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## ON THE COVER

Bishop Curry: “The goal of evangelism is really you being able to share your journey with me, and me with you” (see “Evangelism Matters — and It’s Possible,” p. 4).

Opposite page: Carrie Boren Headington, left, and Stephanie Spellers were co-presenters during a session at Evangelism Matters.

Richard Hill photos

# THE LIVING CHURCH

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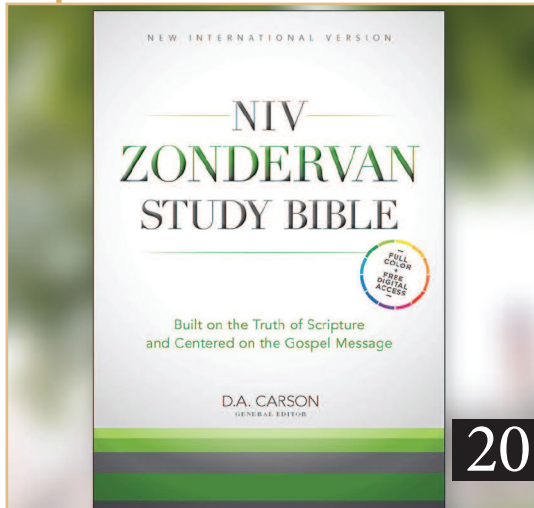
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# Evangelism Matters — and It's Possible

The Lausanne Covenant, largely written by the late Anglican evangelist John Stott, states that “evangelism requires the whole Church to take the whole gospel to the whole world.” During the Evangelism Matters conference in Dallas on Nov. 18-19, Episcopalians discussed their part in that task.

More than 400 conference participants and 75 volunteers converged on the Church of the Transfiguration to respond to Presiding Bishop Michael Curry’s call to create space for evangelism. Since his election, Curry has sometimes described himself as Chief Evangelism Officer of the Episcopal Church. The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers said that Evangelism Matters is meant to “inspire, equip, and send evangelists” and to “create life-giving, loving, liberating relationships with God, with each other, and with the whole world.”

Throughout the conference, speakers urged Episcopalians to embrace evangelism — jokingly referred to as “the E word” — claiming it was not new to the Anglican tradition. Recalling the Vatican’s lending of the crozier of St. Gregory the Great to the Anglican Communion’s Primates’ Meeting in January, Curry reminded the gathering that the pontiff sent evangelists like St. Augustine of Canterbury “not to have tea with the queen ... but to tell of the love of Christ.” The only reason Episcopalians exist, he said, “was because someone was doing evangelism.”

## The Whole Church

The fresh fruits of those ancient evangelistic roots showed in participants’ diversity. In addition to clergy and laity from across the country, the gathering included missionaries from Hawaii, Mexico, and the Dominican



Richard Hill photo

The Most Rev. Josiah Idowu-Fearon: “This is good practice. I think Africans need to hear this, Asians need to hear this, the English also need to hear this. I mean, 400-plus Episcopalians coming together to rub minds, to actually look at the content of what the gospel is. It is great news, and I think people should hear.”

Republic. Many spoke Spanish regularly in keynote sessions and worship.

“I’ve gone to so many conferences where I’m one of very few people of color in the room,” the Rev. Marcus Halley, a panelist from the Diocese of Western Missouri, told TLC. “Here, we have so many voices, people not even from the U.S. In a world spinning to the edges, we have a message that can unite and bring us back to each other.”

For Halley, this diversity included the spectrum of theological perspectives. “Speaking as a queer person, I’ve seen a tendency on all sides to label and dismiss,” he said. “One thing I’m hearing here is that we have to enter into deep relationships and hear the real concerns and hear God even in what is really hard to hear, including those voices we’ve taken for granted and don’t really want to hear. We’re

better in this together.”

Participants heard how evangelism provides an opportunity for those often considered marginalized to find a voice of leadership in the church. “Since evangelism itself has for a long time been marginalized, the folks who have traditionally embraced it and feel comfortable with it are those who are willing to take risks, who know they can’t just sit, know that there’s something at stake,” Spellers said. “That urgency propels a lot of us.”

Spellers, a conference organizer and canon to the presiding bishop for evangelism and reconciliation, spoke to the inextricability of these two tasks. She lamented progressives’ willingness in the last decade to dismiss other Christians.

“Here we are without a lot of folks who had [evangelism] as their bread and butter. If we had said, ‘We love you

and we need you because Jesus is asking us to do something we don't know how to do in the liberal mainline tradition, but you do," Spellers told TLC. "I wish we'd said that sooner."

Efforts to reconcile these various perspectives were not lost on the Most Rev. Josiah Idowu-Fearon, secretary general of the Anglican Communion, who attended Evangelism Matters at Curry's invitation.

"To be honest, I wasn't expecting the sort of stories and experiences I have been hearing," he said. "The general impression in the greater communion is that the Episcopal Church does nothing but discuss human sexuality, moving from one crisis to another. And I feel it is my responsibility as secretary general to share the good practice I find in the various parts of the communion.

"This is good practice. I think Africans need to hear this, Asians need to hear this, the English also need to hear this. I mean, 400-plus Episcopalians coming together to rub minds, to actually look at the content of what the gospel is," Idowu-Fearon said. "It is great news, and I think people should hear."

In an address to the gathering, he echoed another theme: that evangelism is the work of the whole Church. "This is the Jesus movement, not the Michael Curry movement," he said, "and to make sure this outlives Michael Curry, we must plead with our bishops to become chief evangelism officers of their dioceses, priests of their parishes, and each member of their own families."

The Rev. Eric McIntosh, a priest and church planter from Pittsburgh, was eager to accept the challenge. "What's happening is, we have permission now," he said. "We have it at the top, we have it at the bottom, and now it's meeting in the middle. What's happening is that now there's this wave, and I'm getting excited."

### The Whole World

While differences remain, participants seemed united around the belief that the world needs what the Church has to offer, particularly in light of the deep divisions exposed by the presi-

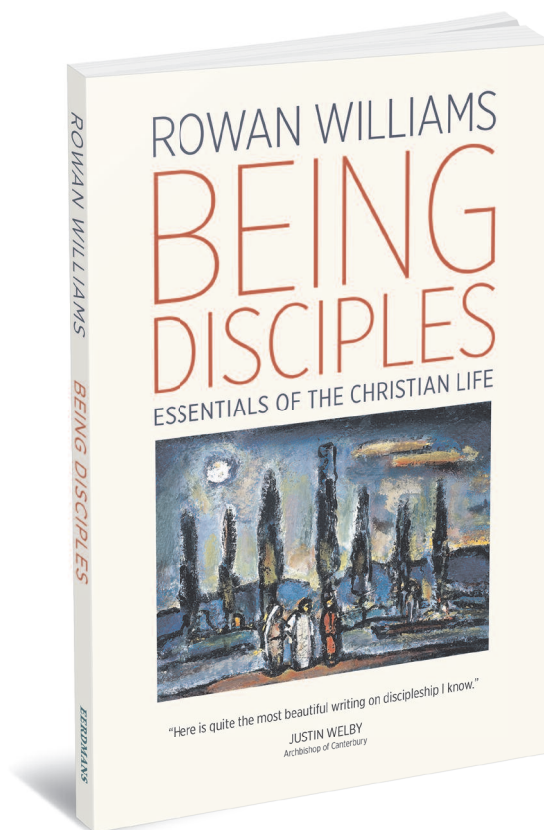
dential election. During the opening plenary conversation, congregational development consultant Mary Parmer expressed her hope that "we as Episcopalians can be a light — one of the least judgmental lights — in a broken world, if we can just learn to tell our stories."

Halley agreed with her, adding: "The challenge and the opportunity are one and the same: the need to speak and act above all of the noise that we see all around us.

"So much of what passes for Christianity in our world is sort of lazy theological Pablum. We have to have a narrative that is able to speak above the noise, point us to a greater reality. If we can raise ourselves and our voices into that space, I think we will meet the Holy Spirit there."

The Rev. Scott Gunn, conference co-organizer and executive director of Forward Movement, spoke to the discipleship the church can offer above

(Continued on next page)



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## Evangelism Conference

(Continued from previous page)

such noise. “Too often in the Episcopal Church, our social teaching can appear to sound like the Democratic Party at prayer. But that can’t be what this is about. This is not a partisan thing. It is to ask, as disciples, what justice looks like,” he said. “And then we can say together, ‘In the name of Jesus I reject racism; in the name of Jesus, I reject sexism and xenophobia.’ Because the gospel is inherently liberating. If you follow it to its greatest conclusion, terrorists, Donald Trump, and Hillary [Clinton] are all made in God’s image. That’s not partisan. God in Jesus offers us hope that we just don’t get anywhere else.”

Speakers repeatedly stressed deep sharing and listening to one another’s stories as the primary tools of evangelism.

Asked about the role of evangelism in the charged aftermath of the elections, Bishop Curry turned to his roots in Buffalo. There, he said, steel mills and industry once reigned but are now gone and “it ain’t coming back.”

Racism may drive some groups, but the election was about more, he said. “There’s a deep-seated frustration and fear for the future.”

Curry said it may be “corny” to talk about sharing stories but that it is a part of the work of evangelizing. “The longer-term solutions are relational,” he said. “Like James Baldwin said in *Nobody Knows My Name*, as long as we don’t know each other’s name there will always be space for animosity. And the long-term goal of evangelism is really you being able to share your journey with me, and me with you.

“Racial reconciliation only really happens when I can share my life with you and you with me, and we can both find our way home.”

### Whose Gospel?

Participants told TLC that much work remains to be done, particularly in ensuring that it is the whole gospel being brought by the whole Church to

the whole world. The Rt. Rev. George Sumner, Bishop of Dallas, reminded participants that the original context of the word *evangelism* had to do with announcing a very particular message. “All evangelism,” he said, “must come back to the taproot, which is King Jesus on the way to Jerusalem, in whose wake you and I are walking.”

Evangelists need to understand the particularity of the Christian gospel. “In a world of diversity,” said the Rev. Robert Hendrickson of Arizona, “we have to have some faculty to say what is unique about us and the distinctive, decisive nature of Christian encounter with the cross.”

