

Impairment Intervention

Grace along the Way

James H. Cone (1938-2018)

May 20, 2018

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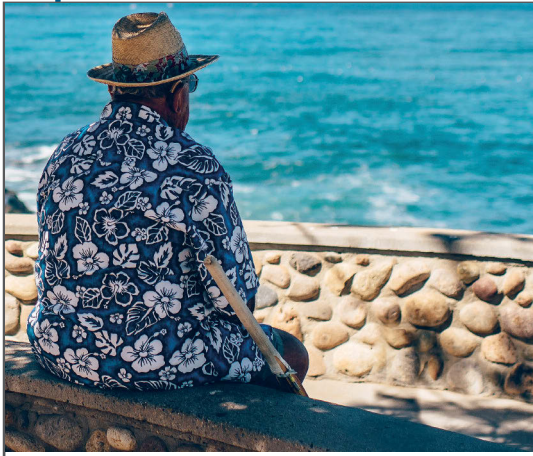


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## ON THE COVER

Richard Kew: “As soon as I could I arranged a flight across the Atlantic, and at the hospital I found a man with galloping dementia, a mere shell of the one I had seen only a couple of months earlier” (see “Suddenly My Brother’s Keeper,” p. 14).

Ian Schneider/Unsplash photo

# THE LIVING CHURCH

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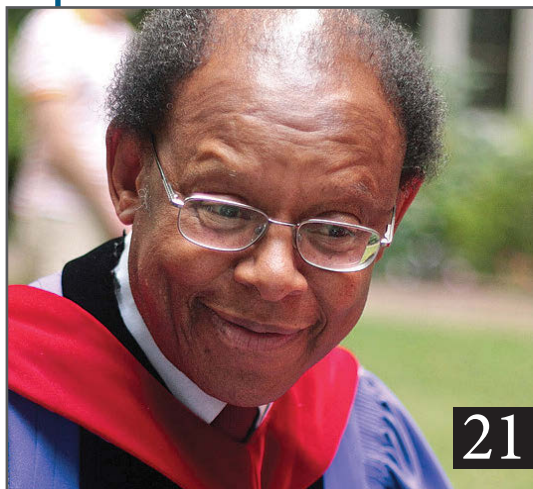
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### LIVING CHURCH Partners

We are grateful to Christ Church, Cooperstown, and St. Michael’s by-the-Sea, Carlsbad [p. 27], and the Parish of Calvary-St. George’s, New York, and the Diocese of Fond du Lac [p. 28], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.



# The Impairment Commission's Intervention

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

A recently released report suggests that if you are a hard-drinking alcoholic or prolific drug user with an aversion to accountability, the Episcopal Church might welcome you.

That depiction of a church lacking essential safeguards was a key theme from the Commission on Impairment and Leadership, which prepared the scathing, 29-page report. It deems the church riddled with “points of weakness and failure that hinder our ability to recognize and respond to impairment in church leaders.”

“We are recommending actions that promote a significant cultural shift in the Episcopal Church,” the report said. “These recommendations address the

problem of impaired leaders, but they also diagnose and suggest treatment for an impaired system that maintains denial and helplessness toward addiction, mental illness, and physical disease.”

Structural flaws in church governance allow substance abuse to go unnoticed or unaddressed at every stage in an ordained person's career, the report said. Impaired leaders are not held accountable, helped, or shown a restorative pathway back to healthy leadership.

“Denial is part of the syndrome of addiction itself, but it's also part of the system,” the Very Rev. Martha Horne, the commission's chairwoman, told TLC. “I think that's part of what the church really needs to be thinking about.”

Decades of talking about the problem has not led to the types of culture and structure that support sober leadership. Resolutions passed at General Convention since 1979 reflect “ambivalence and indeed conflict inherent in the church's general attitude toward this subject,” the report said.

“These resolutions do not reflect the urgency and necessity of a clear, informed, consistent, and church-wide response to impairment,” the report said. “Without built-in accountability, authority, strongly expressed values, and consequences for inaction, these kinds of resolutions have proven to be ineffective.”

The commission makes a series of recommendations, including:

- Establish churchwide standards for screening ordination candidates and for election of bishops.
- Create a searchable database that includes a candidate's impairment-related records.
- Provide access to experts who can help search committees and individuals respond to troubling signs and

maintain confidentiality.

- Adopt training requirements for clergy, including bishops, on issues of substance abuse.
- Establish Title III canons for a non-disciplinary process that would encourage impaired leaders to seek help and provide a clear pathway to their reinstatement after treatment.

General Convention called for the commission in response to a 2014 accident in which Heather Cook, Bishop Suffragan of Maryland at the time, killed a 41-year-old bicyclist while driving drunk. In 2015, she pleaded guilty to vehicular manslaughter, drunken driving, driving while texting, and leaving the scene of an accident. She was denied parole last May, and is now serving the third year of a seven-year prison term with no chance for future parole. She was deposed from ministry in 2015.

Cook's case raised questions about why she was consecrated bishop despite a number of warning signs, including a prior drunken-driving citation and concerns about her being inebriated at a dinner with church leaders before her consecration.

The Commission reviewed several case studies. Many unhealthy dynamics, including fear and confused understandings of what forgiveness and loyalty require, make interventions less likely.

“In all but one case we found a systemic disempowering of the individual and community to take responsibility and act,” the report said. “In almost every case we examined, the ecclesial structure and polity of our church proved to contribute negatively to the situation.”

The commission studied reforms by other institutions, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the professions of aviation, health care, and law. Commissioners saw a common thread: alternatives to profes-

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sional disciplinary processes provide clear pathways for the impaired to be held accountable, find help, and return to leadership.

“Following an initial investigation for impairment issues, many professions now include an opportunity for probation and a pathway to return to full practice through the regulatory process for those who opt for and commit to a treatment program,” the report said. “The commission recommends that a similar process be considered for impaired clergy.”

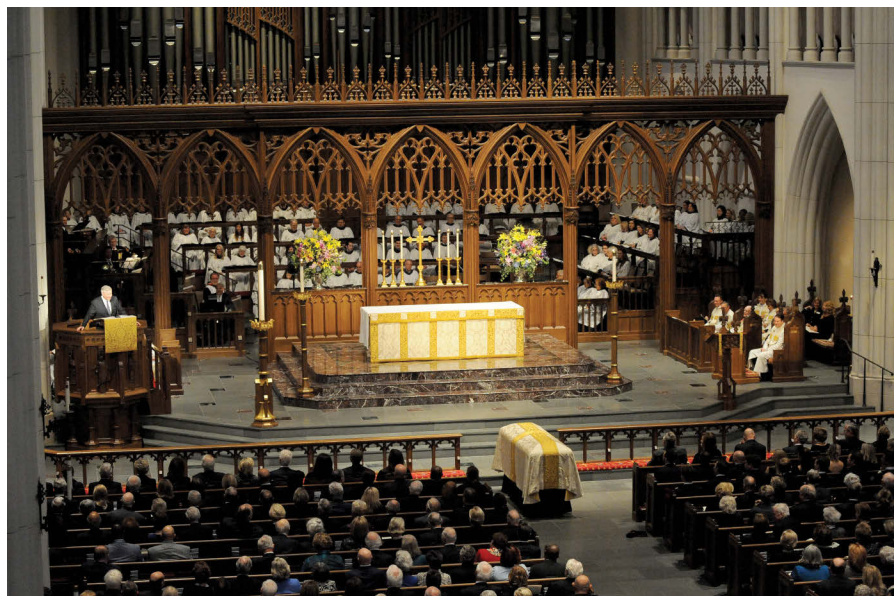
Another theme: inadequate safeguards are creating high-risk situations. In psychological screening, dioceses rely on self-reporting that cannot be verified. In elections of bishops, dioceses frequently have no one qualified to assess impairment risks in a candidate’s background.

Some recommendations might be debated as soon as July at General Convention. The commission urges the church to “review current Title III and Title IV canons alongside governing or regulatory practices of other denominations and professions to identify canonical impediments to effective pastoral response to addiction and substance abuse.”

Yet for all the stated need for structural and policy responses, the commission underscored the importance of what cannot be legislated: “the greater cultural shift required in our church.” Such monumental shifts occur within the Episcopal Church, Dean Horne said. She cited the widespread adoption of Safe Church practices, which have mitigated sexual abuse risks at every level for more than 10 years.

“That’s a really, really good example of the sort of grassroots approach that has been very effective,” she said. “Congregations, dioceses, and organizations throughout the church have all had their awareness and understanding of the issues greatly deepened and expanded.”

“At the same time, policies and procedures for response and accountability have been put into place. So we think that’s a good model for the way in which our church might well want to look at the issues around impairment.”



The invitation-only funeral for Barbara Bush filled the nave of St. Martin’s Church, Houston.

Mark Burns/Office of George H.W. Bush photo



Laura and George W. Bush, Bill and Hillary Clinton, Barack and Michelle Obama, and Melania Trump joined George H.W. Bush in honoring the memory of his wife.

Paul Morse photo

## Presiding Bishop Praises Barbara Bush

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry paid tribute to First Lady Barbara Bush on April 20, describing her “witness to the virtues of personal integrity, devotion to family, commitment to speak truth come what may, and service to her country and to the well-being of the breadth of the human family of God.”

Curry said her commitment to literacy helped “many today who behold new worlds and have hope because of the written word. And, because of her life and real faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and his way of love, we have beheld a great soul, and have hope that we can live likewise.”

The First Lady’s funeral was held at St. Martin’s Church in Houston, where

the Bush family has worshiped since the 1950s.

“President Bush was a very active lay leader in his early years here. But it was not uncommon to see him serving coffee on Sunday morning. Both of them taught in our Sunday school program. Both of them have been involved in our outreach ministries,” the Rev. Russ Levenson Jr., rector of St. Martin’s, told Jose Grinan of FOX 26, Houston. “There are plenty of times when we were really crowded, which is a great problem as a church. And you would see the president or Mrs. Bush or both of them get up and offer their seat to somebody else or scoot over so that people can squeeze in.”



June 12

**Liturgy: What's Really Going On?**

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## Executive Council Considers Title IV

At an Executive Council meeting largely devoted to saying farewell to friends rotating off the council, members got a glimpse of one of the likely hot topics at General Convention in July: Title IV.

Title IV of the church's *Constitution & Canons* concerns ecclesiastical discipline and pertains only to charges against bishops, priests, and deacons. That section of the canons is lengthy, dense, and internally inconsistent, and members beta-tested an impressive new website that promises to make the subject more transparent.

The site, which will be unveiled officially at General Convention, reflects three years of work by a task force of the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution, and Canons, responding to a mandate from the 2015 convention.

The site provides sophisticated navigation that will help participants and observers of Title IV issues to understand the process from their perspec-

tive. As part of its broader mandate, the commission also proposes 21 resolutions related to Title IV, mostly to clarify and correct internal inconsistencies.

Aside from previewing the website, much of the last Executive Council meeting of the triennium focused on transition to the next triennium, and to emotional farewells for the 19 members who are concluding six-year terms. Nineteen other members are midway through their terms. General Convention will elect 10 new members, and the other nine seats will be filled by appointments from the nine provinces of the church.

The council also heard a report on the work of the Commission on Impairment and Leadership, formed after the tragic 2014 accident in which an inebriated bishop killed a bicyclist. The report recommends a variety of restrictions, training, and improvements to record-keeping.

*Kirk Petersen*

## 'A Matter of Grave Consequence'

Seven responses from other Anglican provinces express a consensus that changing the Church's historic doctrine of marriage is a serious matter.

The letters appear on the General Convention website. They came in response to an inquiry by the Rev. Canon Jordan Hylden, an appointed member of General Convention's Task Force on the Study of Marriage and a contributing editor to TLC.

Excerpts follow.

- Archbishop Philip L. Freier, **Anglican Church of Australia**: "There is little question that changing the doctrine of marriage is a matter of grave consequence, indeed a church-dividing matter. ... [After citing the Australian church's resolution expressing regrets the Scottish Episcopal Church had authorized same-sex marriage rites]: The proper response to changing community standards in particular

contexts concerning marriage is, on this view, wrongly handled at a doctrinal level if it involves a redefinition of the doctrine of marriage but rightly developed with pastoral and liturgical resources."

- The Ven. Kibwela K. Anthonio, for Archbishop Masiyango K. Zacharie, **Anglican Church of Congo**: "In the Province of the Anglican Church of Congo, the only type of marriage that we celebrate is for heterosexual couples. Same-sex marriage is not recognized in Article 40 of the Congolese Constitution: 'All individuals have the right to marry a person of their choice of the opposite sex and to create a family.' Thus there is no way we can introduce a proposal of the liturgical rite for the marriage of same-sex couples.

"Another important point we need to mention is that our churches in Africa are still faithful to the Christian



and Biblical worldview, whereas for Westerners, Secularism has become a predominant life. So, in the Province of the Church of Congo we do not have room to talk and discuss about blessing of same-sex unions. Otherwise, it will bring conflicts and division among Christians. The Church has been built for Unity and not for Division.”

- William Nye, secretary general of the Archbishops’ Council, **Church of England**: “Changing doctrine is, we believe, a matter that must be undertaken in a highly consultative and ecumenical manner across the major Christian churches of the world as well as among Anglicans globally. ... Moreover, the way that TEC handles the accommodation of differing doctrinal views will be significant for our future relationships. ... Despite the careful wording of the preface to the *Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2*, in which the ‘gift of children’ is cited as one of God’s purposes for the two people ‘when it is God’s will,’ it remains that the purposes of marriage as understood through the ages have been substantially altered in this new rite. ... The best one can say about effectively erasing one of the key traditional purposes of marriage is that it is a very big step to have undertaken unilaterally in the face of global understandings of our shared traditions across the Church of God.”

- John Reuben Davies, convener of the Liturgy Committee, the **Scottish Episcopal Church**: “At the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church 2017, the second reading of an amendment to Canon 31 (Of the Solemnisation of Holy Matrimony) was passed. The amendment, by removing section 1 of the canon, also took away the only doctrinal definition of marriage to be found in the SEC’s Code of Canons. ... The point to be noted is that, by contrast with the Episcopal Church, no new definition of marriage has been made explicit in the Code of Canons. In this respect, the SEC has rejected the approach of TEC.”

- Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo, **Episcopal Church of Sudan**: “The Episcopal Church of Sudan does not approve of same-sex marriage because it does not believe that it is the will of God. As such,

the Episcopal Church of Sudan does not approve of trial rites for same-sex marriage as it has been authorized by the Episcopal Church of the USA.”

- Archbishop Jacob Erasto Chimeledya, **Anglican Church of Tanzania**: “From now onward be informed that we are not having any church partnership. Please do not write me back on this matter.”

- Archbishop Daniel Yinka Sarfo, **Church of the Province of West Africa**: “Your recent decisions with

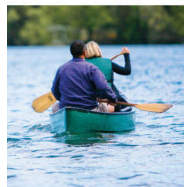
respect to marriage have drawn a line as a drift from the Catholic and traditional marriage between man and woman to something else which most Anglican Provinces including ours abhor. It is a complete turn from the Book of Common Prayer which makes us Anglicans. ... We in the Anglican Church of the Province of West Africa will never permit same-sex marriages to be liturgically celebrated. We believe that same-sex marriage is unbiblical, unnatural, and ‘taboo’ in Africa.”



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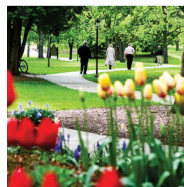
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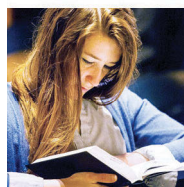
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## Bethlehem Elects N.H. Canon

The Diocese of Bethlehem has elected the Rev. Canon Kevin Nichols as its ninth bishop.

The Rev. Canon Ruth Woodliff-Stanley, canon to the ordinary of the Episcopal Church in Colorado, was the other nominee. The one-ballot election was close among Bethlehem's laity:

Nichols won on a 47-45 vote. The distance was wider among clergy: Nichols won 43-28.

Nichols, 56, is chief operating officer and canon for mission resources in the Diocese of New Hampshire. He is a former president of New Hampshire's standing committee and a member of

the churchwide Task Force to Reimagine the Episcopal Church.

A former Roman Catholic priest and a graduate of St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, Nichols was received into the Episcopal priesthood in 1999 and has served as rector in the New Hampshire parishes of St. Stephen's, Pittsfield, and St. Andrew's, Hopkinton.



Nichols

Bethlehem's eighth bishop, the Rt. Rev. Paul V. Marshall, served from 1996 to January 2014.

The Rt. Rev. Sean W. Rowe, Bishop of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania, served Bethlehem as provisional bishop for four years while the diocese discerned its future.

*Diocese of Bethlehem*

POSTCARD FROM LONDON

## Youth's Murder Haunts England

When he served as Bishop of Stepney, the Rt. Rev. John Sentamu and his wife, Margaret, occupied a former vicarage in Bow, East London, where the back fence stood diagonal to our front door. He was an exceptional bishop with boundless energy. Few were surprised when he progressed from his time in Stepney to a brief stint as Bishop of Birmingham and then became Archbishop of York.

The Sentamus were incredibly generous with their hospitality. His New Day roasts were legendary. My wife, Deirdre, and I enjoyed them several times. They shared their home with countless waifs and strays. A stream of Ugandans found the way to their door. But their hospitality didn't end there.

Several times we met a tall, dignified, and reserved man originally from Jamaica whom the Sentamus had taken in after his marriage ended. Neville Lawrence, a plasterer by trade who had come to the United Kingdom in search of a better life, had lost so much. He may well have lived out his life in suburban obscurity, but this changed on the evening of April 22, 1993, when his 18-year-old son, Stephen, was attacked and stabbed to



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death by a gang of youths at a bus stop not far from the family home in Eltham in southeast London.

Despite being sent a postcard with the alleged attackers' names on it, the police were incredibly slow to act. They eventually claimed they had insufficient evidence to bring a prosecution, and in the years that followed it seemed the police were more intent on harassing the Lawrence family than bringing Stephen's killers to justice.

The Lawrence family unsuccessfully brought a private prosecution and tenaciously sustained a campaign for justice for Stephen, even enlisting the support of President Nelson Mandela. In 1997 the Police Complaints Authority began to investigate the case. Bishop Sentamu, formerly a High Court judge in Uganda, assisted the Lawrence family in hearings chaired by Sir William MacPherson. Two years later the MacPherson Report dramatically charged that the Metropolitan Police authority, which handled the case, was "institutionally racist."

A further outcome was agreement

by Parliament to set aside the ancient tradition prohibiting double jeopardy. Two men who subsequently stood trial were found guilty and jailed, but the Lawrences believe they were not the only guilty parties. It is alleged that during the MacPherson hearings the Sentamus were subject to surveillance from a nearby building site and their home was broken into.

A few weeks ago police announced they had exhausted all lines of enquiry into the Lawrence case. But as the 25th anniversary of Stephen's death approaches, a BBC documentary to be screened on three consecutive nights (*Stephen: The Murder That Changed a Nation*) may unearth new leads. BBC says the documentary represents the fullest coverage yet of the case. A further result could be charges against senior police officers involved in the botched investigation.

