

Samuel Ajayi Crowther

Gift Ideas

Sandy Webb on 815

December 25, 2016

# THE LIVING CHURCH

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In this nativity painting by Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini (1675-1741), Joseph and Mary and the angels who have joined them all focus on the center of history: the second person of the Trinity, newly incarnate as a vulnerable baby. May the same Lord Jesus Christ fill all the faithful, now and always, with wonder, love, and praise.

With love at Christmas,

The Editors of THE LIVING CHURCH



## ON THE COVER

*Virgin and Child.* The child holds a goldfinch, a symbol of his Passion.

Master of the Castello Nativity (15th century)  
Wikimedia Commons photo

# THE LIVING CHURCH

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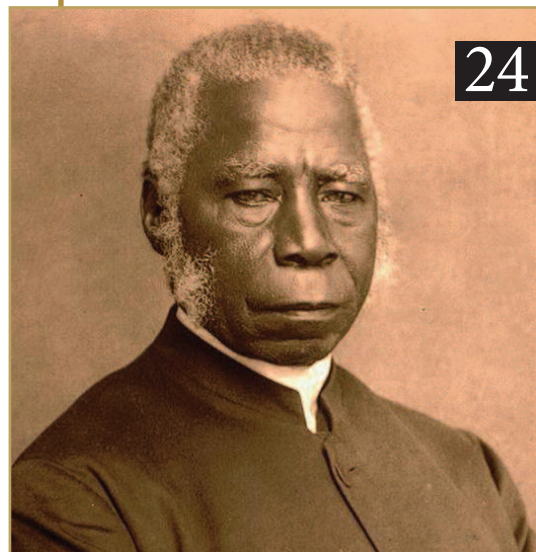
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LIVING CHURCH Partners

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# Gumbo Evangelism

What does turkey gumbo have to do with evangelism? Not much on the surface. But a turkey gumbo recipe represents the fundamental change that the Episcopal Church is making in the way it communicates with the world.

For the Rev. Canon Michael Hunn, evangelism and gumbo can be linked in novel ways. Hunn is canon to the presiding bishop for ministry within the Episcopal Church, and the communications department reports to him.

Hunn described how search engines package ads with search results, depending on search terms: if you search for sweaters, the top links you see will be merchants who sell sweaters.

“That’s called inbound digital marketing, because the inbound energy of the computer user is what drives it,” Hunn told TLC. In the older, broadcast model of advertising, the merchant would buy a television or print ad that reaches a broad audience and hope that some readers may want to buy a sweater.

The church is adopting a similar model, as part of a broad transformation of how it communicates.

“We don’t call it marketing, because we’re not trying to sell anything, but we do say we’re doing inbound digital evangelism,” Hunn said. “When people are seeking God, we want the Episcopal Church to be present with information that’s relevant to those seekers.”

The church is in the process of hiring a digital evangelist, who will be familiar both with the Episcopal Church and with the practice of inbound digital marketing. This initiative was prompted by the 2015 General Convention, which designated evangelism as one of the top three priorities of the church. The digital evangelist is expected to join the organization in January.

In the meantime, the church is using recipes to take its first steps. Starting with turkey gumbo on the first Sunday of Advent, the Episcopal Church



iStock photo

Center has been posting and emailing a new recipe for holiday-themed food every day, drawing on submissions from around the church and the broader Anglican Communion.

The purpose is to reach people who are looking for recipes and trying to decide what to cook for the holidays. Each recipe is accompanied by a brief passage from Scripture and by links to the church’s social media platforms. The blog is called *Make Ready the Feast*. Hunn credited Wendy Karr Johnson and Mary Brennan with the idea, which he called ingenious. Johnson is the church’s digital missionary for formation, and Brennan is staff officer for mission communications.

“People love recipes,” Brennan said. “We thought we could add some faith information as well as some recipe information.”

“It might actually lead you into the door of a church, because you’re looking for recipes,” Hunn said.

More substantively, the communications department also is creating videos and other content relating to the sacrament of baptism, to reach people who are looking to have their children baptized.

The videos will tell the baptism story from a variety of perspectives. “If you happen to be a millennial, we’ll have a version that speaks to millennials,” said Mike Collins, manager of multimedia services. “If you’re a suburban mom, we’ll have that version. If you’re someone who lives in a big city, we’ll have that version as well.”

“We want to start creating material

(Continued on page 6)

## ‘We Forgive You’

Churches that fell victim to a spate of racist vandalism after the election of Donald Trump have experienced the support and love of their neighbors and wider communities in the efforts to clean up and move on.

Church of Our Saviour in Silver Spring, Maryland, and St. David’s Church in Bean Blossom, Indiana, were among the victims of these crimes, which drew quick condemnation from President-elect Trump during a Nov. 13 interview on *60 Minutes*.

As TLC reported on Nov. 14, someone scrawled “Trump Nation” and “Whites Only” on a sign advertising a Spanish-language Eucharist at Our Saviour on Nov. 12. A wall in the parish’s memorial garden was defaced with the same message. In Bean Blossom, about 40 miles south of Indianapolis, vandals painted graffiti saying “Heil Trump,” and “Fag Church” accompanied by a spray-painted swastika.

The Rev. Robert Harvey, rector of Our Saviour, told TLC he saw an uptick in such behavior in the parish’s Hillandale neighborhood leading up to the vandalism. Hillandale is a predominantly Latino neighborhood of the Washington suburb.

Two days after the election, Harvey said, he saw two white males harassing an elderly Hispanic woman outside a neighborhood thrift shop across the street from the parish. He described the men as large and in their early 20s, adding that they were “taunting her, humiliating her, calling her a spic, telling her to go back to Mexico.”

The men left after Harvey approached them, saying he would call the police.

The next Sunday, Harvey arrived at the parish at 7 a.m. to prepare for the day’s worship services. He discovered the vandalism then. “I said, ‘Oh no, oh no, no, no,’” Harvey said. “Not here.”

Harvey called the police, who ar-

rived during the middle of his sermon in the 8 a.m. service. He paused during the sermon to ask the Rev. Francisco Valle, an assistant priest who leads the Spanish-language services, to show the vandalism to the officers.

"After the service, our bishop called me," Harvey said. "She said, 'Robert, I'm coming to do your Spanish service today.'" The Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde suggested holding a press conference.

"It spread like wildfire. By the time the Spanish service started at 1, we had close to 200 people, 210, that day," he said. Budde celebrated and Valle preached.

A week later, on Nov. 20, Our Saviour saw massive support from the community. "Our attendance was way, way up on November 20," Harvey said. Four Synagogues and the Muslim Community Center sent representatives to services at Our Saviour, and many neighbors came to show their love. "We felt overwhelming support from our neighbors and people of other faiths."

One neighbor replaced the vandal-

ized sign with a new sign saying, "Silver Spring loves and welcomes immigrants." Harvey had no idea the neighbor was acting to replace the sign and found the message of love a pleasant surprise. Similarly, a graffiti removal company from Virginia came to remove the paint for free. The FBI has been involved, and the Southern Poverty Law Center has offered support. Crime Solvers of Montgomery County is offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the suspects' arrest.

In Bean Blossom, St. David's has experienced similar solidarity. The Rev. Kelsey Hutto, priest-in-charge of the Brown County church, told TLC the graffiti left at her parish reflected a minority opinion in the county.

"Following this event, the amount of support that has come out from our local community has been so great," she said. "This message that was put on the wall is not the majority message in Brown County."

The graffiti at St. David's was removed on Nov. 30. Hutto said parish-

ioners decided to leave it up, for a time. "We weren't embarrassed because we were targeted. We were targeted for the right reasons," Hutto said.

The Episcopal Church is a place where people are loved regardless of who you are, what color you are, or who you love, she said. Hutto added that the vandalism created an opportunity to discuss the church and its role as a haven. "It was just kind of organic to leave it up and let the conversation develop."

St. David's planned a cleanup on Nov. 30 as a community event combined with a prayer service. About 250 people showed up — substantially more than the parish's average Sunday attendance of 47.

"It's probably the largest event we've had in our history," Hutto said. The crowd gathered for a small prayer before taking turns at scrubbing the graffiti. "Getting to actually scrub it off of the walls was very cathartic for people."

Because parishioners and neighbors removed the graffiti, the event helped

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## 'We Forgive You'

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them translate a sense of shock or disappointment into one of empowerment. "Okay, you can't hurt us," Hutto said. "This does come off of the walls. Hate is not more powerful than love."

After the graffiti was gone, volunteers sang "Amazing Grace" and moved into the sanctuary, which was left with standing room only. There, they held a prayer service of peace, unity, and reconciliation.

Both Harvey and Hutto received interview requests and notes from around the world. Hutto said she appeared on CNN twice to discuss the graffiti, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation interviewed her. "I did not expect it to explode like it did," she said.

Harvey has been interviewed by media in Brazil, the Czech Republic, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Japan. "I've never experienced anything like this," he said, adding that seminary provided little instruction on handling "international press with big-time politics."

Our Saviour has received emails from around the world and from many denominations, and the church's voice-mail system was overwhelmed. Harvey said he discovered its maximum capacity was 47 messages.

"There were four messages of the 47 that were some of the most dreadful, evil, heinous, racist comments I've heard in my entire life," he said.

Harvey said the responses have given Our Saviour a sense of call to its immigrant neighbors.

Harvey said Our Saviour is the most diverse congregation in the Diocese of Washington. Around 80 percent of parishioners are immigrants, New Americans, or first-generation Americans. While the community has expressed outrage, embarrassment, and sadness about the vandalism, most parishioners have responded with "deafening silence." The rector said members are afraid to speak up or to talk with the media.

"They're here in the United States trying to build a life," he said. "It's not easy for them. And then to have this right outside their doors. They're afraid."

"We're just learning now what it means to be a home for all God's people. It's just not about worshipping together. We really are on the front lines now of doing work for our immigrant neighbors."

Harvey said the vandalism has made the neighborhood aware of just how many immigrants are there, both in the church and the surrounding area.

In Indiana, St. David's has felt a similar call. Hutto said the presidential election highlighted existing divisions in America. "We do believe that we can play a role here in Brown County in healing that division," even as a small parish in Bean Blossom.

"Our next step is on December 18. We're going to have a community con-



cert at the local high school in order to continue this conversation about relationship-building," Hutto said. The goal is simple: to come to know one another.

"We need to find this common ground and build the relationship there." If relationships are built, she said, it will be easier to seek reconciliation "when we reach greater divides."

Hutto and Harvey extend that message to the vandals.

"We are praying for you," Harvey said. "We love you. We want you to meet the people we worship with. We want you to understand who we are. We are Americans, too. And we love this country and we want this country to be a place where all are welcome. And our church would welcome everybody, even the perpetrators who did this. We love you, and we pray for you."

"I would say that we forgive you," Hutto said. "That we don't necessarily understand why, but you're always welcome at St. David's. We forgive you."

*Matthew Townsend*

## In the Episcopal Church

### Bishop Curry Writes to Haitian Bishops

On Dec. 1 the Office of the Presiding Bishop released a letter from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry to the Rt. Rev. Zaché Duracin, Bishop of Haiti; the Rt. Rev. Oge Beauvoir, Bishop Suffragan of Haiti; and the Rev. Kesner Ajax, president of the diocese's standing committee. In the letter, Curry addressed the Title IV disciplinary case involving Duracin, the growing divisions within that diocese, and plans to send envoys to Haiti to stabilize the situation.

In his letter, Curry wrote that he and the bishops of Haiti discussed how these divisions within the diocese and between the two bishops had led to the Title IV case against Duracin. "Since

## Gumbo Evangelism

(Continued from page 4)

about baptism that people who are curious about baptism will find authoritative," Hunn said.

By using traffic analytics, the church can see the search terms people use when they're searching for baptism, and then create content that responds to the most popular concepts.

To crunch this data, the church center has contracted with HubSpot, an inbound marketing vendor and consulting firm based in Cambridge, Mas-

sachusetts. The church center is working closely with HubSpot while building a new version of the church's website. The new website will be optimized for mobile users, and is designed so HubSpot can easily collect and analyze data on web traffic. The new site is expected to launch in the spring.

It's all part of retooling the communications department as a digital evangelism department. "The Episcopal Church has a great story to tell," Collins said. "We just have to get it to the right people."

*Kirk Petersen*

our meeting, it has become even clearer that this proceeding will continue to move toward an unflattering public trial within the next few months — with painful allegations by both bishops against each other and testimony by clergy of the Diocese as witnesses on both sides — unless a way can be found to resolve it amicably,” he said.

Curry also cited the increased division among lay and clerical leadership, including a recent filing by the Standing Committee under Title III to dissolve the pastoral relationship between the diocese and Beauvoir. He said that finding an “amicable and pastorally acceptable resolution” of the Title IV proceedings involving Duracin and the Title III proceeding brought against Beauvoir is especially critical in the light of Duracin’s approaching retirement and his call to elect a bishop coadjutor.

“How important it is that that election be conducted by a diocese that is healthy and generous of spirit cannot be overstated,” he said.

