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November 18, 2018

The Living Church

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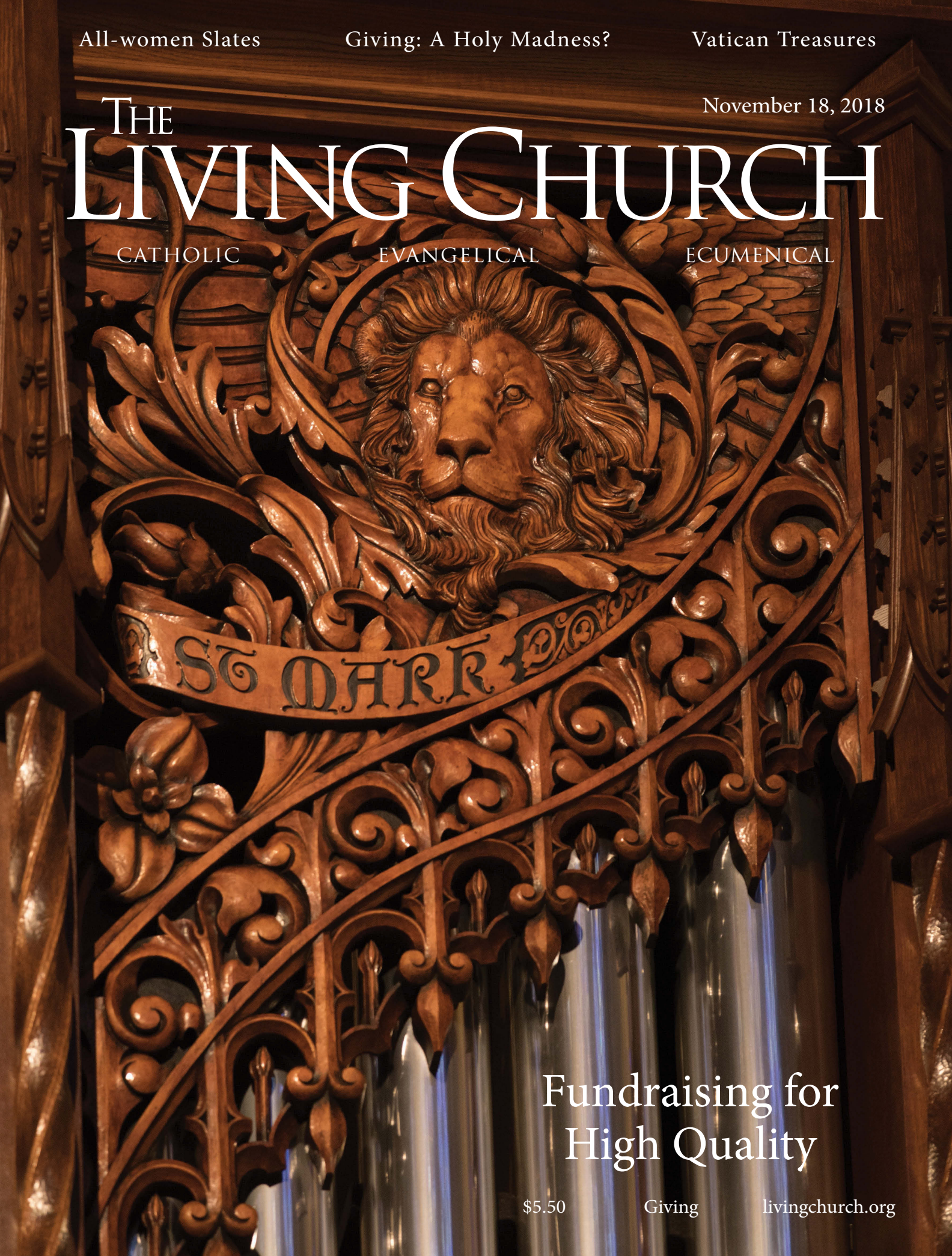

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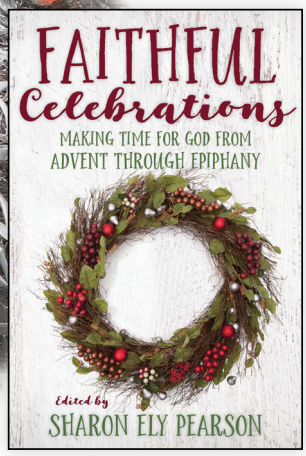

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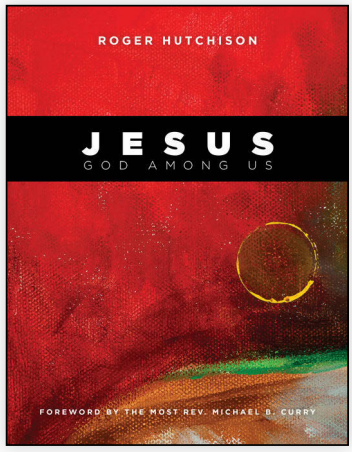

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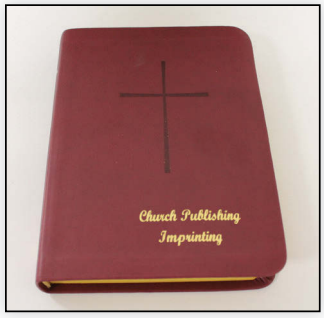

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ON THE COVER

"We now have the instrument to match the quality of the music and the world-class choir we have here" (see "An Organ Crescendo 10 Years in the Making," p. 10).

Ira Lippke photo

The Living Church

THIS ISSUE | November 18, 2018

Living Church Partners

We are grateful to Church of the Ascension, Lafayette, and St. Francis Church, Houston [p. 23], St. Martin's Church, Houston [p. 24], Jerusalem Peacebuilders [p. 25], Saint James School, Hagerstown [p. 27], and Saint Michael and All Angels Church, Dallas [p. 28], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

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Year-end Giving

Plan for tax changes.

This year's increase in the standard tax deduction could reduce incentives to give, but there are still paths to giving-related tax breaks.

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

As year's end draws near, taxpayers with a heart for charity are finding Uncle Sam does not seem to love a cheerful giver quite as much as God does. It is becoming harder to claim a tax break for charitable giving under a new tax law that took effect Jan. 1. But personal finance experts say the new law need not put a damper on holiday season largesse.

Opportunities still exist to lower tax bills through generosity to beloved organizations. It just helps to plan ahead and give in ways that do not involve releasing cash from personal accounts.

This year's biggest change: an increase in the standard deduction, which now allows individuals to automatically claim $12,000 and couples filing jointly to claim $24,000. Unless all deductions, including charitable gifts and mortgage interest, exceed those amounts, it is not worth itemizing and generosity brings no reward from the Internal Revenue Service.

Yet for those who find a way to bundle deductions, the benefits can still add up. Experts recommend consolidating several years' worth of gifts into a single year for maximum tax benefit.

"Maybe in 2019 I'll want to make a larger charitable contribution, like two years' worth," said Larry Pon, a certified financial planner and accountant in Redwood City, Calif. "Let's say I give, in this example, $15,000 to my church. I get the tax benefit of my charitable contribution by doing that. So I kind of go every other year with itemizing or using the standard deduction."

Pon

The idea is to push one's deductions over the standard threshold and then pile on the giving as the benefits of itemization kick in. For example: an individual who pays $4,000 a year in mortgage interest, $6,000 in property taxes, and $2,000 in qualifying medical expenses is already at the $12,000 standard deduction. Any charitable giving is now deductible, i.e., it is subtracted from taxable income for the year.

As experts grow familiar with the new law, they find some familiar financial instruments, like the donor-advised fund, come in especially handy.

As experts grow familiar with the new law, they find some familiar financial instruments, like the donor-advised fund (DAF), come in especially handy.

Here is how it works. Instead of giving directly to a charity, the donor gives to a DAF, which then holds the assets. The donor may recommend where, when, and how much the DAF doles out in charitable distributions. DAF dollars might not go to charities for months or years, but because they are already set aside for charity and cannot be reclaimed, the donor may deduct the full amount as soon as the DAF is funded.

"A donor-advised fund is like a mini-foundation or private charity," said John Scherer, a certified financial planner in Middleton, Wis., and a member of St. Dunstan's Church in Madison. "That can be a way of facilitating some of these deduction bunchings."

Scherer

The Episcopal Church Foundation works with donors to create and manage DAFs, which must give the majority of dollars under management to Episcopal entities. Those seeking more flexibility can also open a DAF with fewer restrictions, such as those offered by Schwab, Fidelity, or another large brokerage.

Using a DAF is just one of several ways to reduce tax debt by having charities receive your gifts from a source other than your bank account.

Another example: giving appreciated stock from a custodial account directly to a charity. That empowers a donor to be more generous by giving a pre-tax donation, rather than personal cash that has been diminished by capital gains taxes after securities are sold.

And for taxpayers older than 70.5 who have a traditional IRA, experts have a rule of thumb: give directly out of your required minimum distribution (RMD) to a church institution or other charity. These qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) from the IRA are not counted as taxable income, which reduces a taxpayer's burden. Pon recently recommended this strategy for a pastor's widow who must take an RMD each year. Though the strategy might be especially useful for those who must take an annual RMD, anyone over age 59.5 may access IRA funds without a penalty and could leverage this giving strategy as well.

"I said, 'Do you need the money?' She said, 'No, not really.' So I said: 'Give it to your church.' With a QCD, you can give up to $100,000 from your IRA to your favorite charity. It fulfills the required minimum distribution requirement, and it's not counted as your income."