Doreen Lawrence, now 65, was elevated to the House of Lords in 2013 on the strength of her campaign to find justice for her murdered son. In 2016 she became chancellor of De Montfort

University in Leicester. It is interesting to compare the attitudes of the estranged husband and wife, who reportedly never speak to each other of their tragedy. Has she come to terms with Stephen's death? "I haven't," she told reporters. "I don't think I have come through the other end. All I want is to get justice for Stephen." In her view, forgiveness cannot be offered without confession of wrongdoing.

Neville Lawrence 78, who was awarded an honorary degree by the University of Portsmouth for his campaigning, has announced he has forgiven the gang, despite the absence of any confession. He has returned to Jamaica and now lives there. He said his decision to forgive was the hardest he would ever make. He continues to feel the pain: "The only time my life sentence will be finished is when I'm in the ground." But he had drawn strength from his Christian faith and plans to spend the anniversary of his son's death in church.

The Lawrence case may have uncov-

(Continued on next page)

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## Youth's Murder

(Continued from previous page)

ered institutional racism among the police at the time of the Lawrence murder, and this is acknowledged. This by no means signals a turning point in the matter of knife crime in London. Since the start of 2018 there have been 60 deaths through stabbings, a statistic that puts London ahead of New York.

*John Martin*

## Bell Probe Dropped

Further police investigation of alleged child abuse by the Rt. Rev. George Bell, a former Bishop of Chichester (1929-58), has been dropped. Sussex Police sources said the investigation was “not possible as Bishop Bell died 60 years ago.”

It is understood that the police probe involved fresh accusations. The first accusation against Bell was made in 1995, 37 years after his death. The complaint to the Rt. Rev. Eric Kemp, Bishop of Chichester (1974-2001), was not passed on to police, and a second complaint was made in 2013 to the office of Archbishop Justin Welby.

The Diocese of Chichester revealed in September 2015 it had made a financial settlement with the alleged victim. This drew accusations that the church had “rushed to judgment” and a concerted campaign seeking to clear Bell’s name. A review of its handling of the case by Lord Carlile claimed there were shortcomings in the church’s processes.

Archbishop Welby has stuck to his guns on his stating that Bell had a “significant cloud ... over his name” after the publication of the Carlile Review. “I cannot with integrity rescind my statement made after the publication of Lord Carlile’s review into how the Church handled the Bishop Bell case,” Welby said.

The Diocese of Chichester had a long history of failures in child protection practice. A submission by the national church’s Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (March 5-23)

said Chichester had fallen far short of what was to be expected, and that the church could and should have done better at the time, and that it failed to protect children and respond properly to survivors.

*John Martin*

## Bishop of Missouri Calls for a Successor

The Rt. Rev. George Wayne Smith, Bishop of Missouri since 2002, has announced his plan to retire in mid-2020. The election of his successor will be held during the diocese’s 2019 convention on Nov. 15-16.

“I am young and healthy, and I am not at all certain that my active ministry will come to an end with my retirement from Missouri,” Smith said. “I am indeed open to new possibilities. It is clear to me, nonetheless, that it is time for a transition in episcopal ministry in this venue. Conversation with my wife, Debbie Smith, and our family, consultation with colleagues in this diocese and with other bishops, and extensive pondering and praying have brought me to this point. I am at ease with the decision.”


## Archbishop Urges Accounting Reforms

South Africa may have new political leaders, but the fight continues to end what Archbishop Thabo Makgoba has called “one of the most trust corroding episodes of the past eight years here in South Africa.”

“The only way to sanctify our belief in a new South Africa is to shower off the dirt of corruption,” the archbishop said in an address to accounting faculty and students at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

The country’s accounting firms need to “take a step back before they take their next step forward. They have shattered this country’s trust in them,” he said.

Professional ethics is “the bedrock of the accountancy profession,” he said. “Ethical behavior in business is fundamental for public trust and confidence.



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We in my church have had to embark on a process of similar self-examination recently, so I know it is not easy.

“If we cannot trust our accounting firms and chartered accountants, how can we trust the promises, decisions, and actions of the government agencies and ministries they audit? And if we cannot trust our South African companies, what then?” he asked.

Distrust “is like a stain,” he said. “It gets on the walls. It gets in your wallpaper. It gets in your rugs, in your upholstery, and your clothes, and finally into you.

“No one has more opportunity to shape tomorrow’s South Africa than you,” he told his audience of accountants. South Africa is entering a “new struggle” that begins “with the rational and emotional acceptance that, after 20 years of democracy, we need to regain our moral compass.”

*John Martin*

## Rwandan Diplomat Pledges Vigilance

Rwandan genocide deniers use many strategies to obscure the 1994 genocide, in which an estimated 500,000 to 1 million died and as much as 70 percent of the Tutsi population was affected.

Yamina Karitanyi, Rwanda’s High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, said deniers keep changing their strategies. She promised that Rwandans will never stop fighting them.

Karitanyi spoke at a commemoration service at St. Marylebone Parish Church in central London. More than 500 guests attended, including many Rwandans living in the U.K.

“For those set on inflicting emotional distress on Rwanda, our message is clear: We will not tire in using the law, and diplomacy, to fight genocide ideology,” Karitanyi said.

She said she regretted a decision was still pending on five extradition cases of genocide suspects living in the U.K.

Michael Gray, academic and universities director at Harrow School, said there was “a premeditated and carefully orchestrated genocide against the Tutsi” and it should have been stopped by the international community.

*John Martin*

## Methodists, Moravians Deepen Their Unity

The Southern Province of the Moravian Church in North America voted in its synod April 20 to enter full communion with the United Methodist Church. The Northern Province of the Moravian Church will vote on this relationship at its synod scheduled for June 21-25.

The votes complement the United

Methodist Church’s May 2016 vote for full communion with these two Moravian provinces. The Moravian Church in North America traces its roots to the Hussite Movement of the 15th century.

Moravian missionary growth throughout the world, including in Africa, the Caribbean, and what are now the United States and Canada, began after the renewal of the Moravian movement by Nicholas Ludwig

*(Continued on next page)*



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## Methodists and Moravians

(Continued from previous page)

von Zinzendorf in the 18th century. London's Moravians were also important in deepening John Wesley's spiritual life as an Anglican, and he went on to inspire the beginnings of the Methodist tradition.

The Episcopal Church has been in full communion with the Moravian Church in the contiguous United States since 2011; Moravians are also in full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In addition, the Episcopal Church is engaged in dialogue with the United Methodist Church; the proposal *A Gift to the World* is circulating for discussion and comment.

*Richard J. Mammana*

## Nashotah Calls Hans Boersma

Nashotah House has appointed Hans Boersma to the Order of St. Benedict Servants of Christ Endowed Professorship in Ascetical Theology. Boersma currently holds the J.I. Packer Chair of Theology at Regent College in Vancouver. He will assume his new duties with Nashotah House in the summer of 2019 after fulfilling a final year of responsibilities at Regent College.

Before joining Regent College in 2005, Boersma taught for six years at Trinity Western University in Langley, British Columbia, after serving as a pastor. Along the way, Boersma has emerged as a leading voice among Protestant and evangelical theologians exploring and appropriating the riches of the Catholic tradition.

Boersma's extensive writing focuses especially on the intersection of sacramental and ascetical theology.

## Lambeth Discusses Freedom of Religion

Parliamentarians and senior religious leaders from 11 Commonwealth countries gathered at Lambeth Palace for

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two days of discussions on freedom of religion or belief.

The gathering was led by the Rt. Rev. Christopher Cocksworth, Bishop of Coventry, and ran parallel to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

The Archbishop of Canterbury convened the event in partnership with Baroness Berridge, director of the Commonwealth Initiative on Freedom of Religion or Belief.

“The discussions at Lambeth Palace were attended by 40 senior religious leaders, parliamentarians, and academics from 11 Commonwealth countries,” said a statement issued from Lambeth Palace. “The theme was ‘Majority and minority in context.’”

Participants heard about the international legal framework for Freedom of Religion or Belief and the need for faith communities and governments to engage with it more consistently.

The meeting was held under the Chatham House rule, named after the international think tank. Under the rule, participants are able to report what they heard at the meeting, but not in a way that will identify the source of that information.

Lambeth Palace said participants “noted that religious freedom is a deep tradition and rich heritage of the countries of the Commonwealth, but one that cannot be taken for granted.”

ACNS

## Bishop Eastman Dies at 89

The Rt. Rev. Albert Theodore Eastman, 12th Bishop of Maryland, died April 26. He was 89. A native of San Mateo, California, he was a graduate of Haverford College and Virginia Theological Seminary. He was ordained a priest in 1954.

“If Christianity is going to speak to a culture,” he told *The Washington Post* in 1982, “then it has to come out of the culture and not be imposed by people with a different set of values or different visions or different cultural heritage.”

In retirement, Bishop Eastman served at Washington National Cathedral in various roles and was appointed vicar in 2003. He lived in Falls Church, Virginia.

## Cuban Bishop Dies at 92

The Rt. Rev. Emilio Hernández, sixth Bishop of Cuba, died of cancer on April 19. He was 92.

Born in Morón, he was a pre-medical student at the University of Havana before pursuing further studies at the Evangelical Theological Seminary at Matanzas. He was elected bishop coadjutor 1980 and was consecrated as diocesan bishop in 1982.

After Hernández finished his theological studies, Bishop Alexander Hugo Blankingship sent him to lead a small church in Florencia, Camagüey.

He served 10 years in prison after resisting Fidel Castro. While in prison, he helped organize an ecumenical fellowship. When his wife, Edivia, visited him in prison, she gave him meals wrapped in pages of the Book of Common Prayer.



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# Suddenly My Brother's Keeper





# Dementia Strikes My Younger Brother

By Richard Kew

As I was getting into my devotions at about 4:30 a.m. January 5, my phone pinged with a text from my elder daughter, Olivia, in England. She was letting me know that my younger brother, after failing several assessments, had finally been accepted into the dementia unit of an outstanding care facility near his home. Phone calls, more texts, and email followed through the day as we arranged his transfer from the hospital, a contract, funds, insurance, and such things.

An early-morning call around Thanksgiving had let me know that my brother's healthcare crisis had come to a head. Chris is 70 and single. He had fallen during the night, and been down for eight hours before being found and rushed to a hospital. As soon as I could I arranged a flight across the Atlantic, and at the hospital I found a man with galloping dementia, a mere shell of the one I had seen only a couple of months earlier. Chris had been a successful businessman, but the doctors were adamant he could never live at home again, drive, or even manage his own affairs. Diabetes and dementia are only part of the long list of his ailments.

During the next ten days my routine was to visit the hospital while scouring the countryside for a place where he would be safe, secure, cared for, and comfortable. My cousin, a registered nurse with a lot of eldercare experience, advised and prodded. I was naïve enough to think I might have everything fixed up before I returned to the United States. Given the convoluted nature of my brother's physical and mental health, many establishments had misgivings about taking him on, so my daughter, an overburdened university administrator, picked up the trail when I came home.

The word that comes to mind to describe these last weeks is *harrowing*. We are now in the front line of the dementia and Alzheimer's epidemic that is ravaging our culture. I am suddenly my brother's keeper as next of kin. This would be a fraught undertaking if we lived in the

same town, but is further complicated by an ocean and six time zones between us. There have been anxious days, frantic prayers, and sleepless nights, the stress having a character all its own. I am writing not just to emphasize the significance of this mental-health challenge, but also to clarify my thoughts and to distill from them some wisdom.

My brother and I have never been close, our paths further diverging in the wake of my teenage commitment to Christ. Dismissing faith as a refuge for the inadequate, he headed in the opposite direction. There were times when in my early zeal I became prissy and hypocritical, a self-righteous older brother to his prodigal son, the religious oddball in our largely post-Christian family. I was ordained and Chris went into construction, taking full advantage of fortuitous opportunities and retiring at 60 with investments that would support an affluent life. We kept in touch, but phone calls were occasional. We cared about each other, but there was little intimacy.

When in England for a family wedding in August 2016, I was made aware of his massive physical and psychological deterioration. I began keeping closer touch and we even vacationed together, but by September 2017 he could barely totter from bed to recliner, his life complicated by other infirmities. During my 10 days with him, it was obvious that he was no longer mentally coping, yet he refused to let go of that with which he was familiar. I spent the time there trying to bring some order to the chaotic state of his business and financial affairs. A bigger crisis was barreling toward us, and that was the November surprise.

I am no stranger to dementia; my brother has followed a path similar to that taken by our mother and grandmother. I find myself wondering if I will be affected next. That is selfish, I know, but unsurprising. Meanwhile, news comes of friends with ever-worsening ailments, watching the hollowing out of their loved ones, or leaving this planet. Although I have lived among families going through something similar since my ordination in

1969, my brother's ordeal has brought home to me how stressful this is on even the most stable family systems.

In quiet moments, I field regrets about Chris, wishing I had reached out more strenuously earlier, but now as his mind muddies, the nature of our relationship has to change. I find myself mulling over the detritus from long-past conflicts that still sits there despite a half-century of prayers and resolutions. No doubt more hurt, remorse, grief, and qualms will burrow their way to the surface of my consciousness in due course. There is guilt and there have been tears.

The main chapters of my life are, for better or worse, now written, while what lies ahead could be little more than a brief epilogue. Ever conscious of the depths of my fallenness, I am sure of my Savior. In the words of Augustus Toplady's great hymn, "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy Cross I cling."

Reason tells me that there is little more I could have done for Chris, yet remorse lingers. Did I sidestep responsibilities earlier in life; am I now warehousing my brother because it is the easiest way out of an almost impossible dilemma? Such questions cascade through my mind, and I have few appropriate answers. As I put the finishing touches to this reflection, I heard that Chris is not sure where he is but is angry about not being allowed to go home, something that is impossible under British law.

In the middle of one night, I awoke wondering about his inner confusion during the hours of darkness in a strange place, his capacities being whittled away. The words of Shakespeare in *As You Like It* refused to go away when the playwright talked of the ages of a man culminating in "second childishness and mere oblivion, / Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything."

What a huge challenge dementia is for all human beings, but especially for those of us entrusted by Christ with his mission in a broken and hurting world.

*The Rev. Richard Kew is priest associate at St. George's Church, Nashville.*

# Grace along the Way

## Pilgrimage and Ordinary Time

By Molly Jane Layton



A church graces the landscape along this part of the Camino Francés (or French Way) branch of El Camino de Santiago in northern Spain.





Staffan Andersson/Flickr photo

I craned my head back, gazing up at the imposing face of the cathedral, with its intricately carved doors and sweeping spires. In the pale morning light, its stone facade stood stark against the overcast sky. Shifting the weight of my backpack, I searched by my feet for a bronze scallop shell in the pavement and took my first steps along the ancient Spanish pilgrimage route to Santiago. El Camino de Santiago (“The Way of St. James”) traces the path pilgrims have walked for more than 1,000 years to pray before the bones of St. James. I was eager to join these pilgrims, embarking on my journey following the scallop-shell markers through the Spanish countryside.

On my second night on the trail, I stayed at a hostel where the manager gave us pilgrims an impassioned speech about the beauty of the Camino. He was full of advice: “The Camino has so many lessons to teach you. Just pay attention and every day you will learn something new.” My fellow pilgrims loved it, but I thought it sounded stressful; as far as I was concerned, I was not walking the Camino to learn my lesson of the day. But, while I did not want to feel pressured into measuring my growth, I knew that my journey was inherently different than the myriad other hikes I had done. The question “What am I doing here?” nagged at me as I walked for the next few days.

(Continued on next page)

# Grace along the Way

(Continued from previous page)

In *The Pilgrim Journey: A History of Pilgrimage in the Western World* (BlueBridge, 2016), James Harper describes pilgrimage as the combination of two essential elements: journey and faith. Without faith, we are simply traveling, and without the journey, no matter what form it takes, we lack what deepens our understanding of God: “For the pilgrim, the journey, with all its vicissitudes, is not the wearisome preamble to truth—it is the necessary way to truth, the living, arduous, and joyful process by which truth can be attained” (p. 7). The destination is exciting, but the journey strengthens the faith, and the faith supports the journey and makes it possible in the first place. The pilgrim must go through the process, at times painful, to see her goal realized. While this definition of pilgrimage resonated with me, its emphasis on human agency also seemed burdensome: where does grace fit into an arduous path to truth? Does the journey lose its joy when the pilgrim feels obligated to grow and change?

As I walked, I began to observe just how ordinary my days on this pilgrimage felt, which heightened my questions about my purpose there. I realized that I had naïvely expected to feel a sustained spiritual high as I walked through the Spanish countryside. Walking alone lends itself to contemplation better than my daily life does, but my routine was pretty similar to the rest of my life: hanging out with friends after a long day’s walk, washing out smelly hiking clothes and making dinner, shopping for the next day’s trail snacks. The unexpected normalcy of my experience reminded me of the difference between a feast Sunday and ordinary time. I was expecting the high of Easter or Christmas and got the mundaneness of your average summer Sunday.

Ordinary time is the period between Pentecost and Advent, roughly May through November. Its name comes from the way that the Sundays are numbered; the first Sunday of

ordinary time is called “the First Sunday after Pentecost,” and so forth; first, second, third are known as ordinal numbers, and because of their pattern, ordinary comes to mean something common, normal, or standard. During ordinary time, the lectionary covers the gospel passages about Jesus’

Whether it is setting a goal of becoming a holier person or learning the lesson of the day on the Camino, this idea of always striving to be better places the focus on us and what we do instead of on Jesus’ sacrifice for us and the perfect life he lived for us.

earthly ministry: his miracles, his conversations with the disciples, his conflicts with the Pharisees. The liturgical color is green, the color of growth, so often people focus on how to become a holier person during this season by imitating the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ through prayer and service to grow closer to God.

As I made connections between my pilgrimage experience and ordinary time, I realized that they can present the same danger: whether it is setting a goal of becoming a holier person or learning the lesson of the day on the Camino, this idea of always striving to be better places the focus on us and what we do instead of on Jesus’ sacrifice for us



and the perfect life he lived for us. To understand the purpose of ordinary time, it is important to remember that the rest of the Church calendar sets the stage for it; it is the second half of the year, not the first. From Advent through Pentecost, we experience Jesus' birth, his manifestation as the Messiah during Epiphany, his temptations during Lent, his Passion, death, and resurrection during Holy Week, and finally his ascension and his gift of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the story of Jesus' sacrifice for us as the Son of God sets the context in which we walk through ordinary time. Our life in Christ begins with his grace and is sustained by his grace. There is no doing or growth apart from that grace, and in the same way there is no learning your lessons or attaining truth apart from grace on a pilgrimage.

