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ON THE COVER

The Rev. Canon Alissabeth Newton at St. Columba's Church in Kent, Washington, during a baptism service (see "Part-time Hours, Full-hearted Ministry," p. 17).

Jenny Jimenez photo / Courtesy of St. Columba's

THE LIVING CHURCH

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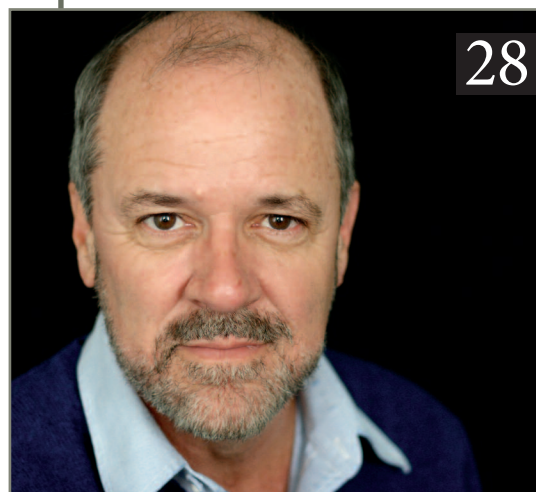
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LIVING CHURCH Partners

We are grateful to the dioceses of Utah and West Texas [p. 39], Saint John's Cathedral, Denver, and the Diocese of Louisiana [p. 40], the Diocese of Southern Ohio [p. 41], and the Diocese of Western New York [p. 43], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.



For Those at Peril on the Sea

For port chaplain Mary H.T. Davisson, helping a stranded crew is part of a year-round ministry.

When problems with international shipping break into the headlines, they usually involve drama on the high seas or illegal trafficking. But many crises faced by the unseen people who keep international trade flowing are more mundane than pirate attacks or cocaine raids.

In a world of global trade, mechanical trouble can lead to miles of bureaucratic red tape, many hours of diplomatic negotiation, and months of isolation for crews who lack visas required to come ashore or might lose pay for abandoning ship.

For the crew of the *Newlead Granadino*, this prospect became a reality last Sept. 20, when the asphalt tanker suffered serious engine trouble near the Port of Baltimore and was deemed unfit to sail by the U.S. Coast Guard. The *Granadino*, which sails under the flag of Malta and is owned by Greece-based NewLead Holdings Ltd., had been chartered for another six months of service on June 23. Its 18-member crew, mostly from the Philippines, had been shipping bitumen to refineries in North America and the Caribbean.

With the *Granadino* unable to leave port, mechanical failure soon created a humanitarian crisis. When this happened, the Baltimore International Seafarers' Center (BISC) stepped in.

"I visited the vessel three times while she was at anchor, thanks to free rides on McAllister Towing tugboats and Maryland Pilot launches," the Rev. Mary H.T. Davisson, port chaplain and executive director at the center, told TLC by email. "During those visits, we delivered donations ranging from snacks and toiletries to thermal underwear and warm hats, as well as care packages from the Filipino-American relatives of a crew member. Other donations were delivered on other occasions by McAllister or the Maryland Pilots."



Philippines Embassy photo

The Rev. Mary Davisson (second from right) escorted representatives from the Philippines Embassy on a McAllister tug to visit the *Newlead Granadino*.

Davisson also helped bring representatives from the Philippines Embassy aboard.

Once the ship could dock near the center, six crew members were repatriated and garbage was removed. Davisson visited another three times and provided escort to a crew member's relative, as required by port security. When the ship was moved to a dock in the Canton area of the port in mid-January, Davisson again met the crew as six more were repatriated.

"I've visited the remaining six on five occasions as of March 8," she said. "Highlights have included escorting more visiting relatives on board, bringing ashes on Ash Wednesday, and escorting a Filipino-American trainee on board, who brought home-cooked food as well as lively conversation in Tagalog."

Davisson said the remaining crew members, who are not allowed ashore

at all, have welcomed her graciously and have repeatedly thanked the greater Baltimore community for its support. This support has included help from the International Transport Workers Federation, the Coast Guard, the Seafarers International Union, and churches. Emmanuel Episcopal provided rosaries for the crew, and the center's ecumenical personnel collected toiletries and warm clothing.

Davisson grew up in Baltimore and studied at Virginia Theological Seminary. Bishop Robert Ilhoff asked the priest if she would visit vessels with the Rev. Ed Munro, the Episcopal deacon who founded the center, which is affiliated with the London-based Mission to Seafarers.

"I fell in love with the ministry because of the trust we experience from seafarers all over the world, the astounding dedication of BISC's volunteers, and the gift of learning to trust

each seafarer back to God as their vessels sailed away,” she said. In her work there, she visits several international crews every week. She offers welcome, free Bibles and magazines, and prayer, if desired. She can also provide legal and labor referrals on request.

“Volunteers working one or more shifts of five to nine hours weekly make similar visits,” she said. “Our most labor-intensive assistance is providing rides ashore for errands or worship, since only drivers with security training and badges can escort seafarers between the gangway and the terminal gate. In most cases, seafarers’ centers are the only option for free rides.”

Stranded vessels and routine visits are not her only concerns. As director of BISC and its only full-time employee, she trains and supervises the volunteers, ensuring that their credentials are up to date for the 14 terminals they serve. Working with the center’s board and treasurer, she helps maintain church-port relationships. She also

helps raise the \$220,000 needed annually by the nonprofit ministry. Vans go to and from the shop, and the restrooms must be stocked with supplies.

Because Davisson works as a chaplain to crews, she cannot reveal many private details about their situation or who they are. She emphasized, however, that missions to seafarers provide vital support to a population that almost always goes unseen.

“Seafarers are physically invisible because they spend nine months a year on the ocean. We literally don’t see them,” she said. “Then when they get to shore, security regulations generally prevent local citizens without special credentials from visiting. Moreover, when a multinational crew works on a vessel owned by a company in country A, flagged in country B, operated by a company based in country C, and sailing from Country D to E to F, it’s sometimes hard to know who if anyone will enforce their rights. There are often financial pressures to keep passing the buck when a problem arises, such as an

expensive injury on the job.”

Davisson said that people can learn more about the lives of shipping crews by reading *Ninety Percent of Everything* by Rose George and visiting the North American Maritime Ministry Associations website at namma.org.

“Those who live in ports can consider volunteering, as many understaffed centers have to turn down multiple requests weekly from crews. And those who don’t live in ports can still contribute financially: let’s prevent any more centers from closing under the financial pressures caused by security regulations and other factors,” she said.

“Congregations can invite port chaplains and volunteers to preach or present at adult forums. Some seafarers’ centers are able to take interested visitors on board vessels. In many ports, the specifics of security rules preclude that, but the local seafarers’ center may offer an annual boat ride around their harbor or other educational event.”

Matthew Townsend



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Bishop North Declines Appointment

The Rt. Rev. Philip North has declined his appointment as Bishop of Sheffield, although the Archbishop of York and dozens of ordained women had defended him amid several attacks.



North

“There is clearly much to be done on what it means to disagree well and to live with theological difference in the Church of England,” Bishop North wrote March 9. “If, as Christians, we cannot relate to each other within the bounds of love, how can we possibly presume to transform a nation in the name of Christ? I hope though that this conversation can continue in the future without it being hung upon the shoulders of one individual.”

North had declined an appointment in December 2012 as Bishop of Whitby (Diocese of York) when his opposition to ordaining women as priests created conflict. In November 2014, he was appointed to Burnley, a part of the Diocese of Blackburn with a strong traditionalist presence.

Leading the campaign against North was the Very Rev. Martyn Percy, dean of Christ Church, Oxford.

“He cannot in his conscience recognize, value, and affirm the sacramental integrity of one third of his clergy,” Percy said of North. “Such a position has no integrity. He will be the cause of division, and cannot bring unity.”

The Archbishop of York supported the appointment in a Feb. 25 article in *The Yorkshire Post*.

“Women clergy in the Diocese of Sheffield will not only be accepted, but will be encouraged, inspired, and furthered in their ministry by their new Diocesan Bishop,” Archbishop John Sentamu wrote. “However, there remain those who question the integrity both of the agreement reached by the Church of England, and of Philip

North himself. And that simply won’t do.”

Ordained women in Sheffield have expressed support for Bishop North.

The Rev. Eleanor Robertshaw, team rector of the Parish of Great Snaith, said she was saddened by calls for North to decline the appointment.

“If a woman had been appointed to Sheffield, and traditionalists had called for her to rescind the appointment, then many women and men, ordained and lay, would have been outraged,” she said. “We have to expect that we will also have traditionalist bishops; otherwise, how is everyone flourishing? ... I firmly believe that God has called Philip North to this diocese because he has the right skills to lead us into the future.”

In 1995, the Church of England appointed two Provincial Episcopal Visitors (often called “Flying Bishops”) to look after the pastoral needs of parishes that do not accept episcopal oversight from bishops who ordain women. Local arrangements have evolved to provide oversight of traditionalist parishes.

In 2010, as General Synod moved toward welcoming women to the episcopate, the Society of St. Wilfrid and St. Hilda was formed to provide alternative episcopal oversight for traditionalists in the Church of England.

Bishop North is a member of the Society and its parent organization, Forward in Faith. The Society provides oversight to about 400 parishes.

John Martin

How Fares God in Australia?

POSTCARD FROM SYDNEY

Embedded in the footpath beside the fountain in Sydney’s Town Hall Square, close by St. Andrew’s Anglican Cathedral, is a single-word sermon: *Eternity*. It’s a solid-brass replica of a copperplate sign that was chalked for nearly 40 years on Sydney streets.

The chalk slogan was the work of Arthur Stace, once a homeless alco-

(Continued on next page)

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Australia

(Continued from previous page)

holic, illiterate, and by all accounts a no-hoper. One night he stumbled into a service at St. Barnabas' Church Broadway in Sydney and was soundly converted. He quit drinking and later got a job as a janitor at Burton Street Tabernacle.

Soon after, one Sunday evening at Burton Street, the war hero turned evangelist John G. Ridley, M.C., waxed eloquent: "Eternity! Eternity! Oh, that this word could be emblazoned across the streets of Sydney!" In his simple way, Stace decided to do that. For many years, no one knew the identity of the graffitist. He would walk the streets during the night hours to ply his project.

During World War II the clock tower of Sydney's central post office was dismantled. When it was rebuilt, workers reinstalling the bell noticed Eternity etched in chalk. No one ever found out how Stace gained access to it.

It's calculated that Stace wrote Eternity more than half a million times between 1932 and 1967. His enduring message makes people stop, think, and engage with the spiritual part of life.

Stace's Eternity became a somewhat incongruous symbol of Sydney. During the opening ceremonies at the Sydney Olympics in 2000, a replica was the centerpiece of a huge illuminated sign on the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

A screen print of Stace's copperplate Eternity was made in 1990 and is on display at the National Gallery of Australia. One of the works by English street artist Banksy during his October 2013 residency in New York depicts a worker washing away an Eternity tag. Stace inspired a religious newspaper called Eternity. The old Burton Street Tabernacle is now the Eternity Theater, owned by the Sydney City Council, which took out a trademark on the name to protect it against indiscriminate commercial use.

The Eternity story, and how it has caught the public imagination, in many ways runs counter to the Australian consensus. As with many parts

of the Western world, the Christian church in Australia finds itself pitted against energetic secularist forces that want to see symbols of the faith removed from the public sphere.

In the week before Christmas, the Most Rev. Glenn Davies, Archbishop of Sydney, saw reports of carols being dropped from school and community celebrations, or words being changed to wish people “Happy Holidays” rather than “Merry Christmas.”

“The politically correct vanguard of secularists are basically trying to conform people to their particular pattern of speech and belief,” he declared. The centerpiece of his Christmas sermon at St. Andrew’s Cathedral was an eloquent rebuttal of the argument of those who want to erase Christianity from public discourse.

Unlike in the United States, there was never any religious vision attached to European settlement in the Antipodes. Whereas many of America’s earliest settlers shared a vision to create a society based on the values of the rule

of God, most of their Australian counterparts were drawn from among the classes most alienated from formal Christianity. Many early convicts had been sentenced to transportation by parson-judges and carried deep resentment of church authority. The first two churches built in the New South Wales colony were destroyed in arson attacks.

In the 1960s and 1970s there was a slide in Anglican church attendance (from 40% before World War II to around 20%). Roman Catholics, thanks to their network of parish schools, fared better. Now Anglicans are energetically founding schools. The welfare agency Anglicare is helping many parishes reposition themselves to serve social as well as spiritual needs.

As with many U.K. cities, cathedral worship in urban portions of Australia seems to be burgeoning. People flocked to St. Paul’s Cathedral in Melbourne at Christmas, despite a terror threat that could have destroyed it. About 1,500 squeezed inside and more

were turned away or worshiped in the forecourt.

St. Andrew’s in Sydney welcomed more than 3,000 to its Christmas services. The Very Rev. Kanishka Raffel, dean of St. Andrew’s, has been in the post a little over a year.

Raffel, 51, was born in London of Sri Lankan parents, and was brought up as a Buddhist. He found the Christian faith when given a Bible while studying law at the University of Sydney.

“Here we are in the middle of a cosmopolitan, vibrant, growing, fairly optimistic sort of city and everybody chasing their dreams at a furious pace,” he told TLC while drinking coffee across the street from St. Andrew’s. “It’s a great privilege to be able to offer the eternal gospel to a very wide cross-section of people. We have tourists, we have refugees, the business types who pop in for Evensong or a lunchtime Bible study.

“I like to say the doors are physically and metaphorically wide open. So we

(Continued on next page)

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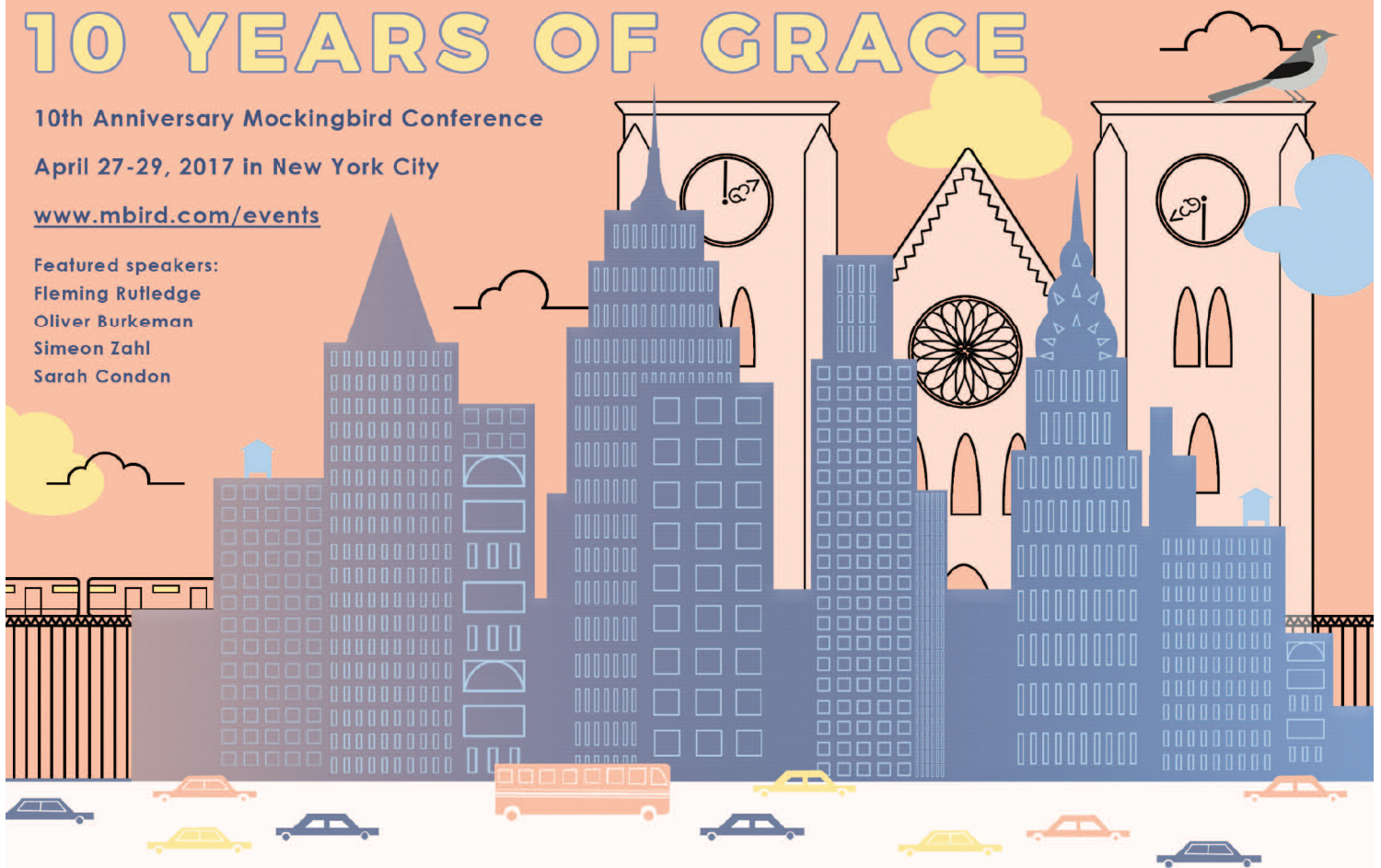
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Australia

(Continued from previous page)

want as a cathedral to offer the hospitality of the gospel. We want to welcome people in: into our space, into our story.”

