Boston Common. The ministry, founded by the Rev. Deborah W. Little Wyman, is a public church that serves Boston's homeless population. Rather than waiting for the homeless to seek out the church, *common cathedral* meets homeless people on the street. Garrison highlights ways in which *common cathedral* has reached people like Joe. The young Bostonian heard about free lunches in the Common, she says.

> After coming here a few times for the food, he says he got into it. Because of this church, he converted to Christianity and now calls this community his home. … "They treat me like a

(Continued on next page)

Ancient-Future Disciples
Meeting Jesus in Mission-shaped Ministries

By **Becky Garrison**. Seabury. Pp. 160. $18

(Continued from previous page)

> person instead of some homeless disease. I feel wanted here."

The Crossing, also in Boston, began as a church of the community. Garrison says it has grown from 10 to 75 people. She introduces readers to Jason Long, a lay leader at the Crossing who also works for the Diocese of Massachusetts. Long says he was attracted to the church precisely because of its interest in context. As Garrison explains:

> Initially, he struggled to find deeper meaning in the sacraments and more traditional aspects of church — even written prayers. But at the Crossing, he heard people asking, "How do we translate the liturgy so it reflects the work of the people and communicates God in our context and community?"

Garrison also cites St. Mark's Church-in-the-Bowery in New York City, which has experimented with its music ministry to reflect its diverse neighborhood. Hip-hop and disco have even made it into services. This, Garrison says, communicates the church's commitment to the neighborhood and its people.

Just as these stories demonstrate 21st-century disciples' investment in their ministries and a commitment to their location, they also evince a common thirst for change and a seriousness to discern God's will.

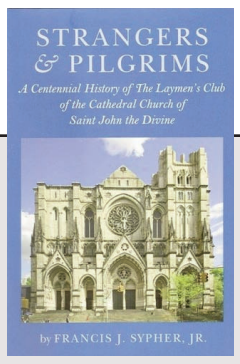
St. Hildegard's in Austin began when 10 parishioners of St. George's Church decided to create a new ministry. The same can be said for Centro Hispano, the Crossing, and Church of the Beloved: the founders of each of these ministries embraced change, Garrison writes, in spite of the hard work and sacrifice involved.

All the ministries featured in Garrison's work are fundamentally Christian: their participants pour themselves out in service to the community and seek transformation and renovation by God. These commonalities transcend social and theological politics as Christ moves between our communities and through them, offering his grace, love, and power. *Ancient-Future Disciples* is a snapshot, a quick introduction to people who are trying to follow Jesus on that path. Though stronger in storytelling than theology, it's a good conversation piece, and might get your parish talking.

Matthew Townsend is communications missioner for the Diocese of Rochester.

Human Buttresses at St. John's

This attractive new book by Francis Sypher is the most recent in his series of insightful histories of parishes and institutions of the Episcopal Diocese of New York. Following his 2010 bicentennial history of St. James's Church, Madison Avenue, and the surprisingly wonderful *St. Agnes Chapel of the Parish of Trinity Church in the City of New York* (2002), this year's *Strangers and Pilgrims* sets a new standard for dedicated historical work on an organization within a larger parochial framework.



Strangers and Pilgrims

A Centennial History of the Laymen's Club of the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine

By **Francis J. Sypher, Jr.** Caravan Books. Pp. 169. $35, cloth

A major component of Sypher's earlier work has been the careful situation of Episcopal Church life within the history of neighborhoods and urban social change. In this case, he charts the activities of the Laymen's Club of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine through its first century (1908-2008) with a sensitive attention to the contributions of the world-famous cathedral to life in the Diocese of New York and the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

From its foundation 16 years after the laying of the cathedral's cornerstone, the primary activities of the Laymen's Club have been in publishing and fundraising for the needs of the cathedral. The club's *Guide to the Cathedral Church*, first published in 1920, went through 17 editions by 1965, and provided a major source of income for building projects throughout the first half of the 20th century.

The club's other activities have been varied and influential, including donations to begin the cathedral's homeless shelter and soup kitchen; commissioning musical compositions for cathedral celebrations; donations for sculpture, construction, roof repair, and architectural studies; and sponsoring exhibitions about the history of the cathedral. One of the most enduring and recognizable projects adopted by the

Laymen's Club is the Pilgrims' Pavement of bronze medallions embedded in the central nave, each representing major destinations of Christian pilgrimage.

