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ON THE COVER

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry: “I pray for the President in part because Jesus Christ is my Savior and Lord. If Jesus is my Lord and the model and guide for my life, his way must be my way, however difficult” (see “Prayer, Protest Greet President Trump,” p. 4).

Danielle E. Thomas photo

THE LIVING CHURCH

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LIVING CHURCH Partners

We are grateful to Church of the Incarnation, Dallas [p. 27], and St. John's Church, Savannah [p. 28], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

Prayer, Protest Greet President Trump

The Jan. 20 inauguration of Donald Trump as the 45th president of the United States stirred prayer and protest in Washington, D.C., and among leaders of the Episcopal Church.

As in past inaugurations, Washington National Cathedral hosted the inaugural prayer service. The service was first held in the space in 1933; prayer services for presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama have been subsequently held at the cathedral.

This year, however, the decision to host the prayer service and to incorporate the cathedral choir into the inauguration drew some controversy, leading the Very Rev. Randolph Marshall Hollerith, the cathedral's dean, to write about the ceremonies and the "very polarized moment" for the United States.

"I understand the strong disagreement many people have with the decisions to accept an invitation for the Cathedral choir to sing at the Inauguration and for the Cathedral to host the Inaugural Prayer Service," Hollerith wrote. "I am sorry those decisions have caused such turmoil and pain. Yet I stand by those decisions — not because we are celebrating the President-elect, but because we want to model for him, and the rest of the country, an approach to civility."

Hollerith said civility does not mean endorsing Trump's beliefs, behavior, or rhetoric. "Our willingness to pray and sing with everyone today does not mean we won't join with others in protest tomorrow. We will always strive to bridge the divide and repair the breaches in our life together. As a Cathedral, we have decided that we will approach this moment as open-handedly as possible."

The dean said the choir would not sing for the president but for God. "We are singing for God because that is what church choirs do, and we are singing for our country because that is what this Cathedral does at important moments in our national life."



Danielle E. Thomas photo

Bishop Mariann Budde on hosting the prayer service: "We, too, acted on spiritual principles."

The Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde, Bishop of Washington, also defended the service. She said that as the service approached, many in the church asked why she and Hollerith would be willing to proceed with hosting it, and why the choir would sing during the prelude to the inauguration when others declined to attend on principle.

"First, I want to acknowledge the anger and disappointment that our decisions have engendered. And to say that I'm listening, because the spiritual principles that move many of you to protest are essential for the work that lies ahead," Budde said. "While I do not ask you to agree, I simply ask you to consider that we, too, acted on spiritual principles. Those principles, while they may seem to conflict with yours, are also essential for the work that lies ahead."

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry issued a statement calling for prayers for President Trump ahead of the inauguration, citing the power and importance of prayer.

"We recognize that this election has been contentious, and the Episcopal Church, like our nation, has expressed a

diversity of views, some of which have been born in deep pain," he said. "Underneath the variety of questions and concerns are some basic Christian questions about prayer: when I pray for our leaders, why am I doing so? Should I pray for a leader I disagree with? When I pray, what do I think I am accomplishing?"

Curry said he believes Christians can and must pray for all civic leaders. "I pray for the President in part because Jesus Christ is my Savior and Lord. If Jesus is my Lord and the model and guide for my life, his way must be my way, however difficult. And the way prayer for others is a part of how I follow the way of Jesus."

While Episcopalians prayed, they also gathered in protest. The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff, Bishop Suffragan of Virginia, announced that she planned to participate in the Women's March on Washington Jan. 21.

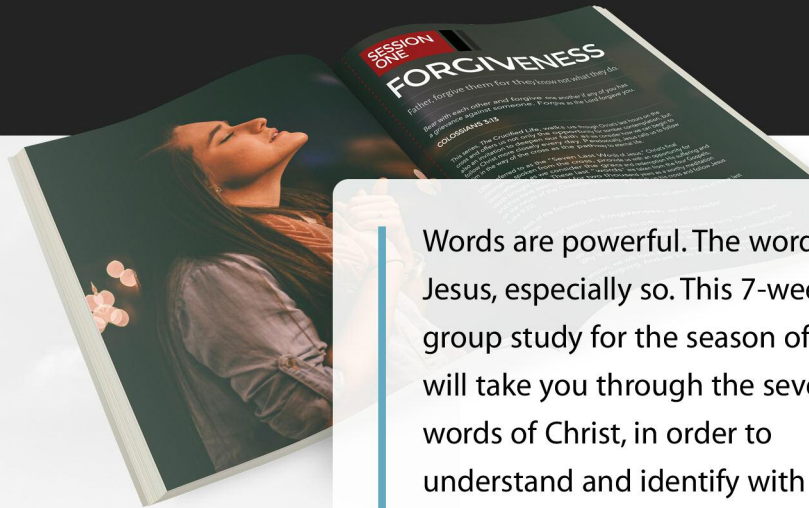
Bishop Goff discussed the decision during a visit to St. Catherine's School in Richmond and in a post on a diocesan weblog.

"[The] biblical vision of the oneness of men and women is powerful and beautiful, but it is not yet a reality in our country," she said. "Women in the majority of fields still don't earn the same salary as men for the same work. Glass ceilings are still firmly in place. Women and girls still suffer abuse and sexual assault at dramatically higher rates than men do — and dismissing assault as locker room talk is not acceptable by any standards. Gender inequality remains firmly entrenched and God's intention is not yet realized."

"As I talk about these things, some people say that I'm biased; they say that my decision to go to Washington is biased. And it's true — I do have a strong bias. But it is not a partisan bias. It's not about one political party or another. It's a faith bias. It's all about living the faith that I proclaim. For me, it's a Jesus bias and I, as a Christian, embrace this bias toward justice and equality in Jesus' name."

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- The Rev. Christopher Brathwaite,
St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Haines City, FL

Session 1 - Forgiveness

Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

Session 2 - Salvation

Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.

Session 3 - Relationship

Woman, behold your son... Behold your mother.

Session 4 - Distress

I thirst.

Session 5 - Abandonment

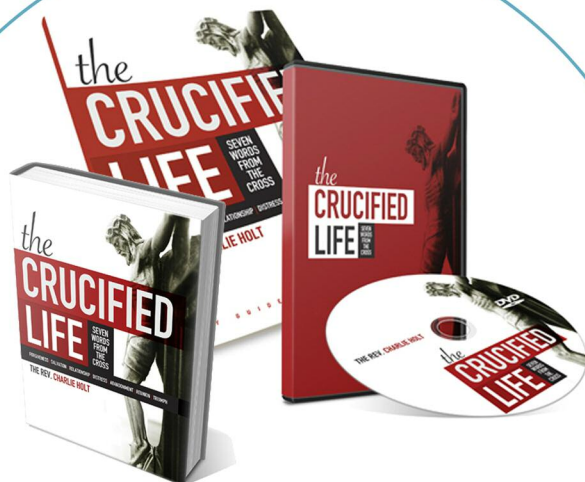
My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Session 6 - Reunion

Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

Session 7 - Triumph

It is finished.