John Martin

Treats for the Pope

On Feb. 26 Pope Francis became the first pontiff to visit an Anglican parish in Rome. He used the historic occasion to press for greater unity after centuries of mistrust, prejudices, and hostility between the two churches, the Associated Press reported.

Francis and the Rt. Rev. Robert Innes, the Church of England’s Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe, prayed side by side in All Saints’ Church, not far from the Spanish Steps.

In his homily, Pope Francis acknowledged that Anglicans and Roman Catholics had long “viewed each other with suspicion and hostility” and that there were “centuries of mutual mistrust.”

“At times, progress on our journey toward full communion may seem slow and uncertain, but today we can be encouraged by our gathering,” the pope said.

In turn, Innes praised the pope for his work on behalf of refugees and migrants.

Francis also said he is studying the possibility of visiting South Sudan,

which is suffering from famine and civil war.

He said Anglican, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic leaders from South Sudan had asked him to make the trip with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Archbishop Justin Welby has described the famine in South Sudan as a dire situation requiring urgent humanitarian and prayerful response. The United Nations reports that 275,000 children are severely malnourished and more than 5 million people urgently need food, agricultural, and nutritional assistance.

One worshiper, who cited Pope Benedict XVI’s concern about stressing shared social actions over seeking theological agreement, asked Francis if he preferred working together on practical matters to holding theological discussions.

Both are important, Francis said: “You have to search through dialogue, through roots, through sacrament. There are things we’re not in agreement on, but you cannot do this in a laboratory. You have to do this walking together.”

The mood was informal. At the end of the gathering, one parishioner gave Francis a traditional Lenten cake, while another woman presented him with a basket of homemade marmalades and chutneys.

Off the Grid

The Church Pension Fund has invested \$30 million into a fund that will provide loans for renewable energy in de-



iStock/yanphoto

veloping markets. Wespeth Benefits and Investments, a general agency of the United Methodist Church, also invested \$30 million into the \$60.8 million Developing World Markets’ Off-Grid, Renewable and Climate Action (ORCA) Impact Note.

The ORCA Impact Note will provide renewable energy finance loans to social businesses in the developing world and is composed of 11 underlying loans made to inclusive financial institutions and operating companies. These organizations support renewable energy creation and services in nine countries across three continents, including Ecuador, Guatemala, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Rwanda, and Tanzania.

“The Church Pension Fund was pleased to serve as an anchor investor, which helped bring other investors to the table to provide renewable energy finance loans to social businesses in the developing world,” said Roger Saylor, managing director and chief investment officer of CPF. “This investment will impact the lives of people on three different continents and is reflective of our commitment to doing good while earning a competitive rate of return.”

This transaction follows two previous socially responsible investments with Cheyne Capital’s Social Property Impact Fund and the Avanath Capital Management’s Affordable Housing Fund in 2016. CPF has socially re-

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sponsible investments in 23 countries, bringing its current total commitment to socially responsible investing to nearly \$1 billion.

In its socially responsible funds, CPF targets investments in women- and minority-owned firms; economically targeted initiatives, including urban redevelopment, affordable housing, sustainable agriculture, and microfinance; and environmental programs that invest in sustainable forestry, clean technology, and green buildings.

North Carolina Elects Massachusetts Priest

The Diocese of North Carolina has elected the Rev. Samuel Rodman, special projects officer in the Diocese of Massachusetts, as its 12th bishop. He led among lay delegates on the first ballot and in both orders on the second ballot. He won on the third ballot.

Rodman also has served as the Massachusetts diocese's project manager for campaign initiatives and rector of St. Michael's Church in Milton, Massachusetts, for 16 years.

The other nominees included the Rev. George Adamik, rector of St. Paul's Church in Cary, North Carolina; the Rev. Charles T. Dupree, rector of Trinity Church in Bloomington, Indiana; and the Rev. Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn, canon to the presiding bishop for ministry within the Episcopal Church.

Bishop Beckwith of Newark to Retire

The Rt. Rev. Mark M. Beckwith, Bishop of Newark, has announced his plan to retire next year.

"Given that the search and call of a bishop takes 18 months, the Presiding Bishop's office has set a date of September 22, 2018, for the consecration of the 11th bishop of the diocese, shortly after I turn 67," Beckwith said in a statement. "When I came to the diocese as bishop, I had made a commitment to my family and myself that I would serve as Diocesan Bishop for

(Continued on next page)



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Beckwith

(Continued from previous page)

ten years. It will end up being nearly twelve. I intend to be fully engaged as Bishop until the time of my successor's consecration."

Migration Office to Close in Miami

Episcopal Migration Ministries will close its satellite office in Miami at the end of July.

The Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson, Director of Episcopal Migration Ministries, said the closing is due in large part to changing policy regarding Cuban immigrants.

"Episcopal Migration Ministries-Miami began in 1980 in response to the Department of State's request for assistance in processing Cubans arriving to the United States during the Mariel boatlift," Stevenson said.

Under the direction of Charlande Michel, the Miami office was approved by the federal government in 1987 to participate in the refugee resettlement program and has since resettled more than 3,300 refugees from Bosnia, Burma, Cuba, Colombia, Haiti, Iraq, Kosovo, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

The Miami office also has provided immigration legal services in South Florida. There are eight staff members in the Miami office.

Office of Public Affairs

Kindred Spirits

Like other Episcopal seminaries in recent decades, Episcopal Divinity School has announced plans to affiliate with a cross-denominational seminary. EDS announced Feb. 24 that it will pursue affiliation with Union Theological Seminary in Manhattan.

Like EDS, Union emphasizes various themes of liberation theology. James H. Cone, author of *A Black Theology of Liberation* (1970) and *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (2011), has taught at Union since 1969.

Graduates of Union include Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Marcus Borg, Malcolm Boyd, Frederick Buechner, Beverly Roberts Gaventa, the Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff, and Walter Wink.

The two seminaries will begin negotiations immediately in the hope that their boards will vote on an agreement when they meet in May, before the final EDS commencement at its Cambridge campus.

West Texans Elect Suffragan

The Diocese of West Texas has elected the first woman who would serve as a bishop of the diocese. The diocese's 113th annual council elected Jennifer Brooke-Davidson on the sixth ballot Feb. 25.

The other nominees were the Rev. Chris Cadel, the Rev. Chris Cole, the Rev. John Hill, the Rev. Lisa Mason, the Rev. Jonathan Wickham, and the Rev. Robert Woody.



Diocese of West Texas photo

Brooke-Davidson

Brooke-Davidson, 56, was ordained a priest in 2009 after graduating from Fuller Theological Seminary. She has served as vicar of St. Elizabeth Church since 2011. She served as assistant rector of St. Stephen's Church in Wimberley from 2009 to 2011.

Before ordination, Brooke-Davidson practiced commercial financial law for 12 years. She is married to Carrick Brooke-Davidson, and they have two grown daughters, Emma and Kate.

*Laura Shaver
Diocese of West Texas*

D.R. Transition

The Rt. Rev. Julio C. Holguín, Bishop of the Dominican Republic since 1991, has announced that he plans to retire on Nov. 1.

The diocese elected the Rt. Rev. Moisés Quezada as its coadjutor bishop in July 2015. His seating as Bishop Holguín's successor is scheduled for Epiphany Cathedral in Santo Domingo on Nov. 4.

Kansas Seeks Assisting Bishop

The 14 trustees of the Diocese of Kansas have announced a decision to call an assisting bishop.

The trustees said in a statement that they had intended to seek a part-time provisional bishop. Their decision followed Bishop Dean E. Wolfe's resignation after he was called to serve as rector of St. Bart's in New York.

The group then learned that there are currently few retired bishops able to serve in this capacity.

"We discussed this at length during our meeting on Feb. 15, and we feel

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confident that the diocese will function well by instead engaging an assisting bishop to perform liturgical functions, notably confirmations and ordinations, while the Council continues its oversight of diocesan matters in its capacity as the interim Ecclesiastical Authority," the trustees wrote. "We also noted that, should the need arise in the coming months, the option of electing a provisional bishop remains."

Bishop Magness Heading to Virginia

The Rt. Rev. James Magness will join the Diocese of Southern Virginia staff in late March as a part-time assisting bishop. Bishop Herman Hollerith announced the decision at the diocese's annual council.

Magness recently retired as the Suf-fragan Bishop of the Armed Forces and Federal Ministries. He served as interim rector of Galilee, Virginia Beach, and as a canon of the diocese. He was also canon to the ordinary of the Diocese of Kentucky.

Diocese of Southern Virginia

CPG Releases 2016 Report

Church Pension Group (CPG) has released the Episcopal Church Medical Trust (Medical Trust) 2016 Denominational Health Plan (DHP) Annual Report.

"This past year we continued to provide a comprehensive healthcare benefits program that not only meets our clients' unique needs, but also remains affordable when compared with similar options in the broader marketplace," said John Servais, CPG's senior vice president of benefits policy and design. "We remain focused on cost containment. The DHP helped us deliver a single-digit average rate increase of 5.5 percent for the 2017 plan year, which compared favorably to exchange rate increases that averaged 24 percent."

Servais added: "There is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the ACA, but we are actively monitoring the policy changes that have been proposed by the new administration and Congress. As a member of the Church Al-

liance, we work with other denominations to monitor developments in Washington, D.C., as they relate to healthcare and other benefits offered by church-related organizations. Our goal is to ensure that the DHP will continue to meet the needs of our clients."

Church Pension Group

Immigration and Threats

Bishop Sally Dyck of the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church, Bishop Jeffrey Lee of the Diocese of Chicago, and Bishop Wayne Miller of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have issued a letter on the new federal immigration enforcement guidelines issued by the Department of Homeland Security.

"This is a difficult time in many of our congregations," they said. "Many people who are now fearful that they will be arrested and deported are parents, children, leaders in our congregations."

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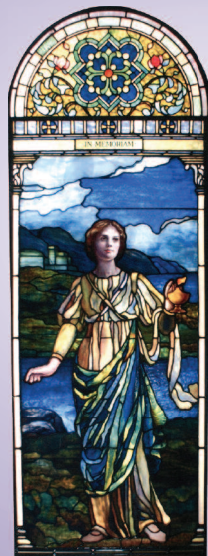
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Threats

(Continued from page 13)

gations, and valued members of our communities.”

The bishops said they understood the importance of securing borders. “But scripture commands us to welcome the strangers in our midst and to care for widows and orphans. The Trump administration’s new immigration priorities go far beyond seeking the deportation of dangerous criminals; they call for the arrest and deportation of millions of people whose only offense may have been to enter the country without documents or to get a driver’s license.”

Increasing threats toward synagogues also drew a statement from Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde of the Diocese of Washington and Bishop Shannon S. Johnston of the Diocese of Virginia.

“We are grieved by the news that two Jewish schools in our area had to be evacuated [Feb. 27] due to bomb threats,” they said. “The Gesher Jewish Day School in Fairfax, Virginia, and the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School in Rockville, Maryland, join a list of 72 Jewish community centers in 30 states and Canada that have received a total of 89 bomb threats since the beginning of the year. We worry that these attacks are not isolated incidents, but represent an orchestrated effort to sow fear across our land.

“We urge all Christians to join us in prayer and acts of solidarity with our Jewish neighbors. As Christians, we reject all acts of violence against those of other faiths. As Americans, we believe that a threat on any community of faith is a threat against every community of faith.”

Guildford Cathedral Imperiled by Debt

The future of the Cathedral Church of the Holy Spirit hangs in the balance. With a running deficit of £100,000, the dean and chapter have pinned their hopes on a plan to build 134 homes on adjoining slopes, which they believe would secure its future.

But the plan met with neighbors’ passionate opposition, and Guildford Borough Council has overwhelmingly voted to refuse planning permission.

“The truth is this: that the cathedral faces the real possibility, in fact probability, of financial failure, of closing its doors, if this planning permission is not granted,” said the Rt. Rev. Andrew Watson, Bishop of Guildford, before the council’s vote.

“There is no plan B,” said the cathedral’s dean, the Very Rev. Dianna Gwilliams, after the council’s decision. “We welcome more than 90,000 people a year, and the running cost of the building is immense.”

Guildford Cathedral is a modern edifice, completed in 1961. The Diocese of Guildford, on the Surrey-London borders, was carved out of the Diocese of Winchester during the interwar years.

Unlike most of England’s ancient cathedrals, it has no historic endowments and must raise its funds year by year. It has been in a shortfall for several years. Dean Gwilliams says there is only enough operating cash for another year.

Judge Richard Vary, a local resident, disputed the notion that the property development would save the cathedral.

“This application ... does not make the cathedral viable,” he said. “The council’s head of financial services found the enabling sum to be £17.2 million. This scheme provides the cathedral with £2 million and an annual income of a few hundred thousand pounds. It falls well short.”

He added: “It’s accepted that this development does not comply with planning guidelines: poorly laid out, lacking green space, less than optimal living environment, overlooking neighbors, significantly exceeding the local plan.”

Funds for the building were raised by asking people to buy a brick. But the building is not greatly loved, being rated as England’s ugliest cathedral. Simon Jenkins, a former editor of *The Times*, bought a brick as a youngster. He said the cathedral sits “lonely on its hill outside the town” and its access road has been “likened to the entrance of a crematorium.”

There are city-center church build-

ings in Guildford with a location and style capable of serving as a replacement.

Luwum Honors Draw Hundreds

Hundreds of Ugandans and more than 30 bishops, two of them from the United Kingdom, prayed at the grave of Archbishop Janani Luwum on Feb. 16, the 40th anniversary of his death.

Luwum was arrested at the behest of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin Dada, who was angered by the archbishop’s condemnation of human-rights abuses perpetrated by Amin’s regime. At the time of Luwum’s death, radio reports claimed Luwum died in a car accident, along with cabinet ministers Erinayo Wilson Oryema and Charles Oboth Ofumbi. When his body was released to his family, however, it was riddled with bullets.

Mission scholars have chronicled how the Amin regime inadvertently furthered the cause of evangelization in eastern Africa. Amin was a Muslim

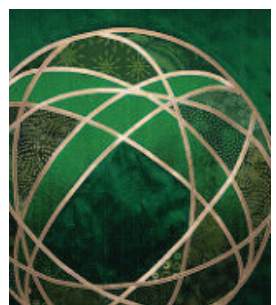
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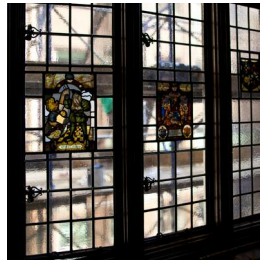
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Luwum

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and no friend of the churches. His persecution meant that large numbers of Ugandans who grew up with the legacy of the East African Revival fled across borders to Sudan (north) and Congo (west).