In efforts to build health, Curry said

the Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society and the Diocese of

Haiti had recently created a new memorandum of understanding about their joint efforts. Curry has also appointed a three-person panel consisting of the Rt. Rev. Stephen T. Lane, the Bishop of Maine; the Rev. P. Roger Bowen, a former Headmaster of Episcopal schools; and Paul B. Nix, Jr., Esquire, In-house Counsel for the DFMS in New York.

“All three persons whom I have selected, and who have agreed to serve, have had substantial personal experience with the Diocese and are persons in whom I place considerable trust,” Curry said.

## Two Days, Eight Ballots

The Diocese of Los Angeles spent eight ballots on Dec. 2-3 deciding between an openly gay preacher, teacher, liturgist, and artist and a priest who was executive director of the Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library for 17 years.

The Rev. Canon John Taylor, 62, was the sole nominee by petition and he won the election. He is the vicar of St. John’s Church and School, Rancho Santa Margarita. Taylor was ordained to the diaconate (2003) and priesthood (2004) by Bishop J. Jon Bruno.

He was chief of staff to the former president from 1984 to 1990, and directed the presidential library from 1990 to 2007. His weblog bears the jaunty title *The Episcopixonian: Ecclesiastical and Political Pragmatism, with a Beat*.

The diocese began voting with a six-person slate in electing a bishop coadjutor, who will serve alongside Bishop Bruno and then succeed him when Bruno retires.

The Rev. Paul Fromberg, 55, rector of St. Gregory of Nyssa, San Francisco, since 2008, was on the list of nominees chosen by a search committee.

“My desire is to be loyal to my bishop and to have a collegial respect for his pastoral oversight,” Fromberg told the *Houston Chronicle* in 2004, in discussing his life as a gay priest. “I

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## Los Angeles Election

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think that it becomes possible for me to maintain that level of loyalty more easily by going to another diocese where there is more of a feeling of acceptance.”

Fromberg told the *Chronicle* that he had not felt driven out of the Diocese of Texas: “I feel like I’m making a choice based on how I understand what God’s call is for me right now.”

Taylor’s years with Nixon notwithstanding, the diocese was not choosing between widely divergent perspectives on politics or sexuality.

“Hopelessness and anger are consequences of oppressive economic and political systems,” Taylor said in a diocesan profile. “Christians’ hope comes from the Resurrection and our experience of our belovedness. Citizens’ hope is in being treated with justice, including dignified work at a living wage with decent benefits. Other preeminent global issues are climate change and vigilance about the scapegoating of Muslims. The bishop of Los Angeles has a special responsibility to advocate for the homeless, the undocumented, and the inalienable rights of women, ethnic minority groups, and LGBTQ people.”

Taylor led the voting in both orders for the first five ballots, but Fromberg began gaining steadily. Taylor won a majority of clergy votes on the third ballot but lost it on the fourth ballot. He won a majority of lay votes on the sixth and seventh ballots. Fromberg and Taylor tied on clergy votes on the seventh ballot, three votes shy of winning that order.

On the eighth ballot, Taylor won 122 votes in the clergy order and increased his vote in the lay order to 194 — 53 more than he needed to win among the laity.

The other nominees were:

- The Rev. Rachel Anne Nyback, rector of St. Cross, Hermosa Beach, who has served in ministry in Southern California and Washington, D.C., after teaching in Kuwait. She withdrew from the election after the second ballot.

- The Rev. Anna Olson, rector of St. Mary’s, Los Angeles, who has served in ministry in Southern California, including as Los Angeles director of the nonprofit Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice. She withdrew from the election after the fourth ballot.

- The Rt. Rev. Pierre Whalon, Bishop of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, who has served in ministry in Europe, Florida, and Pennsylvania with experience in international, interfaith, and financial initiatives. He withdrew from the election after the third ballot.

- The Rev. Mauricio Wilson, rector of St. Paul’s, Oakland, who has served in ministry in Costa Rica, New York, and California following his career as a banker-auditor beginning with Coopers & Lybrand. Wilson did not withdraw from the election, even as his votes dwindled into single digits.

*Douglas LeBlanc*

## West Texas Nominates 7

Seven priests will stand for election as the next Bishop Suffragan of West Texas. The diocese has published their names in a 48-page document that includes their biographies and answers to several questions.

All of the priests serve within the Diocese of West Texas:

- The Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson, vicar, St. Elizabeth’s, Buda

- The Rev. Christopher Caddell, rector, Holy Spirit Church and School, Dripping Springs

- The Rev. Chris Cole, rector, Church of the Resurrection, Windcrest

- The Rev. John Hill, rector, St. Margaret’s, San Antonio

- The Rev. Lisa Mason, rector, St. David’s Church and School, San Antonio

- The Rev. Jonathan Wickham, rector, All Saints, Corpus Christi

- The Rev. Robert Woody, rector, Church of the Reconciliation, San Antonio

The diocese will elect the bishop suffragan during its 113th council meeting on Feb. 25 in Corpus Christi.

## Three Nominees in North Carolina

The Diocese of North Carolina has announced three nominees in its search for the 12th diocesan bishop. The three nominees are men who serve in other dioceses:

- The Rev. Charles T. Dupree, rector of Trinity Church, Bloomington, Indiana

- The Rev. Samuel S. Rodman III, special projects officer, Diocese of Massachusetts

- The Rev. Milind Sojwal, rector of All Angels’ Church, Manhattan

The diocese is scheduled to elect its next bishop on March 4.

## In the Anglican Communion

### Fresh Expressions Tops 50,000

A new Church of England report says that more than 50,000 people participate in Fresh Expressions services in England. Church Army, one of the church’s leading urban mission agencies, conducted the research and published the report. It says the majority of those who attend are younger than the average worshiper in standard parish congregations.

Fresh Expressions is defined as a “new gathering or network that engages mainly with people who have never been to church.” The term was coined in a 2004 report on church-planting, *Mission-shaped Church*. The movement was championed by Rowan Williams during his time as Archbishop of Canterbury.

The report says 3,400 Fresh Expressions projects are found in all the major denominations across the United Kingdom. About half, 2,100, are linked to the Church of England. The 233-page report, *The Day of Small Things*, analyzes about 1,100 Fresh Expressions projects in 21 Church of England dioceses.



## PB Venables Returns

The Most Rev. Greg Venables, Bishop of Argentina, has been elected presiding bishop of the Anglican Church in South America. He succeeds Bishop Tito Muñoz of Chile, the first presiding bishop of the province who was born in South America. Muñoz had served a maximum of two three-year terms.

Bishop Venables previously served in this role from 2001 to 2010. He joined the South America Missionary Society and moved to Latin America in January 1978. He had planned to stay three years, but he has remained ever since and his three grown children all have locally born spouses.

Within the region, the Roman Catholic Church is largest and Pentecostal denominations are also strong. The Anglican Church, which is much smaller, maintains strong ecumenical links with its partners. Bishop Venables said he had a strong working relationship with Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, who is now Pope Francis.

The province comprises Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Northern Argentina, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.

## Australian Diocese Rocked by Allegations

The Diocese of Newcastle, north of Sydney, is reeling from revelations about a culture of widespread sexual abuse across many years. The Rt. Rev. Greg Thompson, Bishop of Newcastle, told a royal commission that a priest told him in the 1970s he would “get ahead” in the church if he offered sexual favors.

Thompson was the concluding witness in a royal commission’s hearing into the diocese, which confirmed abuse occurred there for decades. He broke down several times as he recalled being abused as a teenager.

The hearings included accusations against the Rt. Rev. Ian Shevill, Bishop of Newcastle from 1973 to 1977. He was secretary of USPG, a leading U.K. missionary society, from 1970 to 1973. He died in 1988. The Rev. Canon Eric Barker, a former editor of the diocesan

newspaper, also was implicated. He too is deceased.

The Royal Commission led the Most Rev. Roger Herft, Archbishop of Perth and former Bishop of Newcastle, to stand aside during the course of the commission. He said he had failed the people of Newcastle: “I let them down badly — let down the survivors in a way that remorse itself is a very poor emotion to express.”

## Archbishop Calls Ecumenical Adviser

The Rev. Will Adam is the new ecumenical adviser to the Archbishop of Canterbury and ecumenical officer at the Council for Christian Unity (CCU).

This post will build on the creative working relationship that has been established between Lambeth Palace and the CCU to further the ecumenical ministry of Archbishop Welby.

“I am delighted that Will Adam will be bringing his considerable experience and expertise to this post,” Welby said. “His understanding of both national and international ecumenism will be a real asset to the work at Lambeth and at CCU. There are wonderful opportunities in ecumenism in these times, and we must always strive to be obedient to Jesus’ desire that his Church ‘may be one.’”

“My commitment to the reconciliation of Christ’s Church goes back to my early student days,” Adam said. “I am looking forward to supporting the archbishop and the wider Church of England in ecumenical mission and ministry in the coming years.”

## Bell Case Given Further Review

The Church of England has appointed a senior member of the House of Lords to review the sex-abuse allegations against the late Bishop George Bell.

Alex Carlile, the independent reviewer of terrorism legislation between 2001 and 2011 and an expert in cyber-related issues, will report on lessons

learned in the Bell case. His report, commissioned by the Church of England’s National Safeguarding Team in accordance with the House of Bishops’ guidance on all complex cases, is expected to be finished by the end of next summer.

The Rt. Rev. Martin Warner, Bishop of Chichester, issued a public apology in 2015 and said the church had settled a legal civil claim involving allegations of sexual abuse by Bishop Bell, Bishop of Chichester from 1929 to 1958.

Bell was revered in his time as a pioneer ecumenist and supporter of German Christians opposed to Adolf Hitler. Schools and other buildings were named after him and a statue honors him at Chichester Cathedral. He was a serious candidate to succeed William Temple as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Allegations against Bell were brought to the Diocese of Winchester in 1995 but they prompted no action. In 2013 the complainant approached Lambeth Palace, which commissioned an investigation.

Since the settlement in 2015, several legal experts and journalists have run a sustained campaign criticizing the church’s handling of the case and calling for it to be reviewed.

The Rt. Rev. Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath and Wells and lead bishop on safeguarding, said in a media statement: “I am grateful to Lord Carlile for agreeing to undertake the review, which will take a detailed look into how the church handled the George Bell case; as with all serious cases there are always lessons to be learnt. The Church of England takes all safeguarding issues very seriously and we will continue to listen to everyone affected in this case while we await the findings of the review. The Diocese of Chichester continues to be in touch and offer support to the survivor known as Carol, who brought the allegations.”

## Challenge to Uruguayans

The Bishop of Uruguay has delivered a critical presidential address to his diocesan synod, in which he said that parishes had failed to engage with “the

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## Uruguay

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basics” of mission and evangelism.

The Rt. Rev. Michele Pollesel told a story of a new priest who heard complaints that he preached the same sermon for three weeks. “Yes, it’s true. I have preached the same sermon every week for three weeks now. I know what I’m doing. ... When you begin to live out this sermon, I will go to the next one.”

He added: “Without disparaging anyone in any way, I have begun to feel like that preacher. It may be that I am too impatient, or it may be that I still do not understand the Uruguayan context well, or it may be due to other reasons. ... However, it seems to me that not much of what I’ve exhorted the Church here in Uruguay to accomplish has been achieved.

“I have already said that this is the third year that I am repeating what the basics are for us and, frankly, I have not seen many results. Maybe I’m the only one who sees it this way. Perhaps some of you could name many changes you have experienced in your own community. If this is so, I am happy and I apologize for my insistence on this.”

Pollesel was elected Bishop of the Iglesia Anglicana del Uruguay (the Anglican Church of Uruguay), part of the Anglican Province of South America, in 2011, in succession to the Rt. Rev. Miguel Tamayo.

He wants every parish to send a priest and two lay people to two training events that he is organizing for

2017. “People will be coached, taught, and trained in the some of the basics: how to lead a service within their community; how to lead a Bible study; how to share a simple explanation of what Anglican faith and practice are about,” Bishop Pollesel said. “If any community is not represented at these sessions, either by laity or by clergy, as bishop I will need to consider whether that community deserves to continue existing.

“Why so severe? Because, from my point of view as the bishop in this diocese, we need to start walking towards the fulfillment of a simple but at the same time clear vision. We are not going to change the world, but we are going to begin to change our own perspective and perhaps also seek our own conversion.”

He urged the diocese to strengthen its relationship with other churches in the Anglican Province of South America, saying that the relationship between the diocese and province was non-existent when he arrived. “There was a sense that we existed independently, that we had nothing or very little to do with the province, that the province did not support us, and that we ourselves did not want to have anything to do with the province,” he said.

“The province was regarded as an enemy instead of seeing it as a group of other believers, other followers of Jesus Christ, trying to live out their faith in an appropriate way and according to their criteria.

“I remind you that the Church does not exist independently, but that all —

no matter in what shape and/or manner we try to express our faith, we are all interdependent. We may have something different, something that we can share with others, but they also have something to share with us, and so we continue building God’s dream of God for all of us.”

In his address, Bishop Pollesel explained the difference between mission and vision. He said that the Church’s mission is based on the three pillars of proclamation of the gospel (evangelism and church planting); training in the gospel (discipleship); and service in the gospel (social outreach).

“The mission never changes,” he said. “It is always the same. However, the vision changes according to the circumstances and realities.

“The mission answers the question: What are we going to do? The vision answers the question: How are we going to do it?”