Throughout the book, Sypher shares a wealth of archival material with readers, including historical photographs and designs. One of the treasures of the book is Appendix B, with its reproduction of the full text of a 51-stanza poem by Laymen's Club president Edward Hagaman Hall (1858-1936). The poem is a joy to read from start to finish, but a few lines give a good taste of its tone:

Thus, from Manhattan Isle
the waves He rolled;
Poured out the Palisades
in Gothic mould;
Brought down from Adirondacks'
cloud-wrapped sides
The stately Northern stream
to greet the tides;
Made high the great Cathedral's
future seat;
Spread out the eastward plain
before its feet;
Bedecked the scene with grass,
and flower, and wood;
And, pausing in His work,
beheld it good.

In addition to gems like this, *Strangers and Pilgrims* includes a constellation of names prominent in the life of the cathedral and the Episcopal Church during the century in review: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, James Pike, William Thomas Manning, Horace W.B. Donegan, Ralph Adams Cram, Edward Nason West, Paul Moore, James Parks Morton, and Madeleine L'Engle among them. Its great strength, however, is in attention to the ardent Laymen's Club supporters whose names did not make headlines but whose steadfast Christian commitments to the cathedral's fabric have done so much to ensure institutional and architectural continuity for more than a century.

That they have done so for a cathedral which has been no stranger to controversy is not a major part of this historical account. The focus is instead on a determination to provide a great place in a great city for "those seeking refuge in despair or confusion; those who come to celebrate private and public joys and to worship; those who are witnesses to great state occasions; and, as always, those people who love good music so much that they would even go to church to hear it."

Richard J. Mammana, Jr.
New Haven, Connecticut

Hope Made Tangible

Review by Cheryl H. White

Any book that proclaims to the average individual reader "your life matters, and it matters on an infinite and eternal scale" requires a substantive and organized logic that draws upon sound principles of Christian theology. This is a task Jake Owensby accomplishes with remarkable ease in *Connecting the Dots: A Hope-Inspired Life*, which appeared this summer. Owensby is Bishop of Western Louisiana, holds a Ph.D. in philosophy, and has an active preaching and teaching ministry through his popular weblog, *Pelican Anglican.*

Connecting the Dots targets a broad general audience and emphasizes the core Christian message of hope through a variety of relevant illustrations. Early on, Owensby points out that Holy Scripture and traditional Christian teaching each demand a belief that this life has eternal significance. This is an elusive concept for most, yet Owensby effectively depends upon the use of anecdotal evidence from the seemingly mundane and ordinary tasks of everyday life. From that cornerstone, he builds the message that all can rely on the promise that God will one day connect the dots of our lives. Indeed, this is the book's essential thesis: followers of Jesus are in fact "God's hope-inspired agents in this world."

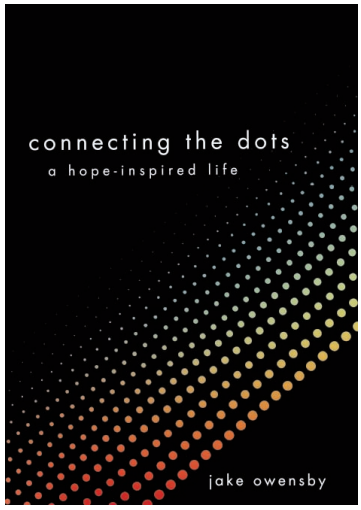
The text makes heavy use of Scripture, citing the Gospels, the Psalms, and the Pauline epistles with equal emphasis. *Connecting the Dots* also reflects a strong incarnational theological premise, with emphasis on man's fall and need for redemption. By the book's fourth chapter, the reader can relate to these issues in practical terms, as Owensby explains how it is possible to be a hope-inspired people in a broken and fallen world. The writing is precise and concise, always balancing the intellectual and philosophical with knowledge that every reader can apply.

Owensby effortlessly moves beyond the abstract theological concepts to practical application, which is where this book excels. Explaining that God transforms the hearts of believers to make a difference in this life, yet also to have eternal effect, *Connecting the Dots* strikes its thesis again and again with startling clarity. This provides an effective segue for dealing with what Owensby calls "an unbiblical understanding of heaven and earth." Pointing out that lives have eternal trajectories, the author also confronts the Christian concepts of heaven and hell with a posture that is both soundly scriptural and logical.