Western missions had been present in these areas for many years, but their work bore little fruit. From the mid-1970s there was rapid growth of the church driven by Ugandan refugees who energetically shared their faith with their fellow Africans.

The young John Sentamu could often be found in the office of Archbishop Luwum, peppering him with questions about Christianity. Sentamu became a high-court judge in Uganda, but fled the country after he jailed a member of Amin's family and began receiving death threats.

Sentamu, now Archbishop of York, said later that it was the death of Luwum that prompted him to offer himself for ordination.

See Lambeth's Gardens for £5

The Archbishop of Canterbury will open the garden of Lambeth Palace to visitors. Until recently, members of the public have only been able to visit the 11-acre garden on special occasions during the year, or during guided tours. This year it will be open once monthly for anyone who wishes to visit.

The move is part of Archbishop Justin Welby's desire to make Lambeth Palace, which has been home to Archbishops of Canterbury for 800 years, more accessible to the public.

From April 7 until Sept. 1, the garden will be open from noon to 3 p.m. on the first Friday of the month, with no need to book in advance. An entrance fee of £5 will support a chosen charity each month. Tea, coffee, and soft drinks will be available for purchase, together with plants from the garden, Lambeth Palace honey, and souvenirs.



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Children gathered for the first half of the service at St. Columba's Church, Kent, Washington.

Daniel Hershman photo/Courtesy of St. Columba's Church

Part-time Hours, Full-hearted Ministry

Laity step up to the challenge of meeting needs with a part-time cleric.

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

St. Columba's Church in Kent, a suburb of Seattle, bears myriad marks of a vital congregation. New ministries shelter homeless men inside and feed the hungry from new vegetable gardens outside. At 79, average Sunday attendance (ASA) is up 44 percent since 2014.

The only thing missing at St. Columba's, according to a few older members, is a full-time priest. To hold down costs, the church shifted in 2014 to a part-time model when it called the

Rev. Canon Alissabeth Newton, the Diocese of Olympia's canon for congregational development, to serve as vicar of the parish 30 hours a week.

But the part-time pastorate is turning out to be a blessing, and not just for St. Columba's bottom line. The priest's limited hours mean more responsibilities fall to the laity, who are motivated to discover how much they can do.

"The congregation has been revitalized," said Bob Ewing, a founding member of St. Columba's in 1959. It struggled under a prior full-time priest who "wanted to run the show and

stepped on a lot of toes," Ewing said. But a part-timer's focus on empowering laity is bearing fruit.

As a church experiencing life after full-time clergy, St. Columba's has plenty of company. From 2010 to 2015, the percentage of American congregations led by a part-time cleric jumped from 29 to 38, according to a Faith Communities Today (FACT) survey from the Hartford Institute for Religion Research. As far back as 2012, 38 percent of mainline Protestant congregations had no paid full-time clergy

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Part-time Hours, Full-hearted Ministry

(Continued from previous page)

according to the latest National Congregations Survey from Duke Divinity School. That number is likely higher today, researchers say.

Shifting to part-time clergy helps congregations slash budgets when their ranks thin out and revenues drop. But denominational officials often urge the faithful to cut elsewhere before reducing the pastoral footprint. Because so much programming, visitation, and worship have been clergy-dependent, they fear a smaller pastorate will equate to less ministry and a hastened decline.

“Those congregations that are choosing part-time ministry are choosing a slow and steady decline towards death,” said the Rev. Sara Anderson, associate to the bishop for the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She said vital congregations need a pastor who leads outreach and community engagement, but a part-time pastor does not have time for those duties.

“For a part-time pastor, really about the only thing they can do is lead Sunday morning worship and visit the sick,” Anderson said.

But congregations are challenging that assumption along with notions that they will not be attractive, will not have much to offer, or will not be a “real church” if they go part time. As more congregations make the move, some are finding it does not have to mean decline. It can lead instead to new focus and strategic redeployment of assets, including clergy and volunteer time.

In the United Methodist Church, 20 percent of the church’s 32,000 congregations have part-time clergy, but nearly all the ones that close (95 percent in 2014) are led by full-time pastors. Those with part-time pastors appear to be relatively resilient with reduced overhead, a lean staffing model, and expanded responsibilities for laity.

Some that have shifted to part-time

clergy are doing more than survive. They are vital as measured by increased mission outreach, growing worship attendance, or increased member engagement:

- Since St. John’s Lutheran Church in Lakewood, Washington, switched to part-time clergy five years ago, ASA has jumped 100 percent, from 25 to 50. The church has boosted mission giving from zero to seven percent and has increased the pastorate from less than half time to 60-percent time.

- Tuttle Road United Methodist Church in Cumberland, Maine, has seen ASA double from 30 to 60 since it made the part-time switch two years ago. New members have come to know the Rev. Linda Brewster through many outreach activities, which she has time to do in part because a layperson leads worship and preaches once a month.

- In Carlsbad, New Mexico, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has seen attendance jump from 35 to 45 in the past year. During that time, the church sold its building and now worships in a synagogue. Formerly inactive members have joined a new worship committee, which has revamped sermon time to be interactive, with congregants responding to questions from Pastor David Roberts.

Not all congregations find vitality in the part-time model; some continue to decline. But consultants say it is crucial for churches to learn from successful examples if mainline Protestantism is going to save thousands of its congregations that can no longer afford full-time paid ministry.

Nowhere is the trend toward part time more visible than in the Episcopal Church, in which 48 percent of congregations have no paid full-time priest. That number is up from 43 percent in 2012, according to the church’s national statistics, and 10 points higher than that the average among mainline Protestant denominations.

In some dioceses, full-time paid clergy have become a rarity. In the

Nowhere is the trend toward part time more visible than in the Episcopal Church, in which 48 percent of congregations have no paid full-time priest.

Diocese of Nevada, only 13 percent of churches have full-time clergy. In Northern Michigan, none of the 24 congregations has a full-time priest. Urban dioceses see the trend less starkly than rural ones, but it is still significant. In Pittsburgh, where full-time used to be the norm, only 22 percent of congregations now have full-time clergy.

Shrinking budgets are driving the trend. A church typically cannot afford a full-time pastor unless it has at least 130 worshipers on an average weekend, according to Rick Morse, vice president of Hope Partnership for Mission Transformation, a consultancy for mainline congregations. But 80 percent of congregations now have attendance below that threshold, which means most will need to consider part time at a turning point if they have not already. Meanwhile, the median budget for U.S. congregations fell from \$150,000 to \$125,000 from 2010 to 2015, according to FACT.

But congregations are finding the shift can be galvanizing. Laity are laying claim to ministries they have long been authorized to do but had always delegated, whether from custom or mere accretion of duties, to a full-time



Muriel Dufendach distributes communion at St. Timothy's, Henderson, Nevada. She presides at weekday eucharistic services each Tuesday and Friday through the Rite of Eucharist Under Special Circumstances.

Photo courtesy of St. Timothy's Church

practitioner among 2,000 people.”

The key to making a part-time arrangement work at St. Columba's, said Newton and her mission's members, is lifting up laypersons' talents and passions without fear of infringing on the priest's domain. As a part-timer, Newton has been eager to share responsibilities that do not involve specifically priestly duties of “absolve, bless, and consecrate.” And the mission's members, who are now accustomed to helping one another in times of loss, have welcomed the challenge.

For James Wyatt, a former Methodist pastor who attends St. Columba's, being in a part-time priest's congregation has meant he contributes on a big scale. He preaches when Newton needs a break, for example. He also enjoys leading a ministry to homeless men who take shelter at St. Columba's for two months a year.

Micah Kurtz, who used to attend a Bellevue megachurch and belongs to St. Columba's, was struck by how democratic the opportunities are in a church with a part-time priest.

“What I found was an openness to let people own things and say, *Hey, why don't we try this? It might meet your skills maybe. Give it a shot.*” Kurtz said. “Making space for people to jump in and do things has really been remarkable.”

This report is the first of three made possible in part by funding from the BTS Center, mission successor to Bangor Theological Seminary. Based in Maine, BTS (thebtscenter.org) focuses on 21st-century communities of faith and practice. The conclusions reported here are those of the reporter and the people he interviewed.

priest, until they no longer had one.

Some congregations extend this thinking to sacraments. At St. Luke's Church in Fair Haven, Vermont, where the congregation is too small to afford even a part-time priest and has called a volunteer priest-in-training, members do not wait for a visiting cleric to anoint the sick. They anoint the sick themselves, using holy oil consecrated by their bishop.

At St. Timothy's in Henderson, Nevada, members do not expect their part-time priest-in-charge, the Rev. Carol Walton, to preside at weekday eucharistic services. Instead they receive every Tuesday and Friday through the rite of Eucharist Under Special Circumstances, over which laywoman Muriel Dufendach presides.

“Laypeople can do an awful lot of stuff in the church that priests have gradually taken over,” Dufendach said.

When Walton is able to attend on a weekday, she sits in the pews and receives with everyone else. As long as laypeople want to keep presiding, she said, she's happy to let them.

“I'm not going to take over something that a layperson has been doing because I think that's part of vitality: having ministry that people want to do,” Walton said.

Lay members of St. Timothy's do plenty of ministries that are more typical of laity, such as preparing sack lunches on a Saturday morning for the city's homeless, but they do not stop there. Some have also presided at memorial services, where they follow the prescribed rite in the Book of Common Prayer. Walton sometimes handles funeral duties herself, but she is glad to let laypeople share that ministry as well.

At St. Columba's in Kent, Newton finds the congregation does not expect her to be a hands-on manager of every ministry. The gardens, for instance, have grown to the point that they now yield wheat for Communion bread, flowers for the altar, and 300 pounds of food for the church's food pantry, all without any direct oversight from Newton.

“We want practitioners, not consumers,” Newton said. “We want people at St. Columba's to learn how to be practitioners of Christian faith. That's a hands-on activity. It involves writing things, doing things, planting things, talking to people. That's really different from the megachurch, consumer-of-faith model where you go and consume whatever is prepared for you and go home. It's hard to learn how to be a

Forgive Us Our Trespases?

By Marcia Pally

“Forgive us our trespases, as *we forgive* those who trespass against us.” What is it that *we’re* forgiving? As our various English translations have it, do we mean sins, trespases, or debts? *Debt* covers both financial and non-financial owing, as in “mortgage debt” and “debt of gratitude.” *Tresspass* points to property violations. *Sin* connotes violation of sacred commandments.

What difference does it make to today’s notion of forgiveness?

The biblical bases for this petition of the Lord’s Prayer, Luke 11:4 and Matthew 6:12 and 6:14, were written in part with reference to the biblical seventh-year laws (*shmitah*). They require that after every six-year period, *financial* debts be relieved and the land lie fallow (Deut. 15:1-3). Complete debt relief had the unintended effect of drying up loans to the poor, so a workaround was developed to ensure that such loans continued. As this was second best to complete debt forgiveness, the rabbis of Jesus’ era set strict, poor-friendly conditions on lending and interest rates, and the *shmitah* laws of debt relief remained an important moral principle. We see it reflected in Luke 11:4 and Matthew 6:12, in which what we forgive is derived from the Greek *aphiemi*, to release or remit a debt, with both monetary and non-monetary connotations.

By contrast, Matthew 6:14 uses the word *paraptoma*, to “trespass” or “sin.” André Trocmé, the French pastor who with his wife, Magda, saved thousands of Jews from Nazi deportation, explains that *paraptoma* was written into Matthew 6:14 to ensure that other sorts of debt were added to the financial meaning already clear in Matthew 6:12. “The material connotation of the word ‘debts’ in the Lord’s Prayer,” Trocmé wrote, “was so obvious that Jesus thought it fitting to add a commentary to the prayer, to explain that the words concerning the debts also applied to ‘trespases’ in general.”

Trocmé’s reading of two sorts of forgiving — monetary and non-monetary — follows Church fathers. Tertullian, for instance, explained his understanding of forgiveness through the parable of the wicked servant, who re-

fuses to forgive a financial debt even when his own is forgiven (Matt. 18: 21-25). “For the fact that the same servant, set free by his Lord, does not likewise spare his *debtoi* [does not forgive his debtor],” Tertullian writes, “*fits in with this, that we profess that we also forgive our debtors.*” Linking what we forgive to the wicked-servant parable, Tertullian brings financial debt into what we are to forgive, using *debtoi* or monetary debtor.

Church historian Christoph Marksches sums up, saying that through antiquity, the debts we are to forgive were understood as both monetary and non-monetary:

Origen in his commentary on the Our Father (in *De Oracione* 28) is using both dimensions of the Greek term by citing Luke’s version and Romans 13:7-8. (Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.) And, as often, he is convinced that these two meanings (monetary and non-monetary debt) are not present by chance but as a sign of the multifold dimensions of sense in Holy Scripture.

The Latin *debitum/debiti*, meaning both financial and non-financial owing, continued through the medieval period, preserving both sorts of forgiving into early modernity and translation of the Bible into local languages. Luther rendered Luke 11:4 as “Forgive us our sins (*Sünden*) as we forgive all who are indebted (*schulden*) to us.” *Schulden* means to “owe” monetarily as well as non-monetarily, continuing the dual senses of forgiveness. Following this, the German Lord’s Prayer uses the noun *Schuld*, which, until the mid-20th century, carried both financial and moral connotations.

All early English translations of the Bible except two (the

Matthew and Tyndale Bibles) preserved the double meaning of debt, using both debt/indebted (with financial overtones) and sin/trespass.

The exception to this tradition is the English Lord's Prayer, which has only *trespasses*. The connotation of forgiving financial debt recedes. Why should this have happened after 1,500 years?

One possibility is events in early modern England, primarily the enclosure and privatization of formerly open farmland. This left the aristocracy richer and commoners with nowhere to grow food. Prosecutions against commoners for trespassing on newly enclosed land (often to poach game to eat) were a frequent activity by the wealthy and a tragedy for the lower classes, many of whom were sent to prison or the gallows. In short, the aristocracy's sin *du jour* was refusal to forgive real trespassing. With this in the cultural atmosphere, it is not surprising that trespasses came to the fore in the Lord's Prayer as what we (should) forgive.

The early Reformed churches, associated with the trading and poorer classes, did not switch to *trespasses* but retained the financial overtones of *debt*. Economically, those in the trades needed something like *shmitah*: a structured bankruptcy and debt forgiveness so that, after an unprofitable venture, they could return to the economy rather than land in debtor's prison. Calvin, a French immigrant to Geneva and deeply concerned about the poverty of his compatriots there, lambasted the rich for their strict, impoverishing debt collection. He refused Communion to those charged with usury. In this economic situation, forgiveness of financial debt remained a pressing need and it remained in the Reformed Lord's Prayer.

Dale Irvin, president of New York Theological Seminary, notes that "Payment of debts is very much on the minds of the early Reformed thinkers in Geneva, which greatly influenced [John] Knox. By the time the Lord's Prayer was being printed in Scottish Presbyterian prayer books, it is always 'debts.'"

And it remained *debts* among the Presbyterians and Congregationalists who came to America. They had been key actors in the effort to break the nobility's stranglehold on the economy and give commoners a leg up. They too needed financial debt forgiveness and saw it as something merciful that people do. In the 1630 *Modell of Christian Charity*, John Winthrop preaches monetary debt forgiveness: "If his [the borrower's] means of repaying thee be only probable or possible, then is he an object of thy mercy, thou must lend him, *though there be danger of losing it*, Deut. 15. 7." Winthrop then links forgiveness, financial reprieve, and the *shmitah*: "Whether thou didst lend by way of commerce or in mercy, if he hath nothing to pay thee, must forgive ... Deut. 15. 2. Every seventh year the Creditor was to quit that which he lent to his brother if he were poor as he appears."