Carrie Boren Headington, missionary for evangelism in the Diocese of Dallas and co-organizer of the conference, agreed. “I think this has been an amazing conference, a phenomenal launch pad,” she told TLC. “Up until now, what we’ve needed more than methods is motivation. Here, the love of Jesus, the joy of Jesus, the joy of proclamation, the call to be ambassadors, has been emphasized, and for this first conference, that’s what we needed more than anything, to light the fire. And it’s lit.”

“But the next step is in the equipping,” she said. “We need to think through together what *is* the good news we are actually proclaiming, because what has emerged from this conference is that while there are lots of ways into sharing that good news, there is a central core — and that is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In a room with many different understandings of that, we need to get clearer on soteriology, eschatology, and what the cross and resurrection actually mean. Above all, it is about the love of Jesus, but we need to get specific about the nuances of that love so people can articulate it.”

The encounter of diverse theological perspectives seemed to challenge and inspire new engagements along these lines. During a familiar homiletic set-piece on the Christian message of love, Curry, preaching at the opening Eucharist, added a striking theological twist by reminding listeners that baptism is an immersion in the life of Jesus. This, he said, is “really immer-

sion in the fullness of the life of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.” With a playful glance toward Bishop Sumner, listening from his seat a few feet away, he said: “And according to St. Augustine of Hippo — no flaming liberal, to be sure — the internal life of the Trinity is the life of love, cohering and giving itself life and pouring out and giving life to the world.”

Many speakers discussed the need for continued accountability and practice in becoming an evangelizing church. “We’ve hinted at it, but discipleship and evangelism are inseparable,” Gunn said. “Evangelism is simply a part of the practice of discipleship, and I hope we continue to focus on the importance of the latter. You can’t give what you don’t have. And if I don’t know Jesus deeply, it’s hard for me to share him with others.”

Spellers agreed. Regarding reconciling evangelism and doctrine, she emphasized the importance of becoming immersed not just in our story but in the story of Scripture. “You can’t make this stuff up, and you *should* not make this stuff up,” she told TLC. “If we are rooted in Scripture, learning and looking for the signs of Jesus we see in Scripture, then we’ll be able to find and bring real healing.”

The urge to feel good should not obscure the true nature of the cross — “real healing, real loving, life-giving, liberating relationships,” Spellers said. “Reconciling all this together is going to take hard work. But I’m not afraid of that hard work of discernment, and I don’t think any of us needs to be either.”

The message of Evangelism Matters was that despite this remaining work, evangelism indeed matters and is possible. Like Augustine of Canterbury and the countless Canterbury pilgrims who followed, and in the words of the Lausanne Covenant, evangelism is enlivened by the whole Church sharing stories and hopes and is compelled by the love of Christ, helping each other and the world find the way home.

“This is nothing new,” Spellers said. “And yet it’s a new day in the Episcopal Church.”

*Matthew Martin Nickoloff*

# Reconciliation or Resistance?

The election of Donald Trump to serve as the next president of the United States has spurred commentary from prominent Episcopalians both concerned and optimistic about Trump's administration.

Both before and after the election, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry offered reflection on prayer and reconciliation.

"Last week I shared what I pray was a reconciling post-election message to our church, reminding us that 'we will all live together as fellow Americans, as citizens,'" Curry said. "Today I want to remind us that during moments of transition, during moments of tension, it is important to affirm our core identity and values as followers of Jesus in the Episcopal Anglican way."

Curry said that "the Episcopal Church welcomes you" should be more than a slogan, affirming the baptismal covenant "to proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ; to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves; to strive for justice and peace among all people; and to respect the dignity of every human being."

"As Christians, we believe that all humans are created in God's image and equal before God — those who may be rejoicing as well as those who may be in sorrow."

Curry said the church would maintain its commitment to supporting refugees, immigrants, and undocumented people — along with others in the margins of society. "We reaffirm that like all people LGBT persons are entitled to full civil rights and protection under the law. We reaffirm and renew the principles of inclusion and the protection of the civil rights of all persons with disabilities. We commit to the honor and dignity of women and speak out against sexual or gender-based violence. We express solidarity with and honor the Indigenous Peoples of the world. We affirm the right to freedom of religious expression and vibrant presence of different religious communities, especially our Muslim sisters and brothers."

Trump's victory came as a surprise to many Americans, including Richelle Thompson, managing editor at Forward Movement. In the Episcopal Church Foundation's *Vital Practices* blog, Thompson wrote about her anticipation of seeking reconciliation with Trump supporters after a Clinton victory.

"I planned to be a gracious winner the week after the election," she said. "I wasn't going to rub it in the faces of folks who had been Donald Trump supporters. My social media presence would be demure, and while I expected to dance a little jig inside, my public persona would call for unity and broad arms to encircle the disenfranchised."

Thompson said she was unaware of the depth of betrayal many Americans felt by the reigning political establishment. "I didn't know because I didn't listen. I didn't know because I didn't think I had to."

Before the election, Thompson wrote an election meditation calling Episcopalians to set aside both gloating and disappointment.

"And I really meant it — when I wrote it a year ago before the mud-slinging of the election season began in earnest and when I read it again yesterday," she said. "I really believe we must work to build common ground, through conversation and connection and through prayer of all sorts, from all traditions."

"But here is my confession: I thought I would be doing this re-unification work from the perspective as winner. It was a lot easier to promise to be humble when I privately thought my side would win."

Thompson said the challenge now is "to be in community with people who have different political beliefs and experiences."

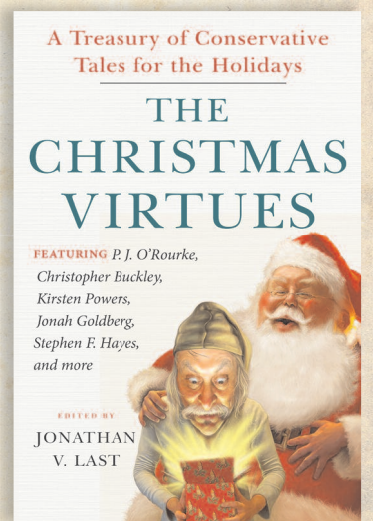
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## "On Christmas, you honor the Holy Family while rolling your eyes at your own."

-Jonathan V. Last

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## Election Commentary

(Continued from previous page)

She added, “I wanted, really wanted, to be a gracious winner, but maybe there’s greater opportunity for change if I can learn how to be a gracious loser.”

Another Episcopalian seeking opportunity in the aftermath of the election was the Rev. Tim Schenck, co-creator of Lent Madness. On his *Clergy Confidential* weblog, Schenck posted that Trump’s election could be “the best thing to ever happen to the church.”

Schenck said he moved through feelings of grief into joy, an “abiding trust in God’s merciful presence.” It is in this sense, he said, that the election of Trump may be good for the church. “Not the country or people on the margins or the world, mind you, but the church. Because we have a unique and biblical opportunity to seize the moral initiative and offer a powerful counter-voice to the forces of violence and oppression. The church that takes seriously Jesus’ radical message of inclusion will not only be relevant but will play a critical role in shaping the future trajectory of our nation.”

The election presents an opportunity for Christians to reclaim a prophetic voice, recognize “our one Lord,” stand with people on the margins, make sacrifices, resist, and embrace hope, Schenck wrote. “This will not be an easy time. There will be times of trial and persecution. Times when all feels lost and hopeless. But we are a Resurrection people, imbued with a sense of hope that can never be driven out.”

To William Murchison, author of *Mortal Follies: Episcopalians and the Crisis of Mainline Christianity*, Trump’s election signals a major shift in America’s understanding of itself, with opportunities to question assumptions about the United States and to reshape the media. “What the presidential election seems to have achieved is less the enthronement of a new governing class than the aborning recognition that another America lies to the west of the Appalachians and the east of the Rock-

ies,” Murchison wrote in his syndicated column.

“The Columboes of the media have discovered, in their embarrassment, an America that spurned recommendations (commands?) to vote for Hillary Clinton. Of the media’s take on all this, the *Columbia Journalism Review’s* editor-in-chief, Kyle Pope, declared this week the need for ‘diversifying our newsrooms so they more accurately reflect the country we’re supposed to be covering’ (with opinion, he added, isolated from reporting),” Murchison said.

In an essay published by Religion News Service, the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, wrote that Trump’s election calls the church to consider resistance over reconciliation. “The desire to foster ‘reconciliation’ is deep in Christians’ bones, and it crops up in just about every statement about the election I have seen from a mainline church leader, but too often the church preaches reconciliation when what we really want is to avoid unpleasantness or get approval from worldly powers and principalities,” she said.

Jennings believes Trump’s rhetoric and Vice President-elect Pence’s beliefs about same-sex attraction may make reconciliation impossible. “Reconciliation, then, may be out of reach, and it may be pastorally inappropriate for the church even to suggest it to people who now have legitimate reasons to be afraid.”

Like Curry, Jennings cited the baptismal promises, stating that they can bring Christians into conflict with secular power. “Reconciliation is holy work. Resistance is too,” she said. “We need to watch and wait to see what God is calling us to do.”

Clergy in Minnesota took up the spirit of resistance with a denunciatory letter, which argued that “overt sexism, corruption, xenophobia, racism, homophobia, and Islamophobia have not only been undercurrents of our political rhetoric this year, but, in many cases, prominent features of it.”

More than 90 clergy signed the letter declaring support for marginalized people. “We reject the notion that one group of people benefit only at the expense of another group. We will not sit

idly by and allow the rights and dignity of any of our community to be threatened or revoked,” they said. “To any of our neighbors who find themselves the target of discrimination, racism, Islamophobia, homophobia, sexism, or any kind of bigotry — we are with you. We pledge our support as leaders in the wider community, that we will stand between you and injustice. Our doors are open and our faith communities are safe spaces to any who need them.”

Like American religious leaders, the Archbishop of Canterbury responded to the election by calling for reconciliation and for prayer.

“As President-elect Donald Trump prepares to take office, my continuing prayers are that the United States of America may find reconciliation after a bitter campaign, and that Mr. Trump may be given wisdom, insight, and grace as he faces the tasks before him,” Archbishop Justin Welby wrote. “Together we pray for all the people of the United States.”

Matthew Townsend

### In the Episcopal Church

## Vandals Target Churches

Racially charged vandalism at Episcopal congregations in Maryland and Indiana have left some wondering if Nov. 8’s presidential election set loose a new wave of old hatred in America.

