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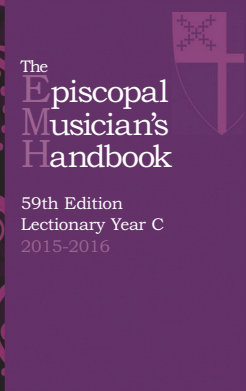
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## ON THE COVER

“Pilgrimage shows us something as simple and yet profound as what it means for Jesus Christ to be Immanuel.”

—Seth A. Raymond (see “On Pilgrimage Together,” p. 10).

Jennifer Klecker photo

# THE LIVING CHURCH

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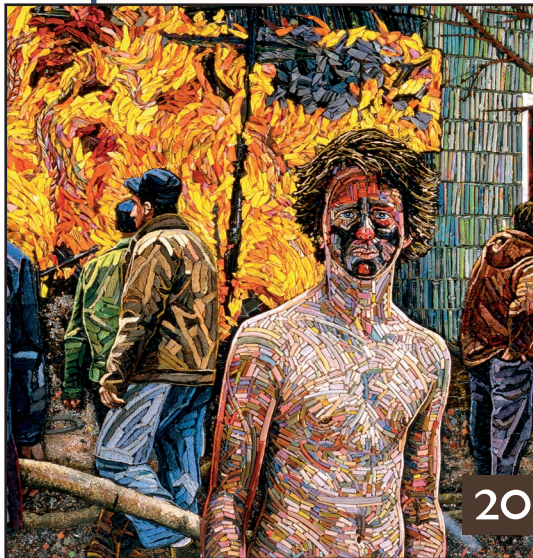
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We are grateful to the dioceses of Mississippi and West Virginia [p. 24], Christ Church, Bradenton [p. 25], and St. Dunstan’s, Houston [p. 27], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.







St. John's Cathedral is located on College Hill in Providence.

Will Hart/Flickr photo

## Reconciliation Center Planned for Cathedral

A shuttered cathedral that once rose to prominence with support from slave traders is on track for a new mission that grows out of its conflicted past: fostering racial reconciliation in the United States.

The Diocese of Rhode Island voted at its November convention to create a National Center for Reconciliation, which is laying groundwork for a launch this year. If all goes according to plan, it will eventually be housed alongside a new slave-trade museum and worship space in Providence's Cathedral of St. John, which has been closed since 2012.

The vision calls for exploring links between faith and the slave trade. Visitors would learn how Episcopal institutions first benefited from slavery but then later helped abolish it.

Telling that story would make the museum unique, as would its ties to a center where practical outreach — including training for interventions in racial conflicts like those in Ferguson, Missouri, last summer — will focus on reconciliation.

"We anticipate that people will find this project uncomfortable or chal-

lenging," said the Rev. Linda Grenz, canon to the ordinary for the Diocese of Rhode Island, via email. "But we are called to the ministry of reconciliation — and we can't be agents of reconciliation without being honest about the past and hearing the pain of our brothers and sisters today."

The goal is to confront and redeem an often-ignored facet of Rhode Island history and the church's past. More than half the voyages from the United States to round up slaves for the Americas originated in the Ocean State.

"Much of [Rhode Island's] economy was built with the profits of that trade," said the Rt. Rev. W. Nicholas Knisely, Bishop of Rhode Island, in his convention address. "Many (perhaps most) of those businesses were owned and operated by Episcopalians. So we feel we have both an obligation and an opportunity to speak the truth about the church's role in the slave trade."

The diocese has enlisted several partners, including the Tracing Center in Watertown, Massachusetts, and Brown University's Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice. The Na-

tional Center for Reconciliation will cosponsor several events at Brown in 2015. A quiet phase of fundraising has begun as well, and contributions are coming in.

Telling the history as a path to reconciliation will not be easy for any group of people, according to Tracing Center's executive director, James DeWolf Perry, whose ancestry includes a leading slave trader, James DeWolf, and a former Bishop of Rhode Island, the late Rt. Rev. James DeWolf Perry.

Perry said some African-Americans would prefer to focus on more positive aspects of their history. What's more, many white New Englanders would rather not confront their checkered history.

"Here in the North, this gap between public memory and reality is huge," said Perry, whose book *Interpreting Slavery at Museums and History Sites* (Rowman & Littlefield) came out in December. "We tend in retrospect to think of ourselves as the good guys in history who ended slavery after the Civil War. We forget that we were very reluctant to end



Southern slavery, and that we had essentially built the North on the economics of slavery.”

Perry insists the path to redemption must include an unvarnished reckoning with realities of the past. Such reckoning would build on recent initiatives in the Episcopal Church. In the past decade, resolutions adopted at General Convention have acknowledged and apologized for the church’s historic complicity with slavery.

Before a slave-trade history could be showcased inside the cathedral, the custodial Cathedral Corporation would first need to approve extensive renovations to the facility. Meanwhile, the National Center for Reconciliation is forging ahead.

“I suspect we shall have some official ‘launch’ event/date when we get the 501(c)(3) incorporation done and a board named,” Grenz said. “But we’re not waiting for that to happen before we start the important work of reconciliation.”

*G. Jeffrey MacDonald*

## Primate Mourns Martyrs

The Most Rev. Mouneer Hanna Anis, Archbishop of Egypt and Primate of Jerusalem and the Middle East, has decried the murder of 21 Egyptian Christians by Islamic State terrorists in Libya.

“Please join me in praying for peace in Libya, Egypt, and the entire Middle East,” the archbishop wrote on February 16. “Please pray the international community will act in wisdom, correctly and efficiently, and support Egypt in its war on terror. Please pray the churches of Egypt will comfort their sons and daughters, encouraging them to resist fear and hatred. And please pray for the perpetrators of this terrible crime, that God would be merciful to them and change their hearts.”

## Heather Cook Cases Proceed

A grand jury has indicted the Rt. Rev. Heather Cook on 13 charges in the death of Baltimore bicyclist Thomas Palermo. The charges include homicide, drunken driving, and leaving the scene of an accident. Cook could face more than 20 years in prison.

In a February 6 letter, the Rt. Rev. Eugene Taylor Sutton wrote that he had not been informed of Bishop Cook’s continuing struggles with alcoholism when she was a nominee to become bishop suffragan. He wrote as well of his concerns about Cook’s condition during a dinner on September 4, two nights before her consecration service.

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori has further restricted Cook’s ministry under Title IV. She wrote to Bishop Cook that the charges are “a result of your alleged criminal conduct in connection with

(Continued on next page)



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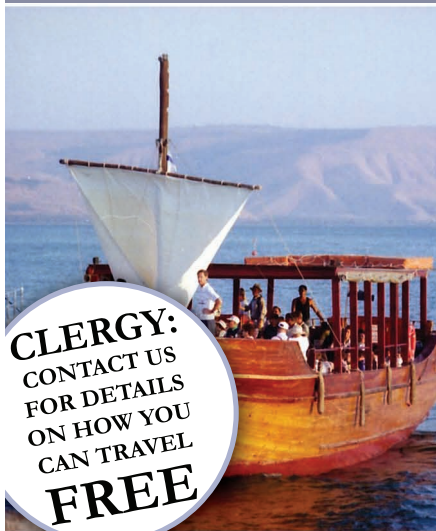
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## Cook Cases Proceed

(Continued from previous page)

an automobile accident on December 27, 2014, and misrepresentations you allegedly made to persons in the Diocese of Easton and in connection to your candidacy for the episcopate in the Diocese of Maryland regarding your experience with alcohol.”

Bishop Sutton placed Bishop Cook on paid leave, and thus restricted her ministry as his bishop suffragan, on December 28, when the diocese announced her involvement in the traffic accident.

The Rev. Gay Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, said in a letter to deputies that the Title IV investigation “does not relieve those of us who help lead the church of our obligation to acknowledge that the credibility of the process by which we elect bishops is in question.”

Jennings added: “Long before this crisis, many people in the church understood that the process no longer serves us well in some instances. I have served as consultant to six bishop search committees, and I concur. The seeming failure of the process in Maryland lends new urgency to the discussion.”

## Haiti’s Long Recovery

The narrow dirt road leading up to the mountain village of Dano, about 30 miles southwest of Port-au-Prince, is steep and for the most part uphill — like the lives of the children who live there. It is frequently washed out by heavy rain, and even on a good day it can give those who use it a bone-shaking ride over deep ruts in a pickup truck.