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Objections to Consecration in Toronto

The consecration service of three area bishops for the Diocese of Toronto prompted written objection because one of the three, the Rev. Canon Kevin Robertson, is a gay priest living in a partnered relationship.

Robertson, the Rev. Riscylla Shaw, and the Rev. Canon Jennifer Andison were consecrated Jan. 7 at St. Paul's Bloor Street amid pageantry and pain, delight and dismay.

The Most Rev. Colin Johnson, Bishop of Toronto and Metropolitan of Ontario, was the chief consecrator and the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, was a co-consecrator. Before the rite began Johnson acknowledged there had been serious objections raised. Standing on the chancel steps, he read from a prepared statement.

"While it is our intention to proceed today, I also want all of you and the whole diocese to know that I am engaged in a serious and mutually committed consultation with those objecting, to find effective ways that our ministries might flourish together in the highest degree of communion possible," he said.

After the sermon, the three bishops elect said and signed their declaration of faith. Then stating, in a reference to the letter of objection received, that "not all concur," Archbishop Johnson asked the congregation whether anyone had any further reason why the service should not proceed. There were

no more objections voiced.

The Rev. Catherine Sider Hamilton said she attended because she is a priest of the diocese and because she wanted to be sure the Archbishop registered the formal objection. "If he had not, several of us were prepared to stand up and object verbally."

She and many other conservative clergy and laity did not assent to the questions, nor did they stand for the consecration or partake of the Eucharist that followed. Sider Hamilton is priest-in-charge at St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Riverdale, and an assistant professor at the University of Toronto's Wycliffe College.

Twenty active and retired bishops joined in laying on hands, including the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald, the national Indigenous bishop, and the Rt. Rev. Patrick Yu, who had both voted against same-sex marriage at General Synod only six months earlier.

"I was focused on the ordination of an Indigenous candidate, Riscylla Shaw, and was there to support her," said Bishop MacDonald, who presented Shaw for consecration. "There was some tension in the air, but not overwhelmingly so. I am praying for us all in these trying times."

"I voted against the change in the marriage canon," Bishop Yu told TLC. "You may, however, recall that earlier in the conversation I supported an honored, public, and safe place for committed same-sex couples in the

church which is distinct from marriage."

The Rt. Rev. Linda Nicholls, Bishop of Huron, said the service mirrored dynamics within the Anglican Church of Canada as it discerns a difficult issue. "It showed the differences we have but also modelled grace in acknowledgment and principled expression of disagreement," she said. "The consideration given to those who dissented from the ordination of a partnered gay bishop in the statement read by Arch-

Two Immigration Responses

Episcopal leaders responded quickly to President Trump's executive orders regarding immigration.

"Our Book of Common Prayer asks for God to 'look with compassion on the whole human family,' to 'break down the walls that separate us and unite us in bonds of love,'" Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said. "We pray to love one another as God loves us. I echo that prayer now and ask that we may work together to build a more grace and compassion-filled world.

Episcopal Migration Ministries is going to continue to minister to those who have fled their homes because of persecution, violence, or war," said the Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson, its director. "Through our network of affiliates across this country, and with the help of the wider Episcopal Church, we will welcome these men, women, and children who did not choose to become refugees. In partnership with the other resettlement agencies, we will work with our government and local communities to provide a place of welcome.

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Michael Hudson/Anglican Diocese of Toronto photo

Archbishop Colin Johnson applauds for newly consecrated bishops Jennifer Andison, Kevin Robertson, and Riscylla Shaw.

bishop Colin Johnson shows the continued desire to be in dialogue with those who disagree. They, in turn, showed grace in working with the Archbishop on the statement read at the beginning that publicly acknowledges the painful situation and in their choice of actions in the service.”

Nichols said the youthfulness of the new bishops “represents a significant change for the Diocese of Toronto and a sign of its vigour.”

Traditionally consecrations are held

in cathedrals, but St. Paul’s was chosen in part because it could seat more than St. James Cathedral. But while about 800 attended, more had been expected and the huge church was not full. After the laying on of hands many conservatives left the building.

Two protest letters had been sent to Archbishop Johnson, the first a letter of formal objection on Dec. 21 from canon lawyer Ajit John,

as chairman of the Toronto chapter of the Anglican Communion Alliance. This official objection to the consecration documented legal grounds for why the consecration should not proceed.

There was also a letter of concern dated Jan. 4 expressing in more detail the pain the whole sequence of events was causing many in the diocese. It was signed by 150 people, 40 of them diocesan clergy.

Sue Careless

In the Episcopal Church

Bishop Vono to Retire

The Rt. Rev. Michael L. Vono, Bishop of the Rio Grande since 2010, has announced his intention to retire in 2018.

“With deep and profound gratitude to each one of you and to my wonderful staff, I am entering the seventh year serving the Church of Jesus Christ as your bishop. I thank the Lord for the great privilege of sharing these wonderful years with you,” Vono wrote in a public letter. “Now the time has come for us to look ahead. My heart and soul have been telling me, after forty years as a cleric, that my retiring time has come.”

Vono will call for the election of a tenth bishop of the diocese in 2018.

Diocese of Bethlehem Seeks Bishop

The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe, Provisional Bishop of Bethlehem and Bishop of

(Continued on next page)



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Bethlehem

(Continued from previous page)

Northwestern Pennsylvania, has announced that the Diocese of Bethlehem is ready to begin seeking its ninth bishop.

“Although the final calendar for the search process will be determined by the Standing Committee, I anticipate that we will elect the ninth bishop of Bethlehem in the spring of 2018 and consecrate and seat that person in the fall of that year.”

Dean David Collins Dies at 94

The Very Rev. David Browning Collins, president of the House of Deputies from 1985 to 1991, died Dec. 29 in Alpharetta, Georgia. He was 94. He served as dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta from 1966 to 1984 and as dean emeritus beginning in 1984.

Born in Hot Springs, Arkansas, Collins was a graduate of the University of the South, where he earned degrees in education, New Testament studies, and sacred theology. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1943 to 1946 and in the U.S. Navy Reserve from 1946 to 1960.

He was ordained deacon in 1948 and priest in 1949. He was priest-in-charge of Holy Cross Church, West Memphis, Arkansas (1949-53), and rector of St. Andrew’s Church, Marianna, Arkansas (1948-49), before becoming chaplain and associate professor of religion at the University of the South. He remained at Sewanee until 1966, when he became dean of St. Philip’s.

He was vice president of the House of Deputies (1979-85), a trustee of the Church Pension Fund (1976-88), and a member of the Board of Clergy Deployment (1971-76). A longtime baseball fan, he was chaplain of the Atlanta Braves’ 400 Club (1966-84).

Collins wrote a privately published memoir, *There Is a Lad Here*, in 1994. In 1984 he founded Windsong Ministries, which he led with his wife, Virginia, until 2011.

In addition to his wife, survivors in-



Dean David Collins (right) meets Pope John Paul II in 1980 at the Vatican.

clude a daughter, Melissa Williams; sons Christopher, Matthew, and Geoffrey; grandchildren Rebekah Williams and Trevor Williams; and great-grandchildren Austin Williams and Grayson Williams.

The interment of the dean’s ashes is scheduled for the summer at the University of the South.

