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December 1, 2019

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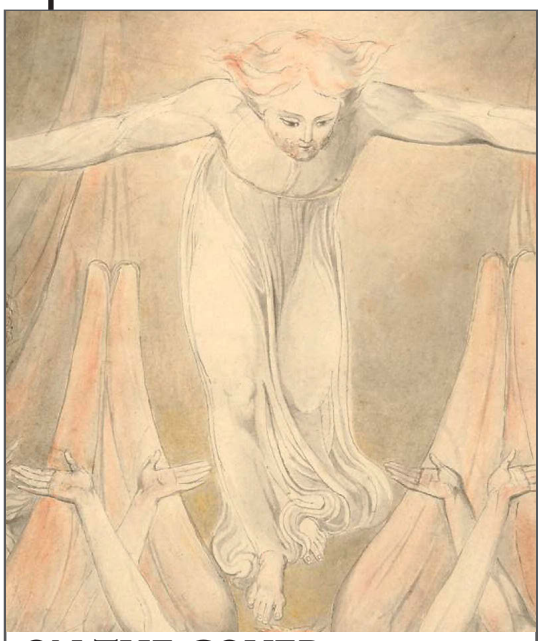
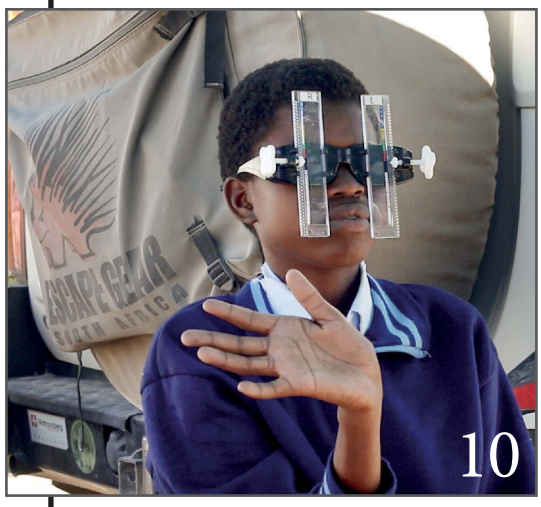


ON THE COVER

David delivered out of many waters. By William Blake (see "Advent's Radical Prophet, p. 14).

1805, Tate Britain



The Living Church

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We are grateful to Jerusalem Peacebuilders [p. 25] and the Consortium for Christian Unity [p. 27] whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

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

NY Diocese Earmarks $1.1 Million for Reparations

By Kirk Petersen

The Diocese of New York has committed $1.1 million dollars of its endowment to reparations for slavery, to redress what Bishop Andrew M.L. Dietsche described as the diocese's "significant, and genuinely evil, part in American slavery."

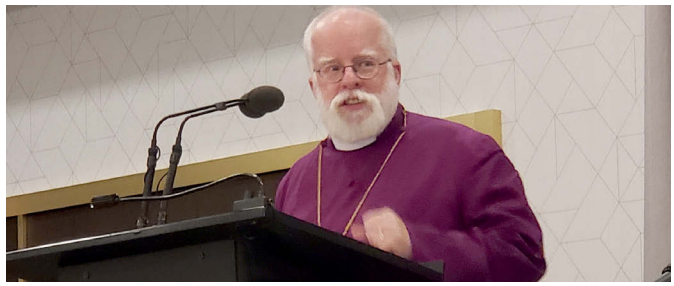
The reparations fund, representing 2.5% of the diocesan endowment, was approved without opposition on November 9 at the annual diocesan convention. The previous day, the convention also approved an 1860 resolution condemning the ownership and trafficking of enslaved people in the diocese. The resolution had been tabled for 159 years.

The Diocese of New York now joins the Episcopal Virginia Theological Seminary and the Presbyterian Princeton Theological Seminary as religious institutions that have pledged significant funds to atone for their ancestors' roles in the slave trade.

The 1860 resolution was on the advance agenda for the convention, but the reparations fund was disclosed for the first time in the bishop's annual address. He plans to appoint a task force to consider how to use the funds and report back to the 2020 convention.

Dietsche said he arrived at the $1.1 million figure by examining the commitments made by VTS and PTS, both of which have significantly larger endowments than the Diocese of New York. He explained that Virginia's $1.7 million pledge represented 1% of its endowment, whereas the Princeton Seminary's pledge of $27 million was 2.25% of its $1.2 billion endowment.

With those examples as guides, he arrived at 2.5%, or $1.1 million of the roughly $44 million endowment. "Much smaller, and the resources for significant reparation would be insufficient; much larger, and it might not be something we could do," he said.



Dietsche

Dietsche described in detail the role the diocese and the city played in the slave trade.

> *During the eighteenth century the proportion of people in New York owning slaves was the second highest among all of the colonies, after only Charleston, South Carolina. We have records of churches in our diocese which owned men and women as parish servants or as property assets: churches whose wealth was built on the traffic in human beings.*

New York began to phase in abolition early in the century, and by 1827 all enslaved people in the state had been emancipated.