He said that the church in Uruguay had “not been very successful” and that proclamation was the weakest part of its mission.

In addition to creation of training events for parishes in the diocese, Pollesel has invited the Diocese of Chile to send two or three missionaries to help plant new communities in Uruguay.

“We need to experience different ways of being and acting as a church in our country, and I hope they can help us to do this,” he said.

Gavin Drake, ACNS

## Call the Midwife Meets USPG

The Christmas special of BBC’s *Call the Midwife* will feature the work of the Anglican mission agency USPG. The show follows the fortunes of the midwives and nuns at Nonnatus House, in East London, in 1961. In the Christmas special, the Rev. Tom Hereward and a number of the Sisters and midwives are sent by SPG, as USPG was known in the 1960s, to help a struggling clinic in South Africa.

Today’s USPG played a significant

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role in helping the BBC research the episode, including input from the Rev. Canon Edgar Ruddock, who was a missionary in South Africa in the 1980s.

"I had a lengthy phone conversation with the key researcher, who tapped into my knowledge of the 1980s, when many church-founded hospitals were still operating across rural southern Africa," Ruddock said. "I was also able to point them to various older colleagues who had worked there as doctors or nurses during the 1960s."

"Mission has changed a lot since the 1960s," said Rachel Parry, global relations director for USPG. "We used to think of mission as something that 'we over here' did for 'them over there' — but now we understand that mission is 'from everywhere to everywhere.' There is no one part of the church that has the monopoly on Christian understanding. Instead, we are all learning from each other.

"Another change is that USPG no longer sends missionaries in the old-fashioned sense. However, we do still support and encourage the movement of people in mission. The difference is that the movement of people today is, again, 'from everywhere to everywhere.' In recent years, USPG has supported a Cuban doctor to work in Uruguay and a Ghanaian priest to work in The Gambia.

"Mission today is about a global network of Christians who all have needs and skills, something they need to learn and something they have to share."

USPG has published a range of resources to highlight the work it is doing today to support midwifery.

## Malawi's President Praises Church

Malawi's President, Peter Mutharika, has praised Anglican churches in his country for their work in health, education, and agriculture.

Mutharika made the remarks to a contingent of Anglican bishops at Kamuzu Palace in the capital city, Lilongwe. Leading the group was the Most Rev. Albert Chama, Primate of

Central Africa, based in neighboring Zambia. The Province of Central Africa comprises dioceses in Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

"The Anglican church here is doing a lot, in providing for the body and the soul," the president said. "You are running schools and hospitals. You are supporting agriculture, and you are with us in times of emergencies, such as the devastating floods and droughts we experienced the past two years. You are also in environmental rehabilitation and management."

The president reiterated his hope for church and state to work collectively in instilling good values among citizens. "Church and government are partners in development," he said. "Together we take care of the body and the soul. Here in Malawi, we have agreed on pillars through which we will develop our country — namely patriotism, integrity, and hard work."

### POSTCARD FROM LONDON

## Finding Faith on the Margins

Religion headlines in the United Kingdom mostly tell a tale of decline. The Church of England certainly has seen decline of 1 percent year on year for more than a decade. Methodists likewise seem to be suffering.

There are some green shoots. A recent report suggests the "messy church" movement is making headway. Another says conservative churches that insist on the truth of the Bible are growing. Perhaps even more intriguing is growth of a spiritual movement that until now at least stood outside the reckoning of media reporting.

Since 1980 large numbers of gypsies have joined a charismatic-style movement called Light and Life. The movement claims to comprise 40 percent of U.K. gypsies. Many of them have turned their backs on adherence to a nominal Roman Catholicism and seek to lead a life that eschews thieving, alcohol, and fortune-telling (dukering).

In July, 6,000 attended the Light and

(Continued on next page)

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## Faith on the Margins

(Continued from previous page)

Life Convention, the movement's annual jamboree. It's said the continental branch of the movement, called *Vie et Lumière*, first took root among Romani survivors of the Holocaust. They planted this movement on a mission visit to the northwest of England.

The style of preaching is charismatic, with all-male speakers. There are miracle claims and rousing worship. "I see a great shift among gypsies today," one preacher told the BBC. "We've gone from being professional liars — I was one of them. Now, we don't want to live that life ... because the Holy Spirit's inside us. We want to go 100 percent legal. That's what happens when you're born again."

Gypsies in the U.K. have their own Roman Catholic chaplain, the Rev. Dan Mason. He told the BBC that Light and Life followers are very critical of the Church's rituals, arguing they are not directly from the Bible. He says Light and Life provides its adherents a sense of identity and belonging, "something that as Catholics we need to take seriously and look at how we can make our parishes more welcoming."

Jackie Boyd, a church elder, wants to see the movement extend beyond gypsies. "England and Britain as a nation are going against the standards and principles of God in a big way," she told the BBC. "So we hope to see a revival and our people saved — but we want everyone to be saved."

*John Martin*

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[covenant.livingchurch.org](http://covenant.livingchurch.org)



Bain-Library of Congress, via Wikimedia Commons

Gypsy Smith photographed in Manhattan, 1918

## Forerunner of Light and Life

On a wet January morning in 1889, a solitary figure stepped ashore at New York Harbor. His arrival was unheralded, but within a few months the name of evangelist Rodney "Gypsy" Smith (1860-1947) was known from Boston to San Francisco.

During the next two decades, he would visit the United States more than 40 times. People crowded halls and tent meetings to hear his trenchant preaching, interspersed with tuneful solos.

Smith was born in a Romani tent in Epping Forest nine miles northeast of London. A commemorative stone marks the spot in the suburb of Woodford Green. The family got by selling baskets, tinware, opportunist thieving, and dukering, that is, fortune-telling using tarot cards. Rodney's mother died of smallpox when he was 5. His father, Cornelius, was in and out of prison but one chaplain took an interest in him. It was the start of a spiritual journey.

Rodney Smith received no education. He could neither read nor write when converted in his teens, but William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, recognized his raw talent and he became an officer in the movement. "The Converted Gypsies," Rodney and his brothers, undertook numerous evangelistic campaigns beginning in 1873. If anything, he would be more famous in the United States than Britain.

"I didn't go through your colleges and seminaries," Smith would say. "They wouldn't have me. But I have been to the feet of Jesus, where the only true scholarship is learned."

Where possible he would visit gypsy encampments on both sides of the Atlantic. In the 1980s, four decades after the death of Gypsy Smith, a spiritual people's movement began to take root among them.

*John Martin*



# Gift ideas

from friends of  
THE LIVING CHURCH  
2016

## Stephen Andrews

An annual Christmas highlight for me, as someone with cultural roots in Minnesota, is the St. Olaf College Christmas Festival Concert. Featuring Christmas music from around the world and a commissioned premiere every year, the concert is a rich and magical blend of the new and the familiar. This year, it is possible for the first time to order audio access from the college ([christmas.stolaf.edu](http://christmas.stolaf.edu)). My Christmas would not be complete without a choral benediction from the Ole Choir!

*The Rt. Rev. Stephen Andrews is principal of Wycliffe College at the University of Toronto.*



## John C. Bauerschmidt

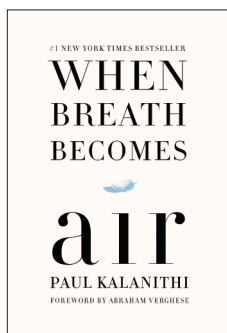
If you ask me, Ridolfo Luigi Boccherini's *Cello Concertos*, Vol. 3, Nos. 9-12 (Naxos) is the music they're playing in heaven. Boccherini (1743-1805) was both a noted composer and a gifted cel-

list in his own right, and these works are a delight to both heart and mind. No. 12 was only recorded after the score was discovered in a Neapolitan library in 1987. The British cellist Raphael Wallfisch performs here in a 2004 recording. He is married to the Australian violinist Elizabeth Wallfisch, who has offered her splendid interpretation of the earlier (1695-1764) Pietro Locatelli's Opus 4 in a 1996 recording on Hyperion that is another favorite.

*The Rt. Rev. John C. Bauerschmidt is Bishop of Tennessee.*

## Katelyn Beaty

If Paul Kalanithi had not become a neurosurgeon, he writes, he might have become a pastor. Both vocations navigate the relationship between body and spirit, and the mystery of human consciousness. But Kalanithi's experience with suffering — a lung cancer diagnosis at age 36 — gives him more



fodder for meditation than does the surgeon's table or the theologian's tome alike. His reflections in *When Breath Becomes Air* illuminate the ways that pain winnows away the excesses of daily life to make room for what matters: relationships, creativity, service, and love. *Katelyn Beaty is a Christianity Today editor at large and author of A Woman's Place: A Christian Vision for Your Calling in the Office, the Home, and the World (Howard/Simon & Schuster, 2016).*

## Donald Bolen

Before his death in early November, Leonard Cohen released *You Want It Darker*. He knew he had cancer and several of the songs on this album reflect that he was clearly preparing to die. Despite a long period in a Buddhist monastery and a long fascination with Jesus, Leonard was Jewish to his core, and generously invites the hearer into his penetrating dialogue with God. Not light Christmas fare, but for the searcher, Leonard brings blessings.

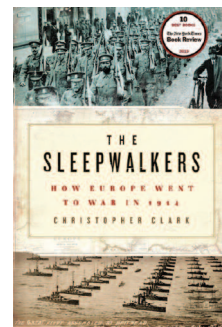
*The Rt. Rev. Donald Bolen is Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Regina.*



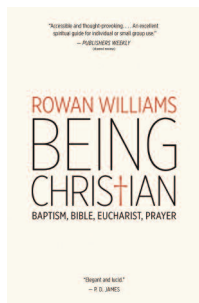
## Adrian Butcher

The First World War has always fascinated me. This year there were moving commemorations to mark the centennial of the Battle of the Somme. In 2017, we will be recalling the United States joining the conflict and the Battle of Passchendaele. Here are three books about World War I that I would recommend: *Birdsong* (Vintage, 1997) by Sebastian Faulkes, a readable yet visceral novel; *Sleepwalkers* (HarperCollins, 2013) by Christopher Clark, a meticulous study of how and why it happened; and *Edith Cavell: Faith Before the Firing Squad* by Catherine Butcher, a short biography of a Christian heroine who paid the ultimate price for her bravery. (I should declare an interest: Catherine is my wife, but she captures Edith Cavell's faith and courage really well.)

*Adrian Butcher is the Anglican Communion Office's director of communications.*



## James G. Callaway



Perhaps nothing stirs the sparks of faith like going back to the basics, which Rowan Williams does in his tiny gem *Being Christian* (Eerdmans, 2014). Given as open lectures at Canterbury Cathedral during Holy Week, the book's four chapters take us to the core of essential elements of the Christian life: baptism, Bible, Eucharist, and prayer.

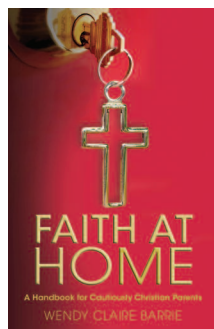
On prayer, for example, he starts with Origen's question, "If God knows what we are going to ask, why bother to pray?" Fleshing out the Lord's Prayer, he turns to Gregory of Nyssa and John Cassian. This resonant book is like making a retreat and is a perfect resource for newcomers and mature souls alike. You will know it is a favorite the first time you reach for it only to realize that it's missing because you had already shared it with someone else.

*The Rev. Canon James G. Callaway is general secretary of the Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion.*

## Bill Campbell

*Faith at Home: A Handbook for Cautiously Christian Parents* (Church Publishing, 2016) by Wendy Claire Berrie is an excellent tool for anyone looking to add spiritual practices to daily family life. Berrie provides simple definitions and personal experiences as guidance for parents trying to better fulfill our roles as the primary faith incubators of our children's spiritual lives. *Faith at Home* gives advice on how to bolster the Christian practices already taking place in your home. Her handbook is deeply personal and relatable, while also being open for families of all types. Joyeux Noel!

*Bill Campbell is the executive director of Forma, the network of faith formation practitioners in the Episcopal Church.*

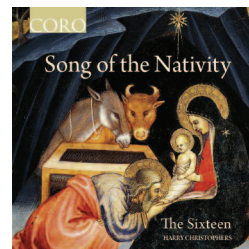


## Christopher Cocksworth

*Song of the Nativity* (CORO Records) by The Sixteen, who often perform in Coventry Cathedral, will stir the soul. The film *Nativity!* (2009), shot in Coventry, will

take you into the meaning of Christmas, with a lot of laughs along the way. Coventry has received hundreds of Syrian and other refugees. To save the life of a child escaping danger this Christmas will take you to the heart of Christmas. Try USP's appeal that supports the great work of the Church of England's Diocese in Europe.

*The Rt. Rev. Christopher Cocksworth is Bishop of Coventry.*



## David Copley

*The Inn of the Sixth Happiness* (1958) is a heartwarming film based on the life of missionary Gladys Aylwood, who became a missionary in China before World War II. Aylwood grew up in a working-class family in North London and used her life savings to reach Asia and work with the China Inland Mission in 1932. The movie takes many liberties on the true life of Aylwood, and is filmed through a romantic Hollywood lens with Ingrid Bergman in the starring role. Nonetheless, it is an inspirational story of a woman stepping out in faith and of the power of the ministry of presence and hospitality.