On Nov. 12 someone scrawled “Trump Nation” and “Whites Only” on a sign advertising a Spanish-language Eucharist at Church of Our Saviour in Silver Spring, Maryland. A wall in the parish’s memorial garden was defaced with the same message.

“I am heartsick, and can only imagine how the people of Our Saviour, one of the most culturally diverse parishes in the diocese, feel,” said the Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde, Bishop of Washington, via Facebook. Budde attended Our Saviour’s Spanish-language worship on Nov. 13 and invited other members of the diocese to stand in solidarity with the congregation.

The sign was cut in several places,



WUSA-TV reported. No arrests have been made.

Vandals also struck at St. David's in Bean Blossom, Indiana, about 40 miles south of Indianapolis. There, graffiti saying "Heil Trump" and "Fag Church" accompanied a spray-painted swastika. Parishioners found the graffiti when they arrived for church on Sunday, WTHR-TV reported.

"We don't need to be moving forward with hate, and when it is presented to us, it's an opportunity to witness," said the Rev. Kelsey Hutto, priest-in-charge at St. David's, in an interview with WTHR. "It's an opportunity to testify to the love of God."

St. David's and Our Savior were not the only churches to suffer vandalism in recent days. Members of Ward African Methodist Episcopal Church in Scottsville, Kentucky, came to worship on Nov. 13 to find their building in disarray.

"They stole our sound system. ... We had crosses and Bibles and everything and they had just thrown them all on the floor," treasurer Shirley Buntun told WBKO-TV. "And then they went on back in the office and proceeded to tear it up."

Vandals have targeted other public buildings. Multiple incidents have been reported in South Philadelphia, where a storefront was painted with "siege heil" and swastikas. In Wellsville, New York, the words "Make America White Again" with a swastika were painted on a wall at a softball field. Reports of harassment are also up.

President-elect Donald Trump has condemned acts of harassment and vandalism. In an interview on *60 Minutes* Nov. 13, Trump turned directly to the camera and said, "Stop it."

## From Kansas to New York

The Rt. Rev. Dean E. Wolfe, Bishop of Kansas since 2004, will soon leave his see in Topeka for a rectorate in New York City.

"It's hard to judge the right time to leave a great ministry. Leave too early and you haven't accomplished what God intended," he wrote in a letter to the diocese. "Leave too late and you

frustrate the Spirit's intentions. I believe, however, it's best to leave a little too early than to leave a little too late.

"So, after a period of deep and prayerful discernment, I have decided to accept a new call to serve as rector of St. Bart's Episcopal Church in New York City, beginning February 5, 2017."

In his letter, Wolfe praised the initiatives launched within the diocese, including a school for ministry, campus ministries, and refugee resettlement programs. "We have raised up a cadre of gifted younger clergy to serve the diocese, and our spiritual health is sound. I have been privileged to pray at your hospital bedsides, bury your relatives, celebrate your triumphs, and find consolation with you in your defeats."

St. Bart's, founded in 1835, is a congregation of about 3,000 members in midtown Manhattan. Bishop Wolfe was among the nominees when the Diocese of Pennsylvania elected its 16th bishop.

## Bishop Harry Shipp Dies at 90

The Rt. Rev. Harry Woolston Shipp, Bishop of Georgia from 1983 to 1994, died Nov. 17 with his beloved wife, Louise, by his side. He was 90.



Shipp

"He was a man of great character and purpose, always ready to listen and offer good counsel," said the Rt. Rev. Scott Anson Benhase, Bishop of Georgia. "He was enormously helpful to me as one who had sat in the chair I now occupy. I could always count on him to give me perspective and needed humor on the office of bishop. He was a great leader of this diocese because he loved God's people so much. He was, quite simply and humbly, a disciple of Jesus."

A native of Bordentown, New Jersey, Bishop Shipp was a graduate of Bordentown Military Institute, and the New York State Maritime Academy. He was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Maritime Service in 1946. He sailed on a troop ship, then with Grace Line Steamship Com-

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## Bishop Shippo

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pany, until called to active duty in the Navy during the Korean War. He was assigned to a Naval facility in Savannah, then to shipboard duty in the North Atlantic.

He married Louise Huntington in 1953.

After his discharge from active duty, he attended Sewanee's School of Theology as a postulant sponsored by the Collegiate Church of St. Paul the Apostle in Savannah. He was ordained a deacon in 1958 and a priest in January 1959.

He was first assigned by Bishop Albert Rhett Stuart as vicar of St. Mark's Church in Albany. Later, he served parishes in Savannah and Augusta. Before his election as bishop, he served as diocesan secretary, editor of the diocesan newspaper, member of Diocesan Council, president of the standing committee, and as a deputy to three General Conventions.

He was rector of St. Alban's, Augusta, and dean of the Augusta Convocation when he was elected bishop coadjutor on September 15, 1983. He was consecrated on January 6, 1984, and became diocesan bishop in 1985 upon the retirement of Bishop Paul Reeves.

Bishop Shippo was initially opposed to the ordination of women to the priesthood, primarily because of his concerns about how it would affect ecumenical relations with the Roman Catholic Church. But early in his episcopate he began a process to hear the diverse diocesan positions on the ordination of women, which the Episcopal Church permitted after its 1976 General Convention.

Bishop Shippo ordained Susan Harrison as a deacon in September 1985. Sonia Sullivan-Clifton was ordained to the priesthood in 1993.

Bishop Shippo and the Most Rev. Raymond W. Lessard, Roman Catholic Bishop of Savannah and a fellow ecumenist, held several joint clergy conferences with speakers from both churches. This cooperation led to a

covenant between the two dioceses calling for a number of mutual ministries and responsibilities.

After his retirement as Bishop of Georgia in 1995, Bishop Shippo served as Assistant Bishop of Dallas for four years.

In addition to his wife, Bishop Shippo is survived by daughters Ruth Shippo, Susan Anderson, and Rebecca Eidson; a son, David Shippo; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

A requiem Eucharist was celebrated Nov. 22 at the Collegiate Church of St. Paul the Apostle.

The diocese welcomes gifts in memory of Bishop Shippo.

## \$3.5 Million to Nashotah

Nashotah House Theological Seminary has received a \$3.5 million commitment from the Order of St. Benedict Servants of Christ to carry on the order's legacy.

An endowed fund will support the St. Benedict Servants of Christ Professorship in Ascetical Theology and Monastic Studies and an annual international conference on religious life and Anglicanism named for the order.

The Very Rev. Dom Cornelis deRijk, a priest and Benedictine monk, and the Rev. Canon Lewis Long founded the order in Phoenix in 1968. The Priory of the Servants of Christ is a Benedictine community guided by the balance of prayer, study, and work. DeRijk received a Master of Divinity degree from Nashotah House in 1976. He died unexpectedly on Sept. 24 of this year.

As membership diminished, it became clear to deRijk that the order needed to leave a legacy that would recognize and carry on the Benedictine values at its core.

"The Benedictine way of spirituality is a cornerstone of the Nashotah House ethos," said the Very Rev. Steven A. Peay, dean and president of Nashotah House. "As we practice the Benedictine disciplines of work, study, and prayer together, the members of our community grow in faith, hope, and a love beyond words. This generous gift-

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investment will honor the order's legacy of service, keeping it alive in perpetuity."

## Russell Artifacts Saved

The Brunswick County/Lake Gaston Tourism Association in southern Virginia worked with the now-closed St. Paul's College to preserve historic items related to James Solomon Russell. The association and college preserved historical artifacts, records, photographs, memorabilia, and other items documenting the life of Russell and the college he founded.

A committee has been formed to start work on creating the James Solomon Russell/St. Paul's College Museum and Archive.

"This new museum will be a great asset to this community, both alumni groups and all visitors who want to research and browse the works of this distinguished intellectual pioneer," said James Grimstead, chairman of the committee.

## EDS Net Assets Drop 11 Percent

Episcopal Divinity School's assets declined by 11 percent in the last fiscal year, according to a statement made by the Rev. Gary Hall and Canon Bonnie Anderson after an EDS board of trustees meeting on Oct. 27-29.

"This follows a decrease of nearly \$6.5 million (8.5%) in 2015. As the fiduciary stewards of EDS's assets and mission, we are obviously dismayed at the size of EDS's losses, but the news has redoubled our commitment to finding a more sustainable and prudent future for the seminary by the end of fiscal year 2017," the statement said.

"As we said in July, the timing of the board's decision to pursue a new direction for EDS was based in part on having adequate resources for student, faculty, and staff transitions.

"In September, we approved a generous severance plan that will cost approximately \$2.5 million if all benefits are claimed. At our meeting in Cambridge, we also committed to adapting the plan as appropriate to meet the

needs of individual employees."

Hall and Anderson said the New Directions Committee had reviewed nine proposals for EDS's future and narrowed them down to three finalists. "Between now and our February meeting, several board members will join Anthony Ruger, an expert in seminary sustainability who is serving as consultant to the process, on site visits to each potential partner. We hope the process will be complete by February, making it possible for the board to decide at our next meeting which partnership to pursue for the most faithful and sustainable future for EDS."

## Kentucky Priest Joins Ordinariate

A glance at the website of the Community of Our Lady and St. John in Louisville, Kentucky, shows a community "in the process of entering into full communion with the Catholic Church through the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter."

Members are currently led by a former Episcopal priest, Jonathan Erdman. They began in Lent of 2016 as a community of Christians gathering at Fr. Erdman's home for worship, mutual support, and friendship. This group included both former lifelong Episcopalians and those who were Baptists, Lutherans, and Presbyterians. They now gather for regular prayer, study, discussion, and fellowship and attend Mass together at St. Martin of Tours.

Fr. Erdman resigned from Calvary Church, Louisville, in December 2015, amid pressures to celebrate weddings for

same-sex couples. He is now in formation to become a Roman Catholic priest.

*Ordinariate News*

## In the Anglican Communion

### Archbishop Welby: Eschew 'Bonkers'

The Archbishop of Canterbury has bewailed an ignorance about religion that lumps jihadists and Anglican Christians together and dismisses them as "bonkers."

Speaking to head teachers of Church of England schools, Archbishop Justin Welby singled out the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defense. He said it is "desperately trying to catch up, to understand a world in which they have no grip on what it is to be religious at all, where religious illiteracy is prevalent and extremely destructive of understanding, and where they can't see really the difference between an extremist Muslim group like the Muslim Brotherhood and a sort of conservative evangelical group in a Church of England church."