> *Yet, 32 years later, in 1859, the London Times declared that New York City remained the largest slave market in the world, because of the ships which sailed from this city to patrol the West Coast of the African continent, continuing to kidnap slaves for the American South, generating untold wealth for the shippers and merchants in this city.*

The bishop declared, "We have a great deal to answer for. We are complicit."

The importance of slavery to the economy of New York City explains why the affluent diocese was unwilling to condemn slavery, even as the Civil War loomed. The 1860 resolution was introduced by John Jay, grandson of the first chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Jay was treated quite shabbily by his fellow convention deputies, a point that was brought home in a dramatic reenactment on the first day of this year's convention. The script for the reenactment was based closely on the transcript of the actual meeting, said Diane Pollard, who has been an active member of the diocesan reparations committee since it was formed in 2006.

John Jay's anti-slavery resolution was brought up multiple times, only to be tabled. When Bishop Horatio Potter finally forced the convention to vote, enough deputies walked out to deny a quorum.

Pollard, who is also a lay member of the churchwide Executive Council, told *TLC*: "We talked about it at our reparations committee meeting, and I believe I was one of the ones who suggested, why don't we bring it up?" She was given the honor of proposing the vote on the 1860 resolution.

Dietsche told the convention that he has hoped during his episcopacy to increase the diocesan endowment, and "this resolution will set that back. … However, I am sure that any honest process of reparation must require sacrifice, and a commitment not only from our surplus, but from our seed corn."

Dietsche said he would appoint the task force in the next 30 days.

> *I do not want to dictate to the task force the deliberations which will come. But may I say that this money could produce five $10,000 college or seminary scholarships every year in perpetuity. This money could establish and fund an education and advocacy library and resource center in this diocese dedicated to racial justice and reconciliation. This money could support a first step program in this diocese to invite, nurture and prepare black young people, and men and women, to explore the possibility of ordained ministry.*

"I look forward with anticipation to the creative possibilities that might come from this initiative," he said.

Jubilate: A Conference on Prayer Book Revision and Language

By Calvin Lane

What sort of language should we use, as Episcopalians, to speak about and pray to God? What words have shaped and captured our imagination as a church? And how, at a time of precipitous decline, will our prayer life inform our mission?

These questions, and more, were faced directly at Jubilate, a conference on prayer book revision sponsored by the Diocese of Southern Ohio and hosted by Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Cincinnati on Saturday, November 2. Around seventy people were present, including clergy and lay people from across the United States. Both coasts were represented, ecumenical guests attended, as did students from multiple Episcopal seminaries.

The event was intended to be a gift to the wider church in order to spur further conversation and dialogue. It was emphasized at the outset of the day that the Episcopal Church, since General Convention 2018, is in a formal season of ingathering and conversation about prayer book revision and a spectrum of voices need to be heard. Jubilate, then, was meant to equip those present for further dialogue around the church. To do that effectively, a real cross-section of opinions was brought into relief.

The day was rich and fast-paced. Ruth Meyers, professor of liturgics at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, was the first of three primary presenters in the morning. She outlined proposed changes in liturgical language over the past generation, that is, since the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, and then made a case for expansive language for the Trinity. She cited feminine imagery about God in both the Old and New Testaments and sug-

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gested, in particular, that biblical language about Wisdom offers rich possibilities for liturgical expression.

Highlighting that she was not proposing abandoning the formula of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Meyers nevertheless contended "We need language that expands our understanding of the triune God and counters misperceptions of God as masculine." Her concern was likewise to, as she put it, "to proclaim the gospel more clearly in our age and our context."

Following Meyers, Ephraim Radner, professor of historical theology at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, focused on exactly that subject, cultural context, by arguing that revising the prayer book is simply irrelevant to the cultural moment. Sharing stories from his previous missionary work in Burundi, he emphasized how prayers imprint themselves on a community, especially during serious challenges. Similarly, he told about worshipping around the world with Anglicans, Catholics, and Pentecostals and being surprised that the music is the same! In short, Radner argued that prayer book revision is likely culturally irrelevant.

Katherine Sonderegger, professor of systematic theology at Virginia Theological Seminary, rounded out the morning by making the claim that "masculine language for God is a settled matter, for liturgy and the Church," and, further, that this claim, somewhat surprisingly, is a "feminist proposal." She said that, were the Episcopal Church to leave such language behind, especially the traditional formula of the Trinity, Episcopalians would disconnect from other Christian denominations and from other Anglicans.