\$1.4m in Justice Loans

The Episcopal Church’s Economic Justice Loan Committee (EJLC) has approved five investments in community development financial intermediaries, totaling \$1.4 million.

“We are happy to approve new loans with groups like Main Street Launch and [Finance Fund Capital Corp.]” said Warren Wong, chairman of the committee. “Both have innovative programs targeted for their communities. The EJLC also renewed and increased our commitment for micro-lending in Haiti with Fonkoze.”

These are the loan recipients:

- Nebraska Enterprise Fund (\$300,000): Nebraska Enterprise Fund’s mission is to support Nebraska micro businesses and small businesses by providing capital, training programs, and technical assistance.

- Local Enterprise Assistance Fund (LEAF), Brookline, Massachusetts (\$250,000): LEAF’s mission is to promote human and economic development by providing financing and development assistance to community-based and employee-owned businesses that create and save jobs.

- Main Street Launch, Oakland (\$300,000): Main Street Launch’s mis-



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sion is to create economic opportunity by assisting entrepreneurs. Through partnerships, Main Street Launch provides business owners with capital, education, and relationships.

- Finance Fund Capital Corp., Columbus, Ohio (\$300,000): Finance Fund Capital Corp., a community development financial institution with a \$27 million loan portfolio, promotes economic revitalization and community development by providing access to capital.

- Fonkozé, Port-au-Prince (\$250,000): This is the EJLC's second loan through Fonkozé, which is based in Washington, D.C., but works widely in Haiti.

Executive Council created the fund in 1998. It combines two prior loan programs that had existed since 1988 and it makes up to \$7 million available. Loans are made to financial intermediaries, usually in amounts between \$150,000 and \$350,000, and usually for terms of three to five years.

Loan applicants do not have to be affiliated with the Episcopal Church, but applicants and recipients must have the support of their local Episcopal bishop. Loans are not made to individuals or for individual projects.

Revival 2017 in Iowa

The Bishop of Iowa, who has designated 2017 as a year of revival in the diocese, has replaced his regularly scheduled parish visits with weekend gatherings supporting that vision.

"I want us to take deliberate time to look at the gift of our calling as people baptized into the body of Christ, and energized by the Spirit of God. We will gather on a Friday or Saturday night in a more informal way to offer our praise to God, listen to the Word both preached and shared in personal testimony from our peers, and seek to recommit ourselves to the life God calls us to live in service and love," the Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe wrote on his weblog.

"To this end I am suspending my regular visitation rotation and replacing it with twenty weekend gatherings under the banner of Revival 2017. Through the twenty gatherings we will cover each congregation. I hope by

now that you have seen where I have invited your congregation to attend and that you are marking the date on your calendar."

Scarfe announced the theme of revival in November, before the Episcopal Church announced its plans for revival meetings in multiple cities throughout the year.

HR Director at 815 Completes Work

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has announced the retirement of John E. Colón as the Episcopal Church's director of human resources, a position he has held since 1989.



Colón

"John has served the church as a member of the staff of four presiding bishops," Bishop Curry said. "What a tenure of service and

witness! We will miss his kind, faithful, and delightful presence, but we thank God that we have served with him. As was said when John Glenn was about to orbit the earth, we say now, 'God-speed' John Colón."

"It has been a privilege and an honor to have served at the churchwide offices for more than 28 years under four

presiding bishops and with current and former colleagues," Colón said. "Be assured that as the Jesus Movement continues to revive us in this Church, I will be there walking alongside you in prayer, action, and thanksgiving."

Colón will retire on Feb. 28. In his retirement, he will provide consultant services focused on diversity, inclusion, and managing difference in varied organizational systems.

Digital Evangelist Logs In

Jeremy Tackett began serving as the Episcopal Church's digital evangelist, a member of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's staff, Feb. 1.

In this new full-time position, Tackett will help build relationships, create community, and foster an aspirational online social presence by managing and implementing the Episcopal Church's growing digital evangelism ministry.

Tackett has worked as director of communications at Christ Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, and coordinator of publications at the University of Pikeville in Kentucky.

Tackett will be based in Raleigh and will report to the presiding bishop's canon for ministry within the Episcopal Church.

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In the Anglican Communion

Joanna Penberthy Consecrated

The Church in Wales has consecrated the Rt. Rev. Joanna Penberthy, the first woman to serve in its episcopate, as the 129th Bishop of St Davids on Jan. 21.

Penberthy, formerly in charge of the Glan Ithon benefice in the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, was elected in November and consecrated Jan. 21. Her enthronement is scheduled for St. Davids Cathedral on Feb. 11.

The Most Rev. Barry Morgan, Archbishop of Wales, described Bishop Penberthy's consecration as a historic occasion. The Church in Wales voted to allow women bishops in 2013 after two decades of debate and controversy about women in leadership.

"While being made bishop is awe-inspiring, I am very much looking forward to joining the people of St Davids diocese as we seek to live out and share our faith in the risen Christ," Penberthy told the BBC.

Morgan said ordained women in Wales had faced a long struggle to reach this point.

"The great thing about our women clergy is that they did not give up or become cynical or bitter," he said. "They dared to trust and dared to hope and so are part of a long and distinguished company of people in the Old and New Testaments who trusted in

God's promises and hoped against hope that all would be well.

"What matters is not gender but suitability, character, gifts, and that was why Joanna was elected as bishop."

'Jesus Has Defeated Hell'

The Archbishop of Jos in the Anglican Church of Nigeria said Christians are finding refuge in God "in the face of turbulence, persecution, and wickedness" in the north of the country.

The Most Rev. Benjamin Kwashi made his remarks at the opening service at the annual retreat of Anglican bishops in the province, meeting at the IBRU International Ecumenical Centre in Agbarha-Otor.

He said that the "forces of evil are still at work, but Jesus has already defeated the powers of hell, of darkness, of wickedness, and of evil."

Archbishop Kwashi asked bishops to "intensify their prayers" for churches in the northern part of Nigeria. Persecution is biting very hard, he said, adding that "the devil has failed because God cannot be defeated."

The archbishop called for action to tackle biblical illiteracy and suggested that Christians should adopt the Jewish tradition of training children properly in Scriptures. Hebrew children, he said, were trained for about 30 years in preparation for ministry. He cited the example of Jesus Christ, "who was guided for about 30 years and used the remaining three years of his life for ministry in order to interpret the law and the prophets."

Abp. Brown Turei Dies

The Most Rev. Brown Turei, one of three archbishops of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, died peacefully Jan. 9, surrounded by his family and loved ones. He was 92.

Archbishop Brown, who had Ngati Porou and Te Whanau-a-Apanui ties, had indicated his intention to retire from ordained ministry earlier last year.

He had planned to step down as Bishop of Tairāwhiti, and to resign as Archbishop and *Pihopa o Aotearoa* — or leader of *Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa*, the Maori arm of the Anglican Church — this March.

"Maoridom and the Anglican Church have lost a leader of enormous stature," said the Most Rev. Philip Richardson. "Archbishop Brown was a gentle and wise leader who brought grace, compassion, and insight to all that he did and said."

Archbishops Richardson and Winston Halapua, who have shared the leadership of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia with Archbishop Brown, say they have lost not only a colleague but also a dear friend.