Maneuvering that truck is Tony Boursiquot, who for the past 25 years has run the Haitian branch of the Christian humanitarian organization Star of Hope USA. At midday, squinting into a scorching sun, he turns his badly battered vehicle into the grounds of the organization’s brightly painted school in Dano, where hundreds of students, preschool to 12th grade, have lined up to greet him. He smiles broadly, clearly happy to see them, saying that he comes from a poor family, just like them.

Boursiquot’s commitment to the poor, in fact, has persisted even through times of deep personal suffering.

Just after the earthquake of Janu-



The Rt. Rev. Duncan M. Gray III, retiring Bishop of Mississippi, passed the crozier to his successor, the Rt. Rev. Brian Seage, on February 13. Bishop Gray will serve as bishop-in-residence at St. Paul’s Church, New Orleans, for the next two years.

Jim Carrington/Diocese of Mississippi photo



ary 12, 2010, he spent many terrifying hours searching for his family members. One of his sisters, and two of her children, perished beneath the fallen concrete of a building in Port-au-Prince.

Barry Borrer, president and CEO of Star of Hope USA, which is headquartered in Ellinwood, Kansas, said he recalls vividly how Boursiquot set aside his grief for his sister and her children — at least temporarily — to lead the organization's initial response to the tragedy. Hired by Star of Hope in 1989, Boursiquot quickly caught the organization's vision to help children become "educated, healthy adults who are involved in their communities and share their love of Jesus Christ."

No one knows exactly how many faith-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Star of Hope operate in Haiti. Even the government does not know. A good guess would be in the hundreds, maybe thousands. Many come to provide much-needed relief in the wake of natural disasters. Many remain to offer follow-up assistance in reconstruction and development. And many just come and go.

But large, well-funded ministries such as Episcopal Relief and Development, Catholic Relief Services, Food for the Poor, Lutheran World Federation, and World Vision have maintained a presence in Haiti for years — as have Samaritan's Purse, founded by the Rev. Franklin Graham, and Partners in Health (PIH), co-founded by Dr. Paul Farmer to address the health-care needs of the poorest residents of Haiti's Central Plateau in 1987.

Farmer was raised Roman Catholic but now calls himself a "lapsed Catholic." He and his PIH colleagues, who recently opened one of the largest and most technologically advanced public hospitals in Haiti, located in Mirebalais, about 30 miles north of Port-au-Prince, have adopted several key concepts of liberation theology and applied them to medicine, including the Catholic-inspired notion of God's "preferential option for the poor."

"Imagine how much unnecessary

suffering we might collectively avert," Farmer wrote in *Sojourners* in 2013, "if our health care and educational systems, foundations, and nongovernmental organizations genuinely made a preferential option for the poor."

Recently the Missouri-based NGO Convoy of Hope announced a partnership with a leading university in Haiti to help farmers learn the latest techniques for conserving soil, generating higher crop yield and mar-

keting and selling their produce. Clearly, the project has a laudable humanitarian objective, but it also aims to further boost self-reliance among Haitians. The organization offers a wide range of services to Haitians, including feeding 60,000 children a day in schools and orphanages across the country.

For its part, the school run by the Star of Hope in Dano provides a Christian-centered education to 600

(Continued on next page)

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## Haiti's Long Recovery

(Continued from previous page)

children from the village and the surrounding countryside, including one hot meal a day. Built in 1998, it is one of seven Star of Hope schools in Haiti, which serve 3,000 children.

Partly destroyed by the earthquake five years ago (about 4,000 schools in Haiti were completely destroyed), the Dano school has now been rebuilt and equipped with seven laptop computers. Most of the students have never even seen a computer let alone used one, said one of the teachers, Fritznel Baptichon. But they are learning fast.

Boursiquot said Haiti's government, even after five years, does not have a plan for rebuilding the country.

"I'm sure that things will get even better," he said. "But it will take time. Everyone had expected more by now. They're losing patience."

The poor still do not have jobs, and he wishes he could do more. For now, what he's doing is a lot.

Gary G. Yerkey

## New Marriage Canons Proposed

The Episcopal Church's Task Force for the Study of Marriage has presented a final, 122-page report to General Convention that would separate the definition of marriage from its definition in the Book of Common Prayer.

The proposals include:

- Revising the marriage canon to remove references to *man, woman, husband, and wife*. The canons would instead refer to *two people* or *two persons*.
- Asking General Convention for a three-year budget of \$45,000 to help the church "study and possibly respond to the changing realities in so-

ciety and in our congregations that challenge marriage as the norm for adult relationships and what it means to be a 'household' or even a 'family.'"

• No longer requiring that a couple declare belief in the definition of marriage found in the Book of Common Prayer.

The existing canon "requires the couple to declare that they 'believe' a set of statements about marriage," the report said. "This is to some extent problematical when one member of the couple may not be a 'believer' at all or may come from a tradition with a different theology of marriage. It should be sufficient that the couple be instructed in, and understand the rights, duties, and responsibilities of, marriage as expressed in the marriage vows; and attest to that understanding as well as to their legal competence to marry."

## Bishop Made Mission Theologian

The Rt. Rev. Graham Kings, Bishop of Sherborne, has accepted a seven-year post as the Anglican Communion's mission theologian. The new post is a shared venture of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Church Mission Society, and Durham University.

His purpose will be to research, stimulate, connect, and publish works of theology in the Anglican Communion, with particular focus on insights from Africa, Asia, and Latin America in their ecumenical contexts.

Bishop Kings will take up this new post in July. He will be based in London, visiting Durham University as an honorary fellow and traveling across the Communion. He will convene a series of seminars in Anglican Communion Studies for theologians. The website *Mission Theology in the Anglican Communion*, launched February 16, will publish the papers. Bishop Kings already has sent various tweets from the Twitter handle of @MissioTheology.

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# Alister McGrath: Luminosity and Joy

How might Christians respond to the relegation of religion to the margins of public life? Must Christianity dwell only in the pew, home, and heart and not step into the public square? Six plenary speakers addressed such questions during this year's Mere Anglicanism conference held January 22-24 in Charleston, South Carolina.

"The Church has too often coluded with secularism by letting God be pushed upstairs, out of sight, into a split-level universe," said the Rt. Rev. N.T. Wright, the New Testament scholar and former Bishop of Durham. He traced secularism to Epicurus, the Greek philosopher who said: "If the gods exist at all it is far away; they take no notice of us." This belief grew in popularity during the Enlightenment, when people had grown weary of religious wars.

Wright added: "God rescues us to become rescuers. We are put right (justified) so we can help right things on earth. God is restoring his world. We've been restored so we can be creators and sustainers of beauty. Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion* have held secularism back better than we have. Truth is more than beauty but it is not less."

The Rt. Rev. Michael Nazir-Ali, former Bishop of Rochester, said that since humans are made in God's image they are "agents who can make a real (though not an absolute) difference and have a degree of (but not absolute) freedom." One need only look at the massive contribution made by the evangelical revival both to end the slave trade and slavery and to campaign for radical change for the poor during the Industrial Revolution.

"While the U.N. and the E.U. talk of the 'inalienable dignity of the human person,' the Bible speaks of the person in relationship to others. We are not atomistic individuals," Nazir-Ali said. "On the surface we may not appear equal, but we have a common origin. Christianity believes in an equality of persons, not the equality

(Continued on page 24)



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Rick Wood photo

# On Pilgrimage Together

A journey to Assisi crosses the wide cultural barriers between two Zip Codes.

By Seth A. Raymond

**I**n the heat of a mid-summer afternoon below the town of Assisi, pilgrims make their way to one of the remaining leprosaria, La Santa Maria Maddalena. At the front of the procession are two high school boys, one white, one Puerto Rican, warning in loud voices of the leper following close behind. Micah, an African American high-school sophomore, follows with shuffling feet. He is covered with a black cloth, a makeshift pall, draped over his backpack filled with bottled water, a journal, and packets of Nutella. He carries the *tentennella*, the traditional wooden clapper that warns the locals of his approach.