"The language we use in ecclesial worship," Sonderegger said, "is not for us to determine independently. We exist, even in fractured communion, in a single Body, whose head is Christ, and we are properly constrained by this membership." Sonderegger argued that her fellow feminists should be wary of the "linguistic turn," as if simply changing words changes reality. The challenges faced by a garbage collector, she said, are not mitigated simply by changing the title to sanitation engineer. More pressing issues, she claimed, should be addressed, the gender pay gap for example and stereotypical roles for women and men in our parishes. Then, in closing, Sonderegger voiced her reservations about the revised Eucharistic prayers, noting especially that many of them, in removing "God the Father" as the recipient of the prayer, inadvertently suggest that neither Christ nor the Spirit are God.

During the afternoon three synthetic responses were made to the morning's presentations, and these continued to raise significant questions about inculturation and our images for God.

Liza Anderson, assistant professor of theology at the College of St. Scholastica in Minnesota, raised the issue of how prayers have shaped individuals and communities, noting her own decade-long memorization of the 1979 BCP psalter. Anderson shared a rather haunting story of a late ancient Christian monk being disabused of his problematic image of God, but then was bereft and isolated. What, she asked, would be the larger cost of losing these images?

Jonathan Tan, professor of catholic studies at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, made a robust case for cultural diversity in our liturgical expressions, claiming that many aspects of the prayer book tradition are unintelligible for immigrants.

Thomas Breidenthal, bishop of Southern Ohio, said that perhaps the morning's presenters were closer than we might immediately realize, claiming that all the morning presenters were minimalists in their approach.

A roundtable closed the day and it was clear that there was strong though charitable disagreement. Meyers was transparent with Sonderegger that she was not persuaded by Sonderegger's case for a feminist endorsement of the traditional formula of the Trinity. Taking questions from the audience, Anderson and Sonderegger spoke about masculine language being "healed" and "redeemed." "If Christ is king," Anderson said, "then Caesar is not" and that changes the word *king* itself.

While Tan argued that, from a global

perspective, the 1662 Book of Common Prayer has been experienced as colonialist, Radner countered that many people in post-colonial churches around the world *want* the 1662 book and that we would be well served to avoid a patronizing posture about what is best for them. Radner, however, raised a more troubling question about the day's conversations: we are having this discussion while our church is "disappearing," citing the membership decline in the Episcopal Church.

One priest in the audience captured concerns raised by both Sonderegger and Radner by asking, in the face not only of tremendous decline but also of global climate change, are there more pressing issues before us as a church? Fittingly, Jubilate closed with a choral Eucharist for All Souls, celebrating the witness of those who came before and the hope in the resurrection that is to come. This conference, which was livestreamed and may still be accessed at dsojubilate.org, was meant to foster further conversation and dialogue, equipping the church to talk openly and with theological rigor about our common prayer.

The Rev. Dr. Calvin Lane is associate rector of St George's Church, Dayton Ohio and affiliate professor of church history at Nashotah House Theological Seminary. He served as moderator for the Jubilate Conference.

Bishop Roundup

On November 2, Jonathan H. Folts became the XI Bishop of South Dakota — and the second bishop in his immediate family.

Folts's father, retired Bishop James E. Folts, served as both a co-consecrator and as the preacher. The elder Folts previously ordained his son as both a deacon and a priest in the Diocese of West Texas.

Episcopal News Service reported that in his sermon, the elder Folts told his son that of his three ordinations, "the one that changed your life the most, was that first one, the one that made you a deacon. For in that one … you

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declared your desire, your intention and indeed your willingness, for the rest of your life, to be a servant."

The consecration took place in Pierre, and the local *Capital Journal* reported that Folts is looking forward to a lot of "windshield time" as he visits the 78 congregations spread across the entire state, including two in Nebraska and one in Minnesota. Fifty of those congregations are on Indian reservations, and the paper said South Dakota is the only diocese in the Church where a majority of members are Native Americans. Part of the service was conducted in the Lakota language.

According to *ENS,* about 60 percent of the baptized Episcopalians are either Dakota, Lakota or Nakota Sioux. The diocese also has one congregation composed of Sudanese immigrants in Sioux Falls. According to 2018 parochial reports, there are about 9,700 baptized members in the diocese.

Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry was chief consecrator, and another co-consecrator was the younger Folts's predecessor as Bishop of South Dakota, the Rt. Rev. John T. Tarrant, who retired earlier in the year. Folts has been serving as acting bishop since August.

Iowa

The Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe has announced plans to retire as Bishop of Iowa in September 2021, and called for the election of his successor in Spring 2021. He made his announcement October 26 at the annual diocesan convention.

Scarfe has led the Diocese of Iowa April 2003. "He has been active in social justice issues through his involvement with Bishops United Against Gun Violence, support for the LGBTQ+ community and encouragement of the Becoming Beloved Community initiative development," according to *ENS.*

Lexington

The Rt. Rev. Mark Van Koevering, who has served as bishop provisional of the Diocese of Lexington since April 2018, was elected bishop diocesan at a special convention of the diocese on November 2.

