Fighting Addiction

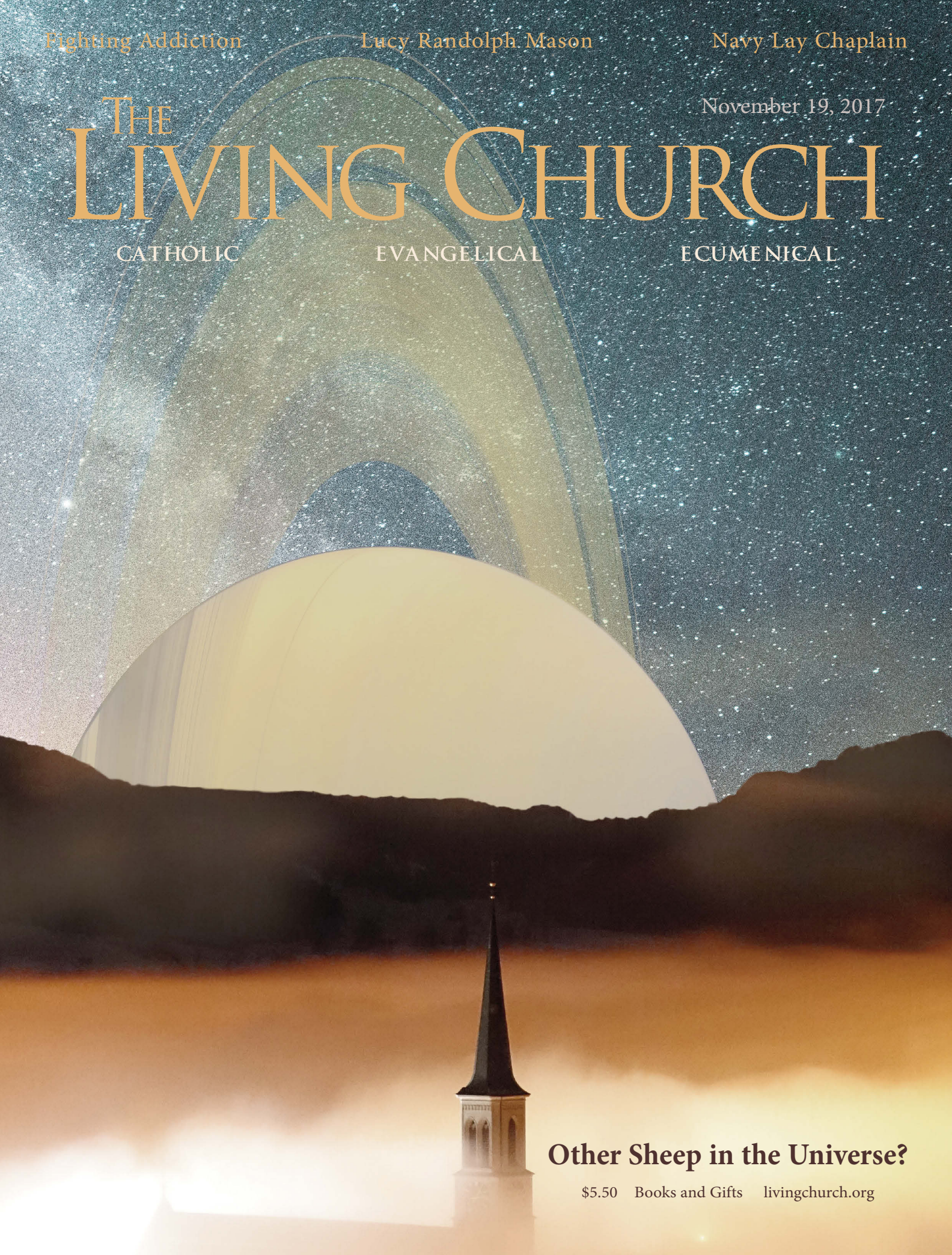
Lucy Randolph Mason

Navy Lay Chaplain

November 19, 2017

The Living Church

CATHOLIC EVANGELICAL ECUMENICAL



Other Sheep in the Universe?

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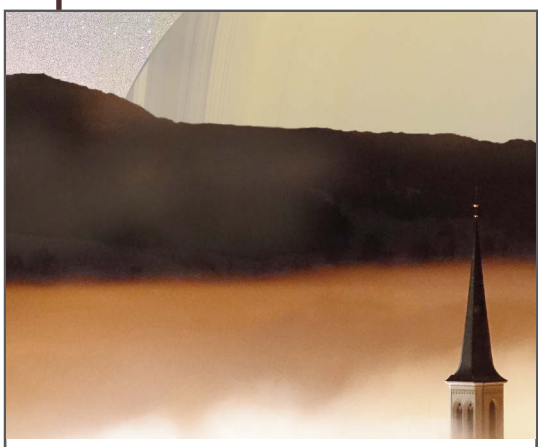
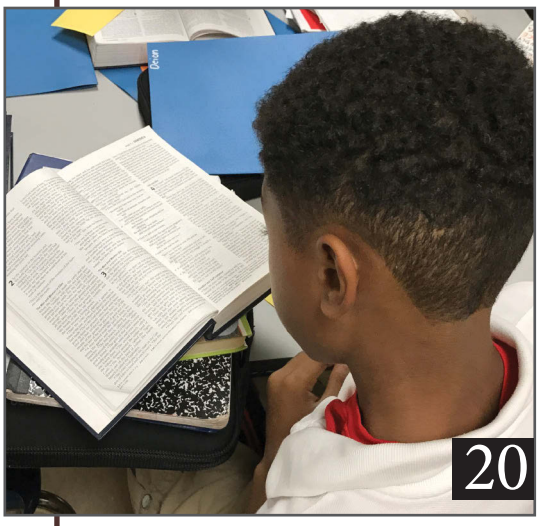


ON THE COVER

Lucas Mix: "If Earth bacteria can tell me something of God, so can Martian bacteria, or something completely alien from Alpha Centauri" (see "Other Sheep in the Universe?" p. 12).

Matthew Townsend illustration using public domain images



The Living Church

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Living Church Partners

We are grateful to S. Stephen's Church, Providence [p. 35], and Church of the Holy Communion, Charleston, and the Society of Mary, American Region [p. 36], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

The Living Church is published by the Living Church Foundation. Our historic mission in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion is to seek and serve the Catholic and evangelical faith of the one Church, to the end of visible Christian unity throughout the world.

#2069

This four-digit number is a hashtag, a death toll, and a call to action.

The past decade was a wrenching one for Lynn and Joe Wencus of Wrentham, Massachusetts, as they tried everything to help their adult son, Jeff, break his addiction to opioids. Unlike other types of crises they had experienced, this one they managed largely alone.

The couple would "hide" at home, Lynn said, because any minute could bring the dreaded call — the one that came during a Christmas party one year — saying Jeff had overdosed again. Other parents would blame them for causing or exacerbating their son's problems, Lynn Wencus said. As hard as the isolation was, keeping a low profile seemed like a necessity.

"If my son had been suffering for 10 years with cancer, people would have been knocking on my door with dinners in the beginning: 'How are you doing? What can I do? Let's plan a menu every night,'" Lynn Wencus said. "When it's substance abuse, there's nobody. Nobody. You don't talk about it."

The worst day of all came last February on Super Bowl Sunday, when Lynn went to pick up her son at the rehabilitation farm where he lived and found him dead from an overdose. Feeling alienated only compounded the family's grief.

But while the grief endures nine months later, the isolation has mercifully abated. The Wencuses have become connected to scores of families that have lost loved ones to opioids or are still waging the battle. Their pain is lessened to a degree by the help they are able to provide to others. They trace their new, healing community to an unlikely source: a quirky, cryptic yard sign campaign that started with a small Episcopal congregation.

Trinity Church photo

Bill Hawkins, president of the Norfolk, Massachusetts, Lions Club, picks up the first group of signs from Trinity Church that the Lions will distribute throughout their organization.

"It began with the question: how do we tell the folks in this little suburban town of Wrentham that there is this reality that confronts us?" said Ron Tibbetts, missional deacon at Trinity Episcopal Church in Wrentham. "We wanted to do something that would invite a question. So we came up with the yard sign and just putting #2069 on it."

The number refers to the epidemic's jarring death toll in Massachusetts, one of the hardest-hit states. In 2016, 2069 died from opioid overdoses, according to state government's figures as of last July. Figures revised since then have moved the updated tally above 2,100.

When curious drivers pass the signs and enter #2069 on Facebook, they arrive at an open online community in which 1,400 members — including dozens who have lost a loved one to opioid addiction — share stories, resources, and information on how to spread more signs across Massachusetts.

What began as a local effort to spark awareness snowballed unexpectedly into a statewide movement. More than 1,100 signs now stand in front of homes, businesses, and public agencies from Pittsfield in the west to Newburyport in the northeast. Coverage in Boston television, radio, and newspapers has delivered regional recognition. Fifteen sites, including Trinity Church in nearby Bridgewater, now distribute the signs in an effort to make sure the momentum keeps growing.

"We love this campaign because it's

getting the awareness out in a really simple way," said Natasha Stewart, rector of Trinity Church in Bridgewater. "We hope that it won't just end with raising the awareness, but that there will be some ministry to back it."

Such ministry is already emerging in a way that is almost as unorthodox as the yard signs. Trinity has been hosting events to bring together people who have met online. What happens once they are together is up to them. Just enabling the connection through a combination of simple low-tech and social media is the goal.

In September, Trinity hosted an initial meet and greet. Then on Oct. 28, the church hosted a combination rally and prayer vigil. Music and speakers helped lift the crisis out of the shadows and provide reassurance to all those afflicted and quietly suffering.

"None of us are experts or up on all the legislation, but what should a church do best?" Tibbetts said. "Let people know that they are loved. Sometimes you can't say any more than that."

The unexpected success of #2069 traces to brainstorming at the church. Congregants had wanted to shift their focus from regional to local issues, but were unsure about how.

Then the death of Jeff Wencus hit close to home because his father, Joe, is a longtime Trinity member. Members of Trinity's outreach committee realized how little they knew about the opioid problem and saw their need for knowledge as an opportunity.

The church's online and physical spaces could function as hubs where those affected by addiction might connect with public health educators, service providers, case workers, and fellow individuals rocked by the epidemic. But first they needed a compelling way to bring a largely invisible, hurting population to the surface.

The sign campaign didn't take long to catch fire. Within two hours of planting the first sign, the #2069 Facebook page was abuzz with chatter about the meaning of the number and the importance of drawing the epidemic out of the shadows. The first 25 signs were sold and planted within a few days. After two weeks, the distributed sign count had reached 63 and climbing.

New partnerships cropped up equally fast. When Tibbetts asked Trinity Church in Bridgewater to plant one of the first signs, he discovered a trove of shared passion for the cause. For Mother Stewart, the epidemic is never far away. Her 3-year-old adopted son was born to an opioid-addicted mother and needs special care as a result. Every year since she arrived in Bridgewater in 2008, she has presided at funerals for young addicts. The congregation lost one its own, Emmett Scannell, to opioids in April 2016. Since February, the congregation has hosted a monthly healing service on a Wednesday night for those battling addiction or grieving its toll.

"Trinity does about six funerals a year," Stewart said. "So for two of them to be related to this [epidemic] in some way makes it a huge percentage of what we do."

Now Trinity in Bridgewater displays the #2069 sign and serves as a signage distribution site. Those who pick up signs are asked to donate $12 (if they can) to cover costs and keep the program going, Tibbetts said, adding that most people give $20. As more people find their way to #2069 online, they learn about the healing service as well as other resources.

The campaign "is not trying to fix the problem," Stewart said. "It's just trying to be an advocate for awareness, which is different from helping people recover. It's helping particularly family members who are struggling with loved ones who are in the throes of addiction or in recovery."

Even as the #2069 campaign grows, the mission remains the same: to help people touched by a historic public health scourge to connect, support each other, and be assured that they are loved. The goal is not to push any particular legislation, although Stewart believes heightened awareness could help marshal new resources for detox beds and other underfunded initiatives.

In the meantime, the campaign is

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Opioids

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demonstrating how a small church with about 60 worshipers on an average Sunday can have an outsized effect in the public square.

The ministry of spreading connections is giving desperate people hope, as Lynn Wencus attests. A mother with an opioid-addicted child recently met her online via the #2069 Facebook community. She asked if they could talk sometime. Wencus said yes.

"Even if it's just to say, *Hey, we can talk about this, let's not be embarrassed*, I would be delighted to do that," Wencus said. "We have to get rid of the shame. We have to end the stigma."

G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Kirk Petersen photo

Executive Council members and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry send a video message of thanksgiving and song to Episcopal Relief & Development workers who have served after recent disasters.

Council Mulls $8M Budget Gap

LINTHICUM HEIGHTS, Md. — Deficits, debt, and dollar bills took the floor of Executive Council's October meeting, when the council discussed the next triennial budget and financial relief for those in the wake of church divisions.

Council sought ways to close a $12 million shortfall in the proposed budget for the next triennium. Even while faced with a shortfall, the council voted to forgive nearly $6 million in debt owed by the Diocese of San Joaquin, one of five dioceses where bishops and many congregations left the Episcopal Church amid disputes on sexuality and doctrine.

The Rev. Mally Lloyd, chair of the budget subcommittee, told the council at its closing plenary on Oct. 21 that in consultation with other committees her committee had narrowed the budget gap in the course of the meeting. The draft budget for the triennium 2019-21 now shows $128.7 million in income and $137.1 million in expenses, leaving a shortfall of more than $8 million, according to discussions during the council's four-day meeting at the Maritime Conference Center in Linthicum Heights, Maryland.

In the discussion period, council members focused on a proposed cut of 41 percent in the evangelism budget, while some other budget lines were increasing. Lloyd explained that the evangelism budget for the current triennium was funded in part by a special draw against endowment income, which the finance committee believed could not be repeated. "Our reserves are dangerously low," Lloyd said.

All of these numbers are still very preliminary, and the working budget has not yet been made public. In the complicated budget process, Executive Council finance committee members were to meet immediately after the council meeting with members of the Program, Budget & Finance Committee, which is composed of deputies to General Convention.

PB&F in the coming weeks will post the draft budget online for comment by members across the church.

Executive Council will continue working with staff to find areas to cut expenses or increase revenues, and the council will take its final vote on the budget at its January meeting. PB&F will then use that document as a starting point in preparing the budget to be voted on at the July 2018 General Convention in Austin.

"The Episcopal Church is not retreating from our passion for evangelism," said the Rev. Canon Michael Barlowe, executive officer of General Convention, who also serves as the secretary of Executive Council. "We will find the resources to do whatever God is calling us to do."

Relief for San Joaquin

One council member said the diocese "bore a disproportionate burden of the disputes" on sexuality and doctrine and the departure of bishops in San Joaquin and four other dioceses in the past decade.

"When a single diocese bears a disproportionate burden, you don't then send them the bill," said Russell Randle of the Diocese of Virginia, who was part of the council team that negotiated with San Joaquin in the past eight months. Some of the costs were driven by decisions made at the churchwide level, including efforts at reconciliation before turning to litigation.

The agreement calls for San Joaquin to pay the Episcopal Church $1 million by Dec. 31 and to begin paying its full 15 percent assessment in 2019. In exchange, the church will forgive the remainder of the debt ($5,875,000), which consisted of $6,175,000 in loans and about $700,000 in interest.

Randle told the council there are 21 viable congregations in the diocese, which has only two full-time priests. Most congregations are being served by part-time or retired priests. The diocese will be able to sell 25 buildings

that it recovered in the litigation, but some of them have "big, unmet capital needs."

In a closing news conference, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said the other dioceses affected by departing bishops and congregations — Fort Worth, Pittsburgh, and South Carolina — are bigger and have other resources to draw on. "If we were to require the repayment of the full loan, … it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for [San Joaquin] to really come alive again," Curry said.

Dollars on the Floor

Another highlight happened on Oct. 19 — a day devoted to mundane but necessary work — when an extraordinarily emotional event occurred at the meeting.

In addition to discussions about budgets and the possibility of revising committee structures, Abagail Nelson, senior vice president for programs at Episcopal Relief & Development, provided an overview of the agency's work in the wake of recent hurricanes and other natural disasters.

The highlight came during the question period, when the Rev. John Floberg, council member from North Dakota, took the microphone.

"Where I come from on the Standing Rock Reservation, whenever they have a powwow and somebody likes the dancing that's going on … they put money down at the feet of the dancer. That's what I'm about to do."

He walked to the front of the podium and let three bills flutter to the ground. After a round of applause, council members, staff, and visitors began rising from their seats to do the same. A small shrine made of currency grew on the carpet, as people around the room wiped away tears.

Nelson told the plenary session that in her 18 years at the agency, "I've never seen anything like we've been going through in the past eight weeks." She listed the string of disasters: Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, as well as wildfires in Northern California and an earthquake in Mexico.

"This is going to be a long haul to a new normal," Nelson said. "We're not going to get everybody back to where they were." But they will do what they can with their widow's mite. "The church's ministry is multifold, and gorgeous," she said.

Oh, and the pile of bills on the floor? "776 dollars," Nelson told TLC later, by email. "Amazing given the spontaneity of the moment."

Other Topics

• On Oct. 20, the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, outlined some ideas for revising the committee structure of Executive Council, in part to enable the body to focus more on strategy and less on nuts and bolts. The presentation sparked animated conversations, with several council members asking what problem the proposal was intended to fix. In subsequent committee meetings and other discussions, council agreed to step back to research and discern best practices about board ju-

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Executive Council

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risdiction in large nonprofit agencies, before talking about changing committees.

• Episcopal Migration Ministries continues to adjust to a "new normal" of reduced refugee admission to the United States, said the Rev. Canon Mark Stevenson, the director of EMM. The new normal appears to be 45,000 refugees a year, down from a historical average of 96,000. This has had a dramatic effect on the agencies that work with EMM to resettle refugees at sites around the country, because those agencies are paid on a per-refugee basis. Stevenson said the number of sites working with EMM nationwide has declined from 31 to 22, and EMM has cut staff from 22 full-time equivalents to 14.

• The Rev. Bradley Hauff, hired earlier this year as missioner for indigenous ministries, made his first appearance at council to discuss his ministry. Hauff, a member of the Oglala Sioux tribe, told council that the focus of indigenous ministries has shifted from reservations to urban areas, where 80 percent of Native Americans now live. There are 101 primarily indigenous congregations throughout the church.

Kirk Petersen

Coalition: Uncover Abuse

A coalition of Native Americans is calling on the Episcopal Church and other denominations to help uncover what happened to thousands of Native American children who were sent to government-funded, church-run boarding schools between 1869 and the 1960s.

Children suffered various types of abuse, disappeared, and died while attending 332 boarding schools in 29 states, according to the Minneapolis-based National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition. But the extent of what happened is still largely unknown, in part because the federal government has not responded to a request filed under the Freedom of Information Act.

The Episcopal Church is believed to have operated nine Indian boarding schools as a result of its 1872 assignment to oversee eight Indian agencies (reservations) in the Dakotas, according to the coalition. Because the coalition continues in its research, the number of Episcopal schools could be revised. The longest-running Episcopal school, St. Mary's Episcopal School for Indian Girls on the Rosebud Indian Reservation, closed in 1986.

Now churches have a pivotal role to play in jump-starting a fact-finding process, according to the coalition's executive officer, Christine McCleave. The request: provide access to records of church-run boarding schools and the church organizations that oversaw them.

Such access "could be the drop in the bucket that creates so many ripples that it would be huge," McCleave said. "The Episcopal Church is one that we think is most likely ready to pass a resolution to mandate that they are going to research the boarding schools that they ran, bring forth the records that they have, and share those."

Documenting what happened could help establish grounds for holding the government accountable, McCleave said.

"In the U.S., these were federally funded, church-run schools, so the

culpability is with the federal government," McCleave said.

The Coalition has launched the Healing Voices Movement, an online project to collect short video testimonies from boarding-school survivors. Such stories can help raise public awareness of this largely unknown episode in American history, McCleave said.

For a century after the Civil War, boarding schools had a mission to change youth in the federal government's custody. Instructors would, for instance, insist that Indian children cut their long hair, stop speaking Native languages, drop their Indian names, and replace ancestral customs with Christian practices. In these intentionally isolating environments, results could sometimes be tragic. An estimated 200 children died and were buried at one of the model institutions, Carlisle [Pa.] Indian School.

In Canada, where a similar boarding-school policy was in place, a 534-page Truth and Reconciliation Commission report appeared in 2015. It concluded that approximately 6,000 children had either died or gone missing during their time at government-funded, church-administered boarding schools.

In the United States, statutes of limitations mean it is too late for survivors to seek legal recourse for abuses. Without a judicial process to compel research, tribes are counting on churches, government agencies, and others to lead voluntary fact-finding.

G. Jeffrey MacDonald

CPG Report Reveals Stability, Gaps

The Church Pension Group has released a report on its strategy and health to the House of Deputies Committee on the State of the Church.

The report responds to a series of questions submitted by the Church Pension Group Subcommittee and addresses CPG's relationship to the church, CPG's pension and health benefits programs, its financial sustainability, and its investment strategy. The subcommittee was convened by the Committee on the State of the Church to study CPG's preparedness for the future.

Highlights from the report include:

• CPG's investment portfolio consists of 30 percent bonds and fixed-income assets; 40 percent alternative investments like private equity, hedge funds, and private real estate; and 30 percent publicly traded equities.

• Most funds are run by outside managers, with more than 200 of them managing almost 500 different funds. Compensation for managers typically ranges from 12 basis points to 2 percent for "more involved private equity and other private investments."

• CPG sees itself as having "less flex-

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CPG Report

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ibility than most Church-related organizations to adopt a divestment approach" based on environmental and social concerns.

• The 18 percent assessment paid by clergy is "not adequate fully to support the benefits CPF provides to clergy," with around $90 million collected annually and $350 million going out in benefits. Return on investments fills the gap.

• CPG lost around $3 billion in assets during the 2008 financial crisis but did not need to reduce benefits paid to participants. That loss has since been recovered. CPG says it remains "focused on the fact that we need to be prepared for future financial crises from which recovery realistically can be far more muted and protracted," and the organization has increased the sophistication of its financial modeling.

• CPG maintains that a defined benefit plan provides higher benefits than a defined contribution plan would, especially for clergy with shorter careers.

• Ordained women, on average, make less than men, with a pay gap of $11,200. Women make up 37 percent of full-time clergy but only 22.5 percent of senior positions. Women in senior positions tend to make less than senior men, with a 10 percent pay gap among those with 20 to 29 years of service.

• This gap extends to retirement benefits among clergy who served longer. Retired men between 65 and 75 with more than 30 years of credited service receive around $55,200 in annual benefit, while retired women receive $49,200.

• 79 percent of clergy and lay employees are enrolled in platinum and gold medical plans, with 20 percent enrolled in silver plans and 1 percent in bronze.

• CPG believes that making participation in the Denominational Health Plan optional would produce results mirroring experience in Affordable Care Act programs. "Younger and healthier participants would be the most likely to opt out, leaving a higher population of older, less healthy participants in the plan."

The full report is available at cpg.org.

Matthew Townsend

S.E. Florida Diocese Waives Payments

The executive board of the Diocese of Southeast Florida has extended financial help to parishes until the end of the year, relieving them from assessment payments for November and December.

"This action was taken in consideration of the fact that we have exercised careful stewardship of our resources this year, and so we have enough of a surplus to enable us to cover our commitments in the budget for the diocese to the end of the year without the need for these two months of contributions," the Rt. Rev. Peter Eaton, Bishop of Southeast Florida, told the diocese in an announcement.

"We have made this decision enthusiastically, in celebration of our common life, and as an encouragement to all who work so hard, and give so sacrificially, for the well-being of our diocesan-wide ministries. We hope most of all that this will allow our congregations to be able to attend to post-hurricane repairs that are not covered by insurance."

Diocese of Southeast Florida

Missionaries Kidnapped in Nigeria

Supporters of four Britons kidnapped in Nigeria's Delta state are appealing to Archbishop Justin Welby for help in securing their release. They were taken at gunpoint by militants who are said to often demand ransoms for their victims.

Two of the four are Dr. David Donovan and his wife, Shirley, both 57, from

Cambridge. They run a charity named New Foundations, offering free medical care to local people. Only the first names of the other victims are as yet known: Alana and Tyan, according to media reports. The couple's sons Julian and Aiden work for the charity but were not taken.

They have worked in the dangerous Delta region for three years. According to some reports, the local police were unaware of their presence. In recent years a number of foreigners have been kidnapped in the Niger Delta region, which is Nigeria's main source of crude oil and the country's economic mainstay.

Archbishop Welby, a former oil executive, knows the region well, having been threatened with death more than once while working there.

Local police are seeking to rescue the missionaries "without jeopardizing their lives," a spokesman said.

Nigeria is notorious for kidnappings. Hundreds of schoolgirls were taken by Muslim militants in the northern town of Chibok in 2014.

John Martin

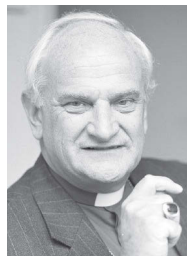
'Archbishop, Where Is God?'

The Most Rev. Robin Eames, the former Primate of All Ireland, played a key role in the Northern Ireland peace process. In *Unfinished Search* (Columba Press), a newly published autobiography, he recalls the aftermath of the Irish Republican Army Enniskillen bombing on Nov. 8, 1987.

"Archbishop, where is God in all of this?" a nurse asked him.

Eleven people — ten civilians and a police officer — died in the County Fermanagh blast, and 63 were injured. This outrage was considered the turning point in Northern Ireland's Troubles (1968-98). Support for the IRA plummeted after it said the deaths were a mistake. The targets, the IRA said, were soldiers and not civilians.

"My recollections of that day remain vivid," he writes. "No course in pastoral theology could possibly have prepared a person for the demands presented by those hours in the hospital.



Eames

"In all honesty, the urgency of that day removed any lofty presumptions of theology to what we were doing. Few tried to reason out the doctrinal or theological approaches to such crying human need. You reacted to requests or you did what you thought appropriate: thinking about it would come later … much later."

He describes how volunteers set up a table to provide tea when an off-duty nurse, one of the first to arrive at the hospital, asked her question, one often asked by people struggling to make sense of human suffering.

"For me in my own pilgrimage with all its continuing questions and degrees of revealed truth, I have turned to the biblical accounts of Holy Week and

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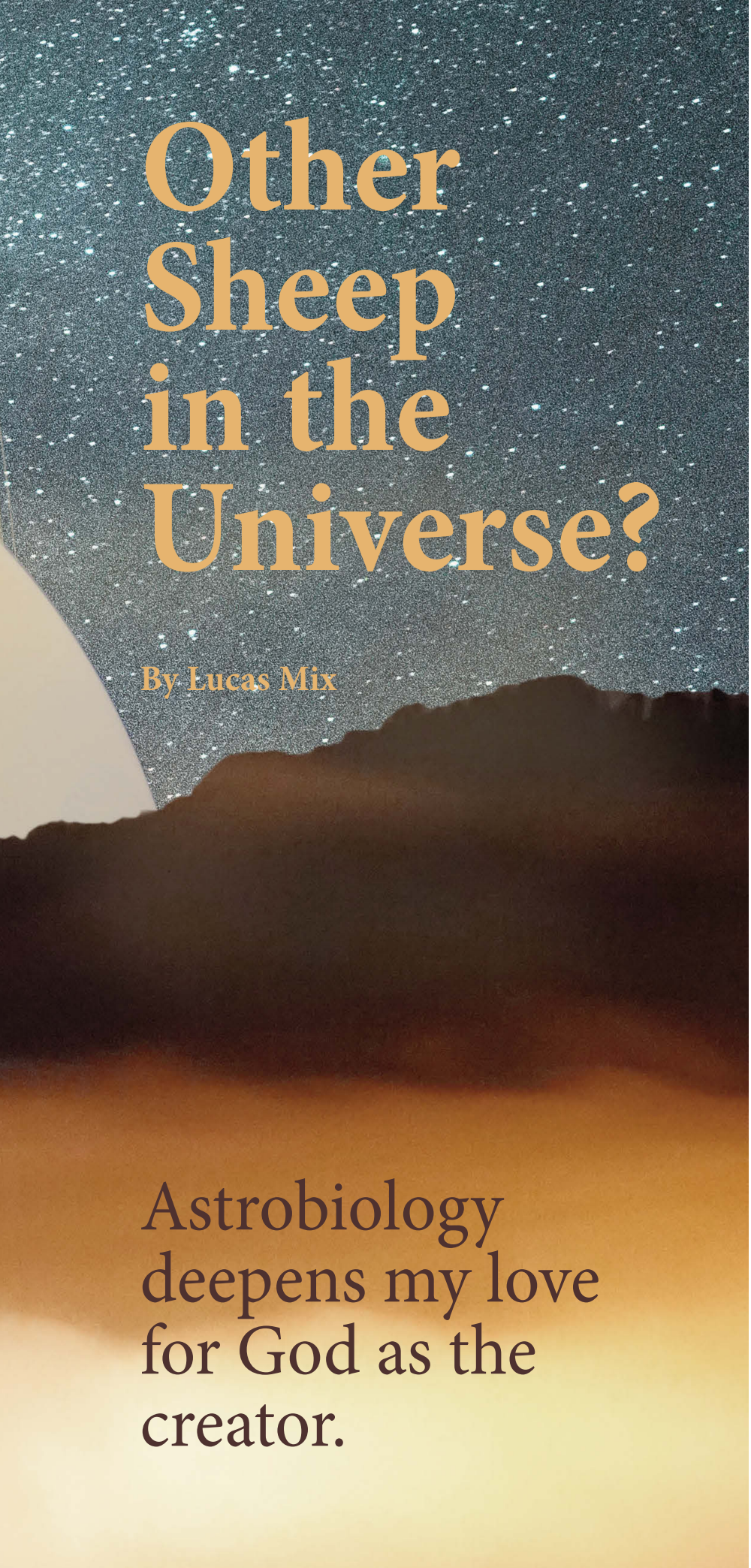

Other Sheep in the Universe?

By Lucas Mix

Astrobiology deepens my love for God as the creator.

In the tenth chapter of John, Jesus says, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." *Life* can mean so many different things. It covers bacterial metabolism, human experience, divine grace, and everything in between. In one way, they are the same life, for in God we live and move and have our being. The most basic life is God-breathed. In other ways, they are different. We can speak about lower life forms and higher life forms, or meager life and abundant life, or even physical life and spiritual life. We must ask, then, what kind of life does Jesus promise? And how does it relate to the concrete, visceral life we share with moss?

With St. Francis, I feel a kinship to creation that runs beyond my human neighbors to every living, breathing thing. That does not mean that all other life is equal in my regard to humans. I would not sacrifice a human for moss. And yet I think all living things have value in and of themselves — even the moss.

I see the world as a set of ever-widening circles. In the center, I find myself and that image of God that is in me. Then I step out to my family and my friends, to church, and country, and eventually the whole human race. In each circle, there is something of God for me to see and learn and love, but the further out I go, the harder it can be to see. Communication becomes more difficult with people who do not speak my language or have my experiences.

So far, the story is familiar. God calls us to love our neighbors, to open our heart to the stranger, and draw them in. I want to suggest that the circles extend beyond humanity. We can look to the strangeness of other mammals, such as cats and dogs, and ask what it means to know, understand, and love them. We can learn to love birds and reptiles, maybe even trees. I do not know about bacteria, but let us call it a long-term goal.

At every stage, love is hard. I know this. Every wider circle requires more of my heart and mind and soul and strength to cross. And yet I truly be-

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Other Sheep in the Universe?

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lieve there is something of God in all of it. I believe Jesus is the life of the world, and so all the world becomes a window into the life of God. All the world becomes interesting and lovable, if only I will apply myself.

That love for creation drives my interest in biology. In college, I studied biochemistry and in graduate school I studied photosynthetic bacteria to push myself out into a wider world of life. I found that abundant life was always close at hand: a world of animals and plants just outside my door and a world of microscopic organisms living all around me. Never

> What is it about life on this planet that makes me want to find more of it out there?

has a new organism failed to delight me. All are strange and wonderful. All invite me into a deeper relationship with the God who created all things.

That love for creation also drives my interest in astrobiology, the search for life beyond Earth. Interest in extraterrestrial life has increased in the last 25 years with the discovery of thousands of planets orbiting other suns. Current data suggest that planets may be so common that every second star has a planet near the size and temperature of Earth. It makes me wonder whether there are even wider circles than those I had imagined.

What aspects of God might be revealed by extraterrestrial life? It need not be intelligent life. If Earth bacteria can tell me something of God, so can Martian bacteria, or something completely alien from Alpha Centauri. I seek because I want to find. I knock because I am hoping the door will open. What else can I do, as a follower of Christ?

I do not know what I will find. That's the most wonderful part. I do not know if there is life out there. I do not know what it will be like. What I do know is that God reveals new things constantly. Sometimes it will be a brilliant gift that enriches my life. Sometimes it will be a stranger in need of assistance. I cannot know until I step outside my door and look.

This past year, I lived and worked in Princeton at the Center of Theological Inquiry. Twelve scholars in various fields (theology and philosophy, mostly) met once a week to discuss the "societal implications of astrobiology." How does the search for life shape our understanding of ourselves, our world, and our place in the universe? Finding life would be incredible, but even the search changes us. Curiosity broadens and deepens our understanding. And we have discovered much. Astronomers keep finding new planets while biologists keep finding new and strange types of life on Earth.

I came away from the year with a better appreciation for the variety of life. Earth moss amazes me. Along with bacteria and countless plants, moss produces abundant oxygen in the atmosphere. That oxygen, in turn, provides a vast energy supply for humans. Multicellular life, including all plants and animals, would not be possible without it. On lifeless planets, the oxygen reacts with chemicals on the surface, keeping it tied up. Early Earth had an atmosphere heavy in carbon dioxide until some bacteria developed the ability to turn sunlight into energy. Bacteria pulled apart water molecules and used the hydrogen atoms to string carbons together, making sugars and other organic compounds. Plants and animals live off the sugars and oxygen. We pull those apart, turning them back into water, carbon dioxide, and energy. So, in a way, moss is responsible for life as we know it.

Astrobiologists study the history of Earth to better understand what it means for a planet to have life. We want to know how and when it arose, how it shaped the land, sea, and sky, and how it all fits together. We also want to know what a living planet looks like. Though we have found thousands of planets, we only know about their mass and orbits so far. The next generation of telescopes, however, will be able to tell us a little more, including information about the gases in their atmosphere. Oxygen may be the first evidence we have for extraterrestrial life. Who knew a molecule could be so important?

Jesus also says, "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So, there will be one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:16). This may include alien life. I hope to find that life because one day we will all be one flock with one shepherd. I hope to find it because there is a part of me that knows I can love God better if I love more of God's creation.

Perhaps this new life will be like an older sister and can pass on the deeper wisdom of the universe. We may find that God has gone before us into the universe and that the Spirit of truth speaks through other worlds. Or perhaps we will find a beggar on our doorstep (if Mars could be called such), a meager life that we are called to care for. Or perhaps we will find that we are the only life in the universe, but that there is something totally strange yet still wonderful waiting in the deeps of space. We know only that we see now as in a mirror dimly; Jesus calls us to investigate the world.

Astrobiology gives me a deeper appreciation for moss, perhaps even a love for that integrated life that makes my life possible. It challenges me to think more carefully about life here on Earth. What is it about life on this planet that makes me want to find more of it out there? What is it about my life, from birth to death, that makes me hope for more of it in eternity? What is there about life that makes it worth having in abundance?

The Rev. Lucas Mix received a doctorate in evolutionary biology from Harvard in 2007 and consults for NASA on interdisciplinary communication in astrobiology. He blogs at dacalu.wordpress.com.

ESA/Hubble & NASA photo

Lord of the Starfields

Theologians have considered the implications of life on other planets since the 15th century.

By Andrew Davison

We have had secure evidence for the presence of planets around other suns only since 1992, but theological attention to the topic is not new. Among Christians, it stretches back at least as far as the 15th century, to Nicholas of Cusa (1401-64), a prominent cardinal, and to the Franciscan Guillaume de Vaurouillon (ca. 1392-1463). Both thought extraterrestrial life quite probable, and took the idea so much in their stride that they mention it only in passing.

In the next century, Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) pushed the idea considerably further in *On the Infinite Universe and Worlds* (1584). These were turbulent years, and the freethinking Bruno was executed as a heretic. Among the Protestant reformers, Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560) addressed the proposal, and deplored it.

The priest John Ray (1627-1705), sometimes called the father of British natural history, stands out. In *The Wisdom of God in the Works of Creation* he mentions extraterrestrial life as an uncontroversial aside: "Every fix'd star [in number 'next to infinite'] … is a Sun or Sun-like Body, and in like manner incircled with a Chorus of Planets moving about it … [and is] in all likelihood furnished with as great variety of corporeal Creatures, animate and inanimate, as the Earth."

Jumping nearer again to our time — to the 19th century, and to *Barchester Towers* — when Anthony Trollope (1815-82) wanted to underline the up-to-date sophistication of some of his characters, he had them talk about theology and astrobiology, as a modish subject of the time (in chapter 19):

> "Are you a Whewellite or a Brewsterite, or a t'othermanite, Mrs. Bold?" said Charlotte [listing popular contemporary opinion-makers on the topic], who knew a little about everything, and had read about a third of each of the books to which she alluded.
>
> "Oh!" said Eleanor; "I have not read any of the books, but I feel sure that there is one man in the moon at least, if not more."
>
> "You don't believe in the pulpy gelatinous matter?" said Bertie.
>
> "I heard about that," said Eleanor; "and I really think it's almost wicked to talk in such a manner. How can we argue about God's power in the other stars from the laws which he has given for our rule in this one?"
>
> "How, indeed!" said Bertie. "Why shouldn't there be a race of salamanders in Venus? and even if there be nothing but fish in Jupiter, why shouldn't the fish there be as wide awake as the men and women here?"
>
> "That would be saying very little for

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Lord of the Starfields

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> them," said Charlotte. "I am for Dr. Whewell myself; for I do not think that men and women are worth being repeated in such countless worlds."

C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) tackled the question not only in his fiction (the "Cosmic Trilogy"), but also in an essay, "Religion and Rocketry" (reproduced in various collections). It makes for ideal introductory reading on the topic. For breathless theological enthusiasm as a response to the "aerospace" revolution, *Astrotheology for the Cosmic Adventure* (1969), by the Roman Catholic priest Clifford J. Stevens, could hardly be bettered.

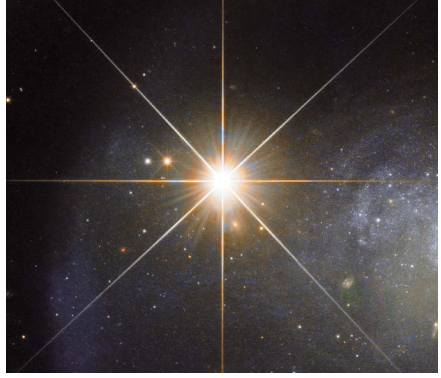
In the later 20th century, several other Anglicans weighed in, not least on whether many inhabited planets would have been met by God through many incarnations. Both Arthur Peacocke and Brian Hebblethwaite thought that multiple Incarnations would be theologically problematic but also somehow theologically expected. From his more liberal perspective, Peacocke thought that called for a revision of Christian doctrine. Writing from a more conservative position, Hebblethwaithe hoped that there would be no other intelligent life: "an implication of the Christian incarnation," he wrote, is "that there are no other intelligent, personal creatures in God's creation than human beings on earth." I disagree, which puts me among other Anglicans who had no problem with multiple Incarnations: the great Anglican Thomist Eric Mascall, for instance, and John Polkinghorne (with Peakcocke, a pioneer in the field of science and religion), who wrote that "if little green men on Mars need saving, then God will take little green flesh."

By far the longest treatment among Anglican theologians comes not from the 20th century but from the 17th, from John Wilkins (1614-72), Bishop of Chester and founder of the Royal Society (London's prestigious scientific society), in a pair of books, published together in 1684. Their combined title is so long that *A discovery of a new world: or a discourse tending to prove, that 'tis probable there may be another Habitable World in the Moon* reproduces only about a third. Given that Wilkins was something of a Puritan sympathizer, it is perhaps unexpected that discussions of Aquinas, Cusa, contemporary Jesuits, and the pagan writers of antiquity fill almost every page, alongside an impressive knowledge of the Fathers. Like other treatments, Wilkins makes only a cursory mention of many Christian doctrines: other creatures might be fallen, for instance, although they also might not, and if they are, Christ's death atones for them too. He presses these questions no further.

What does exercise Wilkins, at *great* length, is scriptural interpretation. In that way, this largely forgotten text has a good deal to offer contemporary discussions of the relation between science and religion. Wilkins demonstrates that an assumption of conflict between them, or of a dogged biblical literalism among conservative figures, are distinctly modern phenomena. We misread the Bible, Wilkins thought, if we forget its purpose, which is to instruct us concerning salvation, and to nurture a relationship with God. It is a mistake, he wrote, to look to the Bible for "philosophy" (natural philosophy, for which, read *science*): the purpose of the Scriptures is not "to discover anything unto us concerning the secrets in philosophy." That leads Wilkins to some striking words, based on St. Augustine:

> when the words of scripture shall seem to contradict common sense or experience, there are they to be understood in a qualified sense, and not according to the letter. And 'tis observed, that for want of this rule, some of the ancients have fastened strange absurdities upon the words of scripture.

Wilkins had no doubt that God could have taught us authoritatively about science in the Bible, but he thought that would likely have distracted us from what matters most of all. Instead, God left it to us to investigate such topics, spurring us on to the sort of intellectual



labors that Wilkins knew and promoted in the work of the Royal Society. On this, he quoted the Book of Ecclesiastes:

> I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. (Eccles. 3:10-11)

Fast forward 350 years, and those labors are marvelously advanced, not least in the search for other worlds. As I write, the tally of planetary systems discovered around other stars stands at around 3,600, although the number increases week by week. Technological developments put us at the cusp of being able to detect the atmosphere around some of these planets, and that would allow us to look for the tell-tale signs of life that would likely show up there.

Who knows when, or if, that momentous news will break. If it does, we can be sure that it need not catch the Church on the back foot. There is already a legacy of thinking about these questions that stretches back over centuries. It has largely been fragmentary up to now, and often cursory, but frequently out of a sense that extraterrestrial life suggests little to worry Christian theology. A good deal of detail remains to be thought through, but Christians can go about that business cheerfully, rather than in trepidation.

The Rev. Andrew Davison is the Starbridge Lecturer in Theology and Natural Sciences at the University of Cambridge, fellow in theology at Corpus Christi College, and canon philosopher of St. Albans Cathedral. In 2016-17 he was a member of a project on the societal implications of astrobiology at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton, New Jersey.

Lucy Randolph Mason

Roving Ambassador for Organized Labor

By Charles Hoffacker

When Lucy Randolph Mason was 14, a sermon by a missionary made her want to become a missionary herself. Serving in some form of Christian ministry ran in the family. Her maternal grandfather, John Cary Ambler, was an Episcopal missionary in the mountains of West Virginia. Both of Lucy's parents demonstrated a strong sense of social responsibility rooted in their religious convictions.

Her father, Landon Randolph Mason, was a parish priest in Virginia. He would respond to calls from impoverished families who had no connection with his congregation. When epidemics struck, he went wherever he was needed, and often sat up all night beside a sickbed or a deathbed. Lucy recalled her father carrying a bushel of coal on his back from a store to the home of a destitute family on a day when a foot and a half of snow had brought all traffic to a halt. This was typical of his behavior.

Lucy's mother, Lucy Ambler Mason, held a Bible class at the state penitentiary in Richmond. Many of the men she met there lodged at the Mason home once they were released and looking for jobs. They stayed in a third-floor bedroom next to Lucy's, but the family never feared they would do any harm.

Through contacts at the penitentiary, Lucy's mother learned of cruelties committed there. Together with friends, she distributed leaflets throughout the state documenting these practices. This action led to some immediate improvements and contributed to sweeping reforms that took place years later.

It is no surprise that young Lucy Randolph Mason responded as she did to a missionary's sermon. She never became a missionary, however, at least not in the usual sense of the word. Instead, she found her Christian vocation as an activist. There were family reasons for this as well.

Carl Wiegold photo/Duke University Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library

Lucy Randolph Mason, in a portrait taken for the Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel

Lucy's parents were not wealthy, but she was descended from prominent Virginia families. Colonel George, the first Mason family member in Virginia, came to the colony in 1651. While serving in the House of Burgesses, he gained a reputation for defending less privileged people. The family tree came to include John Marshall, first chief justice of the United States, and Robert E. Lee, her father's second cousin, as well as three signers of the Declaration of Independence. She used her genealogy

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Lucy Randolph Mason

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to gain a hearing for people whose rights were not recognized.

Among Lucy's celebrated ancestors was George Mason, who was both a maternal and paternal ancestor. George Mason wrote the Virginia Bill of Rights, which became the basis for the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution. A friend of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, he signed the Declaration of Independence and deeply influenced the American legal tradition. In 1775, he urged his fellow patriots to reject slavery, arguing that "Providence punishes national sins by national calamities." He was one of a few members of the 1787 Constitutional Convention who refused to sign the document, partly because it did not abolish slavery.

At age 18, Lucy started teaching Sunday school in a working-class Richmond parish. Most of her pupils were girls who labored in tobacco factories, often for ten hours a day. This experience sparked her early interest in labor organizing. She was also influenced in this direction by her work as a stenographer for a law firm that handled cases related to industrial accidents.

Reading social gospel theologians such as Walter Rauschenbusch helped her understand her experience in the light of her faith. To be a true Christian, she came to believe, was to be a reformer, or in today's language, an activist.

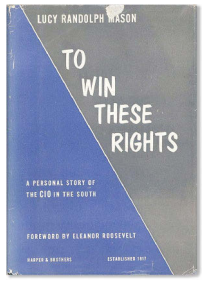
In 1914 she was appointed industrial secretary of the Richmond YWCA, where she promoted workmen's compensation and protective labor legislation for women and children. The Richmond YWCA industrial club was one of 375 such clubs, offering programs for working-class young women. YWCA board members often had acute misgivings about these developments.

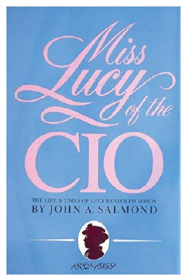
When her mother died in 1918, Lucy resigned from this position to care for her aging father. She continued to volunteer for the Union Label League and served as president of the Richmond Equal Suffrage League and the Richmond League of Women Voters. Her father died in 1923. From then until 1932 she was the general secretary of the Richmond YWCA. She advocated for social and industrial reform, especially for African Americans.

In 1932, when she was about to leave Richmond, African Americans paid her a remarkable tribute. At a church service held in her honor, a series of speakers praised her commitment to racial justice and how she related to people in a way that made skin color irrelevant. In all, 124 of Richmond's African American citizens spoke or recorded their appreciation in a volume of testimonies presented to her. "The white race is on test," she observed, "and the future will be influenced to the extent of its fairness to other races."

From 1932 to 1937 Lucy Mason served in New York City as executive director of the National Consumers' League. The ravages of the Depression were at their worst when she arrived. The league decided to throw its limited resources into the fight against exploitative wage rates. When the New Deal began in 1933, NCL allies in Washington included Labor Secretary Frances Perkins and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. At congressional hearings related to New Deal proposals, Mason had her first sustained contacts with leaders of national labor unions.

Conditions for workers in the South were the most barbaric in the nation.





For More Reading

An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church, edited by Donald S. Armentrout and Robert Boak Slocum, includes an entry about Lucy Randolph Mason. Her story is also recounted at length in two books.

One of them is her work, *To Win These Rights: A Personal Story of the CIO in the South*, published in 1952 with a foreword by Eleanor Roosevelt. *To Win These Rights* is not so much an autobiography as an eyewitness account of the CIO's struggles to organize Southern workers from 1937 to 1951. Throughout her narrative, Mason often places herself in the background, despite her pivotal and even legendary role in union activities.

In 1988, the University of Georgia Press published a full-length study, *Miss Lucy of the CIO: The Life and Times of Lucy Randolph Mason (1882-1959)* by John A. Salmond, a history professor in Australia strongly interested in the American South. It is an attractive work of scholarship.

Mason acted in accord with the NCL's traditions of "investigate, agitate, legislate." She traveled widely throughout the South, speaking wherever she could on behalf of labor legislation. By 1935, the time was right for her to concentrate on South Carolina and Virginia, states where prospects for progressive legislation seemed promising. Yet she continued to be active elsewhere as well. For example, she campaigned for minimum-wage legislation in seven states outside the South.

John L. Lewis, the passionate leader of the fledging Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), offered Mason a position in 1937, and she accepted it. She would serve as a publicist and roving ambassador for the CIO in the South and especially on behalf of textile workers. Lewis was glad to have this respectable middle-aged woman with a celebrated pedigree representing the CIO in the South, where organizing efforts had just begun. (In 1955 the group united with the American Federation of Labor to become the AFL-CIO, which now includes 56 national and international unions representing more than 12 million members.)

The work Mason undertook, which would occupy her for the rest of her career, meant extensive travel from her home in Atlanta throughout the South and beyond, addressing all sorts of groups, and meeting with editors, teachers, ministers, business people, and law-enforcement officials to promote the union movement. In mill towns, she addressed unorganized workers on behalf of unionism and urged all workers to elect public officials who would represent their interests. She continued to function as a political lobbyist on the state level.

Just as Mason was not a missionary in the usual sense, so she was not a union organizer in the usual sense, but went forth (in her words) "to preach the gospel of organization." She communicated to the public through radio addresses, book reviews, and other mass media. Her frequently revised pamphlet, initially titled "The Churches and the Labor Unions," included statements from various denominations and leading clergy and was distributed widely.

An aspect of Mason's work that became increasingly important was intervening in response to illegal actions against organizers. Such actions increased during the Second World War as management more openly defied labor's rights. Miss Lucy (as she was known) was kept busy reporting these situations to the CIO leadership, the U.S. Department of Justice, and her ally Eleanor Roosevelt.

One instance of her intervention occurred in Tifton, Georgia, where the Packinghouse Workers, whose local members were predominately African American, had been on strike for seven weeks. Allegations of civil rights violations by local law enforcement led union leadership to ask that she intervene.

She met separately with a severely injured worker, the anti-union sheriff, and a deputy sheriff. Miss Lucy filed her report with the Justice Department, requesting an immediate investigation. That night she and others patrolled the African American section of town in CIO cars. The FBI investigated, the sheriff was warned, the strike was eventually settled, and the workers returned to their jobs. Her intervention may have prevented further violence and even deaths.

In a 1944 letter, Mason set forth the two opportunities she saw in her beloved South: "The South can become the worst seedbed of Fascism in the country, or it can move in the direction of a liberalism based on the mass strength of labor, such small farmers as can be drawn in, and the best of Southern liberals, plus many obscure people who can be appealed to by what is sound and right and good." She claimed that the CIO — an integrated organization in a segregated society — had "the greatest power to influence the South in the right direction."

In March 1952, the National Religion and Labor Foundation honored Lucy Randolph Mason with its annual Social Justice Award. The accompanying citation praised how she had translated her religious faith "into a life of service on behalf of unionism, social justice, and human rights."

Her grave at Ivy Hill Cemetery, in Alexandria, Virginia, is marked by a simple stone.

Mason retired from the CIO in 1953 for health reasons. She soon succumbed to dementia and spent her last years in a private mental hospital where she was surrounded by love and concern. She died on May 6, 1959, at the age of 76. Her grave at Ivy Hill Cemetery, in Alexandria, Virginia, is marked by a simple stone. A fund established in her memory helps theological students become acquainted with labor leaders, especially through union conventions.

The witness of Lucy Randolph Mason represents a call for a renewal of ties between the labor movement and mainline churches, including the Episcopal Church. It also suggests that many of today's social justice activists working within our nation's constitutional tradition may well be Christians fulfilling their God-given vocations.

The Rev. Charles Hoffacker lives in Greenbelt, Maryland, and serves on the board of the Frances Perkins Center in Newcastle, Maine.

Chattanooga Schools Use Bible to Teach Character

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

The challenge of shaping moral character in students looms large in Chattanooga schools, where the state attorney general last year identified 122 bullying incidents and cited "widespread systemic problems."

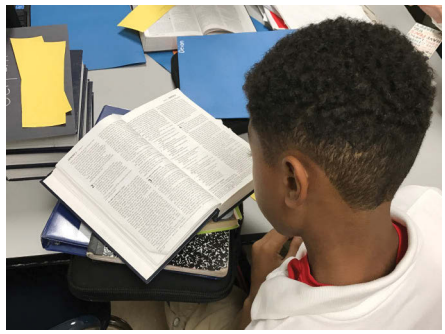
Now, to stamp out bullying, cheating, and other character-related problems, Hamilton County schools are drawing on a not-so-secret weapon that has been part of their curriculum since 1922: the Bible. Private fundraising for Bible-teacher salaries has surged 22 percent this year to support steady enrollment growth in elective Bible courses.

"We're very careful not to say, *This is right, something else is wrong* — many of the students come to those realizations on their own through the study of the text," said Cathy Scott, president of Bible in the Schools, the Chattanooga-based nonprofit agency that funds Bible history courses in middle and high schools.

She noted, for instance, how one student deleted all his pirated music after studying the Ten Commandments. Another student with a pregnancy opted not to have an abortion.

"Through Bible history, she was learning that her life had meaning and a purpose," Scott said. "She had made the decision not to abort the baby as a result of what she was learning in the Bible about the value of life and treating one another the way you'd like to be treated."

Using the Bible to fight moral decay makes sense to many Americans. Eighty-one percent believe the country's morals and values are in decline, according to 2017 research from the Barna Group, a research firm based in Ventura, California. Twenty-seven percent blame lack of Bible reading for the decline. That figure is higher in Chattanooga, where Bible-reading rates are the nation's highest.



Photos courtesy of Cathy Scott / Bible in the Schools

Students in Hamilton County public schools (above, next page) study the Bible through a unique, privately funded program.

Around the country, the Bible-based approach to character formation is rare in public schools. Most districts do not offer Bible courses, although courts have said they are allowed as long as they heed constitutional guidelines. In North Carolina, for instance, high school teacher Bill Simpson worked full time for a year to launch Bible courses in public schools but encountered "only opposition or apathy," he said via email.

"Many fear the [American Civil Liberties Union] and the negative press that would ensue," said Simpson, a teacher at a Christian high school and founder of Pidea Alliance in Wilmington, North Carolina, which helps launch Bible courses in public schools.

Chattanooga's program survived a legal challenge from the ACLU in 1979. The program received court approval after making a few modifications. Last year, Bible in the Schools began a new push to raise its online presence, in part to demonstrate what's possible in public schools. Since then, it has received queries from more than a dozen states where residents would like to launch or expand Bible courses in their schools.

Chattanooga's program is growing fast to keep up with demand. Courses using the Bible as a textbook are offered in 23 Hamilton County middle schools and high schools, up from 15 schools in 2013-14.

Courses are taught with no taxpayer funding. Donations of $1.3 million enable more than 3,700 students (about 17%) to learn what the Bible says. About 5 percent of donations comes from church groups.

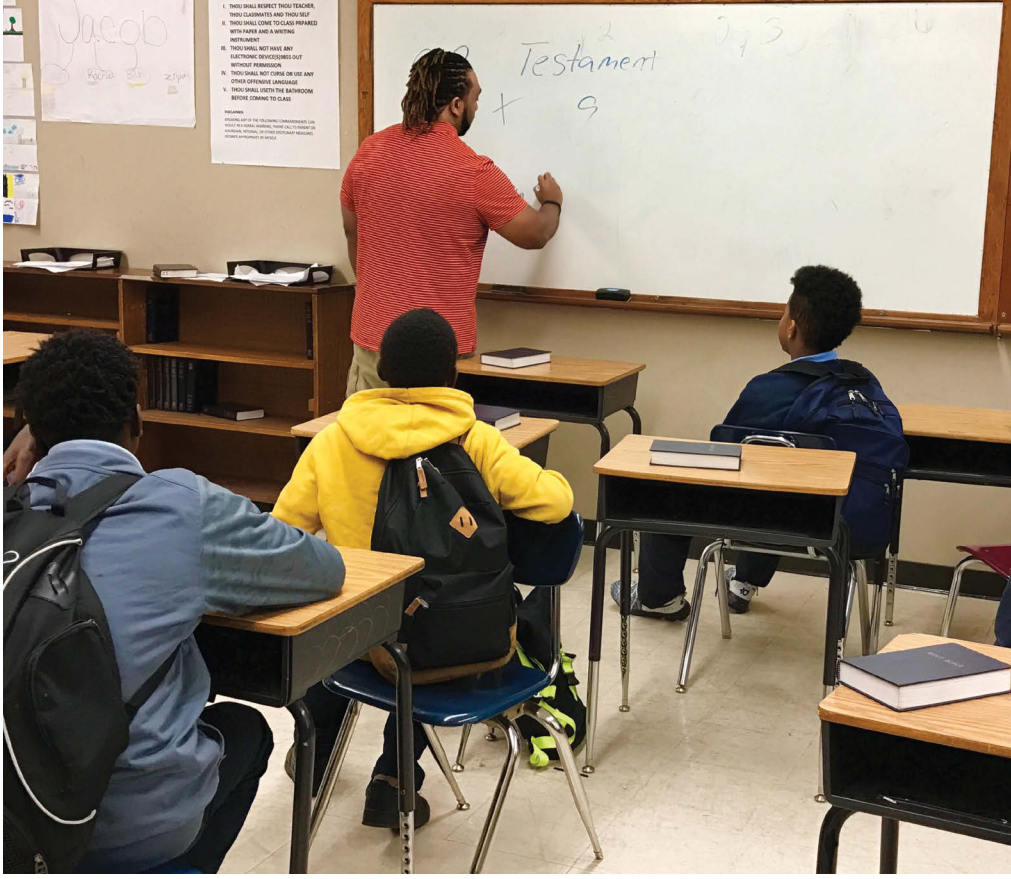
"I've had about four or five school principals call me indicating that they would like this elective as soon as funding becomes available," Scott said. One Hamilton County high school had to turn away 75 registrants last year because all its Bible history classes were full.

"Even if you don't have access to a church, it's good to know about it [the Bible] and be able to spread it and enjoy it," said Jackson Clark, a sophomore in a Bible history class at Ooltewah High School in suburban Chattanooga.

The goal of teaching Bible history in public school is not to promote Christianity, which would violate the U.S. Constitution's prohibition of a state church. Rather, the intent is to make students familiar with one of history's most influential books and to mold character traits, such as honesty.

"This is maybe the only exposure that they have to broad moral truth," says Frank Brock, a board member of Bible in the Schools. "It can have immediate impact because [students have] never heard anybody say, *Stealing is wrong*. … What school teaches stealing is wrong? What course does that come in — math, English, social science?"

Last September in Daniel Ziegenmier's Old Testament survey class at Ooltewah High, students watched a six-minute video summarizing the last 40 chapters of Genesis, then opened their Bibles and read about God making a covenant with Abraham.



Then it was their turn. They broke into pairs to forge covenants of their own. Clark and his classmate, Jacob O'Daniel, pretended one had broken his leg and agreed to the other's restitution of mowing grass and performing other chores. When class members reunited, Ziegenmier challenged students to take away a character lesson from the exercise.

"In thinking about the conversation today — the covenant that God made with Abraham, and the contracts that you made — the question is: why is it so important to be a person that keeps your covenant, your promise, and your commitment?" Ziegenmier said. Students had to turn in their answers before they could leave class.

In the past half-century, courts have tried to clarify what's permissible and what's not in school-based Bible education. The 1963 U.S. Supreme Court case of *Abingdon School District v. Schempp* ended the practice of requiring students to read or hear the Bible read aloud in public school. But it also cleared the way for Bible electives taught from a neutral standpoint with no doctrinal or sectarian biases. The U.S. District Court decision in the 1979 case involving Chattanooga's program, *Wiley v. Franklin*, cited precedents including *Abingdon* and spelled out criteria that Bible courses must meet.

"The nature, intent, and purpose of the course must be secular," the decision said. "The primary effect of the course must neither advance nor inhibit religion; and the course must be offered in a manner that avoids excessive entanglement between government and religion."

Chattanooga has refined its program over the years to pass muster both legally and politically. Bible history teachers have advanced training in biblical studies or a related area, like teachers in other subjects. They are employees of the school district, which makes them accountable to the school district's standards, not to donors.

What's more, because teachers are paid with dollars donated to the district, taxpayers do not pay a dime for Bible electives. Keeping taxpayer dollars out of the equation helps blunt potential opposition and shore up broad public support.

"It is permissible for a school district to use its funds to teach Bible," Brock said. "But it is politically difficult, so we choose to do it this way. It sort of mutes any criticism."

In other districts where Bible education happens, teachers are commonly paid directly by a nonprofit agency rather than the school district, Simpson said. Their work is treated as a released-time activity, not part of the school-day curriculum like it is in Chattanooga.

Hundreds of these off-campus released-time programs are very successful, he said, but he hopes the Chattanooga model can catch on elsewhere. Risk-averse districts are reluctant to let children leave campus for new released-time activities, Simpson said, and accountability can be a problem when teachers are not answerable to the school district.

Chattanooga's "is the only program in the country where the nonprofit is funding teachers and the teachers are hired in the normal way, through the superintendent's office," Simpson said. "The magnitude of their program is also unequaled in that they raise over $1 million annually and give that to the school board. … My prayer is that thousands of programs like this one will be birthed in the coming years."

Simpson conceded that the road to replication is apt to face stiff cultural headwinds. Lawsuit-weary school districts in Tennessee and West Virginia have in some cases opted to leave Bible education to local churches.

Still, proponents are concerned that in a time of waning church attendance, children need to engage the Bible in non-church settings, lest they experience no Bible exposure at all. The percentage of Americans who say they never read, listen to, or pray with the Bible jumped from 27 in 2016 to 32 in 2017.

In Chattanooga, knowledge of the Bible increases by 85 percent on average as students complete Bible history, according to Bible in the Schools' analysis of test records. Students say that is because the class is not required, so most of those who enroll want to learn.

"No one is trying to force you to do anything in this class," said Clark, the Bible history student at Ooltewah High School. "No one is making you believe that God is the one true way. If you want to believe it, that's up to you." ❏

On Board with Ecumenism

By S. Daniel Smith

It's 12:55 p.m. onboard the USS Hué City (CG 66) in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea on a hot, muggy Sunday. While Ensign Brittany Stalzer makes her final preparations to start the Protestant lay-led services, the loudspeaker crackles to life and the boatswain's mate says, "Lay Protestant services will be held in the training room at 1300. Maintain silence in the vicinity of the training room."

Stalzer looks disappointed. She had asked them to say that all hands were invited to attend, but they stuck with the long-accepted phrasing instead. She puts on a minister's face for the sailors who have shown up early, and soon her disappointment melts away.

While Stalzer has a job as a division officer and thus fills an important leadership position in the organizational chart, she also supports her sailors as a qualified lay leader. Her tasks include setting up services, supporting any chaplain who leads the primary service (whether Protestant or Roman Catholic), and representing her faith to the crew.

When no chaplain of a given religious affiliation is available, a lay leader can preside at services, assuming an ecclesiastical body has endorsed the sailor and the sailor has been trained and is qualified, according to the military's instruction on the topic. On most Sunday afternoons, like this one, she begins by focusing the attention of the dozen or so sailors with the call to worship from the Book of Common Prayer.

Sailors' pastoral needs range from developing spiritual health to showing them the love of Christ and inviting them to become a member of the greater Church. Any official counseling required by a service member is referred to a chaplain, as lay leaders are not authorized to conduct counseling.

For Petty Officer Katharyn Dembowski in the fire control division, a welcoming attitude is crucial. "I want

Opposite page: The USS Hué City returning to Naval Station Mayport in Jacksonville, Florida.

U.S. Navy photo

to feel as welcomed as possible," she said. "I know everyone lives with sins and they will be judged by them eventually, but I want to feel like I can walk in someplace and make genuine friends without them wanting to change my life."

"Content and how welcoming the environment is" are the most important factors, said Petty Officer Micah Arrington, who hopes to be a full-time youth minister after completing his time in the Navy. "I think it can feel awkward for people, because we all have a tendency to fall short out here, so if it's not very welcoming and easy-going then people will shy away. With content, you have to take it slow and not bash people over the head with how much they are off due to the same reason."

For the most part, that is exactly Stalzer's mission as a lay leader on the ship. "Ultimately growing the community is my purpose, but also providing a place where people can take their mind off work and deployment and focus on their spirituality and relationship with God tops my priority list," she said.

Filling these disparate needs is not easy. Stalzer, and other lay leaders on ships and shore stations around the country, is essentially a bivocational minister. As a junior officer, she has at least one watch rotation each day, which means being on her feet for five hours on the bridge of her ship, guiding the vessel through the ocean.

She must also attend briefings, and she works on qualifications. Becoming a Surface Warfare Officer is one of the most important gest qualifications for a junior officer to attain. That qualification is the officer capstone project for the first tour on board a ship. Stalzer managed to earn her qualification while filling all of her roles.

Despite the struggle of everyday life as a busy junior officer, "when the main lay leader asked if I was religious, and if I wanted to be a lay leader, it was a no-brainer," Stalzer said. "I was coming straight from college, where I served on my college's steering committee. I wanted to continue my service in some form or another." Being one of the ship's lay leaders was a perfect fit.

Stalzer understands that it takes a team to make everything work. In today's diverse Navy, she knows she has to be more than just an Episcopal lay leader; she has to be a Christian pointing others to the love of Christ. Making that work on smaller ships like hers takes cooperation with other lay leaders.

"Our group utilized the strengths of each of our lay leaders to give our service more energy," she said of her recent deployment. "We had one member reflect on the readings, another guide the music, and I led the worship. By the time we worked out some kinks, we had a full service that provided the energy that the crew needed."

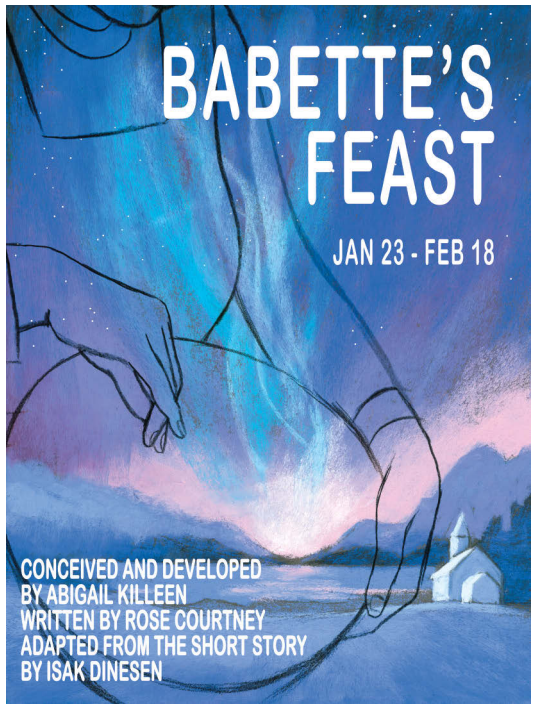
For sailors who have benefited, the result is clear. Petty Officer Jacob Carpenter wanted to "learn about God and his Word and that's exactly what I got." Sailors like Carpenter make up the largest population on the ship, so meeting their pastoral needs is crucial for a lay leader's success.

Whether Stalzer will make a longer call of this effort is yet to be seen. "As of right now," she told TLC, "I've questioned myself extensively about becoming a priest." Options for Stalzer include becoming a Navy chaplain if she chooses to pursue seminary and ordination after completing her current duties.

S. Daniel Smith is a freelance writer and a career Navy officer who lives in San Diego with his wife, son, and two daughters. He writes at www.sdanielsmith.com.

‘Tasting the Divine’

A theatrical production of Babette’s Feast takes a metaphorical approach.



By Retta Blaney

Actress Abigail Killeen first heard of the 1988 Danish film *Babette’s Feast* during a sermon in lower Manhattan in the 1990s. Curious, she watched the movie and enjoyed it. “As a young woman in my 20s at the time, I thought it was beautiful but it didn’t pierce my heart the way age does for us.”

Fast forward to 2007, when the movie was the subject of a sermon at a different Manhattan church. This time Killeen learned that the film was based on a short story by Danish author Isak Dinesen. She read the story and grasped the message of “overwhelming and scandalous grace.” It changed her life.

For the last decade she has devoted herself to adapting the story for the stage. That mission will be fulfilled in January, when the theatrical production of *Babette’s Feast* has its world premiere at Portland Stage Company, Maine’s leading professional theatre.

“It’s a call that is strong,” she says. “It’s been my full-time, uncompensated job. My husband jokes that our third child is named Babette.”

Killeen, 42, spoke about her experience as the play’s conceiver and developer one morning in midtown Manhattan while in the city for the show’s casting. She was on sabbatical from her position as an associate theater professor at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine.

“The story hit me in such a different way than the film. It’s such a work of beauty. I thought there’s more to mine with Babette being a political refugee. That could really get teased out. The film was so focused on the food and the preparation. We can’t do that onstage, so we’re free to examine the effects of the feast.”

In the story and film, Babette is a refugee from 19th-century revolutionary Paris. She has seen her husband and son killed, and she has participated in protests. A friend writes to two spinster sisters he knew years ago in Berlevåg, on the northeastern edge of Norway, and asks them to take Babette in. They do, and she becomes their housekeeper, living in the cold and dreary town with its austere religious residents.

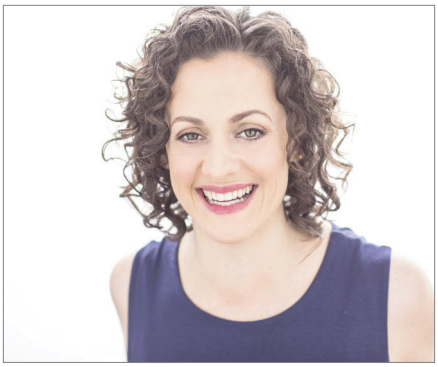
After many years, Babette learns that she has won a large sum from a lottery ticket bought for her by a friend. Rather than return to Paris and live comfortably for the rest of her days, she spends the entire sum on importing rich foods and wines for a grand feast she spends days preparing for the townsfolk, who have spent their lives dining on salted cod and bread and ale soup.

In reading the story when she did, Killeen discerned a different focus from the movie she had seen years before. She collaborated with Rose Courtney, a theater colleague, to develop the script that incorporates much of Dinesen’s language. Courtney wrote the final script. The play is being helmed by Karin Coonrod, a New York-based experimental director.

The play’s development has been thorough, including a sold-out workshop production in New York and the support of New York Theatre Workshop, a major developer of new theatrical work.

“We’re in a different culture than when the film came out 30 years ago,” Killeen says. “We’re in the middle of the largest refugee crisis since World War II. This is a timely story. It’s classic, but the themes are vital for today.”

With that in mind, Killeen thought it was important to open the show in Portland, a refugee resettlement city. It also influenced



Production creator Abigail Killeen

her decision in casting the role of Babette.

"It's part of paying attention to the moment," Killeen said. "This is what a refugee looks like. Our casting has to reflect that. It's not a statement but an honest way to tell the truth."

The two other major roles will be the sisters. Killeen will play one, and the other will be played by Juliana Francis Kelly. They will be joined by six ensemble members. The show runs under 90 minutes with no intermission.

Because staging a play eight times a week with a vast array of food would be not only difficult but extremely expensive, Killeen has reimagined Babette's offering.

"We'll be communicating in movement and music," she said. "There's no food."

Killeen quoted director Coonrod as saying that if people walk away thinking the feast was about food, the production will have failed.

"The feast is a banquet in a metaphorical sense," Killeen said. "It's a feast of equality. The diners don't understand what they're eating. Babette gives them an hour of the millennium, tasting the divine. God asks us to taste him and see that it is good. What comes upon them, they can only taste a fraction of and yet it keeps coming. The grace is that they don't have to understand. They don't have the words, but it's showered on them in great abundance. That's what we're trying to get at with the feast."

Gina Leishman has composed original music and Aretha Aoki is the dance consultant. The production will be minimally staged to reflect the ferocity of the rocky Norwegian landscape above the Arctic Circle. Two-time Tony winner Christopher Akerlind will be the scenic and lighting designer.

"The experience of the triune God happens in this tiny, isolated town through Babette, a complex figure, a mysterious stranger who actively participated in a violent uprising. She's a woman who encompasses light and dark, and God uses her."

And she is a refugee, and her story is being told in a city with a large population of African refugees. The production team, working with Portland's Catholic Charities and Lindsay Sterling's Immigrant Kitchens, will offer cooking classes in which the city's refugees will teach locals to cook dishes from their country. Over three hours, they will prepare and eat the meals together.

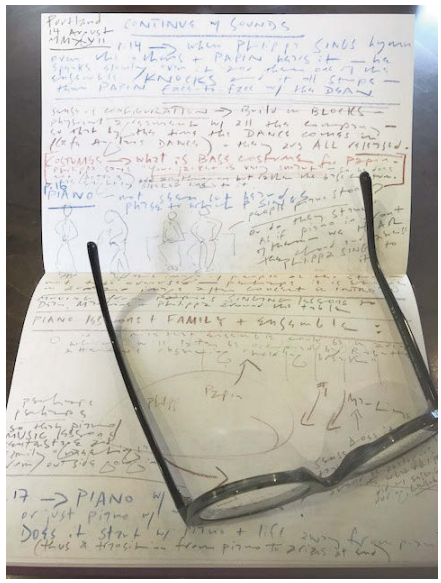
"Theater provides a communal experience," Killeen says. "It is as close to a feast as any translated art form could be. Cooking is an artistic act, and so is theatre. Fellowship in a meal is like a memory of a theatrical experience."

Killeen's hope is that the show will have an immediate transfer to Off-Broadway's Theatre at St. Clement's after it closes in Maine on Feb. 18. Julia Beardsley O'Brien is her producing partner in New York.

She dreams of taking the show to the Vatican, since learning from the Rev. Evan Pillsbury, rector of Light of Christ Anglican Church, that Pope Francis loves the film. She wrote two letters to Boston's Cardinal Sean O'Malley asking him to inform the pontiff of her production but she has received no reply.

Killeen has faced rejection because of the project. Many people told her she was crazy to pursue it, and still tell her that, just as they told the film's director, Gabriel Axel, who fought for his project long before it won an Oscar.

"Even as people said no, it was always gracious and with great respect," Killeen said. "It renewed my thought that we had something. I could let it reveal its path to me. I had to keep shepherding it."



Abigail Killeen photos

The director's script (top), Berlevåg, Norway, around midnight in July 2013 (middle), and Berlevåg from across the water

Retta Blaney is an award-winning journalist and the author of Working on the Inside: The Spiritual Life Through the Eyes of Actors.

Thomas Magno photographs

Jewish and Christian themes blend in the iconography of the sculptures in Chapel of the Good Shepherd at St. Peter's Lutheran Church.

CULTURES

'Every Day Is a Resurrection'

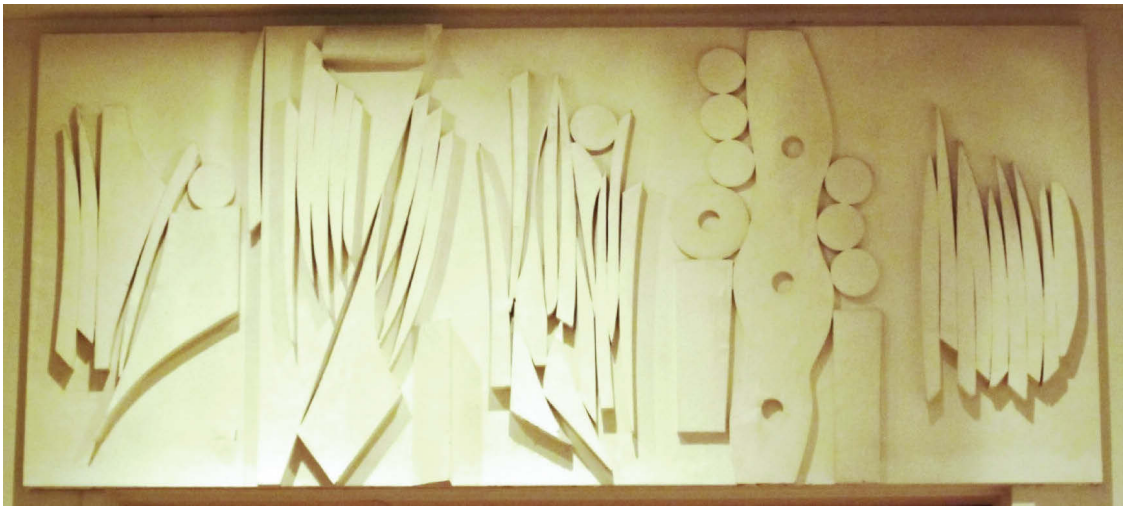
By Dennis Raverty

In the heart of midtown Manhattan at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, in the small Chapel of the Good Shepherd, is a permanent installation of wood relief constructions that cover every wall, enveloping the viewer on all sides in a sculptural environment. The work was conceived for this space, and was designed by internationally renowned sculptor Louise Nevelson during the mid-1970s, at the height of the artist's mature powers. Nevelson was one of that postwar generation of sculptors who, along with Alberto Giacometti and David Smith, took on sublime and often tragic existential themes in their imposing, robust, and romantic works.

Nevelson was a non-observant Jew originally hailing from Eastern Europe who had previously fulfilled sculptural commissions for synagogues, and in this, her first work for a Christian church, she blends Jewish and Christian themes in the iconography of the chapel sculptures and transcend divisions between the two faiths.

The striking cross that hangs behind the small altar in the chapel features relentlessly vertical wooden elements that form the corpus of Christ against a field of gold leaf, perhaps an echo of the Orthodox icons of her homeland. The body is represented here by a series of slim wooden forms, suggesting resurrection rather than suffering and death. The upward movement is reinforced by the vertical shaft of white that dominates and divides the gold ground — the only color other than white in the chapel. The crossbars are rendered in lower relief as if the upward thrust is of primary importance, the horizontal forms merely marking the ascent. Nevelson's cross is not so much a torture instrument as a "launching" device.

On the east wall is an abstract representation of the apostles, and a



This sculpture refers to grains of wheat and grapes, which are elements of both the Jewish Shabbat and the Christian Eucharist.

horizontal sculpture over the doorway refers to grains of wheat and grapes, thence to both the Jewish Shabbat and the Christian Eucharist. Their placement on the lintel over the doorway also recalls the Passover, when smeared paschal blood served as a sign for the angel of death.

Dominating the chapel, *Sky Vestment* encompasses the entire south wall in a large, trapezoidal relief sculpture that resembles in its overall shape the clerical vestment worn by a priest celebrating Mass (the chasuble), arms extended. Nevelson was undoubtedly influenced by Matisse's famous designs for vestments from his Chapelle du Rosaire de Vence. It's as if Nevelson bleached the older master's brilliant color, leaving only the bare bones of geometric structural composition and enlarging it to monumental sculptural proportions.

In overall arrangement, *Sky Vestment* presents a variation on the triptych, the traditional format for a Christian altarpiece of three panels. Instead of one larger rectangular central panel flanked by smaller wings, each section of Nevelson's large triptych are equilateral triangles of identical size: the central panel rests on its base pointing upward, the others on their tip pointing downward.

The opposed directionality of the triangular sections and overall trapezoidal form gives the work a dynamism, elaborated in the almost baroque composition of the relief with multiple ascending and descending abstract shapes that suggest swift movement (like swarms of cherubs in a 17th-century Assumption).

These elements both radiate downward from the top center of the piece like rays of light and push upward from the constricted forms at the bottom of the central panel, ready to burst and propel skyward the cluster of vertical forms at the apex of the composition, above the head of the viewer. All the forms in this almost operatic drama relate directly to the scale of the human body, and may be experienced viscerally when encountering the sculpture.

The central aggregate form in Nevelson's composition adopts the same position as a rondelle on the back of a chasuble, echoing the figure of the nearby cross. Often inscribed with the Cristogram or other decorative elements, the rondelle mirrors the Y-shaped cross at the front of the chasuble marking the intersection of orphreys over the heart of the celebrant, the arms of the cross anticipating the priest's posture. In an East-facing Mass, the rondelle serves as a symbolic corridor, through the celebrant's heart as it were, for the movement of sacramental grace down and out to the congregation.

Likewise, the highly charged, aggregate form or figure in *Sky Vestment* stands at the intersection of multiple forces, holding them in equilibrium. One might view this as an abstract representation of the Resurrection or Ascension with witnesses below, with the void at the apex recalling the unrepresentable God of Israel, a visual *via negativa*.

But the combined upward and downward compositional movement also suggests the superimposed triangles of the *Megan David* (Star of David). The upward pointing triangle represents human aspiration, while the downward anticipates the bestowing of divine aid. *Tikkun Olam*, the healing and redemption of the world, will only be accomplished by divine-human cooperation. In the words of Nevelson, "Every day is a resurrection."

Dennis Raverty is an associate professor of art history at New Jersey City University, specializing in art of the 19th and 20th centuries.

A Gourmet Menu Everyone Can Afford

Review by Emily Hylden

My dad always said, "I don't envy you the distractions that you'll have to face in your life and career; before the Internet, life was so much quieter." In a similar way, our rapidly changing food culture shapes our habits and imaginations. It even shapes our spiritual lives — or so is the argument of David Brazzeal in *Pray Like a Gourmet*.

Drawing heavily and consistently from the analogy of a long, richly diverse meal, Brazzeal, composer and international nomad, invites readers to sit and stay awhile with God. Drawing us in with his experience of spiritual desert, he offers a buffet for retraining our soul's palette, coming to calm in God's presence, enjoying new experiences in the life of prayer, trying different cuisines at God's table.

This book truly resembles a cookbook in its ability to be read and absorbed a few pages at a time.

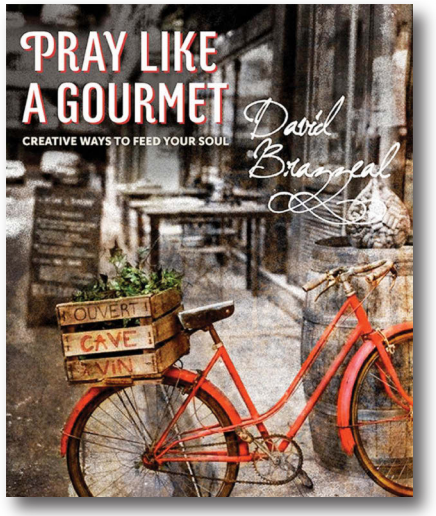
His book is split into three parts, the first laying out the menu before his readers, finding the foundation of his offering in his life experience, guiding the reader through the smorgasbord like a good sommelier. In the main course (part 2), he charts 11 aspects of prayer, ways of communicating with God through blessing, thanks, and praise, as well as lament, confession, and interceding.

After explaining each concept in a few accessible pages, he outlines several ways to prepare and experiment with this new ingredient of prayer's life. His list is introductory rather than exhaustive, working always to encourage pilgrims to continue on their journeys of prayer, led by the hand of God, the ultimate master chef de cuisine. The last section continues this trend, giving insights from Brazzeal's life, again, to spur burgeoning cooks on their trips through the kitchen of prayer, acknowledging the inexhaustibility of ingredients.

Encouraging incremental changes as the bedrock of lasting transformation, *Pray Like a Gourmet* is easy to read in small tastes and readily applicable to small moments in a day. Like *Long Days of Small Things*, a book geared toward mothers of young children with the same message of tying prayer to everyday moments of routine, this book truly resembles a cookbook in its ability to be read and absorbed a few pages at a time, or in a glut of spiritual direction. It takes a few chapters to stop rolling one's eyes at the relentless metaphor of food and cooking, but the analogy can be as addicting as fresh tomatoes in July.

It struck me that the analogy, helpful though it is, plays into assumptions of upper-middle-class Western life. What about those who do shift work and have no time for leisurely sipping of wine around the table? How about people who live in food deserts? And even on the other end of the spectrum, as locavore movements become mainstream, how revolutionary is this way of eating anyway?

Of course, this cuts to deeper fissures in our society, ones borne out every Sunday as we are complicit in different facets of the most segregated hour of Christian America.



Pray Like a Gourmet
Creative Ways to Feed Your Soul
By **David Brazzeal**
Paraclete. Pp. 192. $18.99

Though the commanding metaphor is mixed in its accessibility to many classes of people, its roots in a scriptural understanding of God's interaction with humanity, through a meal, rescues it from complete oblivion. Like any sort of food, attention and contemplation of the metaphor's complexity provides much grist for the mill.

I wonder how careful cooking from this book might reshape readers' spiritual lives — dumping us out of our proverbial frying pans of comfort into a refining new habit of myriad methods of prayer, learning a level of ease with stumbling and staggering through strange rituals, and opening ourselves to the Holy Spirit's direction.

Though I doubt Brazzeal would understand this volume as a diet cookbook, I believe it's very much meant to offer a reprogramming of our souls for deeper, more meaningful conversation with God, traversing a varied landscape together of color, texture, temperature, and flavor. *Pray Like a Gourmet* is a regimen meant to transform and bring lasting change, waking spiritual taste buds to a whole world of God's great love. ❏

‘To the Bottom of the Night’

A study day on proclaiming the Word of God in Advent

December 2 / St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia

Walk through the lectionary texts for the four Sundays in Advent with two of our church’s most prominent preachers and teachers.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us.

The Rev. Fleming Rutledge is author of *The Crucifixion* (Winner of the 2016 Book of the Year Award, *Christianity Today*) and many sermon collections.

Dr. Joseph Mangina is Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Toronto, editor of *Pro Ecclesia*, and author of the Brazos theological commentary on the Book of Revelation.

In partnership with The Living Church

Registration: $35, with lunch included. For payment options and for more information, go online to **bit.ly/ProclamAdvent** or contact Jeremiah Mustered, jmustered@diopa.org.

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Camp Weed, Florida • February 8-10

More and more, Episcopal dioceses are relying on local formation to **train leaders for parish ministry**. Join us for thoughtful consideration of different local formation models and creative partnerships with our church’s traditional seminaries.

Keynote speakers: Dan Aleshire, J. Neil Alexander, George Sumner, and Jane Williams

Others: Garwood Anderson, Don Compier, Susan Daughtry, Douglas Dupree, Jason Fout, and John Lewis

Registration: $100, with comfortable hotel-style accommodations and meals at Camp Weed for your two-night stay. $264 for single-occupancy room, $189 for double-occupancy.

In partnership with The Living Church

Register at campweed.org/wisdom-calling

Questions? Contact Jordan Hylden (jlhylden@livingchurch.org) or Douglas Dupree (Ddupree@diocesefl.org).

Eames

(Continued from page 11)

the Resurrection," Eames wrote. "Above all other passages of scripture, the final weeks of Christ's earthly ministry and especially the events at Calvary have given most relevance to my experience. This I have found in personal reflection and periods of spiritual heart-searching.

"With my memories of ministry during the Troubles it was the Passion, suffering and resurrection of Christ which spoke most clearly to me as an individual. When faced with tragic situations it was there I found most understanding of 'the God in all this.' One of the dangers of Christian ministry lies in having a neat and seemingly certain explanation for every eventuality of daily life."

The Troubles, he writes, "called for a suffering Church alongside a suffering community, but also a Church prepared to point the way forward towards hope. Sharing in the suffering of Calvary helped the believer to sense something of the glory of Easter Day. Sharing in the suffering of all those 'Enniskillens' called the Church to point towards a resurrection in ways that could make an ultimate sense of it all."

John Martin

Church Seeks Bishop for ACC

Nominations are open through Nov. 20 for a bishop to serve on the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) to fill a slot left by the expired term of the Rt. Rev. Ian Douglas, Bishop of Connecticut.

The ACC is one of the four Instruments of Communion. The role of the ACC is to enable cooperative work among the churches of the Anglican Communion.

The term is for three meetings of the ACC, which is generally nine years. The triennial meetings require a two-week commitment. The next ACC meeting is scheduled for 2019, at a location to be determined.

Among the requirements, the bishop must be a member of the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops. A thorough knowledge of the Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Church is required, as well as familiarity with their governance structures.

Office of Public Affairs

Abp. Ntahoturi Begins New Work

The Most Rev. Bernard Ntahoturi, former Primate of Burundi, has been installed as director of the Anglican Centre in Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury's representative to the Holy See.

The archbishop was installed Oct. 27 during Anglican evensong at the Oratorio di San Francesco Saverio del Caravita, a frequent host church for Anglican Centre events.

In the morning, the Archbishop of Canterbury escorted Archbishop Ntahoturi to the Vatican for a private audience with Pope Francis. They then joined the pope for lunch at his residence.

Archbishop Welby introduces Pope Francis to Archbishop Ntahoturi. Anglican Centre in Rome photo

"It is not common for Francis to invite people he meets for official audiences to lunch so the gesture can be read as a sign of the warmth and ease of the relationship that exists between the Pope and Welby," Christopher Lamb wrote for *The Tablet*.

Ntahoturi is a former civil servant who served as chief of staff to Burundi's President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza from 1979 to 1986. He served four years in prison after the 1987 military coup. Later, he was appointed Bishop of Matana and then Archbishop of Burundi. He also worked as vice chairman of the country's commission on truth and reconciliation.

In an interview for the Diocese of Chicago's *Thrive* magazine, Jim Naughton asked Ntahoturi whether the work of the centre could be affected by tensions within the Anglican Communion and disagreements with the Vatican on issues such as the ordination of women.

"Issues will always be there in any organization in any human society," he said. "For me, I feel that the only place where we shall not have differences and issues is when we get to heaven.

"So I believe that those questions within the Anglican Communion between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church and others will continue, but what is important to me is, 'Are we ready, are we willing, to sit and discuss and accept that in spite of those issues we can continue witnessing to the world?'

"When we talk about unity, I don't think we will be talking about an organic unity — that we be under the same umbrella — but the unity that Jesus Christ prayed for, and that I think we should be encouraging now. It is a unity of saying, 'Can we join hands and then witness to the world in action and also through our faith?'"

ACNS

Correction

TLC reported a diocesan affiliation incorrectly in "'Total Dependence Upon God' in Mexico" [Oct. 22]. All of the State of Oaxaca is within the Diocese of Southeastern Mexico, led by Bishop Benito Juarez-Martinez. Thanks to the Rev. Bruce M. Shipman, priest-in-charge at Holy Trinity Church in Oaxaca, for this correction.

TLC Foundation Elections

The board of directors of the Living Church Foundation Inc. has elected the Rt. Rev. John C. Bauerschmidt, Bishop of Tennessee, as president.

Bauerschmidt, who was also re-elected to a second three-year term on the board, succeeds the Rt. Rev. D. Bruce MacPherson. The third Bishop of Western Louisiana and assisting bishop at All Souls' Church in Oklahoma City, MacPherson served as the board's president for four years. He has retired from the foundation after 14 years.

MacPherson said he and his wife, Susan, will continue to support the work of the Living Church Foundation.

"TLC has held a place in our home since 1967 — 50 years this year," he said. "We have shared in a multitude of interesting and challenging days over the years and have witnessed exciting changes and growth in the magazine and related ministries."

Additional elections to the board for a three-year term include the Rev. S. Thomas Kincaid III, who has served as treasurer and is vice rector of Church of the Incarnation, Dallas, and Richard Clements, CEO of an Oklahoma City-based manufacturer and former chairman of the Episcopal Church Foundation.

Also elected were new and returning members of the foundation. New members elected for a three-year term are:

• Kathleen Alexander, an independent consultant and recent chair of the board of trustees for the Washington International School

• The Rt. Rev. Christopher Cocksworth, Bishop of Coventry

• Neva Rae Fox, the Episcopal Church's public affairs officer

• The Rt. Rev. Daniel G.P. Gutiérrez, Bishop of Pennsylvania

• Wesley Hill, associate professor of biblical studies at Trinity School for Ministry

• Catherine Whittinghill Illingworth, a doctoral student at UCLA and adjunct professor of the humanities at Pepperdine University

• The Very Rev. Ian Markham, dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary

• The Rev. Mark Michael, rector of St. Francis Episcopal Church in Potomac, Maryland

• The Rt. Rev. Jo Bailey Wells, Bishop of Dorking in the Church of England's Diocese of Guildford

Members re-elected for a three-year term are:

• The Rt. Rev. Stephen Andrews, principal of Wycliffe College, Toronto

• The Rev. Jordan Hylden, TLC associate editor and canon theologian for the Episcopal Diocese of Dallas

• The Rt. Rev. Steven Miller, Bishop of Milwaukee

• Daniel Muth, senior staff nuclear fuel engineer for Exelon Power Corp.

• The Most Rev. Bernard Ntahoturi, director of the Anglican Centre in Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury's representative to the Holy See, and former Archbishop of Burundi

• The Rev. Walter "Chip" Prehn, interim headmaster of St. John's Parish Day School in Ellicott City, Maryland

• The Rev. Dr. Ephraim Radner, professor of historical theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto

In addition to MacPherson, the Rt. Rev. Edward S. Little, Bishop of Northern Indiana, and Kenneth A. Ross III have retired from the foundation.

PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Roy Allison** is rector of St. James', Ormond Beach, FL.

The Rev. **E. Lucious "Andy" Anderson** is executive director of St. Mary's Sewanee.

The Rev. **Donna Lynn Arellano** is a deacon at Trinity Cathedral, Sacramento.

The Rev. **Ricardo Avila** is rector of St. Luke's, Los Gatos, CA.

The Rev. **Bert Baetz** is rector of St. Peter's, Kerrville, TX.

Jacqueline F. Ballou is vice president for finance and operations at Virginia Theological Seminary.

The Rev. **Robert Beazley** is associate rector and school chaplain at St. Andrew's, New Orleans.

The Rev. **Jean Beniste** is canon for Latino ministry at Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis.

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The Rev. **Brenton H. Carey** is interim rector of St. Michael and All Angels, Mission, KS.

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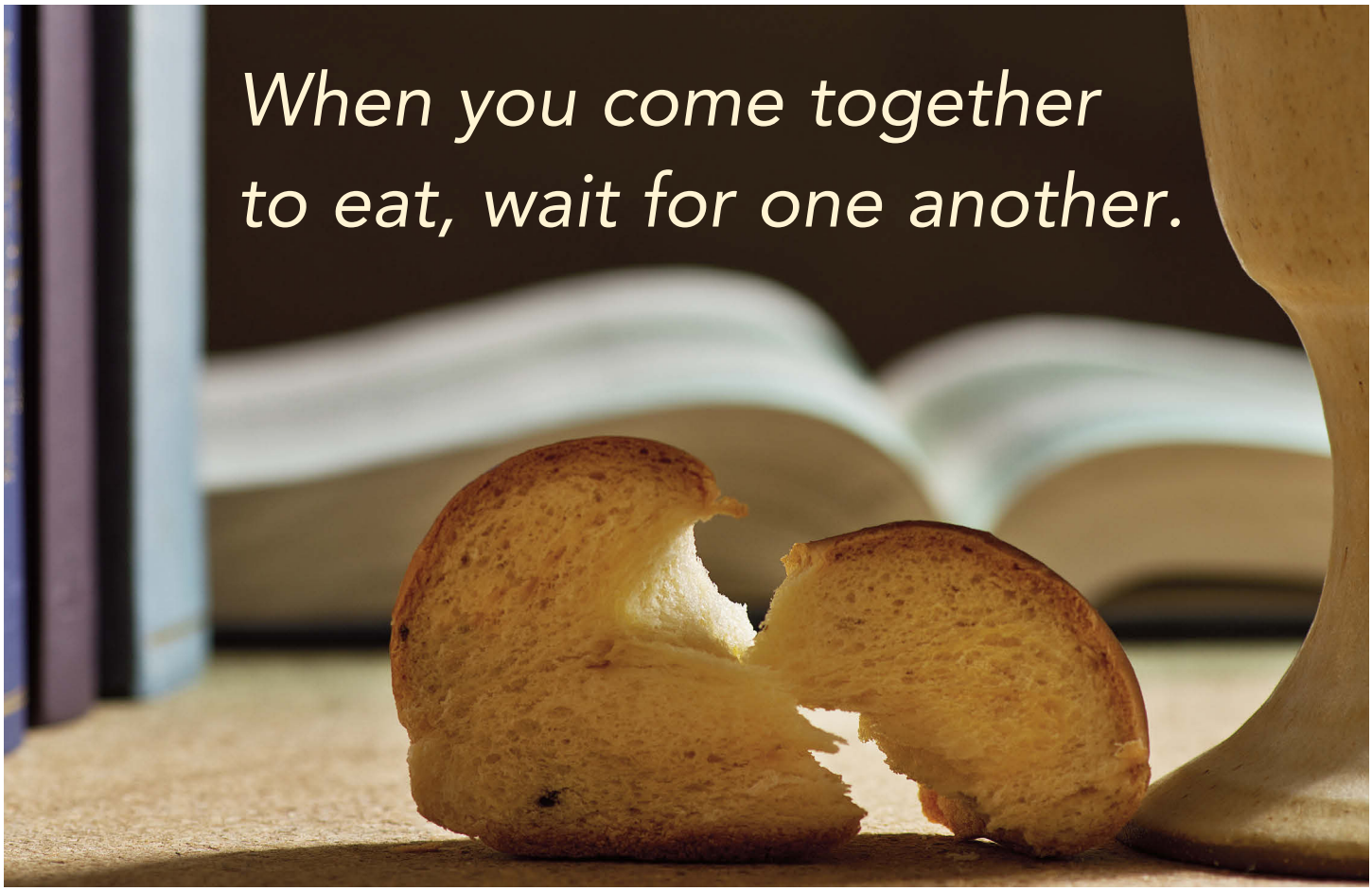

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SUNDAY'S READINGS | 24 Pentecost, November 19

Judges 4:1-7 or Zeph. 1:7,12-18 • Ps. 123 or Ps. 90:1-8 (9-11), 12
1 Thess. 5:1-11 • Matt. 25:14-30

Talents and Time

"God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:9). This bears repeating, as wrath seems to roar in the readings appointed for the last weeks of the Church year and the beginning of Advent. "God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation though our Lord Jesus Christ." We are here, in church, presenting ourselves before God in full confidence that we have an inheritance with the saints in light, salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.

We are also here to keep time, to watch, to observe ourselves with an honest eye. We are here to admit what we have done and left undone in the short time we all have. "The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away" (Ps. 90:10). The call of God upon our lives, the gifts that God has bestowed on us, and the demand that we do some good work in the world in the limited time we have will — if wasted, if squandered, if hidden — bear fruit in what the Bible calls the Day of the Lord. "The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness" (Zeph. 1:14-15).

Are we awake to the passing of time? Are we vigilant in the moment? "For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5:2). Are we careful and thoughtful, alert to the promptings of grace in our lives, and diligent and prudent in our use of time? In the world of the Bible, God's wrath falls upon those who are at ease, who rest complacently, who squander the preciousness of their lives. How are we living?

Jesus tells a story about a man who entrusted his servant with his property. One servant is given five talents, another is given two, and a third is given one. The first two servants invest their talents and, when the master returns, return the talents with interest, for which they are commended and called to "enter into the joy of your master" (Matt. 25:21). The servant with one talent, fearing the severity of the master, shows extreme caution. He digs a hole in the ground and hides the talent. That is, he fails to use it, to invest it, to make it prosper. Are we at ease, complacent, lazy? Do we tell ourselves we have all the time in the world?

Salvation is a gift, but a gift that is worked out in time. It is a life lived to the glory of God. These hard lessons are saying that we each have something to do. "For this end God gave us speech, and hands, and feet, and strength of body, and mind, and understanding, that we might use all these things, both for our own salvation, and for our neighbor's advantage" (John Chrysostom, Homily LXXVII, on the Gospel of St. Matthew). It is a beautiful part of our salvation to be told that God has work for us to do in the world. It is a blessing to till and keep, to labor for God and for the world. Be bold to invest.

Look It Up

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:8.

Think About It

In your work, remember to wear faith, love, and hope.

SUNDAY'S READINGS | Last Sunday after Pentecost, November 26

Ez. 34:11-16; 20-24 • Ps. 100 or Ps. 95:1-7a
Eph. 1:15-23 • Matt. 25:31-46

Hidden Intervention

The Word of God is alive and creative."I, the LORD, have spoken" (Ez. 34:24). The Lord speaks and it is so. God creates, sustains, and observes in love all being, and yet God is not indifferent to evil designs and the harm they unleash. "The LORD saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). What, according to the Bible, does God say and do in the face of widespread injustice, the abuse of the weak by the strong?

"I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide" (Ez. 34:20-21). There is an answer, an intervention, a sweeping litany of caring acts on behalf of the weak all punctuated with the personal pronoun *I*. "I, the LORD, have spoken." "I myself will search for my sheep," "I will seek," "I will rescue," "I will bring them out," "I will feed them," "I will make them lie down," "I will bring back the strayed," "I will bind up the injured," "I will strengthen the weak," "I will save the flock," "I will set over them one shepherd," "I will be their God" (Ez. 34:11-16, 20-24).

Precisely how and when this intervention occurs is left to our imagining. "Concerning that day and hour no one knows" (Matt. 24:36). What is not left an open question is how to wait. Stay awake. Watch. Be vigilant. The Nicene Creed, in the original Greek, evokes urgency by using the present participle in reference to a final judgment. "Jesus Christ coming" (ἐρχόμενον) again to judge the living and the dead. The Latin version uses the future participle (*venturus est*) to suggest an immediate future: "He is about to come." The future tense in the customary English translation may be taken to suggest a long delay, as if nothing is impending. No! Christ the King is about to come. That is the proper manner of Christian waiting in every generation. He is coming. He is at the door. The end is near.

Already, God is acting. God once said to Moses, "I have come down to deliver [my people] from the Egyptians" (Gen. 3:8). God will do what God will do, though often through frail human vessels. "So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt" (Ex. 3:10). Jesus says to his disciples, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21). He says to Peter, "Feed my lambs, tend my sheep" (John 21:15-17). Jesus sent and still sends his disciples to feed and tend and protect and encourage and heal. It is urgent and necessary work flowing directly from the ministry and grace of Christ. The church is God's hidden and mysterious intervention.

What then are we to do? Do we simply run in every direction, compulsive and impetuous in our desire to do good deeds? Do we use other people to prove our goodness? God forbid! Here a long pause and deep stillness are required; maturity and wisdom. God wants us to feed and tend, in works humble or great, out of nothing more than compassion, without any thought of doing some extraordinary thing, without conscious thought even of God. "When did we see you?" Jesus disappears in every good work. He is every human need and every work of compassion, though hidden in darkness. "He vanished from their sight" (Luke 24:31).

Look It Up

Read Matthew 25:37.

Think About It

Practice *not seeing Jesus*. Live your life and draw near to others in loving compassion.

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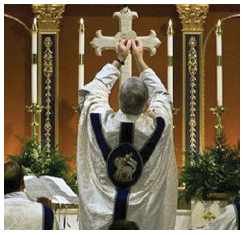

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The Wilton Diptych (detail), c. 1395-1399

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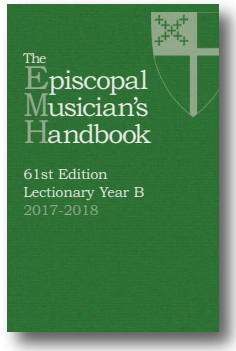

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1302 W. Kiest Blvd. • 214.371.3441
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DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH
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fwepiscopal.org

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TRINITY SCHOOL OF MIDLAND
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432.697.3281
trinitymidland.org

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campallen.org

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dwtx.org

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DIOCESE OF UTAH
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episcopal-ut.org

Charlottesville, Virginia
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100 W. Jefferson St.
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mbird.com

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thediocese.net

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304.344.3597
wvdiocese.org

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DIOCESE OF FOND DU LAC
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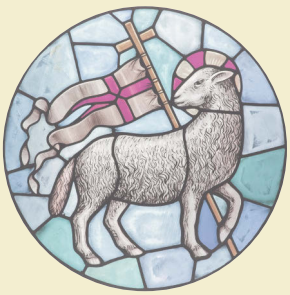
920.830.8866
episcopalfonddulac.org

SOCIETY OF MARY
AMERICAN REGION
Superior: Fr. John D. Alexander
114 George St.
Providence, RI 02906-1189
somamerica.org



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114 W. Roosevelt St.
602.254.0976
azdiocese.org

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913 Wilson Rd. • 302.256.0374
dioceseofdelaware.net

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goodshepherdmaitland.com

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DIOCESE OF SOUTHEAST FLORIDA
525 N.E. 15 St. • 305.373.0881
diosef.org

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christthekingfl.org

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hc-ec.org

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ednin.org

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225 37th St. • 515.277.6165
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1030 Johnston St. • 337.232.2732
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143 State St. • 207.772-1953
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30 Brimmer St. • 617.523.2377
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702.737.9190
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EASTERN PROVINCE
242 Cloister Way • 518.692.3028
stmaryseast.org

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3825 E. Henrietta Rd. Ste. 100
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calvarystgeorges.org

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csschurch.org

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littlechurch.org

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chfepiscopal.org

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diocese-eastcarolina.org

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holymichael.org

Winston-Salem, North Carolina
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ndepiscopal.org

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standrewspgh.org

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615.824.2910
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110 S. Alma Dr. • 214.785.1612
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5100 Ross Ave. • 214.823.8134
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623 Ector St. • 940.387.2622
stdavidsdenton.org

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345 Piney Point Rd.
713.782.1270
sfch.org

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2700 Warren Cir. • 972.255.4171
redeemer-irving.org

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nwtdiocese.org

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118 S. Bois d'Arc • 903.597.9854
christchurchtyler.org

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1624 Wooded Acres Dr.
254.772.1982
holyspiritwaco.com

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CHRIST CHURCH
120 High St. W. • 434.293.2347
christchurchcville.org

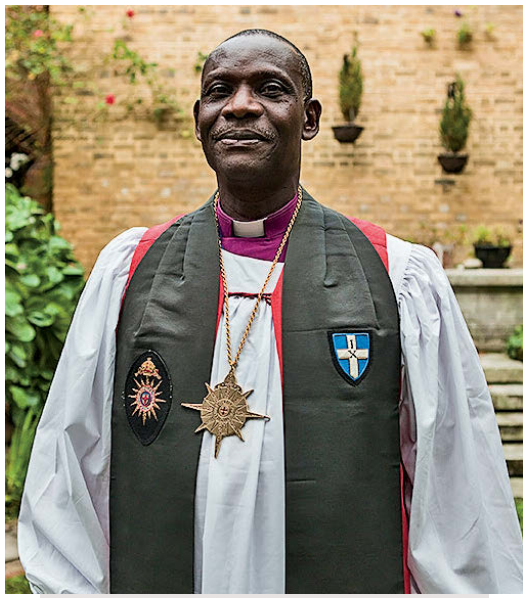
Seattle, Washington
DIOCESE OF OLYMPIA
1551 10th Ave. E • 206.325.4200
ecww.org

Delavan, Wisconsin
CHRIST CHURCH
503 E. Walworth Ave.
262.728.5292
christchurchdelavan.com

CELEBRATING *the* COMMUNION *2017-2018*

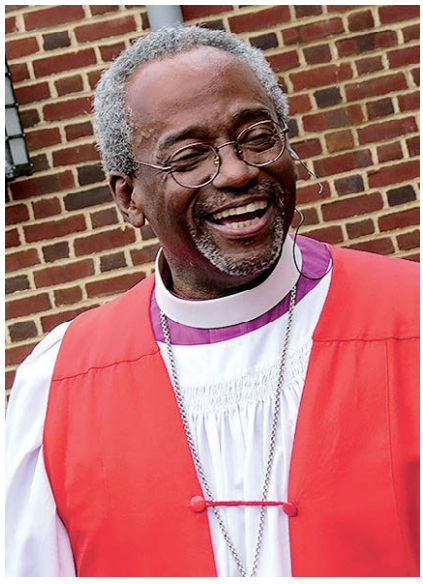
Virginia Theological Seminary's Center for Anglican Communion Studies
Celebrates its 20th Anniversary

NOVEMBER 15, 2017
The Most Rev. Dr. Josiah Idowu-Fearon
Mollegen Lecture: *"The Vitality of World Anglicanism"*



Josiah Idowu-Fearon was appointed Secretary General of the Anglican Communion in 2015. He was awarded the Cross of St. Augustine in 2003. He has expertise in Muslim-Christian relations. In his lecture, and in conversation with panelists, he will bring to the audience an expansive vision of the dynamism of World Anglicanism today and its potential for future growth.

FEBRUARY 1, 2018
The Most Rev. Michael Curry
Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church
Lecture: *"Why the Episcopal Church Needs World Anglicanism"*



The Most Reverend Michael Curry was installed as the 27th Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church on November 1, 2015. Bp. Curry continues to be a deeply respected leader in the Anglican Communion. At VTS he will remind Episcopalians why the Communion is essential. *Register to attend or live stream online on the VTS website:* www.vts.edu.

HIGHLIGHTS AND GUESTS

September 2017–May 2018
Art Exhibit: "Art and Artifacts of the Anglican Communion"
Bishop Payne Library

February 5–28, 2018
Rev. Canon Rosemary Mbogo (Anglican Church of Kenya)

February–March, 2018
Bp. Paul Bayes (Diocese of Liverpool, UK)

March 28–Apr 20, 2018
Canon John Kafwanka (Anglican Communion Office, London)

July 5–13, 2018
Race in the Communion event at General Convention 2018

THE Center *for* Anglican Communion Studies
VIRGINIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY