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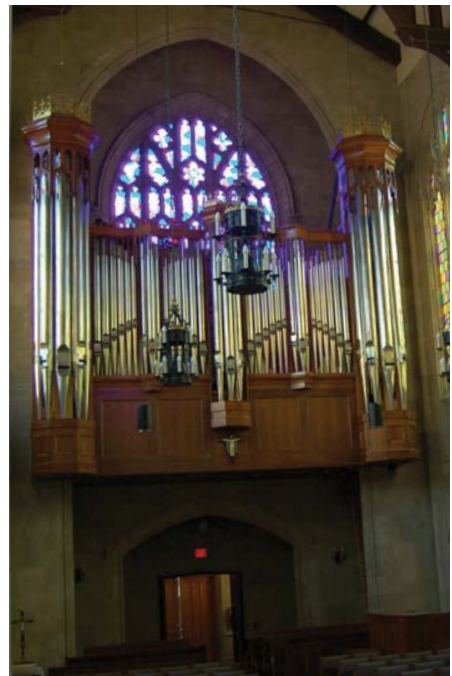
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ON THE COVER

The 79th General Convention will meet in the heart of Texas, in a city so weird that its marketing slogan is “Keep Austin Weird” (see “Austin Loves Weirdness” p. 16).

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THE LIVING CHURCH

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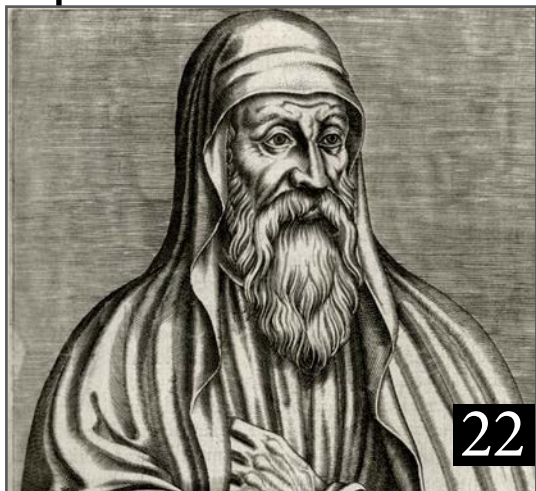
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We are grateful to the Church of the Advent, Boston [p. 56], Christ Church, San Antonio [p. 57], and Trinity Wall Street [p. 59], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.



What May Be Hot in Austin

By Kirk Petersen

Episcopalians take their governance seriously, and the primary governing body meets only once every three years. General Convention can be a cauldron of pent-up passion. What will be the hottest issues at the 79th General Convention, July 5-13, in Austin, Texas?

Same-sex marriage: The bishops of 93 domestic dioceses have approved the trial use of same-sex marriage rites, and same-sex marriages have been solemnized around the country. But the 2015 General Convention resolution that established the rites specified they can be used only with the consent of the local bishop, and eight domestic bishops do not permit same-sex marriages in their dioceses.

Proposed resolutions would eliminate the bishop's veto and start the process of adding the trial rites to the Book of Common Prayer. Proponents say that access to the rites should not depend on a person's Zip Code. Opponents see the resolutions as another step into wrongful doctrine, and warn of further division.

Prayer book revision: In addition to the issue of whether to add same-sex marriage rites to the Book of Common Prayer, a subcommittee of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music established in 2015 has been considering the possibility of a comprehensive revision of the 1979 prayer book. The subcommittee offers two alternatives, each with hefty costs.

Option 1 is a 12-year process aimed at adopting final revisions to the prayer book at the 2030 General Convention. Each triennium leading to 2030 would be devoted to different phases of the process, including research, drafting, trial use, and approval at two consecutive General Conventions. The subcommittee asks for a budget of \$1.9 million for the 2019-21 triennium alone,



Austin Convention Center

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and estimates that the total cost would be between \$7 million and \$8 million.

Option 2 calls for extensive research for a single triennium, leading toward "an intentional and fuller engagement" with the 1979 prayer book. The effort would include cataloging the texts currently used in bulletins throughout the church; convening focus groups; consulting with other Anglican provinces; and developing resources to help congregations connect with the prayer book. The proposed budget for this option is \$1.2 million, which includes translating the prayer book into Spanish, French, and Haitian Creole.

Salary for the president of the House of Deputies: The PHoD wears multiple hats and has extensive duties under the Constitution and Canons of the church. It has always been an unpaid position, which has become more problematic as the duties of the job have grown over the decades. It has been more than 30 years since a president has tried to hold down a separate job while in office.

In 1997, 2000, and 2015, the House of

Deputies approved a salary for its president. Each time, the House of Bishops voted against, thereby defeating the proposal. The same thing may well happen again in 2018, as there are no bishops publicly championing the idea, while some are strongly opposed.

Many deputies see this as a justice issue, and note that under the current system, only a retiree or a person of means can reasonably hold the position. Some bishops believe the role has increased through "mission creep," and that the position should be scaled back in responsibility and authority. The proposed budget for 2019-21 includes a placeholder of up to \$900,000 for a president's salary and benefits. This implies an annual salary of \$200,000 or a bit more, in the same range as the other most-senior executives of the church.

The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings has been the deputies' president for the past six years, and is eligible to run for one more three-year term. She declined to answer when asked if she plans to run again.

Title IV: A task force has proposed

more than 20 resolutions to revise Title IV, which governs the church's disciplinary process for deacons, priests, and bishops. Title IV consists of more than 40 densely worded pages in the canons of the church. It is confusing, internally inconsistent, and poorly organized, which results in different approaches to Title IV in different dioceses. Many of the resolutions simply fix ambiguities that resulted from earlier changes.

The centerpiece of the task force's efforts is a website that will be launched at General Convention. "Understanding Title IV" (now in beta testing) is a flexible, sophisticated, interactive site designed to provide information about every step of the often-lengthy process.

Other aims of the Title IV resolutions include creating a churchwide database of disciplinary proceedings and case dispositions; streamlining the process by establishing a single appeals court, replacing the provincial courts that now exist; and clarifying various portions of the canon.

The Episcopacy: More than 30 resolutions, many of them seeking minor changes in language, address the election and tenure of bishops. Substantive issues include creating a confidential process to help priests discern whether they are called to the episcopacy before ever applying for a specific opening. Another resolution would create a Board for Episcopal Transitions to work with the existing Office of Pastoral Development in recruiting and training transition consultants, and to gather and analyze data to promote more diversity in the episcopacy.

Israel-Palestine conflicts: A resolution calls on the existing Corporate Social Responsibility Committee to identify "companies that profit from Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands or whose products or actions support the infrastructure of the occupation." The church would divest its holdings in such companies, prohibit further investment, and urge Episcopalians to avoid investing in those companies or buying their wares. A similar resolution failed in 2015.

The "Royal Wedding bishop": Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's rousing and provocative sermon at the May 19

wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle received overwhelmingly supportive reviews, tempered by some complaints that the tone was not right for the location or the occasion. There will likely be discussions about whether the church is doing enough, or too much, to leverage the attention being paid to all things Episcopal. Curry will preach at a revival service late Saturday afternoon, July 7, followed by an open barbecue hosted by the Diocese of Texas.

Breaking the Seal?

The seal of the confessional has been drawn into a swirl of debate as the wider Church of England became aware of a diocesan policy advising clergy to break the seal if a confessor believes anyone's well-being is at risk.

At the heart of the matter is part of the Diocese of Canterbury's safeguarding guidance, issued in 2015. Amid the traditional formulae regarding confession,

(Continued on next page)

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Confessional

(Continued from previous page)

the diocese has directed “any priest hearing a confession, regularly or otherwise” to say: “If you touch on any matter in your confession that raises a concern about the well-being or safeguarding of another person or yourself, I am duty bound to pass that information on to the relevant agencies, which means that I am unable to keep such information confidential.”

The dispute began on social media, met a swift response from a diocesan secretary, and remains unresolved, even as national media have picked up on the debate.

This guidance cuts against the Church of England’s traditional requirement that priests maintain strict confidentiality. This requirement dates back to the church’s 17th-century canons, relies on medieval precedent, and remains the standard practice both around the Anglican Communion and in many churches with which the C of E is in dialogue, such as the Roman Catholic Church.

The diocese’s guidance also appears to contradict the more recently established *Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy* (2015). The Rev. Canon Robin Ward, principal of St. Stephen’s House, Oxford, drew attention to this fact in a Facebook conversation that helped ignite the furor. He told TLC he had heard about Canterbury’s instructions while attending this

year’s national pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

The national guidelines were passed by an Act of Convocation in both Provinces of the Church of England, and are the basis for clergy discipline throughout the church. They say: “If a penitent makes a confession with the intention of receiving absolution the priest is forbidden ... to reveal or make known to any person what has been confessed. This requirement of absolute confidentiality applies even after the death of the penitent.”

Rather than requiring priests to warn against a full confession that might involve safeguarding issues or serious crimes, the national standards instead direct the priest to “require the penitent to report his or her conduct to the police or other statutory authority. If the penitent refuses to do so the priest should withhold absolution.”

The seal of the confessional was already a topic of debate in recent years, especially since its traditional requirements stand in some tension with the new safeguarding requirements developed in the wake of major sexual-abuse scandals.

The General Synod discussed the topic in November 2014. The Archbishops’ Council later appointed an official working party to address the topic in 2015, and several Anglo-Catholic groups — Forward in Faith, Affirming Catholicism, and Anglican Catholic Future — submissions defending the seal of the confessional and highlighting the need for priests to receive more substantial training “in the ministry of reconciliation, which both the 1662 and Common Worship Ordinals identify as

a fundamental aspect of priestly ministry” (“Forward in Faith defends the seal of the confessional,” *Forward in Faith*, Oct. 26, 2015).

The working party’s report will be debated by the House of Bishops this December.

Canterbury’s diocesan secretary, Julian Hills, issued a statement on May 30, defending the local guidelines. He said they arose from “a genuine situation” faced by a priest in the diocese, and that they have not “abolished the seal of the confessional.” The guidelines also emerged out of consultation with legal advisers and the church’s head of safeguarding, and are designed to prevent confessions that might “legally compromise the position of the priest.”

“While there have been only a tiny number of criminal cases in which the seal of the confession has been in issue,” he said, “it is unclear whether a criminal court would favour the responsibility to protect someone from abuse or the requirement of a priest to maintain confidentiality.”

Forward in Faith has issued a new statement critical of Canterbury’s guidelines.

“For a diocese to pre-empt synodical discussion of whether any aspect of ecclesiastical law should be changed is unacceptable,” the group said. “Forward in Faith calls for urgent action to bring the Diocese of Canterbury and the Channel Islands deaneries back into conformity with canon law and with the *Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy* so recently issued by the members of the Houses of Bishops and clergy in the provincial convocations. If the Diocese of Canterbury is allowed to continue publicly to incite the clergy to breach canon law, that will set a very worrying precedent.”

The precedent has taken on heightened significance because its circumvention of regular procedure was issued “in the name of the Archbishop of Canterbury,” Adrian Hilton wrote on his *Archbishop Cranmer* weblog.

Forward in Faith’s 2015 statement argued that abolishing the seal would simply lead to fewer confessions of serious crimes and not to improved exposure of them.

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Till Marriage Do Us Part?

The 79th General Convention will debate a proposal to introduce same-sex marriage into the Book of Common Prayer. Statements have been made for and against the resolution, and there are hints at potential separation. TLC conducted extensive interviews with prominent leaders on both sides of the issue, and gathered excerpts from written statements by a variety of jurisdictions.

By Kirk Petersen

At General Convention, one side's major goal is to authorize same-sex marriage liturgies throughout the church, even when a local bishop objects.

The other side wants General Convention to refrain from revising the doctrine of marriage in the prayer book.

Most of the bishops of Province IX (the dioceses of Central Ecuador, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Litoral Ecuador, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela) signed a letter saying they will have to “learn how to walk alone” if General Convention approves such revision to the prayer book, creating echoes of the division seen a decade ago. Other churches in the Anglican Communion — which has already disciplined the Episcopal Church for taking previous steps without awaiting consensus in the Communion — have restated their opposition.

The church has traveled a long road to reach this place.

Same-sex marriage and other gay-rights issues have been on the agenda of every General Convention since at least 1976, when resolutions were passed declaring “homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church,” and are “entitled to equal protection of the laws with all other citizens.”

Another 1976 resolution authorized a study of “The Matter of the Ordination of Homosexuals.” Nobody was talking about same-sex marriage, either at General Convention or in society at large.

Forty-two years later, same-sex couples may be married by Episcopal priests throughout the Episcopal Church, except in eight domestic dioceses. (In addition, there are dioceses outside the United States where same-sex marriage is not legal.)

A 2015 resolution established same-sex liturgies for trial use, with the approval of the bishop diocesan. The bishops of 93 domestic dioceses have given approval. Eight bishops forbid use of the liturgy in their dioceses:

- Albany Bishop William Love
- Central Florida Bishop Gregory Brewer
- Dallas Bishop George Sumner
- Florida Bishop Samuel Johnson Howard
- North Dakota Bishop Michael Smith
- Springfield Bishop Daniel Martins
- Tennessee Bishop John Bauerschmidt
- Virgin Islands Bishop Ambrose Gumbs

The Task Force for the Study of Marriage, created in 2015, issued a report earlier this year that called on General Convention to eliminate the bishops' veto and make same-sex marriage rites legal throughout the church. The main resolution “presents a road map” for General Convention to “40 years of promises of full inclusion in the life of the Episcopal Church for LGBTQ+ individuals.”

The resolution would approve the liturgies “as additions to the Book of Common Prayer (to be inserted following page 438).” To take effect, the resolution would have to be ratified by the 80th General Convention in 2021. Another resolution from the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music calls for a possible “comprehensive

revision of the current Book of Common Prayer.”

The difference between trial use and additions to the prayer book involves more than mere semantics. The Book of Common Prayer expresses the doctrine of the Episcopal Church. Bishop Martins says that adding same-sex marriage rites to the prayer book would be a step across the line between erroneous practice and heresy. (Martins is secretary of the board of directors of the Living Church Foundation.)

The other seven domestic bishops opposed to the rites did not respond to attempts to reach them.

The task force offered a separate resolution that would authorize “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant” in jurisdictions that prohibit same-sex marriage by law.

The task force proposes a third resolution “calling for the development of resources that provide pastoral guidance and teaching on relationships that involve sexual expression” for people who choose not to marry. The Rev. Susan Russell, a task force member and LGBT activist, said this “may be the most controversial” of the resolutions.

One of the 15 task force members opposed the resolutions and filed a minority report.

Will Same-sex Marriage Enter the Prayer Book?

Bishop Daniel Martins: ‘I’m Still Hopeful that Can Be Avoided’

The Rt. Rev. Daniel Martins is Bishop of Springfield and one of eight bishops who do not permit the use of a same-sex marriage liturgy in their dioceses. TLC asked all eight of the bishops for comment; Martins agreed to talk. The inter-

view has been edited for clarity, brevity, and narrative flow.

Why do you oppose the same-sex marriage liturgy?

Jesus quotes Genesis: "For this reason a man leaves his parents and cleaves to his wife, and the two become one flesh." So the whole anthropology of sexual polarity, that human beings are created male and female, is an essential component of what marriage is. That's not to say that there can't be various goods that come from other kinds of relationships between two persons of the same sex, but it's not marriage. It's something else for which we don't have a catchall name, perhaps, but it's not marriage.

I don't want to put words in your mouth, but let me see if I understand you. Your objection is to the idea of redefining what marriage means, contrary to the Scriptures, it's not about disapproval of homosexual actions?

Well, it's probably both. Thanks for that clarifying question, but the immediate questions that come before General Convention, which cause me to think in very defined, clear terms, are related to the redefinition of marriage.

I'm not at the place where I can accept homosexual actions as something that doesn't fall short of God's design for human sexuality.

That's not to say that anything falling short of the target is necessarily evil, it just falls short, and is therefore sinful. It's less than what God desires and what God has designed human sexuality for.


In the past, bishops have left the Episcopal Church over matters of gay rights. Do you feel strongly enough about this set of resolutions to do that? I don't know where I would go. I don't feel permission to abandon the flock would be another answer. William Palmer, a 19th-century Church of England theologian, described his criteria for leaving the church in which one finds oneself. A church has to be in formal heresy, which is a higher bar than erroneous teaching, or erroneous

(Continued on next page)

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Marriage

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practice: that is, if the heresy is baked into the actual formularies for the church, that which defines its doctrine and worship. His second criterion is that the heresy must endure for multiple generations. I've always understood that to mean the biblical 40 years. If a church is in formal heresy for 40 years, then it has ceased to be a church and no longer commands the loyalty of its members.