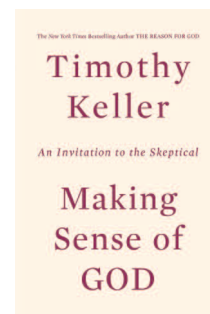
*The Rev. David Copley is team leader of global partnerships at the Episcopal Church Center.*



## Gavin G. Dunbar

Tim Keller's *Making Sense of God* demonstrates an approach to apologetics and evangelism that Anglicans desperately need to incorporate into our preaching and teaching, if we are to survive the hollowing out of the Protestant liberal mainline. *Advent at Merton* (Delphian, 2013) features some of the most compelling new sacred music of our time (by composers like James Macmillan of Scotland) exquisitely performed by the Merton College Choir, conducted by Peter Phillips.

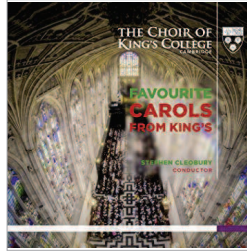
*The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar is rector of St. John's Church in Savannah, Georgia.*



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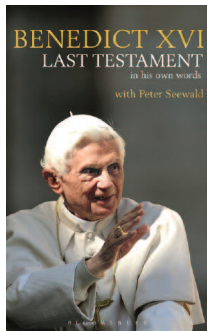
## Robert D. Fain

King's College Choir sets the standard for Anglican choirs worldwide, and its *Favourite Carols from King's* does not disappoint. Released in 2014, it is a collection of 25 highlights from the annual Festival of Lessons and Carols BBC broadcast. Celebrating the 60th anniversary in 2014, the collection includes "Once in Royal David's City," "In the Bleak Mid-Winter," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," and many other beloved carols that every Episcopalian should know. The collection is available as a CD and DVD on the King's College label.



*The Rev. Robert D. Fain is rector of Church of the Good Shepherd in Augusta, Georgia.*

## Zachary Guiliano



Benedict XVI's *Last Testament* (Bloomsbury, 2016) signifies the passing of an age or perhaps a transition into a new era for theology and the Church. Yet this final book captures so much of his personal life, during his years in Nazi-era Germany, his early work as a priest and academic, his participation in Vatican II, and his leadership of the

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. It is wonderfully colorful and entertaining reading, in which his generous spirit and faith shine through.

*Zachary Guiliano is an associate editor of TLC and editor of Covenant.*

## David Hamid

The Book of Common Prayer is rooted in Benedictine spirituality. *Benedictine Daily Prayer: A Short Breviary, Second Edition* by Maxwell E. Johnson (Liturgical Press, 2015) is thus an ideal gift for a deacon, priest, bishop, or layperson who wishes to know more about and to pray the divine office as laid out by St. Benedict in his ancient rule. Yet it is a thoroughly modern breviary, marked by the Benedictine awareness of the world around us. The daily intercessions are inspiring in their scope. An in-

clusive-language version of the Grail Psalter, Scripture readings from the NRSV, and fresh translations of patristic texts make this very much a 21st-century compendium of prayer. It is also an ecumenical work. Maxwell E. Johnson is a Lutheran scholar, pastor in the ELCA, and oblate of St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota.



*The Rt. Rev. David Hamid is Bishop Suffragan of the Church of England's Diocese in Europe and co-chair of the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission.*

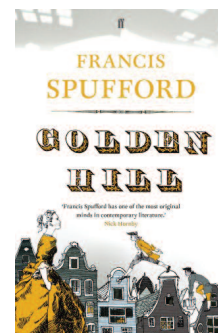
## Scott B. Hayashi

At Christmas, I think about the gift that God gave to us in sending Jesus. That gift was nothing less than God giving himself to us. It was the giving of God's abiding presence that would stay with us after the Ascension of Jesus. That is the gift of God's real presence in the Holy Communion. So, for this Christmas my suggestion is to give to those you love the gift of your undivided presence. That is really being with them — really being open to hearing them and to giving them your gratitude for their preciousness. A blessed Christmas to all!

*The Rt. Rev. Scott B. Hayashi is Bishop of Utah.*

## Wesley Hill

Most readers of *THE LIVING CHURCH* will know the name Francis Spufford, author of the profane and deeply moving



*Unapologetic: Why, Despite Everything, Christianity Can Still Make Surprising Emotional Sense.* Fewer may know that this year Spufford published his first novel, *Golden Hill* (Faber & Faber), a rollicking pre-Revolutionary War story set in New York. If you are able to put it down for more than ten minutes, I will be shocked. Suspense, intrigue, exposé, slapstick, sex: all, and more besides, are here in dazzling, unpredictable abundance.

*Wesley Hill is assistant professor of biblical studies at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania.*



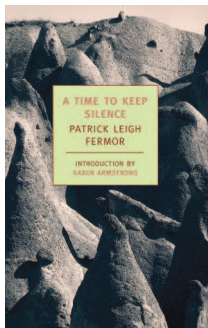
## Brendon Hunter

If you are looking for something smaller or a great stocking-stuffer, Thistle Farms ([thistlefarms.org](http://thistlefarms.org)) makes the best lip balm. It's one of the few unscented, unflavored, all-natural lip balms available. Also, a must for any gardener in your life is Thistle Farms' bug spray, which has no harsh chemicals and works great. Check out all the offerings. Not only are these some of the best-quality products, but you are helping support sanctuary and healing for women survivors of abuse, addiction, trafficking, and prostitution. *Brendon Hunter is the Episcopal Church Foundation's program director for leadership resources.*

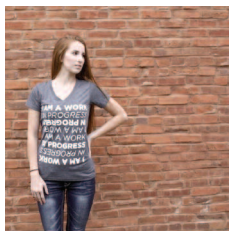


## Serenhedd James

Patrick Leigh Fermor's *A Time to Keep Silence* (New York Review Books, 2007), his short account of visiting various European monasteries in his well-charted travels, speaks with a depth and richness that engages and enthralls in equal measure. From St. Wandrille to Solemnes to La Grande Trappe, and on to Cappadocia, Leigh Fermor is a guide *par excellence* to the hidden lives of the men who live, work, and pray behind the high walls of their spiritual fortresses, which become more enticing by the page. *Serenhedd James is a member of the theology and religion faculty at the University of Oxford and editor of New Directions.*



## Luke Jernagan



This Christmas, I will choose gifts for my friends and family from [bravely.org](http://bravely.org), which was, to quote its website, "conceived by women survivors of sexual exploitation and addiction. We have a message we want to share with the world: that recovery from trauma is possible through love, compassion, and community." In this season of hope, I can think of no better gift than one that supports hope for

these brave women and proclaims hope to the world. The T-shirts are also really comfortable!

*The Rev. Luke Jernagan is rector of St. Peter's Church in Ladue, Missouri.*

## Douglas LeBlanc

*The Black Stallion* (1979) is an enchanting film adaptation of Walter Farley's debut novel in 1941. Scenes of a young actor Kelly Reno running along the beach with the abused horse he befriends anticipate the cross-species body language of *The Horse Whisperer* (1998). If you love art that imagines God's peaceable kingdom, do not miss this masterpiece.

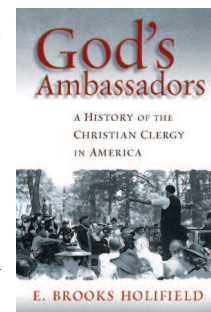
*Douglas LeBlanc is TLC's senior editor.*



## G. Jeffrey MacDonald

The fascinating story of ordained ministry in America receives judicious treatment in *God's Ambassadors: A History of the Christian Clergy in America* (Eerdmans, 2007). In it, historian par excellence E. Brooks Holifield shows how perspectives on ministerial authority evolved by feeding selectively on strains in the tradition and riding waves of cultural change. With an eye for telling detail and economical prose, Holifield attends ably to both Catholic and Protestant trajectories. Clergy who read *God's Ambassadors* will see their calling examined within a new, enriching framework. Lay readers will find the cloth demystified in the best possible way.

*G. Jeffrey MacDonald is a TLC correspondent and pastor in the United Church of Christ.*



## Thabo Makgoba

Give a Gaelic or an indigenous cross, carved and painted locally. This gift points us to the Cross and if made in our own community is an invitation and a call to co-create with God the justice, righteousness, and mercy that the gospel promises, as well as equality and the flourishing of all, including nature. The Cross reveals the

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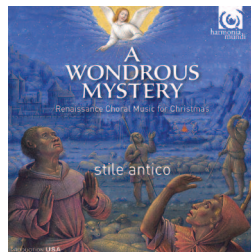
mystery of the Incarnation, suffering, death, and Resurrection of Jesus. It tells us that political and economic power are temporal and that there is value beyond these. In giving the cross, I am asking the receiver to join me in being courageous, hopeful, and prepared to promote the values of the kingdom to the point of personal sacrifice.

*The Most Rev. Thabo Makgoba is Archbishop of Capetown and Primate of Southern Africa.*

## Hannah Matis

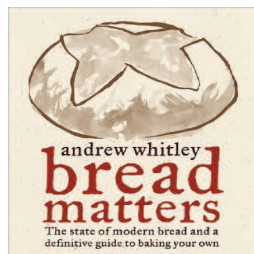
I recommend Stile Antico's album *A Wondrous Mystery: Renaissance Choral Music for Christmas* (Harmonia Mundi, 2015). Stile Antico is arguably the best early-music vocal ensemble working right now, and this Christmas album is a wonderful collection of pieces that will not bore you.

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



## Andrew McGowan

*Bread Matters: The State of Modern Bread and a Definitive Guide to Baking Your Own* (Andrews McMeel, 2009)



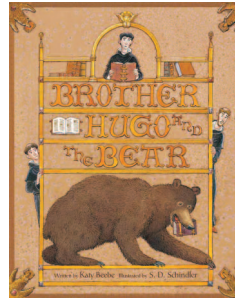
by Andrew Whitley is part cookbook, part manifesto. It offers the beginner all the necessary guidance to make really good bread, real insight into how it works, and a spirited critique of how bread went so wrong. This book is fun to browse, but could

also be the basis for family projects, festive and everyday, in the New Year.

*The Very Rev. Andrew McGowan is dean and president of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale.*

## Mark Michael

Far too many children's religious books seem to be intended for the shrinking violet, but our sons have been delighted by the vivid storytelling and beautiful illustrations in two distinctly robust recent works. *Brother Hugo and the Bear* (Eerdmans, 2014) by Katy Beebe derives

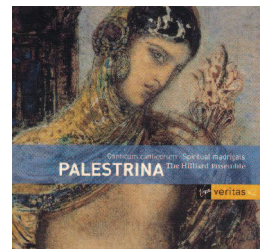


from a marginal note in a 12th-century manuscript and recounts the travails of a monk who must reckon with a bear who has developed a taste for the sermons of St. Augustine. With illustrations patterned on Orthodox frescoes, *My Warrior Saints* (Potamitis Publishing) by Dionysios and Egle-Ekaterine Potamitis tells the legends of a dozen heroic saints, including St. Mercurius ("Sword of the Archangel"), St. George ("Trophy-Bearer"), and St. Menas ("The Terrifying Rider").

*The Rev. Mark Michael is rector of St. Francis Church in Potomac, Maryland.*

## Timothy P. O'Malley

The nuptial imagery of the Song of Songs attunes the soul to savoring the marriage of the divine and humanity in the Incarnation. What better Christmas gift than to give the maturing Christian in your life the Hilliard Ensemble's recording of Palestrina's



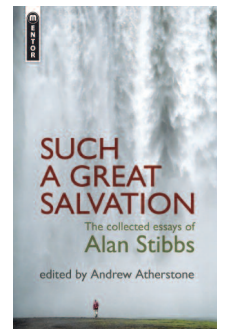
29 motets of the Song of Songs (EMI Import, 2003)? The listener experiences Palestrina's loving contemplation of the Song of Songs stretched out over 79 minutes.

*Timothy P. O'Malley is director of the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy, editor of Church Life, and concurrent associate professional specialist in Notre Dame's Department of Theology.*

## Andrew Pearson

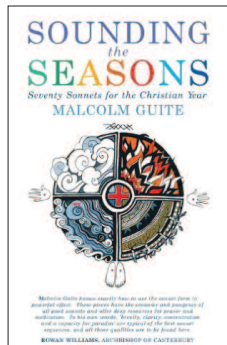
Alan Stibbs, missionary, preacher, and theologian, was, as John Stott said, "a lonely evangelical scholar in a sea of liberalism." God used Stibbs to bring about renewal in the Church of England, and his words are pertinent for us today. The dead yet speaketh (Heb. 11:4). *Such a Great Salvation: The Collected Essays of Alan Stibbs* (Christian Focus Publications, 2008) is a great resource for both laity and clergy alike.