It is "fine to reject and condemn many of the things done in the name of religion," he said. But it is just as important to "understand what it is that can so catch hold of someone that they think life itself is not worth living if that contradicts what they believe."

## Ugandan Court Affirms Archbishop

Uganda's High Court has dismissed a case against Archbishop Stanley Nta-

*(Continued on page 24)*

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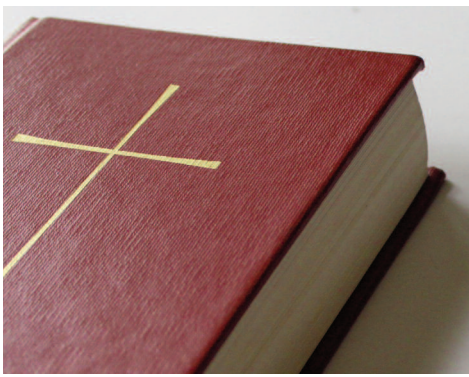
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## Necessary or Expedient?

A teaching series on prayer book revision

# Common Prayer, Common Purpose

By Robert Hendrickson

On the morning after Election Day, 11 people gathered in our chapel at St. Philip's in the Hills in Tucson. We were a small body of the faithful (though somewhat more than gathers on other mornings) who came together to pray words that would have been familiar to those who prayed after the World Trade Center's towers fell. They would have been familiar to those who prayed as a space shuttle came apart in a clear sky, when a president and civil-rights leaders were assassinated, as Iowa boys landed on a French beach. They would have been familiar to those who have prayed through countless disasters, calamities, and mornings after.

We prayed Morning Prayer, Rite I, which begins on page 37 of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.

On countless mornings after, throughout our nation's history and long before, we have prayed. We have prayed for justice and mercy, for peace and prosperity, for loving-kindness and forgiveness. We have prayed that the Lord would show mercy upon us and guide us in the way of justice and peace.

Some in the chapel, no doubt, prayed with sadness. Others may have offered prayers of thanksgiving. Yet, gathered in that small room were not just the 11 of us. Gathered there, in our prayers, were the countless men and women who had prayed in that room before, who had prayed and still do today with the prayers we have been given as a gift and inheritance. You could hear echoes in the officiant's voice, which hesitated just a little, when she said, "Lord, keep this nation under thy care."

Since my arrival as rector not long ago, we have talked much about the Book of Common Prayer. We have talked about its theological premises and about its role as a foundational source for our particular branch of the Church. We have talked about its meaning, rich poetry, and historical significance. We have returned to it as the primary source for our liturgical life.

The Book of Common Prayer exists, in no small part, to

be a tool for our transformation. In its pages is the promise that we who pray regularly will be changed wholly. This is not by chance but by the disciplined engagement of the community with the Holy Spirit who has inspired its crafting. This is not mystical but utterly and completely practical. It is a source of unity that is effected when we speak its words and honor its promises. It binds us to one another and gives direction to our shared search for Christ's enduring and abiding mercy.

With the advent of *Enriching our Worship* and other options for worship, individual communities often seek to use their liturgical time together to speak truth to power in some way and to remind themselves of their Christian obligations to strive for the dignity of every person. The problem is the increasing disconnect between what worship is and what its purpose is.

Ultimately, worship is an expression of our desire to be united with Christ as a community of faithful, failing people. In baptism and the Eucharist, we are given the most fleeting of glimpses of the deepest permanent reality: we are at one with Christ. All we can do in worship is give thanks, lay ourselves at the foot of the throne of grace, and offer all that we are, just as we have on so many mornings after for centuries past and will for centuries to come.

Worship is not meant to be a didactic exercise by which we talk about justice. It is designed to clothe us in the fullness of Christ, and by doing so empower us to proclaim justice at every turn of our lives and beyond. The echoed prayers of that morning after Election Day held the promise that generations had prayed those prayers and that we who gathered were manifesting hope, praying a unity into existence and sharing a unity given in crèche and Cross.

That encounter with Christ takes place within the gathered body. It takes place within the shared hopes, memories, and aspirations of a people who find him together in Word and Sacrament. It takes place within and beyond history. It takes place before and after death. It is always being offered. It takes the whole body of the Church to begin to express our thanks for the gift offered in Christ. It takes the whole

body of the Church with one voice offering thanks and receiving new hope. It trains us to see all of Creation through the light of God's ideal.

The prayer book leads us to a more just Church. Justice is not each of our individual conceptions of right and wrong being traded about until someone makes better choices. Justice is not being made to feel bad so that we take part in wan acts of charity. Justice is the whole turning of ourselves, our communities, and our Church to the will and mind of Christ. It is finding such unity with Christ and one another that we can do nothing but act justly.

This will not happen in antiseptic, didactic chats about God or through the creativity of especially enlightened communities. Our shared language in the prayer book is the expression of our communities' many different hopes across the centuries. It gives voice to the shared knowledge that we are being brought together to our perfection in Christ, generation after generation. Nothing could be more relevant.

**R**elevant is a word that gets used when people want to say the Church is no longer a present fact or factor in people's lives, either because of outdated liturgy, doctrine, language, or manifold other reasons. For many, the Church is not relevant because of something it does that makes it no longer a valued voice in the cultural or consumer marketplace.

For many, it is true, the Church is no longer the dominant voice in their lives and no longer drives their weekly life in the way it once did. We know that wide swaths of the Christian landscape are changing under our feet and that younger people are moving away from organized religion. Yet, I would argue, it is not the Church that has become irrelevant but the ways in which the Church is led.

The Church is irrelevant not because we look too different from the culture but because we look too much like the culture. We are too often not actually offering anything particularly countercultural in many of our parishes, so what real reason do folks have to stay other than habit? Why come to a church that offers more of what they get in their day-to-day lives: more endless consumerist individualism masking itself as creativity? In teaching, liturgy, service, or preaching, the challenge is not making the Church easier to understand or making it relevant but living in such a way that the countercultural narrative we offer is one that Christ would recognize as his own message. Is there a way for the Church not to be relevant but to matter in a living, breathing way? The key to relevance is not to be one more option amidst a panoply of distractions but to be the foundation and summit of people's lives and hopes. This is the change the Prayer Book promises us and is the foundation of a truly justice-minded Church.

Justice is not revealed by us to the Church. It is revealed by the body to us. We are becoming self-offering so that we can be likewise to the world. This is not the work of an instant but is the result of a lifetime of worship that so changes

us that we are a true community, not for the sake of getting along but for the sake of Christ. This necessarily demands a discipline on our part and a willingness to not hear every pronouncement we want to hear from the pulpit or in our prayers.

**T**he prayer book may be our deepest hope for a more just Church because as we use it we are united with brothers and sisters who are being formed with the same promises. The very act of submission to common prayer is to put us in mind of common purpose, the sacrifice of our need to be right for the greater need to be in relationship. The cost of proclaiming presumed enlightenment — our walking away from common prayer — is often to be self-separated from the community that needs us and us them now as we ever have.

In a time of increased theological confusion, and even deeper confusion about just who Christ is, theological or creedal waffling will hardly suffice, and will in fact do profound harm. When communities take up the task of changing the Church's worship, they are contributing to injustice

When communities take up the task of changing the Church's worship, they are contributing to injustice because they are weakening the claim of the whole body to offer one voice.



because they are weakening the claim of the whole body to offer one voice. Moreover, they are declaring the inability of the whole body's common life and prayer to be a means of grace and to offer the hope of glory.

There might be better prayers to pray, more we can be doing in liturgy, more modern language we could use. There might be many good and reasonable alterations that could be made to the prayer book to make it better. Yet it is not ours to change alone. It is the collected longing and debated theological reckoning of this church. It is the expression of the movement of the Holy Spirit across our history that speaks to and through us to this day.

Common prayer is designed to change us. The purpose of worship is the adoration of God, and a lifetime of shared adoration will change the Church. The prayer book can change the world because it can change us, and it may just begin not with some creative, new thing but with page 37 of the Book of Common Prayer.

*The Rev. Robert Hendrickson is rector of St. Philip's in the Hills Church in Tucson, Arizona.*



Participants exchange ideas during a break at Evangelism Matters.

Richard Hill photo

# Our Church Has Found its Voice

Evangelism Matters may help Episcopalians share the gospel with greater ease.

By Kevin Martin

I attended the Evangelism Matters conference in Dallas with cautious optimism. My optimism was rewarded, but I will first explain my caution. I knew rewarding years at St. Luke's Church, Seattle, coordinating new church-planting in the Diocese of Texas, and leading a growing Cathedral of St. Matthew in Dallas. But the words *evangelism* and *Jesus* did not cross the lips of leading Episcopalians with ease. Some seemed ambivalent, at

best, about sharing the gospel as transformative good news.

The presentations at Evangelism Matters suggest that the atmosphere has changed for the better. From the beginning of the conference, the clear message was centered in the essential Christology of the Church. These leaders were not afraid of the words *evangelism* or *Jesus*.

Then there were two addresses by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. In a powerful 55-minute teaching and a moving 45-minute sermon, he laid out

the Jesus of both Scripture and of Anglican theology and the meaning of the Church's mission. His essential theme was "the love of Christ compels us" (2 Cor. 5). He laid out for us the major contribution of the Episcopal and Anglican branch of the Jesus Movement: "It is about Jesus, so it is about God's love for the world. If it is not about love, it is not about Jesus."

He focused on research showing that younger non-Christians see Christians in terms of judgment and condemnation of those who disagree with us.

Evangelism, he said, is about a relationship and reconciliation with God, one another, and God's creation. It demands from us a willingness to proclaim this truth and courage to love others as Christ has loved us.

I was impressed with the varied workshops that gave us useful information and means to carry out this work. Topics ranged from building evangelistic communities to reaching specific groups of people. There was a particularly large presence of Hispanic leaders among the 400-plus participants. There were examples of ways to share our faith with others in an open and listening manner. So often when Episcopalians gather, we hear bright people sharing ideas and concepts, but with no practical application. The organizers of this conference offered a balanced program with both inspirational teaching

and practical equipping.

Organizers also included of a diversity of voices. The invitation was clear: if you care about this Jesus, want to make his love known to others, and have a passion for reaching others, you are welcome in this movement.