Finally, Owensby insists, God's absolute sovereignty undergirds Christian hope. To suggest that all should trust God's purpose runs the risk of sounding suspiciously like a platitude; something much more easily spoken than done. Owensby again effectively relies upon practical illustrations to demonstrate how hope overcomes fear and forgiveness overcomes anger.

Anger, fear and worry are impediments to the full and perfect life that God has promised in a redeemed creation. The Christian is challenged to look to the promise and not the present condition, balancing the reality of daily life with the assurance of eternal life. Owensby offers a means by which Christians can apply the promise of hope in a meaningful way. *Connecting the Dots: A Hope-Inspired Life* is a must-read for Christians interested in contemplating eternity scripturally and logically.

Cheryl H. White is professor of European and Christian Church history at Louisiana State University-Shreveport.



Connecting the Dots
A Hope-Inspired Life
By **Jake Owensby**. WestBow Press. Pp. 136. $11.95

Measure and Act

In "How Did We Get Here from There?" [TLC, Dec. 23] Prudence Dailey asserts that the 1992 General Synod legislation enabling women to become priests would not have achieved the required two-thirds majorities in all three houses without the additional provisions for "flying bishops" contained in the Act of Synod.

This is incorrect. The measure was passed in November 1992 with majorities of 75 percent (bishops), 70.4 percent (clergy), and 67.3 percent (laity), whereas the Act of Synod was first mentioned as a possibility only in April 1993, during the interrogation of church officials by the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament. In June the House of Bishops considered a draft text; in July this was published in a House of Bishops statement, and it was not until November 1993, a full year later, that it was approved by the whole Synod.


THE CHURCH HOUSE

How Did We Get Here from There?

CATHOLIC VOICES

By Prudence Dailey

Indeed the act was necessary, but it was to obtain the approval of Parliament to the measure, not to pass it in the first place.

Simon Sarmiento
St Albans, England

Prudence Dailey replies:
Simon Sarmiento is, of course, quite right that in my article I inadvertently conflated two separate sets of events, and I am grateful to him for pointing out the error.

The legislation approved by General Synod in 1992 did contain clear, legally enforceable safeguards for opponents (Resolutions A and B), without which it would not have passed. The Act of Synod followed a year later, as Mr. Sarmiento says, in order to satisfy the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament.

34,000 and Growing

Bishop Pierre Whalon writes, "It is said that there are more than 20,000 Christian denominations" [TLC, Jan. 20]. It is actually much worse than that.

In 1981 the Anglican Scholar David Barrett published the first edition of his exhaustive *World Christian Encyclopedia*, and at that moment in history he reported there were over 20,800 separate denominations throughout the world, all claiming to be Christian. Twenty years later he brought out his now two-volume second edition. By then the number had risen to 34,000!

And how many more since then? And they will know that we are Christians by our love.

The Rt. Rev. John W. Howe
Orlando, Florida

Deaths

The Rev. Canon **Calvin Adams**, known for his ministry to youth, troubled congregations and vulnerable people, died Nov. 16. He was 70.

Born in St. Petersburg, FL, he was a graduate of the University of South Florida, Johns Hopkins University, and General Theological Seminary. He was a mentor in family systems training made popular by Rabbi Edwin Friedman. Ordained deacon and priest in 1983, he served as assistant, St. John's of Lattingtown, Locust Valley, NY, 1983-87; and rector, St. Gabriel's Church, Douglassville, PA, 1987-2008.

The Rev. **Sandra S. Bess**, who trained horses and young riders before becoming a priest for 34 years, died Oct. 15. She was 69.

Born in Albuquerque, NM, she was a graduate of Fort Hays State University and Church Divinity School of the Pacific. She was ordained deacon in 1977 and priest in 1988, and served in the Diocese of the Rio Grande for all of her ministry.

She served at Pecos Regional Episcopal Ministry, Alpine, TX, 1979-84; archdeacon, 1980-83; vicar, Church of the Epiphany, Socorro, NM, 1988-92; associate, St. Michael and All Angels Church, Albuquerque, 1999-2006; and founding vicar, San Gabriel the Archangel Church, Corrales, NM, 2005-09. She was a hospital and hospice chaplain, and wrote on hospice care and other pastoral matters for *People of God*, the newspaper of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Earnest and Barbara Bess. She is survived by her brothers, Christopher, James and Robert.