$210K for Deputies' President

By Kirk Petersen

At its first meeting after the General Convention in Austin, Executive Council voted to provide compensation to the president of the House of Deputies in the amount of $210,000 per year.

At first glance, this appears to be in line with other four top officers of the Episcopal Church, whose salaries are disclosed by canonical mandate on the church website.

But Jane Cisluycis of the Diocese of Northern Michigan, who led the subcommittee that researched the compensation issue, said the president will be paid as an independent contractor and will not receive an employee benefits package that includes healthcare coverage and retirement accounts. As a rule of thumb, benefits are valued at about a third of base salary.

The position had always been unpaid, but the responsibilities of the office have grown steadily over recent decades, and it now is a demanding job. The incumbent, the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings of Ohio, was re-elected to a third and final three-year term in July.

The House of Deputies had approved a salary for the president at three General Conventions since 1997, and each time the House of Bishops voted against, thereby killing the measure. Some bishops expressed concern that the president had grown too powerful over the years, to the extent of almost becoming a co-primate with the presiding bishop.

In Austin, the Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe, Bishop of Northwestern Pennsylvania, proposed a compromise that carried the day. He suggested that instead of being paid a salary, the president should receive director and officer fees for duties spelled out in the Constitution and Canons of the church. There would be no compensation for additional related duties that the president might pursue, such as speaking engagements not mandated by the canons.

Bishop Rowe's resolution was passed with overwhelming support in both Houses, and Executive Council was directed to establish the amount of the director fees.

Cisluycis said her subcommittee started by reviewing the 14-page report (Blue Book, pp. 897-910) that spells out the work the president performs, and divides it into tasks that are or are not required by the canons.

Committee members studied the ebb and flow of responsibilities by time period. Immediately after General Convention, the president is "really, really, really busy with 600-plus appointments and co-nominations for roles," Cisluycis said.

Regular duties include serving as vice chair of Executive Council, which governs the church between General

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$210K

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Conventions, and as a vice president of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS), the legal name of the Episcopal Church.

The subcommittee examined the compensation of other members of DFSM management as a guideline. "And then we used the guideline of what was available in the budget for the triennium," Cisluycis said. The budget passed by General Convention allocated $650,000 for three years, reduced from $900,000 in earlier drafts. The larger number would have funded salary and benefits comparable to the other top officers. Cisluycis said $210,000 was chosen as "a round number" that used most of the available budget.

Jennings issued a statement to TLC: "Having director's and officer's fees for the president of the House of Deputies means that now, any deputy can discern a call to serve the church in this ministry. As I begin my final triennium as president, I am grateful to know that in the future, the House of Deputies and the wider church will be able to reap the full benefit of the gifts and perspectives of leaders who might otherwise have been unable to serve."

As vice chair of Executive Council, Jennings is considered a member of all of its committees, but her spokeswoman, Rebecca Wilson of Canticle Communications, said Jennings did not participate in any discussions about her compensation.

At the three-day Executive Council meeting in Chaska, Minn., the council also elected and appointed members to various roles for the coming triennium. Three members were elected at large to Executive Council's Executive Committee: Julia Harris of the Diocese of Oklahoma, Utah Bishop Scott Hayashi, and Rose Sconiers of the Diocese of Western New York.

The Executive Committee meets at least once between each meeting of Executive Council, which meets three times a year. The committee sets the agenda for each council meeting, and is empowered to take action on extraordinary matters that cannot wait for the full council to convene. The nine-member committee includes the presiding bishop, the president of the House of Deputies, the chairs of each of the council's standing committees, and at-large members.

The council also altered its committee structure, reducing from five standing committees to four, and elected chairs for each committee. The committees and their chairs are:

- Finance (the Rev. Mally Ewing Lloyd of the Diocese of Massachusetts);
- Governance and Operations (Cisluycis);
- Mission Beyond the Episcopal Church (the Rt. Rev. Dabney Smith, Diocese of Southwest Florida);
- Mission Within the Episcopal Church (the Rev. Canon Frank Logue, Diocese of Georgia).

All-Women Episcopal Slates Emerge

Four episcopal elections have no men on the ballot. What's driving the trend?

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Before this year, the Episcopal Church never had an episcopal election in which every candidate on the slate was a woman. But the emergence of four women-only slates in 2018 has shattered that norm, leaving observers to wonder: why now?

The trailblazing began in Kansas in August when a two-woman slate was introduced to a diocese that has never elected a woman as bishop. When the process was then opened to potential nominees by petition, the additional nominee was a third woman, the Rev. Cathleen Chittenden Bascom, whom delegates elected on Oct. 19.

In early September, the Diocese of Colorado reduced its slate to include only two names, both women, after the Standing Committee withdrew the only male nominee, the Rev. Canon Michael Pipkin, upon learning of issues in his background. Two weeks later, the Diocese of West Tennessee announced a slate consisting of three women and no men. Then in October, the Diocese of San Diego released an episcopal election slate with just one person on it: the Rev. Canon Susan Brown Snook.

"We weren't trying to make a statement or to be bold or to make a proclamation," said the Rev. Gayle McCarty, who led the bishop search committee for West Tennessee. "We were just trying to be faithful to the charge before us."

As all-women slates are becoming more common, observers and participants see two main factors. One is the influence of activists who have long


Bascom


Fortner


Hollar


Lucas


Macgill


Roef


Snook


Svoboda-Barber


Woodliff-Stanley

wanted to see more women in the overwhelmingly male House of Bishops and seem to be using slates as instruments.

The other is competition among more than two dozen dioceses that have, for the past two years, been vying to attract qualified candidates. That is making diverse slates harder to produce, especially in small and mid-sized dioceses.

"Having this number of opportunities has done a number of things," said the Rev. Foster Mays, president of the Council of Trustees for the Diocese of Kansas, which includes the Standing Committee. "It's diluted the pool of candidates. Not that the pool is any smaller, but [candidates] have so many options that they're being more selective in what they're applying to. Also, too, because there are so many opportunities, it gives a lot of opportunities for women to really make an impact."

Standing Committee leaders say diversity was considered when assembling search committees to assure that men, women, and other groups were represented.

"We were delighted to see some diversity within the applicant pool — men, women, people of color, and people representing geographical diversity among other areas," said the Rev. Gary Meade, president of the Standing Committee for the Diocese of West Tennessee. "But once that applicant pool was being considered, what fell to the side was: is this person a man or a woman? Is this person black or white? Those issues became non-issues."

Some question whether search committees are blind to sex, even if they aspire to be, when the result is a women-only slate.

"I'm not sure, in American society, that anybody is entirely gender-blind," said the Rev. Robert Prichard, a church historian at Virginia Theological Seminary. "Particularly in this particular climate in America. Perhaps that's the case, but I would think as well that somebody in the room is mindful of gender to get a slate like that."

West Tennessee has never had a woman serve as bishop, and nearly all of the 31 congregations around the diocese have a man in the top clergy role. And even though the bishop

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All-women Slates

(Continued from previous page)

search process did not consider sex, Meade said, raising up more women to serve across the diocese is a goal.

"We've been working to catch up in that regard in terms of women in leadership," Meade said. "Our most recent class of ordinands was all women. Some of the others who are coming up through the process are not exclusively women, but include a great number of women. So we're very inclusive in that respect. We may not be as representative in terms of women in leadership in the diocese, but we're getting there."

Some observers believe the quest for more diversity among churchwide leaders is resulting in less diversity (i.e., women only) in episcopal slates.

Interest groups have for centuries shaped elections in order to elect bishops from their own camps, whether they share a common race, ethnicity, or theology, Prichard said. For activists to stack slates in order to expand the ranks of women in the House of Bishops would be consistent with this election-shaping tradition, in his view.

"I would guess that what we're seeing is a demonstration of increased leverage of females on those nominating committees," Prichard said. "As part of the ladder up, the percentage of women and level of activism of women on those search committees is increasing. And we're seeing the results of that."

Search committees, however, are sometimes joining the all-women trend unwittingly. Colorado, for instance, chose a diverse slate that only later became exclusively female after Pipkin was withdrawn.

The search committee in Kansas was prepared to present a slate of four — two women and two men — until both men withdrew in the final 24 hours before the slate was presented, Mays said.

All-women slates are reportedly being well-received. Those involved in searches say they have heard only a smattering of discontent.

"A retired priest had expressed some concern about *Shouldn't there be some male representation in the mix?*," Mays said. "Besides that one individual, people have uniformly been enthusiastic. … A lot of folks are frankly delighted that we find ourselves in a position where we have a fully female slate."

Mays estimated that more than two dozen dioceses have been seeking bishops in the past two years as baby boomers retire. He said the sheer number of diocesan searches likely had an effect in Kansas, where the applicant pool of 11 names was smaller than expected. So stiff is the competition that the Diocese of Nevada cited it as a factor in its October decision to suspend its bishop search until next year, even after nominating three priests.

"There were an unprecedented number of bishop searches in process, resulting in a limited applicant pool," said Bonnie Polley, Nevada's Standing Committee president, in a statement.

The Diocese of West Tennessee also received fewer applications than expected, Meade said. It was one of 17 dioceses seeking a bishop when the process began, he said.

Bob Morse, president of the Diocese of Colorado's Standing Committee, declined to say how large its pool of applicants was or what percent of the applicants were women. "The Standing Committee rejoices in having two very qualified candidates on our slate for Bishop of Colorado," he said in a written statement.

Those pressing ahead with all-women slates see a blessing in the quality of candidates and what these slates portend for the church's future. Although the Diocese of Kansas did not set out to create an all-women slate, it inevitably points to more diversity ahead in the House of Bishops, said the Rev. Casey Rohleder, co-chair of the Kansas search committee.

