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February 25, 2018

The Living Church

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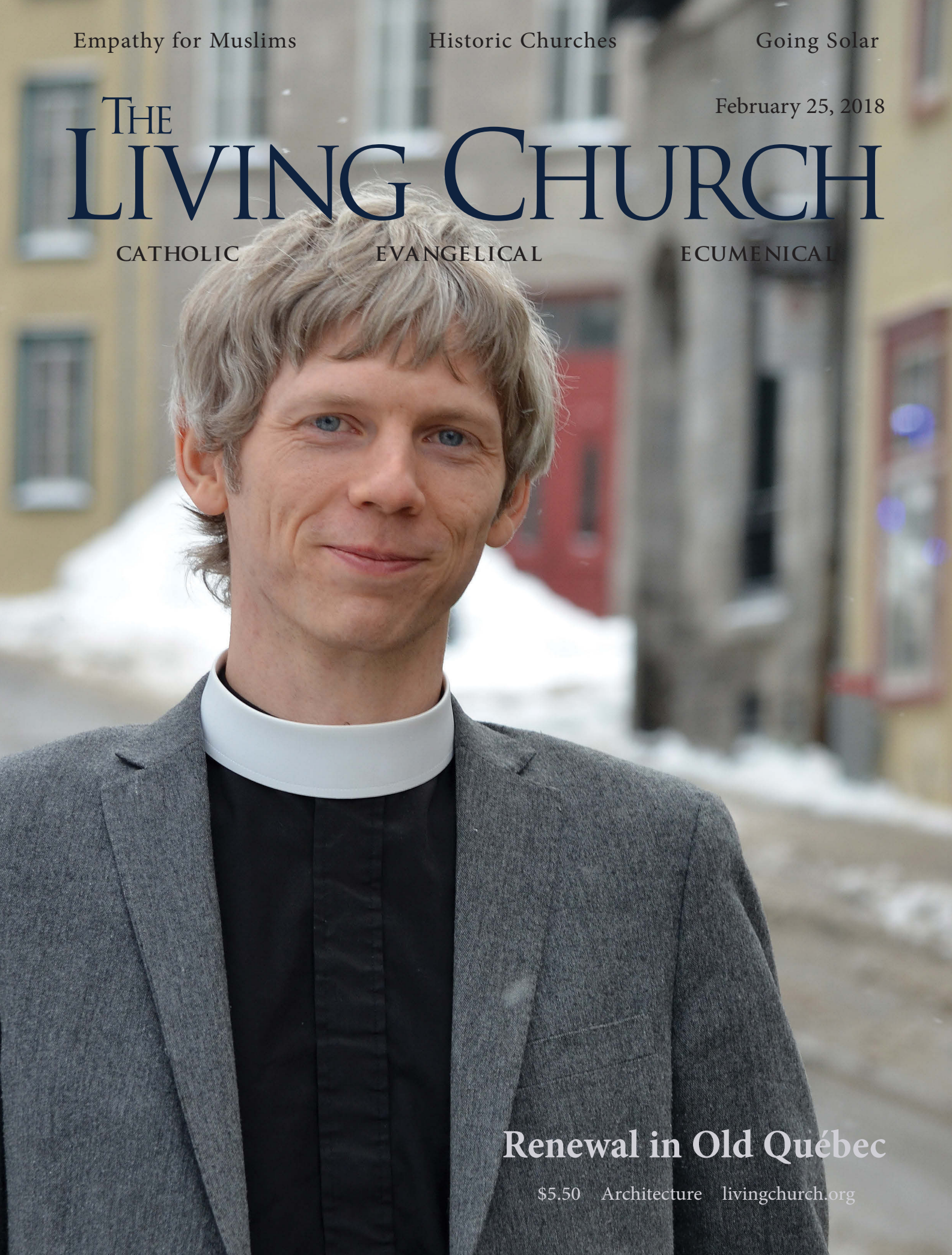

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ON THE COVER

Jeffrey Metcalfe: "I draw on the Benedictine idea because I think our call isn't necessarily to do these big things, but it's to do small things well" (see "To Live in a Small Way, and Live Well," p. 10).

Matthew Townsend photo

The Living Church

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We are grateful to Good Shepherd Church, Dallas [p. 25], the Diocese of Oklahoma [p. 27], and St. David's Church, Wayne [p. 28], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

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‘We’ll Weep When You Weep’

After 2017’s mass shooting at the Grande Mosquée de Québec, the city’s inconspicuous Anglicans built new friendships with Muslims.

Matthew Townsend photo

Marchers at a Jan. 29 vigil in Québec City hold photos of two of the men killed during last year’s mass shooting at the Islamic Cultural Centre of Québec's Grande Mosquée.

QUÉBEC CITY — Shooting sprees have become a sad and seemingly daily part of life in the United States. A steady drumbeat of headlines reminds Americans that the next shooting is never far away: three killed and two injured in Nashville on Jan. 12; five injured in Alachua, Florida, on Jan. 15; two killed and 14 injured in Benton, Kentucky, on Jan. 23; two killed and three injured in Indianapolis on Jan. 28; and nine killed in two separate shootings in Pennsylvania on the same day.

Firearm deaths, in general, are more unusual north of the 49th parallel; Statistics Canada reported 223 firearm homicides in 2016, compared with 247 just in the city of Philadelphia in 2016. Of Canada’s cities, the safest, perhaps, is Québec City — the mostly Francophone capital of the province and former national capital. The city of more than 500,000 saw two murders in 2015 and one in 2016.

However, 2017 became an exceptional year on Jan. 29, when a young man entered the Grande Mosquée de Québec in the Sainte-Foy neighborhood and shot dead six Muslim men shortly after evening prayers: Ibrahima Barry, Mamadou Tanou Barry, Khaled Belkacemi, Aboubaker Thabti, Abdelkrim Hassane, and Azzedine Soufiane. Nineteen others were injured. The shooter, widely reported as expressing anti-refugee and white nationalist sentiments on social media, awaits trial.

The shooting shocked Canada and the world. The next day, 15,000 people showed up for a vigil in the parking lot at the Catholic church across from the site of the shooting. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was among the mourners.

This year, several events in Québec City marked the anniversary of the shooting. Anglicans, in spite of their relatively small population in the city, were visibly present at an interfaith ceremony held in the city’s expo center on Jan. 28 and an open-air vigil held across the street from the Grande Mosquée de Québec on the evening of Jan. 29.

Bishop Bruce Myers of the Diocese of Québec attended both events.

“We’re citizens of this city, we’re people who practice religious faith in this city, and, on top of that, we’re a religious minority who practice faith in this city,” Myers told TLC at the Jan. 29 vigil, which brought more than 1,000 people into the 12-degree weather. “For all of those reasons, we have a fundamental moral obligation to be here, or to in some way express our solidarity and support with another religious minority who hasn’t been here as long as we have.”

Myers first connected with the Islamic Cultural Centre of Québec — of which the Grande Mosquée is a part — before the shooting, after a severed pig’s head was left at the mosque. He said Anglicans have the opportunity to take some of the privileged position that the church has enjoyed for the last two centuries in Québec and “ensure that newer expressions of religious faith in this place have access to the same room and rights and accommodation as we have.”

More basically, though, Anglicans came to stand with people who are hurting and in grief, he said, “who are still very much afraid and still very vulnerable and under threat, and to say *we’re not going to leave you alone, we’ll weep when you weep, and we’ll do everything we can to ensure there won’t be more occasions to weep*.”

The vulnerability Myers mentions is palpable: public expressions of hatred have been on the rise since the attack. Social media and radio programs have given space for derision of Muslims, but some acts have been more physical. In July, a defaced Qur’an was mailed to the mosque where the shooting oc-

curred. The president of the Islamic Cultural Centre of Québec saw his car torched in August.

La Meute, a nativist group born of the internet that opposes Islam in Québec and immigration in general, intended to hold a public rally in August; counter-protesters forcefully hampered those efforts. The Soldiers of Odin, a chapter of the Finnish organization of the same name, have patrolled the streets of Québec City, ostensibly to protect residents from Muslim immigrants. In December, Québec City's police chief said that reported hate crimes against Muslims had doubled in 2017, from 21 to 42.

Expressions of unease have also been political. Bill 62, which prohibits people from covering their faces while using public services, was passed by Québec's Liberal-party government in October. It raised questions about just how someone in a niqab might ride a city bus; the bill has been called both a great victory for secularism and a deep restriction of religious freedom, and a court challenge was filed in November. Likewise, a proposal to name Jan. 29 a "National Day against Islamophobia" was opposed by the province's opposition parties for use of the word *Islamophobia*.

The tension — and even the difficulty finding the vocabulary to describe the situation of Québec's Muslims — has led Myers and other Anglicans to seek ways to nurture friendships. At Jan. 28's interfaith event at the expo center, Myers was one of several interfaith clergy — and two Christians — to address the crowd. He shared a remark by theologian Hans Küng: "There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions."

Much of the event's dialogue was conducted through music from each participating faith group; following Myers's speech, four singers from the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity sang a *Nunc Dimittis* in memory of the victims. Sandra Bender, choirmaster at the cathedral and organizer of the Anglicans' musical contribution, was among the singers.

Matthew Townsend photo

An audience member discusses Islamophobia with a panel at the Jan. 26 "Vivre ensemble avec nos différences," one of several events that marked last year's shooting.

"Our cathedral has a special relationship with the mosque because we reached out to them after the shooting last year," Bender told TLC. "We had an Evensong service that we dedicated to the families of the victims. We collected money to give them at that service. We've been supporting the man who was paralyzed."

As the Jan. 28 interfaith event was being planned, Boufeldja Benabdallah of the Islamic Cultural Centre told civic organizers the participation of only one Christian group was inadequate representation. The Anglicans would have a role to play. That role — the Anglicans' public participation in an event in which Christian representation would typically be limited to Roman Catholics — recently garnered national media attention for the diocese.

Bender said she found participation in the event incredibly moving. She added that she found meaning in being able "to take part in a community that's led by people who are not just tolerant, not just willing to accept [Muslims] here, but happy to reach out and try to build new relationships."

Another aspect of the friendship has grown between Muslims and Anglicans since last year's shooting: social gatherings that bring both groups into the same room. On Oct. 20, the cathedral hosted a dinner that allowed for social interaction between the communities. The Very Rev. Christian Schreiner, dean of the cathedral, said October's dinner was "one of my total, absolute highlights in my 12 years at the cathedral."

Schreiner described receiving a call from his father in Munich on the morning after the shooting, asking him what he would say about the massacre. "I had not heard about it, and I was just completely speechless," he told TLC. "I could not compute these two concepts of a mosque shooting and Québec City," a city with "virtually no violence."

Schreiner said he experienced even more shock after feeling an impulse to commiserate by calling his Muslim friends in the city. "I realized I did not have any Muslim friends in the city," he said. He and his family attended the vigil that night.

Benabdallah, the center's vice president and cofounder, attended the solidarity Evensong after the shooting and Myers's consecration in April; it was then that he issued a call to action to build more relationships between the two groups. That call grew into the October dinner, which mostly comprised young families. Members of the cathedral and the mosque created artwork with their fingerprints — the two paintings they made will hang in their respective houses of worship as a token of friendship.

The dean said the Anglicans' specific inclusion in the commemoration events was deeply touching, and it reveals how the work being done away from podiums, over broken bread, has helped bring healing to Québec City.

"It made a huge difference, as Boufeldja wrote me after, to breathe life into their community," he said. He added that the mosque is now reciprocating their invitation; Anglicans are invited to a dinner at the Grande Mosquée in late February.

Bender said the cathedral's efforts and their fruit have been a very positive experience for her. "I find that Islamophobia is a huge problem in Quebec," she said, noting the Anglican community's willingness to accept Muslims as friends. "We don't say you need to fit into mainstream white, North American culture to be welcome here."

At the vigil, Myers told TLC he sees God present in the willingness of people to show public support for hurting

(Continued on next page)

Grande Mosquée

(Continued from previous page)

people, and in the organic relationships that have formed between people of different religions since the shooting.

"I see God operative in how the different religious communities of this city have come together in a very Spirit-led way — very naturally, without any need to cajole people into gathering together. It's been very spontaneous and very authentic," he said.

"I think God's present in how the Muslim community itself, particularly the families of the victims, has expressed not the slightest hint of anger or vengeance, but grace and thanks for the response they've received from so many people in this city," the bishop said, "even in the face of so much hostility and hatred that we're still seeing and hearing and experiencing towards the Muslim community in this city and province since the attack."

Then Myers returned to the spike in hate crimes reported in December.

"It's a further reminder that there's still much work to do, and the church needs to participate as much as it can."

Matthew Townsend

Inquiries into Abuse Cases

The Church of England and Church in Wales are bracing themselves for three official inquiries into how they handled cases of historic child sexual abuse. The first inquiry begins on March 5 and will last at least three weeks.

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse says its work will include a case study into the Diocese of Chichester. The current Bishop of Chichester, the Rt. Rev. Martin Warner, has admitted that a culture of "ineptitude and irresponsible lack of professionalism" previously existed in the diocese. The admission followed a slew of criminal cases and the jailing of former clergy.

Later in the year it will consider the case of Peter Ball, formerly Bishop of Lewes (a Chichester suffragan see) and later Bishop of Gloucester. That investigation will probe "whether there were inappropriate attempts by people of prominence to interfere in the criminal justice process after he was first accused of child sexual offenses."

The inquiry was instigated by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In recent years the church has strengthened work on safeguarding at parish level. Every parish is now required to appoint a safeguarding officer as well as an advocate for children, backed by a safeguarding committee. Safeguarding is invariably an agenda item at every meeting of parochial church councils.

There are nevertheless worries about robustness of procedures, in particular where they concern historic cases. Allegations against the late Bishop George Bell (Bishop of Chichester, 1929-58) led to the church paying damages to a woman who claimed sexual abuse by Bell. This, however, triggered a high-profile campaign, with supporters of Bell insisting the church's investigations were flawed.

Statements from the Rt. Rev. Peter Hancock and the Church of England's safeguarding team suggest that new information has surfaced about Bell.

"The Church of England's National Safeguarding Team has received fresh information concerning Bishop George Bell," the team's statement said. "Sussex Police have been informed and we will work collaboratively with them. This new information was received following the publication of the Carlile Review, and is now being considered through the Core Group and in accordance with Lord Carlile's recommendations. The Core Group is now in the process of commissioning an independent investigation in respect of these latest developments. As this is a confidential matter we will not be able to say any more about this until inquiries have concluded."

John Martin

Konieczny to Serve on Global Council

The Rt. Rev. Edward J. Konieczny is the new bishop member of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) for the Episcopal Church. Executive Council elected the bishop Jan. 23 to succeed the Rt. Rev. Ian Douglas, whose term has expired. Konieczny, Bishop of Oklahoma, is a member of Executive Council. His term takes effect immediately.

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 set for 2019, at a location to be determined. The ACC is the only instrument of communion that includes clergy and lay people along with bishops.

The Episcopal Church's other ACC members are the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, and Rosalie Ballantine of the Diocese of the Virgin Islands.

Office of Public Affairs

Building Honors Martyr

A new 16-story commercial office suite in the heart of Kampala's financial district will honor the memory of martyred Archbishop Janani Luwum.

The building, was first envisioned by Archbishop Janani before he was martyred on the orders of Idi Amin in February 1977. Janani Luwum Church House is being constructed by the Church of Uganda with the support of Equity Bank of Kenya, and will provide an income stream for the province.

Construction is in its final stages, and tenants expect to move in later this year. Equity Bank, which is expanding across the region, will move its Ugandan corporate headquarters to the building and will become the anchor tenants. The remaining space will be leased to other commercial organizations.

"I get a lot of inspiration from him," Archbishop Stanley Ntagali said of Luwum. "He was a pastor, he was a teacher, he was a counselor, and he was very developmental.

"Church House, which we are about to complete, was his idea. … And that is why the provincial assembly has decided to name it Janani Luwum Church House. We have many things we remember about him: his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; he was a peacemaker — he loved peace and he wanted reconciliation. And that is why he died."

The Church of Uganda's provincial office will remain based near St. Paul's Cathedral on Namirembe Hill.

ACNS

Provisional Nominee

The Rt. Rev. Mark Van Koevering, Assisting Bishop in West Virginia, is the nominee to become Bishop Provisional of Lexington.

The diocese's standing committee announced his selection via email. Lexington will hold its next diocesan convention on Feb. 24.

Van Koevering is a graduate of Michigan State University, where he studied agronomy, genetics, and plant-breeding. He was ordained through the Church in Wales.

He promoted peace and reconciliation in Mozambique with the Mennonite Central Committee, and was elected Bishop of Niassa in 2003. He served in Niassa until 2015, and then began assisting Bishop William Michie Klusmeyer in the Diocese of West Virginia.

The bishop and his wife, the Rev. Helen Van Koevering, have three grown children: Jake, Matt, and Kylie.

Montana to Call Interim

The Diocese of Montana's standing committee has extended the search for a successor to Bishop C. Franklin Brookhart Jr., who has announced his decision to retire.

"Initially we thought that the search process could be completed with the election of a new bishop by Diocesan Convention in October 2018," the committee said in a statement. "After further analysis and the realization of how much needed to be done, a decision was made to extend the search timeframe with the Consecration of our 10th Bishop on December 7, 2019, when the Presiding Bishop can be here."

The result: the diocese will call an interim bishop to service between Nov. 2018 and the election of a new bishop. The standing committee said it "recognizes the need to manage the search process to enable broad participation by congregations while keeping the financial, pastoral, and administrative resources of the diocese in mind."

Hicks Named VP for Church Programs

Josephine Hicks has joined Episcopal Relief and Development in the newly created role of vice president for Episcopal Church programs. She is charged with deepening the organization's programs and engagement within the Episcopal Church.

Hicks will focus on developing programs and resources to meet the needs of Episcopal dioceses and congregations by overseeing staff working with the U.S. Disaster Program, Engagement, and Episcopal Asset Map teams.

A trial lawyer, Hicks has 30 years of experience litigating disputes for a wide range of clients, including public utilities, manufacturers, and other businesses. Most recently, she was a partner with Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein, LLP in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Episcopal Relief & Development

Colin Craston, RIP

The Rev. Canon Colin Craston, a World War II naval hero who became one of England's leading evangelical priests and a chairman of the Anglican Consultative Council, died peacefully at his home Jan. 25. He was 94.

He was educated at Tyndale Hall in Bristol, earning a BA from Bristol University in 1949 and a Bachelor of Divinity from London University in 1951. In 1992, he was awarded a Lambeth Doctorate in Divinity.

Craston was ordained deacon in 1951 and priest in 1952, serving his curacy at St. Nicholas' Church in Durham. In 1954, he became vicar of St. Paul's Church in Bolton, which he served for almost 40 years.

He also served as priest-in-charge and then vicar of Emmanuel Church in Bolton, becoming team rector of the newly created team ministry in 1986. In 1968, he was made an honorary canon of Manchester Cathedral and he also served as Rural Dean of Bolton. In 1985, he was made one of the honorary chaplains to Queen Elizabeth II. He retired in 1992 and retained permission to officiate.

He was elected as the Church of England's clerical member of the Anglican Consultative Council in 1981 and remained on the ACC for 15 years, serving as vice chairman and then chairman of the council from 1990 to 1996.

In 2014, he was awarded a medal by the Russian Federation for his work protecting Arctic convoys during the Second World War. Canon Craston had served as a wireless telegraphist on the Royal Navy destroyer HMS Eclipse for a year before being sent ashore in March 1943. The ship sank seven months later in the Aegean Sea near Greece, killing 119 of the 145-member crew.

After his first wife died, Craston found love again with the Rev. Brenda Fullalove. The couple were married at Lambeth Palace in a service presided over by Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey. He leaves behind Brenda, two children, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

ACNS

Postcard from London

Catholic, High Church, or 'Faffy'?

The Rt. Rev. Pete Broadbent, Acting Bishop of London, is no stranger to disputes, and his use of social media occasionally causes ripples. In 2010, he drew a slap on the wrist from his superior, the Rt. Rev. Richard Chartres, for a tweet about the pending nuptials of Prince William and Katherine Middleton. He predicted the marriage would not last and referred to the Prince's mother — the late Diana, Princess of Wales — as a "porcelain doll." Broadbent was suspended from duty though it is unclear to what extent the ban was implemented.

In late January, Broadbent used his Facebook account to give traction to an advertisement for a parish vacancy in London's Willesden area. The advertisement for a team rector of Uxbridge, a town not far from Heathrow Airport, said the parish was in the "modern catholic tradition." The Facebook discussion that followed prompted one priest to ask, "Do any of you *understand* what Catholic means?"

The online exchanges continued, after which the priest said: "Ahhh you mean 'high church'! a very different thing." The bishop responded: "No, I don't mean high church. High church is faffy ceremonial without teaching the catholic faith. St. Andrew Uxbridge is properly catholic, in that they teach the faith there and inhabit the liturgy."

He added: "High Church in London catholic circles tends to mean just the ceremonial without the deep faith and taught and lived experience that catholic Anglicans understand and live. Ceremony is just an empty shell unless it points people to the incarnate and risen Christ. Beauty of holiness is entirely good but it needs to be rooted."

Alas, media spin depicted Broadbent as attacking Anglo-Catholics. In fact, his elucidations were far more nuanced and important. High church and Anglo-Catholic are not the same, a point not widely understood.

The media controversy points to deeper questions for this wing of the Church. The Diocese of London is an Anglo-Catholic stronghold by tradition. It seems that a tradition that once was an embattled minority has become a victim of its success, but now there is less clarity about its purpose and mission.

Under Archbishop Justin Welby, more and more of the central resources of the Church of England are being redirected to parishes that are implementing strategies for numerical growth. Evangelicals in London lead in this realm, and receive the major share of this funding. The Catholic wing, in contrast, is mostly static, with a certain reluctance to study and apply the church growth principles that are meat and drink to evangelicals. But there are signs of change, and the parish of Uxbridge is one example.

Broadbent found an unlikely defender in Fr. Alan Moses of All Saints', Margaret Street, a famous Anglican Catholic parish in central London. "There's an element of truth in what he says, but it's overstated, in his usual manner," Moses wrote. "He's given to plain-speaking; he will probably call a spade a shovel."

John Martin

Matthew Townsend photo

— Twenty Minutes with Jeffrey Metcalfe —

To Live in a Small Way, and Live Well

The Rev. Canon Jeffrey Metcalfe has a full plate. Recently installed as canon theologian for the Diocese of Québec, Anglican Church of Canada, Metcalfe is also completing his PhD. He's a husband and father, and an Ontario-born Anglophone continuing to hone his French in a very Francophone — and very secular — mission field.

Metcalfe, 30, grew up in a rural area two hours outside of Toronto, completed undergraduate studies in Winnipeg, and earned his MDiv from Trinity College, University of Toronto, in 2011. After ordination, he served three parishes on the remote Magdalen Islands, Québec, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In 2015, he returned to Trinity to begin his doctoral work, developing a theological ethnography of how migration and race are imagined and understood among Québec City's Christians.

Metcalfe also intends to explore how Christians can welcome refugees into a community that has struggled with the arrival of people perceived as racially and religiously different from the majority, with expressions of anti-migration and anti-Muslim sentiment growing into publicly visible right-wing groups and even a mass shooting at the city's Grande Mosquée in January 2017. Six people were killed and another 19 injured.

Metcalfe recently sat for tea with TLC's Matthew Townsend, with whom he spoke about his growing work in the Diocese of Québec, the region's struggles with refugees and racism, and his previous work as a rural priest. The conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

What does it mean to be a canon theologian in Québec? What kind of work will you be doing as this job unfolds?

It feels like, at the same time, both a significant responsibility and a great joy; responsibility in that it's not a normal position for any diocese to have. Every diocese in Canada, probably, will have their financial officers, their retainered lawyers, their experts in stewardship, resources for mission, congregational development. I think we may be the only diocese in Canada that has a full-time canon theologian. That's kind of an odd move to make in a place where the church has very little left.

While our resources are stretched both in terms of people and finances, the leadership and the people (this is a position approved by the diocesan executive committee) have made a statement by creating this position, saying *it's not enough that we make our decisions through the*

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lens of state law and financial prudence. We have other accountabilities that we need to provide for in our decision-making processes. That's the responsibility element, obviously some weight to carry.

It feels like a joy, from a theological perspective and an academic perspective. It's not often that you get to be in a place that is the place in which your theology is given life, the place from which it comes; both because my actual doctoral project is set here, but also because my own understanding of what my task as a theologian is: to be as a servant to the church. So, it's a great privilege and joy.

In terms of pragmatics: I have forming portfolios or tasks, subtasks. One is what I just mentioned: when there are issues that come up, decisions that have to be made, when Bishop Bruce [Myers] calls in the executive director, the financial staff, the chancellor, at some point I will also get a call. First, I like to help engage people in doing their own theological reflection, as well contributing my own. Partially, it's just to provide a level of theological accountability and reflection on every level of our decision-making.

That's also to the service of the parishes. I get called in, occasionally. I was called in to two different parishes that were considering closing, to help walk them theologically through their discernment. My methodology is ethnographic. That's the approach to my own research, so that's the approach I take as the canon theologian.

By doing that, coming to know some of the people, the issues that they face, the demographics of the place, and then walking them through a theological reflection that's based on their own theological reflections, one of those congregations came to the conclusion that it was time to close. While they were sad and upset to make that decision, there was also a sense of *we made the right decision*.

We didn't go in with *okay, you have to sell this because mission demands we're going to use these funds for something else*. Under previous [political] regimes in Canada, we had something we called, rather than evidence-based policymaking, policy-based evidence-making. The same thing happens theologically. So, we've tried to take a different approach. Rather than going in and saying *the writing's on the wall, folks*, saying instead, *what do you read*? And by drawing people's own reflections out — not leading them into the direction you want them to go — you might be surprised when you trust people that they actually know their community better than you do.

So that was one congregation. The other one came to the exact opposition conclusion: "Actually, I think we have a little bit of life left." So, they decided that they would use their location — right out of Québec City, Stoneham, a very small church community that might have seven parishioners — in one of the most beautiful areas of Capitale-Nationale. They said, *why don't we use the beauty of this place as a way of also worshiping God? And we'll invite people from the community, we'll invite people from the Anglican churches in the city to get out*. We had an Epiphany star party just recently. We had a parishioner from the cathedral who is an amateur astronomer come and give this reflection after a Eucharist, guiding people through the constellations and sharing theological reflection that he did on his own. It was beautiful and really well done.

Wikimedia Commons photos

Holy Trinity Church, Grosse-Île, and Entry Island, Magdalen Islands

That was this community's way forward. They were clear: *we're not saying this is going to save us, but this is how we can live faithfully with who we are, where we are, and with the time God has given us*.

Do you think there's reducing anxiety in the system here, that people aren't as worried about the future of the church and are starting to turn to these kinds of questions? It's a very diverse place, so each congregation is different and lives out the particularities of their moment uniquely. I think one of my roles is definitely to help liberate people to feel like they have a legitimate voice, that their theological reflections, while not necessarily academic, are legitimate. I think when people are given a space to articulate themselves, that also becomes healing, whichever way their decision goes.

From our perspective, we're not trying to shepherd them to make the choice that we've already decided on other grounds which are not theological; they're necessarily financial. I suspect that it's, in the very least, a more pastoral approach. But it's a risky one. It means that you make decisions as a leadership that might not be pragmatic. It means that you have to be willing to allow that people don't make the decisions that you might want or need them to make. But then that's part of trust — not trusting that they'll make your decision.

What is it like to observe religious tension in Québec — the mass shooting at the Grand Mosque last year, the law banning face coverings, the rise of anti-immigration and anti-Muslim groups inspired by France's Front National — and how would you explain it to someone who doesn't know Québec well? What do you think is the role of Christians and Anglicans in Québec, in terms of response?

Those are two really big questions, and this is also part of my doctoral research. The first thing I would say is that white supremacy is a global phenomenon, that I think anyone living in a space that has been colonized or is populated by colonizers has an experience of that.

In different particularities, in different places, it manifests itself differently. I think you're right to say that the Québec way this gets expressed tends to be more similar to groups like Front National in France. Interestingly, though, I think the regime south of the border has definitely had a significant impact in emboldening the voices. White supremacy is our global reality, and has been that way for a very long time. And what we're seeing now are various expressions. You can think of it in some ways like a mushroom. In the actual piece that you see, the fruit of the mushroom, is a small part of the creature that lives underground.

Whenever in Canada we have this conversation, it becomes very tied up in identity performances. So, you'll have people from English Canada who will use the expressions of white supremacy that they see in this space as an example of why this is a backwards place: that it denounces the values the rest of Canada might hold as being part of its identity markers, like multiculturalism. I think that's problematic because racism is as present in a place like Toronto as it is in Québec City, but it becomes very easy, quickly, to point at the speck of sawdust in your neighbor's eye while you're missing the beam in your own. I always have to start this conversation by saying that — because there's a longstanding identity performance that goes into the history of these two colonial powers, the French and the English.

I think we have yet to fully take account of, and confess as Christians our participation theologically and practically, in the creation of the whole colonial reality here. As an Anglican in Québec, I think we have a particular responsibility to look deeply within our tradition, our history, our presence in this place, our theology, even our church architecture — this goes all the way down — to become aware of the damage that the system and structure, which we have helped give rise to, has wreaked on this place: the environment itself, as well as those people who called this place home long before any of us arrived. Part of our task — and part of my task as a theologian, specifically — is to address that deeply uncomfortable reality.

As Anglicans who have been a minority, to varying degrees, throughout our time in this place, … I think we need to make ourselves aware of the way this legacy continues to operate in our society. Here is the reality of secularization: we're not at the helm. But our theology — Western Christian theology, the great tradition — has helped give rise to the current structure, which no longer commands obedience in the way that it once did. I think we can argue that maybe that's a good thing. But what that means is that it's easy for groups like La Meute to say things like, "We're protecting Québec's values, which are secular values. We're about having a secular space and we don't want to go backwards."

I think part of our responsibility as a church is to help dig out those foundations, to help make our people aware of their own history — good and bad, because it's mixed — and in so doing, help equip ourselves to live the gospel more faithfully. We're never going to reassume — nor ought we ever try to — the political power that our community once held. Nor is the Catholic Church. What we can be is a remnant of people who can speak from a place of confession. We can say, *here is what we think we contributed to this situation and here are the things we are going to do in terms of our thinking and terms of our practice to try and join with those others who find themselves now at the margins*.

Solidarity seems cheap in some ways, because it's easy to say *we stand in solidarity*. To literally be with these people, whoever they may be, is something else. And right now, they are definitely the very least of the Muslim community, who find themselves targeted in the extreme, by the extreme.

The very fact that there was a mass shooting in Canada last year, and that it targeted Muslims, might surprise many Americans.

That's exactly it; that's not our reality. Québec City, unless the statistic has changed, is the safest city in Canada. I think its crime rate is less than Disney World, in terms of violent crime. So, it is extreme — when you have not just that one act, but you have the president of the mosque's car being torched, and constant leaflets. My research started before the mosque shooting because the four mosques in Québec City are, on average, attacked once a year; some kind of attack, usually crude vandalism. But as we've seen, these things progress.

Groups like La Meute claim they're defending the cradle of European culture in North America from Islamic encroachment and Shariah — they cite a connection to Europe. Yet the histories of Québec and France are very different: Québecers are the French-speaking people still living under a crown; and their geographies are different, in terms of the refugee crisis and immigration. Do you see connections?

I think it's important to distinguish the diversity of the citizenry. The Québec of Vieux-Québec or Sillery or Sainte-Foy is very different, in the city, than Charlesbourg or Beauport. It's really important to distinguish between elite culture in these kinds of debates and culture of non-elites. For instance, newspapers: you have, in Montreal (Diocese of Montreal), like four dailies, which is unheard of now. Four dailies being sustained in one city? So how does that happen? One is the *Gazette*, and that's an Anglophone paper. You have *Le Devoir*, which is the paper of scholars and various social and economic leaders. This is the paper in which public debate happens. Then you have *La Presse*, and you have *Journal de Montréal*.

There are parallels. In Québec, you have *Tout le monde en*

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parle, a talk show that's one of these cultural phenomena here. Everyone watches it. No one in English Canada all watches the same thing — maybe *Game of Thrones* or something, but not a news show. Who does that?

That show existed in France. It's canceled in France. But it still goes here. I think there is more connection in a slice of society, but that slice of society — for economic and social reasons — has significantly more power than the remaining people in society.

On the other side of society, you have extremely rural and remote places in Québec. What was it like to work in the Magdalen Islands?

It was a very interesting place. It's hard to sum up a place like the Magdalen Islands because I think the temptation in any rural posting, and especially one as extreme as the islands, is to give it either a glowingly positive review or [tell] a horrific story. And as I think we would all agree, the truth is usually somewhere in the middle.

Because it's so disconnected geographically from the rest of Québec as well as the rest of Canada, it really has its own culture. Every region in Canada has its own culture, but the interesting thing about the islands is, historically, almost all of the parishioners there would be not only lobster fishermen; they would also be the descendants of shipwreck survivors. So the people who live there, a great deal of them are the descendants of the people who came there accidentally, and by selection are the ones who've never left. That, over time, creates particular cultures that would be quite different from other areas where there's a lot more interaction with newness or other cultural groups and societal trends.

The best example, phenomenologically: I'm in my rectory, and I wake up at 4 a.m. and I just can't sleep for whatever reason. I turn on the light and go get a glass of water. I turn off the light and go back to bed. The next day, 8:30, 9 o'clock, I get a phone call: "Good morning, minister. Saw you had a hard time sleeping last night. Anything on your mind?"

If you were in Toronto and you made that call, your priest might call the police. *That's super creepy, right?* From an outside perspective, you can see and experience that as an invasion of privacy. From someone from my culture, it absolutely is. But the other side of that is that people are always watching each other in the Magdalen Islands, and that's a safety net.

How did culture develop as a safety net?

There's historically not a lot of access to social services or services in general. It's within the last several decades that they've had roads connecting all the islands. And there are people who remember pre-electrification. So there's an aspect of concern. As a person who's not from that place, it's very easy to read that concern in ways that are offensive.

That's one of the challenges. The way the fishing season works, there's a great deal of free time on people's hands during the year. Like many remote communities, when you have a lot of time and means to spend, you can find yourself spending the time and means in ways that are not necessarily the healthiest. There are significant issues with addiction, all over the map. The same kind of cultures that protect each other from falls and health scares are also the same kind of ones that cover for people when they are doing things that they ought not to be or ought to seek help for.

The Anglican parish there is in a largely Anglophone community. The Magdalen Islands are 95 percent French, but the islands are linguistically segregated. There are three predominantly Anglophone islands, and it's not easy for those people to get certain kinds of social services that we take for granted in urban centers. Which just means that the priest's job is to be a front-line mental health worker, a community development worker, a liturgical support, a pastoral presence: all these things that come together; and are actually the way priests used to function quite a while ago, but it's something we're not really prepared for.

What would you like Anglicans and Episcopalians outside of Québec to know about the church here?

I think of our communities, in some ways, like the Benedictine communities at their inception. We're not here to create some massive movement that's going to do this, that, or the other. I've been involved in every deanery within the province except for the lower north shore. The people here, like every other place, are just beautiful, wonderful people. I draw on the Benedictine idea because I think our call isn't necessarily to do these big things, but it's to do small things well — in places where the demographic realities that we have mean there might not be a next generation of Anglicans on Entry Island, that this community has said *this may be the end of our world, but we're going to live it well. And so we're going to plant a garden. And we're going to meet each other as neighbors. And we're going to share things. That's it. We're going to live faithfully on a 2-kilometer-square island with no road access.*

So, that's the charism of the Benedictine order in some senses: *we're going to go to this place and just live here, in a small way, well*. One of the ways that I'm filled with encouragement and joy by serving in this place is to work with people who have no ambition. In theological schools, in places like the Diocese of Toronto, you have competition between clergy. You have competition between parishes.

Overall, we're sort of beyond that, at least to some extent. What's to compete for? So, you get people who are just wanting to study faith, just to study Christian theology. Not because they have grand ambitions, but because they love it. ❏

Québec City

Public Domain photo

Lessons in Humility for a Downtown Parish

By Matthew Townsend

Bad weather and secular holidays do not make for strong church attendance. The combination of the two — such as New Year's Eve and -30 degree temperatures — would often warrant cancellation of services.

The parishioners of St. Matthew's Anglican Church in Winnipeg, Canada, were not waylaid by the weather on Dec. 31. About 40 of them pushed through the biting cold to worship in what is now one of Winnipeg's most unusual church buildings.

Winnipeg is loaded with Anglican churches, but St. Matthew's stands out with an unusual history and an unconventional present. While the parish started as a house church in 1896, it eventually became a significant community center — perhaps evidenced by its location on St. Matthews Avenue in the St. Matthews neighborhood. (As communities grow, apostrophes sometimes fall by the wayside.) A building was constructed in 1913 at the church's current location; it burned down in 1944. The current structure, dating from 1947, was built to hold 1,200 worshipers. The sanctuary was often full to standing room only, and the church was home of one of the city's largest pipe organs.

By the 1960s, however, British-descended families began moving to the suburbs. Decline set in quickly, and the parish considered closing even then. Instead, it remained open, and new ministries and partnerships began to serve the changing neighborhood.

The fortunes of the church, however, did not change, and by the start of the 21st century, the list of needed repairs was growing and income was shrinking. Endowments are atypical in the Anglican Church of Canada, and St.

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Lessons in Humility for a Downtown Parish

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Matthew's was no exception. The church faced a question familiar to many: How can a church keep mission and worship alive with resources that now seem more burden than gift?

In 2014, the parish answered that question with a radical construction project that turned a small portion of the massive church into a modern worship space. The rest of the building became affordable apartments and space for community organizations.

"It was obvious that we were a declining congregation here, and an aging one. And the upkeep of our building was using more than half of our budget," Pat Stewart, a parishioner at St. Matthew's who was involved with the transformation, told TLC during coffee hour at the church. "It was either close the doors or do something with the structure. We literally had stucco walls crumbling from leakage in the roof."

Stewart said the church was able to pay for a new roof because it was hosting a ministry related to refugee relocation — a longstanding concern of St. Matthew's in a neighborhood full of New Canadians. The ministry was in the basement and helped qualify the church for funding. "We got the roof funded by a foundation because we weren't specifically just a Christian building. We were community oriented."

While the presence of community mission helped secure a new roof, it raised another question: What would happen to such ministries if the church were permanently shuttered?

"One of the issues was, if St. Matthew's eventually closed, that would mean all the organizations and ministries that use the basement would lose their space," the Rev. Gwen McAllister, rector of St. Matthew's, told TLC. McAllister began attending St. Matthew's 15 years ago and was ordained a priest a year and a half ago. Her willingness to serve in a part-time position became a call to serve in what had been her home church.

She said the previous rector, the Rev. Cathy Campbell, brought to the parish a vision for turning the building into its current form. Campbell, now retired, was inspired by an example she had seen in Vancouver.

McAllister said the vision met a very specific need in the area. "There's a real lack of affordable housing in the city, and especially in the downtown areas."

The road to change was not always easy for St. Matthew's. Stewart said letting go was a part of deciding. "We had to decide which windows to keep," she said. "The organ was sold for parts." The choir left, and a jazz musician was hired to help ease the transition from organ to piano. During construction, the church worshiped in a drop-in space in the basement, another source of stress.

"It was a long process," McAllister said. "Some people were really heartbroken." But when the congregation talked about it, the decision was to proceed.

"There's maybe three who never really came to terms with it. All three are still members and still support the church and are part of keeping it going through their work as well as their money. Everybody pretty much came to the place where *this is what we should do*."

The result: WestEnd Commons's 26 apartments, including three- and four-bedroom units — another uphill battle, as government grants paid the same for one-bedroom units as for four. McAllister thinks, though, that the humility built by the transition has helped the congregation's diversity. Younger people attend, as well as families from Burundi. Sudanese members were attending but now have their own worship service in Dinka, held on Sunday afternoons in the same space.

"The phrase I use is the pride gets broken in the churches. That pride of *we're a Christendom church,* and *we're a force in society*, and *we're respectable*. That gets broken at some point when there's not enough money and there's not enough people and the kids and the grandkids aren't coming."

Then, McAllister said, the church can begin to change.

Change is still underway at St. Matthew's. The "gargantuan" project, as McAllister put it, ended about three years ago. St. Matthew's building and its missions are now secure. But the conversion project did not serve as a cure for all of the congregation's ills. St. Matthew's is still a church like so many others: trying to grow, trying to reach new people, and trying to balance the budget.

"Our deficit has stayed about the same — it wasn't that it fixed our deficit problems," McAllister said. The parish benefits from a high giving ratio, she said, and ministry can now function free from worry about the building. "And if eventually we close, things will keep happening in the building. It won't be knocked down or turned into condos."

McAllister said she thinks the congregation is just now recovering from the shock of the process. Now, parishioners are considering new ways to strengthen community, such as community lunches and children's time during services. A group discussing *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* by James Cone also attracted newcomers.

And more people in their 30s and 40s have started coming, taking pressure off of a few extremely dedicated and older members. Parishioners old and new are working together to figure out how to avoid "stepping on toes," she said.

"We're just starting to build up and figure out where we want to go." ❏

Historic Churches: Six Cases

By Kirk Petersen

As attendance dwindles in many historic Episcopal congregations, so does pledge income, and it becomes harder and harder to maintain beautiful old buildings with slate roofs and soaring arches in the nave. Some churches have closed, and more will need to. There's a special reluctance to close truly historic buildings, but saving them often requires resources far beyond what a small remaining congregation can provide.

Historic churches in a budget crunch have a number of options:

- They can secure funding from the diocese, the broader community, or historic-preservation groups.
- They can borrow, with the building as collateral.
- They can sell off assets, if they have them to sell.
- They can repurpose part of their church property for rental, thereby preserving a historic structure and maintaining a downsized congregation.
- They can close their doors, give the keys to the diocese, and hope that some other religious organization will acquire the property and continue using it for worship.

Historic church buildings tend to give value to the community beyond the members of the congregation. Partners for Sacred Places, a nonprofit agency that provides consulting and grants to churches, has identified an "economic halo effect" of historic church buildings. A study published by Partners found that "the average historic sacred place in an urban environment generates over $1.7 million annually in economic impact." The report also found that 87 percent of the beneficiaries of community programs and events housed in the churches are not members of the congregations.

In addition to Partners, the Episcopal Church Building Fund also provides consulting for parishes and dioceses, as well as providing conventional loans. ECBF is itself historic, founded in 1880 at a time of rapid Episcopal expansion.

TLC has gathered in these pages the stories of half a dozen historic Episcopal churches throughout the country, illustrating the different paths they can choose.

St. Martin's, Harlem

Rising from the Ashes, Twice

St. Martin's is a huge landmark in Harlem, New York, with seating for 3,300. It was built with granite in the Byzantine Revival style in 1886 as Holy Trinity, but that congregation opted to move out when the building was nearly destroyed by fire in 1925. Only the walls remained standing.

The building was restored by a new congregation, St. Martin's, only to be ravaged by fire again in 1939. Rebuilt once more under the leadership of the Rev. John H. Johnson, the church flourished for decades with a predominantly Caribbean congregation. But weekly attendance has fallen to about 100, said Valerie Daly, senior warden.

The structure is best known in the neighborhood for the 42-bell carillon installed in the 1940s. The bells have been silent for several years because the bell tower is unsafe. "I'm sure it will involve taking some of the tower apart, and then putting it back together again" after numbering all the stones, said Barry Donaldson, the architect working with the parish and the Diocese of New York. Many of the bells will have to be removed temporarily. One of them weighs 2,500 pounds.

The diocese is providing an interest-free bridge loan to finance the $2.8 million bell tower project, said the Rev. Canon Blake Rider, canon to the ordinary, with the expectation of being repaid through the sale of one or more townhouses that the church owns in the area.

The tower is just the beginning of St. Martin's needs. "The entire roof needs to be redone," Donaldson said, and the original slate and copper roof has been replaced across decades with residential-grade asphalt and tar. Once the roof is stable, the two-foot-thick walls will need to dry out for many months before extensive interior work can be done. Overall, the project may go on for a decade, and Rider said it will require "several more millions of dollars of work."

When asked if the building is worth

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Historic Churches: Six Cases

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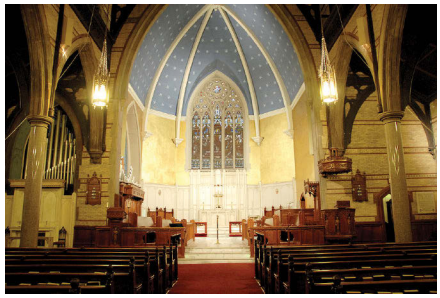
the investment, Rider said: "We spent a long time looking at that." The deciding factors were the rich history of the church and the existence of assets that can cover much of the cost. "We decided we could not let this parish fail," he said. He added that Harlem is gentrifying, which is bringing more money into the neighborhood.

The church is historically important in the community because of extensive civil rights activism dating back to the 1930s, when the church established a federal credit union to make it possible for black members to acquire mortgages. In the 1940s, the church was involved in the effort to integrate Major League Baseball, according to a history of the church by the Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association.



St. Paul's, Syracuse

Embracing the Neighborhood

The cornerstone for St. Paul's in Syracuse was laid in 1884, but the congregation dates to 1827, when it became the third church in the young village. The current church was built in Gothic Revival style, at a time when railroads and the Erie Canal had turned Syracuse into a booming transportation and manufacturing hub.

St. Paul's is a large place: the church seats about 500, and there is a spacious three-story parish house. "We have a lot more space than we need," said Rebecca Livengood, chair of the task force for renovating the buildings.

As the downtown gentrifies again, there's an increased demand for apartments for young professionals, and the church wants to build nine apartments on the second and third floors of the parish house. That will require installing an elevator and making other handicap accessibility changes, and like many churches St. Paul's needs money for roof repair and deferred maintenance.

Average Sunday attendance is about 130, not including a Dinka-language service for South Sudanese refugees. That is not a small congregation, but it is too small for its real estate, and the planned renovations are estimated at $3.2 million.

The parish plans a capital campaign in the fall and is working with both the Episcopal Church Building Fund and Partners for Sacred Places. Livengood is a thankful for the Sacred Places consulting service, which urged St. Paul's to draw the downtown community into its planning. The State of New York also has funds for historic preservation and tax incentives that St. Paul's hopes will help.

St. Matthew's & St. Joseph's, Detroit

Struggling Despite Rich History

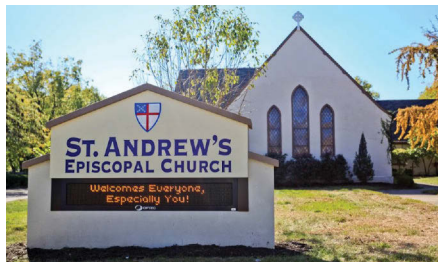
St. Matthew's & St. Joseph's Church occupies a Gothic structure built in 1926, when the booming new auto industry had turned Detroit into "the Silicon Valley of its day," says the Rev. Kenneth Near, priest-in-charge.

Now Detroit is arguably America's most distressed city, and the North End church is near ground zero of the 1967 riots that left 43 dead. The roof leaks because of damage from thieves who tried to steal the copper gutters and flashings, says lifelong parishioner Alethea Belfon. The parking lot is a mess, and the kitchen needs upgrading to support the church's ministry providing hot meals to the poor and homeless.

"Matty-Joe's" has room for about 300 in the pews, but only 40 to 50 sit there on an average Sunday.

The Woodward Avenue building, which was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1982, originally housed just St. Joseph's. After falling on hard times in the years after the riots, St. Matthew's merged and moved in with St. Joseph's in 1971. St. Matthew's was founded in 1846, making it one of the oldest traditionally black parishes in the Episcopal Church. Early parishioners helped slaves escape across the Detroit River into Canada.

The church was a runner-up last year in competition for funding from the Partners for Sacred Places, having applied for $250,000 in matching funds. The parish was encouraged to apply again with a more comprehensive project plan, Belfon said. Parishioners are working on it, but do not really have money for professional fees.



St. Andrew's, Dayton

Saying Goodbye

St. Andrew's in Dayton, Ohio, traces its roots to 1865. Its white A-frame church building opened in 1923, and as the city grew, so did the parish, leading to an expansion in the 1950s. But membership and donations have been dropping for many years, with about 25 worshipers on an average Sunday in 2016, in a church that will seat more than 150.

The church has made the difficult

decision to close its doors, said Sally O'Brien, vice president of the Episcopal Church Building Fund, which worked with the Diocese of Southern Ohio to assess the viability of St. Andrew's and other churches. The final service is scheduled for April 8.

Amanda Romero, a member of the task force pursuing options for the building, said the diocese plans to keep the building maintained through 2018 so a food pantry and used-clothing shop within it can continue to operate. The parish has spent about $15,000 on repairing water damage upstairs, and the building needs a new roof.

O'Brien praised the parishioners for the way they are handling the loss: "They did not wait until it was too late. They are closing as a parish while the building is still in good shape, and there is still a bank account, and turning it over to the diocese."

The diocese will confer with local churches, nonprofit agencies, and civic leaders to determine the best future use for the property.

Epiphany, Los Angeles

Saving its Structure

Church of the Epiphany, founded in 1886, is the oldest Episcopal Church still in use in the Diocese of Los Angeles. The church building erected that year is still in use as a parish hall. The current church was built in 1913 with a West Coast flair, in a mix of Gothic Revival, Mission Revival, and Romanesque Revival styles.

The church attracts about 70 worshipers on an average Sunday. It is historically a working-class Latino church, and the larger of two services is in Spanish. There is a smaller English-language service that includes some professionals, "but nobody with a lot of money, I can tell you that," said the Rev. Thomas Carey, Epiphany's bilingual priest.

Epiphany has already been through one major round of repairs, which saved the parish hall from collapsing, added a commercial kitchen, and fixed some stained-glass windows. But the roof needs repair, there's a water problem in the basement, and leaders want to renovate the large basement and the offices above it. All this will require updating the 1913 electrical equipment.

Carey said Epiphany is gathering estimates, but it will all cost "a lot." The parish received a grant for up to $250,000 from Partners for Sacred Places, but it requires a two-to-one match, so Epiphany needs to raise $500,000. Those funds can only be used for structural repairs, but the organ needs $30,000 worth of work. Epiphany has received "major help" from the diocese, Carey said, and is preparing for a capital campaign.

Trinity & St. Peter's, San Francisco

Sustaining an Arts Community

Trinity & St. Peter's in San Francisco is the oldest Episcopal church west of the Mississippi. It was founded as Trinity Episcopal during the Gold Rush in 1849 and inhabits a fortress-like Norman Gothic structure opened in 1894. The sanctuary of soaring arches has been closed since 2009 because of earthquake concerns, even though the building survived massive earthquakes in 1906 and 1989.

"For some reason the insurance company has only banned us from the main sanctuary," which has room for 450 people, said the Rev. Patricia Cunningham, priest-in-charge. The congregation, which numbers 60 people on an average Sunday, meets in a more intimate adjoining parish hall "that's sort of the right size for us," she said.

But they want to reopen the main church as a venue for concerts and weddings and are moving toward turning it into a center for the arts. Three performing groups are headquartered in the massive building, and they are opening a small art gallery.

The seismic retrofit will cost $4 million. The parish already has $1 million in the bank, and Cunningham said it has borrowing power based on an expected ability to generate $400,000 in annual rentals. It has received a $250,000 matching grant from Partners for Sacred Places, but the future is not entirely clear. In a July 2017 report, Sacred Places said the congregation is not ready for a major capital campaign, and advised it to work to build membership and increase partnerships with the arts community. ❑

Truly the Light Is Sweet

Solar panels may take years to pay for themselves, but their installation is about more than bottom lines and power bills, churches say.

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

When St. Andrew's Church in Seattle set out to become more eco-friendly and cost-efficient a few years ago, the strongest improvement came from an unglamorous new furnace in the cellar. It was not from the new solar panels mounted on a new reflective white rubber roof.

Solar project leader J.B. Hoover says the church has no regrets about investing $40,000 in a 10-kilowatt system, although it will take at least 20 years for the system to pay for itself in electricity savings.

St. Andrew's did it for reasons other than financial return. Solar is helping the church reduce its fossil fuel emissions by 25 percent. The panels also allow the church to send a visible architectural message about the church's values.

With solar, "the decision really needs to be driven by a different value and not the financial value," Hoover said. "You're affirming for the congregation: this is who we are. It's a statement."

Support for solar is glowing in many corners of the Episcopal Church. In January, the Church Pension Fund invested $17 million in a fund that makes microfinance loans for off-grid solar ventures in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. In the Diocese of California, at least 15 congregations have installed solar systems in the past decade. In Little Rock, the congregations of St. Mark's, St. Michael's, and St. Margaret's have all either launched or completed new solar projects within the past two years in hope of inspiring others to do likewise.

"To put solar panels on the roof of your church is an outward symbol of your love for God," said Scharmel Roussel, director of Arkansas Interfaith Power & Light, a nonprofit agency that has given $2,000 toward each of the new solar projects on Little Rock's churches. "They also are an incentive for other churches to consider doing the same thing. That fact that three Episcopal churches have done it, one right after the other, says there's kind of a little friendly competition going on."

While many dream of using solar power at church, those that actually complete solar projects need something other than money, or the desire to save money. They need creativity and a sense of mission to see them through the stormy days that appear along the way.

That has been the case at St. Columba's Church in Washington, D.C. The congregation examined solar options as part of a 2016 campaign to make the parish more eco-friendly, but some worried that rooftop panels might detract from the building's appearance. Others felt the church could not afford, or at least could not justify, the necessary capital outlay to buy and maintain a system.

Photo courtesy of Arkansas Interfaith Power & Light.

St. Mark's, Little Rock, installed solar panels in September 2016.

"We encountered some people at first saying, *Oh gosh, we can't — solar is a luxury*," said Cynthia Laux Kreidler, chair of the environment committee at St. Columba's. "It actually took a few years and a few approaches to the plan to come up with one that didn't seem like a luxury now that would pay off in 10 years."

The environment committee identified an unobjectionable location on a south-facing, perfectly pitched section of roof on a 40-year-old wing addition. So out of sight is the spot that parishioners planted a LOOK UP! sign in the ground to ensure the panels are noticed.

Financing proved feasible with a little creativity, too. The congregation teamed up with a cooperative, the Community Purchasing Alliance, which negotiated terms collectively for 16 area nonprofits to access solar without buying systems.

In the agreement, St. Columba's buys electricity from the company that owns and maintains the panels on its roof. Result: St. Columba's paid nothing for

a system that it does not have to maintain. And the system delivers a 40-percent reduction in the church's electricity costs.

Getting to solar can be multilayered, even for motivated congregations. Reducing dependence on fossil fuels should begin with other steps first, such as plugging drafty cracks, replacing windows, and adding insulation, Roussel said.

Many churches would achieve the best return on investment by replacing an entire HVAC system, but they often lack either the funds or the will to make such an investment, said the Rev. Canon Lang Lowery, canon for Christian enterprise in the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Atlanta.

"They go and buy a very inefficient energy source, one that's environmentally not good stewardship, because it's low-cost," said Lowery, who brings experience as a real-estate developer. "This is what I see going on across the church."

Congregations keen to have solar without deep up-front costs have often entered non-ownership agreements similar to St. Columba's that let power suppliers place panels on a church's roof. But Lowery finds solar contracts tend to be riddled with risks and potential problems. Among the most common problems: damage to a roof is probable, Lowery said, but churches generally have no indemnification for situations in which workers cause roof damage or suffer injuries. What's more, it can be difficult or impossible for a church to terminate its agreement. And investors, not churches, reap nearly all the financial benefits from lease agreements.

"One of the top things that I do across the country now is deal with problems or opportunities related to putting these solar panels on church roofs," Lowery said. "These solar companies come in and do a 50-year lease for the roof. The contract requirements are horrendously bad. … I suspect this is going to end up costing the church a significant amount."

A marketplace dotted with potential pitfalls, however, is not preventing congregations from going solar. It is just requiring them to be resourceful and perform due diligence.

The place to start, advisers say, is by researching incentives. States, utilities, and grant-making organizations often have programs that can help defray the costs and make solar financially feasible. For instance, last year Boston Solar donated a solar system to St. Paul's Church in Natick as part of an agreement with the town. The company agreed to donate one to a local nonprofit agency after signing up 100 Natick customers, and St. Paul's was selected as the beneficiary.

In Lafayette, California, St. Anselm's Church jumped at a $15,000 rebate offered through a state program in 2007. That reduced the cost of installing 42 panels from $50,000 to $35,000. It also eliminated the church's electricity bills, which had been in the range of $3,500 per year. Ten years later in 2017, the church recouped its full investment and still enjoys no electricity bills.

Yet because 10 years is a fairly long payoff window, churches need other motivations, said Douglas Merrill, a layman who helped lead St. Anselm's project. Congregants were especially motivated, he said, to realize the environmental benefit, which was equivalent to taking two cars off the road.

"It's not so much about the money we're saving," Merrill said. "It is about the reduction of carbon dioxide because global warming is really happening. I'm just happy we're able to do our part, even though it's small."

As an architectural feature on a prominent building in town, solar panels on a church can help the faith community develop an environmentally friendly image. Lowery says various types of green initiatives, not just solar, can help a church show its love for God's creation and appeal to prospective new members.

"New people who come to a church look at a facility differently than baby boomers did," Lowery said. "If you want to be sustainable, you've got to be doing these things as a way of inviting people of a different generation. It's not optional, because if you're seen as the same old church doing the same old things, it doesn't help your brand."

Hoover hopes newcomers want to visit St. Andrew's after seeing solar panels and resonating with what they say about the community. So far, he said, records show the congregation has not seen a significant bump in membership or attendance.

Some green initiatives have already helped the bottom line at St. Andrew's. The new furnace, which cost $34,000, paid for itself within three years by reducing heating costs by $12,000 per year. And although solar panels have thus far cost more than they have saved at St. Andrew's, they are giving the church something valuable in parishioners' eyes: a platform to talk up solar as a viable option everywhere.

"We don't get as much sun as a lot of places and electricity is artificially cheap here," Hoover said. "But that's an even greater reason for us to do it. It shows that if we can do it here, then for all these parishes in California, Arizona, and Florida — it should be so easy for them because the cost of electricity is higher and they have all this solar power." ❑

Theology, and Guidance, on Prayers

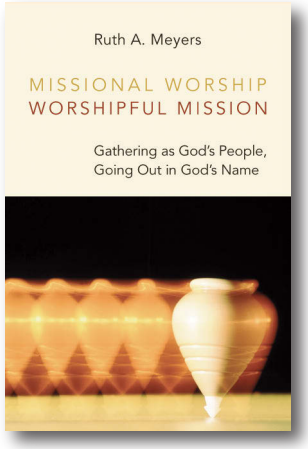
Review by Mark Michael

This is the Episcopal Church's missional moment. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, a passionate preacher of grace, has declared himself chief evangelism officer. A major church planting initiative has been launched. The Task Force for Reimagining the Episcopal Church's report to General Convention in 2015 set a major new agenda, calling us "to follow Jesus, together, into the neighborhood, and to travel lightly."

At the same time, we remain a deeply liturgical church, with common prayer at the heart of our fractious unity. Our rich and beautiful worship surely continues to be among the most potent force drawing newcomers. It is telling that when the task force asked Episcopalians "what one thing should the [Episcopal] Church hold onto?" the top four answers were liturgy, tradition, the Eucharist, and the Book of Common Prayer.

Ruth Meyers's *Missional Worship, Worshipful Mission* would seem to be just the resource needed by this church at this moment. It is by a person uniquely placed to speak and be heard on the way to bring together the church's calls to worship God and to go forth into the world to share his love.

Meyers, the Hodges-Haynes Professor of Liturgics at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, is the widely acknowledged dean of Episcopal liturgists. Her insights and priorities as a long-serving leader on the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music have shaped the numerous supplemental resources authorized for use in the Episcopal Church for the past few decades. She probably knows this church and the way it prays better than anyone else. The book also relies on field research she conducted in five Episcopal churches that use experimental forms of worship.

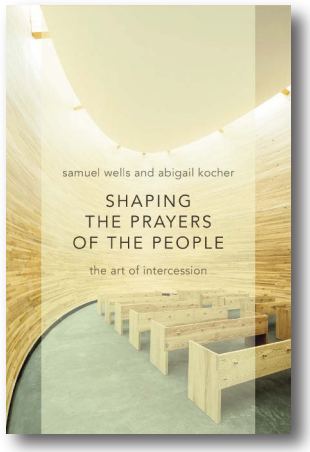


Missional Worship, Worshipful Mission

Gathering as God's People, Going Out in God's Name

By **Ruth A. Meyers**

Eerdmans. Pp. 256. $26



Shaping the Prayers of the People

The Art of Intercession

By **Abigail Kocher** and **Samuel Wells**

Eerdmans. Pp. 176. $16

Meyers begins, rather tentatively, by acknowledging that mission and worship are often seen as contradictory priorities in contemporary churches. Those in the church who really care about mission, whether they be sawdust trail evangelists or radical community organizers, often act as if worship is a warmup for the main event, if not a distraction from it. Liturgists, on the other hand, are easily caricatured as fussy about texts and ceremonial, more attentive to rubrical performance than anything that happens on the far side of the chancel rail.

Meyers aims to call a kind of détente in the worship wars by emphasizing the interdependence of worship and mission. The worshiping assembly is formed of people gathered out of the world, who bring the world's pain and hope to the profound encounter with God and one another that the liturgy enables. Mission, whether focusing on personal evangelism or justice, will only be authentic and meaningful when it flows from a relationship with God and seeks to do his will, and Christian worship is the best possible lab for training faithful and committed missionaries.

Meyers does not propose, then, a series of helpful tips on making liturgy more missional. She criticizes the consumerist orientation of the seeker-sensitive approach of contemporary evangelicals, and frowns a bit at the way middle 20th-century liturgical reformers sometimes promised that revival would come if only priests abandoned wafer bread and faced the people.

She thinks what is really needed is a clearer understanding of the relationship between mission and worship, together with a degree of freedom for local adaptation and experimentation. In one of the book's central passages, she writes: "Missional worship is a matter of perception and attitude rather than technique. Hence, developing missional worship requires a shift in the community's approach to worship. Missional worship happens in a missional congregation, one that proclaims and enacts the reign of God in all aspects of its life, one that expects to encounter God's mercy and judgment both in the assembly and in daily life" (p. 232).

Meyers clearly plays to her strengths in discussing the missional content latent in the church's liturgical texts and practices. Much of the work is organized as a kind of missional commentary on the Book of Common Prayer's eucharistic liturgy. Taking each of the liturgy's sections in turn, she discusses the way in which the worship activity relates to missional themes, while also explaining and probing a few ways that "missional congregations" are experimenting to make these themes even more explicit.

Her explanation of proclaiming and responding to the Word of God, for example, begins with an account of Scripture as "the story of God's mission." When it is proclaimed, she says, worshipers "enter the stream of salvation history and come to understand themselves as participants in this story and actors in the performance of God's mission." Meyers describes how lectionary cycles, sermons, and creeds deepen worshipers' engagement with God's mission.

She peppers her theological account with descriptions of her experiences of mainstream and emergent congregations that interpret biblical passages through drama, testimony, dialogue sermons, and open-space worship. She speaks appreciatively of lectionary revisions that give larger place to the activity of biblical women, preaching that deals sensitively with Christian anti-Judaism, and drafting new creeds for those who "experience a creed as more of a stumbling block than the foundation for a lively faith."

Meyers tries to be even-handed in treating practices like these new creeds and the administration of Holy Communion to the unbaptized, which are sometimes justified as missional imperatives. She points out that the historic creeds express ecumenical consensus, and that an offer of Communion before Baptism may be a form of cheap grace. Congregations, she says, must carefully reflect and seek a balanced approach. But it's not difficult to spot that her true loyalties lie with the progressives, and it would have been helpful if she had included a few examples from theologically and liturgically conservative congregations that are active in transformational mission.

The book is more uneven when specifically treating missiology, largely relying on progressive Protestant sources, and failing to engage with significant recent work by evangelicals in the field. The rather clunky metaphors of the Möbius strip and the spinning top that Meyers repeatedly uses to describe the relationship between mission and worship probably confuse more than illuminate. She also largely confines mission to community work for justice and peace, especially in her selection of congregations for the study. This probably stems from her anxiety about theologically vapid seeker-sensitive services, but this sidelining of the call to make new disciples is inconsistent both with the scriptural witness and much-praised new direction in the life of our denomination.

Shaping the Prayers of the People is just the kind of resource that congregations might use to help connect the dots between worship and mission. Written by Sam Wells, vicar of London's Church of Saint Martin-in-the-Fields, and Abigail Kocher, a United Methodist pastor, the book lays out a wide-ranging theology of intercession as well as detailed guidance on crafting prayers of the people for use in Sunday worship. The two became friends while Wells was serving as dean of Duke Chapel, where his moving weekly intercessions were nearly as acclaimed as his sermons.

The use of generic intercession forms, the standard practice in Episcopal parishes, is marked out as a missed opportunity by the authors. This judgment is also supported by Meyers, who laments the "poverty of intercession" in Episcopal churches in her book. "Here is a moment of spontaneity, of color and life and variation and topicality and genuine structuring of new words around deepest convictions," Wells and Kocher write. "Prayer for themselves and for others is possibly the biggest single thing that draws people to a service of worship. And yet how frequently are people met with lifeless, formulaic, turgid, predictable mantras?" (p. 65).

The book's opening chapters situate intercessory prayer in God's trinitarian life, and articulate the distinct, limited role of the prayers of the people in public worship. Because intercession is speech addressed to God, they say, the prayers should not be read from a lectern, but from the chancel rail or at the altar. The authors also make a strong case for direct and specific biddings. "The harder the intercessor works to articulate exactly who is being prayed for and precisely what God is being asked to do, the more the congregation will have a liberating sense that transformational prayer is taking place" (p. 30).

Wells and Kocher provide specific guidance for drafting prayers inspired by the readings of the day (or hymns used in worship) and constructed according to the form of Cranmer's collects. They suggest three or four of these, each on a different topic and followed by a simple response. They lay out clear steps for meditating on the Scriptures and selecting fitting topics in the life of the congregation and the wider world. Useful examples abound, and the pointers are substantial and reveal long experience in the art. Trying to avert the problem of sermons hidden in prayer, they advise, "find phrases that are full of resonance and heavy with multiple applications. The phrases should open up a field of concern, rather than determine an agenda" (p. 74).

The book's second half is a long series of annotated examples of prayers of the people, many of great beauty. There are prayers for seasons of the church year, with pointers about additional themes that are perennially relevant for intercession. Further prayers for particular occasions like prayer vigils, baccalaureate services, and interfaith and civic events provide very valuable (and rare) models of theologically weighty and poetically resonant Christian prayer.

Meyers wisely urges those who lead congregations to be wary about trying to create missional dynamism by tinkering with the services. Many parishes, though, might find their faith in God's providence and their passion for his mission stirred by experimenting for a season with the methods laid out so helpfully by Wells and Kocher.

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

The Very Place

By Steven R. Ford

I'm writing while sitting on the fourth-floor balcony of a hotel in Gżira in the Republic of Malta. This tiny island nation was in the news some years back when two of Muammar al-Gaddafi's air force jets landed here and the pilots requested asylum. Less than 200 miles from Tripoli, the airport later hosted a sizable Libyan refugee camp, its residents put up in tents inside an aircraft hangar. Should a 14-day storm have struck here, those folks would at least have stayed dry.

The reason I'm here is that this is the very island on which St. Paul was shipwrecked during a 14-day storm in about the year 60 (Acts 27:27-32). It began on February 10, according to local legend. We Anglicans bear witness to Paul's visit to Malta by our magnificent St. Paul's Pro-Cathedral, which dominates the Valetta skyline across the harbor from where I am staying. Its parish life is financed in an interesting way. Marriage laws in Malta are notoriously lax, and couples come from all over Europe to take full advantage. Cathedral powers that be also take full advantage of the couples, charging a hefty €1,250 ($1,400 U.S.) to host and conduct a wedding service. According to the cathedral's wedding brochure, "Fees do not include Organist, Choir, Bells, Flowers etc." Well, of course not! Oddly, there is no shortage of customers.

A few miles northwest of here is St. Paul's Bay, the very place where Paul and his companions were washed ashore. Hey, it's a bay in Malta and it has a sandy beach (Acts 27:39), so it has to be the location. Right? And a couple of blocks from the beach stands a church built on the very spot where Paul accidentally picked up a snake and impressed the local people (Acts 28:3-6). No snake-handling takes place inside, though, as the church is part of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Malta.

Public Domain photo

Valetta, Malta

In fact, my being in Malta is just adding to the long list of "the very places" I've visited where important events have (or may not have) taken place. I've walked the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem, amazed at the enticing souvenir and snack shops Jesus passed on his way from the Mount of Olives to his place of crucifixion. Two years ago I drove from Armenia through Iran to Mount Ararat in eastern Turkey, the very place where Noah's ark came to rest after the flood subsided.

I have stood on the west coast of India on the very place where St. Francis Xavier preached. I have prayed in awe and wonder in the Basilica of Guadalupe, the very place where, in 1531, the Virgin appeared to St. Juan Diego and left a lasting memento of her visit on his cloak, which San Juan presented to the local bishop. And I've been to the Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk, where the Lord's Mother appeared in England in 1061, bearing a detailed blueprint of the Holy Family's home in Nazareth. Richeldis de Faverches dutifully had a copy constructed, which was destroyed during the Reformation. Rebuilt by Father Alfred Hope Patten, SSC, in the 1920s, today it stands at the epicenter of Anglican Marian devotion. All of these are extremely holy places, to be sure.

Yet I have come to realize, over the miles and over the years, that no place is intrinsically holy, no matter what may have happened there. Instead, locales like St. Paul's Bay and Guadalupe and Walsingham have been made holy by countless Christian people coming to them, by God's people gathering together in Christ's name over the years and over the centuries. And the reason is simple: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them," Jesus tells us (Matt. 18:20).

One does not need to go to the ends of the earth to find places made holy by God's people gathering, praying, and celebrating the sacraments (though I am not very likely to stop doing that). We have them, in fact, in every part of Christendom. Like St. Mark's/San Marcos Church in Mesa, Arizona. Just like the Walsingham shrine church and the "Snake Church" in Malta, our Anglican cathedrals, parish and mission churches (as well as our monasteries, convents, and friaries) are made holy by Christians gathering in them and so encountering the risen Savior — in fellowship, in prayer, and his sacramental Presence on their altars.

For Anglicans, the buildings in which we worship stand on ground just as holy as the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem and the wonderful sandy beach in Malta. They are the very places where we come together in Christ's name, where we know his presence "in the breaking of bread and in the prayers" (BCP, p. 304).

The Rev. Steven R. Ford assists at St. Mark's/San Marcos, Mesa, Arizona.

PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

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

The Rev. **John Badders** is interim rector of St. Luke's, San Antonio.

The Rev. **Audrey Bailey** is priest-in-charge of St. Francis and St. Martha's, White Plains, NY.

The Very Rev. **Julia Huttar Bailey** is rector of Trinity, Farmington Hills, MI.

The Rev. Canon **John Burruss** is rector of St. Stephen's, Birmingham.

The Ven. **Steven James Costa** is archdeacon in the Diocese of Hawaii.

The Rev. **William Coyne** is priest-in-charge of East Cooper Church, Mt Pleasant, SC.

The Rev. **Peter DeFranco** is priest-in-charge of St. John the Baptist, Linden, NJ.

The Rev. **Jeff Evans** is rector at St. Stephen's, Huntsville, AL.

The Rev. **Donald Allston Fishburne** is priest associate at Holy Cross Faith Memorial, Pawleys Island, SC.

The Rev. **Greg Foraker** is missioner for faith formation in the Episcopal Church in Colorado.

The Rev. **Lisa Green** is associate rector of St. Martin's, Williamsburg, VA.

The Rev. **Brian Grieves** of Hawaii is interim executive director of Camp Mokule`ia, Waialua, HI.

The Rev. **Chris Hartley** is rector of St. Matthew's, Madison, AL.

The Rev. **Kevin Huddleston** is rector of Holy Communion, Lake Geneva, and St. John the Divine, Burlington, WI.

The Rev. **Sheryl Hughes-Empke** is associate rector of St. Mark's, Des Moines.

The Rev. **Ed Hunt** is superintending presbyter of the Pine Ridge Episcopal Mission in South Dakota.

The Rev. **John Inserra** is rector of St. Alban's, Harlingen, TX.

The Rev. **David Jackson** is rector of All Souls, Ft Myers, FL.

The Rev. Canon **Brian Jemmott** is canon to the ordinary and transitions officer in the Diocese of New Jersey.

The Rev. **Kenn Katona** is priest-in-charge of St. Clement's, Rancho Cordova, CA.

The Rev. **Lura Kaval** is vicar of Incarnation, Mineral, VA.

The Rev. **David Wesley Lemburg** is priest-in-charge of St. Patrick's, Pooler, GA.

The Rt. Rev. **Gary Lillibridge** is interim rector of St. Thomas, San Antonio.

The Rev. **Katlin McCallister** is priest-in-charge of Holy Apostles, Hilo, HI.

The Rev. Canon **Melissa McCarthy** is canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Los Angeles.

The Rev. **Deke Miller** is vicar of Holy Cross, Winter Haven, FL.

The Rev. **Virginia Monroe** is interim rector of Nativity, Huntsville, AL.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Montes** is rector of St. John's, Wichita.

The Rev. **Curt Norman** is rector of St. John's, Saginaw, MI.

The Rev. **Beth O'Callaghan** is rector of St. Nicholas, Germantown, MD.

Tina Pickering is canon for ministry development in the Diocese of New Hampshire.

The Rev. **Jason Prati** is rector of All Saints', New Albany, OH.

The Rev. **Michele Racusin** is missioner for financial stewardship and chief financial officer of the Diocese of Los Angeles.

The Rev. **Judith Reese** is interim rector of St. Matthew's, Hillsborough, NC.

The Rev. **Kira Schlesinger** is interim rector at St. Ann's, Nashville.

The Rev. **Maryalice Sullivan** is priest-in-charge of All Saints' Memorial, Providence.

The Rev. **Roberta R. Taylor** is rector of St. James', Indian Head, MD.

The Rev. **Jason Wells** is executive director of the New Hampshire Council of Churches.

The Rev. **Holly Rankin Zaher** is rector of St. Paul's, Evansville, IN.

Ordinations

Deacons

Atlanta — Gregoria Betances, **Irma Nohemi Guerra**, **Kyle Christopher Mackey**, **Amy Dills-Moore**, **Melanie Gibson Rowell**, and **Kenya Angela Thompson**

Bethlehem — Michele Causton and **Margaret Pendergast**

Central Florida — Kevin Benjamin Bartle, **Kathryn Sarah Gillett**, **Kathy Elizabeth Hulin**, and **James William Louttit Sr.**

Georgia — DeWayne Cope, **Arthur Jones**, and **Bunny Williams**

Long Island — John R. Musco, **Myldred Prévil**, and **Philomé Prévil**

Los Angeles — Mark Douglas Dawson

Maryland — Lisa Ashley Bornt, **Robert Monroe Bunker**, **Taylor Darlington Daynes**, **L. Scott Lipscomb**, and **Patti Luann Sachs**

Missouri — Richard Wiskus

Northwest Texas— Karen Boyd, **Courtney Jones**, and **Alvin Stofel**

Rio Grande — Skip Bambrook

Springfield — Christine Gregory

Western New York — Mona Gaddis

Retirements

The Rev. **Al Aiton**, as rector of St. John's by the Campus, Ames, IA

The Rev. **Hannah Anderson**, as canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of New Hampshire

The Rev. **Ann Copp**, as rector of St. Matthias, Baltimore.

The Rev. **Robert Dandridge**, as rector of St. Patrick's, West Monroe, LA.

The Rev. **Eyleen Farmer**, as associate rector of Calvary, Memphis

The Rev. **Brad Ingalls**, as rector of Holy Trinity, Churchville, MD

The Rev. **Meg Ingalls**, as rector of Transfiguration, Silver Spring, MD.

The Rev. **Victoria Jamieson-Drake**, as associate for pastoral ministry at Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, NC.

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Gen. 17:1-7, 15-16 • Ps. 22:22-30 • Rom. 4:13-25 • Mark 8:31-38

Abraham's Faith

"Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38). Are we ashamed? Are we ashamed to confess with our lips and believe in our hearts that in our father Abraham and our mother Sarah, and consummately in Christ, we have been called? "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless" (Gen. 17:1).

Are we too proud to fall upon our faces at the wonder of God's call to an old man and his barren wife? God uses their bodies, although as good as dead, for maternity and promise. It is an old story. God promises that they will be the parents of a multitude of nations and kings, exceedingly fruitful. And we inherit the promise. While we were yet dead in sin, Christ called us and died for us. He "gives life to the dead and calls into existence things that do not exist" (Rom. 4:17). Our very being and salvation in Christ are, in the order of nature, impossible. "The dead do not praise the LORD, nor do any that go down into silence" (Ps. 115:17). But we bless the Lord as those called out of nothing, pulled from the emptiness of sin and death into a new and divinized humanity. "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless."

Our life in Christ reaches backward to the faith of Abraham, and the faith of Abraham is a proleptic sign of faith in the one before whom every knee will bow. The single ancestor of a multitude of nations is himself a sign of the singular fulfillment of human history and all creation in Christ. All nations, all kings, all people are taken up and recapitulated in the new life of Christ. The psalmist knows this: "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. For dominion belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down, before him shall bow all who do down to the dust, and I shall live for him" (Ps. 22:27-29). To "live for him" is to live for Christ. Those who worship him worship the eternal Son of the Father.

The story begins with a call. God spoke to him. "Then Abraham fell on his face" (Gen. 17:3). Prostration signals the state of his soul; he believed and his faith was reckoned to him as righteousness. It is reckoned to us as well "who believe in him who raised Jesus Christ from the dead," for faith is a single mystery. Faith is the call of God and the life God calls into being. God speaks and creates a way to walk in the world, a way to be blameless (Gen. 17:1). We say, of course, *your will be done*; we pray, *let it be to me according to your word*; we insist, *not my will but your will be done*, and thus human will and desire meet the will and desire of God in perfect freedom. Nonetheless, faith is ultimately the work and mystery of God.

Look It Up

Consider Karl Barth's study, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Oxford, 1968).

Think About It

Try page 153 of Barth: "[H]e has encountered faith, not in the course of a steady growth in experience, but through the action of God upon him, and in the vision of the crucified and risen Christ. Thus, and thus only, he is what he is—not!"

SUNDAY'S READINGS | 3 Lent, March 4

Ex. 20:1-17 • Ps. 19 • 1 Cor. 1:18-25 • John 2:13-22

Creation and Salvation

The heavens above, the earth beneath, the waters under the earth and all that dwell therein bear witness to the light. They are not the light, but bear witness to the light. They tell the glory of God. Creation speaks and instructs, exudes beauty, and gives joy (Ps. 19). The very nature of things announces that each and all are fearfully and wonderfully made. The heart may and must go out to these things, the observing eye hold them, the mind investigate them, the ear listen to what they say and do not say.

The sun and moon and stars of the firmament, vegetation and fruit-bearing trees, the birds of the air and the great sea monsters, cattle and creeping things, beasts of the earth, and men and women everywhere created in the image and likeness of God emanate glory and proclaim the mystery of their origin. Nature and all beings speak in this way: "We tell the glory of God; we are not God. We proclaim his handiwork; we are creatures. We bear witness to the Light; we are not the Light." Our duty is this: "Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood" (Rom. 1:20). Creation is itself a sacrament, a sign pointing to the eternal mystery of creation out of nothing. Creation bears witness to an austere and jealous word: "You shall have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3). Indeed, nature worships the cause of her being in the great Song of Creation (BCP, p. 88).

And yet nature, for all her beauty and order, experiences disorder and deformity as well. She is in travail. She witnesses to her creator and yearns for a redeemer. Something has gone terribly wrong that a story illustrates: "He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well'" (Matt. 13:24-26). No true account of nature and human nature as we see it from day to day can ignore this fact. Sin and death have come into the world. Beauty and brutality are in the order of things as they stand today.

Human attempts to fix this problem, notwithstanding the necessity and importance of always working for a more just and humane world, fail again and again. The God who creates is the God who redeems. God alone will separate the weeds from the wheat, at the close of the age, but even now God is plowing the human heart with the cross of Christ. Listen to St. Macarius: "So Christ our heavenly king came to till the soil of humankind devastated by sin. He assumed a human body and, using the cross as his plowshare, cultivated the barren soul. He removed the thorns and thistles which are the evil spirits and pulled up the weeds of sin" (Homily xxviii). In a similar way, an old Latin hymn shows the judge tearing open the deeds of the breast [*rimari facta pectoris*], which we could not endure but for God's perfect balance of justice and mercy. The cross is the power and wisdom of God breaking open the human heart, piercing nature, and harrowing hell until all things are one in Christ. This hidden purgation, this silent path toward holiness, is the work of a lifetime.

Jesus, consumed with zeal, plows through the house of his Father. You and all creation are that house, the treasures of which are goodness, truth, and beauty beyond all knowing.

Look It Up

Read Psalm 19.

Think About It

How does God redeem nature?

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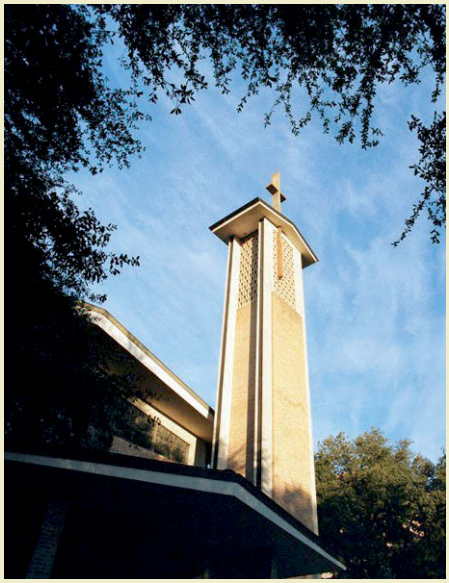

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(Continued on next page)

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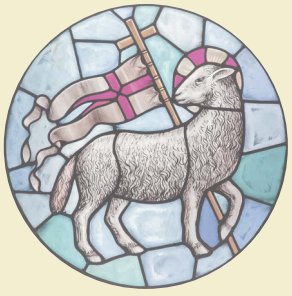

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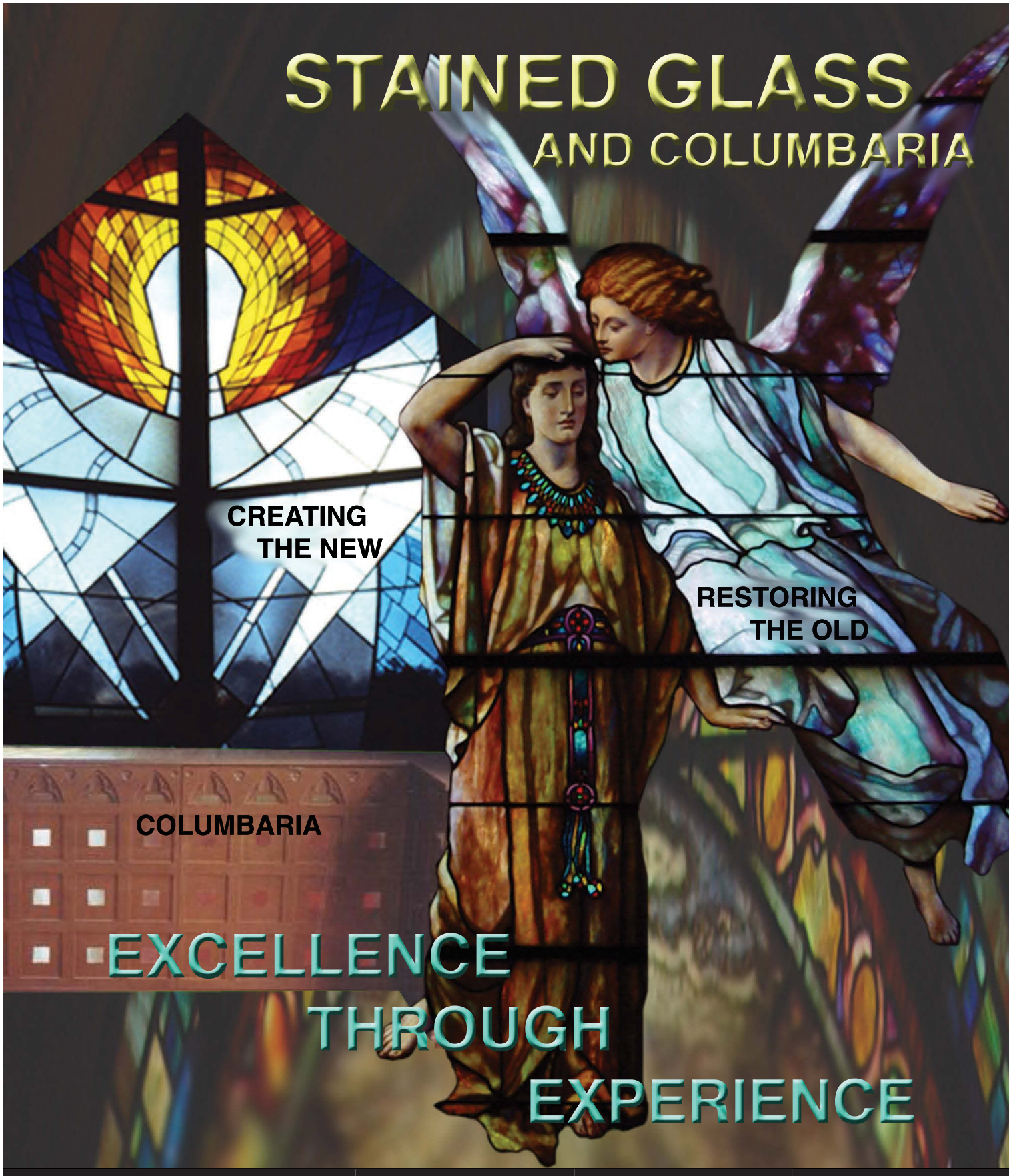

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