Irvin sums up: "My own conclusion is that those movements that had stronger support from merchant classes used

'debts.' The church that was under bishops, who were mostly aligned with the royalists and associated historically with landed aristocracy, went for 'trespasses.' There seems to me to be important if subtle socio-economic forces at work."

Forgiveness of financial debt has been part of the prayer's long history, not surprisingly, given Jesus' many teachings to give both spiritual and material aid to the needy. What implications might this have for present law and policy?

One might look, for instance, at home foreclosure, which after the 2008 financial crisis had devastating effects on families and the economy. By 2013, the number of U.S. foreclosures had reached five million, worse proportionately than during the 1930s Depression. To avoid this sort of societal tragedy, alternative procedures were implemented by Israel in 2008, requiring that banks find alternate housing for families before they could evict. As banks do not want to spend time finding court-approved housing for each defaulting family, the incentive shifted from eviction to developing reasonable payment plans that keep families at home. Foreclosures dropped, along with the damage to families and society. Despite the concerns of critics, Israeli banks remained solidly profitable.

Another idea could be the development of regional banks dedicated to local residents and businesses, and working with them on investment, budgeting, and best practices through business development, not just when bankruptcy looms. In this way, borrowing could be adjusted before it becomes unmanageable debt, a pre-emptive forgiveness far more productive than letting businesses fail. A parallel pre-emptive policy is that, upon closure of larger firms, businesses — in cooperation with regional and national government — could fund retraining and regional redevelopment in new industries, thus preventing unemployment and debt accumulation among an unemployed workforce.

Still another proposal is to restructure debt throughout the economy. The current system of public bailouts for troubled private firms (as we saw in 2009) shifts taxpayer dollars from education, infrastructure, and so on to private banks that failed owing to their own imprudence. Bail-ins, by contrast, mandate that large investors in banks and brokerage houses not only reap profits in good times but share risk of loss. Should a bank falter, large investors would bail-in with funds to stabilize it and set it on a productive course.

If these are not the best ideas, others will be better. We will find them if we work from premises of debt forgiveness, for which the Lord's Prayer remains one of our foundational guides. Upon closer examination, "forgive us our trespasses" means more than our language implies.

Marcia Pally teaches at New York University and Fordham University, and is a guest professor in the theology department at Humboldt University in Berlin. She is author of Commonwealth and Covenant: Economics, Politics, and Theologies of Relationality (Eerdmans, 2016).



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Reconnecting to Church

The parish church is the unique site where the biggest idea of all — a universe created by love — is put together with the most mundane of human events.

By Joseph Britton

In her memoir *Leaving Church* (HarperCollins, 2006), the noted preacher Barbara Brown Taylor chronicles her unexpected vocational transition from parish priest to college professor. She offers by way of explanation that somewhere along the way she had come to realize that “feeding people was no longer feeding me.” Yet her move from church to academy was not entirely discontinuous: in the end, she affirms that on her checklist of things to hold onto, even in her new collegiate circumstances, was faith itself.

Tracing a trajectory in the opposite direction, from seminary dean to parish priest, I have had a rather contrary experience, one of reconnecting with rather than becoming distanced from the local congregation. Perhaps in my case this contrasting experience is best explained by W.H. Vanstone’s classic, *Love’s Endeavour, Love’s Expense: The Response of Being to the Love of God* (Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1977), a little book I fortuitously came across just as my transition back to the parish began. As so often seems the case, it was providentially the right book at the right time.

Vanstone, who died in 1999, was a brilliant priest and theologian in post-war England. Yet he passed by many offers to teach at the nation’s leading universities to devote himself unreservedly to the life of parish ministry in a Lancashire housing estate (suburb). “Many of my best friends,” he once wryly remarked, “accepted jobs that I turned down” (see Robert L. Glover, “Man, Meaning, Mystery: The Quest for the Historical Vanstone,” *Theology in Scotland*. Online at bit.ly/2gHZNmng). He nevertheless continued to take seriously the need for real theological depth, even in the improbable context of a spiritually lifeless setting where there were no obvious hungers of the soul. Thinking of the manner in which the Church often tries to become relevant in such circumstances, he once derisively remarked, “The church is like a swimming pool: all the noise comes from the shallow end.”

Setting himself the task of remaining deeply grounded both spiritually and intellectually, he infused his work with daily prayer and regular pastoral attention to his parishioners, producing at the same time a steady flow of carefully crafted sermons, addresses, and reflections that became the backbone of his ministry. This work culminated toward the end of his life in *Love’s Endeavour, Love’s Expense*, which H.A. Williams, CR, described as “the product of personal experience of a most costly and rewarding kind.”

Vanstone’s book takes as its starting point his painful realization in the midst of his rather banal parochial situation that, in much of what constitutes ordinary parish life, it “seemed more and more incongruous to relate, in any way, such trifling achievement to the glory of God.” His work therefore became for him a “formality,” his life a kind of depressing “charade.” What parish priest has not at some point faced the same deflation of the idealistic hopes that were the origin of a sense of call into ordained ministry in the first place?

Yet Vanstone relates that one day, in a completely unanticipated revelatory moment that happened while he was merely crossing a street

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Reconnecting to Church

(Continued from previous page)

within the housing estate, he suddenly became aware of the absolute, irreducible necessity of the Church's presence in that very place. His book is an attempt to articulate theologically what he so powerfully discovered existentially in that moment.

His conclusion, as suggested by the book's subtitle, is that the Church is the unique place where the creative love of God is both concretely recognized and where a self-conscious response is made to that love. The response is made in everything the community of the Church does — those practices of faith that range from the most sublime sacred music to the most practical ministries of relief for the poor. "Here, at this level of concrete actuality is the response of recognition to the love of God: here is the work of art, the offering of love, which is the Church." The result is that the tragic sense of defeat and disillusionment we human beings so often feel is transformed through the Church's life by the discovery that love (and only love) ends in triumph as it is "expended in self-giving, being wholly expended, without residue or restraint." Vanstone argues that while the ecclesiastical forms of the Church may participate in this response, the true Church is not limited to these forms, but embraces any human act of recognition and response to the divine love that knows it to be that life force upon which the whole universe depends.

Vanstone's perspective leads to the conclusion that the parish church is the unique site where the biggest idea of all — a universe created by love — is put together with the most mundane of human events, in a reciprocal exchange of love between God and humanity that interprets and gives meaning to the whole. As Vanstone summarizes: "The Church is what man is and does when he recognizes what is happening in the being of the universe." Try that out for a parish mission statement.

Is it possible to embody such an elevated vision of the Church in the quotidian realities of its life? There are several directions in which that question might take us. Although the Episcopal Church within the global Anglican Communion may formally exist as both a national and even international institutional entity, its real life is always emphatically and inescapably congregational. One can imagine the Church functioning without dioceses and bishops (much of it does), but were there no distinct worshiping congregations where people share the sorrows of their life and celebrate its joys as they respond to God's love, the Church could not survive or give expression to the content of the gospel. As a corollary to the centrality of the congregation, one may

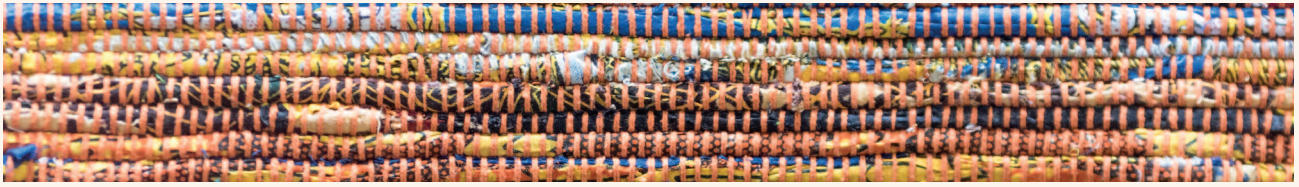
assert that a sane, thoughtful, sacrificial, imaginative, and faithful parish priest is the greatest ministry asset the Church has, a fact that Vanstone visibly embodied.

One implication of this vigorous assertion of the congregational identity of the Church is the critical importance of the local context. For instance, in the state of New Mexico where I now serve, one has to be cognizant of the reality that it is *the poorest* of all 50 states. To give but one illustration of how that local reality impinges on ministry: our outreach team approached two public elementary schools, asking how we could be of service. Expecting that we would be asked for such resources as new computers or library books, we were asked instead to offer basic clothing (socks and underwear) so that the children could come to school.

Ministry in New Mexico also means that to be culturally relevant pastoral leadership has to seek out and embrace the complexity of a minority-majority state in which Hispanic, Native, and Anglo peoples interact in close proximity with one another. The local context cannot merely be taken as a backdrop against which the typical patterns of denominational life are played out. To move beyond those self-limiting preoccupations requires of Church leaders both a genuine curiosity and modesty and an embrace of the freedom that Vanstone regarded as essential to the Church being an "enclave of recognition" of God's love. "Nothing belongs to the Church simply by virtue of its form," he wrote. "Enforced conformity adds nothing to the being of the Church." In short, like Vanstone's commitment to the Lancashire of his origins, a pastor has to have the freedom and passion to respond to the specificity of the Church's local mission: in ministerial terms, one size does not fit all.

I have especially felt the impinging force of the local context in the challenge of preaching in response to repeated recent national crises: the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, for instance, or the high anxiety and cynicism generated by the 2016 national election. In a congregation like the one I serve that identifies itself as "a progressive community of faith," the people look to the sermon both for help in understanding what has happened from a Christian perspective and to be given a way to address the spiritual and justice issues that emerge. Preaching therefore cannot be incidental, but has to be at the very heart of the pastoral relationship and responsibility, laying out the common ground that becomes the setting for the congregation's corporate response.

Living in a border state, our parish community is be-



coming increasingly aware of the complexity of the immigrant and refugee experience, especially since so many people feel directly threatened. In such a moment, preaching can identify and name the human cost of the real situation, and then hold it side by side with Scriptures such as Jesus' parables that demand our engagement. I wrote some years ago about the commonly held

At its heart, ordained ministry is a form of sacrifice: it is less about what one receives from it, and more about what one gives to it.

view that it may be sufficient for pastors simply to show up when necessary. Because, however, the Christ whom we represent comes to us as God's question to all of humanity, probing the limitedness of what we believe in our heart and minds, pastoral leadership requires something more. It means having something to say. Having made the return to the parish, I see this more clearly now than ever.

I also see the absolute necessity of remaining grounded in prayer. Vanstone based his ministry in a tripartite dedication to meditation, sacramental life, and pastoral care — disciplines that, as Sarah Coakley observes, call forth a “painfully purgative faithfulness” and yield a “hidden efficacy” (see “Deepening Practices: Perspectives from Ascetical and Mystical Theology,” in *Practicing Theology* [2002], p. 83). Much of a pastor's true work is hidden in the cultivation of a sufficient depth of interior life to support both the demands of the public exposition of faith and to provide personal reassurance for inevitable private disappointments and discouragements. Vanstone understood that at its heart, ordained ministry is a form of sacrifice: it is less about what one receives from it, and more about what one gives to it. In that regard, he is a bit of an outlier, at least in the well-boundaried terms in which one hears ordained ministry discussed now. (Such a sense of sacrifice is why we now have very few of Vanstone's meticulously crafted sermons: having preached them, he immediately destroyed the texts, since in his estimation a sermon should never be repeated. Each one must be a fresh sacrifice of study, prayer, and creative effort.)

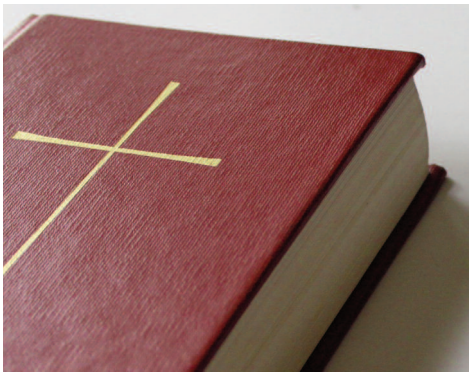
For the sustaining importance of prayer, I am blessed

to be in a parish that has a small cadre of people who gather daily to sing Morning Prayer. Its regular predictability is the most sustaining thing that happens each day. On the morning of the recent election, we conscientiously prayed for the nation and for all those standing for office, knowing that the following day — whatever the outcome — we would be back, at prayer once again. Amid the vicissitudes of human life, the sense of God's changelessness that emerges from such daily repetition of the psalms, lessons, and prayers becomes the source of that long arc of confidence and determination that pastoral ministry ultimately requires.

As I look on my first months back in a parish, I am especially grateful that the transition involved a call to a place that is a bit off the beaten track of the established Episcopal circuit. Thanks to the imaginative leadership of my predecessor, the congregation is one that wears its Episcopal identity rather lightly, and so has a history of being willing to push liturgical and spiritual boundaries in new directions, especially in terms of full inclusion. Rowan Williams once observed that reform in the Church always comes from the fringe rather than the center, and perhaps that is why I find the fringe the most interesting place to be. This conviction has only been reinforced by serving in the era of Pope Francis, who focuses on the Church at the edge, where God's mercy and compassion are most needed and visible.

W.H. Vanstone also occupied a fringe position, choosing to serve in the commonplace housing estates of Lancashire rather than in the prestigious Oxbridge colleges that were eager for his presence. There he struggled with the question of what importance the Church has, when it can seem to make so little difference in the ordinary lives of people in the community. The conclusion he reached, after years of spiritual and intellectual struggle, was that it only has meaning when it is understood as a work of love. Sensing the tragic implications of this understanding, he came to know intimately the sacrificial nature of ministry, the expending of oneself in the service of love, just as Jesus expended himself on the cross. As such, pastoral ministry becomes an end unto itself: “There is,” he observed, “no promotion from the parochial ministry.” Yet as he learned through his experience, only through such aching, spent arms of love is the Church — and the world — sustained and finally brought toward love's final triumph, namely, our responsive recognition of God's love, as love.

The Rev. Joseph Britton is rector of St. Michael & All Angels Church in Albuquerque.



Necessary or Expedient?

A teaching series on prayer book revision

Finding, Not Fixing

By Derek Olsen

I do not know why my cats seem attracted by prayer, but they are. Perhaps it's because my lap will remain in a fixed position for 20 minutes. Maybe it's because they like my fuzzy robe. Maybe there really is an air, an attitude, a spirit of peace and serenity that gathers around those who pray: that feeling you have when you step inside an ancient sanctuary and instantly recognize an odor of holiness, a space sanctified by decades of prayer, the hopes and dreams and anguished breaths clinging to its walls like lingering incense smoke.

I do not know.

But what I do know is that, settling onto the couch for Morning Prayer, coffee cup in one hand, tablet in the other, I inevitably find one or both fuzzy lumps snuggled next to me, purring in my ear from the couch's back, or plopped in my lap.

As a layman in the Episcopal Church, this is my primary point of contact with the Book of Common Prayer and the spirituality that flows from it. Liturgical scholars, who are almost inevitably priests, focus on the sacraments, argue about Baptism and Eucharist, and mess with and shake up the words of Sunday services in the belief that tweaks here or there (or full-on overhauls) will save the church.

Clamor about revising the prayer book inevitably starts here: fix Sunday morning, fix the Church.

I do not see it that way. Yes, I think our church has some problems. Declining attendance, dwindling endowments, diffusion of purpose; these are all things that we should be concerned about. And a big part of the solution to our

problems may well be tied up in the prayer book, but I do not think it's so much a matter of "fixing" as of "finding."

I think we need to find our prayer books and then use them — a lot.

The focus of my research and writing as a biblical scholar is ascetical theology. I am not as interested in what we say we think, that is, in what Christians could or should *think*. I am more interested in what we *do*. If we as Episcopalians say that the Scriptures, the creeds, and the Book of Common Prayer are important to us, what are the daily practices that make this happen? What are the habits with which the Church clothes itself in the mind of Christ?