During ordinary time, our daily routines are paramount, as on a pilgrimage: we go to work, spend time with our families, watch TV, try to make it to the gym, and show up at church — most Sundays, anyways. It is easy to overlook this time because of its mundaneness. What I came to realize during the ordinary routine of pilgrimage is that grace shows itself in the midst of that ordinariness, just as much as in the excitement or gravity of the Church's feast seasons. We see Jesus' grace for us as we celebrate the joys and mourn the sorrows of our daily lives, as we simultaneously love our neighbors and become irritated by them, as we face our struggles with the same ordinary sins over and over.

It was through the rhythm of my journey, with no particularly great revelations or spiritual changes to report from day to day, that I began to understand more deeply what happens in us through the ordinariness of daily life in the Church, a daily life made possible by and sustained through a very extraordinary grace. And so, every Sunday from May to November, we sit in the pews and listen to the Gospel readings about Jesus' earthly ministry, his day-to-day interactions with

the disciples who just cannot seem to get things right, with the Pharisees whom he calls white-washed tombs, and with the fickle crowds that showed up just for bread and fish. We walk to the altar rail with our burdens and our struggles and receive the Eucharist, because Jesus has been there before us and walked our road and done it perfectly.

It was as I absentmindedly hummed an old campfire song on my journey that I was struck by how much this is true for me as a pilgrim:

Jesus is the waymaker  
He made a way for me  
When the sun refused to shine in that  
    sinful heart of mine,  
Jesus made a way for me

Jesus makes a way for pilgrims along El Camino, along the Way. Or, as John 14:6 puts it, "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" Because Jesus is the way, his grace is the starting point, not the endpoint. It is not what we are walking toward, as if anything we do could bring us closer to him. It is what makes us new at the beginning of the journey, what sustains us through the journey, and what makes God say "well done" when the journey is over. There is a subtle but important shift here, from seeing pilgrimage as something we do to attain a goal to seeing it as a journey made possible by Jesus' grace. That grace is extended to all the Sundays of the year and to all of our daily actions, through both the highs of the feasts and the mundaneness of ordinary time, to the pilgrims who continue to make their joyful, arduous journeys, and to those who simply sit in church on an average summer Sunday.

*Molly Jane Layton teaches world history and is the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme coordinator at a public charter school in Brooklyn.*

# Welcome by Design

By David G. Hawkins

I am Ebenezer Scrooge, “secret, self-contained and solitary.” Private grief outdistances public mourning. I hide out beyond life’s margins. Except on this Sunday morning, when I make the effort, as I promised Norma.

“Morning,” says the church greeter.

She stands behind a card table loaded with nametags.

“Got one?” she asks.

I shake my head. These plastic and safety pin entrapments reduce me to all thumbs.

“First name?”

“Why?” I ask.

“To welcome to you to the friendliest church in town, that’s why.”

“Oh, well, in *that* case,” I say, “it’s David.”

My new friend purses her lips and scans the IDs. Her cry is joy unleashed. “Here it is.” She moves to hang it around my neck.

“I can do that,” I say, stepping backward into a body. “Can’t you look where you’re going?” he says. “Oops, sorry about that. You’ll be needing these.” He hands me sheets of paper.

“Looks as if I’ll need an index, too. Will there be an exam?”

“We’ll get you seated.” Under escort, I am ushered closely down the center aisle. I break rank, jump ship, tumble into a pew.

The lector does not make the jump with Philemon. Orphaned from its context, it’s meaningless. The lectionary’s choice from Hebrews needs a short introduction for safe delivery.

During the sermon, I steal glances at what I was handed: Order of Service, church magazine, Council of Churches bulletin, Super Chef Grill’s takeout menu (accidentally included), hymn sheet, notices, flier for flower festival, pastoral letter from the bishop, lyrics for the choir’s anthem, sign-up sheet for vacation Bible school, amended treasurer’s report.

For some, the exchange of the peace is the Arabic genie escaping from its bottle. Glad-handing, networking, tally-ho cries of recognition. Tongues are on the loose. Embosomings abound. The Peace often mimics neighborhood block parties, homecomings, rent-a-crowd.

“Hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast” (Isa. 26:20 KJV). Proven avenues of evasion include scowling, arms tightly folded, waiting

it out, faking a hand injury, hunting in the bulletin for what comes next, feverish burrowing in purse, pocket, and string bag for loose change or the offering envelope.

I’m aware of those behind and those ahead in the checkout queue at the church door.



“Well, I certainly didn’t hear him acknowledge the flowers Dad gave in Mum’s memory. To think we got him up, washed, shaved and dressed just for that bunch of measly old twigs up there. Isn’t that so, Dad?”

A labored expletive from a bundle of shawl in a wheelchair.

Another complainant. “Vroom! Vroom’ is all I heard during the entire service, Cyril. And that couple in front of us. Such behavior is for their bedroom. Did you notice them?”

“Can’t say I did, m’dear. I probably dozed off.”

“Well, I must say. A fat lot of good this morning’s service did you, Cyril.”

The nature of the pastor’s participation in the greet-and-meet departure is well documented:

*The stakeholder, or the “regular attender”* — double handclasp, handshake, elbow clutch, upper arm grasp (male). Embosomings, peck on cheek/s (female).

*The newcomer, or “the stranger”* — moist, limp, zephyr-like palm caress. A hesitant smile accompanies one of “grand, great, good, wonderful, lovely, happy, nice, delighted to have you with us.” Or pleated brow. “Do I know you? Have we met?” The newcomer has been known to respond, “Jolly interesting sermon”; “Where on earth did you learn to preach like that?”; or “I enjoy you so much.”

*The senior citizen* — four-hand pile-up similar to a super burger; elbow is propellant to discourage loitering with intent to chat.

*Youth, or “the youth”* — tentative tactility.

*Unaccompanied female* — sustained double hand grip. Fortissimo: “Ah haaa! Another unclaimed treasure. Do you by any chance sing?”

Church never runs on empty. It is fueled by wine and cheese, tea, fruit juice, coffee, and tuna sandwiches. The coffee hour is not everybody’s cup of tea.

*The Rev. David G. Hawkins served as a chaplain at Vancouver General Hospital from 1973 until he retired in 1994.*



# The Glorious, Complicated Legacy of James H. Cone

By Matthew Burdette

We cannot foresee what strange new future is being thrust upon us by opening a book. Some authors are barely able to trouble the waters of our souls. Others baptize us into a new life and sense of self. Such was my experience with James Cone, who died at 79 on April 28. I did not know what would become of me when, in 2012, I finally got around to reading *Black Theology and Black Power*, Cone's first book, which was published in 1969.

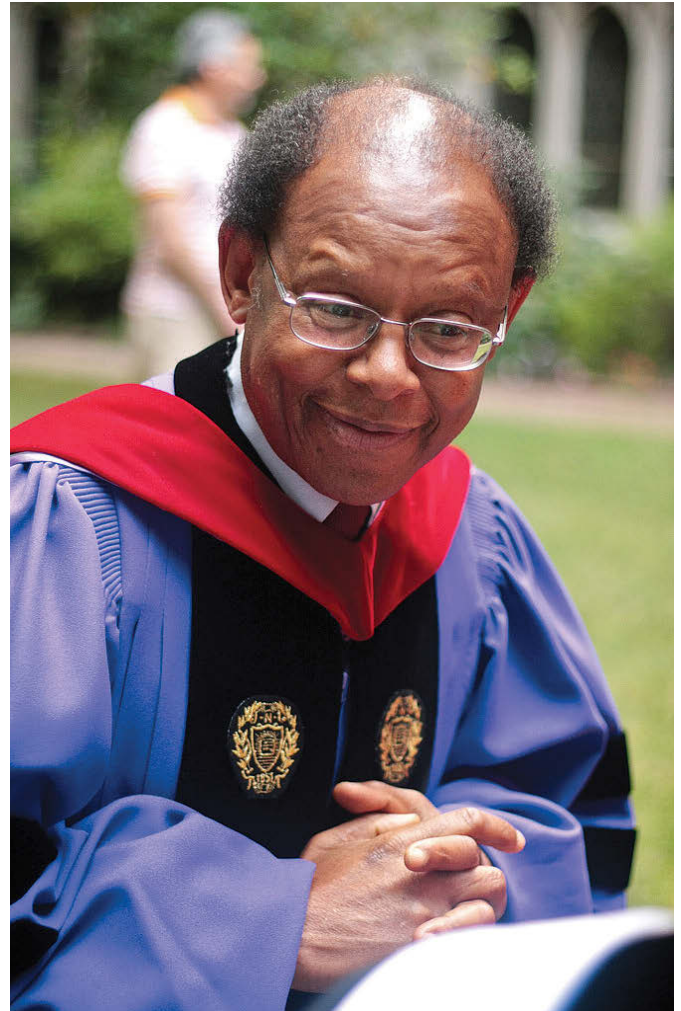
I had been reluctant to read Cone. I was exposed to the occasional excerpt of his work in divinity school, but had not been assigned one of his books. A professor repeatedly warned me that I was doing myself a disservice by ignoring Cone. Not only was I an aspiring theologian who should have some knowledge of one of the most significant figures in recent theology, but more fundamentally, it was important that I, as an aspiring theologian *with dark skin*, learn from one who took seriously both his identity as a Christian theologian and his identity as a black man — as a singular identity. Whenever my professor would remind me to read Cone, I would respond that yes, certainly, I should read Cone, and it would be nice if I had more time to read more books, and of course I would get to Cone just as soon as I finished the other books on my to-read list.

I didn't want to read Cone.

I thought that I understood that racism is bad, that the Christian faith is against racism, and that American society is plagued by it. And I kept it to myself, but I assumed that Cone would say in great detail all of this stuff about racism that I already understood, and that his work would be very moralistic but only tangentially theological. I wanted to read what I was then calling real theology, and I quietly assumed that Cone's work did not qualify.

But in 2012 I picked up *Black Theology and Black Power*. I was just beginning my doctoral studies, and my divinity school professor sent one last email reminder to read Cone. I submitted.

And then I read, "The issue is clear: Racism is a complete denial of the Incarnation and thus of Christianity. ... In our time, the issue of racism is analogous to the Arian controversy of the fourth century." Racism, according to Cone, was not a moral issue that theology might speak about; rather, racism is, first and foremost, a theological issue, and this fact determines what it means for the Christian to think morally



Wikimedia Commons photo

Cone in 2009 at the Convocation of Union Theological Seminary

about racism. By the time I finished the book, I had already acquired Cone's other works, and I was disabused of my assumptions about black theology's content and significance. And not insignificantly, I came to admit that my earlier reluctance to read Cone was not due solely to the presumption that his work would be insufficiently theological, but was also because of a painful truth that I was not ready to acknowledge — an "unknown known," to use Slavoj Žižek's pointed description of the unconscious and even

(Continued on next page)

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willingly disavowed knowledge of something — namely, that even I had internalized white supremacist attitudes, and so black self-hatred, which needed to be confronted by Christ. I learned that I did not know what to make of my experience and humanity, and so experienced the redeeming power of Cone’s words, which are written in the first person in *A Black Theology of Liberation*: “We must become black with God!”

In the end, half of my dissertation was an explication of Cone’s doctrine of God, and much of my writing and work in the Church since that time has dealt with race. Cone’s work transformed my faith, my life. And thankfully, I had the privilege of meeting with Cone on more than one occasion to discuss, and indeed to argue about my work.

Cone’s theology is a stumbling block. It is impossible to forget, for example, that during the campaign season for the United States presidential election in 2008, conservative commentators tried to depict Obama as a black radical because of his association with the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, and to depict Wright, in turn, as a black radical because of his association with Cone. The sheer *fact* of Cone’s work is a stumbling block. Cone’s work, because its purpose is to address race, is ignored or dismissed and sometimes even disagreed with without a hearing. While there are certainly real challenges to his work that must be raised, too often his critics show that they have not so much read Cone as read *at* him, cherry-picking statements that, divorced from context, are easily deconstructed strawmen. In so doing, such critics have failed to identify the substantive issues that are worthy of critique, and so, because these issues are only apparent from within the context of appreciative reading, they failed to discover the riches of Cone’s work.

What is Cone’s contribution to theology? Why should someone who is disinclined to read Cone give him a chance? I shall venture an answer. Cone’s work can be divided somewhat neatly into two major phases: the doctrinal phase (1969–81) and the historical phase (1982–2013). In both of these phases, Cone made several significant theological achievements; I will identify just one achievement in each phase.

Cone made the claim that racism — he would soon come to prefer the more precise phrase “white supremacy” — is not just moral, but *theological*. White supremacy expresses a christological *heresy*, a basic denial of what the Church must say about the person and nature of Christ. And the specific heresy? Docetism, the belief that God only seemed to take on flesh, but in fact remained abstractly unconnected to the messy, particular reality of human life.

Cone observed that in Scripture, idolatry seems always to be joined by oppression. Wherever there is the worship of false gods, social life is perverted so that the powerful lord

over the powerless. With this observation, Cone interrogated the very notion of race. White supremacy, Cone argued, is the idolatrous worship of an abstract god without any particular identity: a god in general of no people in particular. Whiteness, Cone observed, is the social attempt to escape human particularity, to be the universal people in general of a god in general, freed of the burden of being this or that particular people, and oppressing those particular people in the process. The inferior others are particular, *colored*; but white people? To be white is just to be a stock human, the default model. And when this belief meets Christianity, what we end up with is a white Jesus: a spiritualized Christ whose particular humanity is of no real value, a Christ who only seems to have the particular flesh of a first-century Jew but is in fact just the revelation of the same old god in general of no people in particular. In other words, a Docetic Christ, a god who only seemed to take on flesh.

What God does to destroy idolatry, and so to liberate his human creatures from oppression, is to reveal himself. Throughout Scripture, Cone observes, God reveals himself, and he thereby rids his people of idols, lifting up the lowly and casting down the mighty from their thrones. God reveals himself as the particular one, the Lord, the God of Israel, who tolerates no other gods. And it is this particular God of Israel who comes to us in the particular Jewish flesh of Jesus, in the particular circumstances of Jewish poverty under Roman occupation. And it is by this particular Jewish flesh of Jesus that God redeems the world, makes us into new creatures. This Jewish Jesus, said Cone, is not confined to the first century, but is alive and active. This Jewish Jesus frees us today, transforming the self-hatred of oppressed Negroes into the self-love of liberated black women and men, renewed by God’s special creation, beautiful *blackness*. By the particularity of his Jewish flesh, Jesus *does* blackness, so identifying with the oppressed that he transforms the meaning of dark skin from oppression into freedom. *Jesus is black!*

Cone was able to show that the struggle against white supremacy calls Christians to a more, not less fully orthodox articulation of the gospel message. Christ invites us to meet him in his particularity so that we may be freed to receive our own particularity as God’s creation, as God’s gift, and in so receiving ourselves, we are freed to receive others in their particularity. For black people, this means coming to love their blackness, and for whites, it means undergoing the painful liberation from the delusion of whiteness.

In his turn to history, Cone took up the question of social change. The black struggle for freedom in America has vacillated between the optimism of integrationism and the pessimism of black nationalism, based on historical experience. When blacks have been able to see themselves as fully Americans, they have been drawn to efforts at a racially

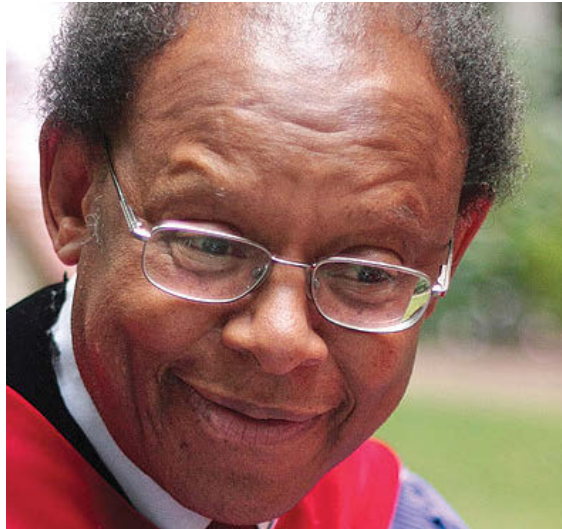


integrated America; but when social experience has made it difficult for black people to see themselves as fully American, they have tended to seek independence and autonomy. Cone identified these two tendencies with the legacies of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. And while Cone argued that these two men became more and more sympathetic to one another during their ministries, he concluded that neither integrationism nor nationalism achieved the desired goal: freedom. Cone understood his work and that of black liberation theology more generally as an effort to find a third way. It was clear to Cone that black nationalism was finally a delusion, that nobody was going back to Africa and that black people had to find a way to live with white people. Yet it was equally clear to him that integrationism is fatally flawed, undermined by its efforts to call on black people to assimilate into the very culture that had oppressed them. What was needed, Cone insisted, was a revolution of American society by black people.

The work of black theology, and a church transformed by it, is to be this revolution. Cone's description of this third way may be understood as an attempt at a more radical interpretation of Jesus' command to love one's enemies. In the case of the culturally mainstream image of Martin Luther King Jr., to love one's enemy is finally to deny that one has an enemy at all, to assume that the enemy is only an enemy because of some misunderstanding. Integrationism finally calls black people to see white society not as an enemy but as an estranged friend. Alternatively, the words of Malcolm X speak for themselves; he thought the idea of loving one's enemy was ludicrous, and that blacks needed to love and care for one another. Black nationalism finally abandons white culture to wallow in its delusions and self-destructive hatred. And then there is Cone's understanding of black liberation. Cone's rhetoric, which has sometimes been an impediment to his white audiences, is in fact central to his revolutionary work. Cone insisted on seeing white culture as a real enemy — as Antichrist, as he called it early on — and to love white people anyway, not denying their status as enemies, nor abandoning them to enmity. Cone has sometimes been criticized for minimizing the role of forgiveness or reconciliation in his theology. These criti-

cisms fail to understand him. The gesture of confrontation, of speaking those truths which none want to say and even fewer want to hear, is the gesture that means *I forgive you. Enter into a new future with me.* The work of black theology, in its most radical form, is a work intended to liberate white people from their oppression, which they cannot see and do not understand.

Cone's theology was not without its problems. The one that stands out most prominently is the autonomy given to the concept of liberation, which becomes an issue in his



Cone has sometimes been criticized for minimizing the role of forgiveness or reconciliation in his theology. These criticisms fail to understand him.

works published in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In Cone's earliest understanding, liberation was a logical and necessary result of God's self-disclosure as the particular God of Israel who comes to us in the man Jesus; however, by 1982, Cone had come to say that wherever there was liberation, God was there revealed, even if such liberation was unrelated to the God of Scripture. Human freedom, which Cone once believed was synonymous with knowing God in Jesus, came to be a self-standing, self-evident concept, without any need for theological content. It is no surprise, then, that Cone stopped writing Christian doctrine altogether after 1982, and in 1997 finally admitted that he no longer believed in the uniqueness of Jesus as God's sole revelation to humanity.

Cone's theology, which was one of the first theologies of identity, focused on addressing a political issue, and was a catalyst and forerunner for a multiplicity of similar theologies of varying quality — too many of which were more dedicated to liberation than to Christian theology. I suspect that the shift in Cone's attention over the years, away from doctrine and toward history, is attributable to these changes in his thinking.

Despite these changes, I remain convinced of the immense significance and worthiness of Cone's theology. His work changed my life as a person, a theologian, and a priest. Cone taught me how to be a black man, and so taught me how to be a more faithful and more orthodox Christian.

*The Rev. Matthew Burdette is a curate at Church of the Good Shepherd in Dallas and serves as associate director of the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology.*

## PENTECOST

## Prosperity Theology in the U.K.

Review by Adrian Chatfield

As a Christian formed by the 1970s charismatic renewal in the Church of England, I continue to treasure the insights and experiences of Pentecostalism as filtered through a measured and critical hermeneutical lens. For many like me, health, wealth, and prosperity teachings are a gross distortion of the Christian gospel; it would not be too much to call them a heresy. Further, prosperity theology feels like a violation of a profoundly important

embedded in a performative rhetoric that many readers will recognize at the heart of Rhema or Word theology. Ackerley explores the way in which this essentially mechanistic understanding of our relationship with the divine affects the teaching of three influential figures in English charismatic evangelicalism: former Anglican Colin Urquhart, disgraced Pentecostal bishop Michael Reid, and American Jerry Savelle, once an associate of Kenneth Copeland's.

The final part of the book is an assessment of how Word of Faith has affected "some English Revivalist Churches." Predictably, the personal charisma of the leaders claims significant attention. More interesting for me was the insight that the churches most likely to be attracted are those that operate on mechanistic, rational principles, whose primary aim is "to mobilize" and "to bring numerical

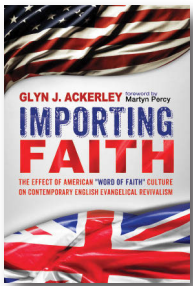
increase by conversion" (p. 216). Further, such churches tend to emphasize personal fulfilment through the characteristics of health, divine provision, and even (an excess of) wealth.

Ackerley is remarkably understated in his criticism of this heresy, though I loved his incisive observation that we are dealing with a "distinctively American neo-Gnosticism that is offered by those who ... view themselves as a special God-chosen people" (p. 267). Reading this alongside a study of Donald Trump's Christian background in the positive thinking of Norman Vincent Peale had the unintended effect of highlighting the link between conservative politics and equally conservative religious faith on both sides of the Atlantic.

I am glad I persevered with the book. I nearly gave up within the first few pages, mainly because it still reads

too much like a thesis, has a number of irritatingly repetitive formulae beloved of researchers, and does not flow particularly well. It is an important book, a key contribution to the academic study of contemporary neo-Pentecostalism. But I commend it most of all to those who remain as disturbed as I am by the rise of a facile and unbiblical version of the faith.

*The Rev. Adrian Chatfield is a fellow of Ridley Hall Cambridge.*



## Importing Faith

The Effect of American "Word of Faith" Culture on Contemporary English Evangelical Revivalism

By Glyn Ackerley

Lutterworth Press. Pp. 326. \$38

mystical insight in the life of the contemporary church, a betrayal of classical Pentecostalism's emphasis on the immediacy, intimacy, and accessibility of a God who comes to his people.

Ackerley's study of prosperity theology's effects on what he calls English Evangelical Revivalism is timely and will be especially helpful to those who need to catch up on the historical background of the Word of Faith movement in cultural and social context. As one would expect of a thinly revised PhD thesis, it is a useful survey of the current literature, observing "a flow of development of positive thinking and Unitarianism arising in response to the harsh asceticism of Calvinism" (p. 122).

The driver for this work is a search for the rhetorical strategies that make this movement so successful, especially in middle-class, suburban contexts,

## PENTECOST

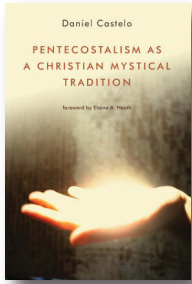
## When Everything is Pentecostal, Nothing Is

Review by Joseph Lear

The title of Daniel Castelo's book describes his project well. He claims that Pentecostalism is best understood as a "modern instantiation of the mystical stream of Christianity" (p. xvi). He hopes to convince Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals alike of this characterization's worthiness. And he realizes the enormity of the task because Pentecostals "would hesitate to identify themselves as modern-day mystics" (p. 37).

A project of this nature is a matter of definition. How does one define mysticism, and does Pentecostalism fit that definition? Castelo, however, seems hesitant to give a precise definition. Ten pages into a chapter devoted to the matter, Castelo has still only acknowledged that *mysticism* is "highly contested and variously used" (p. 47). He cites Pseudo-Dionysius, Hildegard of





## Pentecostalism as a Mystical Tradition

By Daniel Castelo  
Eerdmans. Pp. 214. \$30

Bingen, Boethius, and St. Anselm of Canterbury as mystics. He also suggests that medieval scholar Andrew Louth's definition of mysticism — that it is “a search for and experience of immediacy with God” (p. 44) — is helpful. Other scholars, such as Harvey Cox, have used the term about Pentecostals.

Still yet, Castelo seems to suggest that Pentecostalism is a mystical tradition because it believes in and practices “purgation and sanctification,” “illumination and maturation,” and “union and transformation” (pp. 77-81). He concludes this chapter by saying that Pentecostalism can be identified as a mystical tradition because it believes that knowledge of God is both intellectual and relational (p. 82). But if this remark is taken as his working definition, then are not *all* Christians mystics?

Castelo's next step is to drive a wedge between evangelicalism and Pentecostalism — another enormous task given that, as he admits, most Pentecostals see themselves as part of the evangelical tradition (pp. 109-10). Castelo says that evangelicalism turned theology into method in order to find the “fundamentals” of the Christian faith. But Pentecostals “read Scripture not ... to encounter the facts ... [but] to encounter the living God” (p. 112). This, he claims, shows Pentecostalism's affinity with mysticism.

From there, Castelo seeks to expand Pentecostalism's understanding of baptism in the Holy Spirit. Here he addresses Pentecostals. He suggests

that Pentecostals fall prey to the mistakes of evangelicalism when they continue to seek restrictive “evidences” of Spirit baptism and that they would do better instead to assume a Spirit-drenched world that resists such propositions. In sum, he asks Pentecostals to see Spirit baptism as a constant phenomenon that shows “an on-looking world that the God of Christian confession is active through a God-seeking community in reconciling and sanctifying all things in the here and now” (p. 160).

As a Pentecostal, I welcome any effort to connect Pentecostalism to the historic Church. But I am not sure Castelo's work has accomplished what he set out to do. The problem of definition persists throughout the work. At every point that Castelo elaborates what he thinks Pentecostals *as mystics* ought to believe and practice, such as allowing God to sanctify every mundane aspect of life, I found myself thinking, *Yes, but is it not obvious that all Christians should do that?* Would it not be better simply to say that Pentecostalism is a reminder to the Church that Christians who abandon the presence of the living God for “methods” and “fundamentals” (like some evangelicals Castelo mentions) have lost their way? It seems to me that Pentecostalism is in no need of further identification than simply Christian — if indeed that is what it claims to be.

*The Rev. Joseph Lear is lead pastor of Resurrection Assembly of God in Iowa City, Iowa.*

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Acts 2:1-21 or Ezek. 37:1-14 • Ps. 104:24-35, 37  
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## Entirely Yours

The gift of the Holy Spirit is the gift of God, all God, and nothing but God. Like the Triune Life of which the Spirit is both a person and divine essence, the Holy Spirit is imparted to the church as Oneness and Manifold-Oneness. “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place” (Acts 2:1). “There is one Body and one Spirit; There is one hope in God’s call to us; One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; One God and Father of all” (BCP, p. 299). “The Church is one, because it is one Body, under one Head, our Lord Jesus Christ” (BCP, p. 854). The church is gathered together in one place as one body under one head. That place may be anywhere, but it is one place. The One Spirit has fallen upon the whole church and created a New Humanity.

In a sense, the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is also many because the Holy Spirit preserves and sanctifies each person in his or her absolutely uniqueness. This is evidenced, in part, by the reference to a gust of wind divided as tongues of fire resting upon each disciple and their speaking in the native languages of those who had come from distant places to celebrate the Jewish Feast of Pentecost. Persons have gifts which then reach other persons in a way they can understand. The Spirit inspires personal visions and calls forth dreams; it gives life to prophesy and shows the world itself as a sign of God’s coming. A dark sun and a blood moon, fire and smoky mist—the haunt of murky night—speak the Spirit’s presence to persons.

The Spirit of God is breath upon the slain, life from the dead, dry bones connected by sinew, flesh upon bone, skin over flesh, and breath from the mouth of God to the lungs of humanity. The Spirit raises the whole house of Israel, and the Spirit gives life to the One Holy Church. Again, the Spirit makes one house of Israel, one Holy Church, and yet bones and sinew

and flesh and skin and breath are the building blocks of persons. The Spirit comes to persons as *indwelling God*. This pertains of course to the “seven-fold gifts of the Spirit” described by the prophet Isaiah and it pertains to the “gifts of the Spirit” described by Saint Paul, but it also and most importantly refers to a complete and total gift of God.

The Spirit is God and we are temples of God. The first theologian to write a full treatise on the Holy Spirit, Basil the Great, makes just this point. “The Spirit is shared without loss of ceasing to be entire, after the likeness of a sunbeam, whose kindly light falls on him who enjoys it as though it shone on him alone, and yet illumines land and sea and mingles with the air . . . Just as when a sunbeam falls on bright and transparent bodies, they themselves become brilliant too, and shed forth a fresh brightness from themselves, so souls wherein the Spirit dwells, illumined by the Spirit, themselves become spiritual, and send forth their graces to others” (On the Spirit, cap. ix).

We who have received the Spirit wait and groan not because God has held back. We wait and groan because we are limited in our capacity to receive what God gives. Still, God is giving and by giving and purging, God expands and makes a magnified soul until the soul is bright with the fullness of God.

I know what you want. You want God.

### Look It Up

Read John 16:7.

### Think About It

God is your advantage.



## Afternoon Tea

An old and gravely ill retired English professor invited me to his home, to sit for tea and some Latin readings. He may have understood what we read; I did not. We glanced back and forth and silently agreed that we would understand something true and real, if not the readings. An old man facing the end of his life could be a blessing to his young priest and the priest could, in turn, listen and sit and breathe the clean air of a simple love. We shared Holy Communion and were that communion. Love has a source, an object, a sharing, even in the formal ceremony of tea and Latin and Eucharist.

Shortly before his death, he gave me an old Latin book that had been in his family for generations, and enclosed a personal note. The book, published in Paris in 1559, is a Latin translation by Gentian Hervetus of Theodore Balsamon's commentary on the Nomocanon of Photius. To separate these layers: Hervetus (a French theologian, controversialist, and member of the Council of Trent) translated for the Latin West a Greek summary of Eastern Orthodox canon law (the Nomocanon) interspersed with detailed commentary by Balsamon, a Greek canonist of the 12th century.

A book of canon law necessarily abounds in minute detail, the first of which says something about having tea with an old man, listening, agreeing in silence that the time is at hand and life is imbued with love. The first chapter Nomocanon concerns theology and the Orthodox Faith. Theodore adds his commentary: "The first constitution of the first title of the first books of the Codices ... says this: He is a Christian who believes that divinity is one in equal power of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. He who believes otherwise than has been stated is a heretic." A thousand pastoral visits, friendships of years, marriage and children, life and loss, have confirmed for me the strength of an imperfect analogy. Even I beget love, even I

respond in love, even I move where the Spirit chooses, but I cannot do this without a partner and the exchange of mutual affection.

Far above what reasons may fully know, there is a presence high and lifted up, a Lord whose train fills the temple, whose glory moves across the face of the earth, whose majesty makes smoke and flashes of fire and thunder, whose power shakes the threshold (Isa. 6:1; Ps. 29). The waters roar, the cedars break, the oaks writhe, and all storms say glory and power before which, for all its beauty, the human heart knows fear. "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among people of unclean lips (Isa. 6:5). A vaster universe and a vast presence overshadow the smallness of human life. Do we fall back into fear (Rom. 8:15)?

We are, in Christ, children of God. "It is the very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16). As children who have received a spirit of adoption by a mystical and deep communion with Christ, we are sons and daughters of the one whom Christ most deeply loves. We are children who cry "Abba! Father!" by the grace of Christ in us, and by this grace we are caught up and born from above and lifted into the life of God.

In a sense, "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). Fear is cast out by the power of love, and love is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

### Look It Up

Read Matthew 28:19.

### Think About It

You will need Scripture and Tradition.



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This Associate will share in all the privileges of ordained ministry including preaching, teaching, pastoral care, and administration. He/she will assist the Rector in coordinating all Christian formation opportunities for adult parishioners and also oversee the ministry of the Director of Children's Ministry and Director of Youth Ministry. This Associate will work to create a coordinated youth program designed to inspire and nurture Christian faith and service.

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Inquires should include a cover letter, resume, OTM portfolio, and a list of three references and be sent to the Rev. Tom Murray at [tmurray@stmarksjacksonville.org](mailto:tmurray@stmarksjacksonville.org) [stmarksjacksonville.org/welcome/associate-rector-search.html](http://stmarksjacksonville.org/welcome/associate-rector-search.html)



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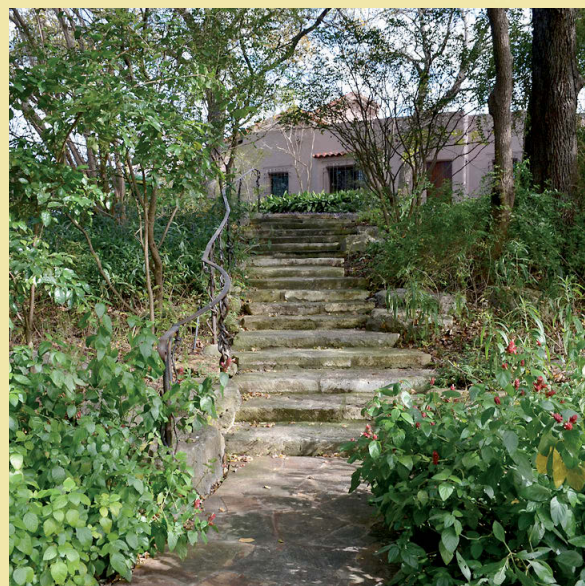
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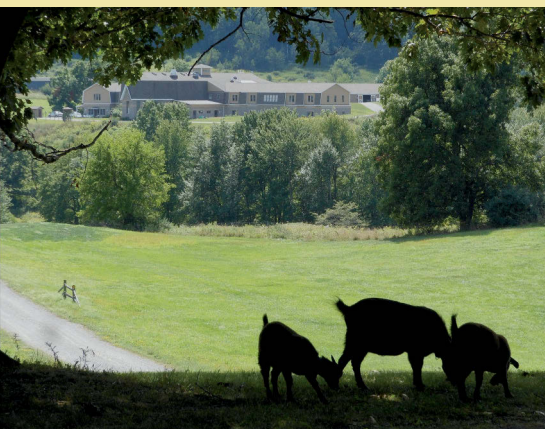
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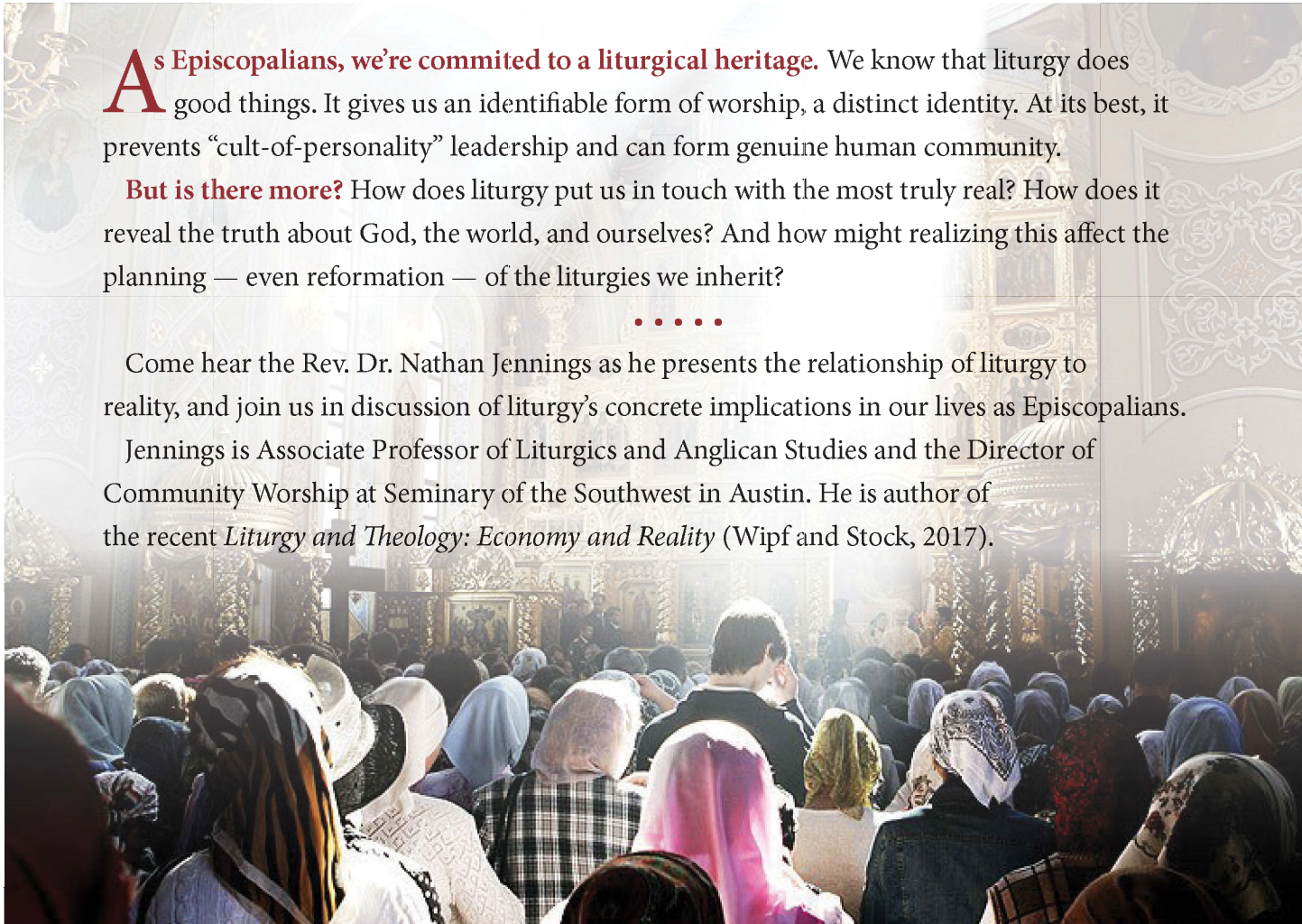
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Jennings is Associate Professor of Liturgics and Anglican Studies and the Director of Community Worship at Seminary of the Southwest in Austin. He is author of the recent *Liturgy and Theology: Economy and Reality* (Wipf and Stock, 2017).



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