The Rt. Rev. **Raymond Bruce Smith**, who spent most of his ordained ministry in Australia's Outback Queensland, died Sept. 1. He was 74.

He died little more than three months before the golden anniversary of his ordination as a priest. He was ordained deacon in 1961 and priest in 1962. He was appointed assistant bishop in the Diocese of Brisbane, with special responsibility for the Western Region of the diocese, in 1996.

"The quintessential 'bush bishop,' he was more likely to share a [beer] with a parishioner than a cup of tea," said an obituary in the *Brisbane Courier*. "For more than 30 years he was a strong voice in the media — and elsewhere — for a fair go for the bush, railing against the effects of drought, depopulation and foreign ownership."

The Diocese of Brisbane's *FOCUS* magazine paid tribute to the bishop in its October-November issue. The bishop had served in the parish of Sulkham Stead and Ufton Nervet in Reading, England, in 2002. Upon hearing of his death, members of the parish wrote: "Bishop Raymond and his wife, Rita, came to us, a small, troubled and unhappy country parish in the south of England. They were with us for only a short time, some months. However, he left us healed, full of hope and ready to take up the cross again with renewed vigor. We remember long

(Continued on page 28)

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Shipping Address:
816 E. Juneau Avenue,
Milwaukee, WI 53202-2793

Phone: 414-276-5420
Fax: 414-276-7483
E-mail: tlc@livingchurch.org
www.livingchurch.org

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SUNDAY'S READINGS | Epiphany 4, February 3

Jer. 1:4-10 • Ps. 71:1-6 • 1 Cor. 13:1-13 • Luke 4:21-30

God's Ecstatic Love

Today's readings speak to us of vocation and of origin and of family, as well as of the often turbulent transition from childhood to maturity. Jeremiah recounts his vocation, saying: "the LORD came to me saying, 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.'"

Here we are reminded that there are no accidents in the economy of salvation, not least when it comes to the destiny of human persons. As Jesus says, "even the hairs of your head are all numbered" (Mark 10:30). The merciful and omnipotent providence of God encompasses the destiny of each of us, and we are seen and known, foreknown, and loved by God from all eternity. And God's timeless and boundless knowledge and love of each of us is the source of the superlative dignity of every human life, from the first instance of its creation and unto endless ages of ages. As the Psalmist has it, "from my mother's womb you have been my strength" (Ps. 71:6).

But the plotlines of our individual stories have reference not only to God but to one another as well. We are members of human families, communities, and societies, and we are irresistibly formed by the nexus of these human associations. We have learned a great deal from modern psychology about just how powerfully formative these associations can be, particularly at very early stages of development. All of which speaks to the importance of a family life rooted in the divine knowledge and love which, as we have seen, is the bedrock of the human person's dignity, and the value of every human life. Our prayer book bears witness to this in speaking of the orientation of Christian marriage toward "the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord" (p. 423).

Our love for one another must be informed by, and an extension of, God's love for us, as Paul characterizes it in the famous passage from 1 Corinthians 12. To Paul's list we might add that love is ecstatic. Christian love is not insular, but overflows its own boundaries. The great Christian teacher Meister Eckhart spoke of our creation as a consequence of God's love, as it were, boiling over.

Thus in this Sunday's Gospel lesson we see Jesus, the perfect exemplification of God's love, transgressing the boundaries of the community from which he had received his formation as a child. After reading from the book of Isaiah, Jesus cites to his fellow Nazarenes some well-known stories from the Hebrew Scriptures of God's mission transcending the boundaries of the community which had been its custodian

Jesus' message rings harshly in the ears of his listeners, so much so that they try to murder him (4:29-30). We are reminded that the word of true love is a challenge, a threat, to the world's power structures, precisely because it is ecstatic, overflowing its own boundaries and keeping nothing for itself. To be touched by this divine knowledge and love is to become animated by its dynamism. Ultimately it means being incorporated into the body of Christ, being crucified with him, offered to God on behalf of the world, and to the world as the bread of life.

Look It Up

The third collect for mission at Morning Prayer (BCP, p. 101) nicely captures the dynamic of today's readings.