I was encouraged by the presence of so many younger leaders. I sat behind Bishop Curry, in the transept during his first address. From there, I saw many younger leaders representing the diversity of our church. Ten minutes into the address, I thought to myself, *Bishop Curry has them*. He had captured their imagination and, in what I can only describe as time anointed by the Holy Spirit, he invited them into this essential work. I realized that after all the conflict of the past decade and what seems like defensiveness and confusion on the part of our leadership,

the Episcopal Church has found its voice. It is a passionate voice focused on our mission and offering the best of our Anglican heritage to the wider Church and the world.

The message on a handout distributed at the conference expressed the point in a playful way: "Episcopal Evangelist is not an Oxymoron." It is an exciting time to be a part of what Brennan Manning called a "ragamuffin fellowship" in which every person has something to offer. Given the divisions, polarity, fears, anger, and even despair of our society, this may be our moment. It certainly is, above all else, our calling.

*The Very Rev. Kevin Martin is retired dean of St. Matthew's Cathedral in Dallas, a frequent conference and workshop speaker, and the author of two books on congregational development.*

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# What Comes Next?

Theology must be at the base of our work after Evangelism Matters.

By Matthew Burdette

It is not clear whether the organizers of Evangelism Matters scheduled the conference at the conclusion of the Church year so that participants would hear the Passion narrative the next weekend. This gospel bookends time to tell us that there is nothing before or after Jesus. As soon as we have spoken the final word, that Jesus is Lord, we turn again to our beginning and look for his coming. In all events, the timing was providential, putting into sharp focus both the promise and limitations of the conference.

The promise of Evangelism Matters is that it marked a step toward clarifying and enacting the Episcopal Church's mission. Every speaker and panelist made the point that sharing the faith really is the Church's mission, even in (gasp!) the Episcopal branch

of the Jesus Movement. The implication, which occasionally rose to an outright allusion, was that the Episcopal Church has for too long had a culture of squeamishness about evangelistic mission.

That this conversation could be had with such honesty — conference backpacks read EPISCOPAL EVANGELIST and NOT AN OXYMORON — was an unequivocal good. The Episcopal Church, like other mainline denominations, is rapidly shrinking, and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry made the legitimate point that evangelism is not a scheme for church growth. But it should also be acknowledged that the most obvious reason why the Episcopal Church is in decline is that we have failed to give people adequate reasons to join or remain with us.

At just this point of promise, on the cusp of serious theological self-examination, Evangelism Matters had some

important limitations. With a few notable exceptions, the event was largely non-theological. Presenters alluded to an ecclesial culture that avoids evangelism and conceives of Church mission in non-evangelistic terms, but never quite came around to grappling with the roots of that culture. The tone of the conference was decidedly optimistic, which is no bad thing, unless such an attitude disallows conversation about real challenges. In my judgment, the challenge of an ecclesial culture that resists evangelism is a theological challenge, which raises the most fundamental questions about what we Christians believe, who we are, and what God intends for us.

The discourse at Evangelism Matters tended to avoid these questions or to assume that their answers are agreed upon and settled, dwelling pri-

(Continued on next page)

It is more than a little ironic that listening was such an explicit focus at a conference intended to convince people to start talking.

(Continued from previous page)

marily in the realm of best practices. For example, a frequent refrain was that it is essential for the work of evangelism that we Christians listen to what other people have to say; far less time and attention were devoted to what one might say after having listened. But surely it is obvious that a church that is not evangelizing is not speaking the Word that God has given it to speak. It is more than a little ironic

that listening was such an explicit focus at a conference intended to convince people to start talking. Considering the non-evangelistic culture of liberal Protestantism, one can appropriately wonder if part of the problem is that we have been listening for so long that we can no longer differentiate the Church's Word from that word spoken by the world.

The name of the conference, *Evangelism Matters*, primarily meant

“[Concrete] Matters of Evangelism” and not “Evangelism Does Matter [Theologically].” I will not disparage the former, but I believe that it can never accomplish what it intends without attending to the latter. Moreover, theological depth is always more important; ecclesial practices and concerns will change with the contingencies of time, but it is the substance of our faith that alone will keep us on task. In my judgment, the long road ahead requires a form of Christian patience that refuses to let the urgency of the mission prevent us from thinking carefully about how we will pursue that mission.

A specifically theological discourse is needed. Such a discourse will raise difficult questions and spark debates, which is vital for our witness and work. I am not the only person to think this. Having spoken to some of the organizers and to Bishop Curry, there is no question that this conference was an initial step among many. All those with whom I spoke were aware of the conference's limitations, and intend to address them in due course.

There should be no question that this event was worthwhile and deeply encouraging, and that Bishop Curry took it up as an opportunity to flesh out what he intends by the phrase “the Jesus Movement.” The Presiding Bishop intends nothing less than the work of proclaiming the love of God in Christ to the world in word and deed, drawing people into the infinite love of the persons of the Trinity as we strive to love God with our whole being and to love our neighbors as ourselves. The high point of the conference came in Bishop Curry's Friday afternoon homiletical exegesis of the baptismal liturgy, making the unequivocal point that our work as a church is to bring people into the freedom and new life of the risen Christ.

I asked Bishop Curry what it is, after considering things like the



An impassioned point by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry inspires applause.

Richard Hill photo





A conference participant has a question as Stephanie Spellers speaks.

Richard Hill photo

Enlightenment or capitalism, that we ourselves have done or failed to do that accounts for our current situation of decline and aversion to evangelism. Rather than speaking in general terms about the Episcopal Church, the bishop told me about his own ministry years ago, saying that for too long he simply did not do an adequate job of making disciples of Jesus, of teaching and forming people in the Christian faith, but instead took knowledge of Jesus for granted. And then he added that there seems to have been a whole generation of clergy trained to minister in this way, and that it was just characteristic of the time. His work, he explained, is now to help focus our attention on this task of making disciples, which requires us to teach the faith, to proclaim the love of Jesus, and to attend

to the work of reconciliation with one another. I could not agree more.

Our work after Evangelism Matters must take us not just out into the world but also deep into the riches, the challenges, and the opportunities presented to us by our tradition. Every invitation into the Church's fellowship will raise the question of its boundaries, of what it means to be initiated, of what it is into which one is being initiated. Every sharing of the story of Jesus' love in one's own life will raise the question of who this Jesus is and why his love is so special. Every mention of Jesus' presence will raise the question of what we believe about his resurrection, of how it is that a crucified man can be present at all. And every effort to make this world a better place will raise the question of where this world is going and of that

for which we Christians in fact hope.

Thanks be to God, we are not the first to face these questions, and by God's grace we will not act as though we are the first to answer them. Our work after Evangelism Matters will drive us into the world to proclaim the good news of God in Christ as we root ourselves in our baptism, dwell in the mystery of the Eucharist, and are captured by the beauty of the Christian faith. The path of evangelism is our catechesis in the politics, metaphysics, and aesthetics of the Church's Word: Jesus is Lord. He is our origin and our goal, we are his, and in him we have found life.

*Matthew Burdette is a postulant for Holy Orders in the Diocese of New Jersey and holds a PhD in theology from the University of Aberdeen.*

# Annunciation

For more than a decade, I have come to treasure praying the rosary in the car at the outset of a drive: five mysteries, according to the day of the week, rotating between Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious. I have yet to incorporate the Luminous Mysteries of John Paul II's invention, but look forward to doing so. A dear Roman Catholic friend from college introduced me to the practice, and others urged it along, not least another dear friend, a Tanzanian Anglican bishop, with whom I had the pleasure of sharing a flat at the College of the Transfiguration in Grahamstown, South Africa. One sunny day we set out on a day trip to Port Elizabeth and I readily agreed to his suggestion that we pray the rosary, passing the petitions back and forth as our little car wended its way along dramatic mountain roads and cascading hills. I drove while the bishop led us, and I recall our delight — which we discussed afterward — in placing ourselves within the web of common prayer, amplified immeasurably by concrete scriptural figures: the joy, that is, of taking up one's life again on a given, perhaps lovely day, in the company of another, and taking up together a universal gospel that reaches round the world, crossing chasms of language and culture, and spans time. It is like the dew of Hermon "that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore" (Ps. 133:3, KJV).

As a series of dramatic set pieces, the mysteries of the rosary draw the attention of wayfaring strangers to the historical facts of Incarnation and redemption, without which we hope in vain. But the form of the liturgy makes meaning in use, as we take up the Apostles' Creed, then successively recite the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, and the Glory Be (and optional Fatima Prayer, "O My Jesus"), capped off by the Salve Regina

("Hail, Holy Queen") and perhaps the end of the Angelus ("Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord"), which all together make the rosary a personal profession of faith in and petition to God. God has acted powerfully *for me*, and calls *me now* to faithful imitation — of Mary, with whom we joyfully begin, as a homely feature of the historical tale, and then her son, incarnated as a Jewish man; whose sorrowful passion is effective and exemplary; who, when he rises, gloriously inaugurates a pattern of ascent-following-descent that is salvation in the Church.

Herewith I begin a brief commentary that seeks to hold these layers together, in the conviction that all theological language is analogous.

Of course, Christians are called to proclaim the good news: to pluck up our courage and speak — preferably with words, as St. Francis probably actually said, and at any rate our Lord did: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, ... teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20). We are commanded by Christ himself to teach the faith, and to view the whole world as a great classroom of evangelization. In this way, *every* Christian is in effect an apostolic nuncio, sent to share the ancient message with which we have been entrusted.

A nuncio announces something, and this is what *annunciation* means, as well: to announce. The angel of the Lord brought tidings unto Mary in his foretelling of Jesus' birth, which famously begins: "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:28, KJV). And the angel goes on to explain that "the Holy Spirit will come upon you" and "overshadow you," yielding a "holy child" who "will be called Son of God" (1:35).

Extraordinary news, indeed; in fact, the most extraordinary news in all of history. God will become man.

We rightly begin here, and could dwell at great length on the significance of God's speaking, both in his own voice and the voice of his creatures. God speaks and the world is made (Gen. 1), and as incarnate "even the wind and the sea obey him" (Mark 4:41). Following the original identification, God's continual communicating in the Word sets the standard of discipleship, as in the Spirit-breathed faith of the Church codified in the creeds, and in the words given by Jesus to address our Father: layer upon layer of annunciation.