Archbishop Brown was ordained a deacon in 1949 and a priest the next year. He was chosen as Archdeacon of Tairāwhiti in 1982. He became chaplain of Hukarere Maori Girls' College in 1984, and he served as chaplain of the Napier Prison for four years.

His election as *Te Pihopa ki Te Tai Rawhiti* in 1992 followed reforms of the Anglican church in 1990.

In 2005 he was elected *Te Pihopa o Aotearoa*, and in 2006 he was installed as Primate and Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa-New Zealand and Polynesia. Last year Archbishop Brown was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his services to the church.

Threat to Narnian Tranquility

A row has broken out in Oxford about a proposal to build apartments near the Kilns, home of the late apologist

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**Certain Restrictions apply*

and novelist C.S. Lewis.

A planning application submitted to Oxford City Council seeks approval of a building development of nine apartments, which the C.S. Lewis Foundation says “will destroy the quiet Narnian environment of C.S. Lewis’s beloved home.” Also at risk is the unique character of the nearby C.S. Lewis Nature Reserve.

The planning application seeks permission for an access road to be built directly across from the Kilns, at the end of Lewis Close in Risinghurst on the edge of Oxford. The proposed road would run along the boundary of the C.S. Lewis Nature Reserve.

The Lewis Foundation believes the project “will destroy the peace and tranquility many find on this quiet cul-de-sac as they come on pilgrimage to visit the home of an author who has inspired millions.”

“The Kilns welcomes children, families, school groups, and tourists from around the world, offering the experience of viewing the historic Blue Plaque home. Further, scholars and clergy live in the home throughout the year, finding a place of quiet study as they work on research and writing projects.”

“This should not be allowed to happen,” said Douglas Gresham, whose mother, poet Joy Davidman, married Lewis and lived at the Kilns. “This proposal would have the effect of putting the C.S. Lewis house in the middle of a development that it does not belong to. ... It would destroy what is a quiet cul-de-sac, and what for many is a holy retreat, for the sake of a profit-grab idea.”

Welby Reflects on the Holocaust

A third visit to the site of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp was for Archbishop Justin Welby “even more appalling” than previous ones.

The clergy were out in the cold for five hours during their visit. Prisoners held there would be out for 12 hours.

“We were fed. They were starved,” Welby wrote. “There are so many statistics about Auschwitz/Birkenau, but it defies description. Eighty-five per-

cent of prisoners died. Many in just days of arriving.

“Then there was the industrialized killing of the gas chambers. The vulnerable, the disabled, marginalized minorities, and above all the Jews: children, adults and the elderly, taken from a train to their deaths in as little as 30 minutes. Accounts were kept, profits were sought. No one can deny the reality of what happened. There is simply far, far, far too much evidence.”

The visit raised questions for the archbishop and his party. “Having seen this terrible place, could we still speak of God? Could we still pray, and if so in what way? Could we hear the tunes of evil in such a way that we recognize their modern variations? Even if we recognized evil, how could we know we would have the courage to protest, to lament — and not be silent when

horror threatened?”

He said three things will stay with him. “First is the way that the perpetrators at Auschwitz tried to dehumanize their victims — in a way that actually cost the humanity of both. It worked to some extent. Prisoners killed others in order to live — and were then killed themselves. Others gave their lives, like St. Maximilian Kolbe and St. Edith Stein.

“Second, these atrocities were committed by ordinary people. When one of the priests leading our retreat was asked who was to blame, he said: ‘People did it to people.’

“Third, it was idolatrous and demonic. It was evil in the strict sense of human-created alternatives to the grace and providence of God. It reversed everything good with everything bad.”

(Continued on next page)

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Welby Reflects on the Holocaust

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Welby

(Continued from previous page)

He added: "I've come away with too much to write, and no words to write it. We must protest to the limit against evil: before it occurs, as it happens, and in its aftermath. But there is also a need for silent reflection — in which we honor the victims, mourn our capacity for evil, and learn to beware."

Archbishops on the Reformation

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York issued a joint statement on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, saying the Church of England will share events with Protestant church partners from continental Europe.

"The Reformation was a process of both renewal and division amongst Christians in Europe," Archbishop Justin Welby and Archbishop Jonathan Sentamu wrote. "In this Reformation anniversary year, many Christians will

want to give thanks for the great blessings they have received to which the Reformation directly contributed. Amongst much else these would include clear proclamation of the gospel of grace, the availability of the Bible to all in their own language, and the recognition of the calling of lay people to serve God in the world and in the church."

They also cited some of the Reformation's troubled legacies. "Many will also remember the lasting damage done five centuries ago to the unity of the Church, in defiance of the clear command of Jesus Christ to unity in love. Those turbulent years saw Christian people pitted against each other, such that many suffered persecution and even death at the hands of others claiming to know the same Lord. A legacy of mistrust and competition would then accompany the astonishing global spread of Christianity in the centuries that followed. All this leaves us much to ponder."

They said the Reformation "should bring us back to what the Reformers wanted to put at the center of every per-

son's life, which is a simple trust in Jesus Christ" and should "lead us to repent of our part in perpetuating divisions."

Call to Evangelism

Another Church of England evangelism report, *Setting God's People Free*, will go before the General Synod in February. It says the Church needs to experience a major culture shift to help lay members spread the gospel in their everyday lives.

Setting God's People Free calls for Christians to be equipped to live by their faith in every sphere, from the factory or office to the gym or shop, to increase numbers of Christians and their influence in all areas of life.

One of the paper's concerns is a need to address tensions between clergy and laity that can often lead to congregational paralysis and ineffectiveness.

The paper is regarded as a key element of the lay leadership strand of Renewal and Reform, an initiative by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, to help the church grow.

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Property Potential

More churches consider property redevelopment to survive and thrive.

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Congregations might be in the business of building up God's kingdom, but it is in real estate that they are finding funds for everything from building repairs to expanded mission outreach.

New revenue-producing projects help local churches meet their goals without tapping out already-generous givers or depleting endowments. They demonstrate what is possible when churches take advantage of underutilized space in ways that complement and advance their missions.

"A lot of the most innovative, interesting examples of community partnerships and using the building as a tool for ministry [are] coming from the Episcopal community," said Tuomi Forrest, executive vice president of Partners for Sacred Places, a Philadelphia-based nonprofit agency that helps churches make their buildings into functional community assets.

Projects range in scale from modest to dramatic. At Trinity Church in downtown Asheville, North Carolina, 90 parking meters at two church-owned lots brought in \$60,000 last year for humanitarian relief projects. In Pompano Beach, Florida, St. Martin Church is subdividing property to allow for such options as commercial parking, a retirement community, and a renovated, more flexible church space. In Sioux City, Iowa, St. Thomas Church has become home to Hazel's Own St. Thomas' Toffee, a confectionary enterprise to rival those of monasteries that make beer and jams.

In these cases and others, congregations are making sure not to leave money on the table in the form of space that sits empty most of the week. Most congregations that seek help from the Episcopal Church Building Fund have properties that are used less than 10 percent of the time in any



Trinity Church photo

In downtown Asheville, Trinity Church is one of three churches that offer public parking.

given week, said Sally O'Brien, vice president of the fund.