Koevering came to Lexington by a circuitous route. He was serving as an assisting bishop in West Virginia for more than two years, after 12 years as Bishop of Niassa in Mozambique, part of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. Before that he was a priest in the Church in Wales, which is one of the provinces of the Anglican Communion. He was born in Michigan, and was a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand and a teacher in China before ordination.

Missouri

The Diocese of Missouri conducted walkabouts in early November, and will elect the XI Bishop of Missouri on November 23. Candidates include: the Rev. Deon K. Johnson, rector at St. Paul's Church, Brighton, Mich.; the Rev. Stacey Fussell, rector of Church of the Ascension in Bradford, Pa; and the Rev. George D. Smith, rector at St. Mark's Church, Glen Ellyn, Ill.

Maryland

The Rt. Rev. Robert Ihloff, the retired XIII Bishop of Maryland, will return to Maryland as assisting bishop on January 1, 2020. The announcement was

made by the XIV Bishop of Maryland, the Rt. Rev. Eugene Taylor Sutton, who remains bishop diocesan.

Church Decries "Irresponsible" Paris Agreement Withdrawal

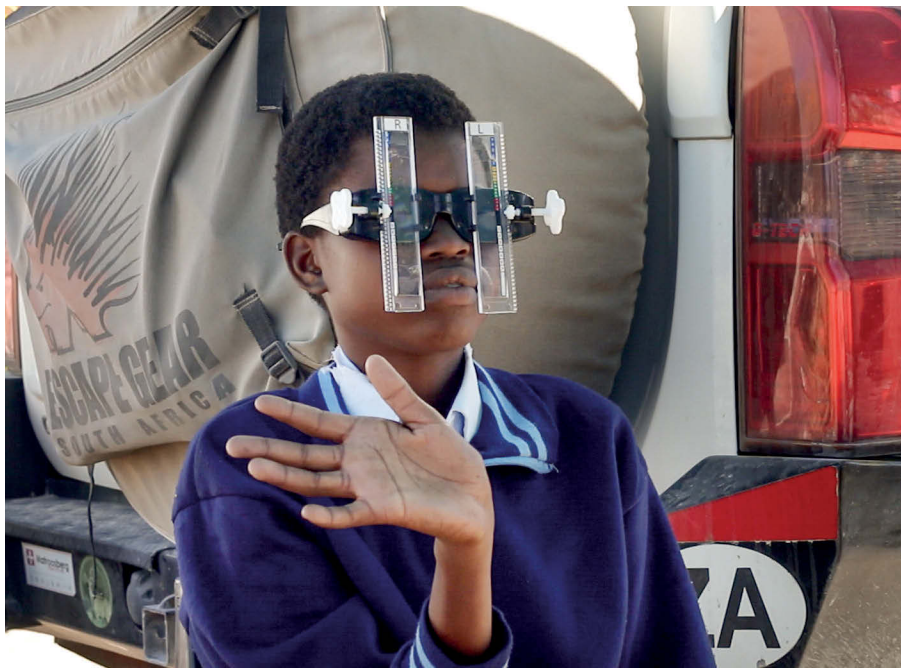
The Episcopal Church, already at odds with the Trump administration over repeated cutbacks to immigration, has called out the administration for its "irresponsible" abandonment of the Paris Agreement, which sets goals for climate change.

"The U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement represents a serious obstacle in the global effort to curb climate change," said the Rt. Rev. Marc Andrus, the Bishop of California. Andrus has been the point person for Episcopal delegations to United Nations summit meetings on climate change.

President Trump has been critical of the Paris Agreement since before he took office, and on Nov. 4 the administration formally announced its plans to withdraw. Nearly every nation on earth — 187 in all — has signed on to the Paris Agreement.

Giving the Gift of Sight to the Neediest

By Kirk Petersen



A child in Botswana takes an eye test. Photo courtesy of Kevin White

There are an estimated 2.5 billion people in the world who do not have access to an optometrist. An Episcopalian in Maryland has found a way to deliver eyeglasses to 40,000 of them, and he has his sights set on more.

While serving as a Marine Corps officer, Kevin White found himself in charge of the Department of Defense's humanitarian efforts for Africa and Eastern Europe. On a trip to Morocco, a medical team was distributing donated eyeglasses to people who needed them.

"It was really disappointing, the inefficiencies of those systems," he said. "Very few people got 20-20 vision in both eyes, and people were literally taking the frame that they liked as opposed to the prescription they needed. I said there has got to be a better way."

So he drew on his science and engineering background to create a system that enables a person with no professional training to determine the necessary correction, pop the appropriate lenses into a frame, and send a patient on his or her way in about 15 minutes — at a cost of about $5 a pair.

Seriously.

The key to the system is called the USee vision-screening tool, which White invented. It's essentially an eyeglass frame with two long, vertical optical strips that gradually change prescription from top to bottom. The patient uses dials to adjust the strips, one eye at a time, to the position providing the clearest vision.