So, where does that put us now? Has there been false teaching in the Episcopal Church? Yeah, for a long, long time. Is it yet formal heresy? I would say not yet, but we're on the brink of it. And if indeed we amend the prayer book to redefine marriage, then in my opinion, that starts the 40-year clock. Now I'm 66 years old, so you do the math.

It sounds like if you were going to leave the church, you would already have done so.

Many of my best friends have done so.

Did you consider it for yourself?

I think you consider everything. So it

comes back to *where would I go?* If there's such a thing as an Anglican soul, then that's what I have. The Anglican liturgical, spiritual, pastoral, theological, musical package is what draws me into the presence of God more effectively than anything else. So where would I go? Some might say ACNA [the Anglican Church in North America, formed a decade ago by bishops who left the Episcopal Church]. Well, ACNA is like one of those planets in the Star Trek movies that's unstable and coming apart. Plus it is Anglican-like, but it's not Anglican, because it's not in communion with the See of Canterbury. I'm too old to become Orthodox. I can't learn a whole new tradition at this age in my life.

So if the convention does decide to change the prayer book in the way that's being recommended, what would you do in response?

I can't say that I know. I'm still hopeful that can be avoided. I would have to take counsel with my colleagues, the other Communion Partner Bishops, and all of us collectively would be taking counsel with our friends across the Communion, both in the Global South and in the Church of England. I imagine there would be some consulting with the Archbishop of Canterbury. So I don't have a prepackaged

answer for you on that.

Will you leave the church over that?

I don't expect that I will. How I will behave within the church remains unclear.

Susan Russell: 'It's Likely We Will Take Another Step'

The Rev. Canon Susan Russell, a longtime LGBT activist and a member of the Task Force on the Study of Marriage, is senior associate for communications at All Saints Church in Pasadena, California. This interview has been edited for clarity, brevity, and narrative flow.

What's going to happen at General Convention?

There are three resolutions we presented. One would finish the work that we did last time on the trial use of the liturgies for marriage, and maybe some cleanup work in the Catechism to make all of our language congruent.

The second was a resolution that would approve for trial use a liturgy of blessing for those for whom marriage was not an option.

The third one, I think maybe the most controversial in some ways, was opening up conversations around pastoral resources for those who choose to live in relationships other than marriage.

Given that the Episcopal Church has been moving toward full inclusion for our LGBT baptized for decades now, I think it's likely we will take another step forward in Austin toward finishing the work we've begun.

Bishops say the resolution would take away their discretion to prohibit the use of the same-sex marriage rite in their dioceses.

That would be correct. In its current form, that would be the goal.

Does this trample on the prerogatives of bishops?

The issue is, can a bishop use his or her theological perspective to prohibit those within their dioceses from using rites that have been authorized by the Episcopal Church? We gave it three years of trial use, under the authority of the bishop with jurisdiction. There was a

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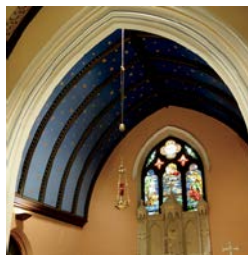
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caveat: bishops were to make the liturgies available to those under their pastoral care, even if they didn't authorize them in their diocese. Some bishops have done a proactive job of arranging for that to happen. Others have not.

The liturgies were approved by overwhelming margins in 2015. We still have eight dioceses where Episcopalians don't have access to those rites. It really is a kind of sacramental apartheid, where a percentage of the baptized are prohibited from receiving a percentage of the sacraments.

The canons clearly state that any clergy person can decline to preside at any marriage for any reason whatsoever. No one is ever going to be compelled against their conscience to participate in a marriage they do not consider sacramentally efficacious.

It's less an issue of theological conscience than it is episcopal authority. When our councils for the church make a decision for the whole church, it needs to be for the whole church.

We went through this in some ways with the ordination of women, which was regularized in 1976, and it wasn't until 1994 that we managed to finally get canonical changes that said you don't have to ordain a woman yourself, but you do have to provide access. It shouldn't take that long.

We still have handfuls of people who will cross to the other side of the Communion rail and receive Communion from "the real priest" instead of the woman up front. But there's room for that! No one questions that. We still have potlucks together, and go to Dodgers Night.

The letter from Province IX talking about learning how to "walk alone" has an ominous tone to it. Are we looking at additional schisms as a result of this measure?

We are long past the point of deciding if we are going to be a church that fully embraces our LGBT baptized — the question is how. There has been grace and time and opportunity for those with what is increasingly a minority theological perspective to know that they've been heard, to understand there is always a place at the table. Good people of deep faith read the

same Scriptures and come to different conclusions. We respect that, and yet, listening to the Holy Spirit, we are continuing to move forward, and I think that will carry through in Austin.

The resolution talks about making "reasonable and convenient access" to these rites. Is there any room for an argument that going to the next diocese is reasonable and convenient?

I think that would be a tough argument to make. For me, reasonable would be if you have a parish in, let's say, North Dakota, where the parish wants to do marriage and the bishop doesn't, to give the Bishop of South Dakota pastoral oversight for that parish regarding those matters.

When you're a member of a congregation, and your priest is your priest, when it comes down to getting married, the happiest day of your life, you're told to go to some other diocese and let somebody you've never met marry you? That's not reasonable.

The Task Force for the Study of Marriage: Two Views on Inclusion

Majority Report: Moving Towards 'Full Measure of Inclusion' of LGBTQ+

The doctrine and practice of marriage and other relationships marked by sexual intimacy may never be settled once and for all and will need continuous attention. Full marriage equality for same-sex couples will not be complete until the liturgies for marriage reflect gender neutrality and are added to the Book of Common Prayer. Positioning these liturgies in other liturgical resources continues to send the message of separate and not equal to LGBTQ+ [persons].

Continued study and monitoring of the implementation and use of the trial liturgies to their inclusion in the Book of Common Prayer is necessary to reach the full measure of inclusion. The Task Force suggests that existing interim bodies are well equipped to see the work of the past forty (40) years through to its conclusion.

(Continued on next page)



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Marriage

(Continued from previous page)

Minority Report: Proposal Missed Concerns of Non-White, Non-U.S. Episcopalians

Of the 15 members on the Task Force on the Study of Marriage, one dissented from the task force report: The Rev. Canon Jordan Hylden, canon theologian for the Diocese of Dallas. Hylden is also a contributing editor of TLC. These are excerpts from his six-page minority report.

I am grateful that the Province IX bishops responded to our invitation to submit a reflection. [The statement was signed by bishops representing five of the seven Latin American dioceses.] Their statement makes clear their traditional view of marriage, grounded in Holy Scripture, and urges our church to avoid revising it in our Prayer Book.

“If the Church approves these changes,” they write, “they are greatly deepening the breach, the division, and the Ninth Province will have to learn how to walk alone.” These are clearly significant words, and I am troubled by a deliberative process that does not take the time to listen well to the concerns of this community. ...

As a matter of principle, I submit that whenever our church undertakes revision in a substantial doctrinal matter, we ought to build meaningful conversation into our deliberative process with those who hold the received position, as well as with those who hold it should be revised. This conversation must I think take particular care to listen to the voices of non-white persons and all the nations of TEC. This I think is true not only for marriage, but also for other issues of substance, such as the ever-green question of whether our canons should permit the communion of the unbaptized. Although our enabling resolution (2015: A037) called for this Task Force to “represent the cultural and the-

ological diversity in the Church,” I do not think this intention was realized.

Will Province IX Walk Alone?

In response to inquiries from the task force, bishops representing most of the Episcopal dioceses in Province IX signed a letter strongly opposing same-sex liturgies. The letter was signed by bishops representing the dioceses of Ecuador Central, Ecuador Littoral, Dominican Republic, Venezuela and Honduras. The bishops of Colombia and Puerto Rico did not sign. Excerpts follow.

Over the past four decades, from 1972 to the present, we have witnessed with sadness and distress the rapid decrease/loss of membership of our Episcopal Church, as well as a disregard of the call to embrace and affirm what is established in the Holy Scriptures; practices that now threaten to tear apart and further divide the Church, and distract it from the true mission of proclaiming our faith and making disciples for the enhancement of the Kingdom of God, thus transforming the society in which we live.

...

As leaders of the Episcopal Church in the IX Province, we are making a resounding call to all Episcopalians, clergy and laity as well, for an undivided commitment to the Holy Scriptures as the leading authority on faith and practice in the church. We call on all members to adopt practices consistent with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and to submit ourselves to the teachings of the Scriptures, because God designed marriage between man and woman, for the procreation of humanity, which is a blessing of God (Gen. 2:24-25; Ps. 127:3-5). The Scriptures also teach that the covenant of Christian marriage is holy, sacred, and consecrated by God and is expressed in the shared faithfulness between one man and one woman throughout their entire lives. ...

Finally, we urge all delegations of our province to vote “No” to liturgical changes in everything regarding the canons about marriage. ... If the Church approves these changes, they are greatly deepening the breach, the

(Continued on page 14)



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Marriage

(Continued from page 12)

division, and the Ninth Province will have to learn how to walk alone.

Voices from the Anglican Communion

In January 2016, the Anglican Communion suspended The Episcopal Church from full participation in the Communion for three years, in response to “unilateral actions on a matter of doctrine” regarding same-sex liturgies. The Task Force on the Study of Marriage sought input on how continued changes regarding same-sex marriage and related issues would affect other provinces. Following are excerpts of some of the responses.

It is a source of great regret — shared by many in the Church of England, including many who are deeply sympathetic to LGBTI+ people, that this step has been taken by TEC without a much wider consensus across the Communion and among our ecumenical partners. Whatever the formal consequences

which may follow for TEC in relation to the Communion, the introduction of the new liturgies cannot but hinder, in numerous small ways, the good relationships and close cooperation between our two Provinces for which we in the Church of England pray daily. We will watch with considerable interest and some concern to see how the new rites are introduced into the pastoral life of TEC.

*William Nye
Secretary General of
the Archbishop’s Council
Church of England*

So, in the Province of the Anglican 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.

*For the Most Rev.
Masimango K. Zacharie
Primate, Anglican Church of Congo,
through a translator*

From now onward be informed that we are not having any church partnership. Please do not write me back on this matter.

*The Most Rev. Jacob Erasto Chimeledya
Archbishop of Tanzania*

There is little question that changing the doctrine of marriage is a matter of grave consequence. ... 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 right developed with pastoral and liturgical resources.

*The Most Rev. Dr. Philip L. Freier
Primate, Anglican Church of Australia*

The Episcopal Church’s authorization and use of liturgical rites for same-sex marriage and the blessing of same-sex unions... has had a negative impact on the Anglican Communion. However, despite all the differences in our doctrines, the Church of the Province of West Africa has decided to walk with all who belong to the Anglican Communion.

*The Most Rev. Daniel Yinkah Sarfo
Primate, Church of the Province of
West Africa*

Brazilian Church Allows Same-sex Marriage

By a 90 percent margin, the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil’s General Synod has authorized marriage for same-sex couples. The vote was 57 in favor, 4 against, and 2 abstentions. The Brazilian church began a formal dialogue about same-sex marriage in 1997. Civil marriage for same-sex couples became legal in Brazil in 2012.

The synod welcomed the Most Rev. Mark Strange, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, and the Rt. Rev. Linda Nicholls, Bishop of Huron in the Anglican Church of Canada, both advocates of blessings for same-sex couples.

“I felt the decision was a result of the Holy Spirit’s presence and work,” said the Most Rev. Francisco de Assis da Silva, Primate of Brazil. “This widens our boundaries, allowing us to be more welcoming to the diversity of people in our country.”

The marriage rite in Brazil’s Book of Common Prayer (2015) is gender-neutral. “The churches of the Anglican

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Communion are autonomous and free to make their own decisions on canon law,” said the Most Rev. Josiah Idowu-Fearon, secretary general of the Anglican Communion.

“There are differing views about same-sex marriage within the Anglican Communion, but this decision puts the Episcopal Church of Brazil at odds with the majority position that marriage is the lifelong union of a man and a woman. This is a move away from the faith and teaching upheld by the overwhelming majority of Anglican provinces on the doctrine of marriage. The Anglican Communion’s position on human sexuality is set out in Resolution I.10 agreed at the Lambeth conference of 1998 and will remain so unless it is revoked.

“It is my deep desire to see the churches of the Anglican Communion remain committed to walking together in the love of Christ in spite of deeply held differences and to work out how to maintain unity and uphold the value of every individual. It is important to stress the Communion’s strong opposition to the criminalization of LGBTQ+ people.”

ACNS

Presiding Bishop Rides Wave of Celebrity

May was quite a month to be an Episcopalian.

For the week leading up to the royal wedding, people across the world wanted to know everything about Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, including why the leader of the Episcopal Church would be preaching in the presence of the queen of England. Then on May 19, nearly 30 million TV viewers in the United States alone watched Curry’s sermon on the power of God’s love at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. For a week afterward, Curry was interviewed or profiled by seemingly every major media outlet, from the BBC to ABC’s *The View* to the celebrity gossip site *TMZ*.

Episcopalians, who have long known of Curry’s talent as a preacher, responded with a mix of joy at “one of us” receiving such attention and hope

that Curry’s rising profile would boost the church’s profile — and maybe even help fill the pews.

“I think you can’t discount just the kind of euphoric pride that Episcopalians felt,” said Melodie Woerman, communications director for the Diocese of Kansas. After the royal wedding, posts about Curry on her diocese’s social media accounts generated a level of intense interest “like I had never seen before,” she said.

Curry did his part to seize this

opportunity for evangelism, deliberately turning the conversations in interviews back to Jesus’ message of love’s power to change the world. And days after the royal wedding, in a bit of scheduling serendipity, he joined other ecumenical Christian leaders for a “Reclaiming Jesus” church service, procession and candlelight vigil in Washington, D.C. Though planned long before Curry was asked to preach at Windsor Castle, those events, held

(Continued on page 30)



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Austin Loves Weirdness



Austin's Cathedral of Junk

Wikimedia Commons/Aleksandr Zykov photo

By Kirk Petersen

The Episcopal Church has chosen a weird city as the venue for the 2018 General Convention. That's not a criticism. The Austin Independent Business Alliance adopted "Keep Austin Weird" as its marketing slogan in 2002.

General Convention, a triennial event, will meet on July 5-13 in Austin's convention center, which is weirdly named the Austin Convention Center. Austin has an estimated population of 950,000 people, making it the second-largest state capital (after Phoenix) but only the fourth-largest city in Texas (after Houston, San Antonio, and Dallas.)

The city is part of the Houston-based Diocese of Texas, led since 2009 by the Rt. Rev. C. Andrew (Andy) Doyle, Bishop of Texas. He oversees one of the largest dioceses in the Episcopal Church, with average Sunday attendance of 24,000 in more than 150 churches. The diocese is one of five contained entirely in Texas. (In addition, the Albuquerque-based Diocese of the Rio Grande includes nine Texas counties, including El Paso.)

The Diocese of Texas will host an open barbeque on Saturday evening, July 7, right after the daily worship service. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will preach at the service at the Palmer Events Center, which holds 6,000 people, and the diocese hopes local folks will bring their friends to see the man the British press has dubbed the Royal Wedding Bishop.

Another highlight: General Convention will meet in a city that has an Episcopal seminary, and the Seminary of the Southwest is eager to welcome the faithful. This opportunity does not come around too often. In 1913, General Convention met in New York City, the home of the church's headquarters and the General Theological Seminary. In 1949 it met in San Francisco, across the bay from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific.

The seminary has planned three events:

- On July 4, the night before the first legislative day, the Seminary of the Southwest is co-sponsoring a fireworks party with Church of the Good Shepherd on the Hill, a five-minute drive south of the convention center. A reception with live music begins at 7:30, followed by fireworks.

- On Sunday, July 8, there will be a Eucharist at 10 a.m. at the seminary's Christ Chapel, followed by an open house

and buffet brunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The seminary's leafy campus is a 10-minute drive north of the convention center. (The campus also houses the Archives of the Episcopal Church, but that organization has not planned any public events.)

- And on Tuesday, July 10, the seminary will host a reception for alumni and friends just a block from the convention center at the J.W. Marriott from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The Very Rev. Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, dean and president of the seminary, will talk about Southwest's past and future.

The convention center is a huge facility, spanning six city blocks, with 881,400 gross square feet of space. The cavernous exhibit hall will have more than 150 exhibitors, and the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies will be on separate floors. If you visit, wear comfortable shoes.