*The Very Rev. Andrew Pearson is dean of the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham, Alabama.*



## Phoebe Pettingell

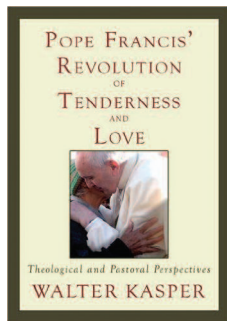
For the poetry lover, liturgist, or anyone who appreciates “the beauty of holiness,” Malcolm Guite’s *Sounding the Seasons: Seventy Sonnets for the Christian Year* (Canterbury Press, 2012) will make a perfect stocking-stuffer. Evoking such poets as George Herbert, John Donne, and John Keble, Guite nonetheless manages to sound contemporary as well as traditional. These sonnets for the liturgical seasons and holy days are profound and witty — a feast for the senses. *Phoebe Pettingell is the sacristan at S. Stephen’s Church in Providence.*



## David Pitts

Here are a few suggested books, a bit diverse by title. Each is thought-provoking and worthwhile:

- *Pope Francis’ Revolution of Tenderness and Love: Theological and Pastoral Perspectives* by Cardinal Walter Kasper (Paulist, 2015)
  - *Mr. Smith Goes to Prison: What My Year Behind Bars Taught Me about America’s Prison Crisis* by Jeff Smith, former state senator in Missouri (St. Martin’s, 2015)
  - *I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives* by Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda with Liz Welch (Little, Brown, 2015)
  - *Called!: Memoirs of a Black Priest* by the Rev. Richard Cornish Martin (Chapel Hill Press, 2016)
- David R. Pitts is the founder of Pitts Management Associates, Inc. in Baton Rouge.*



## Ephraim Radner

There is more “new” old music available today than ever before: rediscovered, restored, rehearsed, and played. Not every contemporary of Bach and Georg Philipp Telemann is a genius pining in the shadows of the masters. Christoph Graupner, however, is surely one. Among the 1,000-plus surviving cantatas from his career in Hesse-Darmstadt, try the Advent Cantatas and Christmas Oratorio on *German Baroque Sacred Music* (Ricercar). Eager brass and winds, straining, liberated, swelling, and

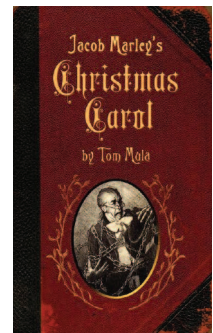
sometimes soaring melody — the propulsion of hope. What anyone needs to burnish the season’s darkening hours. *The Rev. Ephraim Radner is professor of historical theology at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto.*



## David M. Reed

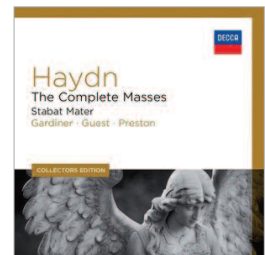
For those who may need to come at the abiding beauty and truth of the Incarnation indirectly, and sometimes surprisingly, in order to pay attention, watch, and wait in hope:

- The play *Jacob Marley’s Christmas Carol* by Tom Mula is available as a book, but if you can find it in audio, grab it. National Public Radio offers a free report from 1998 (n.pr/2g5LINK).
  - *Skipping Christmas* by John Grisham: read the book, avoid the movie.
  - *Home for Christmas: Stories for Young and Old* is a wonderful mix of well-known and little-known authors.
- The Rt. Rev. David M. Reed is Bishop Coadjutor of West Texas.*



## Michael Root

I suggest *Jospeh Haydn: The Complete Masses and Stabat Mater*, conducted by John Eliot Gardiner, George Guest, and Simon Preston (Decca Collectors Edition, 2015). Haydn’s Masses are not as well-known as the religious music of Bach or Handel, but beneath their polished exterior there is great depth and wonderful music. These excellent performances show the growth of Haydn’s endless creativity, culminating in the great Masses of his maturity. Music-loving friends may very well not know these works; giving them the opportunity to hear them is a gift! *Michael Root is ordinary professor of systematic theology and historical/systematic theology area director at the Catholic University of America.*



(Continued on next page)

# Gift ideas

## Tuesday Rupp

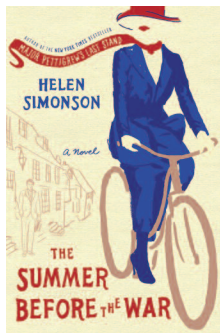


The Pacific Northwest is known for its rain forests, valleys rich with hops and grapes, and proximity to mountain peaks and moody beaches. In recent years, it is also the home to a vibrant early-music community. The women's vocal ensemble In

Mulieribus (Latin for *amongst women*) is one of Portland's best-loved treasures. IM (as the group is known by ardent fans) focuses primarily on music written before 1750 with a blend of crystalline voices supported by a rich alto foundation. *A December Feast* (CD Baby, 2010) brings to life music for the many lesser feasts that brighten the weeks of Advent, sure to please music lovers on your list.

*The Rev. Tuesday Rupp is associate rector for Christian formation and arts ministry at Church of the Heavenly Rest in Manhattan.*

## Grace Sears



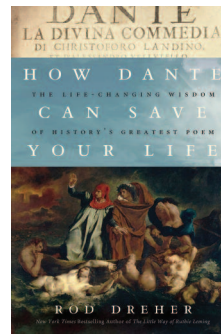
*The Summer Before the War* (Random House, 2016), Helen Simonson's beautifully written second novel, builds, as the reader knows it must, toward terrible choices and loss. The heroine, Beatrice Nash, has come to Rye village in 1914 to teach Latin. Determined to maintain her independence, sensitive to every tone of condescension, she

must navigate the village's labyrinth of prejudice and class. Her sense of what is fair and right turns out most often to be reached, if at all, by indirection and compromise. Yet she finds allies, friendship, and love as the social boundaries of the village collapse at the onset of war.

*Grace Sears is vice president of the board of the Living Church Foundation and past president of the Order of the Daughters of the King.*

## R. Leigh Spruill

Just as the poet Dante needed a companion to guide him through the dark woods of midlife, many of us require a companion guide to navigate the major figures



and multi-layered themes of *The Divine Comedy*. *How Dante Can Save Your Life: The Life-Changing Wisdom of History's Greatest Poem*

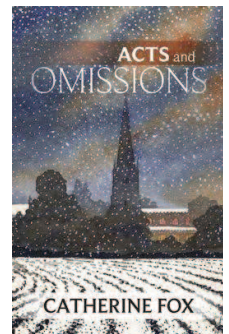
(Regan Arts, 2015) is at once a memoir and a commentary. Rod Dreher awakens in middle age to unexpected health problems and unresolved family dysfunction, a story he shares with tenderness and brutal honesty and one that ends hopefully in his surprising journey through Dante's epic poem.

*The Rev. R. Leigh Spruill is rector of St. George's Church, Nashville.*

## Ed Thornton

Trollope fans might appreciate receiving *Acts and Omissions* by Catherine Fox (SPCK, 2014), a warts-and-all portrayal of the Church of England. Set in the fictional Diocese of Lidchester, the novel follows a cast of colorful characters — bishops, deans, priests — as they battle with personal and ecclesiastical difficulties. The satire is biting and hilarious (and the language often colorful). But the book is not cynical: in the midst of diocesan strife, we are given glimpses of real faith.

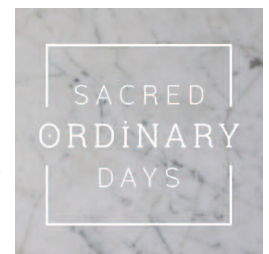
*Ed Thornton is assistant editor at Church Times.*



## Erin Jean Warde

One of the ways I have chosen to work out my neuroses about time is through an obsession with planners. I've used many planners, each of which promised to keep me up to speed with a world that ties my productivity to my worth. In the margins of my to-do list, I penciled in time for prayer. Then, I found the *Sacred Ordinary Days Liturgical Day Planner* (sacredordinarydays.com). This planner offers space to record appointments, but it first provides the daily office lectionary Scriptures for each day. *Sacred Ordinary Days* reminds me of what I already believe: that even the mundane appointments of my life are transformed by God into opportunities for new life, like bread into body and wine into blood.

*The Rev. Erin Jean Warde is associate rector for Christian formation at Church of the Transfiguration in Dallas.*



*O God, who has  
caused this holy  
night to shine with  
the illumination of  
the true Light: Grant  
us, we beseech thee,  
that as we have  
known the mystery  
of that Light upon  
earth, so may we  
perfectly enjoy him  
in heaven.*

*—1979 BCP, p. 161*

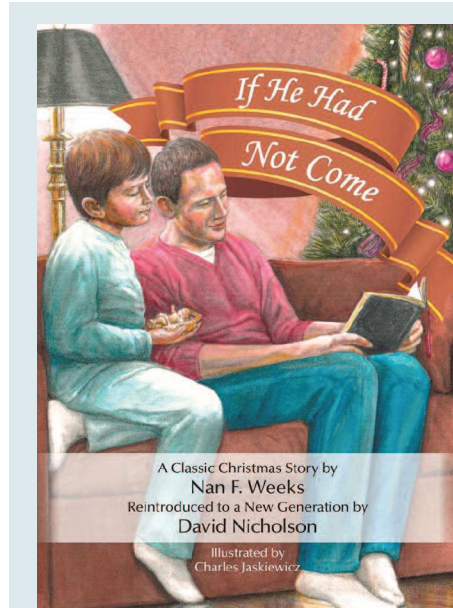
# Always Winter, Never Christmas

Each year, millions of children return from their Christmas morning sorties to announce the good news: “He came, he came!” There is little doubt that for most of them, Christmas is not mostly about the Lord’s Incarnation. *If He Had Not Come* promises to help remind them.

This story was first published in an anthology in 1938. If you know and love the story, you will be very pleased by its republication. “Reintroduced to a new generation by David Nicholson,” the retelling features new illustrations by Charles Jaskiewicz. The illustrations are both evocative and realistic, and they add a classic feel and heft to the volume.

A boy named Bobby awakes on Christmas morning to discover “no stocking hanging above the fireplace, no wreaths in the window, and no presents!” Bobby’s nightmare — a bad dream but maybe more than a dream — takes him on a ghostly tour around his town to see life captioned by John 15:22 (“If I had not come”).

The Christ-less world revealed to Bobby poses a contrast as stark as Bedford Falls without George Bailey. Without Jesus, there is no Christmas holiday, no churches, and maybe not



## If He Had Not Come

By Nan F. Weeks

Illustrated by Charles Jaskiewicz

Westbow. Pp. 39. \$19

even hospitals or homeless shelters. People are also markedly less kind, and Bobby comes to realize that Jesus is “the very best Christmas present anyone can have.” When he finally awakens, he greets Christmas morning with all the joyful anticipation of a newly enlivened faith.

This story points us to Jesus, but on its own it does not offer a robust or thick Christology. Life without Christ-

mas is a bleak disappointment, but by itself *If He Had Not Come* does not show us either who Christ is or what he does.

Nicholson’s retelling supplements the story with more sustained attention in additional sections designed for further discussion with children. “Going Deeper” (by Josh Mulvihill) chiefly addresses Christ’s work, and “Interactive Topics for Families and Sunday School Teachers” encourages children to imagine for themselves what Christ’s coming means.

While these sections deepen the story, they also spell out my reservations with the book. They invite readers to faith, but that invitation sounds unfamiliar and even unsettling to me — on the one hand, overdetermined by the language of penal substitution, and on the other a little emptied out, missing an explicit-enough declaration of Christ’s divinity and the sacraments or life in the Church.