"It will cast a broader vision of the kingdom of God among us," Rohleder said. "More diversity, regardless of how it comes, that better reflects the Body of Christ is good for the church."

'Therefore Choose Life'

The mass murder of 11 people at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh has prompted bishops from around the church to reflect on anti-Semitism, evil, and violence and to call for a vigorous Christian response.

The Rt. Rev. Dorsey W.M. McConnell, Bishop of Pittsburgh, said the shooting went beyond tragedy and described it as "a particularly vile and poisonous kind" of murder.

"Human beings have moral agency," he added. "Someone chose to hate, and chose to kill. And now we are faced

with a choice as well — to do nothing, or to reject this hatred in the strongest possible words and actions, and to refute in every way, in every forum, the philosophical foundations of anti-Semitism wherever they have gained a foothold in our churches and our society. … [Our] obligation is clear: 'Behold, I set before you this day, life and death, blessing and curse: therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live'" (Deut. 30:19).

"Our Jewish neighbors, our brothers and sisters, are fearful and we must stand with them and provide comfort and support for them and for all," Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said.

Bishop Greg Rickel of the Diocese of Olympia said the attack on the synagogue was an attack on all people of faith. "It cannot be accepted and it should not become common place, or even tolerated," he said. "We cannot become numb to this reality. If the rhetoric and tenor of our collective life keeps heading the direction it is now, similar horrors will come to all our doorsteps."

Provisional Plans Run into Snag

Helen K. Spence, president of the Diocese of Virginia's Standing Committee, has announced that no provisional bishop candidate has been found in time for the diocese's annual convention.

"The requirements for a previously consecrated, experienced bishop who would not reach age 72 before the end of the proposed term, and who would be willing to move to Virginia quickly for a term-limited position, made the pool of potential candidates a small one," Spence wrote. She said Bishop Suffragan Susan E. Goff will hold ecclesiastical authority for now.

Second Diocese Again

The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe, Bishop of Northwestern Pennsylvania, will serve a five-year term as Provisional Bishop of Western New York. In September, Rowe completed a four-year term as Provisional Bishop of Bethlehem.

Northwestern Pennsylvania and

(Continued on page 24)

An Organ Crescendo 10 Years in the Making

Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue raised $9 million for the new instrument.

By Kirk Petersen

After more than a decade of planning, fundraising, and construction, a prominent New York City parish has introduced a pipe organ for the ages.

More than 1,100 people packed the pews at Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue for the Oct. 5 dedication recital of the new $11 million Miller-Scott organ. They heard more than 90 minutes of organ works from an instrument that combines ancient invention with sophisticated modern electronics.

Saint Thomas occupies a unique spot among places for Anglican sacred music. In addition to a large church community, the parish also is home to the Saint Thomas Choir School, America's only church-affiliated choir boarding school, which *The New York Times* likened to Westminster Abbey in London. Saint Thomas was founded in 1823, and the current building opened more than a century ago, in 1913.

Each year, 25 to 30 boys in grades 3 through 8 study, work, and live at the school. They perform in the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, which periodically tours in Europe and throughout the United States.

With the new organ, "we now have the instrument to match the quality of the music and the world-class choir we have here," said Ben Sheen, associate organist.

Benjamin K Hoskins photo

Part of the Miller-Scott organ at Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue

The church voted in 2006 to launch a capital campaign to restore stained-glass windows and acquire a new organ. The midtown church had not conducted a capital campaign since the 1930s, said Ann Kaplan, the church's director of development. More than 1,200 donors have contributed close to $9 million toward the $11 million project.

The instrument is designated as the Irene D. and William R. Miller Chancel Organ in Memory of John Scott. William Miller is a former vestry member and retired pharmaceutical executive; John Scott, at one time the organist at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, was the church's organist from 2004 until his sudden death in 2015, at the age of 59.

Scott was succeeded by Daniel Hyde, a Cambridge-trained Briton. The church recently announced that Jeremy Filsell will succeed Hyde in the spring of 2019, when Hyde returns to King's College in Cambridge.

The organ is large, of course, but its 7,069 pipes are not record-breaking. The Boardwalk Hall Auditorium in Atlantic City has more than 33,000 pipes, but most of them have been out of commission for decades. The Wanamaker Grand Court Organ in Philadelphia is the largest functioning organ, with 28,750 pipes.

More than 100 draw knobs control the various ranks of pipes on the Miller-Scott organ console.

"You have string stops, which are the softer stops on the organ, and the flutey stops, the reed stops, and then there's one entire division of the organ that is dedicated to orchestral sounds," Sheen said. "So we have an oboe, a *cor anglais*, a clarinet, a French horn, so it can replicate the full symphony orchestra just from one person playing it." Sophisticated electronics enable one musician to control all those stops while also playing multiple keyboards. Sheen said that many combinations of stops are programmed to respond at the touch of a button. He

likened the organist's console to an airline pilot's cockpit. "You essentially control the entire orchestra from that one seat."

Pipe organs have inspired the phrase "pulling out all the stops," meaning to use every available resource. Sheen said that as a practical matter organists never pull out all the stops.

The instrument was made by Dobson Pipe Organ Builders of Lake City, Iowa. The $11 million went to more than the organ — a variety of factors drove the rest of the cost, starting with structural work to the church. Steel girders had to be installed to support the weight of the organ, and acoustical changes were made to accommodate the new pipes.

The former organ had all its pipes on one side of the chancel, but the new organ required a new case on the other side. An ornately carved wooden case was designed and built to complement the existing one and the interior of the church.

"This is an instrument that will, hopefully, last without needing any renovations for 50 to 100 years," Sheen said in explaining the total cost.

To appreciate the quality of the instrument, there's no substitute for hearing it under the 95-foot vaulted ceiling of the church at Fifth Avenue and 53rd Street. But the church website offers an audio webcast of the dedication recital, and even the tinny speakers of a computer can provide an aural glimpse of the range and complexity of the organ's sound.

Kaplan said the New York City location also added to the expense. Dobson workers from Iowa typically were housed in the choir school, which helped with the cost, but travel costs were significant.

Hyde, who played at the dedication in October, will play the second of six recitals in the church's Grand Organ series on Dec. 22.

Sheen and three other award-winning organists will play at the remaining recitals, which run through May. No tickets are needed for these recitals, although donations are requested.

The Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys will offer two performances of Handel's *Messiah* in early December, with ticket prices ranging from $25 to $95, and a variety of other performances are scheduled.

Ornate carvings on the organ cabinet include a dedication to John Scott (top) and a built-in reminder to visitors to silence their cell phones (middle). The organ was built to complement the church's established role in the arts (bottom). Ira Lippke photos

Lawrence Lew, OP/Flickr photos

Giving is a Holy Madness

By Mark Michael

Zita of Lucca was a 13th-century house servant. Patient and responsible, she was given to meditation and heard Mass daily. But she was known and loved most of all for her generosity. Whatever Zita had, she gave away to the poor.

One cold morning, compelled by her master to wear his cloak on her journey to church, she met a beggar and wrapped the cloak around him without a moment's hesitation. Returning home without it, she was roundly scolded, but later that day, a mysterious stranger appeared, the master's cloak in hand. Another time, when Zita was called away from the kitchen while baking bread to attend to a sick woman, her fellow servants were amazed to discover a company of angels tending the ovens.

The lives of the saints abound with stories like these. Saint Brigid gave her father's prized sword to a leper, and, after being exiled to a work in a dairy in response, she slipped dozens of hampers of butter out the side door. Elizabeth of Hungary was chased from her castle for pawning her jewels to build a hospital during a plague, while Robert Bellarmine scandalized Renaissance Rome by ripping the tapestries from his walls to have them cut up for clothing for the poor. The walls, he assured his fellow clerics, would not catch cold. Martin Luther had to insist that his wife, Katie, keep the key to the family strongbox. Otherwise, he would be sure to give it all away.

Several recent studies in neuroscience claim to have found a way to explain this compulsion toward generosity. Gordan Grafman, a cognitive neuroscientist at Northwestern University Medical School, conducted a study a decade ago, in which participants were placed in fMRI machines and asked to make decisions about donating to charities. The scans revealed that choosing to give money away was correlated with high levels of activity in the brain's mesolimbic system. This system is an important part of the brain's pleasure circuit, producing the happiness-inducing chemical dopamine. Giving money away activated the circuits even more than *getting* money. "What your mother told you, then, is true: it is better to give than to receive. She probably just didn't realize that, neurologically, giving is roughly on par with eating fudge or [making love]" (Sam Kean, "The Man Who Couldn't Stop Giving," *The Atlantic* [May 2015]).

Neuroscientists believe our frontal lobes suppress and regulate our desire to experience that pleasure. Reasoned reflection shows us the downside of emptying our wallets, just as it warns us against that third piece of fudge. But if our brain is damaged, the ability of the frontal lobes to control the process can be disabled. We lose all impulse control, and can become hopelessly addicted — or, perhaps, magnificently generous saints.

This new research challenges many of our deepest assumptions about why giving is a good thing. We normally think of generosity as pure and noble, evidence of the soul. But what if giving is largely a reflex, instinct, or even sometimes a sign of mental derangement or addiction?

Giving activates the pleasure centers of the brain.