There are approximately a zillion restaurants within walking distance, featuring every cuisine and price level. (There's a restaurant guide on the convention website: generalconvention.org.) Anyone with enough energy for nightlife after long legislative days can find nearby dancing and live music. You can find suggestions for dining and activities at the Austin Visitor Center, diagonally across 4th Street and Red River Street from the convention center.

Austin is a blue enclave in a red state. In 2016, Donald Trump prevailed statewide with 53 percent of the vote, while Hillary Clinton won 43 percent. But Clinton outpolled Trump in Travis County, 66 to 27 percent. Same-sex marriage will be an issue at General Convention, and Travis was the only county (out of 254) that voted against a 2005 amendment to the state constitution banning recognition of same-sex marriages, civil unions, and domestic partnerships.

The city is named for Stephen F. Austin, a politician who led the effort to bring settlers to Texas in the early 1800s, when the territory was controlled by Mexico. He's been called "the Father of Texas," but he was not an entirely admirable man. He encouraged the growth of slavery in the territory by giving new settlers 80 acres of land for each slave they brought with them.

Besides weirdness and blueness, what is Austin known for?

The travel site Expedia.com ranks Austin as the coolest city in the country, based on a variety of factors, including arts and entertainment, dining options, and the like. The *official* city motto is "Live Music Capital of the World," and the city boasts strong ties to musicians, including Willie Nelson, Janis Joplin, Stevie Ray and Jimmie Vaughan, and the Dixie Chicks.

Be advised that Austin is cool only in a metaphorical sense: the average high temperature in July is 95 degrees, with an average low of 74. But Texas is in the Southwest, so it must be dry heat, right? No, dry heat is further west. Average daily humidity for Austin in July is 65 percent (88% in the mornings), which is slightly worse than New York City, but not as bad as New Orleans.

Each March, Austin hosts South by Southwest, a conglomeration of music, the arts, and professional confer-

ences in the Austin Convention Center — the same venue as General Convention.

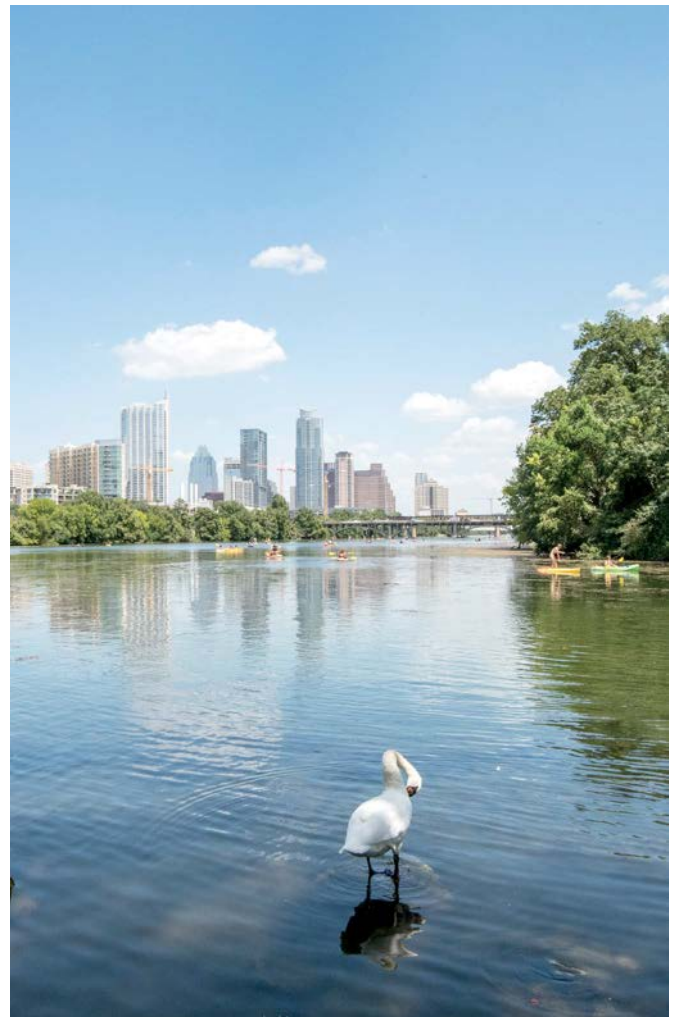
The original Whole Foods Market is about a 20-minute walk west from the convention center on North Lamar Street between 5th and 6th Avenues. The store also houses the Red Okra Restaurant, where the most expensive item is the \$11 Gorgonzola Mushroom Burger, and you have your choice of three local beers.

If you want to see weirdness, there's a Museum of the Weird less than half a mile from the convention center, featuring "authentic freak animals, real mummies, fiji mermaids, shrunken heads, and life-size wax figures of historic sideshow celebrities."

You could get your weird on by watching more than a million bats flying out every evening from under the Congress Avenue Bridge, less than half a mile from the convention center.

Want to swing on a trapeze? Bring \$10 to Trapeze Texas, a mile and a half east of the convention center.

Or consider a jaunt to the Cathedral of Junk, five miles southwest of the convention center. For 30 years, Vince Hannemann has been turning an estimated 60 tons of castoff items into a backyard shrine, featuring multiple rooms and thousands of pipes, car parts, signs, fans, tools and ... well ... junk. By appointment only: 512.299.7413. □



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Change in the Heart of Texas

From Austin to San Antonio, ministries adapt to serve America's next 'mega-metro area.'

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Campus ministry in one of the fastest-growing regions of the country does not look the same as it does in many other places. Along the 80-mile stretch from Austin's southern suburbs to San Antonio, one finds no long-established Canterbury Houses or settled chaplaincies. The needs are changing too fast to establish that kind of permanence.

Instead, a flexible crew of six lay ministers from the Diocese of West Texas is constantly experimenting on six campuses. What worked 10 years ago does not work anymore, said Allie Melancon, assistant director of college missions, who finds much-diminished appetites for Bible study and heightened wariness of Christians doing campus outreach.

Ministry at a place like Texas State University in San Marcos, which has seen 19 consecutive years of enrollment growth, requires nimbleness, humility, and a sense of humor. Comp line at Chick-fil-A? Sure, why not?

"Those things help define our ministry as being a more missional approach," Melancon said. "It looks different than the traditional ways, but the posture toward the campus, toward college, toward questioning and exploring, are all still at the heart."

Campus ministers are not the only ones doing things differently these days in the heart of Texas. Church planting too has a distinctive look in this region, known as hill country, where earth movers and new subdivisions are more plentiful than tumbleweed. For starters, the planting unfolds systematically at a pace many other regions can only imagine. A new church takes root with diocesan support every three to five years.

And church planting does not follow a traditional script. Grace Church, San Antonio, began as a Bible study — not as a mission congregation but as a



Members of Grace Church, San Antonio, distribute food on a Saturday night.

Grace Church photo

ministry of the diocese.

The Rev. Jay George, rector, does not wear a collar or vestments during worship, which happens in a rented chapel at TMI Episcopal, a private school. Casual is more inviting, he says, noting that shorts and flip-flops are standard fare for worshipers. And being inviting matters in that neighborhood, where residents can hear Christian author Max Lucado on any given Sunday or attend one of eight new church plants within a 10-minute drive of Grace.

"A traditional Episcopal model would be that you go into an area, form a congregation, form a mission and have a bishop's committee," George said. "We kind of came at it from the other direction. We said, *Let's grow this congregation until we're strong enough to take that step and be a mission congregation within the diocese on our own.*"

The strategy seems to be working. Having met as a house church beginning in 2008, Grace Church became a

mission in 2011 and a parish in 2016. It now counts 175 partners (akin to members), 75 regular participants (who are not yet partners) and about 100 in Sunday worship.

Rapid adaptation to shifting conditions is perhaps to be expected in the Austin-San Antonio corridor. The corridor includes three of the five fastest-growing counties in the United States, according to U.S. Census figures.

Austin had the nation's fastest rate of employment growth (51 percent) of any U.S. city from 2000 to 2015, according to an analysis by the Center for Opportunity Urbanism in Houston. San Antonio ranked sixth with 36-percent employment growth.

But some believe something unique is happening in this area, where trees and trails draw second-home buyers, and jobs are plentiful in fields from tech to the service sector. They're convinced America is seeing the emergence of its next great metropolis, a sprawling city on the scale of Los Angeles, one that would effectively

gobble up Austin, San Antonio, and every town in between. Experts agree it could be happening. Texas State Demographer Lloyd Potter projects 34 percent growth in the corridor, or 1.5 million new residents, by 2030.

“Over the next 50 years, Austin and San Antonio will become a single mega-metro area,” Austin Mayor Steve Adler says in *The Texas Way of Urbanism*, a Center for Opportunity Urbanism report. “The corridor in between will be the first reflection of this coming future, providing greater connectivity to serve the increasing interdependence and joint economic potential as the two cities grow together.”

If a new mega-city is emerging, however, it is not coming at the expense of local identities — at least not if locals have anything to say about it. Those dynamics, balancing eye-popping change with tenacious traditions and indelible identities, make the corridor a nexus of ministry challenges and opportunities.

Observers see a heightened sense of place taking root in Comal and Hays counties, for instance, where Amazon and Sysco have planted new fulfillment centers, and populations are surging by about five percent a year. This region is no Southern California, where a century-old building is considered old. San Antonio is celebrating its 300th anniversary in 2018. And even though the region is predominantly Roman Catholic, Episcopal ministries sometimes help ground a sense of durable identity on a landscape where so much is increasingly fluid.

“We’ve always been a missional diocese in the sense of far-flung places with new communities springing up in kind of a spiritual wilderness, and the church goes in to provide that spiritual bedrock, the bedrock of Christ,” said the Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson, Suffragan Bishop of West Texas, who served as rector of a parish in the corridor, St. Elizabeth Church in Buda, an Austin suburb, from 2011 to 2017.

“So we’re looking at that as we’re looking at this corridor. The problem is you’ve got all these overworked, spiritually starved, transplanted people that have moved in. They need

community and they need Christ, but they don’t know how to connect.”

Some who live in the area see a mega-city rising and bringing inequality along with it. Patton Dodd, media director for the H.E. Butt Family Foundation, lives on the north side of San Antonio, where much of the city’s residential wealth is concentrated. He observes that San Antonio’s west, south, and east sections (where most of the city’s Hispanics and African-Americans live) lag far behind the north in investment.

In reporting on social conditions in San Antonio for the Foundation’s *Folo Media* website, Dodd has seen churches springing up almost exclusively where the money is. They are often failing to build deep relationships that would transform lives in resource-poor neighborhoods.

“We see dynamics where the majority of the population is middle class or poor and people of color, while a lot of the power and wealth is in the hands of affluent Anglos,” Dodd said. “The communities where the majority are people of color and low-income tend to have old and declining churches.”

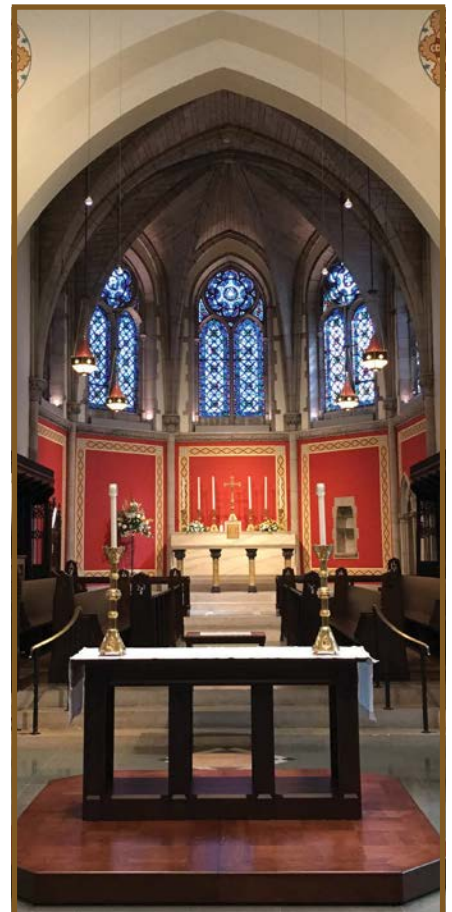
Even religious assets are largely concentrated among the well-off, Dodd said. Aside from mission activities that build not-very-deep relationships, he said, churches generally have not crossed race and class lines to build a stake in other San Antonio neighborhoods.

“It’s unfortunate and ironic to see that the upwardly mobile neighborhoods have better schools, better grocery stores, and more vibrant churches too,” Dodd said. “Churches express inequality just like every other feature of our cities do. They are sites of inequality just like schools are.”

On college campuses, ministry workers navigate between worlds as first-generation college students seek new opportunities. Many commute to save money. These students do not have much community on campus, Melancon said, and ministering to them can be as much about honoring old-school values as it is about using new media technology to stay connected.

For example, meeting the parents is

(Continued on next page)



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Change in the Heart of Texas

(Continued from previous page)

expected of campus ministers who will spend time with a young Hispanic woman, Melancon said. Hitting the road to do a home visit with the parents has become a part of what campus ministry entails.

“There are a lot of barriers,” Melancon said. “If you really want to do good work, meet new students where they are, and build relationships with them, you have to be willing to do things that you wouldn’t do in a traditional Episcopal model. You go to their parents’ house.”

In this complex matrix, some find opportunity. Grace Church has found its sweet spot, George says, in engaging the de-churched, those who have a church background but drifted away. He observes that non-churchgoers are not in worship because they *don’t*

want to be in worship. That means the church does better by inviting neighbors to do things they *already want* to do: watch an outdoor movie on TMI’s grounds, for example, or serve a meal to homeless San Antonians on Saturday nights.

“We show you that being a part of church is not what you think it is — it’s *this*,” George said. “And then you go, *Oh, well, I like to do that. I like beer and nachos. I like movies. I like serving hungry children.* And we say, *Well, let’s go! And, by the way, we worship on Sunday mornings. Here’s why we do that and here’s what happens. Come check it out and see if you like it.*”

Seventy miles away on the outskirts of Austin, the town of Buda (pronounced *b-yoo -dah*) is fast ceasing to be a small town, Brooke-Davidson said. While Austin proudly calls itself weird, she said, Buda describes itself as “just the other side of weird.” She sees St. Elizabeth playing a role in keeping Buda in touch with its roots.

In rapidly changing towns like Buda, she said, congregants find opportunities to help newcomers become settled and make social connections. They frequently work with schools to make sure children’s needs do not fall through the cracks. And when tensions run high at public meetings, as they often do when dramatic changes affect a community, churchgoers are sometimes able to help residents resolve differences amicably. It’s all part of being church in a time of rapid change, and knowing which part of the great tradition to bring to bear at the right time.

“The church can model healthy community and healthy dialogue,” Brooke-Davidson said. “In the church we teach people about lamentation as well as celebration. Sometimes there is just grieving that needs to happen. You can’t turn back the clock sometimes, but you can help people see resurrection coming out of that and help people embrace some of that.” □

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Add Origen to the Calendar

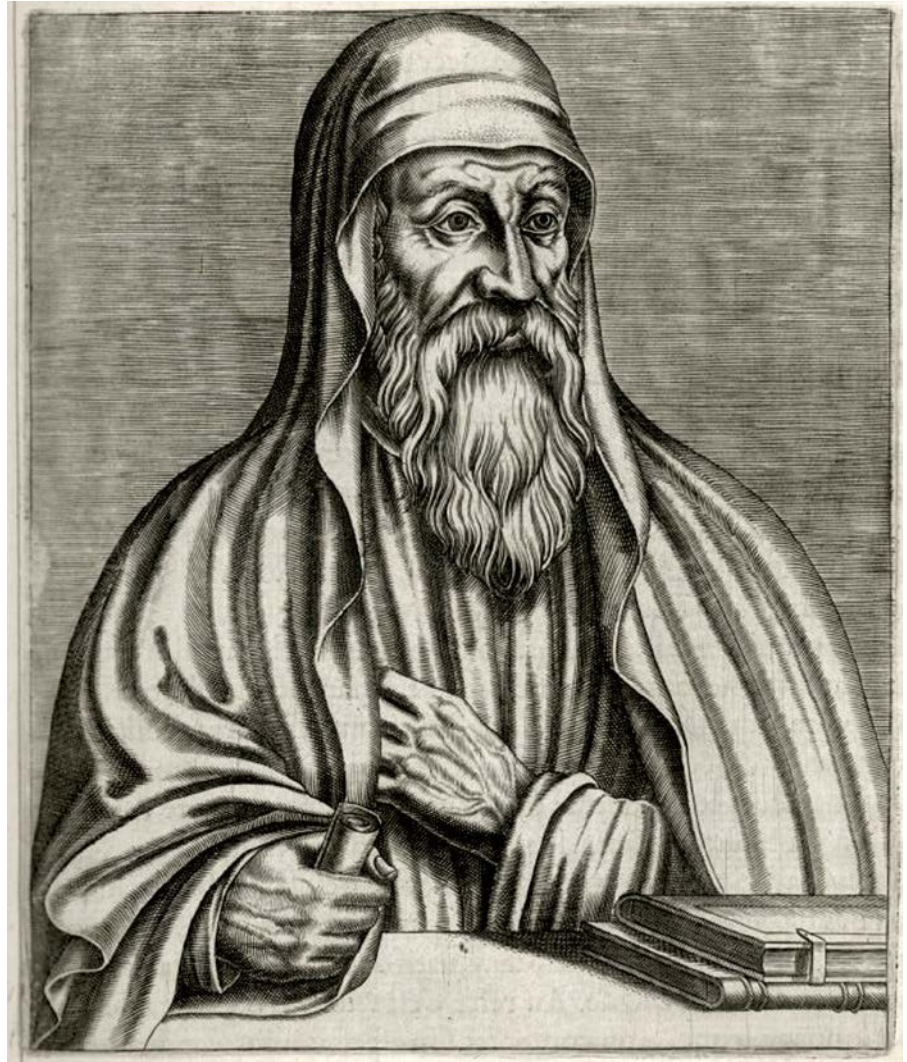
General Convention will consider a resolution from the Diocese of Maryland that defends Origen's name.