Caleb Congrove  
Cambridge, Ohio

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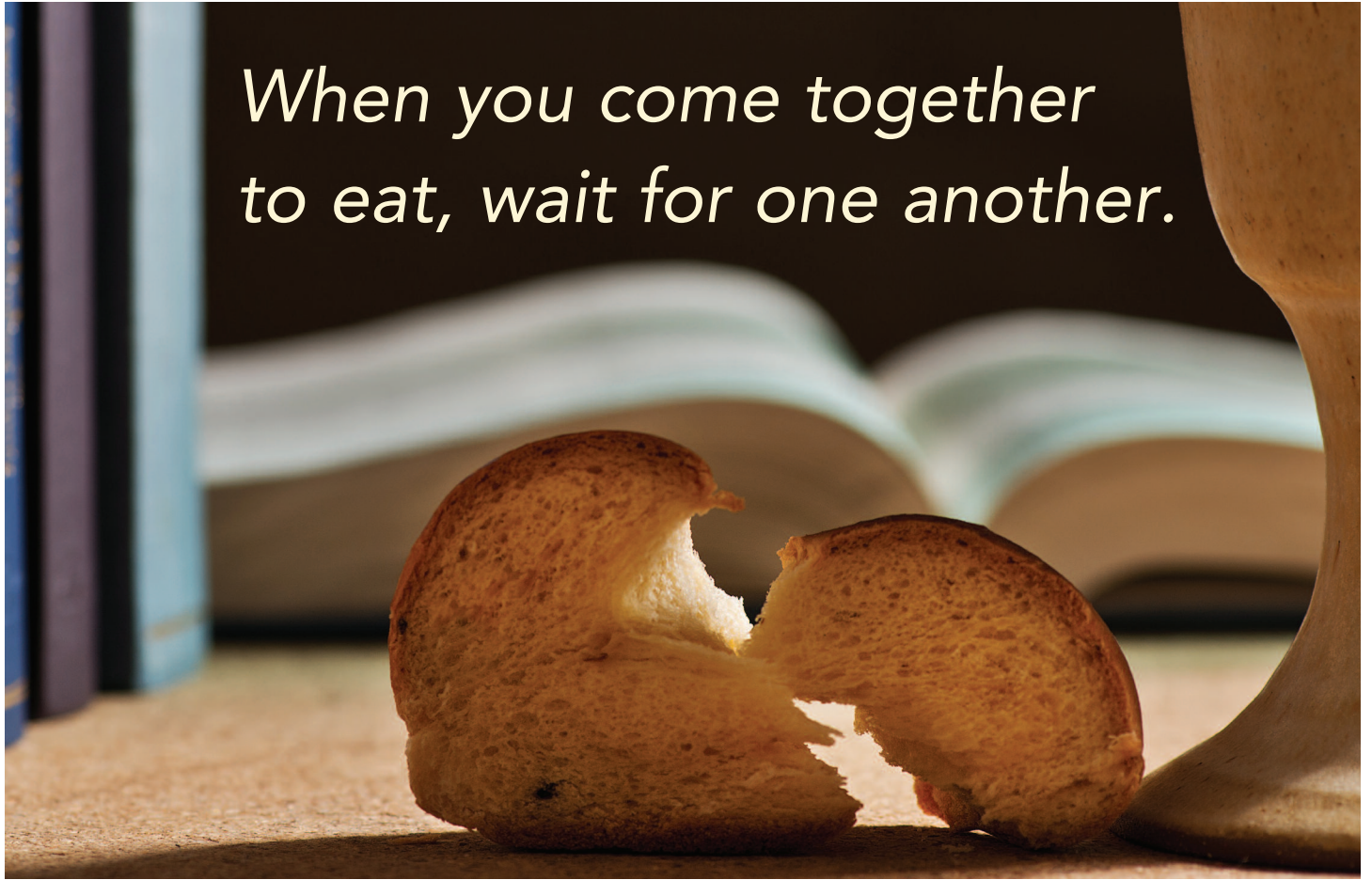
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*When you come together  
to eat, wait for one another.*



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The Living Church Foundation seeks to extend its unique ministry of journalism, publishing, organizing, and leadership development for the life and vitality of the Church.

# Samuel Ajayi Crowther

By Richard J. Mammana

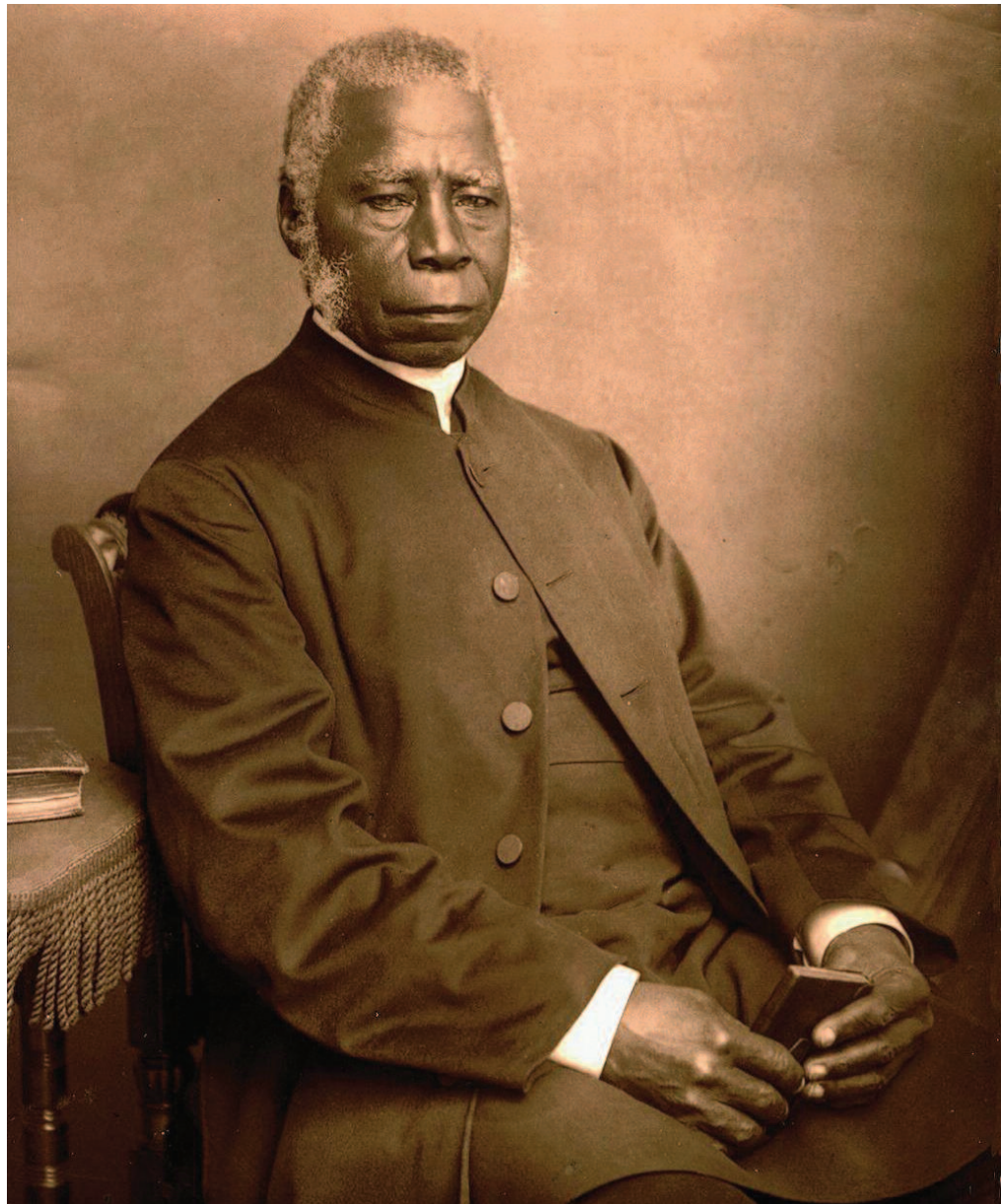
The Church of Nigeria is one of the largest and most influential components of the Anglican world. With more than 120 dioceses in Nigeria and a strong presence in diaspora, this church traces its roots to the life and ministry of one man: Samuel Ajayi Crowther.

He was born on an unknown date in Yorubaland, now part of southwestern Nigeria. (Nigeria was unified as a British colony in 1912-14; it became an independent country in 1960.)

The first verifiable date in Crowther's life is his release from slavery in 1822. We know from autobiographical accounts that about two years earlier he had been taken captive during a raid on his village by Muslim traders, and that he had been sold in slavery at least six times. The young Ajayi's final owners were Portuguese slave-traders who intended to sell him in South America or elsewhere in Portugal's worldwide empire. He was freed when a British anti-slavery patrol based in Sierra Leone boarded a Portuguese ship, his welfare undertaken thereafter by English philanthropists.

Ajayi learned English quickly as a student in the Church Missionary Society (CMS) mission at Freetown; one account notes that he was fluent enough to read the Bible within six months. He was baptized in 1825, and took the name of Samuel Crowther, a prominent English priest who served on the Church Missionary Society's home committee.

The next year, he studied at the CMS training college in London, and returned to Freetown as a lay teacher in 1827. Crowther served as a lay missionary, educator, and translator from this time until his ordination in 1843. He was not, as many accounts say, the first African to be ordained an Angli-



Alchetron photo

Crowther studied at the Church Missionary Society training college in London, and returned to Freetown as a lay teacher in 1827.

can priest. That distinction goes to the Ghanaian Philip Quaque (1741-1816), who was ordained in 1765 for work at Cape Coast.

In the end, Crowther served as a missionary of the CMS for nearly all his adult life. In addition to his extensive work as a Bible translator, he pub-

lished hymns, grammars, and translations of the Book of Common Prayer into West African languages.

The final, sometimes troubled, chapters of Crowther's life begin with his consecration as Bishop of the Niger in 1864 during a crucial period of Eng-

(Continued on page 26)



# Samuel Crowther's Wisdom

## *On being freed from slavery*

From a letter of Samuel Crowther, Sept. 3, 1841, pp. 5-6

I was sold to the Portuguese, at whose first touch I almost trembled to death. Being embarked from the town in canoes in an evening about seven o'clock, to be shipped early the next day, we gave ourselves up totally for lost.

We could not tell where our miseries would end, especially as we thought there was no safety in the land nor on the sea, particularly at sea. ... In the morning, contrary to our prejudices against the English, we were all ordered up on deck and were surprised when our masters were found in irons and all their slaves were at liberty. As hunger rendered us bold, and we were not threatened at our approaching the coconuts and other fruit on the quarterdeck, we soon fell to devour up everything edible that we could get at to satisfy the cravings of hunger. We then began to entertain good opinions of our new conquerors.

After breakfast all the slaves were divided between two other brigs which were lying alongside of us. We six boys had the luck of being taken into the *Myrmidon* where we were very kindly treated. The number of all the slaves was I think 189, out of whom 102 perished in the sea. When we were landed at Sierra Leone, we were placed in a school under the care of the Church Missionary Society. There I was taught to read the Word of God which is able to make all men wise unto salvation. ... It pleased the Lord to open my heart like that of Lydia. I attended unto those things which were spoken of by his servants, and according to my desire, I was admitted into the visible Church of Christ here on earth as a soldier to fight manfully under his banner against our spiritual enemies — the world, the flesh and the devil.

## *On missionary relations with native religions and Islam*

From Samuel Crowther, *The Gospel on the Banks of the Niger* (London: Church Missionary House, 1859), pp. 237-239

Had we been obstinate [in opposing native religions] Christian Missionaries would long ago have been turned out of the country, the converts put to death, and the country would have been long barred against the message of salvation. But what is the result of the caution and prudence exercised? The whole country is opened to us, stations are occupied in different directions, churches are built, congregations are collected, and converts are numbered by hundreds: and yet we do not make the least compromise. ... With the [Muslims] of this country cannot a like course be tried? They have great respect for the books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, and, to some extent for the Gospel of Christ also, all of which they know mostly by name. If they be quietly referred to, these books, the Law of Moses, the Prophets, the Psalms, and the Gospel in all things concerning Christ Himself, we may thus have opportunity of bringing before their minds the wholesome substance of those blessed books.

Our undue rashness in quarrelling with, and our untimely exposure of [Islam], can do no good; but may irritate, and prove most injurious to the heathen population under that government with whom we have more directly to do. — They are perishing for want of the spiritual food of the Gospel. To have the bread and water of life taken away from them by our being turned out of the country in defense of [Islam], through an injudicious action, would be to them the greatest injury possible.

It should also be remembered that God, who has permitted the religion of Mohammed to remain so long, and to overspread the earth, can easily remove it when He pleases, without violence or rash proceedings on our part: the united fervent prayers of the Church, for whose correction perhaps God has permitted this religion to stand so long, may at last prevail. May it please Him to fulfill the promise made concerning His Son, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

# Samuel Ajayi Crowther

(Continued from previous page)

land's imperial activity in western Africa. The Niger Mission was an innovation for Anglican evangelism in its placement of Africans in most major positions of leadership, from the episcopate through administrators and catechists. This was primarily because of the influence of Henry Venn (1796-

So damaging was the extent of London-based objection to indigenous African leadership that the Niger Mission would be dominated by British clergy and administrators for the half-century following Crowther's death.

1873), one of the most forward-thinking mission strategists of his time, who argued that Christian missions should be self-supporting, self-governing, and "self-extending."

Following Venn's death, Crowther lost an important advocate in London, and English organizational control of his work on the Niger increased markedly. Crowther also faced more indigenous opposition to his missionary work as the Niger Mission became more successful, and as English regional interests diverged along political, economic, and missionary lines. So damaging was the extent of London-based objection to Crowther's leadership — to indigenous African leadership — that the Niger Mission would be dominated by British clergy and administrators for the half-century following Crowther's death in 1891.

Notwithstanding the overwhelmingly difficult personal situation of Bishop Crowther in the intertwining currents of European colonization, missiology, racism, and economics, at

the time of his death his contemporaries understood the significance of his ministry. The epitaph on the bishop's plain tombstone quotes Matthew 25:21: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The Episcopal Church commemorates the life of Samuel Ajayi Crowther on December 31 in *Holy Women, Holy Men*, alongside similar commemorations in other Anglican provinces, and there has been a gradual development of new understandings of Crowther's life and work. By 2014, Archbishop Justin Welby preached at "A Service of Thanksgiving and Repentance" on the 150th anniversary of Crowther's consecration, noting the reason for the title of the liturgy:

"Thanksgiving for the extraordinary life which we commemorate. Repentance, shame, and sorrow for Anglicans who are reminded of the sin of many of their ancestors. We in the Church of England need to say sorry that someone was properly and rightly consecrated Bishop and then betrayed and let down and undermined. It was wrong."

## For further reading

The most substantial English-language biography of Crowther is still the un-



National Portrait Gallery of Nigeria  
Crowther served as a missionary of the CMS for nearly all his adult life.

fortunately dated — but in its time very popular — *The Slave Boy Who Became Bishop of the Niger* (1892), by Jesse Page. It is available online with other material by and about Crowther at [anglicanhistory.org/africa/ng](http://anglicanhistory.org/africa/ng). A more recent biography, Jeanne Decorvet's *Samuel Ajayi Crowther: Un Père de l'Église en Afrique Noire* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1992), is available only in French.