Then the person administering the test can read the prescription off the strips and select the lenses from a kit. There's only one style of frames and one size of lens, so everything is interchangeable. The frames come in black, brown or blue, so the patient does get some choice. The blue ones are kind of jazzy.

But how is it possible the glasses cost only $5 a pair?

"Glasses are one of the most marked-up products," White said. "Mostly, that's because of the infrastructure that it takes to deliver those eyeglasses," including brick-and-mortar stores and expensive optometry equipment. The lenses are all made in China, in the same plants that make lenses for fashion brands.

There are limitations to the system, of course. The lenses don't correct for astigmatism, a fairly common problem caused by an irregularly shaped cornea. And of course if a patient has cataracts or other severe eyesight issues, they need conventional eye care.

But White said more than 90% of the patients they serve can be corrected at least to 20-40, which is the World Health Organization's standard for allowing a person to drive a vehicle.

White's company, Global Vision 2020, partners with governments, nongovernmental and faith-based organizations to distribute the glasses. Since the USee prototype was developed in 2015, White said 40,000 glasses have been distributed in 39 countries.

The pace really picked up in January 2018, when White won a $1 million Creator Award from WeWork, a company that provides shared workspaces and services for startups. "We were quite frugal with that," White said. They used the money "to build a company, to get the USee to full-scale production, to have some stocks and inventory. We built a viable company."

White and his family worship at Christ Church Episcopal in Easton, Maryland, and the church has been involved in the effort from the start. A timeline on the company's website notes that early prototypes of the glasses were tested on volunteers from Christ Church, and the church has distributed glasses on a number of mission trips.

"My wife went on one of them to Mexico a number of years ago, and my son went on the Christ Church mission trip this summer to Peru. He was 14 at the time," White said. His travels have not permitted him to accompany the church on mission trips.

TLC asked White how his faith is connected to his work. He said he sees his role as "helping the poorest of the poor… get something that I had when I was 7. I got a pair of glasses when I was 7. I have two sons, both have glasses. I've spent a lot of time in the developing world, especially in Africa, and to see a child who is 20-400 — who essentially can't see, if he stretches his arm out in front of him, his fingertips are blurry — struggling through life… I think God wants everybody to have an opportunity to enjoy their life."

Fr. David Peters leads his congregation in worship at the Three Legged Goat, a Pflugerville, Texas wine bar. Photo courtesy of David Peters

Facing an Invisible Storm

The increasing struggles of living with anxiety and depression.

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Advent brings out crowds to local churches for respite, festivity and brushes with the holy. But for many church workers, facilitating such experiences for others requires navigating an invisible storm within themselves: mood-related mental health problems.

Disorders rooted in anxiety and depression are showing up among church workers at rates several times higher than the national average. What the data show has denominations working to understand potential causes. They're also rolling out initiatives, from a new Episcopal Church webinar on compassion fatigue to a Lutheran online mental health tool that goes live January 1.

Insurance claims suggest church workers are lining up for help. Through October, 40 percent of the 11,000 church workers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America had filed claims in 2019 for treatment of mood disorders, according to the ELCA's Portico Benefit Services. That number is expected to climb in the fourth quarter, which brings a spike in mood disorder claims every year, according to Portico President and CEO Jeff Thiemann.

"Mood disorder is the number one claim in our population," Thiemann said. "We believe that they are higher than average users [of mental health benefits] because of the nature of their work as caregivers and counselors. They're under stress. They also appreciate the value of therapy and are more likely to use it than the average person would be."

In the general population, mood disorders are far less common than among church workers. They afflict about 9.7 percent of American adults, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Only 19 percent of Americans experienced any type of mental illness in 2018, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

ELCA workers aren't alone in facing these types of struggles. A 2019 Wespath Benefits survey of 1,240 active United Methodist clergy in the U.S. found that 60 percent report feeling emotional distress; 29 percent report feeling down or hopeless; and clinical depression afflicts eight percent. Depression rates among clergy run about 50 percent higher than the national average, according to Duke

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Facing an Invisible Storm

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University's Clergy Health Initiative.

A wider context brightens the picture. The Clergy Health Initiative finds a larger percentage of clergy (68 percent) enjoys positive mental health than U.S. adults writ large (58 percent). And clergy job satisfaction exceeds that of many other professionals, including physical therapists, teachers, and artists.

But clergy are also at greater risk of depression, which suggests church work is particularly fraught with both mental health perils and opportunities to thrive.

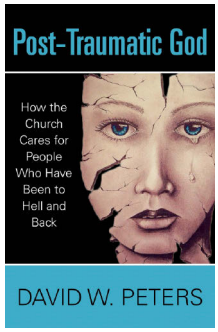
Roman Catholic researchers see the tension play out in satisfaction versus morale. Surveys in multiple dioceses find that about 90 percent of U.S. priests are satisfied with their vocations, according to Fr. Thomas Gaunt, S.J., executive director of the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University. But only about 55 percent report good morale.