The resolution's author makes his case.

By Mark Stanley

Origen of Alexandria's contributions to Christian theology and his personal holiness place him solidly in the *saint* category. After centuries of Origen being called a heretic, General Convention has a chance this month, with Resolution C012, to add him to the Episcopal Calendar. The Fifth Ecumenical Council at Constantinople (553) seems to have condemned him as a heretic. But scholars like the Jesuit Henri Crouzel have concluded that Origen was unjustly branded a heretic, and the *Catholic Encyclopedia* says that Origen "does not deserve to be ranked among the promoters of heresy" (vol. 11, p. 308).

Origen wrote at a time when the Church was still seeking to interpret and define its basic doctrines, before the creeds at Nicaea (325) and Chalcedon (451) were created. It is problematic to apply the stricter standards and terminology of later eras to the earliest theologians, including the early writings of Athanasius. Origen lived and died committed to the orthodox faith of the Church that he knew. He wrote that what is to be believed as truth "in no way conflicts with the tradition of the Church and the Apostles" (*On First Principles* I, Preface 2). Origen was not declared a heretic until hundreds of years after his death. Patristics scholar Boniface Ramsey writes that even as Church concepts



Origen by André Thévet/Greek Wikipedia

and language developed, Origen always maintained "a desire to be orthodox and attain to the truth" (*Beginning to Read the Fathers*, p. 6).

The condemnations of Origen center on three topics: the subordination of God the Son to God the Father, the pre-existence of souls, and the *apokatastasis*, that is, a teaching that all creatures, even the devil, would ultimately be saved. Each of these criticisms can be refuted using Origen's own texts.

Scholar Christopher Beeley demonstrates Origen's view that "Christ is equal to God the Father in both divinity and eternity and that he pos-

sesses the same divine nature" (*The Unity of Christ*, p. 17). This can be seen in Origen's assertion that Christians worship only "one God, the Father and Son" (*Contra Celsus* 8.12). Where Origen's words seem to support subordinationism, this is "simply that affirmation that the Father is primary ... with no implication of superiority of nature" (Crouzel, *Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, p. 503). Even the great advocate of the Nicene position, St. Athanasius, drew on the person he called "diligent Origen." Athanasius uses him to support orthodox doctrine, quoting Origen's teaching that "there is no moment when [the Son]

was not” (*On First Principles* 1.2.9).

Origen did write about the pre-existence of human souls. This would not have been called a heresy in his time since the Church did not have a formal teaching on the matter. Church historian Rebecca Lyman has noted that Origen was extremely careful to say that his speculation about pre-existent souls was a hypothesis, because Scripture gives no clear answer (*Early Christian Thinkers*, p. 121).

Another point of dispute is related to Origen’s concept of the *apokatastasis*. He wrote: “We think that the goodness of God, through the mediation of Christ, will bring all creatures to one and the same end” (*On First Principles* I.6.1-3). Scholars today debate whether Origen truly taught a version of universal salvation, because his writings are not consistent on this matter. Origen’s emphasis on the patience and enduring mercy of God rather than on divine punishment might be seen in our day not as heresy but as Good News.

Much of the condemnation of Origen relates to three things: misunderstandings of his writings, due to their complexity and sheer volume; false attributions of teachings to him that were actually those of his later followers; and even subsequent changes in terminology for God and Christ. Origen’s condemnation associated with the Fifth Ecumenical Council was “clearly directed against contemporary Origenists” (Crouzel, p. 504). Indeed St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus replied to heretics who claimed the support of Origen’s authority that they misunderstood him (see Ferdinand Prat, introduction to *The Sacred Writings of Origen*).

Lyman has argued that Origen believed theology is an act of imagination and prayer within the apostolic tradition, which leads the faithful theologian into greater intimacy with, and deeper knowledge of, God. Origen spent his life trying to make the Bible come alive to everyone, both the simple and the sophisticated, as a place of encounter with the divine Word. This is both why he speculates and why he often encouraged further discussion.

The great Anglican historian Henry Chadwick put it this way (in an article for *Encyclopedia Britannica*): “If orthodoxy were a matter of intention, *no theologian could be more orthodox than*

Origen, none more devoted to the cause of the Christian faith.”

The Rev. Mark Stanley is rector of St. Paul’s Church, Baltimore.

Biography

Origen d. 254

Theologian

Born to Christian parents, Origen spent the first part of his career as a teacher in Alexandria, Egypt. Origen was not just a prolific scholar; he was also a person of genuine holiness. During a persecution in Alexandria in 202 in which his father was killed, teenage Origen desired martyrdom but his mother prevented him from leaving the house by hiding his clothes. He led a strict ascetical life of fasting, prayer, and voluntary poverty. According to the historian Eusebius, Origen castrated himself because of a misinterpretation of Matthew 19:12. Recent scholars have questioned the truth of this story, speculating that this may have been just a rumor circulated by his detractors. In 250 during another persecution of Christians, Origen was imprisoned and cruelly tortured, after which he survived only a few years. Origen’s willingness to undergo personal suffering for refusing to deny his beliefs gives witness to his dedication to Christ.

Origen is known for his breadth and depth of scholarship, writing influential works of theology, textual criticism, biblical commentary, preaching, and spirituality. St. Jerome is quoted as calling Origen the greatest “teacher of wisdom and knowledge after the apostles.” Most of all he was a biblical theologian, encouraging an approach to Holy Scripture on not just the literal level but also on the moral and allegorical levels. Origen’s teachings brought respectability to Christian theology and influenced generations of thinkers.

Many of Origen’s works did not survive due to his condemnation several centuries after his death. Some of the later criticism marks a reaction to Origen’s wide-ranging philosophical speculation at a time when Christian orthodoxy was still forming. One point of dispute is Origen’s concept of *apokatastasis* that all creatures, even the Devil, could ultimately be reconciled with God. While scholars today debate whether Origen truly taught a version of universal salvation, Origen certainly proclaimed a good and powerful deity whose love conquers all.

Suggested Collect

O God, who is the beginning of all things, you gave your servant Origen wisdom in learning and sacrificial devotion to Jesus Christ: Grant that our whole lives may be bent on progress in divine things after the pattern of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen*.

Sources for the Collect

“God, who is the beginning of all things...” (*First Principles* I).

“Now our whole activity is devoted to God, and our whole life, since we are bent on progress in divine things” (*Commentary on John* I.4).

Suggested Readings

Psalm 139:1-12

1 Corinthians 15:51-58

John 3:1-17

Proposed Date: July 8

Meeting Clergy's Financial Needs

Mary Kate Wold is the CEO and president of the Church Pension Group, a financial services organization that serves the Episcopal Church. A former finance and corporate executive and law-firm partner, she now draws on her fiduciary, legal, and finance experience, as well as her love of the church, to help clergy and lay employees enjoy the financial security in retirement. In the weeks before General Convention, Wold spoke with TLC about her work and her faith.

How would you sum up, for readers unfamiliar with the Church Pension Group, the mission of CPG? What does it do, and why does it exist?

Our mission is to serve the clergy and lay employees of the church in their calling to spread the gospel. I care deeply about helping the church grow and thrive, and I believe one of the best ways to do that is to ensure that its leaders are supported. The Church Pension Group contributes to the welfare of clergy and lay employees by providing them the highest possible level of financial security in retirement, by providing access to healthcare while they are working, by educating them about their finances, and by supporting them with wellness-related resources.

The Church Pension Group was founded by Bishop William Lawrence more than a century ago. Recognizing that many Episcopal clergy were retiring into poverty or could not afford to retire at all, Bishop Lawrence set out to create a mandatory and financially sustainable pension fund. His initial goal was to raise \$5 million in seed money — and he ended up raising \$8.5 million from over 47,000 Episcopalians who saw the wisdom of his inspired vision. In 1917, our pension fund sent out its first pension check. Over the years, our offerings have expanded to include additional



Church Pension Fund photos

products and services and to cover lay employees.

The continued evolution of the Episcopal Church is always a hot topic and certainly will be in Austin. In addition to expanded offerings, how is the Church Pension Group keeping up with those changes?

Over the past several years we've been conducting listening events around the

church — in the U.S. and abroad — to help us better understand the needs of different groups of clergy and lay employees so we can continuously improve the many ways in which we serve them. Two recent General Convention resolutions (2015-A177 and 2015-A181) affirmed our efforts to respond to different forms of ministry in the U.S. and to understand the unique needs of clergy and lay

employees in the non-domestic dioceses of the Episcopal Church.

What are some of your challenges?

Our number one concern is the performance of the financial markets. While we have invested extremely well over the past hundred years, we have also gone through periods of incredible financial stress in the markets, and we know that those periods will recur. We realize that we cannot rest on our laurels and that our past financial success does not guarantee that we will be successful in the future. For this reason, we spend a great deal of time honing our investment practices, analyzing the markets, projecting into the future, and ensuring that we are well-prepared for financial risks on the horizon and beyond.

Another big challenge, which was also an opportunity, was updating our defined benefit pension plans. When I assumed my role seven years ago, it was already clear that the church was changing, that ministries were evolving, and that a pension fund that had been around for nearly a century probably needed to change too. As I considered the possibility of leading CPG, I went through my own discernment process. That included extensive conversations with people around the church, both lay and clergy. Although I didn't necessarily see the trends in my parishes, those conversations revealed especially the rise in the numbers of part time, bi-vocational, and non-stipendiary clergy. I knew then that these and other evolving models of ministry would have to be a focus of our work.

We had to figure out how to simplify pension benefits and make them more flexible and sensitive to emerging needs without compromising the overall value of our pension program or the financial strength of the pension fund. It was a tall order. Let me give you a few examples.

First, the formula for calculating pensions made it difficult for clergy to take breaks from higher-paying positions to do more missional work without adversely affecting their future pensions. We changed the formula to add more flexibility. Another example:

we found for various reasons clergy were taking longer breaks from service — taking more time between jobs. To enable them to continue their involvement in the pension plan, we doubled the period during which they could make personal payments when not employed and continue to earn credit toward their pensions. We also made it easier for clergy at the lowest compensation levels qualify for participation in the plan and earn full years of service for their work.

How did you get there?

We embarked upon a multi-year undertaking to seek input from those who would have a stake in the changes we were contemplating, including part-time and bi-vocational clergy, clergy with breaks in service, clergy who had been ordained later in life, seminarians, lay employees, vestry wardens and treasurers, and diocesan and parish administrators. We met with hundreds of people in the process.

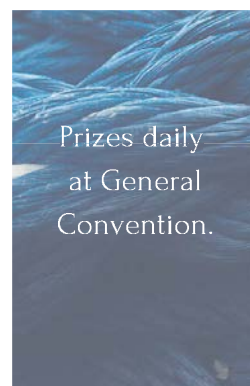
Once we came up with a list of possible changes, I thought, "Okay, I think we know what the issues are and the best ways to solve them. But what if we don't get it right? How can we be sure that we will do no harm?" We devised a second phase of iterative conversations during which we ultimately reviewed our proposals with more than 1,500

clergy and lay leaders. After initial feedback, we went back to the drawing board, made tweaks to our proposals, and went out again and again to retest them until we were convinced that we had it right. By the time we launched the new Church Pension Fund Clergy Pension Plan on January 1, we had a real sense of confidence that we had done our job, that we had truly listened to the church, and that we had created a modern pension plan that was responsive to the changing needs of the church and was financially sustainable.

How is CPG working to determine the needs of retirees as the church and economy change, such as lay people retiring later, or clergy staying in active or near-active service for longer?

Our Research & Data group is constantly mining data at our disposal as the Recorder of Ordinations and benefits provider for the Episcopal Church. We regularly conduct surveys and focus groups to understand and quantify the needs of our clients. In fact, we recently completed a survey that examines how well prepared lay employees of the church are for retirement. We also sponsor educational gatherings for our retired clergy and a Chaplains to the Retired program that

(Continued on next page)



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(Continued from previous page)

underwrites pastoral care resources in each diocese to work with retirees and connect them with CPG. We learn a lot about the needs of retirees from our Chaplains to the Retired.

How would you say that your work is aligned with the values of the Episcopal Church?

Everything we do is designed to help fortify the clergy and lay employees of the Church so that they are free to pursue their work with less worry about their financial futures. The way we manage our investment portfolio plays a critical part in how we are able to accomplish this. Our portfolio is the financial engine that fuels all the benefits we provide. As fiduciaries of the pension plans we administer, we pursue the highest level of risk-adjusted returns to ensure that we are able to pay benefits for as long as they need to be paid. At the same time, we put a tremendous emphasis on socially responsible investing, which includes three powerful and effective strategies: positive-impact investing, shareholder engagement, and thought leadership.

First, we invest whenever possible in projects that have social and environmental benefits and still deliver returns that are consistent with our investment goals. Second, we work closely with the church, and particularly with the Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, to be involved in shareholder engagement. We engage companies in our mutual portfolios to discuss issues that are relevant to the church and to encourage those companies to align their business practices with the values of the Episcopal Church. Our current areas of focus in shareholder engagement are human rights, environmental concerns, and diversity issues in corporate governance. Third, we use our leadership position in socially responsible investing to connect and convene other institutions, encouraging and inspiring them to get involved in socially responsible investing. We've



posted some great stories about our work on our website. I encourage everyone to view our videos at cpg.org/srividéos.

You are the CEO and president of an Episcopal organization but you are also an Episcopalian. When did you enter the faith?

My faith and membership in the Christian community has always been of paramount importance to me. I had an ecumenical path in my earlier years. I was raised a Methodist in a small town on the Canadian border in North Dakota, where church was at the center of everyone's lives. During summers of my college years, I "joined the majority" in my community of Scandinavian immigrants and worked as a counselor at a Lutheran church camp. Then, just after starting law school, a friend introduced me to the Episcopal Church. What captured my heart immediately was the beauty of the liturgy. I have never looked back and have been an Episcopalian ever since.

During my adult life I have very much enjoyed being involved in the church at the parish level. I am now on my third vestry, at Trinity Wall Street, where I also serve on the investment committee. I served for many years on the vestry and as chancellor of St.

Bartholomew's in New York City and served for several years on the vestry of Christ Church in Hudson, New York. My three children all attended preschool at St. Bartholomew's, and all served as acolytes at our Hudson church. In fact, at the age of nine, my daughter was Christ Church's youngest acolyte and was a petite but proud crucifer by the age of 10.

As the 79th General Convention approaches, what would you like people to know about you and your work?