"Every canon is struggling with *what do I do with these churches that are on the cusp?*" O'Brien said. "It may not be every one of their churches, but it's in every diocese."

By sharing room with tenants or in-house enterprises, churches are sometimes able to hold off less palatable alternatives, such as reducing staff, selling assets, or slashing budgets for outreach. The strategy requires trade-offs and does not work in every setting, but consultants say it is often doable if a church follows steps to find a complementary partnership.

"You have to leverage your assets," said the Very Rev. Lang Lowrey, canon for Christian enterprise in the Diocese of Atlanta and a real-estate developer

who works with dioceses and congregations on property-related projects nationwide.

If churches wait too long, Lowrey said, "our lack of decision will require us to either sell or make partnerships that are lucrative but aren't in keeping with our mission. The earlier we do all this, the more the mission can be preserved and improved."

Tough financial realities have sparked the search for new revenues. Average Sunday attendance fell 12 percent from 2010 to 2015 across the Episcopal Church. In the same period, increases in average pledge amounts did not keep pace with inflation. The pinch is often felt in the form of deferred maintenance projects. As roofs age and HVAC systems cry out for replacing,

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Property Potential

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churches are reaching out for ideas or funds to make their properties more financially sustainable.

The challenge afflicts even affluent areas such as Pompano Beach, located 10 miles north of Fort Lauderdale. Last summer, St. Martin was running a \$15,000 deficit and facing \$150,000 in urgent needs, including an alarm system to satisfy fire codes and repairs to the seawall on the church's waterfront property. Beyond those costs, the building needs rewiring, renovations to offices and bathrooms, and greater accessibility for the handicapped.

The Rev. Bernard Pecaro, rector of St. Martin, believes the parish must leverage its real estate.

"Unless we utilize the value of our property to support and grow our ministries we will not be able to financially endure," Pecaro wrote in the church's fall 2016 newsletter. "We will eventually have to close our doors for lack of adequate financial resources."

By working with the Diocese of Southeast Florida and Lowrey, St. Martin plans to redevelop its property. The nave will be remade, without pews or carpeting, to accommodate various uses, from flexible worship to theater

events and fine-arts displays. An upgraded parish hall will attract rental income by offering a waterside patio and room for at least 200 guests. New boat slips and new meeting rooms will be among the benefits that come from harnessing the underlying real estate's value.

Congregations are eager to explore the possibilities. The Episcopal Church Building Fund received twice as many calls from parishes in 2016 as it did five years earlier, O'Brien said. She used to speak to church groups four times a year, but demand has swelled to the point that she often gives four talks a month now. She finds parishioners know it is time for significant structural moves to cut costs, boost revenues, or both.

"The denial about decline is no longer there," O'Brien said. "It used to be that we would have to spend a fair amount of time helping parishes face that what they were calling 'stability' was actually decline. There was lots of excuse-making, but that doesn't exist anymore."

To meet growing demand, the building fund in September expanded its consulting staff team from two to five.



St. Thomas' Church photo

Members of St. Thomas Church, Sioux City, prepare packages of toffee, which is made in the church's commercial kitchen. Earnings on toffee sales help mitigate a heavy draw on the church's endowment.

Last summer, the fund lowered its interest rate from 6.5 percent to 5.75 percent to increase accessibility. It raised the loan amount ceiling from \$500,000 to \$1 million. The fund's \$6 million portfolio now includes 26 loans, up from 15 in 2010.

As the fund expands its reach, O'Brien coaches congregations on how to assess which steps to take when considering new revenues. She urges them to keep their eyes on the prize: congregational vitality. If a congregation needs outside revenue to pay bills, it is usually because vitality (including attendance and other signs of member engagement) needs shoring up. Finding new income streams may buy time for a congregation, O'Brien said, while it works to engage the neighborhood and attract more newcomers.

Financial partnerships work best, experts say, when they help a congregation boost vitality while advancing its mission and providing much-needed resources. Congregations are already used to sharing their buildings, Forrest said. He notes that 80 or 90 percent of weekly traffic in a church is usually non-members attending meetings or events. Many users pay little or nothing because they cannot afford much, and the church gladly offers space as a ministry. But if an organization has a staff and a complementary

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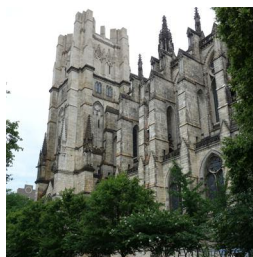
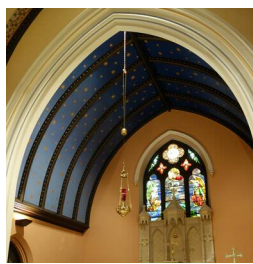
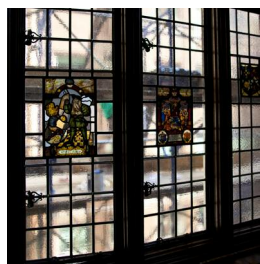
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mission, then renting office or meeting space can meet a need and provide a boost to church coffers without compromising anyone's integrity.

One example comes from Calvary Methodist Church in Philadelphia. Located in a neighborhood that declined economically and later experienced some gentrification, the church was drawing 25 for Sunday worship and could not maintain its striking architecture, including Tiffany stained-glass windows.

Through a creative partnership, the congregation remade its space into the Calvary Center for Culture and Community, which hosts three worshipping communities, theater events, and other gatherings. By making itself a community asset, Calvary raised \$2 million for essential brick-and-mortar investments, while still retaining ownership and access to its worship space.

"The place is literally the community center of the neighborhood in a real way, not just euphemistically," said Joshua Castaño, senior program manager for Partners for Sacred Places and a member of St. Mark's Church in Philadelphia. "The congregation has increased now to close to 150 people again because, slowly but surely, they've made this deep and sincere partnership with the community around leveraging their building."

As congregations begin to explore their options, Castaño and Forrest said it helps to have representatives from the church begin talking with other community groups about how they might work together. Inviting them to visit the church can help spark ideas. They have seen some congregations host open houses, not for church growth but rather in a clearly articulated quest to explore how the church can support community groups and initiatives.

They also recommend noticing what nearby congregations are doing to make their spaces more usable. In downtown Asheville, Trinity Church is one of three churches that now offer public parking at meters. Trinity's rector, the Rev. Scott White, said the congregation is healthy and does not need the extra revenue to keep up with building expenses, but it could be help-

ful down the line for budgetary line items beyond mission support.

Tradeoffs come with the territory. Trinity is now taxed \$10,000 a year on its parking-facility land, but the cost is easily covered by the \$60,000 in parking revenue. The church reserves the right to limit parking when members need it for church events.

Whether metered parking has a long-term future at Trinity remains to be seen. The city recently built a 900-car garage, which could soften demand

for church parking. If taxes rise further, the cost might no longer be justified. But for now, it's helping the church advance its purpose, and for that the congregation gives thanks.