"They'll say, 'I'm very happy to be a priest. I can't stand my bishop' or 'I think the parishioners are unrealistic.' But when you go back to asking about being a priest or minister, they'll say, 'No, I'm very satisfied'," Gaunt said. "Our explanation would be that people are very happy with their vocational call but kind of dissatisfied with the practical dimensions or structures — the parish or diocese."

Managing mood-related issues becomes especially important at this time of year. Seasonal affective disorder tends to kick in now when days are short and sunlight proves elusive. Difficult and demanding parishioners can exacerbate mood-related troubles. But denominations vary in how much they know and are willing to disclose about mental health challenges their workers face.

The Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ did not respond to queries from The Living Church. The Church Medical Trust, which administers health benefits for 35,000 Episcopal Church workers and their dependents, declined to provide data on anxiety and depression disorder claims filed with its insurer, Cigna Behavioral Health (CBH).

However, CMT spokesperson Curt Ritter said in an email that Episcopal Church workers are experiencing more problems in at least one mental health area: post-traumatic stress disorder. PTSD claims from a pool of 35,000 Episcopal Church workers and dependents are up 20 percent since 2016, according to CMT.



PTSD is not classified as a mood disorder because it traces to a traumatic experience rather than a chemical imbalance in the brain, according to Dr. Lilly Friedland, a Los Angeles psychologist who helps clients with PTSD and mood disorders. But those who suffer from PTSD routinely also experience depression, anxiety or both, she said.

Ritter said CMT does not understand what's causing the increase in PTSD claims. He did not say how many workers are affected, despite multiple requests from The Living Church to get the figures that were used in calculating the 20-percent increase. He passed along general context from CBH.

CBH indicates "that the lack of a good social support system, childhood trauma and exposure to traumatic events often increases the risk for PTSD," Ritter said in an email.

That church workers would be suffering more PTSD comes as no surprise to Fr. David Peters, an Iraq War veteran and vicar of Saint Joan of Arc Episcopal Church, a new congregation that launched last January in Pflugerville, Texas. He helps veterans suffering from PTSD through the Episcopal Veterans Fellowship. He writes about the disorder — how it takes root, generates numbness and stirs feelings of doom and constant threat — in his book, *Post-Traumatic God: How the Church Cares for People Who Have Been to Hell and Back*.

Clergy can get what's called "secondary PTSD" in parish work, Peters said, simply by compassionately listening to trauma victims. To identify ensuing emotional troubles in clergy as PTSD likely would not have happened 15 years ago, but now people are more aware of the problem and how to treat it.

"The nature of the job — dealing with death and dying and crises — I do think that produces PTSD in a lot of people" in congregational ministry, Peters said. "I don't know that [the 20-percent increase in claims] means more people are getting traumatized. It might just mean that more people are getting help for it."

Peters notes that trauma leading to PTSD, even for military personnel, usually stems from early life experiences (e.g., abuse) that then get triggered by intense episodes later. Dynamics in parish life can cause a previously traumatized person to revert to feeling unsafe or under threat, even if no realistic threat exists, he said.

"There's tons of back channel communication in parish life where people come to you and say: 'you know, some of us were talking, people are talking, people are saying they don't like this or they don't like that'," Peters said. "Those types of things are going to trigger people who have lived in abusive situations because some of that stuff can either feel like abuse or just be abusive."

Getting treatment for PTSD can enable church workers to function well, Peters said, whereas untreated PTSD can be debilitating. The cognitive dissonance alone can be disruptive.

"On a spiritual level, PTSD is an inability to trust," Peters said. "In a job where you're supposed to be teaching trust and helping people trust, [to] discover that it's really hard for you [to trust] would be, I would think, really upending. It has been for me at times."

Multiple factors could be causing or exacerbating mood disorders among church workers, Thiemann and others said. Among them:

- Political tensions are playing out more intensely in congregations and local communities since 2016;
- Declining participation in local church life can lead to blaming church leaders and heightening stress;
- Negative perceptions of church in wake of clergy sexual abuse and other scandals foster low morale;
- Social support for church-related careers is lacking as confused peers wonder: Why choose ministry?
- Perennial challenges, such as feeling

isolated as clergy, and financial stress.

"A lot of folks are really frustrated that their kids are not in church and their grandkids are not in church as we've seen the de-churching of America," Thiemann said. "One way to [respond] would be to say: 'What did I do wrong?' But it's much more likely people will say: 'What did the system do wrong? What did the leader do wrong and why don't you fix that?' And then point to the pastor."

Friedland said mood disorders among church workers aren't surprising in part because clergy have what she calls "one of the toughest jobs in the world." She notes they're expected to always be in a good mood, have time for every congregant, show up for major moments such as births and deaths, yet accept being away from their own families at special occasions. If they're idealists, reality can deal some hard blows too.

"Most people go into nonprofits because they want to do good, and part of this [mental health struggle] is realizing: 'Oh my God, I can't make that big of a difference,'" Friedland said. "It's very humbling. The pay isn't often great. The expectations others have are very high. So, I think it's just a hard time."