Think About It

A central theme running through Scripture is God calling his people out from their places of origin, through challenging circumstances, and into a place of rest and plenty. How has this divine call been played out in your own life? From what, and into what, is God calling you?

SUNDAY'S READINGS | Epiphany 5, February 10

Neh. 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 • Ps. 19 • 1 Cor. 12:12-31a • Luke 4:14-21

Luminous with God's Glory

Today's readings speak of veils and of veilings and unveilings. In Exodus we hear the story of Moses coming down from Mt. Sinai, where the Lord's own glory had been partially unveiled to him (33:18ff). Moses caught only a glimpse of God's glory, but it was such an awesome experience that "the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God" (34:29) and the people of Israel "were afraid to come near him" (v. 30). So Moses veiled his face, seemingly out of consideration for the people. And Exodus says that this pattern continued "whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him" (v. 34).

Paul makes reference to the narrative of Exodus when he writes how it is that for those in Christ the veil has been lifted which had hitherto hidden God's glory from the vision even of his own people; and that we "with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor. 3:18).

The Gospel reading for this Sunday gives us, as it were, the metaphysical foundation of this feature of Christian life, and it is the identity of Jesus. As in Exodus, the narrative brings us "up on the mountain" for an encounter with God's glory. And here again it is as though the curtain of the universe is lifted, and we are offered a glimpse of the reality of the interpenetration of matter and spirit that centers in Jesus: "while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white" (Luke 9:29).

A puzzling feature of Luke's Transfiguration narrative is his insistence that Peter, James, and John "were weighed down with sleep," and yet nevertheless "had stayed awake" (9:32). This juxtaposition of wakefulness and sleep evokes the Lover from the Song of Songs who sings of her encounter with the Bridegroom in similar terms: "I slept, but my heart was awake. Hark! my beloved is knocking" (5:2). Both passages hint at God's simultaneous nearness and hiddenness, what Gregory Nazianzen, speaking of Moses' encounter with God on Sinai, called the "Back Parts of God, which He leaves behind Him, as tokens of Himself like the shadows and reflection of the sun in the water, which show the sun to our weak eyes, because we cannot look at the sun himself, for by his unmixed light he is too strong for our power of perception."

Luke says that Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus on the mountain, and that they "were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem" (9:31). Luke is of course referring to the death of Jesus, to the events of Calvary. The Greek word here translated *departure* is *exodus*, which draws our attention to Jesus as the archetype to whom Moses pointed. Just as Moses led God's people out of the land of Egypt, and the slavery and death that were a feature of their existence there, so too will Jesus lead God's people through the veil of death to eternal and abundant life in the presence of his unveiled glory.

Look It Up

Through the centuries, the great teachers of Christian spirituality have taken up Scripture's paradoxical metaphors like wakeful sleep (Song of Songs 5) or luminous darkness (1 Tim. 6:16, Ps. 97:2) to speak of the spiritual life. What do these paradoxes mean to teach us about God and our relationship with him?

Think About It

Our lectionary today offers us passages that draw out the central mystery of Christmas and Epiphany, the manifestation of the God who was invisible until the coming of Christ. Why is this theme particularly appropriate as we stand on the threshold of Lent?

PEOPLE & PLACES

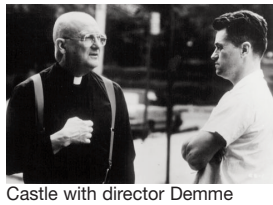
(Continued from page 25)

after they left us and we are truly grateful to have been part of this remarkable man's history."

Bishop Smith is survived by his wife, Rita; children Howard, Catherine and Kerry; four grandchildren; and his brother, John Mackenzie-Smith.

The Rev. **Robert W. Castle, Jr.**, a longtime activist priest and occasional film actor, died Oct. 27 in Newport, VT. He was 83.

Born in Jersey City, NJ, he was a graduate of St. Lawrence University (where he was chosen as a quarterback for the All America Football Team) and Berkeley Divinity School at Yale University. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1955.



Castle with director Demme

He served as vicar, St. Andrew's Church, Lincoln Park, NJ, 1955-60; rector, St. John's Church, Jersey City, NJ, 1962-71; rector, St. Mark's Church, Newport, VT, 1974-82; rector, Christ Church, Island Pond, VT, 1979-82; director, Brookhaven Home for Boys, Chelsea, VT, 1982-85; and rector, St. Mary's Manhattanville, 1986-99.

Fr. Castle, who was active in the civil rights movement and protests against the Vietnam War, was the author of *Prayers from the Burned-Out City* (Sheed and Ward, 1968). Castle made his film debut in the documentary *Cousin Bobby* (1992), directed by Jonathan Demme. He acted in 12 other films, including *Beloved*, *Cop Land*, *Lost Souls*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, *Philadelphia*, and *Rachel Getting Married*.

Fr. Castle is survived by his wife, Kate Betsch; daughter, Jane; sons Paul and John; stepchildren William and Emily Betsch; eight grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

The Rev. **Benjamin Oliver Pfeil** died Nov. 10 in Madison, FL. He was 88. Ordained deacon and priest in 1992, he was a member of St. Marty's Church, Madison, for 64 years. He became its vicar in 1992. Fr. Pfeil was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Jane.

The Rev. **Betty E. Seidle** died Nov. 6 in Bangor, Maine. She was 73. Born in Philadelphia, she graduated from Temple University and Adams State College.

She taught for 20 years in the Hicksville, NY, school system before moving to Maine. She was ordained deacon in 2004. She played the French horn, piano and keyboard, and for several years shared her music with residents of long-term care and rehabilitation homes in Maine and Canada. She was also a certified nursing assistant working at Down East Community Hospital and a volunteer ombudsman for state programs. As a deacon she served at St. Aidan's Church in Machias from 2004 until her death. Deacon Seidle is survived by her sister, Kim Terra Nova; and niece, Jessica Terra Nova, both of Colorado.

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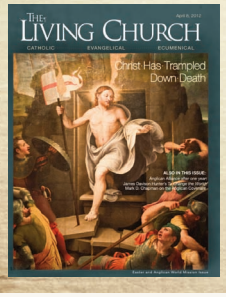

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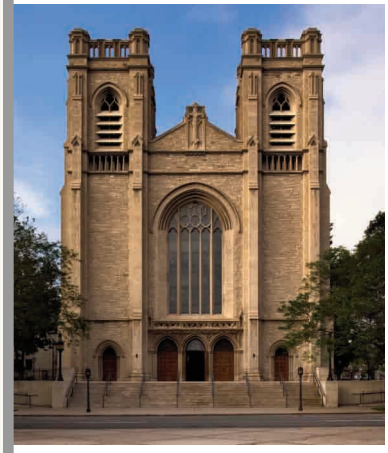
CATHEDRAL CANON

The Dean of Saint John's Cathedral, Denver, Colorado, intends to appoint a second Cathedral Canon to the staff as soon as possible. The new Canon will join a clergy staff of five and other senior lay staff colleagues in the ministry of a large urban cathedral that draws its congregation from a wide geographical area. This position is suitable for an energetic priest with 3-5 years experience who shows promise of significant leadership.



This Canon will share fully with the Dean, two other clergy Canons, and a curate in the full liturgical ministry of the Cathedral; youth, young adult and adult formation; community life, pastoral care, outreach, and administration; and will exercise creative oversight over areas of our ministry that are assigned from time to time. A deep and articulate faith, a commitment to the daily community of prayer at the Cathedral, imagination, and an ability to take initiative while working collaboratively with staff and congregational leadership are essential.
Saint John's Cathedral strives to be a lively, progressive congregation in the Anglican Catholic tradition, and lives fully the riches of our liturgical, spiritual, and theological heritage in witness and service to our wider community. We are called to be the heart of the city in the heart of the city, as those who know Christ and making Christ known.

If you believe that you might be suited to this position, you are invited to send a cover letter, resume, and OTM profile to the **Dean, the Very Reverend Peter Eaton, Saint John's Cathedral, 1350 Washington Street, Denver, CO 80203**, or via email to **michelle@sjcathedral.org**.

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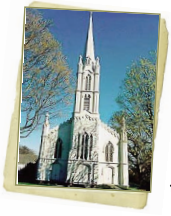

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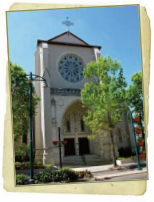

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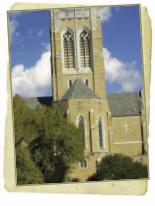

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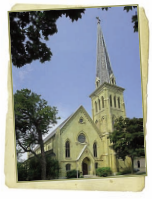

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