"We see it as a mission," White said. "We're balancing between being a ministry site for the gospel and being good stewards of our resources and our space. It's reasonable for us to ask for this donation for parking so that we can continue to be a ministry site for the gospel in Asheville." □



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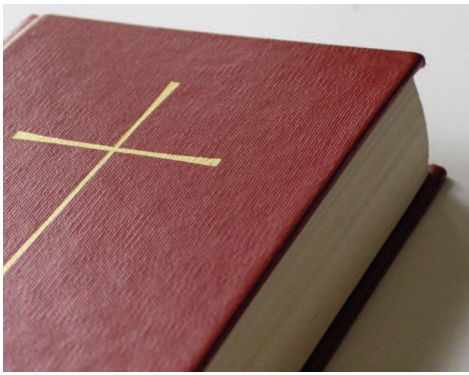
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Necessary or Expedient?

A teaching series on prayer book revision

The Book of Common Prayer (2016)

By Kevin J. Moroney

During the fall semester at General Theological Seminary I taught a class, “Prayer Books as Historical Theology,” that took up the challenge of revising sections of the Book of Common Prayer.

We worked on Proper Liturgies for Special Days (Ash Wednesday and Holy Week); Holy Baptism; Confirmation; Episcopal Services; and the Holy Eucharist.

In the first half of the semester we developed a long list of principles that would guide our revision work:

- The 1979 prayer book needs refinement, not radical revision.
- The texts and rubrics would require very little of those who do not desire change and will provide enrichment to those who seek it.
- The liturgies would remain strong in the essentials of trinitarian theology and Christology while articulating a clearer baptismal ecclesiology.

We also decided that our liturgical provisions should accommodate the changing nature of community. Ever-increasing mobility means that we sometimes cannot worship together. We envisioned a section of prayers and brief liturgies for individuals and families.

This principle was of considerable importance to our work on Proper Liturgies for Special Days. We found no need for significant alterations to the texts for Ash Wednesday or Holy Week. For those congregations that are too small or too far-flung to celebrate all the services, we made parts of the services adaptable for when people could be together.

For example, the liturgy for Ash Wednesday could be transferred to 1 Lent on the grounds that children will re-

member that they experienced the ashes more than whether it was on a Wednesday or a Sunday. A more complex construction is that elements of the Maundy Thursday liturgy may be integrated into the Palm Sunday liturgy by inserting the Gospel and ceremony for foot-washing, stripping the altar, and concluding the service with the reading of the Passion. We also included a section of Holy Week prayers for the home.

Similarly, we did not believe that the rite of Holy Baptism needed textual revision. We did minor work, such as moving the note allowing a candle from Additional Directions into the service text. We wanted the baptismal character of Confirmation to be articulated more clearly. We did this in several ways. First, the notes before the services we prepared provide a clearer dependence of Confirmation on Baptism:

Concerning the Service (Baptism)

Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church and its gathering in the Eucharist. The bond which God established in baptism is indissoluble, because the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable; baptism, therefore, is unrepeatable.

Concerning the Service (Confirmation)

Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church and its gathering in the Eucharist. In the course of their Christian development the baptized, when they are ready and have been duly prepared, are encouraged to make a public witness of their baptism and to receive the laying on of hands by a bishop.

Because Baptism is full initiation, Confirmation is an af-

firmation and public witness to those baptismal vows in the presence of a representative of the universal Church: a bishop. We chose to remove any language related to age or maturity, preferring to see candidates more simply as those who take the vows for themselves or those who cannot. In this rationale, even those who took their vows at Baptism would be encouraged to give witness to those vows in the presence of a bishop at Confirmation. We realize that this does not untangle all the issues between Baptism and Confirmation, but it asserts clearly that the former is full initiation and the latter is a public witness to Baptism that is encouraged rather than required.

In Episcopal Services, we similarly attempted to strengthen the theological and ceremonial ties between Baptism and Ordination by making three insertions to the rite that were designed to evoke a clearer vision of baptismal ecclesiology:

After the Opening Acclamation, we inserted baptismal versicles and responses:

The Bishop then continues

There is one Body and one Spirit

People There is one hope in God's call to us;

Bishop One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;

People One God and Father of all.

At the Examination, we replaced the current responses of the candidate with the familiar response from Baptism: "I will with God's help."

We concluded the Examination with a congregational question and response similar to that found in Baptism:

The Presiding Bishop then addresses the people.

Bishop Will you who witness these vows continue in the faith and pursue the ministry of Christ in and through the life and worship of the Church in this diocese?

Answer We will.

Bishop Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support this person in her/his ministry as your Bishop?

Answer We will.

For the Holy Eucharist, our revisions were sufficiently conservative that we found much of what we did for Rite I applied also to Rite II. We included A Thanksgiving for Baptism, taken from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, as an alternative to the Penitential Order that could be used during Eastertide or other appropriate occasions. We also crafted the Opening Acclamation so that a congregation could either continue its current practice or use two alternatives:

The Presider says

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

Presider Blessed be God: the one, holy, and undivided Trinity.

People Glory to God forever and ever.

Presider The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People And also with you.

We addressed formatting issues by placing the Decalogue and Kyrie/Trisagion in the Penitential Order. After the Liturgy of the Word, we arranged the liturgy of the Eucharist into what we called Orders, which included full texts from the Offertory to the Dismissal, to make it more user-friendly. There were two Orders in Rite I and six Orders in Rite II. The expansion in Rite II includes lightly edited versions of our four existing prayers (we resolved the gender issue in Prayer C by striking the phrase that includes Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). Order Five includes Eucharistic Prayer 2 from *Enriching Our Worship* ("as a mother cares for her children") and Order Six is Prayer 3 from the Church of Ireland's Book of Common Prayer, unique because it addresses each person of the Trinity individually.

We also tried to improve the section we now call the Sending by including the commissioning of Lay Eucharistic Ministers and strengthening the missional aspect of the Post-Communion Prayer:

Send us now into the world to spread the gospel, make disciples, and promote justice, that the Kingdom you announced might break forth in our communities and throughout the world; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

As the Episcopal Church discerns the possibility of prayer book revision, our class would like others to know that this was a valuable exercise in reflecting on core theology and how it finds liturgical expression that is both/and: both strong in essentials and flexible in use; both reasonably traditional and reasonably progressive, embracing the ecumenical liturgical consensus and enshrining a recognizably Anglican/Episcopal identity. We have no illusions that we got anything absolutely right, but we benefitted greatly from the exercise and we offer a few examples of our work as a glimpse of what a refinement of the prayer book could look like.

The Rev. Kevin J. Moroney is associate professor of liturgics at the General Theological Seminary.

A Child-friendly Creed

This children's story is theologically rich, and Christ's identity is arguably its main point — it's the Nicene Creed, with illustrations and explanations for children. There is much to admire about this book.

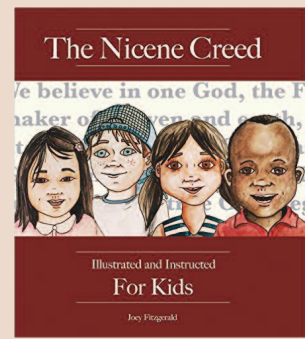
A priest and a former art teacher, Joey Fitzgerald, is its author and illustrator. Moreover, this book attempts head-on what much children's catechesis avoids discussing directly. When was the last time that you used the Nicene Creed as the basis for a Sunday school class? In some churches, liturgists even bump it from the Mass if children are to be somehow especially involved.