Denominations are taking a proactive approach. They're encouraging church workers to use employee assistance programs and manage stress by taking sabbath days of rest, eating well and getting enough exercise. They're also rolling out new resources.

For Episcopalians, Church Pension Group produced new webinars this year. Topics include stress reduction through mindfulness practices, overcoming compassion fatigue and resilience when disaster strikes. See the resources here: bit.ly/34OMAg6.

United Methodists have released a resiliency toolkit that encourages workers to use their Employee Assistance Program and their Live and Work Well benefits: bit.ly/2K8vL7W

The ELCA meanwhile is planning a Jan. 1, 2020 launch of Learn to Live, a new online mental health program. It's designed to help members strengthen their minds and improve emotional resilience through principles of cognitive behavioral therapy.

Learn to Live is part of a "wellness reformation" that the ELCA has touted since 2016. That's when Portico Benefit Services took the unorthodox step of reaching out beyond its membership to engage congregational leaders. Among the central goals: to raise awareness of how congregants are impacting church workers' mental health. Every church council president received a "conversation guide" to open the dialogue.

"We hope you'll play a part in the wellness reformation, too!" says Thiemann's letter introducing the guide. "We encourage congregation leaders to engage in a conversation about how your church culture is (or isn't) supporting healthy lifestyles. This conversation is meant to affirm positive practices already in place and shine light on new ways your church can support the health of your leaders and be a place of wellness." ❑

Advent's Radical Prophet

By Mark Michael

"William Blake" at the Tate Britain Museum, Millbank, London. Until February 2, 2020.

William Blake, self portrait

London's Tate Britain Museum lies just a few steps from the Pimlico tube stop, bordering some of the city's most exclusive neighborhoods. But I'd suggest approaching its massive "William Blake" exhibition, as I did, by alighting at Westminster, and walking alongside the Houses of Parliament in what seems an apocalyptic twilight for British politics. "Madness, madness, Brexit is madness!" a trio sang on one side of me, while protesters hoisted high their placards on the other, "I'm with Boris! No Surrender!"

Martin Myrone and Amy Concannon, the curators of the 300-piece exhibition, the largest display of Blake's work in a generation, emphasize that the artist, too, was cursed to live in interesting times. His was, they say, an age of "radical thought, war and global unrest." The American Revolution, France's Reign of Terror, the Napoleonic Wars, and the Corn Law riots framed his life. A self-professed radical, Blake counted public crusaders for universal suffrage, women's rights and the abolition of slavery among his friends and patrons, and he lifted up a vision of liberated humanity and a hope for a new city of justice and peace.

This is a woke Blake for the 21st century. The exhibition's selections and interpretive materials are quick to tug at the threads of race consciousness, sexual liberation, pacificism, and proto-environmentalism clearly present in the tangles of the great artist's mind. "A Negro hung alive by the Ribs to a Gallows," an engraving of a Caribbean lynching scene that kindled his deep hatred of slavery, is centrally featured in a survey of his early work. Nearby are a series of plates he executed (for a handsome fee) to illustrate a German childrearing manual translated by the proto-feminist Mary Wollstonecraft. Selections from Blake's allegorical epic, *America,* a supernatural contest between George Washington and "The Guardian Prince of Albion" waged on the fields of the lost continent of Atlantis, are selected to emphasize Blake's hatred of tyranny and trust in self-government.

The exhibition also, perhaps, connects with 21st century experience in casting the artist as a continually beleaguered gig-worker, running through an immense chain of unreliable or offended patrons. The prices paid for many of the pieces are carefully documented, and several of the comparative works are by students Blake took in to extend his continually dwindling resources. Extended series of illustrations for contemporary meditations on death and fantastical tales of his own stand

alongside commissions based on texts from Milton, Dante, Bunyan, and, of course, the Bible. The wide variety marks out deep wells of imagination, as well as wearying progression of recycled bearded ancients, histrionic maidens and muscle-bound warriors.

A large number of Blake's illustrated books, which feature his own arcane poetry alongside vivid, though sometimes unrelated, imagery are displayed, and invite close inspection. Blake himself designed the process, "relief etching," that he used to print them. Evocatively deploying acid to eat away copper plate to reveal the desired image, the technique saved the cost of hand-coloring and allowed the text to be printed in (sadly faded) colored ink.

Like many contemporary exhibitions, the Tate displays unfolds the technical mysteries of the process in great detail. It frustratingly pleads a variety of interpretations to pawn off its duty to help the viewer understand the complex combinations of text and image. That Blake claimed that relief etching was revealed to him in a vision and that the process resulted in works with a noted affinity to medieval illuminated manuscripts goes largely unmentioned.

This gestures at a missed opportunity at the heart of this otherwise deeply significant collection. Perhaps half the works on display deal with Biblical themes, including the marvelous gallery of Old and New Testament watercolors commissioned by Thomas Butts. But the curators consistently give short shrift to Blake's profound Christian faith and his sense of responsibility to England's religious heritage.

Blake's first major assignment as an apprentice was drawing the grave monuments of Westminster Abbey, a place he described to his friend Samuel Palmer as the site of "his earliest and most sacred recollections." In his magisterial biography of the artist, Peter Ackroyd remarks, "His poetry and paintings are imbued with Biblical motifs and images; the very curve and cadence of his sentences are derived from the Old Testament" (25). An autodidact, he read widely in Christian mysticism, orthodox and heretical, and his seemingly modern sexual attitudes spring mainly from Swedenborg's theories of the body's spiritual energies. Blake was also, to the bafflement of his many secular contemporaries, a visionary all his life, having first glimpsed a tree full of angels on Peckham Rye, then a meadow on London's edge, at the age of eight.

Blake, A Negro Hung Alive by the Ribs to a Gallows, 1796, Victoria and Albert

He continually reworked his *Ancient of Days*, the famous image of the mighty Creator plotting the worlds with his golden compass. A vividly colored version, completed just days before his death, is prominently featured in the Tate exhibition. The powerful figure clearly evokes Blake's hero Michelangelo. Ackroyd argues for inspiration from a carving on Richard II's tomb canopy in the Abbey. But Blake also said he had seen the Ancient of Days atop the staircase in his cramped London house. He rendered on paper nothing less than what God himself had revealed.

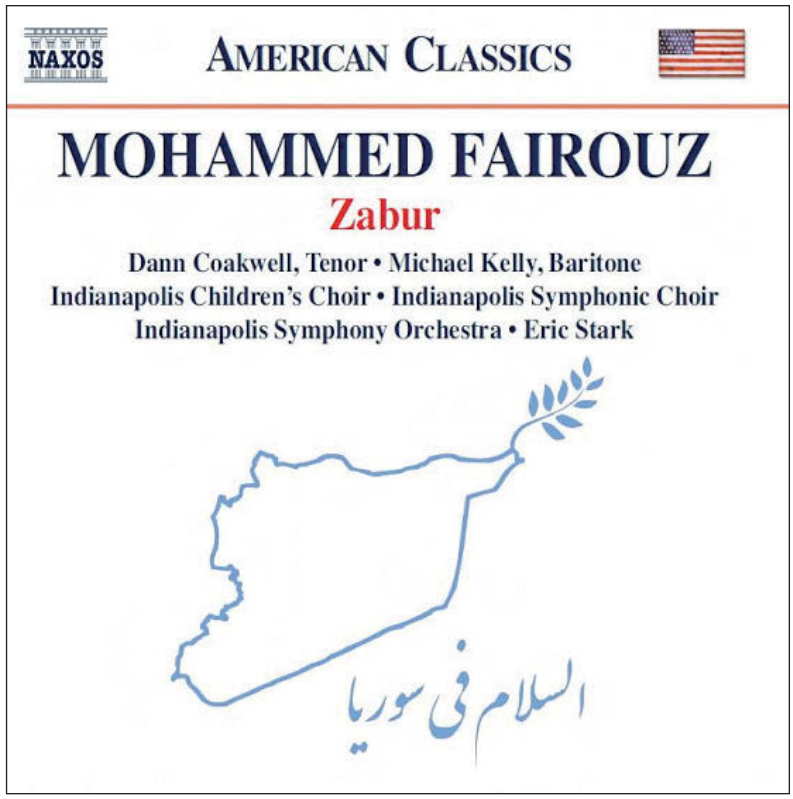
Blake viewed himself first not as a poet or an artist, much less a political activist, but as a prophet, a seer who glimpsed the glory of God and was forever transformed. A deeply arresting self-portrait in the exhibition's first room marks him as a man of penetrating vision, one who sees through the events of his own time to the eternal verities.

Early biographer Allan Cunningham noted this mingling of the ages in Blake's final epic, *Jerusalem,* a factor which he blames for the project's abject commercial failure. "Of new designs there are no less than a hundred and what their meaning is the artist has left unexplained. It seems of a religious, political, and spiritual kind and wanders from hell to heaven and from heaven to earth, now glancing into the disturbances of our day and then making a transition to the antediluvians."

As he aged, Blake's attention turned insistently back to Jesus, and the exhibition includes several of his most notable images of the Savior. These include an evocative treatment of Psalm 18:16, "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters." David, bound in chains (a recurrent motif in Blake), barely lifts his dead above the dark waters. But a youthful Christ gazes at him in love, glowing with light and strength. Christ's arms are outstretched, cruciform, and he swoops down on a throne of seven cherubim. He comes as the Savior to a world bound in chains of its own making, chains that technological progress and sharp new ideas could not ultimately sever.

Blake did not deal out a vague, undifferentiated "spirituality" to his own age of "radical thought, war and global unrest." