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ON THE COVER

“Participants spend a portion of the two hours strolling among the trees, either on their own or with a guide. They pay close attention to what they see, hear, and smell” (see “Church of the Woods [Truly],” p. 8).

Princess pines and autumn leaves
Church of the Woods photo

THE LIVING CHURCH

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LIVING CHURCH Partners

We are grateful to the Parish of St. Paul the Apostle, Savannah [p. 24], All Souls Anglican Foundation [p. 25], and the dioceses of Minnesota and Rochester [p. 27], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

GTS 8 Want an Arbiter

Faculty fears of returning to a “toxic work environment” at General Theological Seminary have stalled negotiations aimed at reinstating eight professors mired in a month-long labor dispute.

Professors are insisting that before they return to classrooms, a neutral person must be in place to buffer their communications with GTS Dean and President Kurt Dunkle, whom they accuse of crude language about “women, non-white cultures, and the LGBT community.” After an investigation, the seminary’s board of trustees reaffirmed its support of Dean Dunkle and rebuffed faculty calls for him to be fired.

“If they’re going to retain him, the least they could do is provide us a neutral party to deal with him,” said the Rev. Amy Bentley Lamborn, who speaks for the group, in an interview with TLC October 27. “We’re holding out for the neutral intermediary. And we’ve got other issues with other parts of the proposed agreement.”

The other affected GTS faculty members are Joshua Davis, the Rev. Mitties McDonald DeChamplain, Deirdre Good, David Hurd, Andrew Irving, the Rev. Andrew Kadel, and the Rev. Patrick Malloy.

On October 27 the board reportedly shot down the professors’ demand for an intermediary. According to a faculty press release, the board came back instead with an alternative that the faculty finds unacceptable: a four-person panel of trustees, led by the Rev. Ellen Tillotson, whom the faculty regard as highly critical of their cause.

“The complaints we made about [Dunkle] remain, and continue to create a toxic work environment,” the October 27 statement said. “A four-person committee chaired by an out-

spoken critic is not going to rectify that problem.”

Tensions reached a boiling point in September when faculty launched a work stoppage to draw attention to their concerns about Dunkle. The board interpreted their actions as indications that they had resigned and voted to accept their resignations. The eight professors, who represent 80 percent of the faculty, quickly said they had not resigned and intended to stay in their roles.

Negotiations for reinstatement began October 24. The board offered terms that would put all eight faculty members to work provisionally through the end of the current academic year. On the table is the expectation that they would join in common meals and common worship while working to resolve all outstanding issues with the board.

The current impasse comes as faculty share new details about the roots of the current imbroglio.

Lamborn, who teaches pastoral theology, told TLC that Dunkle routinely uses sexual metaphors such as “get in bed together” or “pulling the sheets down” for institutional relationships. She said he urges people to “rub up against each other” to develop better working relationships.

In a recent contract negotiation, Lamborn said, she asked for an example of what it would mean to be “fired for cause.”

“He said, ‘What if you and [your husband] decided you wanted to have a lover, take your lover into your marriage, and have your lover live in your apartment with you? That’s a reason I would fire you for cause,’” she said. “What’s inappropriate is to give an example that is so personal and so sexual, when what you constantly hear from this man is



The chapel entrance at GTS Wikimedia Commons photo

very sexualized comments.”

Lamborn said that when she objected to Dunkle’s comments he replied that she was being too sensitive and suggested she was apparently no longer happy working at GTS.

Dunkle did not respond immediately to requests for comment on Lamborn’s allegations. He has previously referred press inquiries to Chad Rancourt, the seminary’s communications director, who also did not respond. Dunkle wrote a general response to allegations on October 3.

“There are three categories of things the eight faculty allege: (1) things that I said and I stand behind them; (2) things which are so contorted, misquoted, or detached from context that they are repeated in a ‘false light’; and (3) things which are just not true,” Dunkle wrote.

In its October 24 announcement, the board indicated that it was offering to reinstate faculty “in a spirit of reconciliation and healing for the entire Seminary community” and that an outside mediator would help with reconciliation.

Faculty members have said they welcome the board’s proposal to use a Mennonite group to help with reconciliation, but they also want a neutral intermediary in place so they will

not have to deal with Dunkle directly.

Lamborn said professors are being asked to comply with seminary by-laws that violate Association of Theological Schools standards. She said professors are also keeping open the option of suing to keep their jobs with no changes to contractual terms.

Even if an agreement can be reached, she said, it would be “challenging” for her to teach in a setting led by Dunkle.

“I have found it difficult to teach pastoral theology since Kurt has arrived, to some extent, because he likes happiness,” Lamborn said. “He doesn’t like or show a lot of regard for struggle or for a kind of Good Friday experience of naming what’s wrong. He wants to skip right over Good Friday to Easter. And in pastoral care and counseling, you deal with a lot of people who aren’t there.”

As of October 27, lawyers were handling all communication between the two sides.

G. Jeffrey MacDonald



Peay

Nashotah House Calls New Dean

Nashotah House Theological Seminary’s board of trustees has elected the Rev. Steven Peay, dean for academic affairs, as the school’s 20th dean and president. The seminary had set October 20 as the deadline for applications.

During the trustees’ meeting on October 23 a search committee reported its unanimous recommendation of Fr. Peay. The trustees then approved his election.

Peay’s undergraduate study of

Church history led him toward monastic life at St. Vincent Archabbey at Latrobe, Pennsylvania, in 1977. After his first profession of vows he studied for the priesthood. He was ordained deacon in 1981 and priest in 1982.

Peay came to Nashotah House as adjunct professor of Church history in 2008 and was elected to the faculty in 2010. His orders were received in August 2010, and he is a priest of the Diocese of Albany.

Peay and his wife, Julie, have been married since 1996, and they are the parents of Jeremy and Matthew.

Suffragan Elected Coadjutor

The Diocese of West Texas elected the Rt. Rev. David Mitchell Reed as its bishop coadjutor on October 25. Reed, 57, has served as bishop suffragan since 2006. He is the first suffragan bishop in the diocese’s history

(Continued on next page)



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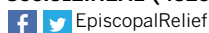
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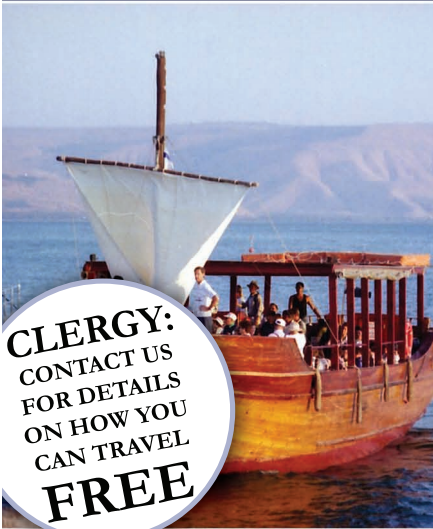
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Reed

West Texas Suffragan Elected Coadjutor

(Continued from previous page)

to be elected as a coadjutor.

Reed will continue to serve alongside the Rt. Rev. Gary Lillibridge, Bishop of West Texas since 2004. When Lillibridge retires in 2017, Reed will become tenth bishop of the diocese.

Reed was ordained in 1983 when he graduated from the Seminary of the Southwest. He served as assistant rector of St. Alban's, Harlingen, 1983-87; rector of St. Francis, Victoria, 1987-94; and rector of St. Alban's, Harlingen, 1994-2006.

There were five other nominees on the slate:

- The Rev. Scott Brown, rector, St. Alban's, Harlingen
- The Rev. Ram Lopez, rector, St. George, San Antonio
- The Rev. Jim Nelson, rector, St. John's, McAllen
- The Rev. David Read, rector, St. Luke's, San Antonio
- The Rev. Robert Woody, rector, Church of Reconciliation, San Antonio

Ballot	1	
C = Clergy; L = Laity	C	L
Needed to Elect	63	157
Brown	25	38
Lopez	6	13
Nelson	3	7
Read	5	22
Reed	66	207
Woody	19	25

S.E. Florida Nominates 5

The Diocese of Southeast Florida has announced five nominees in its search for a bishop coadjutor. The Rt. Rev. Leopold Frade, third Bishop of Southeast Florida, will retire in January 2016. The election is scheduled for January 20.

The nominees are:

- The Rev. Michael J. Battle, interim dean of students and community life, Episcopal Divinity School
- The Very Rev. DeDe Duncan-Probe, rector, St. Peter's in the Woods Church, Fairfax Station, Virginia
- The Very Rev. Peter Eaton, dean, St. John's Cathedral, Denver
- The Rev. John C.N. Hall, rector, St. Boniface Church, Sarasota, Florida
- The Rev. Allen F. Robinson, rector, St. James Church, Baltimore

Deacons' Fund Grows

The Fund for the Diaconate in the Episcopal Church re-elected several officers during its annual meeting October 7 at the offices of the Church Pension Group in Manhattan:

- The Rev. Edwin F. "Ted" Hallenbeck of the Diocese of Rhode Island, president
- The Rev. W. Keith McCoy of the Diocese of New Jersey, vice president
- The Rev. Ellen Ross of the Diocese of Nebraska, secretary
- Allerton Marshall of the Episcopal Church in South Carolina, treasurer
- The Rev. Robert Franken of the Diocese of Missouri, assistant treasurer

This year marked the first time the fund met outside of New York, and for more than a day, when it held a two-day planning retreat in Hilton Head, South Carolina, in May.



Berkeley Divinity School photo
Dean McGowan with his wife, Felicity

Berkeley Greets Dean McGowan

A service of Evensong in Marquand Chapel marked the Very Rev. Andrew McGowan's formal installation October 21 as 14th dean and president of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale.

The newly installed Dean McGowan preached a sermon reflecting on Berkeley's motto, *In illa quae ultra sunt* ("Into the regions beyond"), and on the School's namesake, George Berkeley, an 18th-century bishop, philosopher, educator, and missionary. Dean McGowan traced points of contact between the life and witness of Bishop Berkeley and Berkeley Divinity School, and highlighted three key areas in which he felt the school was being called to continue moving "into the regions beyond."

Dean McGowan is from Australia, and prior to being called to Berkeley was the warden of Trinity College at the University of Melbourne. His wife, Felicity, is an art historian, and has been appointed to the faculty of Yale Divinity School in partnership with the Institute of Sacred Music.

The Rev. Blake Sawicky

More news on page 24

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Church of the Woods (Truly)

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

At the end of a bumpy drive in the least religious corner of America, a new church without a building has begun offering the Eucharist among the hardwoods and the chipmunks of rural New Hampshire. The dream is as big as the forest: to evangelize the many locals who love the outdoors and seek spirituality in nature, not church.

But those who visit Church of the Woods will not hear calls to repentance or conversion — at least not as they are traditionally understood. They will instead be led, ever so gently, to experience how faith enriches the lives of environmentalists by imbuing them with much-needed hope.

It's the ministry of an Episcopal priest who's also a zealous convert. The Rev. Stephen Blackmer, 58, used to tell friends his church was not a faith community but was in the woods, on a river or atop a mountain. Now he aims to reach kindred spirits. His backers say he's not trying to convert anyone — just aiming to enrich their experience for the good of an ecologically imperiled world.

“So much of what I see faith communities doing about environmental issues is taking political action,” said Blackmer, chaplain to Church of the Woods, which meets on his land: 106 acres of forest and wetlands in Canterbury, New Hampshire.

“That's essential, but it doesn't begin to be enough.”

What's lacking in political action, he said, is litur-



Chelsea Scudder-Steinauer plays a meditation on cello.

Photos courtesy of Church of the Woods

gical experience, personal transformation, and guided refocusing on what exactly is sacred about caring for the planet. It's time, in his view, for environmentalists to get religion.

If Church of the Woods succeeds, it will spread the Christian faith among the eco-conscious in New Hampshire, which the Gallup Poll identifies as the second-least-religious of all U.S. states, behind neighboring Vermont. It will also help reinvigorate the Diocese of New Hampshire, in which average Sunday attendance fell by 20 percent from 2000 to 2010 and two thirds of the parishes cannot afford to pay even one full-time priest.

Yet the project's significance could also ripple more widely as an experiment — not only in outreach but also in what it means to share the gospel.

“Nationwide, Episcopalians are rethinking evangelism,” said Day Smith Pritchardt, executive director of the Evangelical Education Society of the Episcopal Church, which awarded Blackmer two grants during seminary to develop the ideas that gave rise to Church of the Woods.

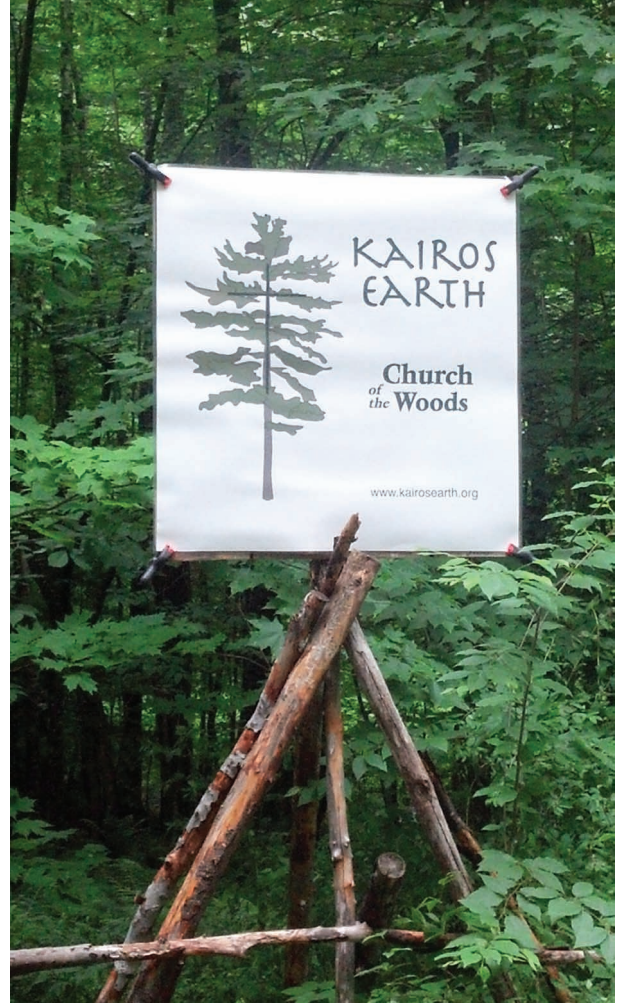
Evangelism is no longer about fixing a spiritual deficiency, she said. It is instead about adding to what's already good inside a person, who comes to embrace a new dimension of life.

“It used to be this proclamation of deficiency,” Pritchardt said, but those who are led to faith now hear a different message. “Now it's recognizing oneself as a child of God with a mission to bring the coming of God's kingdom to earth.”

Church of the Woods draws people twice a month on Sunday afternoons to a cleared field where Blackmer has a cabin construction project in the works. Participants spend a portion of the two hours strolling among the trees, either on their own or with a guide. They pay close attention to what they see, hear, and smell.

When they gather for a Eucharist, Blackmer does not preach. He instead directs a group conversation that draws on Scripture readings and probes what

(Continued on next page)



A sign marks the entry to the place of worship in the woods.



Blackmer: Focusing on what is sacred about caring for the planet.





The congregation on a recent Sunday included more than a dozen visitors from the Diocese of Vermont.

(Continued from previous page)

they experienced on their meditative walks. Pilgrims are invited to the table but assured that receiving the sacrament is optional.

The structure is as experimental as the ministry itself. The church is a project of Blackmer's nonprofit organization, Kairos Earth, which leases the land from him and invites other religious groups to use it. This arrangement means the Diocese of New Hampshire bears no financial obligations if Church of the Woods fizzles out.

The diocese has nonetheless provided a \$30,000 grant for 2014. That funding helps pay Blackmer's salary while he launches the church, pursues additional funding streams, and builds a cabin for worship services through the winter. It's an investment in a quintessentially New Hampshire form of the "emerging church," according to the Rt. Rev. Robert Hirschfeld, Bishop of New Hampshire.

"The images we have of the emerging church are people meeting in garages, warehouses, coffeehouses, and bars," Bishop Hirschfeld said. "This is just the same thing, except out in the woods, where people seem to like to be."

For Blackmer, Church of the Woods is the latest

manifestation of a most unusual calling that took root in his early 50s. He had never been a churchgoer, nor had he come from a family of churchgoers. He was an agnostic, spiritual-but-not-religious man who spent his career doing conservation work as a forest ecologist, lobbyist, and public advocate.

His work led him to worry about daunting problems, such as climate change and extinction, which eliminates dozens of species every day, according to the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School. To make sense of it all, he found he needed more than mountaintop experiences alone could offer.

"As an environmental activist for many years, I was coming to grips with fear, grief, loss, anxiety, and asking, *Where does one find hope in a world where so much is going wrong?* Faith became for me a way of expressing hope in the midst of despair," he said.

Blackmer now feels kinship with the Apostle Paul, a zealous Jew who encountered the risen Christ on the Damascus Road and returned to synagogues to share the gospel with his people. He believes faith has much to offer to the lives of secular environmentalists, who sometimes despair amid huge challenges.

“The Christian faith, as expressed in our Episcopal tradition, can add to their experiences of nature and open them up to fuller, richer, perhaps challenging understandings,” he said. “I hope it will provide a way for people in the environmental movement to reconnect with religious language and religious experience as parts of conserving the earth.”

For all the challenges inherent in trying to reach the unchurched in New Hampshire, Church of the Woods has some natural advantages. For instance, it’s targeting a group that already shares values and common experiences, from exhilarating hikes to public-policy laments. These are ripe for interpretation through a theological lens, observers say, and the new perspective might help feed unmet yearnings in their community.

“There is something deficient, and we know exactly what that is,” Bishop Hirschfeld said. “There’s a tremendous amount of grieving, guilt, understanding of humanity’s fallenness and need for forgiveness, with amendment of life, when it comes to our relationship to God’s creation. The Church of the Woods is a real, immediate opportunity and venue for dealing with these very immediate theological issues.”

Early interest is coming, in part, from environmentalists who do not feel at home in church. Chelsea Scudder, 27, grew up in a secular household in Norman, Oklahoma, with a Jewish mother and environmentalist father. She never felt spiritually moved in traditional religious settings, she told TLC by email. Yet she signed on as communications assistant for Church of the Woods because she hopes it can build a movement to recast how human beings value the earth.

“I’ve had so many experiences in nature where I’ve felt peace and serenity, have felt that moving of my spirit, have felt at home,” Scudder said. “Until recently, I just never thought that I could call that ‘religion’ or that it ‘counted’ as prayer. ... It was so wonderful to encounter Church of the Woods as a place that provided a framework and a language for connecting with nature in that way.”

In reimaging evangelism, Church of the Woods



Peter Hope (left), Stephen Tracy, a Mohawk Indian from St. Stephen’s Church, Colebrook, N.H., who spoke at a service in October, and the Rev. John McCausland.

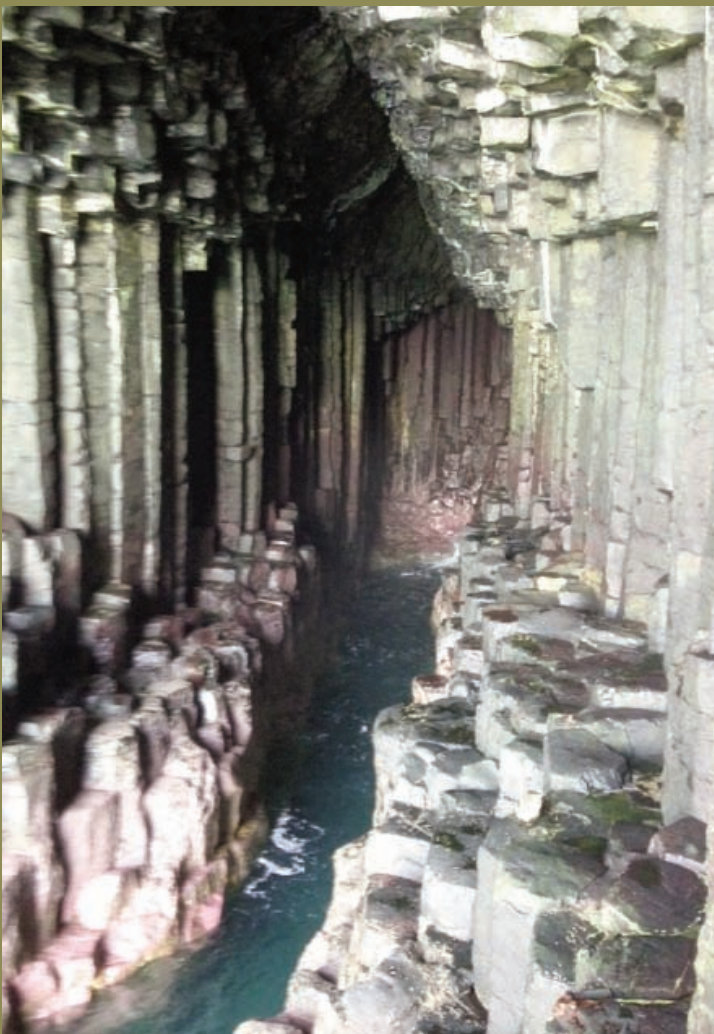
walks a fine line. On one level, it’s embracing traditional Christian concepts of creation, sin, and redemption through Christ as bases for Christian hope. Yet there’s also some intentional distancing from the tradition as meanings of key concepts are revamped. Among the questions is whether coming to faith stills hold the same transformative power, even when one’s values and lifestyle are affirmed and left intact.

Backers say the power of new faith is still at hand. Church of the Woods reflects what’s happening in the emerging church, where some traditional understandings and emphases have given way to new ones, Pritchardt said.

“Repent means to turn around, but more and more, it’s understood as embracing a new way of life as a child of God,” she said.

Gone from this formulation is the need for renouncing past beliefs, behaviors, or dispositions of the heart. At Church of the Woods, she expects talk of salvation without conversion — even when the conversation is led by a priest who’s a convert himself.

“I don’t think it’s conversion; I would stay away from that and focus on evangelism,” Pritchardt said. “I would call it embracing the gospel, being saved from not knowing God, being saved from not knowing that God is behind everything in the universe.”



Fingal's Cave on Staffa



Oban



Staffa



Gathering on Columba's Bay with pilgrims



The Abbey



The Great High Cross

Iona

One of the World's Thin Places

By Marek Zabriskie

After graduating from high school 35 years ago, I arranged to train with a semi-pro soccer team in Aberdeen, Scotland. I would have starved had I tried to make a living as a soccer player. My mother wisely insisted that I travel before playing soccer; so I made my way to the northwest coast of Scotland and arrived one evening in Oban, where I witnessed a sunset that changed my life.

Oban is pitched on a hillside with a scenic harbor overlooking the Isle of Mull. After enjoying a picturesque train ride from Glasgow, passing lochs and rugged hillsides with cascading waterfalls and fields full of sheep and Shetland cattle, I arrived in Oban.

I stopped at an information center and found the name of a B&B located high atop the hill. I climbed 144 steps of what the locals refer to as Jacob's ladder — a stairway leading up the hillside — laden with my backpack. I found my room, and then descended to the town in search of food. I climbed the 144 steps once again and sat on the granite window sill in my room eating a dinner of cheese, bread, and milk, while listening to classical music as the sun set over Mull.

As I did so, I had the most profound religious awakening of my life. Oban is famous for its sunsets. The quality of light is breathtaking. My parents were undergoing a horrific divorce, and for a brief moment a veil lifted and I could see something good coming forth from it, and from all sorts of painful situations in our community and in the world. Years later, I linked this mysti-

cal moment to Julian of Norwich's famous words, "All shall be well, and all shall be well."

I later learned that beyond Isle of Mull, where I saw the sun setting, lay Iona, where Christianity first came to Scotland. At the time, I was not attending church and religion had no place in my life, but my experience was a spiritual awakening. It set me on a journey that eventually led to the priesthood. For over 25 years, I have wanted to return to Oban and visit Iona, one of Christianity's great holy sites where pilgrims flock from around the world to pray and experience what the Celts call "a thin place," where heaven and earth seem to touch. George Macleod, founder of the Iona Community, wrote that Iona is "a thin place where only tissue paper separates the material from the spiritual."

My chance finally came. I was traveling to London and Oxford on church business and had six days for a side trip to Iona. Getting there is not easy. It involves trains, ferries, and buses, each of which must be carefully timed, and bad weather can disrupt things.

Iona is a tiny island located in the Inner Hebrides, 1.5 miles wide by 3 miles long, with a population of fewer than 150 permanent residents. It welcomes 130,000 visitors each year, but is remarkably quiet. A sense of peace and freedom pervades. Pilgrims and visitors can walk for hours and see only a few others.

Iona's enduring fame comes from its connection with an

Irish monk named St. Columba, a major figure of the early Church. Columba was born of royal blood in County Donegal in Ireland in 521. Columba (in Latin) or *Colum Cille* (in Gaelic) means "dove." His grandfather was the Irish High King, and Columba stood in line to succeed him. No one knows for certain why Columba left Ireland, but most believe it was an act of self-imposed penance for blood that he shed in Ireland.

Columba's harsh temper got the best of him. Born to a warrior clan, he rallied his tribesmen to fight against Finnian's monks and clan. Legend has it that Columba's clan killed 10,000 opponents without losing a single member of its own tribe. Either from remorse for the deaths that he had caused or because of displeasing the High King, Columba left Ireland in exile. As the story goes, he was banished until he had converted as many people to the Christian faith as he and his clan had killed in battle.

Setting out in a coracle, a round boat made of animal skins strapped to a wooden frame, Columba finally landed on the shores of Iona and

(Continued on next page)



Tuesday Pilgrimage around Iona



Returning from the Aisle of Staffa



Seal pup on Iona



The nunnery



Fingal's Cave in Staffa

Iona

One of the World's 'Thin' Places

(Continued from previous page)

climbed a hillside. Reportedly it was the first place he had landed where he could no longer see Ireland. He chose to stay. Perhaps it was not a clear day, for on some days it is possible to spot Ireland from there.

A healthy community existed at Iona, but the island's greatest years were ahead. Columba founded a monastery that would endure for 1,000 years. At its height, Iona had about 600 monks and many workers, who supported the building and maintenance of the abbey. All told, the island's population was probably close to 1,000.

The monks grew crops, kept livestock, and tended gardens. They cooked, cleaned, built boats and buildings, caught fish, and grew corn. In the abbey workshops, craftsmen shaped wood, metal, glass, leather, and stone, while manuscript makers prepared their parchment with ink and dyes.

Much of what we know about Columba comes from a biography written by Adomnán, who led the monastery almost 100 years after Columba's death. Like Columba, Adomnán was known for his holiness and miracles and later became a saint.

In 795, Vikings launched their first of many raids upon Iona, killing monks, stealing treasures from the abbey, and pillaging everything they could. The Book of Kells, now housed at Trinity College in Dublin, was produced on Iona. It was later moved with many other treasures from the abbey to Kells, for protection from Viking raids.

Scotland, like England, had a reformation and most of the abbeys and monasteries were sacked and destroyed. Windows were smashed. Stones were removed to build homes for local residents. Gold and silver were plundered and taken by the king.

In 1938, George Macleod, a charismatic Scottish clergyman from a famous family of preachers, founded the Iona Community and resurrected the abbey. He had been ministering in the midst of poverty in Glasgow and discovered how little the church spoke to the lives of working people. He restored the abbey to be a center of worship and communal life and created a training center for young clergy, who were to study and be formed spiritually on Iona before embarking on urban ministry with the poor.

Today, the Iona Community is an international ecumenical movement of men and women, working for peace and justice, the rebuilding of community, and the renewal of worship. It consists of 300 members who live around the world and follow a rule of life that involves daily prayer, reading Scripture, practicing social justice, and meeting regularly with family groups of other community members.

The abbey only accepts guests who can arrive on a Saturday and stay until Friday. I stayed at the charming St. Columba Hotel, located just a short walk from the abbey. I had a small room with a sea view, and the food was excellent. Breads, scones, cakes, pies, and meals are made using excellent local

and organic ingredients. The menus change seasonally to reflect the produce. The fish comes from Neil, St. Columba's own fisherman. The organic garden supplies ample greens, beans, herbs, salads, flowers, and fruit.

The abbey has a museum, which boasts of having the finest collection of sacred sculpture and ancient high crosses anywhere in Scotland. It is well worth seeing. Each morning I took a short walk to the Bishop's House, a Scottish Episcopal Church retreat center, where I attended the Eucharist at 8 a.m., before walking to the abbey to worship at 9 a.m. and again at 9 p.m. in a candlelight service.

Each Tuesday, the abbey offers a six-hour pilgrimage around the island. Joanna Anderson, warden for the Iona Community, met us at the St. Martin's cross — the oldest High Cross in Britain still standing in its original location. It has stood on this spot since 1200. We paused at a crossroads and one of the Iona leaders read from Jeremiah: "Thus says the Lord: Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls" (6:16).

After explaining the history of the cross, Joanna offered a prayer for our day's journey and we headed off. Pausing on the pilgrimage, Joanna asked each Iona pilgrim: "How much silence is in your life?" She then invited us to experience three minutes of intentional silence. Near the end of the pilgrimage, Joanna stopped and offered a blessing to the pilgrims:

*Deep peace of the running waves to you.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace of the son of peace to you.*

We ended our pilgrimage in the cemetery chapel near the abbey known as Reilig Òdhrain, where 48 Scottish kings, eight Norwegian kings, and four Irish kings were said to be

buried, including Shakespeare's Macbeth and King Duncan.

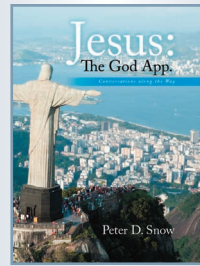
On Tuesday night, worship at the abbey is a healing service. Pilgrims and visitors are invited to step forward to where hand-stitched kneelers have been placed in a circle with candles around them. Members of the Iona Community place their hands on the heads of those who seek healing and they pray: "Spirit of the living God, present with us now, enter you, body, mind and spirit, and heal you of all that harms, in Jesus' name." It is short but beautiful, and I shall remember the hand of an anonymous pilgrim placed on my shoulder as a community member prayed for me.

On Wednesday morning I took a boat to Staffa, where summer visitors can spot puffins, fulmars, and more birds nesting from May to late July. Basking sharks and dolphins can sometimes be spotted, as well as otters at the South East and North End beaches, and plummeting gannets. The amazing rock formations here are 56 million years old, relatively new compared to the ancient rocks found on Iona.

On Wednesday night there was a service of commitment. We were invited to come forward for the laying on of hands as one of the leaders recited a biblical phrase, which was different for each of us. When my turn came, the leader read, "Love others as God has loved you."

On Thursday night was a sending service, in which we sat at a long table placed in the middle of the aisle between the prayer stalls, like a great family banquet. The Eucharist was celebrated, and we were commissioned to return home to carry the spirit of Iona and St. Columba and the lessons that we had learned during our retreat on the island. It was just the time away for silence and solitude that I needed during an incredibly busy year.

The Rev. Marek P. Zabriskie is rector of St. Thomas' Church, Whitemarsh, Pennsylvania.



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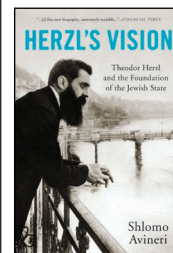


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CULTURES

‘Christ on a Bike’

By John Martin

Interviewed in 1979 when his father Robert Runcie was announced as the 101st Archbishop of Canterbury, James Runcie, then a 20-year-old Cambridge student, told a reporter he wasn't terribly certain about things of faith. In the years that followed, almost imperceptibly, that started to change. Towards the end of his time at Canterbury the elder Runcie hinted as much. "For our children growing up, music was compulsory, religion was optional." Now, he said, both his offspring seemed much "more interested" in the latter.

Religion and faith are at the fore in James Runcie's *Grantchester*, which premiered on ITV October 6. His fourth novel in the series is due for publication next May. The chief character is clergyman-

cum-sleuth Canon Sidney Chambers (James Norton), whom Runcie cheerfully admits is loosely based on his late father.

James Runcie builds in characters bearing associations with family and friends. Sidney is named after Sidney Smith, one of his father's favourite vicars. In the first of the series Chambers is intrigued by a piano-playing German woman who loves Bach (James Runcie's mother, Lindy, was a piano teacher). "I didn't intend them to be a fictionalised, alternative biography of my father — and I still hope they aren't — but one cannot easily escape a strong paternal influence."

The series opens with a funeral scene after which a woman insists that her secret lover did not commit suicide but was murdered. For the police there can be no other explanation, but

Chambers, a keen listener with an eye for detail, unpicks a clever murder plot. So begins an unlikely partnership in crime solving between Chambers and the abrasive, earthy Inspector Keating (Robson Green).

The cop once testily refers to the Cambridge-based Chambers as “Christ on a bike.” Parallels with the life of Archbishop Runcie add texture. Keating asks Chambers, “Were you a padre in the war?” “No, I fought in it.” Chambers suffers nightmare flashbacks, in which he aims his gun to kill an enemy soldier.

Robert Runcie as a 23-year-old tank commander heroically rescued a colleague from a crippled tank. The next day he drove the tank to a highly vulnerable position to knock out three anti-tank gun placements. For these acts he was awarded the Military Cross. He was one of the first Allied soldiers to enter the infamous Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. His was a generation that went to war in 1939-45 to confront a huge evil, and if that meant taking lives, so be it.

The first volume of the series, all self-contained stories, is set in 1953, the coronation year of Queen Elizabeth II. Britain is just beginning to emerge from post-war austerity. Runcie’s novels stretch across the next quarter-century and trace the massive social change that ensued. In 1953 DNA had just been discovered. The Pill would soon transform attitudes about sex. Britain would become more affluent but more self-absorbed as a former colonial power struggling to discover a role for itself in a fast-changing world.

It made sense for Runcie to make his lead character a clergyman. Sidney Chambers, in common with Robert Runcie, was (in his son’s words) someone “sharing his love of humanity, his ability to think the best of people while sometimes fearing the worst, his cheerfulness and his love of the ridiculous, as well as his sadness and disappointment in the face of human failing.”

Archbishop Runcie is best remembered for his advocacy of a thoughtful faith, which he laced with a sharp wit and sense of fun. He once said the Church of England was “a bit like a public swimming pool: most of the noise comes from the shallow end.” He said a somewhat strident member of the Church of England General Synod was “the only bull I know who carries his own china

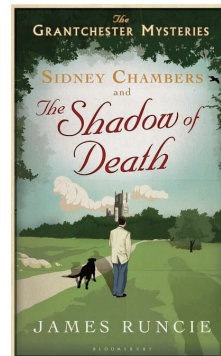
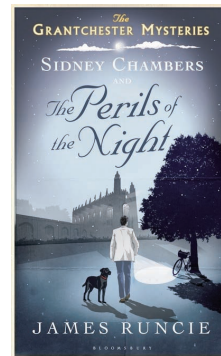
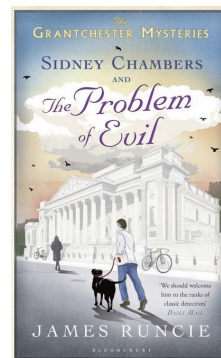
shop with him.” Among the many earthy bits of advice offered to students during his days as principal of Ripon College Cuddesdon: “Sleep with your eyes open, yawn with your mouth closed.” For him the best of Anglicanism was perhaps best summed up in the paradox of “passionate coolness.”

James Runcie told the *Telegraph*: “My editor once said to me: ‘These are disguised sermons, aren’t they?’ I am not ashamed of that and I am hopeful that the television series, as well as being dramatic, consists of thoughtful and moral meditations on subjects such as loyalty, friendship, deceit, cruelty, and generosity. There are all the usual human fallibilities and they are taken seriously; but they are also viewed, wherever possible, with a kindly eye. (Hate the sin, but love the sinner.)”

What would his father think of it all? “I can almost see him, aged 93, in a wheelchair perhaps, with a rug over his lap, watching the filming of that war scene. I think he would have been bemused — and amused. I can imagine him laughing about it afterwards and saying that it wasn’t like that at all. I don’t think for a minute that he would ever say that he was proud of me, but I hope he would at least be secretly intrigued.”

Canon Sidney Chambers is a world away from the shallow, jokey, caricatures of a Dick Emery, Derek Nimmo, or Arthur Lowe. Adam Smallbone in *Rev* is nearer to contemporary reality. As with the Channel 4 series *Call the Midwife*, which is due to return to television screens at Christmas, *Grantchester* suggests that British television seems to have found a way to portray an unvarnished version of real faith: a character living out the Christian life amid all the complexities and temptations that go with it.

John Martin is a TLC correspondent based in London.



Engage the Liturgy

Review by Mark Michael

“Full and active participation” has been the watchword of the Liturgical Movement for more than a century, and is firmly enshrined in the Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The Living Liturgy series from Liturgical Press locates itself within this tradition, and offers a variety of publications to help with planning and teaching about the Eucharist, the focal point of the “source and summit” of the Christian life.

The series includes a planning guide, manuals for cantors and eucharistic ministers, and a pew missal. The authors are two nuns, both noted liturgical scholars closely associated with Liturgical Press’s former journal, *Liturgical Ministry*, and a parish priest. The project is rooted in deep and careful scholarship, but the resources are accessible, and most of them could be useful for Episcopal parish priests and musicians, as well as others who help lead the sacred liturgy.

The planning guide offers three pages of resources for each Sunday and solemnity of the liturgical year. The resources include brief commentaries on Scripture passages, suggestions for homily preparation and music selection, reflective questions for those with different liturgical roles, model penitential acts and intercessions, and catechetical insights relating Sunday’s themes to the liturgy’s history and theology.

The specifically liturgical material is strongest, especially the liturgical catechesis section, which manages to cover a wide spectrum across the year, linking each lesson closely to a theme in the Sunday reading. The Psalm commentaries are very good for similar reasons, and reveal the insights of a writer accustomed to deep meditation. Many of the reflective questions are

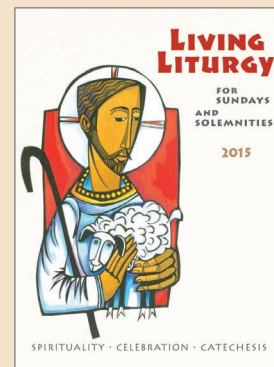
insightful, and would be helpful for a study group. The text is attractive, with some appealing clip art available in the eBook.

There will be some limitations for Episcopalians using the series. The Roman Mass Lectionary is very similar to the Revised Common Lectionary, but does differ in places, especially by shortening pericopes. Only about half of the hymns and songs suggested for most weeks appear in Episcopal hymnals and the model penitential acts and very short intercessions will not be useful for those who closely follow the Book of Common Prayer.

The reflection questions radiate a bit of the utopianism about parish life that seems to permeate the work of so many liturgical scholars. The planning guide is intended for use by all liturgical ministers, not just celebrant and musicians, and contains carefully graded questions related to each ministry. Ushers who reflect carefully each week on how their ministry relates to the Sunday Gospel are surely a blessing fondly to be hoped for by parish clergy but, as a species, rather thin on the ground.

The manual for eucharistic ministers manual would be a very useful resource for congregations that send ministers out to lead services at care facilities and to make visitations in hospitals and private homes. This smaller book contains a brief devotional homily, usually based on the Gospel text, and a few questions that would enable brief and accessible dialogue. Because of a directive from the Vatican’s liturgical authorities, this text could not contain the church’s forms for administering the sacrament. Though surely an annoyance to many lay eucharistic visitors, this feature makes wider ecumenical use of the text simpler.

The pew missal, because it prints the Roman Mass texts and uses the



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By **Joyce Ann Zimmerman**, CPPS,

Kathleen Harmon, SNDdeN, and **John W. Tonkin**

Liturgical Press. Pp. 328. \$16.95 (paper), \$14.99 (eBook)

Living Liturgy for Cantors

Pp. 206. \$9.95 (paper), \$7.99 (eBook)

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Pp. 436. \$9.95 (paper), \$7.99 (eBook)

Living Liturgy for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Year B (2015)

Pp. 128. \$9.95 (paper), \$7.99 (eBook)

unfortunate New American Bible translation, will not be useful for Anglican parishes. There is much to be said for pew missals as a concept, since they are simpler to use than a prayer book and require less work than a full-text bulletin. The format is much more cost-effective and wastes less paper.

The Church of England’s Common Worship series encourages using seasonal pew missals, which may eventually become more widespread in Anglican churches. A parish seeking to develop this kind of resource would find a useful template in Living Liturgy. The cantor’s manual merely reduplicates material contained in the planning guide.

The Rev. Mark Michael is rector of Christ Church in Cooperstown, New York.

Liturgy for Beginners

Words for Worship

Prayers from the Heart of the Church of England

Compiled by members of the **Liturgical Commission** of the Church of England.

Church House. £7.99

Words for Worship is a wonderful resource that presents the texts of 55 prayers “especially cherished in the worship of the Church of England,”

and provides a simple commentary on each, usually a single paragraph.

The work intends to introduce these treasures to those for whom the liturgy is new and unfamiliar. It discusses the

biblical roots of each prayer, as well as the relevance of each prayer's theme to the practice of the Christian life. In discussing the *Nunc Dimittis*, for example, the author notes: “Used in worship, the words remind Christian people that while our life will inevitably draw to a close, we are assured of salvation through the coming of Jesus, and we can live and leave in peace” (p. 39).

Terms unusual to modern ears such as *Holy Ghost*, and *with thy Spirit*, and the traditional use of *prevent* are explained lucidly, and the section on penitential prayer deftly handles common objections to Christian teaching about sin, while demonstrating the complex ways in which the liturgical confessions describe it.

Selection is the great challenge of a book like this, and the authors manage this superbly. They include all the most beloved Anglican prayers (except, perhaps, the marriage vows and the burial anthems), including some brief responses like “The Lord be with you” and gospel acclamations that might not naturally elicit commentary.

The authors resist the temptation to belabor questions of liturgical lineage, maintaining a style and level of

(Continued on page 28)

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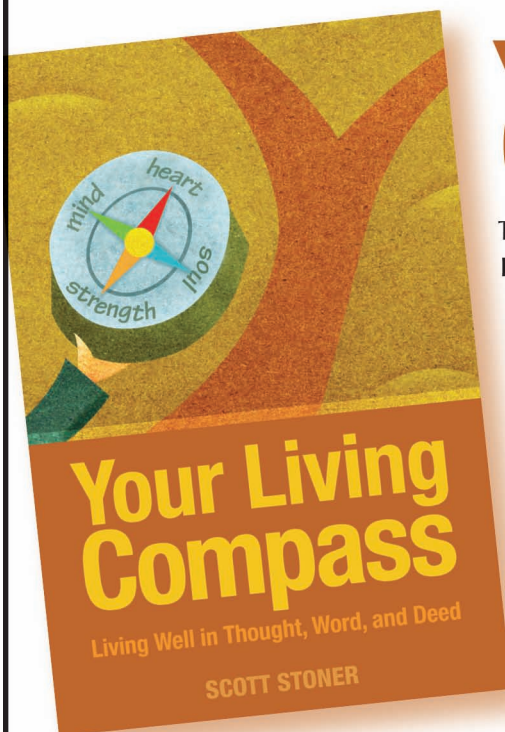
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From the Foreword, The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey Lee, Bishop of Chicago



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Impassive Pacifism

Review by Seth A. Raymond

In my introductory Christian ethics course in seminary, our professor was adamant that students not confuse *pacifism* with *passivism*. Confusing these two terms leads “realists” and “pragmatists” to deride pacifists for their idealism and naiveté when they call for peace in the face of evil. Confusing these terms too often means that a call to action becomes a call to arms, or that Christians stand idle while horrendous evils are perpetrated.

Dorothy Garrity Ranaghan calls out both pacifists and realists in *Blind Spot: War and Christian Identity*. She challenges readers to assess whether their faith formation has encouraged either passivism or a call to arms, both of which, she argues, are antithetical to the Christian life.

While developing a strong case for the Christian obligation to work for peace, Ranaghan claims early on to be neither “total pacifist” nor “total patriot.” She is unwilling to identify primarily with either of these categories because, as she makes clear in her crucial chapter “Christian Identity,” baptism into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ provides Christians with an even more basic identity, that of “Christ himself in this world.” We are to live as Christ, who spoke words of peace, including “turn the other cheek” and “put away your sword.” When Jesus speaks of bringing division, he means the division that will come as a result of this hard teaching. Ranaghan links violence in the 21st century to the difficulty Christians have in resisting the dichotomy between passivism and patriotism and instead choosing the third way of Jesus, the way of peace.

The strength of Ranaghan’s short piece comes in her ability to summarize the approaches of just war and Christian pacifism succinctly and with

sensitivity to a wide range of ecumenical scholarship, including contributions from her own charismatic Roman Catholic background. Ranaghan observes that the violent life and the non-violent life are equally impractical and risky. Arguing against those who justify violence on the grounds that pacifism is impractical and results in greater violence, Ranaghan points to the escalation of war in past centuries and the increasingly destructive means of war such as nuclear weapons and combat that kills civilians.

Advocates of Christian nonviolence often find their way to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German Lutheran pastor and theologian who took an integral role in the Confessing Church and actively resisted the Nazi regime. In *Bonhoeffer the Assassin?* we find a new attempt to convince readers that Bonhoeffer did not succumb to pragmatism or the way of violence as has been suggested in numerous biographies, but maintained a commitment to nonviolence even while resisting Hitler as an operative within the *Abwehr*.

Bonhoeffer the Assassin? addresses his continued commitment to nonviolence in two distinct sections: biography and examination of Bonhoeffer’s theological ethics from his first dissertation through the unfinished *Ethics*. As the authors show, Bonhoeffer had a clear sense that Christian pacifism would entail struggle. Bonhoeffer wrote in 1932 that “there can be a peace that is worse than struggle. Yet it must be a struggle out of love for another, a battle that comes from the Spirit, not from the flesh.” In examining Bonhoeffer’s letters and early biographies, Mark Thiessen Nation concludes that Bonhoeffer did not take any meaningful part in a plot on Hitler’s life, and he remains agnostic on Bonhoeffer’s involvement in counseling those who did.



Blind Spot

War and Christian Identity

By **Dorothy Garrity Ranaghan.**

New City Press. Pp. 112. \$11.95

Bonhoeffer the Assassin?

Challenging the Myth, Recovering his Call to Peacemaking

By **Mark Thiessen Nation,**

Anthony G. Siegrist, and Daniel P. Umbel.

Baker. Pp. 272. \$29.99

Beyond biographical details, the authors helpfully extend discussion of Bonhoeffer’s major works at a level that remains mostly accessible to the educated layperson. The authors do not shy away from issues such as the relationship between freedom and obedience and Bonhoeffer’s ethical thinking, which does not allow for simple moral absolutes but rather honors the complexity of discipleship in the face of violence.

While it remains an underdeveloped theme in the book, the authors identify the Church as the place where Christ is fully revealed. The Church remembers the paradoxical logic of the cross as the way to peace as well as the place where Christ’s revelation is most formative for “practical pacifists.” Through the cross we incline toward suffering neighbors and enemies.

Both of these books remind us of the eschatological framework of God’s shalom: that the impractical and risky commitment to Christian nonviolence is made possible by the vision of the Lamb, who comes as judge and as the one who makes all things new.

The Rev. Seth A. Raymond is assistant to the rector at Christ Church in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin.



A hospital in Kenema, Sierra Leone, where Ebola virus samples have been tested.

Leasmhar/Wikimedia Commons photo

CATHOLIC VOICES

Ebola Ravages Sierra Leone

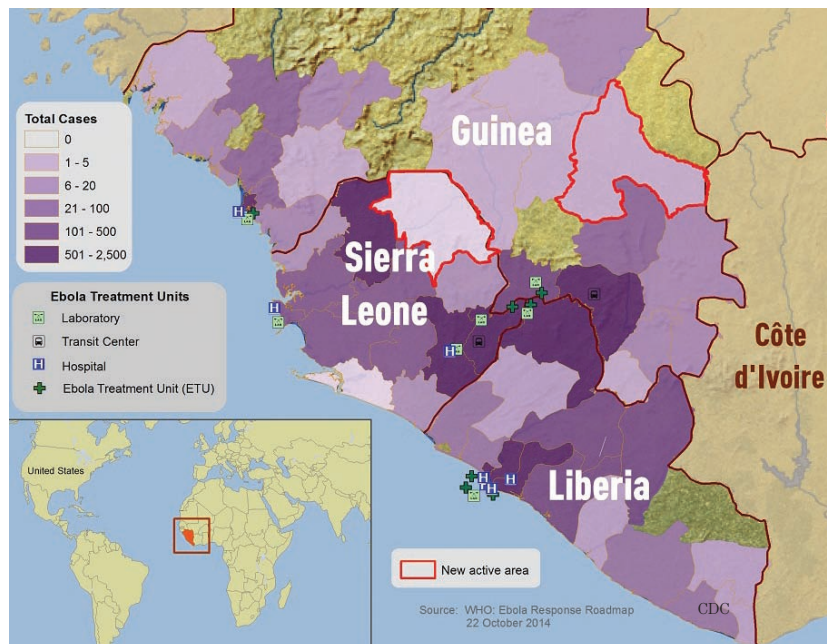
By Patrick Hayes

Today I learned that a friend, his wife, and his eldest boy died of Ebola. Peter Kanu was from Masiaka in Sierra Leone and he was the catechist for his Roman Catholic parish there. A man of great faith and happiness, he took care of people, often at his own expense. He died in poverty, but he was very rich. He once gave me a fine pineapple, which he grew in his garden, and I offered to share it with him. No, he said, it was just for me.

When I first arrived in Sierra Leone, where I was a visiting scholar in 2010, a priest took me to see the Roman Catholic Archbishop of the Diocese of Freetown. It was a courtesy call, but for me it was an interesting introduction to the country. Sitting in his air-conditioned office, we talked about the national elections. Then, the power cut out and we were left in the dark. You see, he said, this little inconvenience is a symptom of something greater and if our politicians are unable to stabilize the country, there will be chaos.

(Continued on next page)

Ebola Ravages Sierra Leone



(Continued from previous page)

Stability is precious and fleeting in Sierra Leone, where fear of Ebola is now rampant. The disease has had some insidious repercussions, but instability may be the worst. Every day shows the fragility of the government. There are measures of this.

For average Sierra Leoneans, the timing of the Ebola crisis could not be worse. It is the rainy season and, thanks to government-sanctioned quarantines, crop harvests are at a low. The price of food has skyrocketed and forced people to go into the bush for food and firewood. Quarantined areas such as Waterloo, about 20 miles east of Freetown, have seen severe food shortages, and the United Nations Food Program has had to step in to provide rice to thousands of residents there, many of whom were queuing up shoulder-to-shoulder in public areas — precisely the kind of gathering a quarantine is meant to prevent. Add to this the further dependence on the world community for survival and the demoralization of the people takes deeper root.

Economic forces are also jeopardizing national stability. Growth rates — in some sectors topping 15 percent in investments in the last few years — have been obliterated. London Mining, one of the key contracts secured by the Sierra Leonean government during this period, has announced it will be going into bankruptcy. The extractives industry is not what it used to be and stock for the London-based company tumbled dramatically in the last year as the price of iron ore declined. As a result, the company is renegeing on a covenant with the people of Sierra Leone for thousands of jobs at its mine in Marampa and a needed injection of tax revenue.

When young people are unemployed and desperate, mischief occurs. In the southeastern city of Bo, for instance, crime — too often violent crime — has been

rising. With police now occupied in responding to calls from infected households or keeping the curious away from dead bodies, they cannot monitor the city as before. Other irresponsible behavior has been reported in the Pujehun district on the southern border with Liberia. Contact tracers there have been called “ghosts” because they collect salaries without inspecting suspected households. Still other schemes have families paying off health workers and burial teams to issue death certificates that falsely identify the deceased as something other than an Ebola victim. The stigma is often too great for families to bear.

Agriculture is also taking a hit. *Forbes* has reported that 5,000 small farmers who would ordinarily sell their produce to Africa Felix, a juice manufacturer, have been stymied because of tolls levied at “health check points” along major roads. Jonathan Shafer, managing director of Africa Felix, has noted that the Ebola scare has prompted his chief operating officer and his chief technician to flee Sierra Leone. They had no plan to return.

Investors in these kinds of businesses have panicked — so much so that the World Bank’s predictions for 2015 put revenue losses in the billions of dollars. Its estimates for “low Ebola” to “high Ebola” range from \$1.6 billion to \$25.2 billion, depending upon the ability to stem the spread of the disease by early next year. According to Kaifala Marah, Sierra Leone’s finance minister, “every gain that we have made has been lost.”

Revising the engine of development is often at the mercy of the central entry points to Sierra Leone — Lungi Airport and the port in Freetown. Cancellation of flights to and from Sierra Leone by some countries has troubled the burgeoning tourism industry.

The country's pristine beaches are now empty. Moving in massive relief aid to Freetown and the nation's interior has necessarily crowded out commercial transports.

Education — primary, secondary, and tertiary — has ceased. A new school term that should have started weeks ago has been halted indefinitely. UNICEF reports that 108,000 students who should have sat for their secondary school exams have missed them. The Ministry of Education uses the radio to reach younger children with lessons that can be engaged at home, but often villages do not have access to a radio signal (or radios) or students' parents are illiterate and do not place a high value on learning. Just as it was during Sierra Leone's civil war, a lack of access to the classroom retards development — both in traditional math and reading skills and things like basic hygiene education. College students are frustrated, too. For those who have reached the culmination of their studies and who have been selected as scholarship winners to earn graduate degrees in

“Anglican Churches or Christian Churches the world over [could] express their solidarity by observing one Sunday as Ebola Sunday to pray and mobilize resources for the affected areas in the subregion or West Africa. Now Ebola is at war against humanity; the world must act now to stop Ebola.”

— The Most Rev. Daniel Yinkah Sarfo,
Primate of West Africa

places like China, South Korea, and Italy, not only is it difficult to obtain a visa but there is no money to help with plane fare.

Among the unseen burdens on Sierra Leoneans, Liberians, and Guineans is a strain on those working outside these countries who send funds to their homeland. Family members who have lost breadwinners have placed inordinate demands on expatriates to increase their contributions. Of course, those working in the diaspora have to pay for their own living expenses, too, and feel the pressure of loved ones back home who are pinched by rising inflation. Ebola thus

has both economic and psychological burdens associated with it. No matter how hard they work, many expatriates carry the guilt of not being able to help those left behind.

For their part, churches have performed admirably in the face of Ebola's ravages. The Anglican Diocese of Freetown recently supplied land to a children's hospital east of the capital city of Freetown for an isolation unit. Bishop Thomas Wilson had been holding the land in reserve, but the national need has been so great, the diocese believed it had a Christian duty to arrange transfer. It joins other Christian bodies, such as Caritas, World Hope International, and the Healey International Relief Foundation, in setting up health facilities and moving urgent medical supplies and foodstuffs to those areas of the country that lack capacity or are under quarantine.

Already there is talk of a shortage of beds and body bags in treatment centers across West Africa, and more than one reporter has latched on to the idea that

if you sit outside a center long enough, some infected person is bound to show up only to be turned away. News at eleven. The reports on the death toll will continue, and the agitation of the population from this tinderbox will also grow. Attacking Ebola at its source — by funding, by personnel, by equipment — will be a boon to stability. Otherwise, anarchy will ensue and a massive global pandemic will be the result.

West African nations that have vested interests in seeing an end to Ebola are also joining forces, but more needs to be done by nations in the developed world to bring about normalcy for the affected populations. The Most Rev. Daniel Yinkah

Sarfo, Primate of West Africa, issued a recent statement encouraging “Anglican Churches or Christian Churches the world over to express their solidarity by observing one Sunday as Ebola Sunday to pray and mobilize resources for the affected areas in the subregion or West Africa. Now Ebola is at war against humanity; the world must act now to stop Ebola.”

Patrick J. Hayes is archivist for the Baltimore Province of the Redemptorists and a former visiting scholar in religion at the University of Makeni, Sierra Leone.



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Bishop Tengtenga Interprets

The Anglican Communion has a communication problem that too often escalates cultural differences into conflict and perceived threats to the Church, according to a prominent African bishop who's building a platform in America to tackle it.

"Do we know where the other is coming from before we can simply dismiss them as being ignorant?" asked the Rt. Rev. James Tengtenga, chairman of the Anglican Consultative Council and former bishop of Southern Malawi. "Is it because their ways of reaching decisions, either moral or otherwise, come from a different base?"

Bishop Tengtenga is spending this year at the University of the South's School of Theology, where he's a distinguished visiting professor of global Anglicanism. He hopes the position will lead to a permanent post at Sewanee, where he would teach, convene dialogues on thorny global issues, and serve as a consultant for dioceses and congregations.

"Within our differences, we have committed ourselves through Christ to work together," Tengtenga said. "I see my task as facilitating interpretation on both sides."

Tengtenga knows the challenges of cross-cultural communication all too well. In 2013, he resigned his bishopric in Southern Malawi to accept a job offer as dean of the Tucker Foundation at Dartmouth College. But Dartmouth rescinded its offer after some faculty and students demanded it. They objected to earlier statements that Tengtenga said were taken out of context and did not represent his understanding of homosexuality.

With no diocesan episcopacy to return to, he taught last spring at Episcopal Divinity School, then came to Sewanee this fall. He's now helping American students see how assumptions and philosophical biases can lead to unnecessary misunderstandings and rifts.



Tengtenga

For example, what residents of developed Western nations regard as normal assertiveness often comes across as belligerence to Africans. Likewise, Westerners can seem condescending when they insist on the paramount importance of individual rights.

"People in the West tend to look at the individual as significant, so that the individual is the controlling factor in decision-making," Tengtenga said. "In the African context, the community is more important. ... It can override what individual choices and thought may be."

Tengtenga, 56, brings to Sewanee his status as an important figure in the worldwide Communion. He meets regularly with the Archbishop of Canterbury and other members of the ACC's standing committee, on which he has served for 12 years, including the last five as chairman. Every three years, he oversees a global meeting of 100 or so bishops, priests, and laypeople, who consider resolutions from around the world and commend proposals — including the Anglican Covenant — for Anglicans' consideration.

Like Tengtenga, Sewanee is hopeful his presence on campus will become permanent, according to the Rt. Rev. J. Neil Alexander, dean of the seminary. He sees the relationship bearing fruit already in classrooms and beyond.

"This has got an unquestionably

good future, and we expect it to be a regular part of our life from now on,” Bishop Alexander said. “His role in the Anglican Communion means he has contacts and entrée into places around the Communion. Relationships between those places, those institutions, and Sewanee may be enhanced by that.”

G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Bishop Shaw Dies at 69

The Rt. Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, a brother of the Society of St. John the Evangelist and Bishop of Massachusetts for 20 years, died October 17 after a lengthy struggle with brain cancer. He was 69.

Born in Battle Creek, Michigan, Shaw was a graduate of Alma College, General Theological Seminary, and Catholic University of America, and studied for a year at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon in 1970 and priest in 1971.

Shaw served for much of his vocation at the SSJE’s monastic community in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and was its superior from 1983 to 1992. He was Bishop of Massachusetts from 1994 until his retirement in September.

Bishop Robertson Dies at 70

The Rt. Rev. Creighton L. Robertson, ninth Bishop of South Dakota, died of heart failure on October 24. He was 70.

Born in Kansas City, he was a graduate of Black Hill State University, the University of South Dakota, and the University of the South’s School of Theology. He was ordained deacon in 1989 and priest in 1990, and served as priest-in-charge at Santee Episcopal Mission in Nebraska, 1990-94.

Bishop Robertson was a Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux, and the first Native American to be elected Bishop of South Dakota. While serving as bishop from 1994 to 2009, he emphasized forms of training and deployment that became known as Mutual Ministry.

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Interpretations of today's gospel generally take two directions. First is the *economic* interpretation — associated with what Max Weber called the Protestant ethic — in which this parable would justify accumulating material wealth as a sign of God's favor. That's good news for the rich, not such good news for the poor.

Second is the *moralizing* interpretation. Even though the Greek word for *talent* means a huge sum of money, and has nothing to do with the ability to paint or sing, innumerable sermons on this parable exhort us to use our talents in God's service. That is good advice but not really the parable's message.

We need to grasp how shocking and scandalous this parable would have been in Jesus' time. We are apt to admire the good business sense of the first two servants who invest their money and double their return. And we are apt to scorn the servant who buries his money in the ground just as we scorn people today who stuff their life savings away in mattresses. After all, money loses value with inflation and we must invest it wisely to stay even.

People in the ancient world thought differently. The rabbis taught that when someone entrusted you with a large sum of money, burying it in the ground for safekeeping was the most morally responsible thing you could do. The underlying premise was that the supply of this world's goods is finite and *already distributed*. If you were born rich, fine, but if not then the only way you could get rich was by making someone else poor. People who became wealthy through their business dealings were universally suspected of fraud, deceit, or theft. Financial success was not the badge of respectability that it is today: quite the opposite.

Jesus' original audience probably regarded the first two servants as shady and dishonest characters — just like

their master who reaps where he has not sown and gathers where he has not winnowed. And the great scandal of the parable is that these disreputable servants end up being rewarded, while the honest servant ends up being punished.

What does Jesus mean by telling such a transgressive story? Perhaps he is challenging us to imagine a different kind of world, governed by different economic laws, with a different kind of wealth, denominated in a different kind of currency. In a world of finitude and scarcity, hoarding treasure makes perfect sense in certain circumstances. But maybe the talents in the parable represent not commodities to be invested or hoarded but *spiritual gifts to be shared*.

Our Lord has entrusted into the care of his Church what is sometimes known as "the deposit of faith" — the gospel, sacraments, creeds, liturgy, prayers, and all gifts of grace. He intends us to share these spiritual treasures liberally. Our great temptation is to fear that unless we build a fence around them to protect them they will become corrupted by the world and we will lose them. By keeping them to ourselves, we end up effectively burying them in the ground. Paradoxically, only by giving them away do we keep them. And when we share them — freely, generously, and abundantly — we find that they keep on multiplying until our Master returns and bids us enter into his joy.

Look It Up

Compare the words of the master in the parable with the Old Testament prohibitions on charging interest (Exod. 22:25, Lev. 25:36-37, and Deut. 23:19-20).

Think About It

What gifts have we that are not diminished but rather multiplied by being shared with others?

First reading and psalm: Ezek. 34:11-16, 20-24 • Ps. 100
 Alternate: Psalm 95:1-7a • Eph. 1:15-23 • Matt. 25:31-46

The Incognito King

In biblical times, kings and emperors were recognizable by material splendor. They lived in magnificent palaces, wore sumptuous robes, and presided over lavish banquets and entertainments. Today's gospel reveals a different kind of king. On the Day of Judgment he is revealed in all his glory, to be sure, but in this world he not only remains incognito but also identifies himself completely with the poorest of the poor: the stranger, the hungry, the homeless, the prisoner. Their hardships and sufferings are his hardships and sufferings.

The standard way of reading this parable is to identify ourselves with the sheep and the goats. We hope that in the Day of Judgment we shall be numbered among the sheep, and not among the goats. Read in this way, the parable exhorts and warns us. Practice hospitality. Respond in compassion to human need. In welcoming the stranger and in serving the disadvantaged we welcome and serve Christ himself, often without realizing that we're doing so.

There is, however, an alternate reading. When the reader identifies with the *least of these*, the parable takes on a whole new meaning. Some New Testament commentators propose that when Jesus speaks of "the least of these my brethren," he is referring specifically to *his disciples*. Thus, on the Last Day all the nations will be gathered before the King's royal throne and judged by how well they received the Christian missionaries who were sent to them.

The apostolic emissaries of the early Church were after all poor, vulnerable, and dependent on the hospitality of the peoples to whom they brought the gospel. They came as strangers; they needed food, clothing, and shelter. From time to time, they found themselves cast into prison, and perhaps even condemned to death. According to this reading, Christ is promising his disciples that he will always go with

them, that those who welcome them likewise welcome him, and that those who reject and abuse them likewise reject and abuse him, and will be judged accordingly.

Both ways of reading the parable are necessary to the fullest appreciation of what Jesus is saying. We need to identify with both the givers and receivers of hospitality in the story. And there's a real spiritual danger in failing to recognize ourselves among the least of these.

In the Incarnation, Christ has become one of us, sharing in our common humanity. When we separate ourselves from the needy even while helping them — by looking on them from a position of superiority and condescension, perhaps because what we fear most is becoming like them — we separate ourselves from Christ. To truly meet others in their deepest need we must meet ourselves in them, seeing in them the reflection of our own vulnerability and deepest fears. It is in this encounter with ourselves in the face of the other that we encounter Christ himself.

Christ is the incognito king who suffers in our suffering, rejoices in our rejoicing and, on the last day, judges us on the basis of our hospitality, concern, and care for all who share in the same human condition. But if on that day we hope to be counted among the sheep and not the goats, we must learn first to recognize ourselves among the least of these.

Look It Up

Ponder Jesus' use of *little ones* in Matthew 10:42 and 18:6ff. Are these *little ones* the same as the *least of these* in today's gospel?

Think About It

"There but for the grace of God go I." How theologically sound is this slogan?



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BOOKS

Liturgy for Beginners

(Continued from page 19)

detail that is thoroughly accessible and never boring. The work closes with a three-page history of Anglican liturgy that is simple, careful, and fair.

I detected only one minor error. The 1552 BCP's Communion service did not omit the entire *Sanctus*, but only the second portion, *the Benedictus qui venit*. The style and thematic focus are also remarkably consistent for the work of seven writers who are covering ground that has been seeded with controversy for decades. The work of a very capable editor is evident.

Words for Worship is written specifically for the English context, but there is not a comparable resource currently in print elsewhere, and the book would make a fine confirmation present, or a resource for newcomers, especially for those from non-liturgical churches. Only 15 of the 55 prayers are not also included in our 1979 Book of Common Prayer. These are mostly from the Modern Collects section, which still remains very useful as an introduction to the themes of the liturgical year. Even those who have prayed the liturgy all their lives would likely find new and helpful insights in this valuable collection.

*The Rev. Mark Michael
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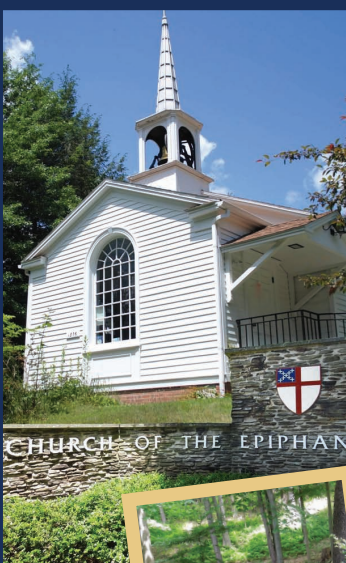
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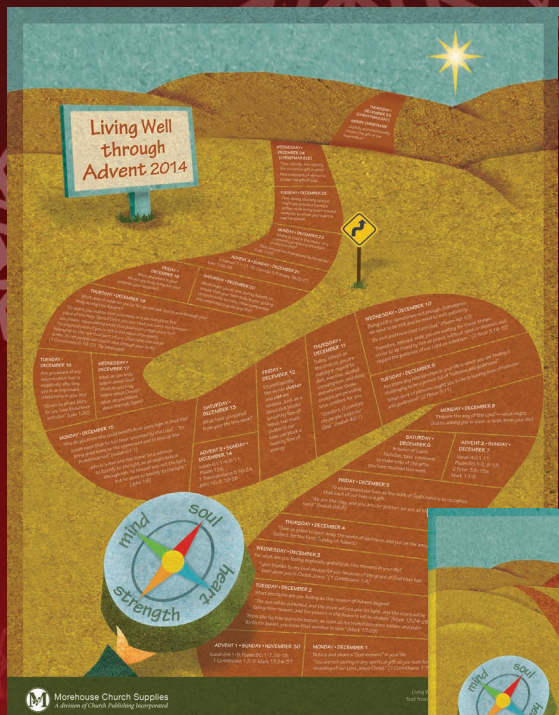
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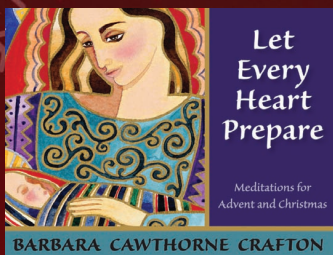
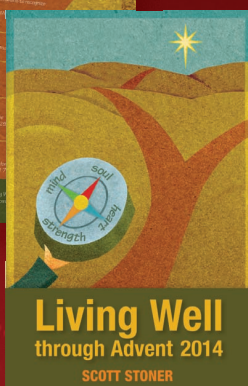


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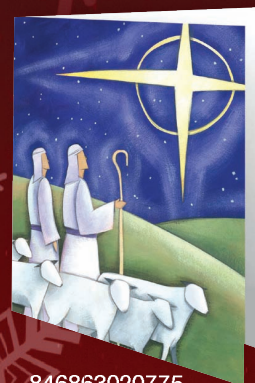


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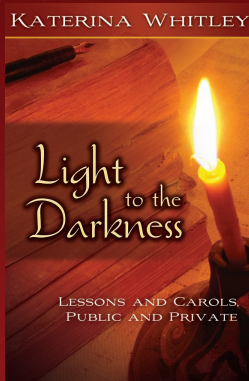
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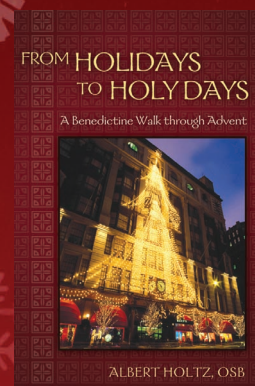
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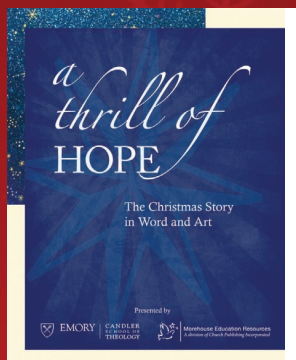
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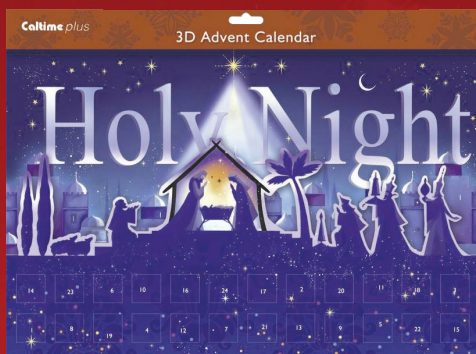
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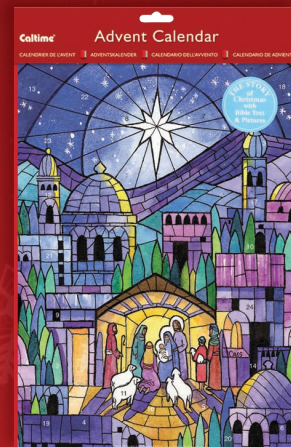
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