Neurology's discovery that giving is pleasurable accords with a consistent theme in Scripture. Job looks back with great fondness upon the days when he was wealthy and able to give freely to all who asked for his help:

> When the ear heard, it called me blessed,
> and when the eye saw, it approved;
> because I delivered the poor who cried,
> and the fatherless who had none to help him.
> The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me,
> and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. (29:11-13)

St. Paul, in an extended exhortation about almsgiving, noted that God "loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). All almsgiving, in a deeper sense, gestures toward the joyful abundance of God the Father, "who delights to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:35), as well as the self-offering of Christ, who laid down his life, not merely out of duty, but "for the joy that was set before him" (Heb. 12:2).

The Scriptures are also less scrupulous about self-interest as a motivation. Jesus, to be sure, rebuked the way the Pharisees gave to draw attention to themselves, urging an inconspicuous approach, "the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing" (Matt. 6:3). But manifold benefits are promised by God to the generous, including an answer in danger (Ps. 41:1), deliverance from death (Tob. 4:10), abundant blessings (Mal. 3:10), and "a harvest of righteousness" (2 Cor. 9:10). Proverbs 16:6 ("By love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for") was widely interpreted by Jews and early Christians as an assurance that giving, when accompanied by contrition, expiated sins.

To many of us, all this seems crude or tacky. After the scandals of the indulgence controversy and the prosperity preachers, we are wary of how this kind of reasoning can be misused. But what of those recklessly generous saints? Are they, in some important sense, models for the rest of us?

In his extensive section on almsgiving in the *Summa Theologiae*'s treatise on charity, Thomas Aquinas stresses that, like all other virtuous acts, almsgiving must be conducted in due proportion and governed by precept. The frontal lobes must be very active, indeed. We cannot give what does not rightfully belong to us, though a person in extreme need may have a greater claim than the putative owner (2a2ae.32, 7). In keeping with Augustine's teaching on the order of loves, Thomas stresses that we must also be sure not to impoverish our dependents to relieve the sufferings of those who have no claim on us (2a2ae.32, 9). Thomas's entire line of thought is governed by the concept that we should normally give from our superfluous income, an idea he derives from a particularly odd Latin translation of Luke 11:24 as "what is over and above give as alms." And yet St. Thomas allows that giving even out of poverty may be appropriate in some cases, especially when entering religious life (2a2ae.32, 6).

If the neurologists are right and abundant generosity is a sign of mental derangement, does that mean it has no value to the rest of us, who occasionally wince when we slip the offering envelope into the plate, all too aware of what generosity costs? I'm not so sure. Is there not a kind of holy madness in this God of ours, who abandons the 99 to seek the one lost sheep, and sells all that he has to buy the field rich in treasure? When love becomes complete, our fear of scarcity and need for self-preservation pass away.

Perhaps God has designed us to be generous. In the life of virtue, we come to love that which is good, to do it easily and with pleasure. As the love of God is poured into our hearts, our desires are gradually transformed, the theme of so many of our collects. Could not neurochemical mechanisms be part of that habituating process — a little dopamine pushing us on to what should be both our duty and our delight?

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt 6:33). Above all, that is the promise on which the extravagantly generous lean. Perhaps theirs is a spiritual gift, a special vocation, the "giving generously" of Romans 12:8. Or perhaps, in that dramatic way of all the saints, they merely show the rest of us just how glorious life can be when we cast ourselves completely upon God's mercy.

The Rev. Mark Michael is rector of St. Francis Church in Potomac, Maryland. This post originally appeared on our weblog, Covenant *(June 1, 2015).*

Joan of Arc's Family Drama

By Retta Blaney

When she was growing up, Jane Anderson had an odd role model for a young girl who was not Catholic. She looked all the way back to the 15th century and found inspiration from a French peasant who was burned at the stake for heresy.

"Always when I was a teenager I looked at Joan of Arc as an iconic character," Anderson said. "I wanted to be like that, with freedom, doing dangerous things, leaving home, going out into the world and having outrageous adventures."

As an adult she still thought about Joan, but her perspective shifted. "When I become a mother I understood what it was like for my mother to have a daughter like me, what it's like to have a young girl who is strange but gifted and a mother who loves her no matter what."

Anderson, a playwright and screenwriter, has combined these two sources of her inspiration into a play, *Mother of the Maid*, in production off-Broadway through Dec. 23 at The Public Theater with Glenn Close in the role of Isabelle Arc, Joan's mother.

The play, which has been greatly rewritten since its world premiere in Lenox, Mass., in 2015, draws on Anderson's considerable research for historical context, but employs modern language and dramatic license, with phrases like *wonky* and *good to go*.

Jane Anderson Corey Nickols photo

"I didn't want to write a historical play. It's a very personal play in the form of historical drama. It's not a [George Bernard] Shaw play, although *Saint Joan* is magnificent. Shaw wanted a play about politics. I wanted to loosen it up and make it emotional and personal."

Ben Brantley, chief theater critic of *The New York Times*, gave the production an unqualified rave, praising Anderson's "robustly sentimental" writing and Close "for the kind of acting with a capital A that once had Broadway theatergoers queuing around the block for returns. … When in her wrenching final soliloquy Ms. Close's Isabelle talks about shaking her fists at God, you can't help feeling that the Almighty had better take cover" ("Glenn Close Raises a Saint in 'Mother of the Maid'" [Oct. 17]).

Anderson's Isabelle provides rich material for an actress, traveling a long emotional journey in the play's two hours. At the start, she's a hard-working wife and mother, her full-skirted, faded dress soiled by farm labor. Her conversations with Joan run along the lines of contemporary mother-daughter chats. She wants to know if Joanie is interested in any boys and steers the subject around to sex in an attempt to educate her daughter and find out what she's up to in that area.

When Joanie reveals that she's been visited by St. Catherine, Isabelle sounds more 21st century than 15th as she asks eagerly, "What does she look like?" and "What was she wearing?" The scene establishes an intimacy between the two and creates a family life more accessible than a strict historical account would offer.

When the local priest arrives at their humble home with a letter from the bishop proclaiming that Joan's visions are authentic, Isabelle slowly moves from skepticism to wonder and finally to pride.

"She's special," she says in awe to her husband, who is unconvinced by the priest's assurances. "Who are we to keep her down? Our girl has been chosen and we should both be fierce proud."

But Isabelle is concerned about her daughter going off to battle with a regiment of men — until Joan comes downstairs with her newly cut hair and masculine tunic.

"No one's going to be bothering you," Isabelle says dryly.

Anderson weaves such comic comments throughout the first act, bringing the centuries-old story in line with contemporary family dramas. After a while, though, the loss of Joanie begins to weigh heavily on Isabelle, a woman who, true to her day, had never left her tiny village. She gathers her courage and walks 300 miles in the rain and mud, with blisters and aching knees, to the court where Joan is living before the fight against the occupying English army. Isabelle is impressed with the grandeur of her daughter's new life, but when the tide begins to turn against Joan, Isabelle is faced with a spiritual crisis.

"Isabelle believes with all her heart what the local pastor told her," Anderson says. "She didn't see the politics of the church manipulating their lives. Her husband sees it and is afraid their daughter will be manipulated."

We see just how fierce Isabelle's love for her daughter is as she defends her to the lady of the court and all who will

Glenn Close and Grace Van Patten in the New York premier of *Mother of the Maid* Joan Marcus photo

listen. This uneducated peasant is even willing to take on the pope. "I want to meet the man in a hat and tell him my daughter is no heretic," she cries out.

Isabelle is unsuccessful, and Anderson creates a heartbreaking scene of her visiting Joan in prison, seeing her daughter thin and dirty, lying on the cold stone floor, chained to a wall, with an unemptied bucket of her waste beside her. In great anguish, she begins bathing the body of her child before it is to be burned. This is the scene that most affected the playwright.

"I was shaking. It was so awful to imagine. What an unspeakable thing for a mother to have to do."

Anderson has done a lot of rewriting since the 2015 production, most notably eliminating a character, St. Catherine, who is now only spoken of as part of Joan's visions.

"She was a kind of narrator, funny and irreverent as she guided us through the play," Anderson said. "I was being far too clever for my own good. It took away from the emotion. Now it's entirely Isabelle's point of view."

Since the play is presented without a historical disclaimer in the program, audiences may come away thinking they have learned new biographical information. At the end, many in the theater gasped as they heard that Joan's father witnessed her execution, went blind as a result, and died in a cart on his way home. In truth, while her father did not live long after her death, he did not die that day and was not blinded.

"This is not a historical play," Anderson said again. "It's a family drama. I wasn't interested in sticking to the facts. I wanted to find images that best described the emotional journey that my characters were on. As I started writing Jacques's monologue about being there for his daughter's burning, it only made sense to me that he'd go blind after watching his girl go through such an unspeakably awful thing. It's poetic license."

One line that is factual comes from Isabelle's testimony from the hearing held in 1455 to clear Joan's name of heresy, 25 years after she was burned, when Isabelle was in her 80s. Anderson found it "so unbelievably moving" that she made it the last line of the play. Its simplicity is powerfully dramatic.

The diminutive actress stands alone in a spot of light and utters the words of pain and loss the mother spoke centuries ago: "I had a daughter once."

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

Celebrations of the Bible as Material Object

Review by Paul Wheatley

As soon as we adapt to new media forms, we experience nostalgia for those displaced. For example, the rise of portable digital media has coincided with increased sales of journals of elevated quality and preciousness, such as Moleskine notebooks, and the resurgence of instant film cameras as analog throwbacks to their digital counterparts.