In and through it all, our prayer can only be that we may, by God's grace, speak faithfully and truly, and so follow the word and way of the Lord. *Thy* will be done — which *will* the Lord communicates antecedently, so that it can be discovered and enacted. Here, again, the Church lifts up the Blessed Virgin Mary as *the* Christian model in her ideal response to the angel's announcement: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38, KJV). *Fiat*: Let it be done. Mary's reply evinces not only courage and amazing faith but also direct simplicity; she speaks *clearly*. In this respect, we may recall another English descendant of the Latin *nuntiare*: *enunciation*. To enunciate is to declare, profess, assert, affirm, proclaim, all of which indicate a decided directing of speech. St. Luke makes clear that the tidings borne to Mary by the angel of the Lord were enunciated in no uncertain terms: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God" (1:30), and the angel's annunciation elicits a comparable decisiveness on Mary's part.

Set within the devotional practice of the rosary, it seems hardly accidental that the Hail Mary is built into

the first of the mysteries, in the very words spoken by the angel. It provides a convenient scriptural alibi for the devotion, and serves as a prescriptive pedagogy for all that follows, namely, the offering of ourselves to God in humble devotion with and after the example of our sister, the greatest of all disciples. Here, the Church in her wisdom provides an aid to devotion in another — extraordinarily saintly — human being, with whom to walk the pilgrim way.

Lastly, Mary marks this way by continual reference to her son, and the familial tie bears reflection: the passing on of faith from generation to generation, even to the point of re-evangelization *by the young*, as they come of age. This theme will recur in subsequent mysteries, as the company of communion consists of natural and adoptive kin. The controlling metaphor works

because all are born of women and all have fathers, even when we do not know them, and this was true for Jesus and Mary as well.

*O Lord God, help us to hear your voice when you speak — in the Word of Scripture, in the Word made flesh, in the voice of great saints and teachers of the Church, and in and through one another — and form us in love and responsibility. Give us supernatural hearing, and a clear, courageous spirit to answer your call in our lives. O Lord, move our spirits by your grace to understand all that you would have us do, even when it seems frightening. Help us to follow the good example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, teaching us to respond promptly and sincerely to your Spirit. Above all, Lord, fill us with holy expectation in the sure knowledge that you bear good tidings of great joy — much more than we can ask or imagine — having first created and then called us to follow the way of your Son. It is in his name that we pray. Amen.*

Christopher Wells

Mary marks  
the pilgrim way  
by continual  
reference  
to her son.

# Evangelical Studies by the Pound

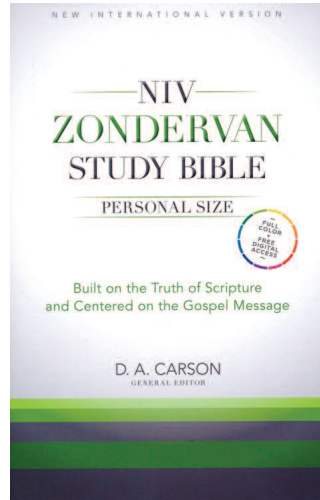
The *NIVZSB* is, on the analogy of computers, a *desktop* Bible.

Review by Garwood P. Anderson

Flouting a professional obligation to look askance, I am a big fan of the study bible. My affection for the genre is initially sentimental. Copies of the original *NIV Study Bible* cluttered our house while I was growing up. They were well-used (especially by my parents), marked up, and stuffed with church bulletins and sermon notes. I gave several of these as gifts in the 1980s, including a mauve leather copy to the woman who nevertheless became my wife and who wore out that Bible, no doubt seeking solace in the midst of trial.

The first two times I read through the Bible from cover to cover, as a late adolescent and then young adult, it was with the aid of the *NIV Study Bible*, and I found it invaluable. Hundreds of times I turned to a note to explain a curious or even assaulting text. If I was not always assuaged by the explanation, it would take the swelling down enough for me to carry on. Study Bibles are paper-and-ink Philips climbing into the chariots of eager Ethiopians, telling the story of salvation. So my obliged professional contempt for the genre is no match for my personal gratitude.

What shall we say of this one, which differs from the *NIV Study Bible* that graced my youth? The simple — and perhaps adequate — answer is that many Christians will benefit immensely from this ambitious, richly illustrated, and copiously annotated Bible. The introductions and annotations are consistently useful and always accessible. Inasmuch as the *NIVZSB* casts itself as a work of biblical theology, it includes another thirty-some essays introducing biblical genres or biblical-theological themes in addition to the expected in-



## The NIV Zondervan Study Bible

General Editor, D.A. Carson. Zondervan.

Pp. 2,918. \$39.99–\$149.99

roductions to biblical books. This Bible is chock full of full-color pictures and maps and extensive charts. In short, it is a trove of competent resources, handsomely packaged. Very few Christians would not benefit immensely by reading from it daily.

Opinions will vary with respect to design. It is, on the analogy of computers, assuredly a *desktop* Bible. Without the Apocrypha, at 2,918 pages and a full 2¾ inches thick, even the most compact edition dwarfs, for example, its *New Oxford* counterpart. Casters and a pull handle are not among the available options, but might have been. Given its ample size, the standard editions feature a surprisingly small, though attractive, font with generous white space. The annotations, sometimes covering half the page and even more, are usefully set off in a sans-serif font against a laurel green background. A majority of my unscientific focus group found the layout attractive or highly attractive; a few found it busy and overdone. I thought it overdone at first, but after several weeks the layout grew on me. It should also be noted that the hard copy of the *NIVZSB* is

complemented by a first-rate website.

As one might expect given the evangelical publisher, the work has a consistent, only occasionally overbearing, evangelical cast. The Holy Bible consists of the 66 books of the Protestant canon (we are not told why), which, for all their conceded diversity, are construed as a unity, primarily as an overarching narrative of salvation history in form (“Unpacking God’s Story, Book by Book”), and materially as the voice of a speaking God. Critical judgments are consistently conservative (e.g., Moses is the probable author of the majority of the Pentateuch; the historical Isaiah wrote the entirety of Isaiah in the late 8th century; Daniel is probably written in the 6th century). Textual anomalies are explained and apparent conflicts harmonized, if not always convincingly (e.g., the temple “cleansing” in John 2 is a different event than a later one like it in the synoptic Gospels; both God and Satan [or “a satan”; i.e., adversary] incited David to take a census, a “secondary agent” accomplishing God’s purposes). “Centered on the gospel message,” the *NIVZSB* deliberately orients itself to

# Impressive Supplement

If the massive *NIV Zondervan Study Bible* were not enough, Zondervan has followed it in close succession with a supplement, *The NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*. Lest this be judged too much of a good thing, we might say instead that it is rather much of a different thing.

In lieu of the all-purpose study notes of the conventional study Bible, the *NIVCBSB* offers generous annotations and sidebars on matters having to do with the cultural setting of the biblical texts. The editors draw generously upon previous stand-alone reference volumes, including their earlier *IVP Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament* (Walton with others) and *New Testament* (Keener) and a wealth of Zondervan reference works in “Bible backgrounds.”

I’m quite impressed with the result.

Perhaps the clearest sign was that I found myself reading biblical texts for the sheer enjoyment of the wealth of suggestions offered in the study notes, often quite illuminating. By and large, the editors are able to observe the self-imposed boundaries of the project, the focus on “cultural backgrounds.”

But these are wide-ranging phenomena, and it is ultimately impossible and unhelpful to quarantine such matters from the larger enterprise of textual interpretation. Readers will sometimes want to know how the editors have arrived at the generalizations in the annotations, but for that they will have to go elsewhere and simply be thankful for piqued curiosity.

In short, I find this the most interesting and possibly the most useful study Bible I’ve come across. For its narrower focus, it perhaps should not

the “gospel” as its avowed center, construed decidedly toward a Protestant account of justification. Although the discussions are typically intramural to the evangelical world, one notes a commendable care for reserve and balance. This Bible is notably innocent of a dispensational hermeneutic or an overconfident charting of eschatology, salient features of evangelical study Bibles of eras past.

It is not hard to discern that the *NIVZSB* vies more specifically for market share with the *ESV Study Bible* (Crossway, 2008), while also more generally functioning as a kind of rehabilitation strategy for the NIV brand. Some background might be helpful. The original (1984) NIV dominated the evangelical market for several decades, finding a niche among those for whom the archaisms of the KJV contradicted the perspicuity of Scripture, for whom the RSV’s affiliation with the National Council of Churches rendered it suspicious, and for whom

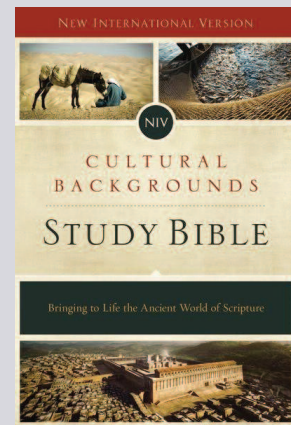
the Living Bible was a little too “living and active.” But when, in its second iteration, the 2005 *Today’s NIV* (TNIV) took a more gender-inclusive approach, it unleashed a backlash among certain evangelical leaders (e.g., Focus on the Family and the Council for Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood). Already regarded by some with suspicion for its “dynamic equivalence” method (translating biblical language in “sense for sense” toward the goal of greater clarity rather than “word for word”), the TNIV now was also suspect for the company it kept. Some worried that a covert feminist agenda lay behind the more inclusive version. (Although some of the criticism of the TNIV bordered on the hysterical, all lovers of language must acknowledge that neither precision nor elegance are among the virtues of gender-inclusive language.)

This New Coke moment in turn set the stage for the recent prominence of the *ESV*, a generally capable revision of the RSV, which enjoys a zealous devo-

tion beyond its merits and in the very circles that comprise the provenance of the *NIVZSB*. Now with the 2011 release of a second, more chastened, edition of the NIV, the stage is set to recapture market share, especially among those who were apprehensive of the TNIV. Thus, on closer inspection, it might be truer to say that the provenance and “market” for the *NIVZSB* represents something of a recognizable subcultural evangelicalism — broadly Calvinistic, non-sacramental, hailing from institutions that affirm biblical inerrancy, with a large majority of self-identifying gender complementarians. (Complementarian is an evangelical *terminus technicus* for the essential gender differentiation of men and women, with incumbent limitations on the service of women in the church.)