Fitzgerald's language is clear and filled with eloquent images: "He made things we can see, like the sun, the moon, and the stars. He made chickens, llamas, cucumbers, baby sisters, and bananas. He even created the things we can't see, like music, our

thought, angels, Heaven, and our spirits" (p. 8). This gloss is characteristically substantive and complete; the book manages to be both accessible and meaty.

It's easy to explain *homoousios* as a piece of technical or historical jargon and remove it completely from the center of real, living faith. But Fitzgerald's explanation gets at it directly and admirably: "There was never a time that Jesus was not there! When the Father was dreaming about the world he wanted to make, Jesus was dreaming with him." There isn't much lost in this translation.

This book will be useful for catechists and Sunday school teachers. Besides the presentation of the Creed, it includes an appendix for explaining other words and ideas within the Creed. What does *begotten* mean? Or *Creed*? Or *gospel*? Overall, this glossary shows the same combination of sim-



The Nicene Creed
Illustrated and Instructed for Kids
By Joey Fitzgerald. Anglican House. Pp. 40. \$20

plicity and aptness.

"Keywords for Kids" do not just come up in the Creed but in any recounting of the Christian story. Finally, this book manages to be both evangelical and creedal, inviting personal belief in the faith of the Church: "Are you ready to believe the words of the Nicene Creed and to have faith?"

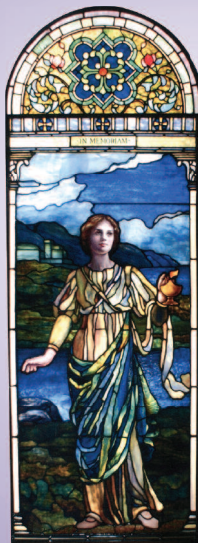
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Presentation, Finding

The second chapter of the Gospel of St. Luke delivers the narrative basis for the fourth and fifth joyful mysteries of the rosary, both ordered around the cultic center of Jewish worship: the Presentation (vv. 22-40) and the Finding (vv. 41-52) of our Lord in the Temple. And the Presentation occasions our third gospel canticle, the *Nunc Dimittis* or Song of Simeon, which stands as a sentinel of Christian prayer at the close of the day, in the services of Evening Prayer and Compline. The figures are rich and redolent, and they invite the Christian pilgrim to sit down to a feast of theological virtues.

To start, consider Simeon as an icon of the faithfulness of the Jewish Church, which welcomes the Lord as one expected and, more than that, as the creative Word who spoke her into being, as a creature called out (*qahal*). The Son and Word arrives on the doorstep of the temple as a 40-day-old infant and the devout old man, “looking forward to the consolation of Israel,” meets him as a charismatic to whom the Spirit had “revealed” that he would see “the Lord’s Messiah” before his death (Luke 2:25-26). And Simeon, among the first of the Lord’s disciples, not only sees with his eyes but touches with his hands “the word of life” (1 John 1:1), taking him in his arms and seeking his benediction:

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,
according to thy word;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
which thou hast prepared before the face of all people,
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles,
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

(Luke 2:29-32 as Canticle 5, 1979 BCP p. 51)

The Church made flesh rests in his bosom. The infant Savior convenes the assembly of his visible Body for the

praise and glory of his own Name.

We rightly join righteous Simeon in his prayer! Would that all the citizens and saints of the commonwealth of Israel were such prophets, the Lord placing his Spirit upon each one (Eph. 2:12, 19; Num. 11:29). Would that the Word might in this way cleanse and sanctify the Church, presenting to himself a Body without blemish, glorious and holy (Eph. 5:26-27).

Here we see why a Feast of Presentation is and must be both a principal feast (on Feb. 2 each year) and a Feast of Purification, that is, a *churching* (in the old parlance) in the Spirit and the Son, for communion with the Father. All Christians must be purified, and Mary, in this case as Virgin and mother, serves as sacramental set piece for the universal call to holiness, as a bride preparing to meet her bridegroom (Rev. 21:2; Ps. 45:13-14). With her we strive as ones called “by the mercies of God to present [our] bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is [our] spiritual worship” (Rom. 12:1). With her we know that the sign of the Word incarnate “will be opposed” and that “a sword will pierce [our] own soul also” (Luke 2:34-35). Just *here*, already in the shadow of the cross, in the communion of Saints Simeon, Mary, and Joseph, and of all the apostles, prophets, and martyrs, *we offer and present* to the Lord “our selves, our souls and bodies,” humbly beseeching him that we who are unworthy may nonetheless, through Jesus Christ, be “made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him” (1979 BCP, p. 336).

† † †

If and as this is possible, by the grace and mercy of God, we are called “according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28), that is, we are seen, known, and “conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn

On arriving,
we enter the
temple with
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Jesus so as
to be found
where we
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our Father's
house.

within a large family” (Rom. 8:28, 29; cf. John 1:48). We are *found* — drafted — to serve as his siblings; and, in a mystery of free will, we *find* him “about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth” (John 1:45).

The fifth joyful mystery provides a convenient window onto how exactly this works, ordered around continual travel to and from Jerusalem “to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, the assembly of Israel, to praise the Name of the LORD” (Ps. 122:4). As adoptive sons and daughters, sisters, brothers, and friends of the Holy Family we are numbered among those tribes, and we belong to the same assembly. Our Lord, and all of Scripture, beckon us down this road, the sacramental signs along which properly guide the grammar of our thinking and speaking. *All* seeking and finding is here anticipated, explained, and fulfilled in and through God’s effective example of faith, hope, and love in his Son. On arriv-

ing, we enter the temple with the youthful Jesus so as to be found where we must be, in our Father’s house. At home with him we increase “in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor,” and with his mother we treasure all these things in our heart (Luke 2:52, 51).

As foundlings of the Word made flesh we enroll in his school and eagerly take up the assigned material, ordered by a discipline of “listening” and “asking questions” (Luke 2:46). Even the old teachers come alongside in amazement, and all learn again “the first principles of the oracles of God,” as milk before meat (Heb. 5:12). In the good company of Mary and Joseph we remain slow to understand, needing demonstrations of obedience

(Luke 2:50-51) — finally to the Father, by which the Son suffers unto perfection, as “the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him” (Heb. 5:8-9).

Here, in sum, we see a foretaste of the kingdom of heaven, which is like “a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son” (Matt. 22:2). We are those whom he found on the main streets, both good and bad, so that the hall may be filled with guests; we need, however, the proper attire, which is the clothing of humility (see Luke 14:7-11). Being poor, crippled, lame, and blind we cannot repay him. Sitting down at the lowest place, we hope to be made worthy of “the resurrection of the righteous” (14:14).

Seek the Lord while he wills to be found;
call upon him when he draws near.
Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the evil ones their thoughts;
And let them turn to the Lord, and he will have compassion,
and to our God, for he will richly pardon.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor your ways my ways, says the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts.
For as rain and snow fall from the heavens
and return not again, but water the earth,
Bringing forth life and giving growth,
seed for sowing and bread for eating,
So is my word that goes forth from my mouth;
it will not return to me empty;
But it will accomplish that which I have purposed,
and prosper in that for which I sent it.
(Isa. 55:6-11 as Canticle 10, BCP, pp. 86-87)

O Lord, sanctify and cleanse your Body the Church with the washing of water by the word, and present her gloriously to yourself without spot or wrinkle. Teach her members to be found by you at peace, patient in the salvation of your Son. Amen.

Christopher Wells

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Commitment

Freedom is largely squandered if exercised as a series of provisional commitments. In such a case, the mind, heart, and soul and the body's work in the world are never constrained or fixed to some point of irrevocable commitment. No work is deeply engaged, no love profoundly embraced. This is a gospel example of freedom: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). A declaration of consent confirms this is done freely and without compulsion. A decision is made and other options summarily cut off. If faith, hope, and love remain, this can be a freedom of decades, a holy vow loosed by death alone. This too is an example of gospel freedom: A legendary Latin teacher speaks of his early dreams. "When I was seven I decided to become a priest. In my teens I decided to join the Carmelites and hoped to become a Latinist and Latin teacher." More than 50 years later, these three remain: priesthood, monasticism, Latin brilliance. "It's amazing," the Rev. Reginald Foster opines, "what you can do if you *limit your options*."

"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity" (Deut. 30:15). Providence awaits a promise, a firm and resolute commitment. Obey the commandments, love the Lord your God, walk in his ways, observe commandments and decrees and ordinances (Deut. 30:16). "Choose life so that you and your descendants may live" (Deut. 30:19). The summary of the law contained in the synoptic gospels and enshrined in the Book of Common Prayer restates this for the Christian dispensation: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (BCP, p. 324). Such commitment requires steadfastness, diligence, eyes fixed on the prize, the upward call

of God in Christ (Ps. 119:5-6). One must choose, and the choice must be sincere and confirmed by effort.

In religious devotion of love to God and neighbor, and in the vocational direction of one's life, decision and commitment are essential instruments of growth. "To obtain the gift of holiness is the work of a *life*," John Henry Newman said in his sermon "Holiness Necessary for Future Blessedness," adding: "Is not holiness the result of many patient, repeated efforts after obedience, gradually working on us, at first modifying and then changing our hearts?" My Latinist friend and teacher Father Foster warns: "Take the pain, suffering, and discipline to keep yourself from falling into the eternal trap of misunderstanding these verb times," along many other similar provocations to hard work (*Ossa Latinitatis Sola*, p. 202). Decide and make solemn vows!

But we know the problem. "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me" (Rom. 7:20). Subject to sin, we seem incapable of keeping commitments as we ought to God, our neighbors, and our respective vocations. St. Paul cries out in a mixture of despair and profound hope: "Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7:25). Amid failures we know too well, Christ is the grace to go on, the one who makes speed to save us. Thus failure is no excuse. When I am weak, then I am strong in the super-abounding and supplementing grace of Christ. Go on until it is finished! Endure to the end.

Look It Up

Read Matthew 5:37.

Think About It

The time is short. Start.

Two Demands

The voice that says, "I am the Lord," is the sound of love, an effectual word that elicits what it gives. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God will all thy heart, and will all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (BCP, p. 324; Matt. 22:37-40). God is the source of a double command and the singular grace of its fulfillment. Given human folly, this is a hard word. The God who says "Love!" says "be holy" and "you shall fear your God" (Lev. 19:2, 14).

"In the order of commanding, the love of God is first; the love of neighbor, however, is first in the order of doing" (St. Augustine, *In Ioannem*, tract. 17, my translation). Why? "If you do not love the brother whom you see, how will you be able to love the God whom you do not see?" (Augustine and 1 John 4:20). And yet, how often the neighbor stands as a real or imagined enemy, how often Cain kills Abel, how often a living soul falls upon its own sword.

The love that God commands is sourced from God's being. Love is the impossible possibility that empowers and instructs, saying: reap not to the edge of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall not strip the vineyard bare, or gather fallen grapes; you shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; do not lie to one another; do not defraud; do not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer; do not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor; do not take revenge or bear a grudge (see Lev. 19:9-18).

Love is a sober justice that acknowledges the common blood of a single humanity, every drop of which coursed through the flesh of Christ and ran from his pierced body like a new deluge over the face of the earth. This is not, however, blood in the Nile, the canals, rivers, ponds, and vessels of an

ancient or modern enemy. This is the blood of the Lamb whose hot redness makes white the dress of the baptized and the garment of martyrs.

We are not without guidance. There are things to be done and things to be left undone. Your neighbor is another you, another human being, one for whom Christ came, and lived, and died, and rose again, and lives forevermore.

Guidance is a great help, but it will not cover every exigency. What does it mean to love one's neighbor in a dense and complex situation? It will involve moments of moral clarity and moments of confusion. Thus risk is unavoidable, which is why both forgiveness and judgment are so necessary. We will need to be forgiven for harm caused by good intention, and we will need, in God's time, to be stripped of our obsessive tendencies to make others pay for our blundered efforts at good will and good action.

Amid moral risk, however, we have the sure foundation of Jesus Christ our Lord. Others, and we ourselves, build upon that foundation. We will build well and we will build poorly. We will get a reward or we will get purging fire. In either case, "the builder will be saved" (1 Cor. 3:15). God loves you, forgives you, burns you clean for your good, making you a pure sacrifice to the glory of his name. Go forth.

Look It Up

Read the Epistles of John.

Think About It

Love, holy, fear.

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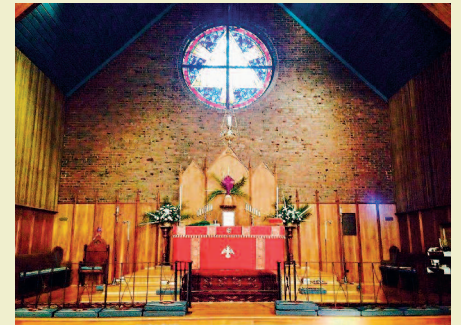
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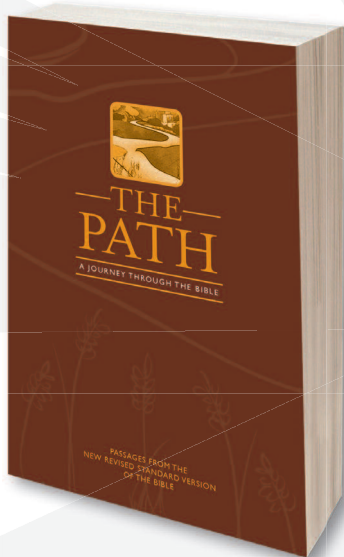
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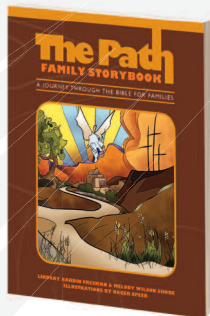
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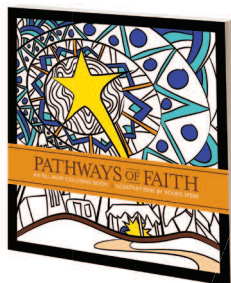


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