With a mixture of solemnity and idle chatter, 26 other pilgrims follow in funeral procession behind Micah, knowing that when we arrive at La Maddalena, he will be considered as good as dead. Micah will no longer be called one of our own, but will live out his days in the Umbrian valley, isolated from the townspeople above.

We approach the small stone church and file in. There is not much that impresses our weary travelers about such a humble space. Pilgrims remain quiet as our leper is led to the front of the nave by Brother Tom, our Franciscan guide. Brother Tom leads us in a reflection on alienation, separation, being different. He asks each of us to write a poem on the theme of bullying and read it aloud. We then enter a sacred moment of ritual hand-washing, each pilgrim washing the hands of the next, enacting a humble service to the outcast and lepers among us.

### The Context

Milwaukee is often described as one of the most racially segregated cities in the United States (is.gd/il26PY). Even in the most diverse neighborhoods, it is not uncommon to find one block of Puerto Ricans next to a few blocks of African Americans, next to a block or two of Caucasians. As demographics shifted over the years, mainline churches in Milwaukee largely failed to keep pace with the changing landscape, leaving behind remnant congregations, while newer residents worship in storefront churches that dot the streets of many neighborhoods.

Just north of the center city of Milwaukee is the village of Whitefish Bay, home of Christ Church. A well-known derisive name for this village is Whitefolks Bay. Whitefish Bay is located in a “super Zip,” a Zip Code that ranks in the 95th percentile for median income and percentage of residents with college degrees (is.gd/EzdwpL). Census data show a population of 14,163 that is 96.1 percent white and 1.3 percent African American, with a median annual income of \$117,000 (justicemap.org/?id=544).

One Zip Code away from Christ Church is All Peoples, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that restarted from the ground in 1991 with an emphasis on reflecting the makeup of its neighborhood. The differences between the two neighborhoods are stark. The neighborhood surrounding All Peoples has a median household income of \$21,000, 91 percent African Americans, and 25 percent having some college education (justicemap.org/?id=547).

### The Invitation

In most years of this century All Peoples concentrated



Jennifer Klecker photo

The Rev. Steve Jerbi, pastor of All Peoples, describes the pilgrimage offer as “a unifying goal that provided an excuse for our two churches to journey together.”

largely on its local surroundings, running a youth-staffed urban gardening program year round and providing services such as a soup kitchen and after-school programming. Christ Church sent its youth on annual mission trips to build and repair homes in Appalachia, encountering the rural poor in an intense week of building and providing traditional works of mercy.

In the summer of 2013, Franciscan Pilgrimages Program approached the two churches about forming a first ecumenical high-school pilgrimage. Our churches were asked to expand a partnership that began in 2011 and involved a few volunteers from Christ Church assisting with Wednesday night meals at All Peoples, plus a pulpit-and-choir swap. The Franciscans asked if we were willing to do more, to take a risk, and combine our youth groups for a nine-day Franciscan pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi.

The Rev. Steve Jerbi, pastor of All Peoples, describes the pilgrimage offer as “a unifying goal that

(Continued on next page)





Jennifer Klecker photo

## On Pilgrimage Together

Francis and not so much about Jesus. In lieu of a planned reflection time, Pastor Jerbi asked the group: “Where would you go to understand Martin Luther King, Jr.?”

Youth from All Peoples, well educated in the Civil Rights movement, enthusiastically answered, “Atlanta!”

“Right,” Steve said. “Where in Atlanta?”

“The Civil Rights museum,” chimed in a Christ Church pilgrim.

“Okay, but where would you go to really get to know Dr. King? What about Ebenezer Baptist Church? You see, to get to know someone, we go to where they lived and worked, where they exercised their ministry. We see the place Dr. King preached the gospel of equality and civil rights and we learn what he was about. We learn that throughout his ministry Dr. King was pointing at Jesus.”

While disciples of Martin Luther King travel distances to see the places of his ministry, Jesus spent the majority of his ministry walking *with* his disciples. Pilgrimage is an opportunity to explore two important dimensions of Christian discipleship: the experience of encountering holy places where God has been made known, combined with the experience of inhabiting these spaces with fellow disciples.

Pilgrimage illustrates the good news that mission is a journey of God *with* us. Both of our churches had expressed mission as something done *for* others — Christ Church in its service in Appalachia and All Peoples in its service to the neighborhood. While both of these ways of doing mission have their particular virtues, neither of them fully grasps the power of what Jesus offers in a unique way: the God who is so deeply for us that he comes down, lives among us, with us. Pilgrimage shows us something as simple and yet profound as what it means for Jesus Christ to be Immanuel.

### Walking for a Year

The Great Hall of Christ Church is a cavernous open space that swallows the nervous energy of 22 high school youth embarking into the unknown. Our pilgrimage began in this space with cautious icebreakers, moving from the nonthreatening “fruit salad” to the more intimate “trust fall.” We moved into a discussion of the Road to Emmaus. One or two students spoke. The other 20 sat in silence. The pastors did no better.

In subsequent meetings between the two churches, we focused on sharing new experiences and illuminating the gifts of each youth group. At a talent-show

(Continued from previous page)

provided an excuse for our two churches to journey together.” The idea quickly took root as a way to engage mission, “to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ” (BCP 1979, p. 855). Our imaginations were ignited about how this opportunity might be incarnated as a year-long pilgrimage, culminating in a nine-day intensive pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi. For the first time, our youth programs might build real, incarnated, reconciling relationships within our city. We embarked on what Paul identifies as God’s intention for all disciples: continuing the divine ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18).

### Reconciliation through Pilgrimage

After the initial excitement about the invitation, our churches reflected on what this pilgrimage experience would offer our churches. What about pilgrimage would spark the imagination of our members, particularly our youth? How might pilgrimage help our churches move more deeply into a ministry of reconciliation?

After three days in Rome, many of the pilgrims began to question the purpose of pilgrimage — especially wanting to know why there was so much talk of St.



fundraiser, the acts ranged from a series of spoken-word poems about the experience of black youth in Milwaukee to an impromptu bell choir to a cello duet. We also spent an afternoon at the Islamic Society of Milwaukee, encountering a foreign space and foreign traditions together. Using each other's space equally helped bring our congregations together.

During Lent, Christ Church invited parishioners to share formative moments in their journey of faith with the congregation. One Sunday, Christine, the mother of a Christ Church pilgrim and Kayla, a youth pilgrim from All Peoples, stood together at the pulpit. Christine spoke about how afraid she was about this partnership initially. She confessed to locking car doors in the All Peoples neighborhood. Even more vulnerably, she admitted that feelings of discomfort and fear are still there; they haven't been resolved, but they are being challenged and exposed in new ways through this experience. Following Christine's testimony, Kayla offered her testimony in the form of a spoken-word poem that said, in part:

Frustration has officially / Taken its toll on me / School, teachers, work / Students, fights / Lack of learning / Lack of concentration / It's like they don't care / If you fail or not / They in it for the / Money, not cuz they / Truly care about you / And ya future. ... All black people are not dumb, / Or ghetto / Actually a lot of us are smart, / They just don't show it / Cuz they think it'll be "lame" / Or "not cool" / But you know what, it ain't doing / Nothing but making it hard / For people that really wanna be something in life.

### St. Francis and St. Clare

"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love" (1 John 4:18). Along the way we acknowledged that our fears have not been banished. Our love for one another is not yet made complete. Once our group made it to Assisi, though, we found an example that helped guide us toward perfect love.

In 1997, people from all around the world donated money to pave a path from Assisi down into the valley to the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels. At the trailhead the words *pax et bonum* are etched into the stone. At the beginning of this 45-minute walk each pilgrim was paired with a prayer partner, a pilgrim from the other church. They were given two prompts: "When was a moment when you felt afraid?" and "When was a moment when you felt safe?"

A month after returning from the pilgrimage, I noticed a change in Liam, one of the pilgrims from Christ

Church. His language flowed with a passion for Jesus that startled me and some of his fellow youth-group members. One evening I asked Liam what changed and he told me how, while praying at the San Damiano cross, he felt the presence of God like never before. Immediately after sensing this presence he was paired with Jay, a pilgrim from All Peoples, to make the walk into the valley. Liam was startled and moved by the story he heard from Jay, a story of a broken family in which fear is a consistent part of the environment. Liam encountered firsthand someone whose father communicates largely through abusive language. Moved by his experience at the cross, Liam listened intently to Jay's story of pain and familial anguish.

Outside the basilica is a park with a statue of St. Clare and St. Francis on a picnic. The story says that as Clare and Francis ate together their love for God was so great they appeared as pillars of fire to people on the mountain above. Their love had been perfected and had cast out all fear.

Liam told me how Jay expressed a conviction that God is with him through abuse. In fact, Jay told the story of identifying deeply with Francis's renunciation of his father and being taken in by the church. Liam began to wonder, "What is it that makes his faith so strong?" He was delighted when at a school volleyball match last fall he saw a lanky figure running across the court and realized it was Jay. The two students spoke for a while between breaks in the volleyball game, re-

(Continued on next page)

We see churches from different denominations willing to cast aside their traditional boundaries and work together.



Jennifer Klecker photo

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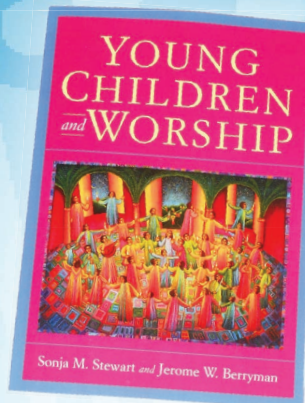
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## On Pilgrimage Together

(Continued from previous page)

joining that their sharing of fear had created their friendship. Did anyone notice the pillars of fire on that volleyball court?

### The Pilgrimage Continues

Doris Donnelly once wrote that pilgrimage differs from other sorts of travel in that “community is formed for pilgrims; community is not a desideratum for tourists. The tourist usually prefers to maintain his/her status quo” (“Pilgrims and Tourists: Conflicting Metaphors for the Christian Journey to God,” *Spirituality Today*, Spring 1992, pp. 20-36).

Through pilgrimage, Christ Church and All Peoples learned that our partnership does not prefer the status quo. After encountering each other at the depth of walking alongside one another, we continue to ask how our partnership might grow rather than fall back into our previous models of mission. How do we continue to engage youth together? How do we encourage engagement between adults from the two communities?

These questions and their answers continue to be pressing concerns for many communities. Fear too often dominates conversation and action surrounding racial reconciliation. We are all far from realizing the perfect love that casts away fear. Yet we see signs of hope. We see organizations like the Franciscan Pilgrimages Program that imagine in the ancient tradition of pilgrimage a new way to help bring together Christian communities. We see churches from different denominations willing to cast aside their traditional boundaries and work together. We see parents and teenagers step into their fears and talk and walk alongside one another. And in all these things, we see Jesus lead his disciples, causing them to burn from within with love for him and for one another.

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





Hannah Matis Perett photo

# Giving Thanks for Central Tanganyika

By Hannah Matis Perett

**T**he Rt. Rev. Dickson Chilongani was elected sixth Bishop of Central Tanganyika by a landslide in October 2014, winning more than 90 percent of the vote in a country where episcopal elections are often hotly contested. I was honored to attend Bishop Chilongani's consecration service and installation on November 23 and 24, through Virginia Theological Seminary's Center for Anglican Communion Studies.

Born in 1966, Chilongani grew up in the capital city of Dodoma, finding a spiritual home near what is now Msalato Theological College. At the time he had few resources and was largely self-educated. Ultimately he took an opportunity to study at the University of Bristol in the United Kingdom, where he completed both a master's degree and a doctorate. He completed another master's degree at the University of Durham. He told me of retaining a fondness for Manchester United Football Club. He and his wife, Pendo, have two sons, Imani and John.

(Continued on next page)

## Giving Thanks for Central Tanganyika



### “Do we need each other?”

(Continued from previous page)

Because of his travels, education, and experience, Bishop Chilogani relates to a wide variety of people. Before his election he was the diocese’s provincial secretary. He was among the scholars who created Bible studies for the Lambeth Conference in 2008. As a member of the Anglican Consultative Council, he has worked for greater cooperation and information-sharing across the Anglican Communion. He has participated in Continuing Indaba, the project for enabling conversation and continued mission across differences in the Anglican Communion.

The Diocese of Central Tanganyika is estimated to be among the largest in the Anglican Communion. Dodoma is located in the territory of the Wagogo people, who are majority Anglican, comprising approximately half of the area’s population. Unlike the coastal port of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania’s largest city, Dodoma is located in fairly arid country. In North American terms, traveling from one to the other is like a journey from Miami to Santa Fe. Water has never been abundant, but it is now even more scarce and precious. While still an overwhelmingly rural country, Tanzania is developing quickly, and deforestation has further contributed to the country’s water shortages.

Dodoma is among the three areas of Tanzania most vulnerable to drought, and 2012-13 was particularly devastating. In recent months violence has erupted between farmers and pastoralists. Water, rather than conflict between Christians and Muslims, has been the primary cause. People moving to seek better land to grow crops inevitably bring their differing religious allegiances into play, however, and one of the challenges Bishop Chilogani will face is to help lead his people in a time of complexity, stress, and social change.

During the consecration service in Dodoma’s Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, a Muslim imam urged Bishop Chilogani to remember the poor. The Most Rev. Jacob Chimeledya, Archbishop of Tanzania, likewise exhorted him to help protect the poor of the region in clashes with the city of Kibaya to the northeast. The

Rev. Canon Philip Groves, one of Bishop Chilogani’s former tutors, read a personal letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Choirs sang both in Swahili and in their local languages. Mizengo Pinda, Tanzania’s prime minister, gave the concluding address.

I have pondered our many conversations, and one brief exchange in particular, that occurred at Msalato Theological College the day before Bishop Chilogani’s consecration. Several American visitors had driven out to the college to meet and drink tea with the students, and we ended up exchanging questions in Msalato’s small and open chapel. Many of these students are very young; they will be put in charge of parishes of up to 800 people; and they are from locations so remote that walking is the most efficient and reliable means of reaching them. There are about 500,000 Anglicans in the Diocese of Central Tanganyika, although exact figures are impossible. By comparison, there are approximately 2 million members of the America-based Episcopal Church. Central Tanganyika, unlike some dioceses of Tanzania, ordains women to the priesthood. Ordained or not, young women provide important rudimentary pastoral care in rural areas.

Students at Msalato had been asking us about certain differences between the Episcopal Church and their own situation. One of our group, the Rev. Ranjit Mathews, asked them: “Do we need each other?”

They responded with an unequivocal *yes*, but not because of American money, resources, or leadership, which can help but so often come at a cost. These students said we need one another because as Christians we are called to relationship, and because the ties of relationship between us — between local congregations, between institutions, between people — are themselves of great value. There is much that we can do for one another, provided that cultivating these relationships is our central priority.

*Hannah Matis Perett is an assistant professor of church history at Virginia Theological Seminary.*



# Islam's Anglican Thinker

Review by Lucinda Mosher

**B**ediuzzaman Said Nursi (1877/78-1960) wended his way into my doctoral research in 1999. Ian Markham commenced his study of Nursi in 2002. Of the relatively short list of English-language scholarly books about Nursi, several contain an essay by one or both of us. Markham, however, has gone steps farther than I. He included a chapter on Nursi in his *Theology of Engagement* (Blackwell, 2003); and significantly, of the English-language scholarly books on Nursi, Markham's name is on the front cover of three, including the two texts under review here.

Who is Nursi? A Kurdish-Turkish scholar and spiritual leader, his public career overlapped two world wars, the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, and Turkey's subsequent efforts to establish a different kind of government and national identity. His disciples — an extensive global community — see him as an Islamic restorationist, a God-sent reviver of the religion for the 20th century and beyond. Hence, they often refer to him by the honorific *Bediuzzaman*, that is, Wonder of the Age. His disciples are ardent students of his legacy, having produced more than 5,000 pages of thematically organized Qur'an commentary, practical spiritual guidance, and correspondence, most of which is published as the multi-volume *Risale-i Nur* (Epistles of Light). Nursi's biography is compelling; but wading into his *Risale* can be daunting. He has his modern-day detractors, the government of Russia among them. Ian Markham's Nursi projects offer guidance toward understanding and appreciation of Bediuzzaman.

*Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* is Markham's attempt to explain his involvement with Bediuzzaman as an act of Christian faithfulness. In Nursi, he sees someone who "represents within Islam an approach that Anglicans represent in Christianity." That is, both Anglicanism and Nursi's ever-widening circle of disciples are movements "born out of internal conversations"; both are "committed to the life of the mind" and have sought "to accommodate the best of modernity" (p. 5). Having found the effort transformative, Markham, who describes himself as "a rooted Christian," seeks to demonstrate what Christians might

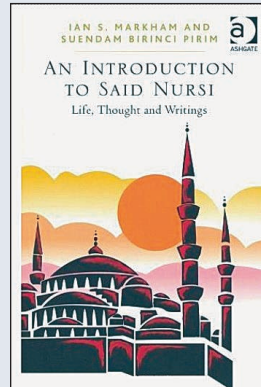
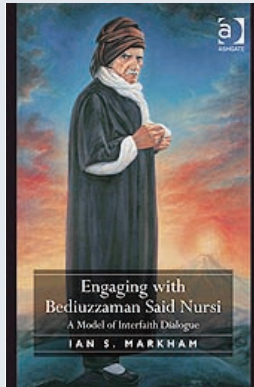
learn from Nursi's ideas and example. "The argument of this book," Markham explains, "is that every religious tradition needs a Said Nursi. The future of the world depends on all of us discovering in our rootedness a commitment to dialogue and living together" (p. 145).

In "Part One: Learning From Nursi" (nine chapters), Markham strives to "relate [Nursi's] nuanced and complex position" and "to reflect on the implications of his thought for Christian theology" (p. 6). Accordingly, he brings Nursi into conversation with a range of major thinkers — Alasdair MacIntyre, Bertrand Russell, Richard John Neuhaus, John Hick, Michael Hardt, and Antonio Negri, among others — as he demonstrates what Nursi has to offer to discussions of secularism and ethics, theism versus atheism, human destiny and moral accountability, faith and politics, and globalization. Then, having rehearsed John Hick's "pluralist hypothesis," and having countered it by asserting that "the commitment to diversity, conversation, and toleration cannot start from semi-unbelief," he offers Nursi's approach as a robust alternative for engaging religious diversity by anyone who insists on remaining "grounded in the particularities of [a] faith tradition" (p. 58). In contrast to the "religion-less" spirituality of secular America," he proposes Nursi's "grounded spirituality" (i.e., "a spirituality grounded in a tradition") as an attractive alternative. Markham concludes Part One by laying out four lessons Christians can learn from Nursi: "remain rooted," "change in ways that are true to the tradition," "witness to the truth of your tradition in non-violent ways," and "continue to connect faith with life." It seems to me that the book could end here.

**I**nstead, we come to "Part Two: Rethinking Dialogue." Of its six chapters, three (10, 11, and 12) are adaptations of Markham's Teape Lectures on "Dialogue Done Differently" given in India in 2004. "The Dialogue Industry" criticizes the assumptions foundational to Leonard Swidler's approach. "Learning from India" lifts up four case studies of dialogue in a Hindu-majority context. "A New Decalogue" offers dialogue principles "grounded in the Indian experience" (p. 131). Nursi was not mentioned in the original lectures; in their form as book chapters, he is barely mentioned.

(Continued on next page)





## Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi

By **Ian S. Markham**. Ashgate Publishing. Pp. vii + 179. £65

## An Introduction to Said Nursi

Life, Thought, and Writings

By **Ian S. Markham** and **Suendam Birinci Pirim**.

Ashgate Publishing. Pp. vii + 198. £65

(Continued from previous page)

Nursi is celebrated in the opening paragraph of “Conservatives and Dialogue” (chapter 13), but that is Markham’s last mention of him as once again he reminds us of the difficulties with John Hick’s pluralist hypothesis and again stresses the need for “a tradition-constituted account of religious diversity” (p. 157). “Neither Conservative nor Liberal: A Theology of Christian Engagement with Non-Christian Traditions” (chapter 14) — a version of Markham’s paper given in Calgary in 2007 — refers to itself as a “concluding chapter,” but it ends with “a brief analysis and description” of Pope Benedict XVI’s “attack on Islam” (p. 169), rather than with a summary of the book. That is left for chapter 15, only a single page in length, in which Markham insists that Part Two has been an attempt to “formulate a Christian (but also an Anglican) account of dialogue, which is grounded in the methodology of Nursi” taught in Part I (p. 175).

Had Nursi been brought more explicitly and fully into each essay in Part Two, I might be more convinced that these essays are grounded in his methodology and thus that they belong in *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*. That said, Part Two is nevertheless rich and thought-provoking. Anyone interested in an authentically Anglican theology of religious manyness will find much of value there, and Part One is especially pertinent as a rationale for engaging with a brilliant 20th-century Muslim thinker. Anyone who has participated in dialogues, friendship dinners, or tours of Turkey sponsored by one of America’s many Turkish institutes inspired by the teaching of Fetullah Gülen has *ipso facto* encountered disciples of Said Nursi. Markham’s *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* will shed light on the commitment of these Turkish-Americans to their tradition and to in-

terfaith engagement, and improve our own similar engagement.

**H**aving been shown the value in taking Bediuzzaman seriously, readers may want to know more about him and be ready to read from the *Risale-i Nur*. Little exists in English to guide the novice reader of this massive work. In their *Introduction to Said Nursi: Life, Thought, and Writings*, Markham and his coauthor, Nursi scholar Suendam Birinci Pirim, provide excellent assistance.

*Introduction* begins with four chapters, each concluded with three sets of “reflection questions.” Chapter 1, a biography, is succinct, yet rich enough in details to orient the newcomer to Nursi and his *Risale-i Nur*. Characteristics of his theology and spirituality are the focus of chapters 2 and 3. I would have explained Nursi’s relation to Sufism and mysticism differently, and I have concerns regarding the transliteration and use of key Arabic vocabulary in this chapter, but these are too technical to explain here. I nonetheless appreciate what Markham and Pirim have to say on Nursi’s spirituality as a key to understanding his attitude toward other matters. Chapter 4, based on portions of *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, provides a brief account of “grounded pluralism” as the alternative Nursi offers to theocracy or secularism.

The remainder of *Introduction* presents 25 extended passages from the Nursi corpus. Arranged under four headings — Belief, Prophethood, Life after Death and Resurrection, and Justice and Worship — each excerpt is given a brief introduction providing context and some guidance for reading. Footnotes clarify the text as needed. These extracts are not snippets; each are of significant length, thus allowing the reader to experience how Nursi crafts an argument, gives advice, or suppli-

cates; how he “chunks” material and makes creative use of levels of sub-headings in order to make his lessons easier to recall. I view the relation of *Mathnawi al-Nuriye* to the *Risale* differently, but I am glad it is represented in the excerpts chosen for *Introduction*.

The collection of extracts is prefaced by an explanation of the style of the *Risale-i Nur*. This is but a single page; I wish Markham and Pirim had written more. While the *Risale's* style and structure did figure in their telling of the story of Nursi's life (chapter 1), it would be helpful to have that information reiterated and expanded just before entering the *Risale*.

In short, *An Introduction to Said Nursi* is an important academic resource that is approachable by the non-specialist as well. A major Muslim thinker with a profound commitment to nonviolence, Bediuzzaman deserves to be better known. *An Introduction* enhances the accessibility of Nursi's enormous literary legacy, such that more students and scholars will be inclined to read him alongside Muslims such as Rumi, al-Ghazali, or Ibn 'Arabi — and alongside Christians such as Barth, Tillich, or the Anglican Divines. It is a fine companion to *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*. One may find *Introduction* the better volume with which to start. Having gotten to know something of Nursi's story and heard him speak for himself, through the annotated excerpts of his work, one will be better prepared to appreciate why the dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary has been so invested in explaining what this Turkish mystic has to offer to the arena of interreligious understanding.

*Lucinda Mosher is faculty associate in interfaith studies at Hartford Seminary and author of Toward Our Mutual Flourishing: The Episcopal Church, Interreligious Relations, and Theologies of Religious Manyness.*

# Life as She Is Lived

## Theologizing en Espanglish

Context, Community, and Ministry

By **Carmen Nanko-Fernández**. Orbis. Pp. xx + 188. \$25

Review by Peter Eaton

**E**n familias como la mía, more often than not *se habla* “Spanglish,” rather than either pure English or pure Spanish. Spanglish has a rhythm and a beauty all its own, and some speak it with more grace and ease than others. And, as Carmen Nanko-Fernández demonstrates in this collection of probing essays, Spanglish represents a range of theological concerns for what she calls the Latin@ community, the Church, and the rest of us.

Spanglish is a consequence of “life as she is lived,” and Nanko-Fernández insists that theology be grounded in *lo cotidiano*: “*las teologías latinas* are theologies dreamed in Spanish, articulated in English, and lived in Spanglish.” Spanglish is both the evidence and the result of emerging realities that we must face in the ever-growing diversity *de nuestra vida cotidiana en los Estados Unidos*.

As a Roman Catholic theologian, Nanko-Fernández is not unaware of the traps. To take *la vida cotidiana* seriously is not to say “that we make our stories normative.” We must beware of making the particular universal. And she is clear that we must face with honesty, and with all the theological tools at our disposal, a sinful dimension to our common life and our attempts to create *comunidades de integridad*.

Nanko-Fernández is critical of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for subsuming its different “minority” offices under a broad committee on “Cultural Diversity in the Church,” asserting, with some justification, that such multiculturalism effectively hides the different cultures that make up the Body of Christ in our nation. It is a warning we Episcopalians would do well to hear.

How are we to speak of God and

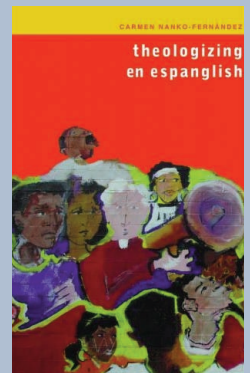
humanity *en nuestra propia lengua*? And more to the point, how is the Church to engage in theology *latinamente* — especially when there are too few Latinos graduating from our seminaries, and when seminarians whose first and only language is English are not expected to be proficient in Spanish? The days are long gone when it is sufficient for a parish to have *La Santa Eucaristía* at noon or 1 p.m. on a Sunday and call it “Hispanic ministry.”

In one of her most interesting chapters, “Handing on faith *en su propia lengua*,” Nanko-Fernández raises the challenges that face deaf Latinos in a speaking and hearing church. In this circumstance, how are we to make sense of phrases like *having a voice, the word, or indeed the Word*?

One answer she proposes is attention to other “texts,” not the least of which are popular religious practices that go to the heart of Latin@ religious life. Such practices are evidence of an incarnational faith and are too often left unexplored both by parish and academy.

This is a crucial book. At the heart of her reflections beats the theology of the Trinity, if often implicitly. A proper trinitarian theology is the Church's *guarantor de la libertad* from the dangers that Nanko-Fernández articulates. Here is common ground for the ecumenical enterprise, and some of this work has already begun. Roman Catholics and Anglicans can do so much together *latinamente*, for the sake of *nuestra fé Cristiana* and for the well-being of *nuestra humanidad*. *Ya veremos a ver*.

*The Very Rev. Peter Eaton is bishop-elect of the Diocese of Southeast Florida.*







The Falcon Cannot Hear the Falconer | 39.5 x 50.75 inches 2008, mixed media collage on paper

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IMAGE  
Lent

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Isaiah 9:18-20 | 22 x 30 inches 1993, mixed media collage on paper



# VERSE

By Michael Cover

## *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*

[Augury]

*He also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, 'It is going to rain'; and so it happens." Luke 13:54*

How does stoneblue morning  
differ from twilit dawn  
or the red claws that shred clouds  
like carrion birds at evening,  
    vulture or *corvus corone*,  
hanging the carcass of a day  
before the gawking eyes of all,  
    bespectacled, bemused,  
to begore their bludgeoned  
collapse into oblivion?

The answer comes, as is her wont, in a question:

Is morning more pure then  
when violence is not fresh and bodies  
bathed and perfumed  
in scent of orange or lilac  
fall back upon each other  
in primal innocent embrace before  
day's divorce, which brings  
an onslaught of all necessary things:  
    thought, speech, light, weather,  
and soil? In short,  
of Adam's toil?

Or does the bloody cup unveil  
all too early war within us,  
whose legion factions still  
dispute and spar  
upon our hearts' fields,  
    Antietam, Newtown,  
and spill out over every berg and shire and ville,  
until the bleeding. O the bleeding,  
hands shall stir and staunch our wounding  
and divine transfusion shall  
upon receiving  
all our illness in donating  
human blood  
fill...  
what?

Our hunger or  
a wound at evening,  
woven in that purple ceiling  
where the ravens and the wheeling  
falcons by the tower clock  
    *tick tock*  
feed on carcasses and gawk?

Till their talons turn to elevating  
fingers, and the harpy eagle  
    kingfisher, buzzard, fearful owl, and hawk,  
all assent to hold a council  
summoned by the Lord of Augurs  
who walks as yet unheralded on the dock.





Steven R. Ford photos

The Hoxha Memorial in Tirana, commissioned by dictator Enver Hoxha, lies abandoned and crumbling.

# Imagine No Religion

By Steven R. Ford

“Imagine there’s no heaven,” John Lennon sang in 1971. “It’s easy if you try. No hell below us, above us only sky.” Well, one does not need much imagination in Albania — it’s pretty much everyday reality. According to one recent reckoning, three-quarters of the nation’s residents are self-professed atheists, and only a small number of those who identify as Muslim or Christian actually participate in any religious community.

For a largely atheistic country, Albania has an incredibly rich religious history. St. Paul came to this region, once part of the Roman province of Illyricum, and preached (Rom. 15:19), and a Christian community is known to have existed as early as A.D. 58. By the late 11th century, a Byzantine document described Albanians as “entirely Christian,” with only those in the far north owing allegiance to Rome.

The arrival of Ottoman-Turkish rule in the 15th century saw Islam begin to chip away at the Christian population. Some became Muslim through pure pragmatism: since Islam was the faith of the new ruling class, embracing it could be a path to personal advancement. Others were undoubtedly convinced of the truth of Islam by powerful Muslim preaching. Many more changed religion as a result of strong peer pressure. By the time of independence in 1912, Albania was mostly Muslim, with about a quarter to the population practicing Christianity. An-



Source: Operation World

The Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ (Albanian Orthodox) in Tirana is new but sparsely attended.

A long-closed late medieval church in the former Illyria, near the Kosovo border.

imosity was largely lacking between adherents of the two faiths. Intermarriage was common, and interfaith families freely participated in each other's religious celebrations.

Overt religious conflict dates only from the Italian occupation of 1939-44. Roman Catholics, still numerous in the north and present in tiny numbers elsewhere, came quickly to be perceived as fascist collaborators by Muslims and Orthodox Christians alike. Many were treated shamefully and even martyred.

Enter tobanconist turned Communist activist Enver Hoxha, coming to power at the end of Italian rule. Taking full financial advantage of new religious division, he first seized Catholic property and assets, followed in 1946 by seizing most other Christian and Muslim properties. By the mid-1960s, all places of public worship had been converted to "productive" use. But the loss of property and money hardly kills faith, as the Episcopal Church's wide application of the Dennis Canon has demonstrated.

A new national constitution in 1976 made it clear that the state supported "implant[ing] a scientific materialistic world outlook in the people," and the next year the state outlawed "religious propaganda and the production, distribution, or storage of religious literature," including Bibles and Qur'ans. Penalties for religious "propagandizing" became so severe that even the most ardent Christian and Muslim believers declined to pass on their faith to their children, lest the children tell others and the parents be imprisoned. The result was an entire generation lost to religion altogether.

A lifting of the ban on religion and the subsequent collapse of Communism in the early 1990s brought an influx of foreign funds to build new churches and mosques, and a few of these stand in sharp contrast to the drab functionality of Hoxha-era architecture. The trouble is that few people worship in them. A generation never nurtured in spirituality and "no religion too," in Lennon's words, apparently has no interest in such things. In fact, most who attend worship services today were born before the eclipse of religion.

The current religious situation in Albania shows just how quickly ancient and noble religious traditions can disappear. All it took was a single generation not passing on its faith to the next, and so the new generation has no faith to pass on — no grace, no redemption, no hope of eternal life. "I'll worry about sickness and suffering and dying when they happen," a young man in a Tirana coffee shop told me. And one senses a widespread amorality, particularly in business affairs. Shady get rich quick schemes abound; pirated, counterfeit, and obviously stolen goods are on offer in the markets. "Imagine all the



people living for today," sang Lennon, though it could have been Vladimir Lenin. Many appear to have lives as functional and soulless as Tirana's post-war housing blocks.

It's frequently been pointed out that traditional religion in the developed world is losing a whole generation of young people. This is particularly apparent among Anglicans. Why this is has been widely debated, but the reasons really do not matter. It's happening, and whatever we have done wrong has already been done. A lost generation has no faith story to pass on to the next, and that's how religions die.

While many Episcopal congregations have no young people or young families anymore, a few are blessed with plenty of both and many others still have at least some. If our faith means enough to us that we want our church to continue into the future, we might do well to focus on sharing our faith story with the young. We can do this not only in formal church school settings, but also through equipping and encouraging parents to share faith stories at home. Only our youngest members, after all, can pass on that sustaining faith to the generation that follows. Otherwise, Albania gives a hint of what our future holds.

*The Rev. Steven R. Ford assists at St. James the Apostle, Tempe, Arizona.*





As his final act before retirement on Feb. 8, Bishop Duncan M. Gray III passed the crozier to the Rt. Rev. Brian R. Seage, 10th bishop of Mississippi at the 188th annual council held in Jackson. In his address to council, Bishop Seage called for continued support of building the Mississippi Civil Rights

Museum and renewed the diocese's ongoing efforts toward racial reconciliation in our time. Seage also asked for parishes and individuals to care for those who are recovering from addictions, through education and programs that support sobriety and wellness. Mississippi seeks to maintain theological diversity while continuing to enjoy the noteworthy charism of clergy collegiality which promotes the ecclesiology of Being One Church. Follow #Being1Church on Twitter and log on RtRevDeadHead.com for news of Bishop Seage's ministry.



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- We worship God
- We proclaim the Good News
- We love and forgive
- We live and serve, sharing in Christ's reconciling work in the world
- We believe that God calls everyone to ministry



A LIVING CHURCH Partner

## Alister McGrath

(Continued from page 9)

of all lifestyles and behaviors."

Columnist Ross Douthat of *The New York Times* assured the conference that "secularism is weaker than you think, with cracks almost everywhere. The American elite is disturbingly secular, but secularism doesn't have a hold on the breadth and depth of American culture."

Douthat recounted the unexpected religious revival in the West after World War II. Religious ideas were propounded even among the elites, and the 1940s and 1950s saw a renaissance of Christian humanism in the writings of C.S. Lewis, Walker Percy, Flannery O'Connor, T.S. Eliot, and W.H. Auden. In the early 1960s Roman Catholics moved out of the immigrant ghetto into the American mainstream. Evangelicals moved out of the fundamentalist ghetto. And the black church, which had been culturally marginalized, promoted non-violent resistance that helped the civil rights movement triumph peacefully.

"Ironically, while many in the West now question why one particular religion should have a monopoly on the truth, Christianity is having an explosive growth in the non-Western world," Douthat said.

Mary Eberstadt, senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Centre, spoke of Christian-bashing in the West. New atheism has a "rhetorical viciousness," going so far as to call religious instruction in the home "child abuse."

"Most people don't come to Christ through theology but something quieter: the ordinary rhythm of family life in birth, marriage, and grief," Eberstadt said. "The family has been the human symphony through which the voice of God is heard; there is conversion within the family. Secularism interrupts the transmission of religion."

Os Guinness, a prolific author and social critic, argued that the chief reason for European secularization was a reaction to the oppression and corruption of state churches. Now there is a reaction to the corruptness



The Rev. Alister McGrath talks with the Rt. Rev. N.T. Wright during Mere Anglicanism. Sue Careless photo

and barrenness of secularism. "Atheism is cold, dull, and boring, not wondrous."

The Rev. Alister McGrath, once an atheist, found Christianity a "far more robust and intellectually satisfying explanation of the world than scientific atheism." He holds a doctorate in molecular biophysics as well as in theology and divinity from Oxford University, and is now a professor of science and religion.

McGrath believes secularism is "a glib and shallow rationalism," but warned that we should not lock the gospel in a "rationalist straight-jacket." He appreciates how C.S. Lewis mingles reason and imagination. Reason alone can be "dull and limited," while imagination alone can be "illusory and escapist." We must not reduce Christianity to ideas only but recognize that "imagination is the gateway to the soul."

"With Lewis we think we are listening to an argument, when in reality we are presented with a vision that carries conviction."

There are many stories or explanations of reality, but they cannot all be true, McGrath said. He encouraged those seeking truth to ask two questions: How much sense does this story make of what we observe? How trustworthy is the storyteller? "Then allow your story to be part of the bigger story."

McGrath added: "There is a luminosity and joy in our faith that secular culture does not provide. There is an existential shallowness to secularism and a dullness to atheism. We tell a better story."

Sue Careless

## PEOPLE & PLACES

### Deaths

The Rev. **Robert Lee Ihlefeld**, a priest for 50 years who also taught philosophy, died Feb. 2. He was 78.

Born in Davenport, IA, he was a graduate of Augustana College, Philadelphia Divinity School, and Nashotah House Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1964. He served churches in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, and New Mexico.

He was an adjunct assistant professor of philosophy at Western New Mexico University-Silver City from 1985 to 1990.

He is survived by his wife, Mary; sons Mark, Curtis, and Chris; daughter MaryAnne Elizabeth; a brother, Richard; and grandchildren Benjamin Nels Ihlefeld, Sarah Elizabeth Ihlefeld, Lacie Ihlefeld, and Luke William Ihlefeld.

The Rev. **John Beverley Kelley**, who served churches in Connecticut, Ecuador, Florida, Missouri, New York, and Virginia, died Jan. 2. He was 86.

Born in Miami, he was a graduate of Washington University and Union Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1953. He is survived by his wife, Gwynneth Davis; three sons; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

The Rev. **Robert David Liguori**, who served churches in New York and Florida, died Jan. 6. He was 85.

Born in Walton, NY, he was a graduate of Hartwick College and Yale Divinity School. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1953. Fr. Liguori is survived by Joan M. Schrang Liguori, his wife of 63 years; sons David, Jonathan, Christopher, and Joel; and three grandchildren.

The Rev. **Roland Ashley Timberlake**, a veteran of the U.S. Navy, died Jan. 6. He was 82.

Born in Hebronville, TX, he was a graduate of the University of Texas and Seminary of the Southwest. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1972.

He was a Navy officer and pilot and owned an automobile dealership before his call to ordained ministry.

Fr. Timberlake served parishes in San Antonio and League City before becoming rector of St. Luke's on the Lake, Austin, where he served for 20 years before being named rector emeritus. He was appointed chaplain to retired clergy and spouses in the Austin area.

He is survived by Alice Jean, his wife of 60 years; children, Trent, Claire, and Gayle; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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Christ Church has many opportunities for Christian discipleship. A men's group meets weekly on Thursday morning for study and fellowship, while Daughters of the King and Episcopal Church Women gather regularly for service and spiritual growth. Other Bible studies are available Wednesday evening after the Eucharist and Thursday morning.

Youth group members are actively involved in diocesan, provincial, and national church events.

Our Lord's Pantry opens on Thursday afternoon and serves a cross-section of applicants ranging from the homeless to those who simply need some extra help. The Thrift Shop is open daily to sell gently-used items. All profits go to Christ Church Outreach. Serving in the soup kitchen and visiting the homebound are some of the other ways that members of Christ Church reach out to the community.

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“God spoke all these words” (Ex. 20:1). The subject? *God* spoke all these words. The verb? *God spoke* all these words. The object? *God spoke all these words*. This is slow, of course, but we’re being careful, and care will lead to the road less traveled. While there is a natural homiletic pull toward the enduring words of the Decalogue, even the Decalogue (as we look at *all these words*) will trouble and disturb.

God spoke: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Ex. 20:2). God sets the people free. God spoke: “you shall have no other gods before me” (Ex. 20:3). God will not have the people enslaved to idolatries that would bind their hearts to empty promises, false hopes, and death itself. God speaks, commending the Sabbath rest: “The seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work — you, your son or your daughter, *your male or female slave*” (Ex. 20:10). For freedom not all have been set free. The slave may rest one day of the week, but the slave lives in the house of slavery every moment of every week.

Is this a *Word of the Lord*? The Bible tells me so. So the Bible troubles, and trouble is the hermeneutic task. It’s not a question of trying to escape a trap, but of feeling and facing the problem. And because slavery is a strong Christian metaphor, the question must be confronted. St. Paul opens his great Epistle to the Romans, introducing himself in these words: “I Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ.” The metaphor, no doubt, had special poignancy because the institution was yet alive and well. In many ways, it still is.

Does God sanction slavery? Many theologians have said yes. We have moved on from those days, but not far. The great comedian Paul Mooney often corrects cantankerous white people who say, “That was 400 years ago. Get over it.” Mooney quips, “Two grandmothers ago, you could have

owned me, us!” It’s awful, terrible, disturbing: human depravity on display.

The Bible is open, but I see through a glass dimly. Who am I to interpret the Bible? When Christ called me, he put scales to my eyes. He told me, “You don’t know anything.” Then, by his sovereign and compassionate command, he said, “Be opened.” Scales fell and yet my vision was unclear. I saw trees walking. Then a translucent and radiant Jesus stood before me, close to me, so close I could see the world only through him. There I saw, in all its complex beauty, one new humanity. I no longer heard the word of the Lord; I looked through it.

I could see that for freedom Christ set us free. If there is something human he has not assumed, he has not saved it. And if he leaves a mere fragment behind, is all lost? O Jesus, you have told me. On the cross, the icon of scandal and folly, the power of God was at work in your death. Who died? Who died when the temple of your body fell? The old human being — deviant and cruel — was fixed to the cross with Christ, and with the voice of our humanity Christ cried, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (see Gal. 2:20 and Augustine’s commentary on Ps. 140:4-6). In Christ, the sick *me* is dead!

Let the old Adam go. Let freedom be and work in the one Christ whose blood is a torrent of love

### Look It Up

Read Psalm 19:3.

### Think About It

You died with Christ. Now live with him in your new humanity.

## Biting Snakes and Startling Life

A Canaanite snake cult gives graphic detail to this tale in the valley of the shadow of death, where there is no water and no food, and where serpents bite. The question is inevitable, a wailing lament. “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?” (Num. 21:5). The answer is embedded in the question, for the people who cross the Red Sea die in the Sinai Peninsula and their heirs alone cross the parted Jordan to enter the Land of Promise. Even those who go the way of all flesh on the Exodus route, however, get epiphanies of new life. Looking to the bronze serpent lifted high, a type of the One lifted for the life of the world, they live. They die and they live, and they die and they live. And one day heirs of the promise so live as to escape the cycle of life and death, death being swallowed up by life itself, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Christians look back to see their own wilderness, a recent past, vivid and still strong. “You were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked [not *lived*], following the course of this world, following the rulers of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ... [W]e were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else” (Eph. 2:1-3). It is troubling to admit the extent to which we are as yet like everyone else. We may sing Jesus to the high heavens and yet walk just as others walk. In some measure, this should anchor the Christian soul and body to the human soil of humility. We should never say, “God, I thank you that I am not like other people” (Luke 18:11).

While we have more than reason to be humble, we also have reason to glorify God. For God, “who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, *made us alive together with Christ ... and raised us up with him and seated us with him* in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus”

(Eph. 2:4-6). Single verbs express the idea of being co-vivified, co-raised, co-seated, emphasizing that the head of the body and the members of the body are one mystical Christ.

Together with Christ, our life is new, and yet there is no ground for boasting. “This is not our doing,” the translators say, telling the truth of words to follow — “not the result of works” (Eph. 2:8-9). But the first remark may be better rendered as “this is not of you.” Not only what we do, but even what we think or feel, no matter how pious the thought or sentiment, make no claim upon salvation. The mystery of our saving is hidden in the secrecy and security of the one God who is rich in mercy. While not of us, salvation is for us and for a work prepared in the chamber of all benevolence, all good will, and all perfect execution. God gives us a “way of life” (Eph. 2:10). So there are deeds that are done in God (John 3:21).

Lest a prudent humility lead to total despair, we return often to the mercy of God, “the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7). Looking up to Jesus, we behold and believe a new life, one in which we are not condemned, but created and called. Created as what the KJV accurately named *his workmanship*, or, as elsewhere translated, *his masterpiece*. So beautified, walk!

### Look It Up

Read Ephesians 2:1-10.

### Think About It

Do your own slow reading.



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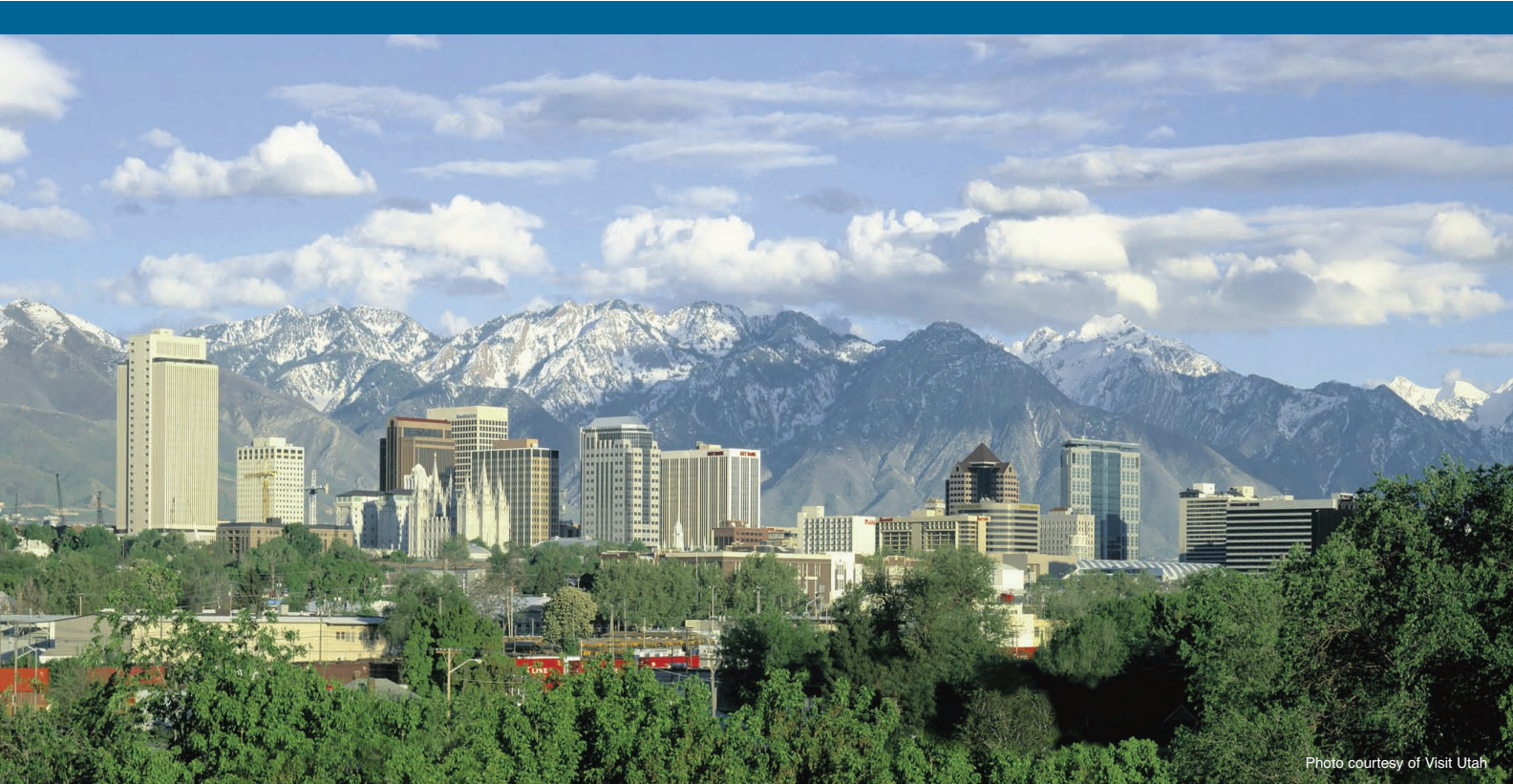


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