I am immensely honored and gratified to be part of an organization that has served the church loyally and responsibly for the past 100 years. In fact, it was by a General Convention resolution that we were first established, and we are passionate in pursuing our mandate to serve the clergy and lay employees of the church. I hope you'll visit our special website, cpg.org/GC2018, before, during, and afterward, and that you'll follow us on (ChurchPension) Facebook (ChurchPension) and Twitter (@ChurchPension). If you will be in Austin, please plan to stop by our booth to learn more about our efforts to keep the Episcopal Church strong by serving the people and other institutions that serve it. □



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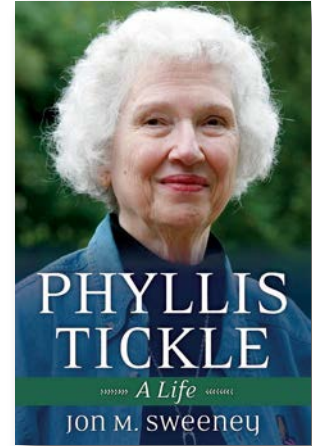
Review by Phoebe Pettingell

I first encountered Phyllis Tickle (1934–2015) in the 1990s through her religion column in *Publishers Weekly*. Books about religion had hitherto been a niche market, hard to order through one's local small bookstore. But with the advent of Barnes & Noble, Borders, and similar superstores, it suddenly became possible to acquire small-press volumes, even self-published ones, or find them on the shelves. Recognizing a changing market, *PW* (as it is known in the trade) brought on Tickle, who had managed small religious and regional presses in her home state of Tennessee.

As Jon Sweeney writes, "Her talent was the ability to prophetically see what was coming, and then explain it in attractive detail." She played a similar role for emergence Christianity, which she adapted from a biology term that describes a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. The movement began in the 1970s among evan-

gelicals of various stripes attempting to come to terms with modernity. And, thanks to her three *Divine Hours* volumes, she introduced thousands of readers to a usable form of hours of prayer — demonstrating the shape of these liturgies to those as yet too inexperienced to manage a breviary or construct a usable office from the Book of Common Prayer.

Sweeney is admirably suited to write about Tickle. In the last year of her life, when her health was failing, he acted as her coauthor. He too had become an Episcopalian after an evangelical childhood, although he subsequently joined the Roman Catholic Church. As he admits, Tickle is not an easy subject. She came from a Southern culture that made a tight distinction between public and private life. Not only did she hold her feelings inside herself, including those concerning significant problems with her marriage, but even her autobiographical writings are singularly impersonal. Her spiritual life remained private, as well. She had a



Phyllis Tickle: A Life

By John M. Sweeney

Church Publishing. Pp. 274. \$26.95

developed inner life of prayer of which even those closest to her caught only an occasional glimpse.

Although raised a conservative Presbyterian, Tickle was temperamentally a liberal in most ways. She easily absorbed new ideas and was an enthusiast for most kinds of learning. At the same time, however, she saw no reason why embracing new certainties required abandoning everything connected with the old. She was neither a scholar — despite her wide reading — nor a systematic thinker. Rather, she synthesized knowledge into an appealing presentation, albeit with some mind-boggling assertions, such as that Martin Luther stood as a bookend, beginning an era that thinkers like Marcus Borg and John Shelby Spong were bringing to an end.

Loosely adapting a concept of 12th-century mystic Joachim of Fiore, she liked to say that Judaism had been the Age of the Father; the coming of Christ ushered in the Age of the Son, which continued through the Protestant Reformation and what followed; and that contemporary Christianity was entering

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the Age of the Spirit, in which “uncertainty was now the only authentic expression of what we called faith.” As this formulation implies, Tickle was staunchly anti-hierarchical. Sweeney thinks her anti-Catholicism was a relic of her Presbyterian dispensationalism. The only two bishops she seems to have admired were Spong and Desmond Tutu. Similarly, despite her devotion to the Canonical Hours of Prayer, she remained firmly at the Protestant end of the Anglican spectrum, having little use for “ritualism.”

Nonetheless, she never considered herself post-Christian, and after joining the Episcopal Church, she remained faithful and active. Her husband, a doctor, fit less well into a denominational mold. Beginning as an Appalachian conservative, he gradually morphed into a faith even Tickle (who was married to him for 53 years) confessed she could not understand. At some point during the most turbulent years of debates on sexuality (Sweeney is sometime vague about dates), the couple attended a non-denominational parish, Holy Trinity, in downtown Memphis, because it was gay-friendly, as the Diocese of West Tennessee was not.

Unbeknownst to many, Samuel Tickle had come out to his wife, claiming he needed men as well as her. However, she refused to join Trinity formally because it would have meant giving up not only membership in the Episcopal Church but her positions as a lay reader and eucharistic minister. She hoped that Trinity would eventually be accepted into her diocese, but when the congregation joined the United Church of Christ the Tickles left and she returned to attending an Episcopal parish without her husband.

Despite her involvement with the Emergent movement, she was never wholeheartedly sold on it. She explained in an interview, “I’m not an emergence Christian; I’m probably an Angli-mergent. ... I have colleagues who are pure emergence Christians who don’t like for me to say this, but

one of the things is that emergence praxis does not allow for much transcendence. It allows for transport—and there’s a difference.” Yet in other respects she also missed certain elements of spirituality because of her background. Ultimately, the canonical hours of prayer are a form of corporate worship that binds a specific community (even though some may be praying it in different venues). When she describes herself as “an uncloistered Benedictine,” her penchant for embracing paradox strains credulity.

Sweeney sees Tickle as generous to the point of overvaluing certain trends because she liked the people involved. Increasingly, it looks as though the emergent movement has proved less than the sum of its parts: a diffuse attempt on the part of some evangelicals to come to terms with modernity, in some cases merely to adapt its lan-

guage to older concepts, in others to embrace liberalism. Sweeney believes her greater achievements to have been her recognition that religious publishing was reaching a wider audience, thanks to changes in marketing, and her introduction of certain ancient practices—praying at specific hours, fasting, tithing, and so forth — to Protestants whose traditions had neglected them. These are significant, if probably transitory achievements. But it may be that the quality that made Tickle seem groundbreaking to certain groups cannot be captured without her presence. What comes across, in the end, is a gifted marketer who knew how to seize a particular moment and sell it.

Phoebe Pettingell, a literary critic and liturgist, is sacristan at S. Stephen’s Church in Providence.

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Celebrity

(Continued from page 15)

on May 24, drew additional news coverage due to his sudden star power.

Of course, news cycles don't last forever. If Curry was granted his Warholian 15 minutes of international fame, he succeeded in extending it by several days. But he, the church and Episcopalians now are faced with the question, what's next?

"Part of evangelism is helping the church to be more visible, just as a practical matter, and the other part of it is the church having a message that is worthy of the hearing," Curry told Episcopal News Service in a phone interview May 31, recapping the whirlwind of his past few weeks. "And this has nothing to do with Michael Curry. Jesus figured this out. Jesus was right. This way of love is the only way of life. That's it."

Curry was a viral internet phenomenon once before. His 2012 sermon at



The View/YouTube screen capture

General Convention generated plenty of attention within and outside the church and led to his book, *Crazy Christians*, though he has no immediate plans to write a new book now that he is known as the royal wedding preacher.

He is more likely to pen opinion pieces on Christian themes for news

outlets, "if it helps the cause of spreading the message," he said, though the most certain next act for the presiding bishop is simply more of the same. In addition to preparing for the 79th General Convention this July in Austin, Texas, Curry will do what he always does: spend most weeks trav-

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eling to various dioceses, meeting with Episcopalians and preaching.

The bigger question for dioceses, congregations and parishioners may be whether the attention Curry has brought to the Episcopal Church and to the Reclaiming Jesus initiative will flow down to them in ways that serve the long-term mission of the church and the work of its members. Even if it does, some say there still is plenty of work to be done.

It may be too much to expect one sermon — even that sermon — will suddenly compel people to seek out their local Episcopal congregations and fill Sunday services across the land, but Episcopalians have the ability to seize Curry's message in similar ways, said Woerman of the Diocese of Kansas, who also serves as president of Episcopal Communicators.

"American culture seems to be in a lot of strife right now, and just to have a straightforward, powerful message of love ... I think that is a message that a lot of people in our society long to hear," she said.

But Curry can't do all the heavy lifting. That was the point made by the Rev. Michael Michie, Episcopal Church staff officer for church planting infrastructure, in a recent blog post titled "Once We are Done High-Fiving, What are We Going to Do?"

"The sermon is a call for us to go to the people, not for the people to come to us," Michie wrote. "That God gave our good bishop this incredible platform is not a license for us to remain in our pews, necks craned wistfully at the front door. What if we took the incredible words he shared to heart and allowed it to birth new ministries?"

The Rev. Scott Gunn, executive director of the Episcopal evangelism resource ministry Forward Movement, puts it another way.

"Churches often think that they're going to advertise their way into church growth or that the presiding bishop will do our work for us," Gunn told ENS. "But the reality is people hear about Jesus because one person invites another person."

Gunn admits to being swept up in royal wedding fever on May 19, waking

(Continued on next page)

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Celebrity

(Continued from previous page)

up early to watch the hats and hoopla while wearing his own favorite hat, a Cincinnati Reds baseball cap. It didn't take long after Curry's sermon to realize the reaction would be huge.

Gunn, who writes faith-themed opinion pieces occasionally for FoxNews.com, got a call that afternoon from Lynne Jordal Martin, the opinion editor for the cable channel's website and a Forward Movement board member. She asked if he could write a column on short deadline and gave him the headline in advance: "If you liked the Royal Wedding sermon on Saturday, go to church on Sunday."

He gladly wrote the column. Unfortunately, however, not all churches are equipped to take advantage of a royal wedding moment, Gunn told ENS.

"Sadly, too many of our churches are just not welcoming," he said. "We think we are, but we're nice to people who are already in the club. We're not hospitable to strangers who come through our doors, and we're terrible at inviting people to come through our doors."

That said, he is hopeful that Curry's royal wedding sermon and his subsequent media blitz will encourage and embolden congregations to improve their own efforts at evangelism. Gunn thought that, even while participating in a lighthearted TV segment, such as on NBC's *Today* when Al Roker, a fellow Episcopalian, asked Curry to help deliver the weather forecast, the presiding bishop struck the right tone.

"Bishop Curry is such a burst of joy that of course he's going to enjoy this, but my sense is he's not enjoying it for the boost to his ego. ... He's doing it to promote a message of God's love," Gunn said. "We don't have Hollywood celebrities sitting in our congregations, but I think that message works."

Curry downplayed his own newfound celebrity in speaking with ENS. "I'm not an actor. I'm not a celebrity. I'm not a movie star. There's nothing about me that's really interesting, not more than anybody else," he said.

*David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service*

General Convention's #MeToo Listening Session

The Planning Team for the House of Bishops' Pastoral Response to #MeToo has released further information about a listening session scheduled for July 4 during General Convention. The team invited communication about cases of sexual abuse, harassment, and exploitation within church institutions.

"Submissions will be treated with confidentiality and respect," a letter from the team said.

"Confidential pastoral care will be offered during the listening service, throughout General Convention and beyond by certified professionals engaged for this work and by the bishops ongoing pastoral care in each diocese. Consultation regarding possible Title IV issues will also be available. All conversations with the Pastoral Care Team or Title IV consultants will be confidential."

Church Center Loses Communicator

Neva Rae Fox, the chief spokeswoman for the Episcopal Church for more than a decade, apparently left her employment May 23, for reasons that have not been made public.

Senior leaders at the church center did not immediately respond to requests for comment, and Fox could not be reached. Fox's contact information was deleted on May 23 or early May 24 from the staff directory and communications office pages on episcopalchurch.org.

In a May 29 email to Episcopal Communicators, the Rev. Canon Michael Hunn acknowledged that Fox no longer works for the Episcopal Church. He provided no further information about the circumstances of her leaving.

Lisa Webb, associate officer for public affairs, is now listed as the primary contact for public affairs.

The action came just days after Fox was in London with Presiding Bishop Michael Curry to handle the avalanche of media attention related to his sermon at the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. The sermon attracted enormous attention around the world, and was the highest-profile event for the church in years. Media coverage of the presiding bishop has been overwhelmingly favorable, and is continuing at a rapid pace.

The departure also came six weeks before the start of the church's 79th General Convention.

Fox was appointed to the position of staff officer for public affairs in 2007, after seven years as communications director for the Diocese of New York. She is well known throughout the church's far-flung communications community, having worked with dioceses and Episcopal organizations throughout the country.

Last year Fox began a three-year term as one of more than 40 members of the Living Church Foundation. She is not on the eight-member board of directors, who are elected by the foundation members at annual meetings.

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Churches Combat Modern Slavery

Chances are good that within 100 yards of most locations in London, someone being held in some form of slavery. A new app will help people stay alert and be aware of the various guises modern slavery takes.

Car washes are notorious for using slave labor, according to church charities waging a new campaign. The Safe Car Wash app is the brainchild of the Anglican Clewer Initiative and the Roman Catholic Santa Marta Group.

Estimates of people held in slavery in Britain vary widely. An estimated 18,000 people are exploited as car-wash employees. While many of these businesses are legitimate, some threaten workers and trap them in modern slavery.

The app pinpoints the location of

questionable car washes. It shows indicators of modern slavery: signs can include workers lacking appropriate protective clothing and shoes, and people in forced servitude often appear nervous and withdrawn.

The app helps users link to the Modern Slavery Helpline. Data from the app is shared with the National Crime Agency and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority.

Modern slavery takes many forms in the United Kingdom. Young women from countries like Albania can be lured to London by prospects of well-paid work. These women are locked up, beaten, and starved until they agree to become sex workers.

Nail salons often enslave attractive young women who have been trafficked. Church people need to be alert to cases of domestic servitude. A typical case may be a young African woman. She may attend church, seated between two adults and never allowed to mix with other worshippers. In fact, she may be held in domestic servitude, perhaps by members of her extended

family based in London.

London's metropolitan slavery unit receives 1,600 referrals each year. It has warned that modern slavery in Britain is burgeoning. In the days of William Wilberforce's campaign against the international slave trade, to secure someone for the transatlantic slave trade would have cost £20,000 in today's money. Today, £150 will cover the cost of a one-way airline ticket from many European cities to London.

The Salvation Army has long fought exploitation of women as sex workers. It helps former sex slaves obtain new identities and vocational training. In 1885, it worked with journalist W.T. Stead of *The Pall Mall Gazette*, who is often hailed as the founder of investigative journalism. He was jailed under a technicality, having purchased 13-year-old Eliza Armstrong with the intention of setting her free. His campaign eventually led to raising the age of consent for girls from 13 to 16.

John Martin

Newark Calls Ft. Worth Priest

The Diocese of Newark elected the Rev. Carlye J. Hughes as its 11th bishop during a special convention May 19 at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Morristown. Hughes was elected on the first ballot.

The first woman and first African-American to be elected bishop in the Diocese of Newark, Hughes, 59, is rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Fort Worth and was one of three nominees.

In order to be elected, a candidate needed to receive a simple majority of votes from both the clergy and the lay delegates, voting separately as orders in the same balloting round. Hughes was elected on the first ballot, receiving 62 of 116 clergy votes and 141 of 241 lay votes.

The other two nominees were: the Rev. Lisa W. Hunt, rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Houston, and the Rev. Canon Scott G. Slater, canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Maryland.

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Hughes was ordained a priest in 2005 after graduating from Virginia Theological Seminary, and has served as rector of Trinity Church since 2012.

*Nina Nicholson
Diocese of Newark*

Rwandan Bishop Wins Court Ruling

A court ruling has allowed a bishop accused of complicity in the Rwandan genocide to remain in Britain.

The Rt. Rev. Jonathan Ruhumuliza, a member of the majority Hutu ethnic group, was an ordained priest in 1994 when 800,000 people of the minority Tutsi ethnic group were slaughtered.

The case may not yet be closed. The government's home office still believes Ruhumuliza, 62, was "complicit in the genocide," excluded Tutsis from safe havens, and "distributed weapons to the killers." The government also claims that he had close links with Hutu paramilitaries and traveled abroad spreading propaganda.

According to *The Times*, the bishop was the first senior Anglican churchman to return to Rwanda after the genocide to help with reconciliation. In 2005 he coordinated a visit by Lord Carey of Clifton, then the Archbishop of Canterbury.

He became the Bishop of Kigali in July 1995 and the following year issued a statement in which he "repented the fact that owing to his cowardliness and weakness he had not taken various opportunities to condemn and speak out against the genocide."

After protests about his appointment he resigned as bishop in 1997 to assist in reconciliation. He was appointed an assistant honorary bishop in 2005 by the Rt. Rev. Peter Selby, Bishop of Worcester.

When the allegations against him were made public in 2014, the Diocese of Worcester issued a statement saying that "extensive checks were undertaken through Lambeth Palace" and "no evidence was found of complicity in the Rwandan genocide." Ruhumuliza has always denied involvement in the killings.

John Martin

Canon Andrew White Freed from Allegations

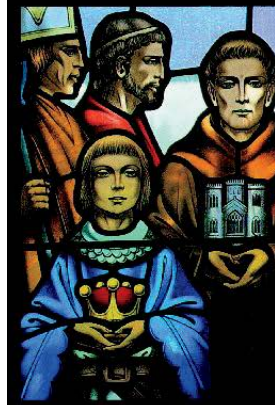
The Rev. Canon Andrew White, former Vicar of Baghdad, says he faces no charges after police concluded an investigation into allegations that he paid money to Islamic State to secure the release of young women held as sex slaves.

From the time the accusations surfaced, Canon White has denied paying

money to secure the release of the women. He was founding director of the Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East, but resigned after being suspended when the Charity Commission launched an investigation.

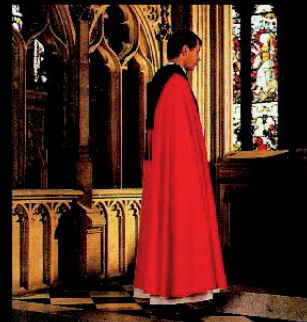
After the Charity Commission began its investigation, London's Metropolitan Police launched a criminal investigation, and Canon White was interviewed in the presence of his

(Continued on page 37)



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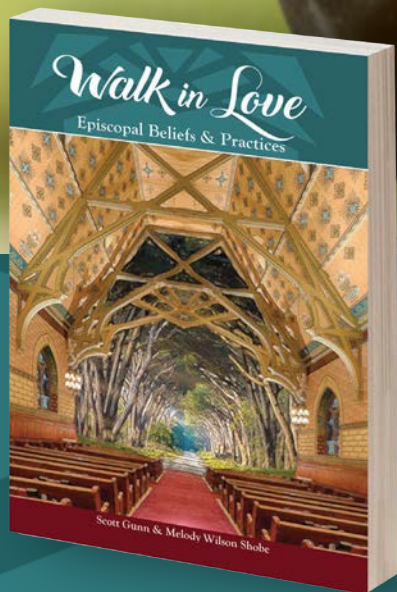


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White

(Continued from page 35)

solicitor. This week he told *The Times* that the investigation is complete.

“If I was not a person of such profound, simple faith I would feel very angry but I know that anger does not really achieve anything,” Canon White told *The Times*. “I feel very hurt by it all, but it has not affected my faith.

“It is quite amazing. You would think that releasing sex slaves from ISIS was a good thing. But [the police] were convinced that I could only have done it by paying for them.”

Canon White said he managed to secure the release of six or seven women through connections he had developed with Sunni Muslims while he was in Iraq. He was forced to leave Iraq as ISIS insurgents continued to take territory, and he now works to support Iraqi refugees in Jordan.

ACNS

Bexley Seabury Calls New President

Bexley Seabury Seminary has chosen the Rev. Micah T.J. Jackson as its new president, effective June 1. He will succeed the Rev. Roger Ferlo, who retired in the fall of 2017.

Before being called to lead Bexley Seabury Seminary, Jackson served as the Bishop John Hines Associate Professor of Preaching and director of comprehensive wellness at Seminary of the Southwest in Austin.

His academic interests include the spiritual discipline of preaching, homiletic form, the postmodern construction of the relationship between preacher and congregation, liturgical leadership, and clergy formation and wellness.

Jackson holds an MTS in preaching from Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, an MDiv from Meadville Lombard Theological School, and a PhD in homiletics and liturgy from Graduate Theological Union. He is the

author of *Preaching Face to Face: An Invitation to Conversational Preaching* (Church Publishing, July).

Haitians Elect Coadjutor Bishop

The Very Rev. Joseph Kirwin Delicat, Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Port-au-Prince, has been elected bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of Haiti.

The election followed five inconclusive ballots on May 17. On a second day of voting June 2, Dean Delicat was elected by a majority of both lay and clergy delegates on the second ballot of the day.

‘Culture of Secrecy’ About Sex Abuse

A review by the Diocese of Truro has shown that four bishops knew about child sex abuse by Jeremy Dowling, a lay preacher, teacher, former member of General Synod, and diocesan communications officer.

Dowling abused young boys while working as a teacher in the 1970s. He was jailed in 2015. The review said that several bishops were told about the abuse but took no action.

Accusations against Dowling were first made in 1972. The chairman of the board of governors at the school where Dowling was a teacher wrote to the Rt. Rev. Maurice Key, Bishop of Truro from 1960 to 1973. The report did not name the school in order to protect victims’ identities.

The complainant told the bishop that Dowling had admitted sex offenses against boys and offered to resign. Bishop Key said it was “a tragedy for Jeremy Dowling” and “a real blow for the school and the church,” and added: “The devil is certainly a master at attacking where he can do most harm.”

Key died in 1984. Some bishops succeeding Key knew about the allegations but did not investigate or take action against Dowling, the review found.

In 1986 there were complaints about Dowling to the Rt. Rev. Peter Mumford, Bishop of Truro from 1981 to 1989.

The Rt. Rev. Michael Ball (1990-97), his successor, said he was informed of the allegations but did not see the need for action because Dowling had not been prosecuted. Ball’s identical twin brother, Peter, was jailed in 2015 for a series of assaults on teenagers and young men.

(Continued on next page)



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Sex Abuse

(Continued from previous page)

A file found in the residence of the Bishop of Truro in 2013 was passed to the police, which led to Dowling's prosecution.

The problem persisted because of "no external and independent oversight on issues of safeguarding children," said David Greenwood, chairman of the campaign group Stop Church Child Abuse. "One cannot help think some child abusers are attracted to church organizations because they know they will receive favorable treatment if caught."

"It is clear that abusive behavior flourishes where there is a culture of secrecy, and so it was important that we made the findings of this review widely available. We are committed to being transparent," said the Rt. Rev. Chris Goldsmith, Bishop of St. Germans.

"My apology on behalf of the diocese to anybody who has suffered as a result of past failings is abject, sincere and heartfelt," he added. "It was with a sense of disappointment, sorrow, and shame that we read of a failure to act and make any independent investigation of Jeremy Dowling after the initial allegations were made."

John Martin

Virginia Bishop Cancels Search

The Rev. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston, bishop of the Diocese of Virginia, has announced the immediate cancellation of the search for a second suffragan bishop.

"We have taken this extraordinary step for two fundamental reasons," he wrote to the diocese May 24. "First, over the past few months, serious questions have been brought forward by members of the diocesan staff having to do with the leadership and

the culture among diocesan staff. As bishop I must take full responsibility for this situation. Utmost in my priorities will be to ensure that all of us function well together. The crucial point as we face this reality is that this is not the time to introduce a new bishop into the diocesan system."

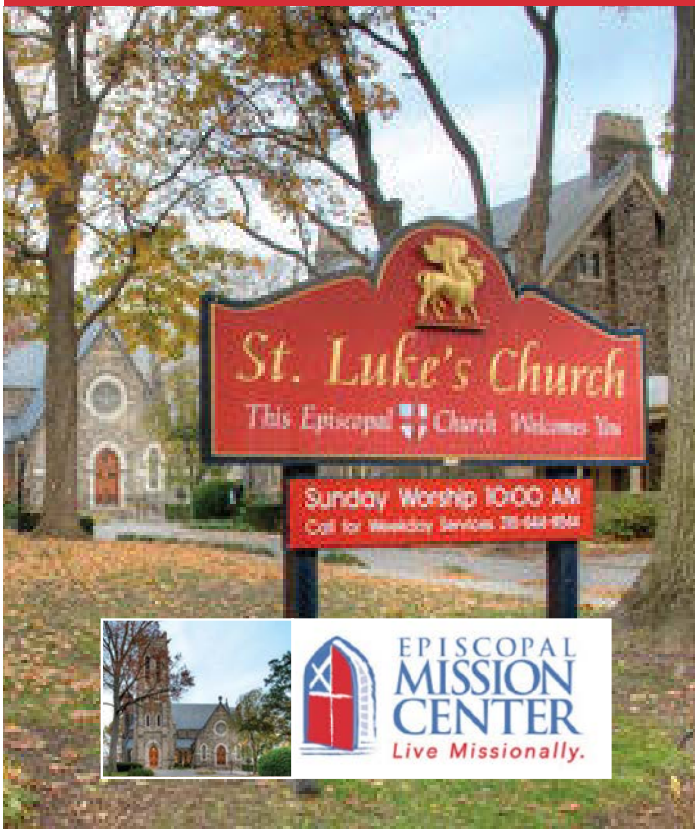
Johnston also cited his consideration of an early retirement.

U.K. Island Rejects Assisted Suicide Bill

Almost every year in the last decade, various U.K. parliaments have debated and rejected attempts to legalize assisted suicide. Defeat has not seemed to deter pro-euthanasia lobbies.

Guernsey, an island in the English Channel between England and the coast of France, could have become the first place in the British Isles to legalize assisted dying. Both sides of the debate considered Guernsey an important test

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case for their cause. There was intense lobbying, and all sides were aware the vote would have repercussions well beyond Guernsey.

Leading the campaign for change in the law was the island's chief minister, Gavin St Pier.

St. Pier had to change tack several times. His original bill, for instance, contained no age restrictions, so under it even children may have been killed.

After a three-day debate the request — similar to a private member's bill — was defeated 24-14 on May 17. Much to the satisfaction of campaigners opposing the change, the Guernsey Parliament voted to work on better care for terminally ill people.

Campaigners seeking change said they believed the majority of Guernsey citizens supported a change in the law and that one day Guernsey will adopt it. The campaign group Care Not Killing welcomed the decision and called the proposals dangerous.

"The current law on Guernsey is clear — it protects those who are sick, elderly, depressed, or disabled from feeling under pressure to end their lives," said Dr. Peter Saunders, CNK's campaign director.

A written judgement will be handed down later this summer in the case of 68-year-old Noel Conway, who is terminally ill with motor neuron disease. The U.K. Court of Appeal heard his case in the same week as Guernsey's decision.

John Martin

Church in Wales Invests in Growth

With a decline in church attendance in Wales worse than any other British region, the Church in Wales has launched a £10 million fund to address the problem of dwindling numbers. Anglican churches in Wales are closing at the rate of more than 10 a year. Between 1996 and 2016 the number of church members dropped from 91,247 to 45,759.

Church in Wales leaders hope the fund will help breathe new life into its

(Continued on next page)

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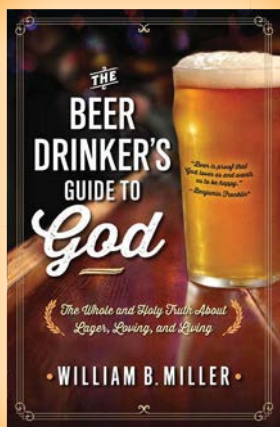
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Wales

(Continued from previous page)

churches. The church has announced that grants between £250,000 and £3m will be available for projects. It hopes this will help reach people of different ages not attending church, trigger new forms of church, and focus on people rather than buildings.

The project will help the church "think big and change our culture," said the Rt. Rev. Andy John, Bishop of Bangor and a member of the new fund's management committee. "For too long, churches have been hampered in their outreach because the money simply hasn't been there or it has all gone into propping up buildings."

"We are putting our money where our mouth is," said the Most Rev. John Davies, Archbishop of Wales. "We have long talked about growing the church, and now we want to invest in projects across the country to enable that to happen."

John Martin

Mexico Honors Priest Who Rescues Women

The Mexican government has honored an Anglican priest in recognition of her work in helping abused women in the United States.

The Rev. María Elena Daniel Cristerna received the Ohtli Award at the Mexican Consulate in Eagle Pass, Texas, in early May.

Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs told ACNS that Cristerna received one of 10 awards given to "Mexicans and friends of Mexico who have dedicated their lives and professional activities, to forging a path for the Mexican community abroad" as part of the 156th anniversary of the Battle of Puebla and Cinco de Mayo.

The awards are given by the Mexican foreign ministry's Institute of Mexicans Abroad to recognize and honor Mexican, Mexican-American,

and Latino leaders who have dedicated their lives and careers to blazing a trail abroad for younger generations of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans as they strive to achieve their dreams. It is one of the highest and rare distinctions given by the Government of Mexico.

A teacher before her ordination, Cristerna was born in Nueva Rosita in the northern Mexico state of Coahuila. She immigrated to the United States in 1970 and became an American citizen in 1984.

She studied at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas, and was elected counselor of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (2006-08).

"She specializes in working with women who have been victims of any type of violence, helping them get psychological support," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told ACNS. "She is a big supporter of gender equality and women's empowerment. One of her main goals is to empower women through education."

She has now returned to Mexico where, after ordination in 2006, she took on responsibility as assistant rector of two parishes: *El Buen Pastor* (the Good Shepherd) and the Resurrection in Piedras Negras, Coahuila, in the Diocese of Northern Mexico, alongside her husband, the Rev. Miguel Cristerna.

Ohtli is a *Náhuatl* word that means "pathway" or "camino" in Spanish. The award consists of a medal, a silver rosette, and a diploma.

Cristerna is passionate about empowering women, and recently represented the Anglican Church of Mexico as part of the Anglican Communion's delegation to the United Nations' 62nd Commission on the Status of Women.

She established a shelter in 2014 for women, sometimes with children, who need to escape pain and fear in their domestic environment. The multipurpose shelter provides a place to sleep, eat, and recuperate from physical and emotional wounds. It also hosts prayer groups, retreats, and conferences in which women learn about their right to stand up against domestic violence. The shelter also provides a loving envi-

(Continued on page 42)

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Mexico

(Continued from page 40)

ronment for children and helps to build their confidence.

ACNS

Recycled Plastics Become Cassocks

Discarded plastic bags are a growing menace in oceans and waterways; a whale died recently in Thailand after eating 17 pounds of plastic bags. The Church of England is trying to make a difference with plastic recycling.

Butler and Butler, operated by a London vicar, has launched a range of eco-friendly cassocks manufactured with a polyester created from reclaimed bottles. The Rev. Simon Butler reports a “huge swell of interest” in the cassocks inspired by the BBC TV series *Blue Planet*.

A fabric mill in India makes the fabric for the £189 cassock, which

Butler says is closer to a “softer wool feel” than traditional polyester.

“The company has been going for ten years and we have a strong customer base who really like what we do with the fair trade and the organic,” Butler told *The Telegraph*. “So the move into the recycled plastics just seemed like a really good fit. Our existing customer base have been really pleased and response has been really good, I think because it’s such a live topic and a live issue.”

John Martin

Bishop Councill Dies at 68

The Rt. Rev. George Edward Councill, 11th Bishop of New Jersey, died May 21 in hospice care at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in Hamilton, New Jersey. He was 68. Bishop Councill had suffered a stroke a few days earlier.

Born in Detroit, Councill was a graduate of the University of California and Episcopal Divinity School. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1975.



Councill

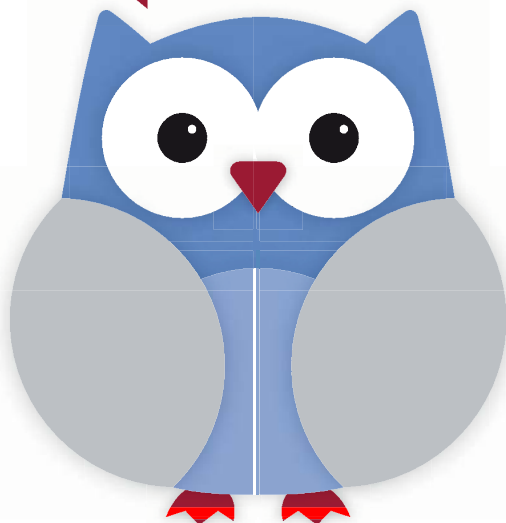
He became Bishop of New Jersey in 2003, after serving parishes and dioceses in California, Illinois, and Massachusetts.

Councill was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease — and later climbed Mount Kilimanjaro — in 2008. He retired in 2013. The next year he began serving as resident chaplain of the Doane Academy, a coeducational, independent day school founded in 1837.

In an era of court battles, Councill arranged for a parish to stay in its existing building after it left the Diocese of New Jersey.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth, and their daughters Martha and Sarah.

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THE *Episcopal* CHURCH

Radical Hospitality



flickr/Jerry Richardson photo

By Steven R. Ford

“Radical hospitality” has become an almost mandatory buzz phrase in American liberal Christian denominational statements of identity and purpose. It has rapidly spread to the judicatory and congregational level. One looks almost in vain for any “mainstream” Christian website that does not include radical hospitality as a draw to the religious organization it represents.

This is particularly true in the Episcopal Church and in First World Anglicanism generally. It is often tied to our Benedictine heritage in medieval England. Our roots are deep in the Benedictine daily offices, and this is reflected in our classic church architecture, which has generally included a monastic-style choir for their public celebration. The tradition of Benedictine monasteries, priories, and convents is that no one is ever turned away. Everyone is welcome for worship and prayer and simply for quiet time, the hungry are fed and those without shelter are housed.