The 1979 prayer book, like all its predecessors, is intentionally structured with an implicit rule of life. When Archbishop Cranmer and friends compiled and translated the Book of Common Prayer, they were adapting a coherent system of Christian practices that stretched back as far as the second century. The three central components in this system are the Calendar, the pattern of daily prayers regularized as the Daily Office, and the Eucharist. These three elements form the bedrock of our liturgical spirituality as they seek to draw us into the habitual recollection of God.

The 1979 Book of Common Prayer is too often understood as the source for Sunday morning services. It is so much more than that. It has so much more to offer the Church than that. Through the mechanisms of the Calendar, the Office, and the Eucharist, it offers a way for transforming the way that Episcopalians pray, think, and act in the world, grounding us in scriptural, creedal patterns of

Rather than looking for the next Sunday-morning novelty to save us, I see a renewal of the Church bound up with a recovery and recommitment to the patterns we already possess.



engaging our day-to-day being and the people around us. But this will not happen if the books simply occupy pew racks and wait for us to come to them a few times a month.

I do not think we need prayer book revision in the church at this time. I think we need prayer book recovery. I think we need to live the patterns that are there, make them well and widely known, and then get a sense of where we are. In the last few years, I have begun seeing hopeful signs. There has been a resurgence among the laity in praying the Office. To my mind, that's the most critical part of the process: when "non-professional Christians" make Scripture and prayer a regular part of our experience. And yet we are not nearly where we need to be.

So much of the promise of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer has not been grasped. The Offices were simplified, yes. But they have not been taught or encouraged as regularly as they should. Among other items, two important things, new to American prayer books, appeared: a sanctoral Calendar and a Baptismal Covenant. But the intimate relationship between the two has not been broadly understood. The travails of the Calendar going from *Lesser Feasts & Fasts* to *Holy Women, Holy Men* to *A Great Cloud of Witnesses* and back to *Lesser Feasts & Fasts* (which remains the official sanctoral Calendar of the Episcopal Church) make abundantly clear that the church is still at sea on this issue. The majority of the church still fails to grasp Christian sanctity as the expression of a lifelong sacramental path of discipleship grounded in baptism.

Are there some changes I would make to our current Book of Common Prayer if I had the authority to do so? Yes, perhaps. Is the church in peril if the book is not changed? No, it is not. But the church is in peril when we are not praying. At its heart, the purpose of a liturgical system, a liturgical structure, like that of the prayer book is not to shape it to our way of thinking, but to allow it to shape us into its patterns, its rhythms, its witness to the gospel embodied in sacramental actions and daily events.

The theological and scriptural center of the prayer book's Daily Office is the repetition of the Psalms and key canticles. The poetic praise of the Psalms gives us an emotional grammar for talking to God: words and forms for offering praise and rejoicing, but also words of confusion, of pain, of anger. No other liturgical resource offers us such profound models for the praise of God, the giver of all

good gifts, but also for railing at God and pouring out our doubts and frustrations as the Psalms.

For me and for millions of Christians through time who have prayed the Daily Office, our vision of Christian social action is renewed every evening when we pray the Song of Mary ("He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent away empty"). Our understanding of Christian mission and evangelism is reinforced by every morning's Song of Zechariah ("To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace").

When my cats and I settle onto the couch each morning, we may be the only three in the room but nonetheless we are joining the whole Church in prayer. When we share a common pattern of praise, when we open ourselves to be formed and conformed to the ancient words and ways of Scripture, we join the great unceasing chorus that rises hour by hour before the throne of God and the Lamb. I know that my wife will join it when she prays the Office at the parish where she is rector; my girls will join it as we pray the brief hours together. We plug ourselves into the praises of God that feed, nurture, and form the body of Christ.

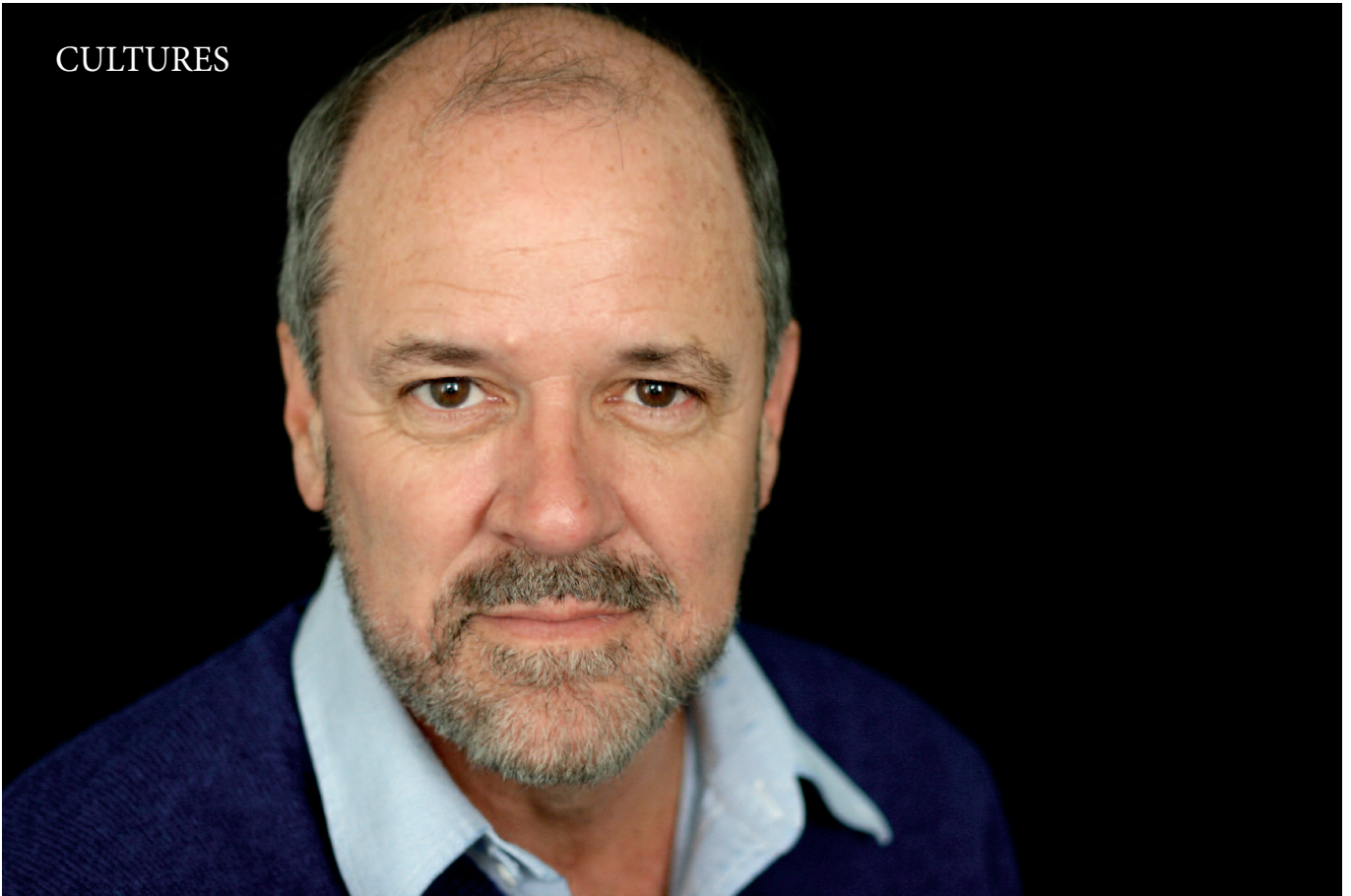
These are the daily actions that will renew the Church.

Rather than looking for the next Sunday-morning novelty to save us, I see a renewal of the Church bound up with a recovery and recommitment to the patterns we already possess. If we cannot inhabit what we already have, how will altering it have any meaningful or measurable effect?

My hope for the church is that we, as a people of prayer, a spiritual temple built of living stones, may become suffused with the odor of holiness. Not of sanctimoniousness, not of self-righteousness, but with the spirit of a people who are both honest and earnest in prayer: who daily offer our joys, our doubts, our disappointments, and our delights as we have been shaped and led by the honest psalms and prayers of our prayer book.

I do not think we need to fix our prayer books: I think we need to find them, and then use them — a lot.

A former member of the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, Derek Olsen is the author of Inwardly Digest: The Prayer Book as Guide to a Spiritual Life.



Bruce Graham: "I go out of my way to shake people up. I like to offend people."

Discomfiting Theater

Playwright Bruce Graham writes in direct language about racism.

By Retta Blaney

More than a decade ago, playwright Bruce Graham read a newspaper feature about a transit bus bound for New York City's Rikers Island Correctional Center. Graham started thinking about the people who rode buses like that to the remote areas where prisons tend to be located. A self-described liberal, the 60-year-old South Philadelphia

native was also pondering ideas about white privilege and "the slavery card," topics he thinks other writers often avoid for fear of being politically incorrect.

Out of his musings came *White Guy on the Bus*, which is staged by Off-Broadway's 59E59 Theaters from March 7 to April 16.

"I usually start with stuff that gets me angry," he said during a telephone interview from his home in

South Philly. "That keeps me out of therapy."

White Guy premiered two years ago in Chicago and has met with successful runs in Denver, Los Angeles, Oakland, and Trenton. Discussions of race have been emphasized in Episcopal parishes around the country in the last couple of years, following incidents of police shootings of unarmed black men and the murder of nine black church members in

Charleston by a white supremacist.

“I’m sad and angry that it’s topical,” Graham said. “I think about things for years and then write the play in a matter of weeks. I’m a fast writer and slow thinker.”

White Guy is set in the present. Times and locations shift, as do the worlds of the five characters: Ray, a wealthy advertising man, and his wife, Roz, an inner-city public school teacher, both white and in their 50s; Christopher, a young man for whom Ray has been a father figure as well as mentor at work, and Molly, Christopher’s wife, both white; and Shatique, a 26-year-old struggling black single mother and nursing-school student who works in an assisted-living facility.

When *White Guy* opened in Chicago, the actress playing Shatique helped Graham develop the dialect and conversation. His students at the inner-city campus of Drexel University in Philadelphia, where he teaches playwriting, offered suggestions and rephrasing to make the play authentic.

When questioned about the appropriateness of giving the character such a black-sounding name, Graham had a question of his own: “What am I going to call her, Linda?” He said there was no black Linda in his classes at Drexel and that he used a former student’s name. Still, “no one in Philly would touch it.”

“The things I think about aren’t said in the theater. Theater has gotten so politically correct. It’s boring. I work in the two most politically correct environments: academia and the theater. I go out of my way to shake people up. I like to offend people.”

Graham doesn’t see *White Guy* as a play about race, but rather about revenge, which is one of the play’s plot twists.

Before the feedback he received

from cast and students, Graham had worked to authenticate the play by riding the bus to Rikers. He was the only white person and one of only two men aboard. All the other riders were women and children of color. He went into the prison to feel what it was like to be a visitor placed in a circle and sniffed by guard dogs. He wanted to experience the smells, sounds, and routines of prison life. “Everything that’s in there, I saw it.”

Graham grew up in a blue-color family in the segregated world of the 1960s in South Philadelphia, a city with a history of racial strife. It was one place where Jackie Robinson encountered a hateful reception. “I saw it everywhere growing up,” Graham said. “Diversity, when it happens organically, is great.”

Graham allows his characters to express ideas some people may find difficult. Ray admits that if he has three equally qualified job candidates — a white man, a black man, and a woman — he wants to hire the white man so he will not be charged with racism or sexism if he has to fire the person. Molly expresses her belief that people prefer to be with their own: “We’re more comfortable on a gut level.”

“I want to hold a mirror up there to make [audience members] uncomfortable,” Graham says. “I love to go to the theater and be surprised.”

What he most hopes, though, is that his audiences will be entertained. “I’m first and foremost a song and dance man,” he said. “I don’t want to be preaching. I want to tell a good story.”

Retta Blaney is an award-winning journalist and author of Working on the Inside: The Spiritual Life Through the Eyes of Actors (Sheed & Ward, 2003).

“I saw it everywhere growing up,” Graham said. “Diversity, when it happens organically, is great.”

Battlefield by Battlefield

Review by Bruce Robison

In his Easter morning sermon on April 7, 1958, the Rev. Samuel Shoemaker, 12th rector of Calvary Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh, stirred up his congregation with a rousing call to expansive mission, declaring that the city “ought to be more famous for God than for steel.”

I am sure it was not what he had in mind, but a half-century later Shoemaker’s Pittsburgh did indeed rise to a Warholesque 15 minutes of national and even international prominence, at least in Anglican ecclesiastical circles, as it became a flashpoint not of evangelistic fervor but of division. The story spread globally when, in October 2008, the diocese met in convention and approved unprecedented (and, within the received view of the Episcopal Church, impossible) amendments to its constitution and canons to enable its withdrawal from the Episcopal Church and to “realign” the diocese in a temporary relationship with the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone of South America.

In the context of similar actions that same year in three other dioceses (Fort Worth, Quincy, and San Joaquin); with rising tensions between the Anglican churches of the Global South and the Episcopal Church, the Anglican Church of Canada, and, increasingly, the Church of England; and with the Bishop of Pittsburgh, the Rt. Rev. Robert W. Duncan, having risen as a leading figure of this movement of “realignment,” Pittsburgh Episcopalians were for a brief season anyway if not “more famous than steel,” then at least *in the news*.

It is too soon now, not even a decade after that convention, to say that the dust has settled here in Pittsburgh, or in the Episcopal Church. Indeed, much remains unresolved both about the consequences of this ecclesiastical separation — some would say “schism” — and about the issues that motivated it.

Nonetheless, it seems clear even now that any future account of the story of 21st-century Anglican life will need to address in some measure what happened in Pittsburgh.

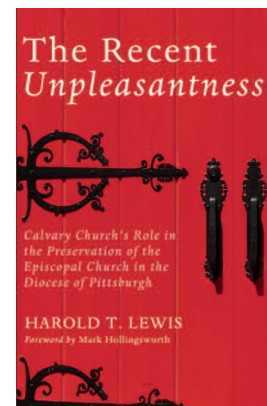
Two books published in 2015, the first by Sam Shoemaker’s successor, the Rev. Harold T. Lewis, 15th rector of Calvary Church, and the second by the Rev. Christopher Craig Brittain, a priest of the Scottish Episcopal Church and professor of social and political theology at the University of Aberdeen, make significant contributions to telling this Pittsburgh story.

Lewis’s *Recent Unpleasantness* is something of a field general’s wartime memoir, and given his perspective the title’s allusion to the American Civil War seems especially apt.

The centerpiece of the story is the lawsuit that Lewis and the wardens and vestry of Calvary Church filed in the fall of 2003 to seek the court’s protection of diocesan assets when it appeared to them that the bishop and canonical bodies of the diocese, reacting to General Convention’s consent to the election of V. Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire, were developing plans to separate from the Episcopal Church.

Lewis frames the account of “the Calvary Lawsuit” first by providing some backstory, beginning briefly with a history of rising tensions between the conservative leadership of the Pittsburgh diocese and the more liberal leadership of the Episcopal Church through the 1990s. He offers additional commentary on the evangelical leadership of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, located in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, and the increasingly engaged voices of leaders from the Anglican Global South.

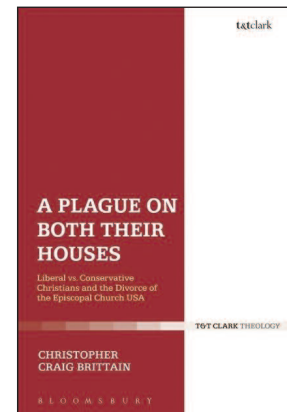
Lewis maps a gathering storm of tensions in the months after General Convention in 2003. He follows the ups and downs of increasingly polar-



The Recent Unpleasantness

Calvary Church’s Role in the Preservation of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Pittsburgh

By Harold Lewis. Wipf and Stock. Pp. 132. \$18



A Plague on Both Their Houses

Liberal vs. Conservative Christians and the Divorce of the Episcopal Church USA

By Christopher Craig Brittain.