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



The Black Bishop Vintage photo

The Niger Mission was an innovation for Anglican evangelism in its placement of Africans in most major positions of leadership.

# Freedom to Serve

As Episcopal congregations meet the needs they know best, the church center can lighten its pressures.

By Sandy Webb

I came of age at the Episcopal Church Center, first as an intern and later as full-time staff, and my heart breaks to know of the difficulties at 815 Second Avenue. When the Executive Council and the church center staff met in October to discuss a new course, I began to wonder: How did we get here?

My first reaction was to blame the staff. Some of the good people at 815 made some poor choices in the last several years, the details of which are rightly kept private, but the consequences of which are very public. The spirit of mistrust and resentment described in news reports has not always characterized our headquarters.

My time at the Episcopal Church Center began just off the lobby, in the Chapel of Christ the Lord. I was a 20-year-old summer intern in a dark suit, shaking with nervousness. Across the aisle was the 25th presiding bishop, entirely at ease in a pair of jeans and a purple polo shirt. Bishop Frank Griswold was at the top of the hierarchy, and I was at the bottom. He was a few years away from retirement, and I had not yet finished college. We were separated by more than just an aisle, until he reached across it.

My memories of the church center are defined by good people like that: A staff bishop who always had jelly beans to share, lobbyists who made pancakes for their interns, a maintenance supervisor who decorated his basement office with cast-off furniture and accessories from upstairs office makeovers. One administrative assistant gave me a tour of the church center and introduced me to almost everyone in the

building. A decade later, she received the very first blessing I gave as a newly ordained priest.

Things began to change when General Convention met in 2009, just a year into the Great Recession. Millions of dollars had evaporated from the churchwide budget. The General Convention eliminated many staff positions at the church center, reduced every department's resources, and al-



The Chapel of Christ the Lord, on the ground floor of the Episcopal Church Center.

lowed several officers to work remotely. What the General Convention did not do was reduce the work.

General Convention asked church center employees to do more with less, and reduced their opportunity to be in relationship with one another. We should not be surprised that conflict emerged. Episcopalians in leadership roles share responsibility for this cultural shift, and we share responsibility for addressing it. We need to reach across the divide that we played a role in creating. This begins with answering a deceptively simple question: What does the Episcopal Church need its church center to do, and what configu-

ration of staff do they need to do it?

Not every churchwide problem needs to be addressed by church center staff. The principle of subsidiarity applies: The denominational staff should do only those things that cannot be done effectively by dioceses and parishes. Mission, formation, and evangelism are the responsibility of the Episcopal Church's 6,500 congregations and 1.8 million baptized members.

Creative, engaged congregations are the future of the Episcopal Church. When Presiding Bishop Arthur Lichtemberger dedicated the church center in 1962, America's population was booming, the church was expanding, and technology was limited. It made sense then to have a large staff working out of a prominent headquarters, but that approach makes less sense today.

After meeting with Executive Council, each church center employee committed to making one behavioral change. Those of us in the field need to do the same. We owe our denominational staff a set of clear and thoughtful expectations for this era, and an efficient budget to accomplish them. Then we need to move as much of our human talent and financial resources out of the central office and back into our congregations, where it will be most effective.

The inscription on the church center's dedication plaque inspires me every day: "Whose service is perfect freedom." Christ's service belongs to us all.

*The Rev. Sandy Webb, rector of Church of the Holy Communion in Memphis, previously served in the General Convention Office and the Office of Government Relations.*

# Visitation, Nativity

*For Emily and Audra*

Visitation, as a divine act, in several scenes. First, a miraculously expectant Mary hastens to Elizabeth, herself wonderfully pregnant and “filled with the Holy Spirit.” Elizabeth, St. Luke says, cries out with a loud voice: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.” And her prophecy continues: “Why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy” (Luke 1:42-44). We may not think of this as a meeting of four persons — Elizabeth and Mary *and* their unborn sons, the incipient Baptist and Messiah — but it was: a certifiable quorum of world-formative concourse.

Mary responds in the words of the greatest hymn and memoir of the Church, the Magnificat, spoken (or sung?) from a personalist perspective: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” To repeat her words is to make her story our own, as Christians, East and West, have done in the Daily Office since St. Benedict. The hymn is ecclesial because it gathers together “all generations,” inscribing the faithfulness of God, his favor, might, holiness, and mercy, as gifts given to “those who fear him,” notwithstanding considerable odds and opposition from the proud, the powerful, and the rich (Luke 1:46-53). And it ascends to the figure of divine peoplehood, in which Jews and Christians gratefully share together, as a mystery of grace and election: “He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel, as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever” (1979 BCP, p. 50). Mary grasps the historical significance of the events at hand, and in this

way Luke sets the stage for the next scene, centered on the Lord God’s own coming “to visit us in great humility” (Collect for Advent 1), as the very type of visitation, communion, and mission.

We meditate on movements of people and of God because we all meet on the divinely given road, as sojourners in the school of divine wisdom. The God-Man himself appears there, walking alongside to explain patiently, and he comes inside when we insist he “stay with us,” whereupon our eyes are opened in recognition (Luke 24:29). Indeed, to visit (*visitare*) someone or something is to go and see (*visere; videre*), which is spiritually significant. At the Lord’s visitation, we exclaim, *Look, here is the Lamb of God!* (John 1:36) because we know not only “what we have heard,” as Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, but also and especially “what we have looked at and touched with our hands concerning the word of life” — *which life*, John emphasizes, “was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us: we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete” (1 John 1:1-4).

This joyful fellowship of communion with God and with one another must, because we are wayfarers, begin in transitory stations and impromptu get-togethers. The Lord finds us and we follow, having long since been looking. He sees us sitting under the fig tree. We want to know more — for instance, “Where are you staying?” That is, *May we visit you?* His reply is gracious: “Come and see.” So “they came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day” (John 1:38-39).

Within these figures lie all the signs of sacramental encounter, hospitality, and homecoming, on the way to “greater things,” like seeing “heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” (John 1:50-51).

† † †

Of course, St. Luke provides a second gospel canticle in his first chapter, Zechariah’s Benedictus, writ as a foretaste of the messianic pledge by dint of the amazing events unfolding before his eyes. His son, John, is born and needs a name, upon the giving of which Zechariah’s tongue is loosed to praise God: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.” As God looks, so he comes, as “a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David,” as “promised to our ancestors.” John, for his part, “will be called the prophet of the Most High; for [he] will go before the Lord to prepare his ways” (Luke 1:68-69, 72, 76). The inevitability of pilgrimage converges with the fulfillment of the hopes of many generations, borne faithfully by God’s people and now manifest in the birth of children whose own itinerancy will reveal the difficult way of salvation for all peoples and nations. “For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matt. 7:14).

How else to understand the child John’s growing “strong in spirit ... in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel” (Luke 1:80) set alongside a proposed registration of “the world,” which occasions the transit of the Holy Family to Bethlehem (2:1)? Birth, as we know, is dicey business in the best of

times, and all the more *re-birth* by “water and Spirit” (John 3:5). In Matthew’s agonized account of the Nativity, King Herod looms as the “frightened” pretender who would bend the wise men to his will (Matt. 2:3). When they disregard his instructions, leaving “for their own country by another road,” he flies into a murderous massacre of “all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under” (2:16), commemorated as the Feast of the Holy Innocents or *Childermas*. Set within the octave of Christmas alongside the feasts of St. Stephen, Protomartyr, and St. John

the Evangelist, the Church shows us what it means to love our own in the world to the end (see 20:22; cf. John 13:1). That is, we recall that Christ came — as he comes — “to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 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 of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:11-13).

To be born, therefore, of God, after the pattern of God’s own birth: obedient, alert, courageous. For “the

Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory” (John 1:14). To go and see him, to live anew in him, is to testify with John that the Bridegroom came before us, and to “rejoice greatly” in his voice as itself a fulfillment. “He must increase, but I must decrease” (3:29-30).

*Almighty God, give me grace that I may cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit me in great humility. Be born anew in me this day. And give me the courage to walk before thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life. Amen.*

Christopher Wells

To go and see  
him, to live anew  
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“rejoice greatly.”

## Read the Gospels

In TLC's review of the presidential campaign [Nov. 27], the dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary concentrated on economic issues, suggesting the need for a reassessment of the neo-liberal capitalism of the Western democracies and advocating a look back to Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*.

Dean Ian Markham's recommendation ignores not only the imploding of Marxist economies a quarter-century ago, but, far more fundamentally, the underlying issues of family, faith, and culture as key factors in the difficulties facing many Americans that J.D. Vance described in his recent book, *Hillbilly Elegy*.

For addressing these issues, arguably more useful than Marx might be Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Many Christians in many ages have relied on family, faith, and culture to overcome economic conditions even worse than those currently existing in this country. Hopefully, the potential contribution of the Christian community in addressing the challenges facing our fellow Americans will be based more on the Gospels than on the prescriptions of a long-discredited German intellectual.

*Richard A. Best, Jr.  
Washington, D.C.*

*Ian Markham replies:*

I am grateful for Mr. Best's contribution to this important debate. I concur with his insight that there is a cultural deprivation and underlying alienation in certain parts of America.

I use the word *alienation* deliberately. Although Karl Marx got many things wrong, his concept of alienation or estrangement is helpful. Many Americans are feeling used and even discarded by the forces of globalization that sweep the world.



Perhaps I should have suggested that we all look afresh at Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. Marx is right in this respect: human lives need meaning. I suspect that on this point we could agree.

## Revising the Prayer Book

Are we talking about a new Book of Common Prayer or a new CD of Common Prayer? As a speaker for Food for the Poor, I have visited at least 200 Episcopal congregations across the United States, and only a handful used the "new prayer book."

Oh, they were in the book racks, but the liturgy was most often in an "easy to follow" service leaflet, which included prayers, lessons, and hymns. In many cases "adjustments" to the liturgy approved by General Convention had been made by the parish priest.

Coincidentally, the same mail that delivered a recent issue of TLC also delivered a long-lost copy of the "new" 1928 BCP, signed by Bishop James P. DeWolfe of Long Island in 1943 on the occasion of my confirmation.

Wow! What a different world that was and what a different Episcopal Church we attended.

I share this as the church grapples with the challenge of how to create a liturgy that will bring church members and our Lord and our God together for common worship in the culture of the 21st century.

*The Rev. Bob Libby  
Key Biscayne, Florida*

## Appointments

**Donald James Allison** is chancellor of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, 37 Chestnut St., Springfield, MA 01103.

The Rev. **Christian Baron** and the Rev. **Jodi Baron** are co-rectors of St. Philip's, 785 Beulah Hwy. (P.O. Box 26), Beulah, MI 49617.

The Rev. **Phyllis Mahilani Beimes** is vicar of St. Matthew's, 41-054 Ehukai (P.O. Box 70), Waimanalo, Oahu, HI 96795.

The Rev. **Dane E. Boston** is rector of Christ Church, 46 River St., Cooperstown, NY 13326.

The Rev. **Richard Anthony Chandler** is rector of St. Anne's, 9870 W. Fort Island Trl., Crystal River, FL 34429.

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The Rev. **Bruce DeGooyer** is vicar of Trinity By-the-Sea, 100 Kulanihakoai St., Kihei HI 96753.

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The Rev. **Georgina Hegney** is interim rector of Grace, 6 Elizabeth St., Utica, NY 13501.

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The Rev. **Nathan Huddleston** is assistant rector for youth ministry and outreach at Calvary, 31 Woodland Ave., Summit, NJ 07901.

The Rev. **Nicholas Hull** is rector of Christ Church, 311 E. Church St., Martinsville, VA 24112.

**Lillian Issa** is head of school at St. Thomas, 5692 North Kendall Drive, Coral Gables, FL 33156.

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The Rev. **Vicente Santiago**, as rector of Advent, Jeannette, PA, but continuing as priest-in-charge

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The Rev. **Stephen Ankudowich**, Nov. 28

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The Rev. **DeLaney Armstead**, May 14

The Rev. **J. Stephen Barber**, April 19

The Rev. **Donald S. Barrus**, April 15

The Rev. **Philip R. Baxter**, June 14

The Rev. **Kenneth Garret Beason**, Oct. 11

The Ven. **Thomas E. Benson**, Nov. 13

The Rev. **James C. Blackburn**, May 28

The Rev. **Floyd William Brewer**, Dec. 2

The Rev. **Merril Broach**, July 22

The Rev. **Allen Webster Brown, Jr.**, March 26

The Rev. **Percival Brown**, June 24

The Rev. **Raymond E. Buntaine**, Dec. 5

The Rev. **Walter Carlson**, Nov. 6

The Rev. **Charles A. Carter III**, Oct. 31

The Rev. **Paul Coleman Cochran**, Oct. 14

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Isa. 9:2-7 • Ps. 96 • Titus 2:11-14 • Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

## The Child

“This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Ps. 118:24). This is the dawn of a great light casting out all darkness, a light shining upon all nations and people, all tribes and races. Joy has increased. A child is born. A Son is given. Finally and forever, the Prince of Peace has gained a foothold.