In early May, I celebrated my retirement from active healthcare ministry by taking what, for me, was an extraordinarily rare week-long road trip through several southwestern states, leisurely returning home through northern Mexico. I made a point, in both rural and urban areas through which I passed, to find and stop at every Episcopal church that I could. I found and stopped at many.

Almost invariably, the EPISCOPAL CHURCH WELCOMES YOU sign was prominently displayed. A few were new, and that was heartening. But a number were so old and rusted that the service times were no longer readable. One was attached to a chain-link fence with razor wire crowning the top. Another even had a NO TRESPASSING sign directly beside it.

But what really broke my heart as a priest was that every single “welcoming” Episcopal church at which I stopped was locked as tightly as a jail. A few even had locked prison bar-like gates preventing entry even to the grounds. THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH WELCOMES YOU, said the signs, but the locks and gates and rust clearly shouted, YOU’RE NOT WELCOME HERE. GO AWAY. Not surprisingly, most people do stay away.

I’m enough of a sociologist of religion (who has spent time in more than 190 countries engaging in what social anthropologists used to call “participant observation”) to be convinced by Émile Durkheim’s observation that a group’s

conception of God is the sum total of that group’s beliefs and practices (*The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, 1912). Mainstream Americans, whatever we choose to espouse, do not comprise a particularly welcoming culture, as evidenced by the widespread popular support of various attempts at a Muslim ban and the mass deportation of mostly Christian Hispanic undocumented U.S. residents.

On my road trip, I was welcomed into Mexico by a border guard who noticed the wedding band on my right hand instead of my left (it changed hands when I was widowed in December). She asked if I was a priest or a religious brother. “A priest,” I said, not wanting to get into the ins and outs of Anglicanism. “Welcome to Mexico, Father,” she said. “Have a great time.” And off I was. Returning to the United States, however, I had to prove my citizenship, and after that I went through two freeway checkpoints to make certain I did not look Hispanic. “Give me your tired, your poor, / Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, / The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.” “The Episcopal Church Welcomes You.” Sure.

About a month before my retirement from active healthcare ministry, I decided to take my two weeks of unused vacation time. Off I went to previously unvisited countries of Bangladesh and Brunei, with stops in China and in Malaysia along the way. First, there was a plane change in Shanghai (to which China Eastern Airlines delivered me about half an hour after the connecting flight had left). Through Customs and Immigration I had to go, and into the huge immigration line I went.

I was immediately accosted, grabbed by both elbows, by young soldiers of the People’s Liberation Army. *Uh oh*, I thought. I’ve watched *Locked Up Abroad*, and I thought about a future of sewing Nike sneakers. Well, I limp some due to a years-ago bout with Guillain-Barré syndrome, and the limp grows more pronounced when I’m tired (which I was). These two fine people, of whom I was so suspicious as an American, simply took me to the front of the line. “The atheistic People’s Republic of China welcomes you.” Amazing!

Late the next day I was off to Dhaka, with four or five other passengers. The plane was late in arriving — 2 a.m. instead of 10 p.m. — and everything was closed at the airport. I had reserved a car, but the rental desk was closed. I finally found an envelope with my name and a license plate

number on it, and after an hour of searching the parking lot with a keychain light, I was off. But who knew where? No streetlights, no posted street names, nothing. I found a mosque, door open and lights on, so I stopped and went in. Two devout men inside interrupted their prayers, and when they finally figured out I was totally lost they directed to a nearby police station.

The only officer on duty, who spoke remarkably fine English, explained that the office was Central Booking, and that if I waited a patrol car would “bring in a customer” and he would have him lead me to the hotel in which I had a reservation. We joked, we laughed, he made me coffee and a sandwich. Sure enough, after about an hour a patrol car pulled up, and the duty officer chatted with the patrolman. Within minutes I was being led (lights flashing so he did not lose me) through alleys and swamps and mud holes to precisely where I wanted to be. “The Islamic People’s Republic of Bangladesh Welcomes You.” “The Sunni Mosque Welcomes You” —even at 2 a.m. Indeed!

On, then, to the Sultanate of Negara Brunei Darussalam on the north coast of Borneo. Nothing but smiling welcomes from officials on my arrival in this country which seems more like a Gulf State than a tiny country in South-east Asia. No trouble with a visa on arrival, renting a car, or finding a cheap place to stay. Unfortunately, getting from Western Brunei to its eastern enclave involves driving through Malaysian Sarawak. As I returned from Sarawak, however, the border guard neglected to stamp my passport.

When I was ready to leave the country, police pretended to make a big deal out of this. “Are you a Christian?” they asked. “You’re in Brunei illegally,” they said repeatedly. “We’re a sovereign nation, and we have a perfect right to determine which nationalities and religions are welcome and which are not.”

Sensing I was being played a bit by a couple of political jokesters, I solemnly asked, “So what are you going to do? Deport me?” Both winked and laughed out loud, one answering, “Of course!” My passport was duly affixed with diplomatic entry and exit stamps and after pats on the back and more laughter I was on my way.

What I learned was simple. First, many people against whom we Americans discriminate seen to know instinctively (or else through personal experience) is that no political regime lasts for very long. Second, most governments do not represent the will of their countries, at least for the long haul. Finally, a Mexican border guard, soldiers of the People’s Liberation Army, two Sunni late-night faithful, two Sunni police officers, and a couple of Muslim Brunei emigration officers have a whole lot to teach us about welcome.

My years as a priest leave me open to the possibility that the Episcopal Church (and liberal Christianity generally) might become a catalyst for *change* in our society’s collective conscience and actually make it welcoming.

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

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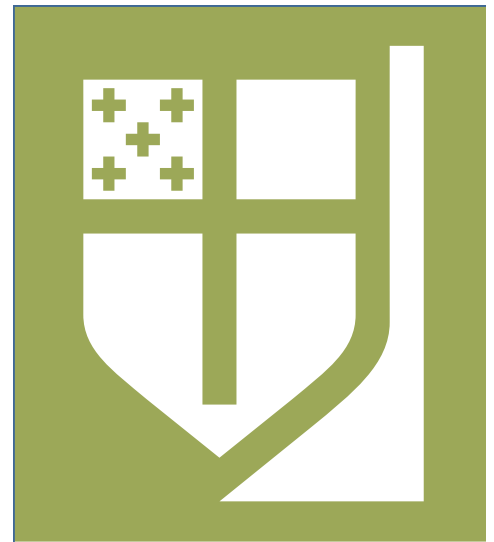
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Mrs. **Mary Naumann**, Laramie

PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Stephen Applegate** is interim rector of St. Christopher's, Carmel, IN.

The Rev. **John Merritt Atkins** is rector of St. Paul's, Dayton, OH.

The Rev. **Trevor R. Babb** is rector of Christ Church (New Brighton), Staten Island, NY.

The Rev. **Luke Back** is rector of Church of the Holy Spirit, Lake Forest, IL.

The Very Rev. Canon **Abbott Bailey** is canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of California.

The Rev. **John C. Bethell** is command chaplain at Naval Support Activity Souda Bay on the island of Crete, Greece.

Buck Blanchard is missionary for outreach and mission in the Diocese of Colorado.

The Rev. **Brian Blayer** is rector of St. Mark's, Storrs, CT.

The Rev. **Wren Blessing** is rector at Grace, Bainbridge Island, WA.

The Rev. **Chris Bowhay** is rector of St. Peter's, Columbia, TN.

The Rev. **Anna Brawley** is interim rector of St. Paul's, Kingsport, TN.

The Rev. **Rosa Brown** is vicar of St. John's, Bisbee, and St. Stephen's, Douglas, AZ.

William Buchanan is canon for finance and administration in the Diocese of Oklahoma.

The Rev. **Richard Budd** is priest in charge of St. Stephen's, Newport News, VA.

The Rev. **Walter Burgess** is interim rector of Resurrection (Copley Parish), Joppa, MD.

The Rev. **Joshua Caler** is rector of Christ Church, Pottstown, PA.

The Rev. **Veronica Donohue Chappell** and lay pastor **Kyle Murphy** are the ministry team at Christ Church, Williamsport, PA.

Kathy Cobb is president of Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy, Melbourne, FL.

The Rev. **Suzanne Cole** is rector of St. Luke's, Wilton, ME.

The Rev. **Kelly Conkling** is long-term supply priest for St. Timothy's, Cotulla, TX.

The Rev. **Eric Cooter** is rector of St. Monica's, Naples, FL.

Rich Creehan is director of external relations for the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

The Rev. **Kate Cress** is rector of St. James in-the-City, Los Angeles.

The Rev. **Robert Barry Crow** is vicar of St. Anne of Grace, Seminole, FL.

The Rev. **Suzanne M. Culhane** is canon for stewardship in the Diocese of Long Island, and continues as priest in charge of St. Philip's Church, Brooklyn.

Grae Dickson is executive director of Cathedral Ridge, Woodland Park, Colorado.

The Rev. **Pamela Dolan** is rector of St. Martin's, Davis, CA.

The Rev. **John Dukes** is interim rector of St. Andrew's, Maryville, TN.

The Rev. **Bradley C. Dyche** is rector of St. Luke's, Stephenville, TX.

The Rev. **Dick Elwood** is interim rector of St. Christopher's, Bandera, TX.

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

Lynn Farlin is canon for formation in the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

The Rev. **Christine Faulstich** is chief of staff for the Diocese of Texas.

The Rev. **Emilie Finn** is interim associate priest at All Saints', Phoenix.

Michael Funston is associate for youth and campus ministry in the Diocese of Kansas.

Devin Gillespie is lay curate at All Saints, Safford, and Sts. Philip and James, Morenci, AZ.

The Rev. **Rebecca Grant** is a deacon at St. Luke's Cathedral, Portland, ME.

Carrie Graves is director of communications in the Diocese of Maryland.

The Rev. **Nickolas C. Griffith** is rector of Christ Church, Redondo Beach, CA.

The Rev. **Anne Grizzle** is chaplain at Boys Home of Virginia.

The Rev. **Daniel Gunn** is Priest in charge of St. Andrew's, New Providence, NJ.

The Rev. **Trula Hollywood** is priest in charge of St. Paul's, Owego, NY.

The Rev. **Bob Honeychurch** is priest in charge of Our Saviour, San Gabriel, CA.

The Rev. Joshua Hosler is rector of Good Shepherd, Federal Way, WA.

Libby House is treasurer of the Diocese of Bethlehem.

The Rev. **Marcia Hunter** is priest in charge of St. Andrew's, Lexington, KY.

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

The Rev. **Jay C. James** is associate rector of Church of the Advent, Boston.

The Rev. **Jennifer L. Hulén** is rector of Emmanuel, Webster Groves, MO.

The Rev. **Robin Kassabian** is priest in charge of St. Mark's, Van Nuys, CA.

Meaghan Keegan is communications offi-

cer for the Diocese of Albany.

The Rev. **Kristin C. Kopren** is rector of Holy Cross, Edgewood, NM.

The Rev. **Sarah Lamming** is rector of St. Mary Magdalene, Silver Spring, MD.

The Rev. **Peter Lane** is rector of St. Alfred's, Palm Harbor, FL.

Sue LaRose is interim executive director of Camp Marshall in Polson, MT.

The Rev. **Kimberlee Law** is associate rector at Grace St. Paul's, Tucson, AZ.

The Rev. **Eldwin (Ed) M. Lovelady** is vicar of St. Benedict, Lacey, WA.

The Rev. **Debra Low-Skinner** is vicar of Christ Church Sei Ko Kai, San Francisco.

The Rev. **Cameron MacMillan** is rector of Good Shepherd, Maitland, FL.

The Rev. **Jeanie Martinez-Jantz** is interim rector of Olivet, Franconia, VA.

The Rev. **Paul McCabe** is Episcopal Chaplain for the Georgia Army National Guard.

The Very Rev. **Amy Ebeling McCreath** is dean of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston.

The Rev. Canon **Kathleene McNellis** is rector of Holy Spirit, El Paso.

The Rev. **Christine Mendoza** is rector of Good Shepherd, Burke, VA.

The Rev. **Greg Millikin** is vicar of Grace, New Lenox, IL.

The Rev. **Judy Mitchell** is priest in charge of All Saints' Memorial, Providence, RI.

The Rev. **Paul Nancarrow** is canon theologian in the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia.

The Rev. **Richard H. Norman** is canon for congregational development in the Diocese of Southwest Florida.

The Rev. **Matthew Oprendeck** is priest in charge of St. James, Fordham, Bronx.

The Rev. **Jeffrey A. Packard** is rector of St. Andrew's, State College, PA.

The Rev. **Kathleen Patton** is rector of St.

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The Rev. **Ezgi Saribay Perkins** is an associate for ministry at St. Paul's Cathedral, Fond du Lac, WI.

The Very Rev. **Patrick Perkins** is dean of the Cathedral of St. Paul, Fond du Lac, WI.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Riley** is rector of Emmanuel, Mercer Island, WA.

The Rev. **Josephine Robertson** is vicar of All Saints, Bellevue, WA.

The Rev. **Allen F. Robinson** is rector of Grace, Brooklyn Heights, NY.

The Rev. **Cara Rockhill** is the Diocese of Rhode Island's young adult missionary, based at the Cathedral of St. John, Providence.

The Rev. **Annis Rogers** is vicar of St. Thomas, Northern Cambria, PA.

The Rev. **John Rouser** is deacon at St. Peter's, Chattanooga, TN.

The Rev. **Claudia Scheda** is rector of St. David's, W. Seneca, NY.

The Rev. **Kathryn Schillreff** is interim priest at St. Mark's, Marco Island, FL.

Karen Schlabach is youth missionary and interim campus missionary in the Diocese of Kansas.

The Rev. **Kelly Sundberg Seaman** is vicar of St. Mark's, Ashland, NH.

The Rev. **Janet Seeley** and the Rev. **Walt Seeley** are rectors of Trinity, Lander, WY.

The Rev. **Gigi Sharp** is interim head of school at All Saints, Morristown, TN.

The Rev. **Angela F. Shepherd** is rector of St. Bartholomew's, Atlanta.

The Rev. **Debra Trakel** is interim pastor of Advent Lutheran, Cedarburg, WI.

The Rev. **Catherine Tran** is co-pastor of Grace Episcopal-United Methodist in Buena Vista, CO.

The Very Rev. **Doug Travis** is interim rector of Heavenly Rest, Abilene, TX.

Adrian Tubbs is lay curate at St. George's, Holbrook, AZ.

The Rev. **Harry Way** is interim rector of St. Stephen's, Phoenix.

The Rev. **Sarai Wender** is deacon at All Saints, Morristown, TN.

The Rev. **Howard (Doc) Whitaker** is priest in charge of Grace, Elmira, NY.

The Rev. **Sara D'Angio White** is youth missionary in the Diocese of Maine.

The Rev. **Jane White-Hassler** is rector of St. James, Old Town, ME.

The Rev. **Christopher W. Yoder** is assistant rector of All Souls, Oklahoma City.

Ordinations

Deacons

Albany — Walter (Wally) Plock

Arkansas — Josh Daniel, Stephanie Fox, Mark Harris, Michaelene Miller, David Sims, and Greg Warren

Bethlehem — Kurt Kovalovich and Jennifer Scott

Central Florida — Kevin Benjamin Bartle, Kathryn Sarah Gillett, and Kathy Ann Hulin

Central Gulf Coast — Ryan Daniel Currie, Sara Dulaney Phillips, Alice Sherman Sawyer, Thomas Forbes Sirmon, and Joshua Wayne Woods

Central Pennsylvania — Michael Nailor
Connecticut — Armando Ghinaglia, Thom Peters, and Dana Capasso Stivers

East Carolina — Stephen John Batten, Linda Lee Murdock, and Adam Miller Pierce

East Tennessee — Claire Brown of St. Paul's, Chattanooga; Spencer Cantrell; and Elizabeth Farr of Good Samaritan, Knoxville
Georgia — Amy Smith Bradley, DeWayne Cope, Arthur Jones, Thomas James Strickland, and Bunny Williams

Long Island — Leandra Thelma Lisa Lambert

Maine — Stephanie Jane Batterman, Holly Christine Clark, and Cynthia Louise Dawson

Missouri — Kevin Selle

Montana — Sharman Brown and Gretchen Strohmaier

Nebraska — Kevin David Winton

North Carolina — Monnie Riggan and Jackie Whitfield

Oklahoma — Michael S. Clements, to serve at St. John's, Durant; Mary Ann Coffman, St. David's, Oklahoma City; Stephen Howard Miller, St. Mark's, Perry; and Ann Elena Williams Murray, St. Mary's, Edmond
Rhode Island — Julie Hanavan, serving at All Saints' Memorial, Providence, RI

Priests

Central Florida — Sean David Duncan, Gregory Emanuel Favazza, Kenneth Nolen, and Thomas Morgan Phillips

East North Carolina — Skip Walker
East Tennessee — Amy Morehous
El Camino Real — Janet Helen Wild
Florida — Walter K. (Jay) Jamison, vicar of Holy Communion, Hawthorne
Maryland — Janet K. Kuria

Retirements

The Rev. **Stephen Becker**, as vicar of Christ Church, Lucketts, VA

The Rev. **James Bernacki**, as rector of Christ Church, Albemarle, NC

Caroline Black, as canon for formation in the Diocese of Southern Virginia

The Rev. **Gary Bradley** and the Rev. **Peg Bradley**, as rector and assistant rector of Our Saviour, San Gabriel, CA

The Rev. **Sarah Bronos**, as rector of Good Shepherd, Maitland, FL

The Rev. Canon **Bill Bryant**, as canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Western Louisiana

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2 Sam. 1:1, 17-27 or Wis. 1; 13-15, 2:23-24
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Speaking of the Dead

A competent preacher who has won the trust and affection of a parish community through an ever-changing variety of pastoral contacts and preaching moments will bear the bitterness of a failed sermon with this consolation: they have heard me before, they have heard me on better days, they will come again, and they will listen. Years of life together and shared affection will not, however, quiet the preacher's anxiety when the pulpit awaits a word over the body of a dead parishioner. There is but one opportunity to intone grace at the burial of the dead. The stakes are high. What should a preacher do?

There are two ways that are equally wrong and equally empty. The preacher may rehearse a life story, highlights of a biography, a series of accomplishments, all of which, especially if notable and significant, will seem as nothing in the face of death. Who cares? All we go down to the dust. What is man that thou art mindful of him? Polite nods and forced smiles will only confirm that death is the real point. On the other hand, the preacher may place the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead as the central and exclusive theme of the sermon, but with the curious and uneasy suggestion that Jesus Christ has nothing to do with the actual life of the deceased. Oddly, the right readings, and the right hymns, and a decidedly theological message may leave everyone, including the preacher, saddened and deflated. What about my mother? What about my husband? What about my daughter? Should the congregation think and feel, though never say, "What is the resurrection of Christ to me or you?"

There is another way that requires the preacher's best thought and deepest emotion. "I am the vine, you are the branches," Jesus says (John 15:5). "Where I am, there you will be also," Jesus says (John 14:3). "I am with you

always, even to the close of the age" (Matt. 28:20). When the preacher connects the real presence and life of Jesus Christ with the real presence and life of the deceased, the dignity of the dead is honored and even magnified with hope. Even a small life, an average life, or a life in which vices were well known can show glimpses and sometimes brilliant evidence of how the grace of the risen Lord has been shown in just this person, this life, this irreplaceable human being whom God has created and loved. The connection of the risen Lord to even the smallest or most common details of a human life can ignite hope and bring tears welling up to eternal life. Emotions will open, tears may fall, people may even laugh. Nothing is forced or fake when hope is real.

After David returned from defeating the Amalekites, he "intoned this lamentation over Saul and his son Jonathan" (2 Sam. 1:17). He taught the people the Song of the Bow, and in liturgical fashion spoke: "Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely! In life and death they were not divided"; "O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul"; "I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan" (2 Sam. 1:1, 17-27).

A funeral is a cry from the depths (Ps. 130). A funeral is weeping and supplication and mourning and sackcloth (Ps. 30). It is also hope, hope that the resurrection of Christ is the redemption and resurrection of just this person. In the name of God, honor the dead. Say something simple and beautiful and true.

Look It Up

Read Mark 5:21-43.

Think About It

Resurrection from the dead is resurrection for the dead.

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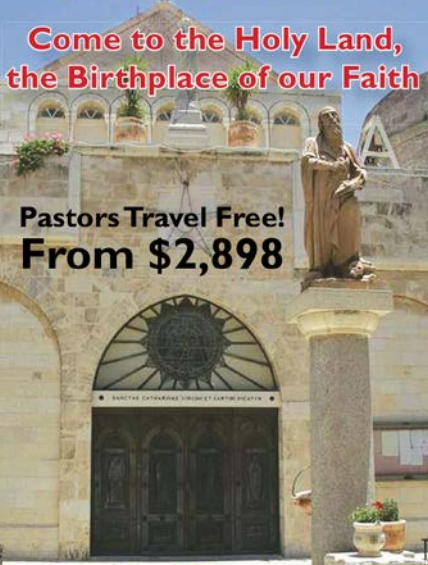
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Power Belongs to God

“All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said, ‘Look, we are your bone and flesh. ... The LORD said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel’” (2 Sam. 5:1-2). Thus, “King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel” (2 Sam. 5:3). “And David became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him” (2 Sam. 5:10). As king and commander, he broke the yoke of the Philistines, waged great battles against Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Aram. He brokered a treaty with Hiram of Tyre. He captured the old fortress of Jerusalem and made it the capital of a new theocracy. He rescued the Ark of the Covenant and placed it in Jerusalem in a Tent of Meeting. He went from strength to strength. Indeed, Jerusalem was known as the city of David.

From the height of his great power and glory, David fell, as kings so often do, to the allure of beauty and the urgings of lust. He was, in the end, a man, a fallen and tragic man. Nonetheless, he established a great city to which the kings of the earth went up. Kings assembled there and were astonished at the sight of the city. They were filled with panic and trembled not from fear but from wonder. They sensed the steadfast love of God, the wondrous name of God, and the praises of God resounding to the ends of the earth. They heard cries of gladness and rejoicing erupt from every corner of the city. They confessed and they did not deny: this is God, our God forever and ever. David presided over the city; he did not preside over heaven and earth. There was when David was not. Everlasting glory and eternal power belong to God alone.

Political power is both necessary and easily corrupted. Religious power is likewise a necessity and a constant danger. In both church and state, suc-

cess and power are the place of trial and the scene of inevitable decline, though not always of a moral character. Often, it is nothing more than the exposure of human weakness. As Hamlet said of his dead father, “A was a man, take him for all in all.” St. Paul could have been a purveyor of religious gnosis, a super apostle selling pearls of wisdom gathered from the third heaven. He could have “told his story” again and again, rehearsing the exceptional character of the revelations. Had he done so, he would have had glory, but only for a time, and only from the gullible. Instead, to keep him from being elated, God put a thorn in his flesh. The Lord spoke to Paul, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. 12:9). A great king lowered by his crime and a great apostle wounded in the flesh each demonstrate that all glory and honor and power belong only and utterly to God.

Jesus wants our weak and frail lives. He wants us stripped for the journey, holding nothing more than a staff, wearing only sandals and one tunic. Utterly dependent on the grace and goodness of God, he wants us to preach and heal and cast out demons. Still, providence may give a crown or a miter, and providence certainly does give everyone necessary and irrevocable responsibilities. A vocation must be lived. But it is lived in human weakness and total dependence on the goodness and grace of God.

Look It Up

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9.

Think About It

The power of Christ dwells in you.

Dance of Death, Dance of Life

“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them” (Matt. 20:25). An obsession with power, prestige, and reputation provide motive again and again for evils that would otherwise not be committed. Herod did not want the beheading of John the Baptist, did not want the prophet’s severed head put on a platter and given to his daughter Herodias. He did not want a banquet and dance recital to end in brutality and blood, but he had given his word. For the sake of his oath and for his guests, Herod ordered the death of a man whom he knew to be just and holy. Thus it has been, and thus it will be until all powers are subject to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Notwithstanding the evils of the present age, the victory of Christ the King, the King of Peace, is assured and promised. Jesus is written in Scripture and painted on the canvas of the cosmos. Let those who have eyes to see, see. Jesus is the ark of God, the empty space between the cherubim, the empty space between burial garments (2 Sam. 6:2; John 20:6-7). Jesus is “no thing” and yet the source of everything. Jesus is the light of the world, the light of humanity, the source, guide, and goal of all that is. Let those of a brave and joyful heart take up the ark and bring it to the center of the city and into the heart of the earth. And let those who hear the music dance the dance of love. Jesus is the king who invites and inspires the dance of life and love.

Jesus is everywhere and yet he deigns to be *here*. Where we are, Jesus is. “[God the Father] chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:4-6). Just as Jesus is

the tabernacle of God, we are temples of the Spirit. The ark we welcome, we become by a deep mystical communion. The good pleasure of the Father, the lavish grace of the Father poured into the Son, seeps into the daughters and sons of God.

We are the good pleasure of God set forth in Christ. And yet the less we are, the less we maneuver and compete like the rulers of this age, the less the ego has to claim and defend, the more a new humanity in Christ emerges. “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20). Strangely, this new dispossessed self is deeper, stronger, more stable, and more joyful.

In Christ we have redemption by his blood and the forgiveness of our sin, but we also have something more (Eph. 1:7). We have the sheer and unbridled joy of being alive from the dead. What are we to do? When David and his house brought the Ark of God from Baale-judah, there was dancing with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. There was shouting and the sound of trumpets, leaping and dancing. There was a benediction and the sharing of bread and meat and cakes of raisin.

Did you know that the Father holds the hands of the Son and, in Spirit, they move to the song of love?

Look It Up

Read 2 Samuel 6:5.

Think About It

There is nothing *serious* about it. Become like a child.



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2 Sam. 7:1-14a or Jer. 23:1-6 • Ps. 89:20-37 or Ps. 23 • Eph. 2:11-22 • Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

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The House of Contemplation

“Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, ‘See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent’” (2 Sam. 7:1-2). Settled and living in peace, King David has time and resources to do something for God. But does God need something from King David? Has God asked for a house? “I have not lived in a house,” says the Lord, “since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle” (2 Sam. 7:6). The God who moves over the face of the waters is not contained or constrained by space or time. God will be where he will be with all the intensity he desires, and yet he is everywhere and everywhere undivided. God is not confined to a tent or a tabernacle or a house. God is pure spirit, and those who worship God must worship in spirit and truth.

In time, God allows a temple to be built by David’s son, King Solomon, and God allows synagogues and churches as signposts of the divine presence. God allows beautiful places and beautiful art and the majesty of science to open windows into the mystery of divine life. Still, every place dedicated to God, every piece of sacred art, every human work is *not* God. God alone is God. God is not a human projection.

Here a stiff dose of Calvinism mixed with a strain of Catholic austerity is a potent corrective to the danger of idolatry. “Nothing which they may attempt to offer in the way of worship or obedience,” says Calvin, “can have any value in his sight, because it is not him they worship, but, instead of him, *the dream and figment of their own heart.*” “Like water gushing forth from a large and copious spring, immense crowds of gods have issue from the human mind” (*Institutes*, cap. 1-5). Commenting on the ascent of Moses to the holy moun-

tain, Gregory of Nyssa, writes in a very different time and context, “He that is going to associate intimately with God must go beyond all that is visible, and (lifting up his own mind, as to a mountaintop, to the invisible and incomprehensible) believe that that the divine is *there* where the understanding does not reach” (*Life of Moses*, 46). God reveals the truth in Christ and that truth is inexhaustible. Strangely, real knowledge of God is the knowledge of what is unknown, or what can never be fully known.

Does God want a house? “You are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God” (Eph. 2:19-22). We are the dwelling place of God, but we do not limit God. We are the praying community, but our community is not God. We speak of God, but God is beyond human speech and speculation. God is high and lifted up, a mystery we touch by faith, not by sight.

Speaking to his disciples after they reported all they had done and taught, Jesus advised that they “Come away to a deserted place ... and rest a while” (Mark 6:31). Rest in the restless knowledge that God is beyond all knowing.

Look It Up

Read Psalm 23.

Think About It

Ascend above images.

2 Sam. 11:1-15 or 2 Kgs. 4:42-44
 Ps. 14 or Ps. 145:10-19 • Eph. 3:14-21 • John 6:1-21

More Than Forgiveness

“David sent someone to inquire about the woman” (2 Sam. 11:3). He saw her bathing and that she was beautiful, but he knew nothing about her, not even her name. Then “David sent messengers to get her” (2 Sam. 11:4). Lust without the restraint of love is madness. The king will do what the king will do. Lies, deceit, and murder follow as attempts to cover the offense, but God is not mocked, and disaster follows. “The LORD looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God. They have all gone astray, they are all alike perverse; there is no one who does good, no, not one” (Ps. 14:2-3).

This judgment, of course, is a matter of comparison. Comparing person to person, the Lord says, “There was once a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. That man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil” (Job 1:1). There are good people who make a real effort to live good lives, who feel the weight of responsibility and the surveillance of a developed conscience, who believe that in some sense they are answerable for how they live. The effort to be good is its own reward, but also a judgment. How good are we, really? How good are we in comparison to the inexhaustible and perfect goodness of God? A moral life is endless moral progress; it is never the presumption of perfection.

We fall and God forgives. And we fall again. And we confess again and God forgives again. But there is so much more to the mercy of God than mere acquittal. God has poured out “the riches of his glory,” and although we are summoned to contemplate and comprehend the “breadth and length and height and depth” of the divine love poured into us, it “surpasses knowledge” (Eph. 3:16-19). The grace of God in Christ fills us, and yet he exceeds every measure of quantity. So great is “the power at work within us”

that it “is able to accomplish abundantly *far more* than we can ask or imagine” (Eph. 3:20).

Sometimes an illustration helps. Jesus saw a large crowd coming toward him. He knew the people were hungry. He inquired about their food supply. A boy had five barley loaves and two fish. Taking these, Jesus gave thanks and then distributed the bread and fish to the large crowd sitting on the grass. They all ate as much as they wanted. Jesus met their need. If you thirst, go to him. If you are hungry, go to him. If you are discouraged, go to him. If you are lost, find your way in him. If you are guilty, find forgiveness and solace in him. “The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open wide your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing” (Ps. 145:15-16). Jesus gives what we need, but he gives more than we need, far more than we can ask or imagine. “Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost” (John 6:12).

The bread and fish of Christ exceed mere necessity. They are signs of the inexhaustible riches of Christ. Listen to Columban, an ancient saint of the Church: “Let us eat and drink of him and yet remain ever hungry and thirsty. ... He is not diminished because our bread is eternal and our fountain is sweet and everlasting.” Jesus is our forgiveness and the food and drink of endless blessings. Let your soul magnify the Lord.

Look It Up

Read John 6:14.

Think About It

Gather up the fragments.



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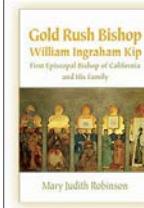
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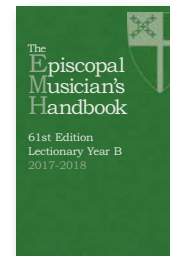
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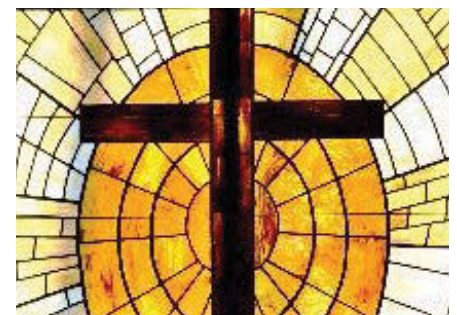
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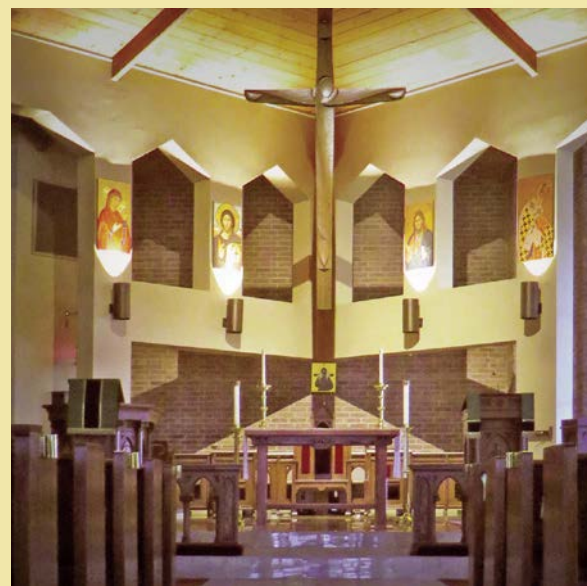
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