Bloomsbury T&T Clark.

Pp. 280. \$114; \$85.99 eBook

ized diocesan life, including a detailed account of the diocese’s special convention in the fall of 2003. Resolutions at that special convention condemned the General Convention and authorized diocesan leadership to seek relief from authorities beyond the Episcopal Church in the Anglican Communion. They specifically denied the force of the Dennis Canon, which states that all parish and diocesan assets are held in trust for the Episcopal Church.

Lewis calls the passage of these reso-

I mentioned to many of my Diocese of Pittsburgh colleagues and friends that I had been reading these books. The response was extremely cautious.

lutions “a game changer” and quotes his contemporaneous comment in Calvary Church’s newsletter: “Let us make one thing abundantly clear. We are no longer talking about sex, sexuality or homosexuality. We are talking about the authority and governance of the church.”

Lewis then recounts the diocesan story between 2003 and 2008, “battlefield by battlefield,” often with incisive observation, recalling in detail convention resolutions, open letters and public statements, public and secret alliances and advocacy groups, the connection of Pittsburgh to other dissenting Episcopal dioceses, the role of more progressive groups within and beyond the diocese, and the deposition of Bishop Duncan by Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori.

The “Calvary Lawsuit” was settled in 2005, long before the 2008 division, with an agreement between Calvary and Bishop Duncan and the canonical bodies of the diocese that all diocesan assets would remain under the control of “the Diocese of Pittsburgh of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America.” The latter section of Lewis’s memoir recounts the unsuccessful legal appeals to the enforcement of this stipulation by the leadership of what was already informally being called “the Anglican Diocese” in the years following 2008. He concludes with a very interesting reflection on the legal and ecclesiological concerns that guided the course of the litigation and on some of the subsequent events and characters involved in the reorganization of the Episcopal diocese after 2008.

Lewis’s “battlefield” memoir is written from the unique vantage point of one of the central figures of the events. No one can tell the story quite the way he does. If it is often an opinionated and one-sided view, then we will simply need to wait for a counterbalancing volume by one or more of the players on the other side.

Christopher Brittain, unlike Lewis, is an observer without a dog in the hunt. He’s not from Pittsburgh, he’s not an Episcopalian, and his *Plague on Both Their Houses* is much more interested in exploring deeper motivations and wider context than in the sorties and stratagems of heroes and villains. He wants to know what was happening in the hearts and minds of those involved, both leaders and people in the pews, and how that affected the relationships that constitute the fabric of congregational and diocesan life.

Brittain begins his study by acknowledging the intensifying polarization of American society in what some have called a Culture War between liberals and conservatives across a spectrum of social and political platforms and several hot-button issues. As one sociologist told him as he began this study of the Pittsburgh division, “it’s simply the Episcopal Church’s turn.”

But Brittain does not accept it as so simple. Some of those polarizing issues and tensions were certainly in play in Pittsburgh, but he is interested to understand instead “how particular [Episcopal] congregations account for

the conflicts in their church” and how “they describe themselves, as well as their opponents.”

Brittain sets out first “to diagnose the situation ... by listening attentively to the voices of clergy and laypeople who are trying to navigate these troubled ecclesial waters.” This to me is the richest part, and the major contribution, of Brittain’s work, as he presents the extended accounts and reflections of clergy and laity on both sides of the Pittsburgh divide in their own words. As we hear these voices, we come to recognize a story filled with nuance and sensitivity, loyalties and convictions, pain and loss — and through it all a sense of deep Christian character. We gain appreciation as well for Brittain’s choice of the word *divorce* to describe what happened in Pittsburgh. It perhaps plumbs more deeply the personal, familial, and spiritual dimensions of the division than would a more formal, ecclesiastically colored word like *schism*.

Brittain also explores “sociological and theological literature on the nature of church conflict,” noting how the specific catalysts of theological differences in Pittsburgh set in motion patterns of conflict that may have had deeper social and historical roots. I am glad to see that Brittain takes account of historian Jeremy Bonner’s thesis — in *Called out of Darkness into Marvelous Light: A History of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, 1750-2006* (Wipf and Stock, 2009) — that at least some

(Continued on next page)

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(Continued from previous page)

stress of the early 2000s had its origin in the energetic post-war era missionary work of Pittsburgh Bishop Austin Pardue. Along with associates like Sam Shoemaker, Bishop Pardue worked to build stronger ecumenical alliances with non-Episcopalian evangelical church leaders and parachurch organizations and to found or expand congregations in the ethnic, traditionally Roman Catholic regions of the wider Steel Valley region. Brittain describes how communication via platforms of new media — weblogs, social networking sites, email lists — served as a volatile accelerant once the fires of conflict began to burn.

As he assesses the nuanced and sometimes contradictory experiences and perspectives of the people he interviewed in Pittsburgh and their congregations, Brittain concludes that “Christians would do well to forgo falling into the trap of conceiving of the current divides in the church in essentialist terms.” He notes that when leaders focus only on “the emotional intensities that arise in the heat of battle,” when they do not “leave room for respect to be found in one’s opponent” and “fail to be alert to the underlying structural issues that are likely enabling the conflict,” then “any solutions proposed to the dilemma are likely to fall short of the target.”

In recent months I mentioned to many of my Diocese of Pittsburgh colleagues and friends that I had been reading these books. The response was extremely cautious: a few questions about the tone or perspective of the authors’ approaches, but with little interest in a more extensive conversation. Perhaps the experience is too fresh for that, some wounds not fully healed. Nonetheless, I think both books will be useful in the long run as case studies for those seeking a better understanding of this era of change in the Anglican and wider Christian world.

The Rev. Bruce Robison is rector of St. Andrew’s Church, Highland Park, Pittsburgh.

A Grief Relived

Review by Edward Henderson

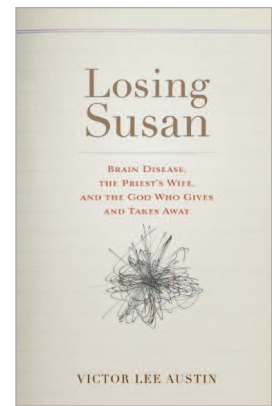
Victor Lee Austin’s *Losing Susan*, his first “post-Susan work,” is both a memoir processing his grief and a beautiful piece of bottom-up non-technical theology. Its melding of theological thinking with his experience of loss makes *Losing Susan* generally helpful but especially so to sufferers, caregivers, and pastoral counselors. I can see it in a college or seminary classroom, and for me it was good for prayer at a silent retreat.

Austin makes us appreciate his loss by telling us about Susan: her love of children, her commitment to the sanctity of life, her use of crafts to bring the Church’s liturgy to life in their home. He shows her creative intelligence by including brief instances of her writing on abortion and makes one of her unpublished stories the epilogue of the book. (It’s a story that deserves to be illustrated for children and published.)

But Austin’s main objective is to work through losing Susan. He tells us about her brain cancer and the resulting post-treatment white-matter disease that caused her slowly to slip away from him. This he does unsentimentally and with a light touch that still makes the reader feel his pain and his regret for becoming at times impatient, frustrated, and even angry with her — all understandable as he had to carry on his duties as priest, teacher, and theologian while taking over her executive function and tending to her most basic bodily needs.

His experience makes him bridle at a comment made in a discussion group and that we all have likely heard: “If we just trust God and pray, all will be good.” So strongly does Austin disabuse us of that understanding of the life of faith that he almost makes us think he is giving suffering and death the last word.

Austin brings the theological wisdom of the ages to bear, laying out three “takes” on why the God who is Love might give us a world containing evil. These three



Losing Susan

Brain Disease, The Priest’s Wife, and the God Who Gives and Takes Away

By Victor Lee Austin. Brazos Press. Pp. 160. \$19.99

approaches are like Job’s three friends. They fail to explain evil in a way that absolves God of responsibility for it. Their failure brings Austin to the “mind-blowing, confidence shattering, vertiginously terrifying” conclusion: God cannot be let off the hook for the reality of evil.

God is surpassingly “strange” because he is not one of the components of the world. Rather, God is the creator of the world; without God’s decision to create and to create the kind of world we in fact have, there would be no evil, no death, no suffering. After the philosophers and theologians have done their best to explain evil and to exonerate God, there remains some sense in which God is the “cause” of evil, of Austin’s own evil, of his loss of Susan.

But wait! Right smack in the middle of his sadness and suffering, Austin experiences joy in the most unglamorous part of his caring for Susan. “I would weep. I would be angry. I would pace the floor. *But there was joy in my bones.* ... I learned that I could clean Susan’s body and feel joy.” Furthermore, it was a transcendent and transcending joy, a joy that “wraps around both of us and lifts us up, in the midst of such a mundane human thing as caring for one another’s corporeality — lifts us up to the heights, to the heart of joy.”

So it is that Austin’s experience leads him away from theological explanations

of evil to the presence and action of God, which is the uniquely Christian “answer” to evil. As Austin Farrer put it, “God does not give us explanations; God gives up a Son.”

Austin goes, then, from the experience of joy in the midst of pain to the story of God’s Son and his suffering. Jesus goes all the way down to hell, where the Father is not. When we grasp the beauty of the bloodied and abused Jesus who did not strike back, the life of faith can begin. As Job, Austin says, was changed by his suffering and made able to give and receive love and enjoy community as he could not before his loss, so we may, by the experience of suffering and the reality of death, receive the hope of the resurrection, lay down the cross of suffering, and enter on the new adventure of life. Austin now envisions Susan on that new adventure of coming “further up and further in,” as C.S. Lewis describes it at the end of *The Last Battle*. Evil does not get the last word; the resurrection of the bloodied and suffering Jesus does.

Early on Austin discusses the centrality of death in the Eucharist and in the eternally enacted love that is the life of the Trinity. Perhaps I take too much liberty with his comments, but they suggest to me a trinitarian development. Death is an essential part of love because love is giving oneself away, dying for the sake of the beloved. When one’s desire is for the beloved’s good, then the realization of that good brings joy to the giver. In the life of the Trinity, the deaths of the three divine persons in their eternal giving of each to the other will at the same time be eternal receiving and joy. Austin’s experience of joy even in the pain of his life makes it possible to imagine and to hope that, going further up and further in, one may find one’s joy completed in the heart of God. Then, we may reasonably hope, we will live the dying that is essential in love’s dynamic but will know it not as the loss it must be under the conditions of our present life, but as gain.

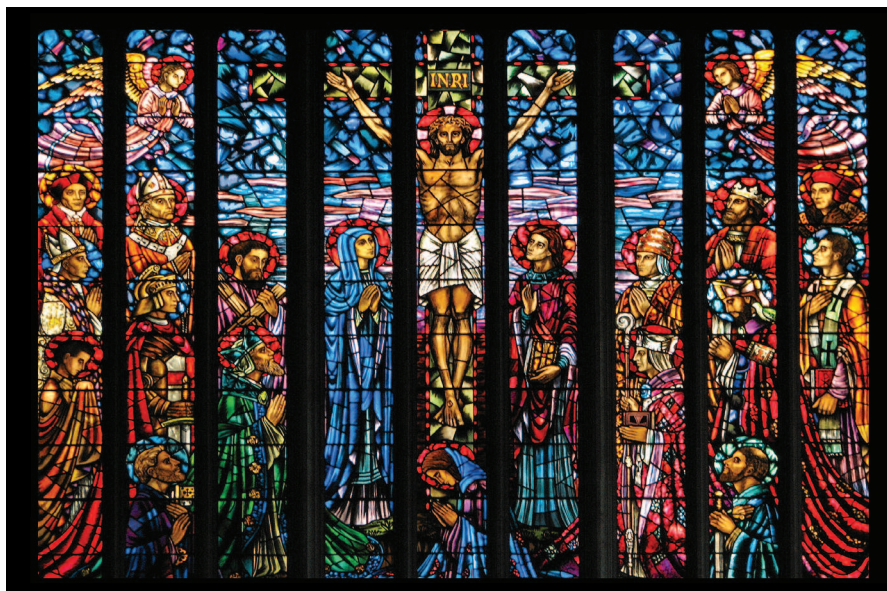
I cannot begin to give the reader a sense of how exhilarating Austin’s last 50 pages are. They are to be experienced, not written about. But joy does not

negate the reality of suffering, just as the resurrection does not negate the horror of the crucifixion. I am more willing than Austin to speculate about why evil happens in God’s world, and to think that God stands back from or chooses to be affected by creation in order to let his creatures be themselves.

On the other hand, I am less willing than Austin to speak as though God “causes” such evils as Susan’s disease and death, though Austin does give some sense that *cause* might not be the best

word, and he says that in the crucifixion, the Father “pulled back.” Minor disagreements being what they may, Austin has focused our attention properly: not on the eloquent wisdom of philosophers and theologians but on the action of God to share and overcome our suffering.

Edward Henderson is professor emeritus of philosophy, Louisiana State University, and coauthor with Margaret Cupit of Why, God? Suffering through Cancer into Faith (Resource Publications, 2015).



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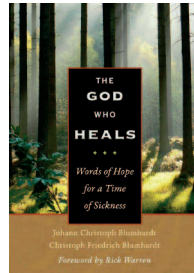
Reviews by Leander Harding

The God Who Heals

Words of Hope for a Time of Sickness

By **Johann Christoph Blumhardt** and **Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt**. Edited by **Charles E. Moore**.
Plough Publishing House. Pp. 208. \$18

This little book is an exquisite spiritual classic from the tradition of Lutheran pietism. It was previously unknown to me and I count the opportunity to review this book as a providential blessing. The book is a collection of short meditations for those who are facing illness. The authors are a father and son who had together a famous healing ministry.



Johann, the father, died in 1880 and Christoph, his son, in 1920. Their ministry was in the Black Forest region of Germany in a remote rural location. Johann began his ministry with a two-year battle of prayer for the healing of a local woman who was beset with physical and mental illness. Johann believed she was attacked by demonic forces.

At the end of this intense struggle she was returned to health. Her healing provoked a spiritual renewal in the whole community. "Almost overnight, the town of Mottlingen was swept up in an unprecedented movement of repentance and renewal. Stolen property was returned, broken marriages restored, enemies reconciled, alcoholics cured, and sick people healed. An entire village experienced what life could be like when God was free to rule. Jesus was the victor" (p. xvii). Christoph continued his father's ministry and expanded the work.

These meditations are marked by a sure confidence in the goodness of God and human beings' great need to repent of their sins and to turn to God with all their hearts. This turning to

God was the true and lasting healing that the Blumhardts sought. Even an intractable illness might be the gateway to a more profound healing if it leads to deeper repentance and a greater trust and dependence on God.

The writing is simple, straight from the heart of a consecrated pastor, and full of the most winning tenderness and concern. The words of the Blumhardts are filled with hope. This is a book that pastors will treasure for their devotions and that can be given with confidence to those who suffer.

Fifteen Steps Out of Darkness

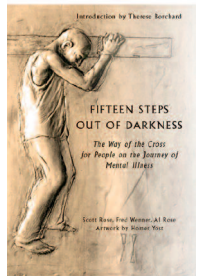
The Way of the Cross for People on the Journey of Mental Illness

By **Scott Rose**, **Fred Wenner**, and **Al Rose**.
Orbis Books. Pp. 144. \$18

This is an inspiring book written collaboratively by three people of faith who have spent their lives in service to people with severe mental illness. The authors share vignettes from their ministry in the form of meditations on the stations of the cross. The stories are moving and well told. They tell stories of Christian love in action and of the dignity and courage of those who suffer from mental illness.

The book is designed and marketed as a resource for people who are suffering from mental illness. In my view, the book does not work as designed. Based on my experience with a family member under severe mental distress, I would hesitate to give this book to a sufferer or family member as a spiritual resource. Compelling as these stories are, they are written from the standpoint of the clinical observer and not of a fellow sufferer.