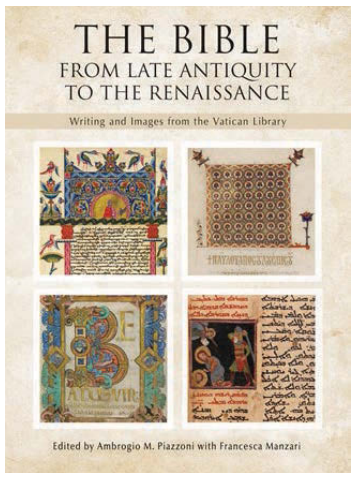
In the field of biblical studies there has been a similar interest in manuscripts as material objects, corresponding to the increasingly digital means through which we access Bibles and the large-scale digitization of biblical manuscripts that allows their easy dissemination. Two recent books provide helpful and beautiful presentations of the Bible's material history as a hand-written text. Both include many glossy, full-color plates of the manuscripts to illustrate their historical research, and both would make excellent gifts as high-quality coffee-table or display books for the Bible-lover in your life.

These books demonstrate that the material forms in which we encounter the Bible have meaning. They tell us about the significance, interpretation, and use of the Bible in wide-ranging cultural, linguistic, and historical contexts and about the different cultural, political, religious, and intellectual contexts in which people have read the Bible.

The Jewish Bible: A Material History traces the history of the Jewish Scriptures from their earliest known witnesses through modern printed editions. David Stern, the Harry Starr Professor of Classical and Modern Jewish and Hebrew Literature at Harvard University, succinctly traces a storyline about the texts, translations, and collections of the Jewish Scriptures throughout time. He also connects these texts to their material forms, liturgical uses, and cultural significance in the Jewish diaspora.

Beginning with the Torah Scroll (or *Sefer Torah*) of enduring liturgical use, Stern contrasts its use and development with the early Christian adaptation of the codex, as well as later early Islamic book cultures. Use of the scroll, Stern argues, provided a cultural distinction within Jewish book culture that marked a book of contested ownership (Jewish Bible, or Christian *Old* Testament?) as distinctly Jewish.

The Jewish Bible
A Material History
By **David Stern**
University of Washington Press. Pp. 320. $50



The Bible from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance
Writing and Images
from the Vatican Library
Edited by **Ambrogio M. Piazzoni with Francesca Manzari**
Liturgical Press. Pp. 366. $79.95

Through the adaptation of the codex, and the diversification of different material and biblical traditions in the various Jewish diaspora communities (*Ashkenaz, Shepharad,* Palestinian, and Yemenite), Stern demonstrates both the continuity and the distinguishing features of these different reading and book-making traditions, in contrast and conversation with their respective contexts.

His explanation of the *masorah* — numerical, text-critical, philological, and stoichological material that often accompanied the text of the Hebrew Bible in the Middle Ages — is helpful and illuminating, and will provide points of enlightenment and clarity even for professional biblical scholars. Yet the book also remains accessible, and never dwells on any individual feature too long. Readers of TLC may be particularly interested in Stern's treatment of the liturgical uses of Jewish Bibles, and the cultural interchange between Jewish and Christian book cultures in the early Renaissance.

The Bible from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance: Writing and Images from the Vatican Library provides a wide-ranging treatment of the history of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, through an examination of some of the most beautiful exemplars of the Vatican Library manuscript collection. This large book is edited by the vice prefect of the Vatican Apostolic Library, with help from Francesca Manzari, art historian at the Sapienza University of Rome. It collects introductory essays from a staggering array of top scholars in the fields of ancient Bibles in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Slavonic, Armenian, Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopic, Georgian, and Gothic, along with histories of the transmission and unique uses of the Bible in Byzantine, Eastern Christian, Jewish, and Western traditions. It also includes treatments of Bibles developed for specific liturgical and portable use.

The quality of the essays is extreme-

ly high, despite the usual variance of an edited collection. and they provide accessible introductions to the various translation traditions that surpass the usual treatment in seminary-level biblical studies courses. The accessibility of the essays varies, but non-specialists and specialists alike will learn much from them. These concise essays introduce and orient the reader to the staggering number of large, beautifully presented Bibles from the Vatican collection. The images alone are worth the cost of the book and would provide hours of enjoyment with or without the introductory material. Of particular interest to Anglicans and Episcopalians might be the lengthy treatment of Western Bibles similar to those used in pre-Reformation England, and the chapter on Bible reading for liturgical use.

The book was originally published in Italian and was translated into several languages subsequently. The publishers chose translators from an Italian firm that specializes in business and marketing translations, and some essays suffer as a result from non-specialized translation, rendering terms from biblical studies or codicology in puzzling or inadvertently humorous ways. For example, describing *meat and fur* sides of manuscript pages instead of the usual *hair and flesh*, using *sheets* instead of the more technically precise *leaves* for individual pages, *chains* rather than the common *catenae* to describe a specific patristic commentary form, and using *Vulgate* to describe standardized versions of biblical texts in languages other than Latin. Overall, however, the book serves its purpose of providing a beautiful and informative look at the finest manuscripts from the Vatican collection.

> These books demonstrate that the material forms in which we encounter the Bible have meaning.

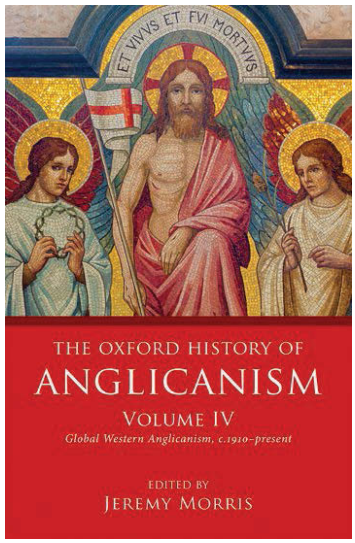
By virtue of its narrower subject matter, *The Jewish Bible* provides a clearer, more accessible narrative that non-specialists should be able to follow, and offers a deeper analysis that should appeal to even the most specialized academic reader. It has far fewer pictures, however, and would be more suited to someone interested in *reading* about the history of the Jewish Bible.

The Vatican book, on the other hand, would appeal to anyone with an interest in art history, biblical studies, liturgy, or medieval history. It would make a beautiful coffee-table addition that provides ample conversation about the Bible, the Church, and the history of the Western world.

The Rev. Paul Wheatley is a doctoral student at the University of Notre Dame.

A Bit Too Anglo

Review by Robert Tobin



The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume IV

Global Western Anglicanism,
c. 1910–present

Edited by **Jeremy Morris**
Oxford University Press. Pp. xx + 449. $145

Anglicanism as the diverse, global phenomenon that we know today is largely a phenomenon of the 20th century. It is therefore unsurprising to learn that when *The Oxford History of Anglicanism* was being planned, the editors decided to cover the century across two volumes. There were, they soon realized, simply too many events, people, and themes to cover within the pages of one book.

So recounts Jeremy Morris when explaining why this volume — the fourth in the series — focuses on Western forms of Anglicanism, while the one following it concentrates on its non-Western forms. In this context, *Western* denotes the British Isles, North America, and Australasia, those regions where Anglicans have tended to be English-speaking, of European descent, and active in industrial economies.

Having stressed these commonalities, however, Morris is quick to acknowledge the significant differences among these regions and the national churches within them. He argues the whole story of Western Anglicanism in the last century should be seen "as a movement from a dominant central perspective to multiple local contexts," a gradual retreat from any presumption of uniformity.

Particularly with the breakup of the British Empire after the Second World War, the notion that Anglicanism remained synonymous with Englishness yielded to a more pluralistic understanding. Yet this central fact is not always reflected in what follows. In a volume purporting to cover the whole range of Western Anglican churches, the Church of England remains the default setting. To some extent this is inevitable, given its size and historical prominence. But if the purpose of the collection is to document and explore the growing diversity within Western Anglicanism, it is puzzling how often this fact is not so much denied as simply ignored by some of the contributors.

The first section, "Themes and Wider Engagements," is the longest and sets the tone for the whole. Mark Chapman opens with a fine survey of modern Anglican theology, which essentially focuses on theological developments within the Church of England up to the 1970s. Americans William Porcher DuBose, William Reed Huntington, and Stephen Bayne appear briefly, but otherwise the proceedings remain thoroughly English.

In a similar fashion, Martin Percy's essay on the sociology of Western Anglicanism and Malcolm Brown's synopsis of its social theology treat the Church of England as normative, though Percy appreciates the distinctive interplay of class and religion in the American context. In writing about decolonization during the postwar period, Sarah Stockwell offers some historical justification for this Anglocentric tendency, observing that for much of the 20th century, leadership of

the Western churches remained overwhelmingly in English hands. Having made this point, she shows the ways in which Britain's retreat as a global power was mirrored by the devolution of ecclesiastical authority across the Anglican Communion.

Dovetailing with Stockwell's essay on these mid-century realignments are pieces by Matthew Grimley and Michael Snape. Grimley's essay on the interplay of nationalism and Anglican identity is the strongest in the collection, a model of careful research that assiduously surveys all the Western churches in their turn. Even as he attends to the internal complexities of each, Grimley detects a shared propensity among the Western churches to conceive of themselves in establishment terms, regardless of their legal status. By the same token, Snape notes how much Western Anglicans were bound together by their support for the imperial war effort during two global conflicts. In this he includes Episcopalians in the United States, whom he describes as "the lost sheep of the empire."

The second section, "Institutional Development," consists of essays by Colin Podmore and Ephraim Radner. Podmore provides a useful account of inter-Anglican structures, which have often struggled to inject a sense of commonality amid the range of ecclesiologies at work in the Anglican Communion. He points out that even among the Western churches (let alone beyond them), there has been a tendency to overlook differences of understanding about the role of bishops in church government, which has in turn bedeviled attempts to establish a baseline for Communion-wide authority.

Exploring the ways in which the Communion's recent struggles reflect something essential about 20th-century Anglicanism, Radner focuses on how much the latter relied upon the notion of a shared ethos to function. Here he echoes a point made repeatedly in this volume: the emergence of global Anglican identity depended more on a network of associations and shared experiences among its leadership than it did on any coherent theology. Once such social uniformity began to yield to a more diverse local leadership in the postwar period, a basic weakness in world Anglicanism was exposed. Cultural conditioning started to win out over the vestiges of a shared heritage.

Given the degree to which the Church of England dominates this volume, the final section, "Regional Survey," necessarily feels like an exercise in compensation. This is a shame, as the three essays are worthy of note.

Ian Breward's contribution on Anglicanism in Australia and New Zealand is particularly acute in evoking the struggles that Antipodean churches faced while adapting to changing circumstances. In writing about North American Anglicanism, Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook emphasizes the Episcopal Church's social progressivism, which helps explain the pride of place she gives to Edmond Browning's tenure as presiding bishop during the 1980s and '90s.

Finally, Jeremy Morris concludes the book with an essay on Anglicanism in Britain and Ireland, which in belatedly discussing the Celtic churches unintentionally emphasizes their almost total absence in the preceding 400 pages. If the story of 20th-century Western Anglicanism is in fact a narrative about growing diversity, it is troubling that the diversity among British churches enjoys so little attention in this book.

The Rev. Robert Tobin is vicar of the Church of St. Mary and St. John the Divine, Balham, London. His volume on Episcopal identity and activism in the postwar period will be published by Oxford University Press in 2020.

Explaining the Psalms

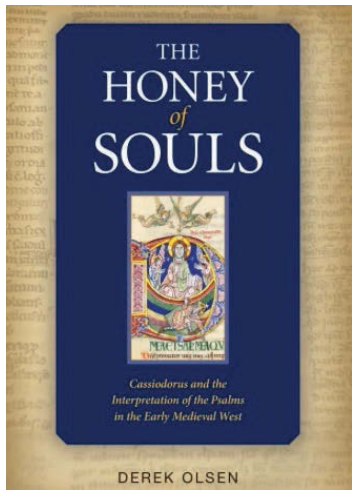
Review by Allison Zbicz Michael

Those who pray the daily office know that the biblical Psalter undergirds those ancient patterns of liturgical prayer, and that even the most extemporaneous praying draws on the Psalter's language of thanksgiving, confession, lament, and adoration.

Although a careful reading of Cassiodorus's sixth-century *Explanation of the Psalms* is the occasion for Derek Olsen's book, the Psalter's multifaceted presence in early medieval religious life is the key underlying theme. Olsen examines how the Psalter functioned not only as liturgical prayer, but as a pedagogical resource, a rhetorical model, and a part of the material culture in religious communities.

Through his *Explanation,* Cassiodorus helped shape the use of the Psalter in monastic communities that came after him, and participated in the transmission of a way of life marked by the words of the Psalms. Though Olsen's work may be read out of pure intellectual interest, his examination of a time and culture that is in many ways very different from ours, gives an occasion for a deeper reflection on the forces and habits that form — and that we hope will form — the life of Christian communities today.

The Rev. Allison Zbicz Michael is a PhD student at Catholic University of America.



The Honey of Souls

Cassiodorus and the Interpretation of the Psalms in the Early Medieval West

By **Derek A. Olsen**

Liturgical Press. Pp. 328. $49.49

A Rewarding History of a Neglected Theme

Review by Philip Harrold

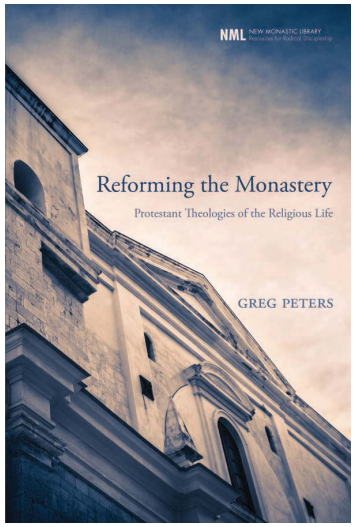
From the beginning, Greg Peters argues, Protestants have "mostly" rejected monasticism, allowing only for something like a "reformed monasticism," but with widely varying understandings of what that means. A prejudicial and polemical bent has never entirely displaced the notion of a life together that can take on a variety of purposes and structures defined by some sort of rule. When this form of Christian community is consonant with the "freedom of the Christian," as understood in the Reformation's formal principle of salvation by grace through faith, almost anything goes.

Peters is among that rare breed of Protestant scholars who is devoted to the historical study of monasticism, and the book under review is the first of his two major recent works on the topic. Baker Academic published the second, *The Story of Monasticism: Retrieving an Ancient Tradition for Contemporary Spirituality*.

Reforming the Monastery strives to reconnect Protestants, evangelicals in particular, to the long and neglected history of organized religious life across the Reformation traditions. It is a relatively thin volume, as you might expect, but it serves as a kind of stage-setter for the more comprehensive second study.

Peters demonstrates that the hard-nosed attitude of the Reformers regarding monasticism was rooted in deep theological concerns regarding religious vocations. Certainly biography factored into the largely critical positions adopted by Martin Luther and John Calvin; both had firsthand experiences in monastic or semi-monastic life. But their convictions were informed as much by a pervasive sense that institutional monasticism, with its insistence on vows and its contribution to a "double Christianity," or a two-tiered structure of spirituality (those seeking perfection and those settling for something less), had devolved into something fundamentally at odds with the biblical teaching on justification by faith. In the end, the leading Reformers left room, perhaps inadvertently, for a reformed monasticism, yet it would take a few hundred years for anything lasting and viable to develop.

The cast of characters in this later history includes well-known 20th-century figures like Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Donald Bloesch, each expounding to varying degrees on the possibility of a reformed monasticism. His treatment of these complex thinkers features important biographical details that show where much of the impulse to retrieve originated. Clearly, new conditions and new questions prompted much of the fresh inquiry regarding monastic practice and theology.



Reforming the Monastery
Protestant Theologies
of the Religious Life
By **Greg Peters**
Cascade Books. Pp. 167. $22

Surprises include Barth's fruitful dialogue with a Benedictine abbot-coadjutor in 1966, Bonhoeffer's interactions with Bishop George Bell, an avid proponent of monastic life in the 1930s, and Bloesch's study of Anglo-Catholic monasteries during his postdoctoral work at Oxford University. Lingering concerns about "works-righteousness" persisted, but so did the realization that Christian discipleship can be expressed in a variety of ways so as to preserve a distinctive Christian ethic in an increasingly secular world (Barth and Bonhoeffer) and bring renewal to the wider Church (Bloesch).

Between the Reformers and these later figures, Anglicans feature prominently. Peters is most thorough in his survey when he traces the various calls to reclaim monastic life in the English context, from the Ferrar family's Little Gidding community and the rekindled vision of communal life expressed by a lesser-known Caroline Divine, Herbert Thorndike, to the Oxford Movement's "more deliberate catholic orientation."

Beyond the Anglican world, there are also detailed descriptions of life in specific communities, including William Carey's Serampore Mission and Bonhoeffer's Finkenwalde. At times, we wish for more context, a bit more pre-Reformation stage setting for anti-monastic polemic, and some summary and analysis that helps us to see more clearly the broader contours of this fascinating arena of retrieval. This would help us to better understand how later Protestants could be less edgy about the monastic life.

The narrative is also disjointed at times, with Carey's work and post-Reformation German monasticism appearing out of chronological sequence. But the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses in this unusual book. By the time we reach its conclusion, today's new monasticism begins to look less new. Innovation driven by contextualization is a persistent theme, but it is never far removed from the recurring option set in motion centuries ago by Benedict of Nursia.

Philip Harrold is associate professor of Church history at Trinity School for Ministry.

Autobiographical Apologetics

Review by J. David Moser

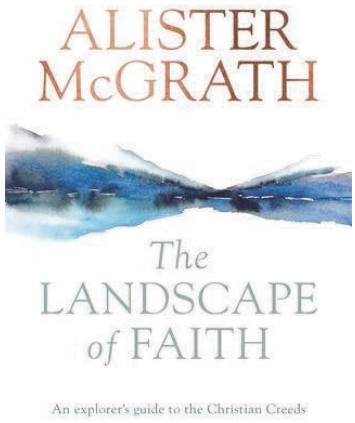
St. Augustine called Christians *viatores*, wayfarers, who journey through this world to their heavenly destination. Alister McGrath, the Andreas Idreos Professor of Science and Religion at the University of Oxford, has given us a map that can assist us on the journey. His book is "a tool for study, a resource for wisdom in leading an intelligent, reflective, and grateful life of Christian discipleship" (p. xi).

McGrath's book at times has the quality of a spiritual autobiography. He tells us how he came to faith in Christ as a student at Oxford in the 1970s after years of being a staunchly committed atheist. He realized his dogmatic certainty that only the scientific method laid claim to what is true was really an unverifiable assumption he unquestioningly held. Even atheists need to hold to certain beliefs by faith.

This fact invited him to reexamine his unquestioned assumptions about the ultimate questions and to find a coherent big picture of the world that explains the diverse aspects of human life. McGrath became a Christian, and here he commends Christianity as the explanation of the world and our lives as gifts of God (p. 90). His autobiography leads us to a central theme of the book: the nature of faith as not only assent to what is believed, but also trust in and commitment to God (pp. 52-53). God's benevolent commitment to us requires our commitment to him as we journey through this world.

The Christian life takes place on the landscape of faith. When Christians experience salvation in Jesus Christ and begin the journey, they need a map for the way ahead. Here McGrath commends the creeds, which are "summary descriptions of the vast expanses of the landscape of faith, intended to invite us to explore further this distinctive landscape" (p. 18).

Accordingly, the book is organized according to the pattern and content of the



The Landscape of Faith

An Explorer's Guide to the Christian Creeds

By **Alister McGrath**

SPCK. Pp. xiii+256. $23

Apostles' Creed and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. Each chapter contains short biblical and theological accounts of each belief that the creed affirms.

McGrath brings up apologetic concerns in many of the chapters. In his chapter on the Trinity, for example, he responds to the charge that the doctrine is incoherent nonsense. He shows how it should be received as a mystery within the context of worship. While we cannot fully comprehend the mystery, we can grasp it within the lens of faith.

The text is remarkably clear and well-written. Furthermore, McGrath follows C.S. Lewis's *Mere Christianity* approach in his account of Christian doctrine. Thus, nearly all of what one finds in the text is universally held by Christians.

This makes the book commendable to diverse Christian communities. Furthermore, it will be useful for preachers and catechists who need an introductory guide to core Christian doctrine for teaching purposes. It will especially connect with those who have held some of the scientific objections to religious belief that McGrath once did.

J. David Moser is a PhD student in theology at Southern Methodist University.

faith talks

THE LIVING CHURCH INSTITUTE

***The Living Church Institute's* Faith Talks** *series continued October 18 in Dallas to consider Christian education in our time. Jon Jordan, Logic School director and teacher at Coram Deo Academy of Dallas, presented a case for why Christian education should be different.*

He argued that classical education provides the best model for education that shapes disciples. The panel and audience, while mostly sympathetic to Jordan's case, raised questions about the connection between classical pedagogy and Christianity, as well as how classical education can serve a wider population wider than the white upper middle class.

Here are abridged versions of Jordan's talk and panelist Seth Oldham's response. †

Reframing Christian Education

By Jon Jordan

Christian education, like education in general, is in need of reframing.

Read college brochures; skim high school textbooks; attend preview weekends for universities; read the names of the most popular majors on campus. What you will see may not shock you but it should: Educational institutions today exist to train a workforce to complete tasks.

The human person is reduced to a computational and mechanical unit, and education becomes something like the installation of software. Career preparation is certainly not an evil goal, but it is woefully inadequate as a vision of education.

Contrast it with the ancient Greek notion of *paideia*, which includes passing down a way of life and a love of learning, to equip the disciple for a lifetime of growth and development.

Christian education at its best not only can embrace this ancient notion of *paideia*, but can bring it to fullness. While for the Greeks becoming the ideal person was the goal of education, Christians educate in order to form more fully human beings into the image of Jesus Christ.

A passage by C.S. Lewis conveys the destiny God has in mind for humans. In *The Screwtape Letters*, demons are designed to feast upon their prey once they are successfully lured to hell. The demon Screwtape bemoans the reality that God wants to conform free humans into his children, not consume them as his meal:

> He really does want to fill the universe with a lot of loathsome little replicas of Himself — creatures whose life, on its miniature scale, will be qualitatively like His own, not because He has absorbed them but because their wills freely conform to His. We want cattle who can finally become food; He wants servants who can finally become sons.

We cannot simply add religion, Bible, or theology classes to the modern curriculum. What we need in the Church and the world is fully alive human beings being formed into the image of Jesus — virtuous women and men who have been trained in prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance; Christians whose parents, pastors, and teachers have modeled and awakened wisdom, concern for the other, courage, and restraint.

Christian Education is in need of reframing — not by means of new innovation, but by returning to an older, better way: as a liturgical, teleological, erotic, and eschatological endeavor.

To say that Christian education is liturgical means that we are forming worshipers. Even a subject like physics can be taught in a way that elicits praise. We must recognize that humans are drawn to worship. A Christian educator should ask: *If my classroom, school, stage, court, or field were a religious service, whom or what would my students be inspired to worship?*

To say that Christian education is teleological is to say that it is focused on an end goal: becoming like Jesus. All other stated goals, such as vision or mission statements and school standards, ought to flow from that. We should ask: *How does what I am doing right now move my student closer to the end goal of our family, church, and school?*

To say that Christian education is

about eros means that we are about more than knowledge: education forms students' love and desires. Aristotle said that the aim of education is to make the pupil "like and dislike what he ought." St. Augustine had something similar in mind when he said that virtue involved an *ordo amoris*, the right ordering of our loves. To educate this way, we can ask ourselves: *What do I want my students to love? What do my students think I want them to love? Why does an outside observer think that I love?*

To say that Christian education is eschatological means that we are playing the long game. We are laying a moral and intellectual foundation that prepares students to face whatever may come, rather than working toward short-term results. We should ask: *What is the long-term benefit of what I am doing right now? What is the shortcut I am tempted to take?* †

Attaining the Good Life

By Seth Oldham

In a world in which money and fame are held in high regard, it makes sense that the liberal arts, or classical education, need staunch defenders ready to argue for the good that a liberal arts education can provide. I am one of them, and I see the value in what Jon Jordan has laid out.

On the other hand, those who defend the liberal arts need to understand and work toward three different goals.

First, we need to understand that the good life may not need to be achieved through formal education. On the contrary, *paideia* (passing on a way of life) often occurs outside a four-walled classroom through families, churches, or other venues such as residence halls or cafeterias. The virtues of justice, prudence, temperance, and fortitude can be or should be learned through living together in Christian community.

Second, those who defend the liberal arts should work toward making classical education more accessible, especially for minority and low-income students. Creating classical charter schools in low-income communities is a great model, but it is likely not a long-term solution, for a variety of political reasons. Creating new opportunities through the Church, or supporting policies that encourage state boards of education to include a Great Books curriculum, may be better long-term solutions.

Finally, we need to apply what we have learned. The best way to convince people that the good life is worth pursuing is by showing it. As we discussed during Faith Talks, it may be possible to attain the good life without faith in God, but it will be incomplete. Our commitment to the Christian faith and our applied classical education will create the greatest potential for the world, currently blinded by false goods, to embrace the *truly* good life. †

Second Diocese

(Continued from page 9)

Western New York will share Bishop Rowe and his staff for the next five years as they explore a deeper relationship focused on creating new opportunities for mission.

The New York diocese completed the agreement Oct. 26 by electing Rowe. He is scheduled to assume the office upon the retirement of Bishop William Franklin in early April.

The dioceses will evaluate the partnership again in October 2021 and will decide three years later whether to continue it. Rowe will maintain offices in Tonawanda and Erie and make visitations in both dioceses. The dioceses are contiguous and their see cities are about 100 miles apart. Western New York is part of Province II and Northwestern Pennsylvania is part of Province III.

Michigan Dioceses Move Closer

The Diocese of Eastern Michigan voted Oct. 27 to elect the Rt. Rev. Whayne M. Hougland Jr., Bishop of Western Michigan, to serve as its provisional bishop.

That proposed sharing of a bishop now awaits the approval of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan. The dioceses are contiguous and their see cities, Kalamazoo and Saginaw, are 150 miles apart.

Episcopalians in Eastern Michigan will discuss the proposal in three workshops scheduled for February and March.

Coloradans Choose Priest from D.C.

The Rev. Kimberly (Kym) Lucas, rector of St. Margaret's Church in Washington, D.C., was elected 11th Bishop of Colorado on Oct. 27.

The other nominee was the Rev. Canon Ruth Woodliff-Stanley, who serves as the diocese's canon to the ordinary.

On the first ballot, Lucas led in the lay order and Woodliff-Stanley led among clergy.

The second ballot was ruled invalid because of a reporting error about the first ballot. By the third ballot, Lucas led in both orders. On the fourth ballot, she reached the two-thirds majority that the diocese requires in both orders.

Lucas has led St. Margaret's since January 2012, and she was rector of St. Ambrose Church in Raleigh, N.C., from 2005 to 2011. She grew up in Spring Lake, N.C., and is a graduate of Wake Forest University and Union Theological Seminary in New York. She and her husband, Mark Retherford, have four children.

North Dakota's Bishop Retiring in May 2019

The Rt. Rev. Michael G. Smith, Bishop of North Dakota since 2004, has announced his intention to retire in May 2019.

Bishop Smith made the announcement near the conclusion of his brief sermon to the 48th annual convention of the diocese. His sermon, which drew from *The Benedict Option* by Rod Dreher, focused on challenges to the church amid wide cultural change.

"Practically speaking, with a diocesan budget as small as ours, it is extremely difficult to make changes in terms of reorganization for mission and ministry with the incumbent bishop in office," he said.

"My retirement, along with the approaching retirement of Canon Zanne Ness, will make room to discern and support a renewed vision for the Diocese of North Dakota in the face of ever-increasing challenges for the institutional church."

Arizonans Elect Priest from N.Y.

The Rev. Jennifer Anne Reddall, rector of Church of the Epiphany in New York City, has been elected the sixth Bishop of Arizona.

She was one of three nominees and was elected on the first ballot. The other two nominees were the Rev.

Dena Marcel Cleaver-Bartholomew, rector of Christ Church, Manlius, N.Y., and the Rev. Andrew Wallace Walter, rector of Grace Church, Silver Spring, Md.

"Jennifer is the mother of Nathan, who is nine," said the bishop-elect's biography for the election. "Her parents moved to Tucson in 2016. Jennifer is in a long-term relationship with Paul Sheehan, who lives primarily in Hong Kong."

Reddall grew up in California, and after graduating from Yale University with a degree in theater studies, she joined the Episcopal Urban Intern Program in Los Angeles. She graduated from General Theological Seminary in New York City with an MDiv in 2002.

Priest and Scholar Will Lead Convocation

After eight ballots, seven of them split between clergy and lay votes, the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe has elected the Rev. Mark Edington as bishop.

From the first ballot, Edington led among the laity and the Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler, founder and president of the arts and peace-building ministry CARAVAN, led among clergy. On the final ballot, Edington received 13 clergy votes and Chandler received ten.

Two other nominees — the Rev. Steven D. Paulikas, rector of All Saints' Church in Brooklyn, and the Very Rev. Benjamin A. Shambaugh, dean of the Cathedral Church of St. Luke in Portland, Maine — withdrew after the second ballot.

He will be the second elected bishop of the convocation, after the Rt. Rev. Pierre Whalon. Edington is rector of St. John's Church in Newtonville, Massachusetts, and director of Amherst College Press.

He is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and is active in the Religion and Foreign Policy program, and his essays have appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New York Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor* and other national publications. His wife, Judith, is a tax attorney.

"I see the convocation in many ways as the future of the church," Edington said in a video message before the election. He noted that Episcopalians in Europe live in a heavily secular, multiethnic society in which people of faith are in intentional conversation with other communities.

"You are already living in a culture that America will be living in, in 40 years," he said. "We can together teach the rest of the church how to move into that future."

Religion Professor Elected in Kansas

The annual convention of the Diocese of Kansas has elected the Rev. Cathleen Chittenden Bascom as tenth bishop.

Bascom, assistant professor of religion at Waldorf University in Forest City, Iowa, was added to the slate by petition. She led in both orders of ministry on the first ballot, and was elected on the second ballot.

Bascom, born in Denver, is a graduate of the University of Kansas and Exeter University. She earned an MDiv at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary and a DMin in preaching from Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

The other nominees were the Rev. Martha N. Macgill, rector of Emmanuel Parish in Cumberland, Md., and the Rev. Helen Svoboda-Barber, rector of St. Luke's Church in Durham, N.C.

25th Chancellor

The Rt. Rev. Robert Skirving, Bishop of East Carolina, was elected the 25th chancellor of the University of the South on Oct. 12.

Skirving succeeds the Rt. Rev. Samuel Johnson Howard, Bishop of Florida, who served as chancellor from October 2012 through October 2018.

Skirving, a native of Ontario, Canada, was ordained and consecrated as the eighth Bishop of the Diocese of East Carolina on November 8, 2014. He has been a member of Sewanee's Board of Trustees since 2014 and the Board of Regents since 2017, and received an honorary degree from the University in 2015.

Sewanee Today

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SUNDAY'S READINGS | 26 Pentecost, November 18

1 Sam. 1:420 or Dan. 12:1-3 • 1 Sam. 2:1-10 or Ps. 16
Heb. 10:11-14 (15-18), 19-25 • Mark 13:1-8

The End

There is, in passages here and there, a great rattling noise in Scripture, trembling and fear, foreboding predictions of the end of all things and the judgment of the world. Such a time is at hand. There is a time for every purpose under heaven, a time to be born and a time to die. Do we consider the frailty of human life and human history as we ought? Do we contemplate our end? Are we waiting and watching? A religion that does not speak of death, that does not face it and name it, leads astray.

"There shall be a time of anguish," says the prophet, "such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:1-2). Scripture encourages, it strengthens, and it teaches, but it also warns. "Thou only art immortal, the creator and maker of mankind; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and unto earth shall we return" (1979 BCP, Burial I, p. 482).

Material life and material things, however precious, fail eventually. "As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, 'Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!' Then Jesus asked him, 'Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down'" (Mark 13:1-2). Jesus speaks of wars and rumors of wars and earthquakes in various places. The shaking of the foundations he calls "the beginning of the birth pangs." This bracing announcement Scripture regards, though we may not initially, as Good News. It startles us to hear the most obvious thing, the mutability and frailty of life, a mortal end in dust and ashes. Indeed, we tell ourselves that we have forever, years and years, time to waste and squander. And so, as often happens, life is lived without attention, without awareness, and without purpose.

If the mortal end of human life is held in view, God's eternity, immutability, everlasting essence, and attributes break through the fog of common human lethargy. Sometimes crisis gives clarity. "Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge. I say to the Lord, 'You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you'" (Ps. 16:1-2). There is no good, no refuge, no hope apart from God, because he alone is from everlasting to everlasting. Almighty God is the source of all things, the continuing strength in all things, the guiding hand in all things, and the promise of everlasting life to everyone whose name is written in the book. You, O God, hold my lot (Ps. 16:5).

God has set boundary lines to human existence, limits in which we may live and move and have our being. And yet within the limits of human life, God has offered a goodly heritage, and good counsel; God instructs the heart and is ever near. God gives gladness and joy and secure rest to small human lives because he has deigned to enter our lives in the person of Jesus Christ. "I am with you always," Jesus says, "even to the close of the age."

Our mortal lives exhaust themselves. We can face this truth because God is our everlasting hope and peace and rest. Face your end by facing God.

Look It Up

Read Mark 13:2.

Think About It

This may be read as a sad description of many parish churches. Churches die and close. Take refuge in God alone.

SUNDAY'S READINGS | Last Pentecost, November 25

2 Sam. 23:1-7 or Dan. 7:9-10, 13-14 • Ps. 132:1-13 (14-19) or Ps. 93
Rev. 1:4b-8 • John 18:33-37

King and Kingdom

Pilate asks Jesus directly, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus, seeming to evade, answers with a question: "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" No question put to Jesus will find an answer if the question is a trap. On his own terms and in the divine freedom of his will, Jesus says, "My kingdom is not from this world." Thus, he has a kingdom of which he is the king. In a sense, however, he is not the king of the Jews; rather, he is not the king merely of the Jews. He is king over everyone who belongs to the truth, which he himself is, and he is king over those who listen to his voice. His kingship and his kingdom are ever secure, and thus he forswears violence. Jesus reigns supreme, high above all nations (John 18:33-37).

"In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world" (John 16:33). In this world we expect trial and hardship, challenge and loss, persecution and bitterness of every kind. We expect to work by the sweat of our brow and bear the blessing of life in pain. We expect this and we face this, but not as those who are without hope. Our help is in the name of the Lord. Our help and hope reside in heaven, where victory and life and healing are assured.

Consider the Father and the Son and sacred flame of the Spirit in the mystery of heaven. "As I watched," the prophet says, calling the reader and listener to watch and wait and wonder at the victory and power of God. "As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne, his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire" (Dan. 7:9). Do we see the night vision? God Almighty! God the Ancient One! God forever and ever! Fiery flames and burning wheels!

There is a divine person who stands before the throne. "As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him" (Dan. 7:13). In like manner, the author of the letter to the Hebrews writes, "For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf" (Heb. 9:24). Jesus is our king precisely because of what he has done on our behalf. He has assumed our human nature; he has borne the crushing weight of evil and the sediment of guilt accrued over ages. He loved us and forgave us to the end. He loves us still, forgives us still, and is ever making petition on our behalf. In him, we are secure as the adopted children of God.

In the midst of life we are in death. But we may say with equal confidence that in the midst of death we are in life forevermore because we are in Jesus Christ. "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Moment by moment, the kingdom of heaven is being established on earth in the hearts the elect. The kingdom of God is within you. And in the final moment, whenever it may be, a cry will go out: "Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him" (Rev. 1:7).

Jesus Christ is the victorious king. Press on with hope and confidence.

Look It Up

Read Ephesians 1:20-23.

Think About It

God raised him and set him in heaven.

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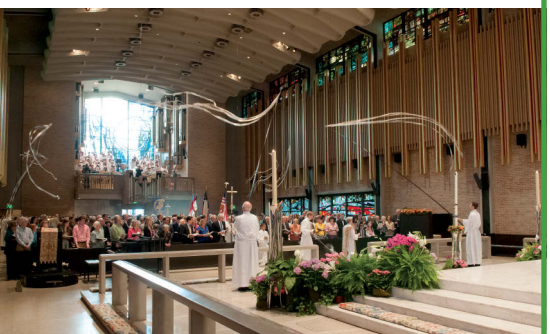

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(Continued on next page)

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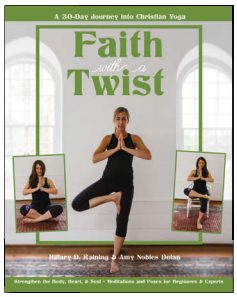

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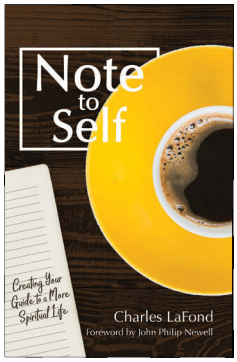

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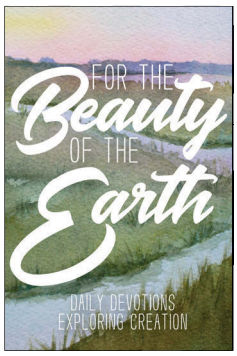

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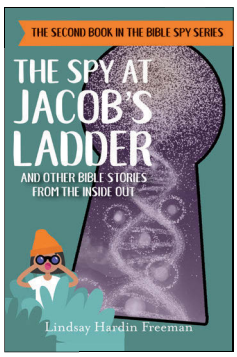

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