But look! There is no place for the child, for his mother, for his adoptive father (Luke 2:7). Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the infant of peace is placed in a feeding trough amid the cold night air. Demons and dictators threaten, but Christ prevails, wrapped in the bands of his mother’s love and protected by a secret and powerful providence. This tiny infant, this frail being, is an image of the invisible God. God has come down to be among us. He who is in the bosom of the Father is now in the belly of the world (John 1:18).

His time will be filled with trial and sorrow. He will carry the yoke of every burden crushing the oppressed, a beam across his shoulders. He will feel the sting of the rod (Isa. 9:4). He will be broken, wounded, cut off, accursed, and given to the elements and wild beasts, and yet — and yet — invisible angels will minister to him, and he will pour out healing and hope, forgiveness, and the promise of a new being. The story is over. The story is old. It happened so long ago.

Jesus, who is in the bosom of the Father, has revealed/explained/made known (John 1:18). Translators supply the object: “he has made God known.” “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). The infant Jesus is a revelation of the Father. To use creedal language, he is truly God and truly human, and so there is no end to what may be said of him, no end to the praise justly given to him. There was not when he was not, which is an old way of saying the story is always new. In every moment of every day, Jesus

rests in the bosom of the Father, and he rests too in the center of every welcoming soul.

And he is put on the earth whose foundation he is, for he called all things into being. So, the heavens are glad, the earth rejoices, the seas roar and all that is in them, the fields exalt, the trees tremor in witness to his coming (Ps. 96:11-12). There is “a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors’” (Luke 2:13-14). Creation groans for redemption, witnessing to its redeemer.

Can a child’s story be true? Will a child lead them? Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. “God chose what is foolish, what is weak, what is low and despised, things that are not” (1 Cor. 1:27-28). She pondered the lowliness of her estate, a handmaid of the Lord. In time, we will each feel our folly, reckon with our weakness, feel cast away and forgotten. The Christian gospel is a lowly Christ in the midst of human lowliness.

Only by going to such depths of love can God show that he gave his Son for the life of the entire world, a love poured out like the waters that cover the sea.

### Look It Up

Read Isa. 9:5. The Prince of Peace is the end of war.

### Think About It

Eye hath seen, and yet not seen.

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## Go Up with God

The mind goes up to high places where the earth's crust bends toward heaven. It beholds majesty on earth and glory above the heavens (Ps. 8:1). Infants and babes know the language of this ascent, wordless sounds fit for the majesty and glory of the Most High God, sighs too deep for words and too strong for foes (Rom. 8:26; Ps. 8:2). Unless you become like a child, like an infant, you will never see or enter into the kingdom of God, whose very name cannot be named. God is the silent ground, the Word before speech, love's voiceless return.

The mind's eye looks up: "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, / the moon and the stars you have established; / what are human beings that you are mindful of them, / mortals that you care for them?" (Ps. 8:3-5).

Yet this human, a mere speck in a vast ocean of created being, wants to praise *You* (St. Augustine). A little lower than angels, crowned with glory and honor, given mastery over the sheep and oxen, wild beasts, birds of the air, fish of the sea, whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea: this human being is given the task of humble and responsible dominion under the gaze of a transcendent Sovereign (Ps. 8:5-9).

God has done this. God has deigned to put his image and likeness into the clay and spirit of an earth creature. By God's design and craft, human beings have the capacity to behold and imagine the world, and to give voice to every creature under heaven in praise and wonder. Such contemplation is nearly natural, the normal state of a soul at peace with God. "There is a good comparison between the soul and a delicate little feather. If a feather has not been touched by damp, it is so light that the slightest breath of wind can puff it high into the air" (John Cassian, Conference IX). "But, in truth, the feather is damp, something of which the silent ascetic is fully aware."

We are weighted by the enemy and

the avenger: sin, the flesh, and the devil. So, think less, for a moment, of going up, though the call is true. Have this lowly mind that was in Christ Jesus. Though equal to God, he humbled himself, taking the form of a servant, suffering death, even the curse of a bloody and cruel rejection on the hard wood of the cross. Only because he went, in the power of his eternal life, to the depth of a human hell, broke the chains of the ancient captives, bound the strong man, and rose again, every human being and all creation may be alive in him in whom all the fullness of God dwells.

The highest God has gone to the gallows. "Therefore God also exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). This genuflection is the immediate result of Christ's incarnation (on earth), his death and descent among the dead (under the earth), and his resurrection and ascension (in heaven). He has claimed and conquered in love what is rightly his own.

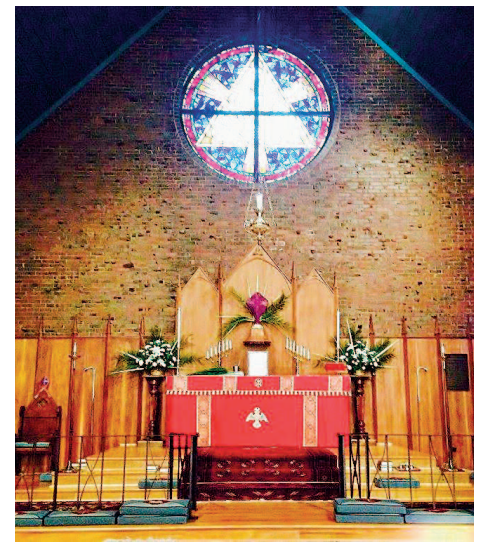
In union with Christ, our ascent is assured; the feather is dry. Set your minds on things that are above; I lift up my eyes to the hills. Grace has done this.

### Look It Up

Read Luke 2:19. A treasure to ponder.

### Think About It

The Name, the presence, is in all the earth, under the earth, and in heaven.



## Word and Truth

St. Paul enjoins St. Timothy to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

The people of St. Timothy's Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, take these words seriously and attempt as best they know how to fulfill this charge as a parish family and as individual members of Christ's body — by faithful worship according to the Book of Common Prayer, reading and studying Holy Scripture, and taking part in the fellowship of the parish family.

The church supports St. Timothy's School, founded in 1958 as the first non-public day school to be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The school has earned an indelible reputation for high academic standards as well as Christian morals and values.



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## The River

Before walking on the water, Jesus deigns to walk in it, coming from Galilee to John at the Jordan. Crowds have come from Jerusalem and all Judea, and the whole region along the Jordan. John calls the people to repent (turn) and announces the coming kingdom of God. His speech, dress, and manner call to mind ancient prophecies of God's impending judgment. He tells of one who will "baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matt. 3:11). He assigns to his successor power to separate and judge. "A winnowing fork is in his hand, ... the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:12)."

As Jesus steps out of the crowd, John objects: "I need to be baptized by you" (Matt. 3:14). Jesus gives a soft rebuke, pointing out the significance of time (now) and the aptness of the action (it is fitting) to fulfill all righteousness (Matt. 3:15). This is a moment appointed to make clear Jesus' complete identification with the crowds coming for repentance and with the intention to bear good fruit. "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21). Stepping into the water and awaiting his baptism, Jesus humbles himself to know and feel human moral failure, human weakness, frailty, the fear of death, and death itself. He goes into the deep.

Christ's humility is essential to his sacred calling. "And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him" (Matt. 3:16). In this scene, Jesus alone sees the Spirit of God, and the heavens are likewise opened only "to him," a prepositional phrase omitted in some manuscripts but still consistent with the private quality of the revelation. The crowds see the baptism. They do not see the heavens opened, nor do they see the Spirit. This is a se-

cret, mysterious, and providential moment in the economy of the Son's vocation. The crowds, however, are given a public proclamation in these words, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased," a phrase they cannot possibly understand in its fullness.

God is almighty. The voice of the Lord is over the waters. The voice of the Lord thunders with power and majesty. The might of God breaks the cedars, makes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare. God is judge over all the earth (Ps. 29). Let all fear his holy name. And yet God is free, not constrained, preparing a path beyond human knowing, with Wisdom to confound the wise. "He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; ... I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you ... to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness (Isa. 42:2-7).

As Jesus goes into the river, he steps into a broken human family, a natural order shaken; he dips himself in water reserved for the blind, the imprisoned, all those cast into the dungeon. He becomes what we are in a great parabolic action. Why?

As he touches everything human on that day in the water, he allows the grace of his life (the Beloved) to baptize the world, so that we become what and who he is.

### Look It Up

Read Matt. 3:15. What is proper?

### Think About It

Chosen witnesses tell the story.

## Where Christ Is

John comes and then Jesus comes, although Jesus ranks ahead of him and before him. First there is water baptism and then water, blood, and fire. Things change. A divine economy is at work in the passage of times and seasons. We wait patiently for the Lord, and then the Lord inclines (Ps. 40:1). There is a season to wait and a season to welcome the arrival. There is a season for endings too. "A little while, and you will no longer see me" (John 16:16). Does the pain of this pierce as it should, the march of time to a bitter end, every love ending sometime, somewhere, every project shelved and forgotten?

The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head, and so, in union with him, we wander as resident aliens (1 Peter 2:11). We go from place to place, from one sorrow to another, and the pain can seem unbearable. Yet he who deigned to become what we are lives still in the bosom of the Father. Rejection and death and hell cannot make him other than the still Word formed in silence. He is where the Father is; and we, by grace and faith, may be where the Son is, living in Christ with God.

Pointedly, Jesus asks, "What are you looking for?" (John 1:38). As if answering for every human being, the first disciples form another question: "Where are you staying?" Jesus calls out, "Come and see." What follows is the very heart of discipleship: "They remained with him that day" (John 1:39). With the Lord, one day is like a thousand years stretching out to the close of the age when Christ will burst forth as the consummation and end of all things. "Where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3). This is what Jesus wants, sisters and brothers caught up into his life, so that they too live *there*, in the heart of the Father. This is a place to remain.

Opening his epistle to the Church in Corinth, St. Paul begins not with a list of the internal struggles for which this

community is known, but rather with a statement of gratitude for "the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 1:4). They are enriched in every way, he says, in speech and knowledge, lacking in no spiritual gift. He concludes his salutation affirming that they "were called to the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). *Koinonia*, the Greek word translated as *fellowship*, has long been acknowledged to carry deep meanings of mutual sharing, partnership, and togetherness in the life of Christ. Capturing another aspect of this, the Vulgate tradition has used the word *societas*, suggesting a shared life in Christ larger than any local community. Indeed, Paul addresses the saints in Corinth, "together will all those in every place" (1 Cor. 1:2).

The Church is the society where Christ is. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20, KJV). These words bear repeating: "There *am* I." To live in Christ is to feel and know something like the safety and stability of a monastic enclosure (*The Rule of St. Benedict*, Caput 4). Christ simply is.

Yes, we feel at times as if we have fallen into a desolate pit and wallow in a miry bog (Ps. 40:2), and it does not harm faith to say so again and again. Still, the rock upon which our feet are set, the place where we remain, the presence that remains with us, is secure forevermore.

### Look It Up

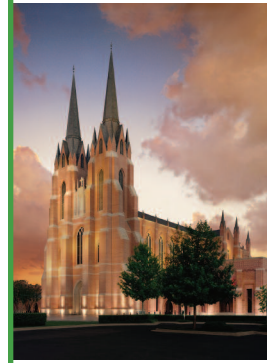
Read John 1:39. Give this time.

### Think About It

Read Psalm 40:2. Feel the ground. Steady yourself. Now walk.

## Making and Growing Disciples for Christ

Archbishop Justin Welby recently offered these wise words: "The best decision anyone can ever make, at any point in life, in any circumstance, whoever they are,



wherever they are, is to become a disciple of Jesus Christ." This quote fully sums up the core mission of St. Martin's: to "make and grow disciples of Christ."

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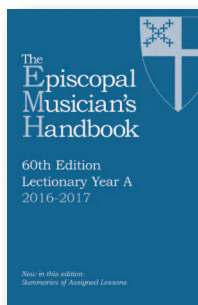
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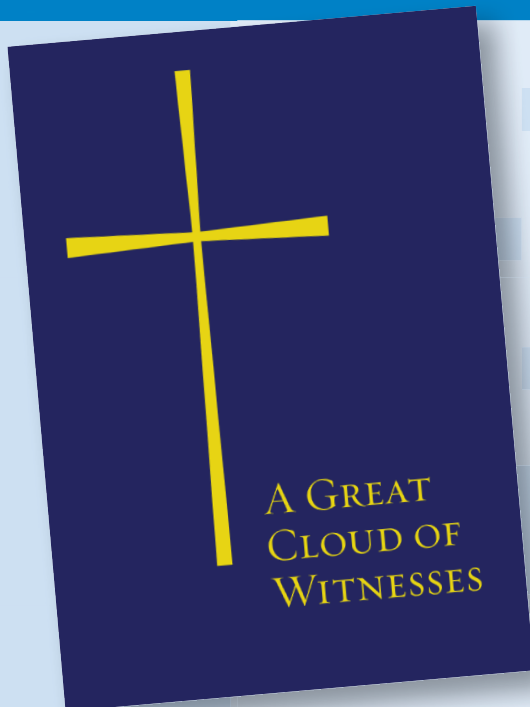
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