In my experience, most people who suffer from severe mental illness would



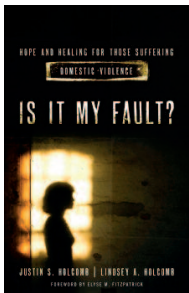
feel they were being talked about rather than talked to. I think this book is more for clergy and other helpers who want insight into what working in this world is like than it is for sufferers and their families.

Is It My Fault?

Hope and Healing for Those Suffering Domestic Violence

By **Justin S. Holcomb** and **Lindsey A. Holcomb**.
Moody Publishers. Pp. 227. \$14.99

This is a comprehensive resource on domestic violence by a husband-and-wife team with long experience working with victims of abuse and with congregations that want to be responsive to this pervasive problem. The authors help a woman understand what abuse looks like and that she is being abused if she feels fear and intimidation, even if physical violence is absent or rare.



They also do a good job of debunking readings of the Bible that rationalize abuse or encourage women to stay in abusive relationships. There are careful explanations of how women can find help and how pastors and congregations can help. The Holcombs provide moving meditations on the psalms as an aid for victims of abuse to give words to the prayers of their hearts. This book integrates very well psychological, sociological, and theological perspectives on domestic violence.

Bearing the Unbearable

Trauma, Gospel, and Pastoral Care

By **Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger**.
Eerdmans. Pp. 179. \$20

This is an important book in pastoral theology. Pastoral theology has the task of bringing doctrines and dogmas to life in the pastoral practice of the Church. This requires a vigorous engagement with other disciplines of knowledge that seek to further the well-being of humanity,

including the social sciences.

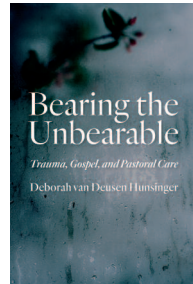
The pastoral theologian should particularly employ psychology without allowing the social scientific tail to wag the theological dog. Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger is deeply informed by a wide reading of groundbreaking research in the psychology and therapy of trauma but does not lose her grip on a robust, Reformed understanding of the cross. Indeed, she identifies Jesus as the one able to bear the unbearable and bear it away.

We have passed through a time when a simple biochemical determinism was the preferred paradigm for understanding serious mental distress such as depression, substance abuse, or psychosis. Researchers are coming to realize that heretofore invisible trauma is at the root of intractable personal and social dysfunction.

Hunsinger has kept up with these developments, and integrates them into a theological perspective that informs the practice of pastors and congregations. There is a fascinating chapter on how congregations can use the insights of the emerging field of “restorative practice,” to create restorative congregations.

It is something of an embarrassment that the Church, which God has entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation, has forgotten its accumulated wisdom for healing trauma and reconciling differences. Hunsinger helps us remember the Church’s wisdom about healing and reconciliation and helps us see how that wisdom is echoed and enriched by the experience of contemporary researchers and therapists. I sometimes teach a seminary course on pastoral leadership, and I will add this book to the syllabus.

The Ven. Leander S. Harding is rector of St. Luke’s Church, Catskill, New York, and becomes dean of the Cathedral of All Saints, Albany, on Palm Sunday.



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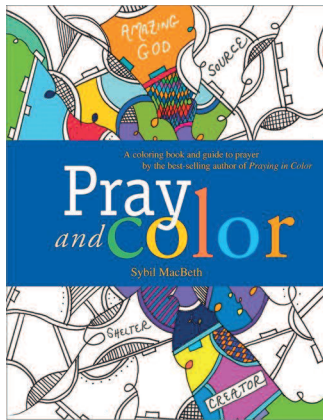
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Pray and Color

A Coloring Book and Guide to Prayer
By Sybil MacBeth. Paraclete. Pp. 96 pages. \$14.99

This book is for people who “like to color,” “struggle with prayer,” “want the freedom not to have to create something new,” and “are curious” (p. 4). If the current popularity of adult coloring books is any sign, you probably know somebody for this book. Sybil MacBeth’s first coloring book for adults, *Praying in Color: Drawing a New Path to God* (2007), was very successful.

This book may boast plenty of currency and appeal, but do not dismiss it as merely trendy. The basic point of approaching prayer through coloring and doodling seems to me very insightful and plausible:

Coloring as a spiritual practice provides a segue between the fast, continuous movement of my normal life and a slow, contemplative pace. The delight of choosing and using colors, the motion of my hand on paper, and the focus of my eyes on the work in progress give me something to *do* while I transition from high speed to zero, from busyness to stillness. Since chronic *doing* is the norm for most of us, coloring can be a bridge to an island of inner quiet. (p. 5)

This “guide to prayer” is not unstructured or undirected. Chapter Five — “Ways to Pray” — is a primer and offers a catalogue of prayers. Each entry explains one type — intercessory prayer, for example —

and offers a set of instructions, a how-to, for praying that way with markers and crayons. Accordingly, the coloring pages can serve as guided exercises.

To some, doodling prayer might seem too undetermined: “Write your name for God” is a common first step in these instructions. But the open-endedness of this approach is more personal than uncommitted. The guided exercises in *Pray and Color* are clearly related to biblical forms of prayer. MacBeth’s primer includes “praying a passage of Scripture,” and her explanations enumerate a whole range of different types that might have been lifted from the Psalms: “disgruntled prayers,” “adoration or praise prayers,” “gratitude or grunted prayers” (pp. 15-27).

MacBeth’s catalog includes “praying for your enemies” (pp. 22-23). What can be more specifically Christian than that, which rests on the singular command of our Lord’s “But I say”? St. Silouan the Athonite saw in “love for our enemies” the culmination of Christian theology because it signifies the gracious and transformative presence of the Holy Spirit. Without grace, it is impossible to love one’s enemies. Is it ever easy?

Pray and Color might not be for everyone, but I suspect that its exercises would benefit many people. How often or well do you really pray for your enemies? Would your prayer make a rich and differentiated chapter? Who could not use a little direction or nudge?

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PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

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The Rev. **José Juan Bernal** is rector of St. Christopher's, 300 Riverside Dr., El Paso, TX 79915.

Tory Blum is coordinator of youth ministry in the Diocese of Central New York, 1020 7th North St., Ste. 200, Liverpool, NY 13088.

The Rev. **Kathy Boeschstein** is vicar of Holy Trinity, 240 Rio Grande Ave., Raton, NM 87740.

The Rev. **Scott Jeffrey Brown** is headmaster of TMI-The Episcopal School of Texas, 20955 W. Tejas Trail, San Antonio, TX 78257.

The Rev. **Lydia Bucklin** is a consulting priest for St. Paul's, 22 Dillman Dr., Council Bluffs, IA 51503, and continues as the Diocese of Iowa's young adult missionary.

The Rev. **Mark Collins** is rector of All Saints', 40 Central Ave., Glen Rock, NJ 07452.

The Rev. **Alan Cowart** is rector of Grace Memorial, 1021 New Hampshire Ave., Lynchburg, VA 24502.

Courtney V. Cowart is executive director of the Society for the Increase of Ministry, 120 Sigourney St., Hartford, CT 06105.

The Rev. **Marcus Cunningham** is rector of St. Peter's, 217 Houston St., Ripon, WI 54971, and St. Mary's Chapel, N2616 Bugh's Lake Rd., Wautoma WI 54982.

The Rev. **Jim Dannals** is interim rector of Transfiguration, 72 Charles St, Saluda, NC 28773.

The Rev. **Robert Davenport** is priest-in-charge of Trinity, 500 Court St., Portsmouth, VA 23704.

The Rev. **Robin D. Dodge** is rector of Holy Faith, 311 E. Palace Ave., Santa Fe, NM 87501.

The Rev. Canon **Kathy Dunagan** is canon for wellness and safe church ministries in the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, 1002 First St., Roanoke, VA 24016.

The Rev. **Bonnie E. Edwards** is rector of San Gabriel the Archangel, 4908B Corrales Road N.W., Corrales, NM 87048.

The Rev. **Anne Ellsworth** is an assisting priest for family and children's ministries at St. James, 975 E. Warner Rd., Tempe, AZ 85284.

The Rev. **Phillip Ellsworth** is rector of St. Stephen's, 3 Bayview Ave., Belvedere, CA 94920.

The Rev. **David M. Faulkner** is rector of Good Shepherd, 200 W. College St., Terrell, TX US 75160.

The Rev. **Tim Fountain** is missionary of support in the Diocese of South Dakota, 408 N. Jefferson Ave., Pierre, SD 57501.

The Rev. Canon **Mark Furlow** is chief operating officer of the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, 1002 First St. S.W., Roanoke, VA 24016.

The Rev. **Jeremiah C. Griffin** is rector of St. Chad's, 7171 Tennyson St. N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87122.

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The Rev. Canon **Connor B. Gwin** is canon for social engagement and Christian formation in the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, 1002 First St., Roanoke, VA 24016.

The Rev. **Natalie Gessert Hall**, an ELCA pastor, is canon for evangelism and faith formation in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, 325 Oliver Ave., Ste. 300, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

The Rev. **John Hamilton** is rector of St. Elizabeth's, 1188 Hamp Mill Rd., Dahlonga, GA 30533.

The Rev. Canon **Jonathan Harris** is diocesan transition minister for the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, 1002 First St. S.W., Roanoke, VA 24016.

Matt Hartley is lay chaplain at the University of North Florida, 400 San Juan Dr., Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082.

The Rev. **Bruce Heyvaert** is rector of St. Thomas, 312 N. Steele St., Sanford, NC 27330.

Stephanie Higgins is development officer for the Diocese of Virginia, 110 West Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23220.

Beverly Hurley Hill is canon for mission and lay ministry in the Diocese of East Tennessee, 814 Episcopal School Way, Knoxville, TN 37932.

The Rev. **J. Mark Holland** is rector of All Saints', 601 W. Main St., Morristown, TN 37814.

The Rev. **Raisin Horn** is rector of Christ Church, 2100 N. 2nd St., Clinton, IA 52732.

The Rev. **Kay Jennings** is vicar of St. James, 510 N. Sixth St., Alpine, TX 79831.

The Rev. **Nancy Turner Jones** is rector of St. Barnabas, 10345 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, OH 45242.

Canon **Phyllis Jones** is chief operating officer of the Diocese of New Jersey, 808 W. State St., Trenton, NJ 08618.

The Rev. Deacon **Craig Klein** is dean of community college programs at Rio Grande Community College, P.O. Box 500, Rio Grande, OH 45674.

The Rev. **Michael Koehler** is assistant rector of St. Luke's, 11 St. Luke's Lane, San Antonio, TX 78209.

The Rev. **Philip F. Kunder** is interim rector of New Life, 13118 Church Ave. N.W., Uniontown, OH 44685.

The Rev. **Watson Lamb** is chaplain at Chapel of the Holy Spirit, 1100 Broadway St., New Orleans, LA 70118.

Pat LeBeau is missionary for property in the Diocese of South Dakota, 408 N. Jefferson Ave., Pierre, SD 57501.

The Rev. **Scott Lee** is rector of St. Barnabas, 3257 Post Rd, Warwick, RI 02886.

The Rev. **Philip Linder** is priest-in-charge of St. Mark's, 16 Thomas St., Charleston, SC 29403.

The Rev. **Marjorie Lindstrom** is priest-in-residence at St. Matthew's, 167 Spring Valley

(Continued on next page)



The Diocese of Utah

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Bishop Tuttle arrived 150 years ago facing miners without medical care, children without schooling, and a vast diocese reaching from Utah to the Canadian border. Today, we continue to strive for justice and peace and seek and serve Christ in all persons. We own five senior residential complexes where people can live out their lives in dignity, we support after-school programs with hundreds of children, a free clinic, free lunches, and medical assistance for hundreds. Our congregations are communities of acceptance where all people are welcomed as God's children made in the image of God. In the Diocese of Utah, Christ's love is proclaimed and lived out in concrete ways.



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The Diocese of West Texas is celebrating its first election of a woman as a suffragan bishop (see p. 12). The choice of the Rev.

Jennifer Brooke-Davidson emerges from our tradition of electing our bishops from within the diocese. And it is grounded in our diocese's core values:

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The Diocese of Louisiana

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Amazing things are happening in the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana. People are working together in bold and courageous ways to serve Jesus and proclaim the Good News.

- Congregations share resources and collaborate with one another in

unprecedented ways.

- The diocese has significantly improved the way that future clergy are financially supported.

- Parochial and diocesan schools transform communities on both a local and global scale.

- Diocesan-wide education offerings and congregational development opportunities have increased substantially.

New programs and ministries are on the horizon. We are proud of our common life and believe that the future holds opportunities awaiting capture.



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PEOPLE & PLACES

(Continued from previous page)

Rd., Paramus, NJ 07652.

The Rev. **Dana Lockhart** is rector of St. John's, 210 N Main St., Versailles, KY 40383.

The Rev. **Jack Lynch** is Hispanic missionary at Iglesia San Jorge, 12 Clinton St., Central Falls, RI 02863.

The Rev. **Earl Mahan** is priest-in-charge of St. Luke's, 444 Brightfield Trail, Manchester, MO 63021.

The Rev. **Ramelle McCall** is urban missioner for West Baltimore and priest-in-charge at Holy Trinity, 2300 W. Lafayette Ave., Baltimore, MD 21226.

The Rev. **Beverly Moore-Tasy** is vicar of St. Christopher's, 207 E. Permian Dr., Hobbs, NM 88240.

The Rev. **Robert Corin Morris** is interim rector of St. Peter's, 271 Roseland Ave., Essex Falls, NJ 07021.

The Rev. **Curt Norman** is rector of St. John's, 123 N. Michigan Ave., Saginaw, MI 48602.

The Rev. **Christina O'Hara** is rector of Good Shepherd, 2707 W. 33rd St., Sioux Falls, SD 57105.

The Rev. **Kevin Olds** is rector of St. Timothy's on the Hill, 4670 Congress St., Fairfield, CT 06824.

The Rev. **Lynn D. Orville** is rector of St. Andrew's by-the-Sea, 182 Willow Ave. (P.O. Box 491), Little Compton, RI 02837

The Rev. **William P. Peyton** is rector of St. Paul's Memorial, 1700 University Ave, Charlottesville, VA 22903.

The Rev. **Jason M. Prati** is rector of All Saints, 5101 Johnstown Road (P.O. Box 421), New Albany, OH 43054.

The Rev. **Anthony Puca** is rector of Grace, 9 Harrington Ave., Westwood, NJ 07675, and youth minister at St. Peter's, 271 Roseland Ave., Essex Falls, NJ 07021.

The Rev. Canon **Raymond Raney** is canon to the ordinary, Diocese of the Rio Grande, 6400 Coors Blvd. N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87120.

The Rev. **Joslyn Ogden Schaefer** is rector of Grace Church in the Mountains, 394 N. Haywood St., Waynesville, NC 28786.

The Rev. Canon **Carrie Schofield-Broadbent** is canon for transition and church development in the Diocese of Central New York, 1020 7th North St., Ste. 200, Liverpool, NY 13088.

The Rev. **Doug Sharf** is rector of Good Shepherd, 400 Seabrook Rd., Tequesta, FL 33469.

The Rev. **Scott Slater** is vicar-in-charge of Holy Covenant, 5657 The Alameda, Baltimore, MD 21239.

The Rev. **Patrick Soule** is middle school chaplain at TMI-The Episcopal School of Texas, 20955 W. Tejas Trail, San Antonio, TX 78257.

The Rev. Canon **Mike Stephenson** is priest-in-charge of St. Philip's, 516 McLish St., Ardmore, OK 73401.

The Rev. **Ronnie Stout-Kopp** is interim rector of Holy Trinity, 326 Hillside Ave., Hillsdale, NJ 07642.

The Rev. **Thomas Townsend** is priest-in-charge of Holy Nativity, 615 Mallery St., Saint Simons Island, GA 31522.