This is a constituency that, to its credit, buys a lot of Bibles. To lay claim to that market, one could scarcely do any better than the general editor, D.A. Carson, a prolific New Testament

(Continued on next page)



## The NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

Zondervan. Edited by Craig S. Keener and

John H. Walton. Pp. xli + 2,358.

\$14.99 app, \$49.99 ebook, \$89.99 cloth.

be the first or only study Bible on the desk, but it will surely enliven the Bible study of clergy and well-motivated lay readers. It deserves wide use.

Garwood P. Anderson

(Continued from previous page)

scholar and a sort of cardinal among evangelicals whose *nihil obstat* bestows instant credibility to this project. It can hardly be accidental that in the NIVZSB press materials, Carson is more often identified as “a co-founder of the Gospel Coalition” than by his academic affiliation as research professor of New Testament at Trinity Evan-

gelical Divinity School. Likewise, the contributors are largely a who’s who of a subsection of evangelical biblical scholarship, and the study notes are often abridgements of major evangelical commentaries.

A casualty of the who’s who of evangelical scholarship is the almost complete absence of women among the contributors (only three of the more

than 60 — which, it might be noted, is three more than the *ESV Study Bible*) and of ethnic minorities (no African Americans, one Asian and one Latino). I suppose the indifference to that sort of diversity could be regarded as refreshing by persons worried about diversity for its own sake, camels’ noses in tents, and boiling frogs, but this is not my first instinct. One suspects that the name recognition of the contributors and prior fraternity made these natural choices, but there is some justification in feeling that an opportunity was missed.

Perhaps even more troubling is a certain theological myopia evident in the annotations and essays. Not surprisingly, a general thinness afflicts reflections on the Church and worship. We are told, for example, that “It is especially important to emphasize that the early church did not *create* the canon; it *recognized* the canon” (Doug Moo, p. 1913). While it is not hard to appreciate what lay behind such a sentiment, one wonders if the oxymoron is not a price too dear even in defense of the primacy of Scripture. Likewise, Anglicans will find the treatment of worship and the sacraments as woefully inadequate and frequently the site of special pleading. Not surprisingly, there are no articles dedicated to sacraments, but it would also be impossible from the article on “Worship” (David Peterson) to detect that early Christian assemblies commemorated a Eucharist or that they inherited any liturgical tradition at all. We learn that Romans 6:3-4 “probably” refers to “water baptism,” but the annotation is quick to add that it is faith, *not baptism*, that “effects the transfer from the old life to the new.” And not only here is faith understood in contradistinction to and exclusive of the Church’s rites, conscientiously refuting a view that nobody holds.

Regarding John 6:53-54, we are told that eating the flesh of Christ and drinking his blood are not figures for the Eucharist. After all, the Lord’s Supper had not yet been instituted, and then, with indifference to the facts of the matter, we are told that “[d]uring



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the first two centuries, whenever Christians clearly speak of the Lord's Supper, they speak of the 'body' and 'blood' of the Lord, not (as here) the 'flesh' and 'blood' of the Lord" (Carson and Andrew David Naselli, pp. 2163-64; cf. *Ign. Rom.* 7:3; *Ign. Phil.* 4:1). If this seems as nitpicking (sacraments hardly command primary attention in the New Testament, and this is a work of *biblical theology*), it should be noted that these sorts of judgments are characteristic more generally of the *NIVZSB*.

Whether these shortcomings, as I regard them, are mere quibbles or disqualifiers will depend largely on the sort of catechetical work we hope that a study Bible might do. If the purpose of a study Bible is to orient readers to the Bible in broad strokes and with efficient guidance, this is just the tool. In that regard, it is an improvement upon the *NIV Study Bible* that formed me as a young Christian. It deserves wide use. It should sell well, and it *should* sell well. If, however, it is the goal of a study Bible to inculcate a theological vision, the shortcomings of the *NIVZSB* have to be acknowledged, not because it is lacking such a vision but because it has one while, under cover of "biblical theology," implying that it does not.

So here's a concluding diagnostic: were I to recommend a study Bible and my choices were between the *New Oxford* and the *NIVZSB*, I could only declare a stalemate, and it would depend upon the intended audience. The *New Oxford* is much to be preferred for its general ecumenical neutrality, its economic annotations, its calm, understated layout, and the inclusion of deuterocanonical texts (can a study Bible not have the Apocrypha?). But to satiate a thirst for understanding and nourish the zeal of a growing Christian, shortcomings notwithstanding, the nod would go to the *NIVZSB*. Call me sentimental.

*Garwood P. Anderson is professor of New Testament and Greek at Nashotah House Theological Seminary.*

## Luther Year Begins at the Morgan

### Word and Image: Martin Luther's Reformation

Through January 22, 2017

The Morgan Library & Museum, New York  
bit.ly/2g05sPG

By Richard J. Mammana

October 31 marked the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's preparation of 95 theses for academic debate about abuses in the Roman Catholic Church, a routine university announcement posting that launched the European reformations. Constituencies as diverse as the German Federal Foreign Office, the successor church bodies that resulted from the reform, and travel agents around the world have debated how to observe the occasion. Is it an invitation to cele-

Three North American exhibits offer visitors the opportunity to engage with items produced by major participants in the first stages of the Lutheran reform.

brate a necessary theological revolution, a time to lament the reform-turned-schism, or some combination of the two?

Pope Francis has praised Luther's work to build a central role for Scripture in the life of the Church and its members; the Lutheran World Federation has joined in international commemoration with Roman Catholics, and issued documents of agreement and cooperation. Some confessional Lutheran bodies have continued to reject high-level Lutheran-Roman Catholic rapprochement, while insisting on the continued need for reform of the papal office and its teachings.

The Evangelical Church in Germany and the Luther Memorials Foundation of Saxony-Anhalt have cut through the



Portrait of Martin Luther by Lucas Cranach the Elder

conceptual divisions in their launch of Luther Year 2017 ([luther2017.de/en](http://luther2017.de/en)), a year-long series of events, exhibits, publications, travel opportunities, festivals, concerts, church services, and academic seminars that began this year. For those who will not travel to Germany to participate in this wide array of observances, one of the primary points of contact with the historical anniversary will be a series of remarkable museum installations.

Three North American exhibits (at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Pitts Theology Library at Emory University in Atlanta, and the Morgan Library & Museum) offer visitors the opportunity to engage with items produced by major participants in the first stages of the Lutheran reform. *Word and Image: Martin Luther's Reformation* brings together a particularly rich selection of material from German state museums and libraries, as well as American col-

(Continued on next page)



Christ and Mary by Lucas Cranach the Elder

(Continued from previous page)

lections. The former home of John Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913), one of the most prominent lay supporters of the Episcopal Church during his influential life, hosts the exhibit.

Nearly every other item in *Word and Image* would qualify as a highlight for collections of national and international significance. There are signed letters by Luther to his collaborators and opponents, Philip Melancthon's manuscript of the Augsburg Confession, Luther's drafts of his translation of the Old Testament, and one of four extant broadside copies of the *Ninety-five Theses*.

There are a dozen paintings by Lucas Cranach (1472-1553), Luther's friend and collaborator in advancing Reformation interests through popular art. We find the first Lutheran hymnal in one display case, and an installation of the surviving lead type used to produce it. A chasuble worn by Luther is next to a large wooden chest reputed to have belonged to the notorious indulgence-seller Johann Tetzel.

There are printed indulgences, a woodblock caricature of the pope as the unrepentant thief at the crucifixion, copies of Luther's German Bible, reformed liturgical texts, and items related to Katarina von Bora, Luther's wife from 1525 until his death. There is even a section dedicated to archeological exploration of the contents of the cistern at

the Luther family house, revealing new insights about the reformer's domestic diet, clothing, private amusements, and financial situation.

Two substantial books accompany the exhibits. *Martin Luther: Treasures of the Reformation* (pp. 504, \$39.95) shows items from all three North American locations, along with extended narrative descriptions and interpretive essays. A more involved theological-historical volume, *Martin Luther and the Reformation: Essays* (pp. 496, \$39.95), delves into subjects as varied as anti-Semitism in Luther's writings, the history of printing and the emergence of popular media culture during the Reformation, the expansion of Lutheran reforms beyond German-speaking Europe, the economic and social backgrounds for Luther's concerns, and art historical explorations.

*Word and Image* is a model of theological clarity and sensitivity for a museum exhibit, explaining religious background and dynamics with thoroughness for visitors who may not have prior knowledge about the topics it covers. Despite the brevity of the installation, it marks a very auspicious beginning indeed for Luther Year 2017.

*Richard J. Mammanna is the archivist of the Living Church Foundation and a parishioner and vestry member at Trinity Church in New Haven, Connecticut.*

## Ugandan Court

(Continued from previous page)

gali's control of the Diocese of West Ankole.

The dispute dates from early October, when Ntagali appointed commissaries to run the diocese after the retirement of the Rt. Rev. Yona Katoneene.

The case was brought by 11 senior West Ankole clergy who claimed the archbishop did not have the power under the constitution of the Church of Uganda. Their court petition said: "The act of the defendant of appointing a bishop's commissary for West Ankole Diocese was unlawful."

The High Court in Kampala ruled that the archbishop was within his rights. Under canon law, Ntagali has powers to take over the seat of any vacant diocese until a new bishop is appointed, Justice Lydia Mugambe said.

Ntagali, speaking at a service in which he confirmed 657 people at Bugongi Secondary School in the Sheema District, said his actions were in the church's best interests.

"I have been bishop for 12 years and I am not fighting for anything," he said. "I led the diocese and God called me to serve as archbishop. I am a shepherd and that's why I am here today.

"I have forgiven the 11 canons who took me to court. They were crippled and they need to repent for dragging God's church to courts of law because they sued the head of church in Uganda."

*John Martin*

## Book Studies Anglican Numbers

A one-day conference will mark the release of *Growth and Decline in the Anglican Communion: 1980 to the Present*. The study is edited by the Rev. David Goodhew, director of ministerial practice at Cranmer Hall Durham.

Prepared by an international team of researchers across five continents, the study provides a global survey of Anglicanism and 12 detailed studies of



Anglican churches in Australia, Congo, England, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, South America, South India, South Korea, and the United States.

“This is a truly valuable book,” Philip Jenkins, distinguished professor of history at Baylor University, wrote in an endorsement. “In a collection of outstanding essays, the contributors seek to find firm ground for statements about growth and decline in the Anglican Communion, one of the world’s largest religious institutions.”

The conference will meet at Whitehalls College of the University of Roehampton, London, on Feb. 24. Speakers will include David Voas, professor of social science at University College London; Emma Wild-Wood, lecturer in world Christianities at Cambridge University; the Rt. Rev. Graham Kings, mission theologian in the Anglican Communion; and Goodhew.

*Gavin Drake, ACNS*

## Study Scripture with Archbishop Welby

The Archbishop of Canterbury will teach an online course, “Getting More Out of the Bible,” through Dec. 24.

The class includes a series of video lectures, quizzes, and discussions. No additional software is required. It takes about 45 minutes for an average learner to complete.

ChurchNext offers several resources for congregational use, including downloadable posters, bulletin inserts, and a Launch Guide.

This course is made possible through the support of the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Bible in the Life of the Church initiative, and ChurchNext.

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## PEOPLE & PLACES

### Appointments

The Rev. **C. Louanne Loch** is rector of St. Paul’s by the Sea, 465 11th Ave. N., Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250.

The Rev. **Sandra Mayer** is interim rector of Trinity, 503 2nd Ave. S., Clanton, AL 35045.

**Nancy Ann McLaughlin** is ministry developer in the Diocese of Michigan, 4800 Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI 48201.

The Rev. **Christine T. McSpadden** is rector of Trinity, 1500 State St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

The Rev. **James W. Medley** is rector of Good Shepherd, 7400 Hampton Blvd., Norfolk, VA 23505.

The Rev. **J.K. Melton** is priest-in-charge at All Saints’, 300 Harrison Ave., Harrison, NY 10528.

The Rev. **Anne Nicholson** is associate rector of St. James’, 5757 Solomons Island Rd., Lothian, MD 20711.

The Rev. **Paula C. Rachal** is rector of All Saints, 4211 Wayne Rd., Greensboro, NC 27407.

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#### Deacons

**Southeast Florida — Sheila Acevedo, Micahel Sahdev, James Teets**

**Texas — Aston Brown**

**Washington — Kyle James Babin, Marcella Rose Gillis, Cara McKinney Rockhill, Serena Wille Sides, Teresa Faye Terry, and Richard Mosson Weinberg**

**Western Michigan — Diane Stier**

#### Priests

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**Georgia — Luke Wetzel**

**Lexington — Tyler Joseph Tetzlaff**, priest-in-charge at Our Saviour, 2323 Lexington Rd., Richmond, KY 40475.

**Oklahoma — Lin Funderburg Stern**

**South Carolina — Robertson Carr Donehue**

**Western Louisiana — Frank Fuller**

### Retirements

The Rev. **Sue Duffield**, as vicar of St. Elizabeth’s, Whiterocks, Utah

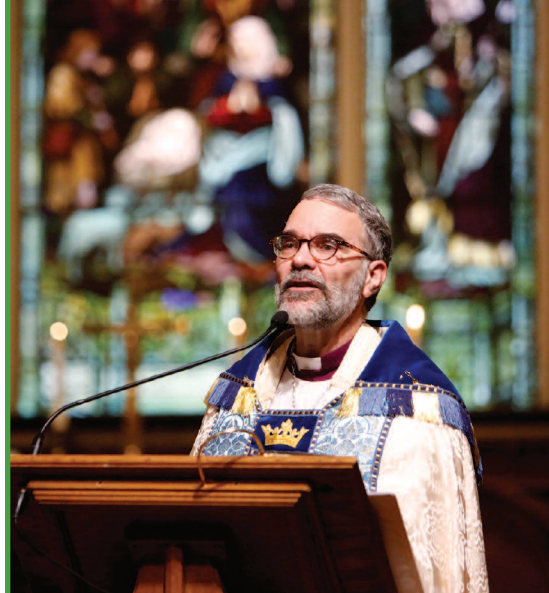
The Rev. **Peter T. Elvin**, as rector of St. John’s, Williamstown, MA

The Rev. **Karl Kern**, as rector of St. Alban’s, Sinking Spring, PA

The Rev. Canon **James H. Pritchett, Jr.**, as canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Western North Carolina

The Rev. **Minka Sprague**, as chaplain of Chapel of the Holy Spirit, New Orleans

The Rev. **David Teschner**, as rector at Christ and Grace, Petersburg, VA



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## In These Times

The wilderness and the dry land, the desert, the burning sand, the thirsty ground, the haunt of jackals, the home of dragons: depravity covers the earth like the waters cover the sea (Isa. 35:1, 7). The land seems at times lifeless, at times alive to the work of violence. “Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born” (Rev. 12:4b). And when the child was rescued from the poison that poured like a river from the dragon’s mouth, the beast turned its wrath “on the rest of her children” (Rev. 12:17). The Church must, in these times, awake to the depth and danger of a demonic power sapping life from created beauty, and giving permission to the worst of human nature. “That ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world,” is raging and dividing humanity and plotting the ruin of nature (Rev. 12:9).

In this lifeless and violent place, however, “they shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God” (Isa. 35:2b). Gladness, rejoicing, the blooming crocus, joy and singing: life will burst from Life’s being. God shows mercy “chiefly in showing mercy and pity” (BCP, pp. 182, 234). God will strengthen weak hands, make firm feeble knees, open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, make the lame leap like deer (Isa. 35:3-6). “Water shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert” (Isa. 35:6). What God does he also commands, calling an elect people to be agents of divine mercy and pity in the harsh trials of daily life and political struggle.

*God* is a tricky word, often no more than a projection, an imposing and spoiled ego thrown against the sky. A mere “my god” makes me a danger to myself and to others. The God of revelation, however, is not another “I”; the God of the Bible says what I often do not want to hear. God speaks in ways that are poetically arresting and politi-

cally disturbing. God executes justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry, opens the eyes of the blind, lifts up those who are bowed down, watches over the stranger, upholds the orphan and the widow (Ps. 146:7-9). This must be said again and again, in the pulpit and on the street; rehearsed in prayer and deployed in action. God extends healing and compassion; God in Christ reaches with outstretched arms on the hard wood of the cross, at the cost of his own life, which he gives for the life of the world.

Pondering in exaltation, Mary, the mother of Jesus, describes past events, or God’s customary way of acting in the present (“gnomic” aorist); treats the future as already present; or, holding all this together, she recites her own Vincentian Canon, showing what God does always, everywhere, and by all the baptized and all persons of good will. “[God] has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty” (Luke 1:51-53).

God’s work is our work. “The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news preached to them” (Matt. 11:5). The truth is, the doctor is in, and the doctor treats with skill and love every human being.

### Look It Up

Read Luke 1:48: lowliness, humility, a humble state.

### Think About It

Sit down at the lowest place.



## From Above

A young woman: I saw her climb switchbacks carved in canyon walls, months pregnant, showing, looking, as salvation does, fully alive. I walked down, away from her, but the Word took hold and I am thinking of her still all these weeks later. She was unknown to me, and yet I know she will give her child food fit for a long walk through the fields of humanity, the valley of death, the harrowing of hell, and the impossibility (but not to God) of a good life forevermore. She will reach into her sack and give her child Old Testament trail food, curds, and honey. And yet she and her little one will eat the bread of tears, drain a chalice of sorrow. How good and pleasant and painful it is to see the gospel etched on a Paleo-Indian path.

Mary, God's chosen, carries a hidden child, loves him, hopes for him, will join his smallest joys, and suffer his every sorrow. Though she is like every mother and every parent in many ways, her vocation stands apart, is inexplicable, is understood, though never fully understood, in these transcendent words: "the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 1:20). This once-for-all election is the foundation of a new pattern, the emergence of a new humanity in Christ that is pure and total gift. "Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven" (Matt. 16:17). "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

Thus, every moment in which grace is given and faith elicited is a vertical intrusion of pure gift and the root cause of faith's obedience. Every child of God is, in this sense, conceived by the Holy Spirit. All the baptized are transferred from the absolutism of family, tribal, and national ties and established as adopted children of God. This does not negate important tem-

poral commitments, but tempers and corrects them. In the end, the knee bows to the grace of Christ alone.

Consider St. Paul. "If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless" (Phil. 3:4-6).

"Paul, it is true, is always himself, and moves essentially on the same plane as all other men ...; fashioned of the same stuff as all other men, a stone differing in no way from other stones" (Karl Barth, *Commentary on Romans*). He is only a man, a very religious man; and yet, as he testifies, he counts his pious pedigree and all else as nothing (Phil. 3:7).

Why? He was called as an apostle, as Mary was called to be a mother, a calling hidden in the overshadowing of providence and grace that exclude all merit, genetic fortune, and inherited prestige. Barth adds: "As an apostle — and only as an apostle — he stands in no organic relationship with human society, he can be regarded only as an exception, nay, rather, impossibility. Paul's position can be justified only as resting in God. ... He is commissioned to hand over to men something quite new and unprecedented, joyful and good — the truth of God." This is the miracle of Christian faith. Salvation is a gracious, unmerited, and impossible gift.

### Look It Up

Read Psalm 80:3, 7. God shines.

### Think About It

His yoke is easy. Ascend the canyon walls.

## Steady Growth

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Full position description can be found at <http://ssw.edu/director-latinohispanic-studies>



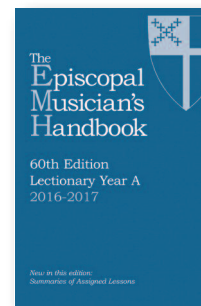
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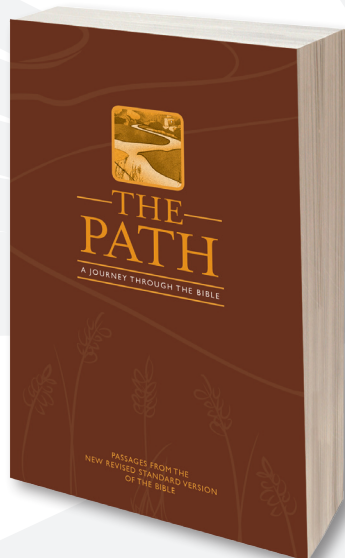
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