The Rev. **Brian Turner** is vicar of Blessed Redeemer, 1225 Degroodt Rd. S.W., Palm Bay, FL 32908.

The Rev. **David Vickers** is priest-in-charge of Blue Water Church, a mission of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan that unites St. Mark's, Marine City; All Saints, Marysville; and St. Paul's, St. Clair.

The Rev. **Kevin VonGonten** is rector of St. Paul's, 422 Market St., Camden NJ 08102.

Tanja Wadsworth is executive director of Solomon Episcopal Conference Center, 54296 Hwy. 445, Loranger, LA 70446.

The Rev. **Meg Wagner** is consulting priest in partnership with Trinity Church, 204 E 5th St., Ottumwa, IA 52501, and remains the Diocese of Iowa's communications coordinator.

The Rev. **Geoff Ward** is rector of St. Christopher's, 7845 N. River Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53217.

The Rev. **Harry Way** is interim rector of All Saints of the Desert, 9502 W. Hutton Dr., Sun City, AZ 85351.

The Rev. **Hal Weidman** is rector of St. Andrew's, 910 Soo San Dr., Rapid City, SD 57702.

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Ordinations

Deacons

Long Island — Terrence Buckley, Morgan Mercer Ladd, Matthew Moore, Pauline Samuel, and Stephen Tamke

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Western New York — Susan Firestone and Diana Leiker

Priests

Northwest Texas — Christian Rabone
Pittsburgh — Joseph Paul Baird
Rio Grande — Susan Hutchins, vicar of St. Luke's, 419 W. Spruce St., Deming, NM 88031.

Southwest Florida — Richard T. Earle and Jerry Earl Sather

Texas — Lecia Diaz Brannon and Stephanie Patterson Moncrieff, minister of pastoral care and young adults at Trinity, 3401 Bellaire Dr. S., Fort Worth, TX 76109

Utah — Charles Henry Knuth

Retirements

The Rev. **James Bocchino**, as priest-in-charge of St. Barnabas, Warwick, RI

The Rev. **Bob Burton**, as rector of All Saints of the Desert, Sun City, AZ

The Rev. Canon **Carmen Guerrero**, as vicar of Santa Maria, Phoenix, AZ

The Rev. **John Kapp**, as deacon of Christ

the King, Tucson, AZ

The Rev. **Don Matthews**, as rector of Grace Church, Elmira, NY

The Rev. **Martie Metzler**, as rector of Emmanuel, Webster Groves, MO

The Rev. **Cordelia Red Owl**, as priest at Pine Ridge Mission, SD

Deaths

The Rev. **Stephen Ankudowich** died on Nov. 28 from complications of throat cancer. He was 68.

A native of Northampton, MA, he was a graduate of Trinity College and Episcopal Theological School. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1974. He served congregations in Connecticut, Florida, and Massachusetts.

He was an ardent sports fan and he loved opera. On many a Saturday he would watch football or baseball with the television sound muted while listening to a live performance of New York's Metropolitan Opera.

Fr. Ankudowich is survived by his wife, Denise; a son, Michael; and two daughters, Elizabeth and Alexandra.

The Rev. **Floyd William Brewer**, who worked in the computer field for much of his lay career, died Dec. 2. He was 85.

A native of Chattanooga, TN, in 1931, he was a graduate of the University of Florida and the University of the South in 1996. He was ordained deacon in 1996 and priest in 1997. He served congregations in Tampa and Palm Harbor. In his retirement, he served the Diocese of Tennessee as a chaplain for retirement homes.

He and his second wife, the late Anne Blake Brewer, married Feb. 5, 1989.

Fr. Brewer is survived by daughters Beverly Brewer Mahan and Kelley Brewer O'Brien; a son, Floyd "Bo" Brewer III; four grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

The Rev. **Charles D. "Pete" Cooper**, a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, died on Dec. 7. He was 72.

A native of Lancaster, SC, he was a graduate of the Citadel, Furman University, and the University of the South. He was ordained priest in 1981.

He served several parishes in South Carolina, retiring as rector of St. John's Church, Florence, after 20 years. He was interim rector Church of the Ascension in Hagood until his death.

Fr. Cooper is survived by his wife of 47 years, Elizabeth Blair Blackwell Cooper; a son, Gordon Wade Cooper; daughters Ashley Blair Cooper Scott and Elizabeth Lyles Cooper Lyles; six grandchildren; a sister, Beki Crogan; and a brother, Francis Cooper.

The Rev. Deacon **Marguerite Webb Perez Gillen**, 80, died after a long illness. She was 80.

A native of Tampa, FL, she was a graduate of Charter Oak College of Connecticut. She was ordained deacon in 2005 and served at St. Mark's Church in Bridgewater, CT.

She volunteered in many capacities before

working for the Southern New England Telephone Co. She retired in 1980 and began a second career in 1986, when she became a registered nurse and worked in that field in several states. She served as a hospice nurse for several years.

Deacon Gillen is survived by daughters Elizabeth Rhodes, Katherine Leslie, and Virginia Rhodes; sons John and Peter Gillen; 17 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

The Rev. **Gordon B. Gudger, Jr.**, a U.S. Army veteran, died Dec. 3. He was 84.

A native of San Antonio, he was a graduate of Texas A&M University and Seminary of the Southwest. Before his seminary studies, he served in the First Armored Division of the U.S. Army. He was ordained deacon in 1960 and priest in 1961.

After serving nine years in several parishes, he left ordained ministry for five years to work for Dow Chemical Co. as a chemical engineer, helping to develop Dow's cold cure process. He then returned to ordained ministry for another 18 years.

Fr. Gudger is survived by his wife, Nell Jeanne Morin Gudger; daughters Debra Anne and Linda LaNelle; sons Larry Gordon and John Earl; and his sister, Judi Gudger.

The Rev. **Frederick C. Harrison, Jr.**, who had a long vocation in counseling, died Dec. 12. He was 94.

A native of South Bend, IN, he was a graduate of Florida International University and Virginia Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon in 1956 and priest in 1957.

He served as rector of St. Andrew's, Charlotte, and took early retirement in 1984. He served Episcopal churches in Crystal River, FL, and Kannapolis, NC.

He was founder and executive director of Unity House in Auburn, NY, 1974-78, and executive director of the Christian Counseling Center in Naples, FL, 1979-84. He served as a chaplain at the Illinois State Penitentiary System, 1960-68.

He married Lucille S. Lanni in 1973. He is survived by his wife; sons Frederick K. Harrison, Richard L. Harrison, Russell S. Harrison, Thomas C. Lanni, William F. Lanni; and seven grandchildren.

The Rev. **Walter W. Witte**, a bivocational priest, died Dec. 12. He was 89.

A native of North Tonawanda, NY, he graduated from Hobart College, Berkeley Divinity School, and Union Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon in 1952 and priest in 1954.

He was a canon of the Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral in Newark, NJ, and served other churches in Massachusetts, Missouri, and New York. He was personnel director of St. Louis City Hospital and the St. Louis Housing Authority. He was also a vice president at the career transition firms Drake Beam Morin and New Directions, both in Boston.

Fr. Witte is survived by his wife, Patricia; a son, Matthew Witte; a stepson, Michael Griffin; a stepdaughter, Margaret Heffner; and five step-grandchildren.



Innovative Spirit

The Diocese of Southern Ohio is home to more than 25,000 Episcopalians. Our communities of faith can be found in Cincinnati, Columbus, and Dayton, and



in many farm towns and county seats across the southern half of the state.

Southern Ohio has long been recognized for innovation and leadership throughout the Episcopal Church, and many initiatives

that have carried the church through difficult times, such as Forward Movement and Episcopal Relief and Development, were born through the faithful work of the people of this diocese. This spirit of mission and inclusion carries on today through the words of our mission statement, which guide the mission and ministry of the diocese:

As Episcopalians in the Diocese of Southern Ohio, we commit ourselves to

- Know the common story
- Proclaim our common faith
- Pray our common prayer
- Drink the common cup
- Serve the common good

In the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is our common ministry.

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Bible Questions

The moral landscape of Scripture is often treacherous, and unadvisedly applied to present life. Saul, according to the old story, was rejected from being king over Israel because he refrained from absolute obedience to a divine command. “Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have; do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey” (1 Sam. 15:3). Instead, “Saul and the people spared Agag [king of the Amalekites], and the best of the sheep and of all the cattle and of the fatlings, and the lambs and all that was valuable, and would not utterly destroy” (1 Sam. 15:9). Thus, “Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you from being king” (1 Sam. 15:23). This is an ancient received tradition from a land and life not our own. What does God want?

The story continues with the election of David, the young shepherd boy. The moral lesson is dubious at best. And yet, the mind simmers over these strange details, registers them with contemplative calm and distance. We are still “in the presence of enemies,” but the enemy is as much within as without (Ps. 23). Goodness and mercy require a supplement, a rod and staff. What are we to think?

Somewhere in his journals, Thomas Merton remarked on his reading of the bloody wars in the Book of Judges, saying with obvious humor, “We can’t lose!” At some point, perhaps at many points, a good and informed Christian conscience admits clearly and openly that our ancient religious texts are a tool, privileged to be sure, but a tool nonetheless to be used for interpretive efforts that contribute to human flourishing. We read, learn, mark, and inwardly digest Scripture in our search for a more humane life and a deeper communion with a hidden ground of love embodied in Christ our Lord. “We can’t lose,” Merton says. Indeed, the strife is over, the battle won. The bat-

tlefield is the soul; the enemies are sin, flesh, and the devil. Victory is the defeat of death and the gift of life forevermore.

Another question. “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him’” (John 9:2-3). Parsing the moral logic here is nearly impossible. Jesus goes on to mix spittle with dirt, a paste that restores the man’s sight. What are we to see in this story? St. Augustine will help: “First they are released and raised up. What follows that light about which we hear: I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness? Because the Lord enlightens the blind, we, therefore, are enlightened by the eye-ointment of faith” (Commentary on John, Tract. 34)

The symbol gives rise to thought. Bible stories are often ragged and perplexing, inspiring and disturbing. The reader must slow down and think. There are enemies: sin, the flesh, the devil, disease, abuse, neglect, extreme poverty, cruelty, war. Christ is at work. “The strife is over, the battle done, the victory of life is won” (Hymnal, 208). The victory of life is won! The victory of life is won!

Jesus is the victorious one who releases us, pulls us from the grip of sin and death, and opens our eyes to see what only faith can see. The man born blind who had received his sight said, “Lord, I believe” (John 9:38). And what do we say? What do we see?

Look It Up

Read Psalm 23.

Think About It

Your questions have not been answered, but your eyes are open.

Prayer and the Bones

To pray without ceasing is to pray with the heart. So we have been taught by spiritual masters who well understand the folly and impossibility of reciting or thinking conscious prayers without end. A friend, a home renovator who works mostly alone, told me his wife once asked him, "What do you think about all day?" "Nothing," he said. "Really?" she wondered. "If I start thinking about things," he explained, "I will likely saw off my fingers or worse." There is a time for every purpose under heaven. When the band saw is running, the mind should stay with the sound and the line and a singular purpose. "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of heaven" (Luke 9:62).

The prayer of the heart would, however, be nothing more than the background noise of the cultural religion one imbibes simply by living in one place and time, if not for moments, times, and seasons of disciplined prayer in the tradition of the Church's language. What the Church has taught, confessed, and believed may gain a foothold only if time is given to the matter. In cultivating faith, as in acquiring any knowledge, repletion is the mother of all learning. And, if time is given to private and corporate prayer, to the sacraments and seasons of the Church, and if this is done with an eye fixed, as the Incarnation demands, to the realities of life, then a Christian conscience will feel and know these words: "Out of the depths I cry to you" (Ps. 130:1). The question will arise, "O Lord, how long shall I cry for help and you will not listen?" (Hab. 1:2). Prayer is this deep pain, a groan issued from the hard wood of a bloody cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46). Adoration, praise, and thanksgiving will not and should not blunt this sorrow.

Seeing the world, faith sees great and small beauties, large and modest examples of goodness, bold and discreet

witnesses to truth, but faith also looks with searing pain and clarity on the suffering of a broken world. "The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones" (Ezek. 37:1). A clash of cultures is not needed to provoke or advance this vision. It simply is the condition of a fallen race. "The flesh is death," headed toward its dissolution and placement among the dead (Rom. 8:6). The bones are many and they are very dry. What will God do?

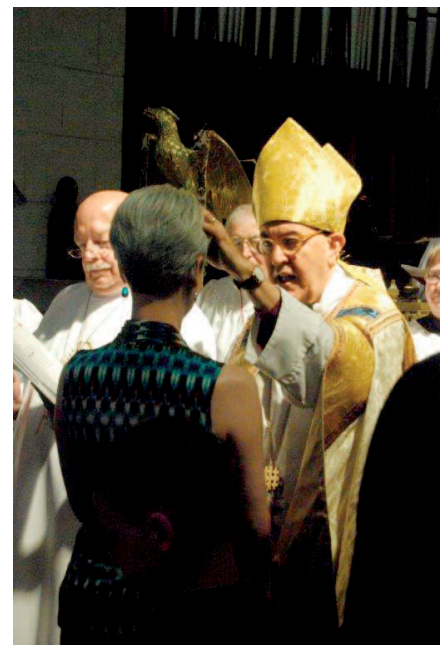
"Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. ... I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD" (Ezek. 37:4-6). These bones are the whole house of Israel, and these bones are assumed and saved in the recapitulation that is Christ our Lord. Speaking to all these bones, Jesus says, "Lazarus, come forth" (John 11:43). And there was a noise and a rattling, and the bones came together. They did and they still do and they will in the fullness of time. Those bones will live in that place where there is no pain or death and upon the earth's soil where, no less, Christ is.

Look It Up

Read John 11:21; 11:32. These women are in pain.

Think About It

Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.



Good News to All

The future of God's kingdom is the focus in the Diocese of Western New York. Through the leadership of Bishop R. William Franklin, our congregations are weaving a cooperative Web of Grace and pioneering innovative ways to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and make their facilities sustainable for generations to come.

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MONTANA ON YOUR MIND? We are a small parish in rural Montana. Our long term rector is retiring in Summer, 2017. Are you being called to serve here? In the tradition of Marcus Borg, St. Mark's is progressive, spirited and energetic with a core of dedicated, liturgically broad parishioners. We love to serve God by serving our neighbors. If this ministry speaks to your heart, please contact us. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 626, Big Timber, MT 59011. **406-932-5712**. officeofstmarks@gmail.com

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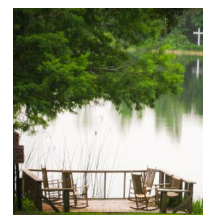
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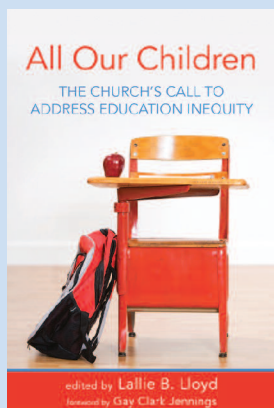
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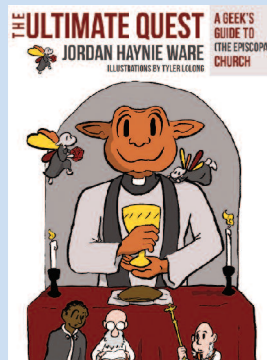
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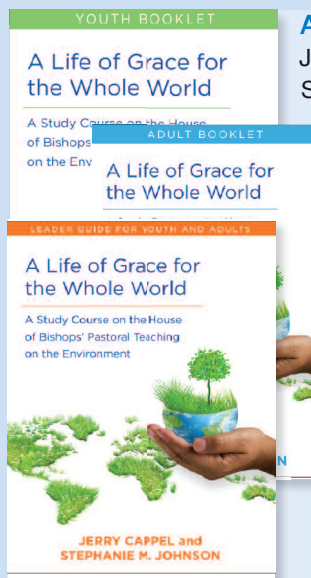
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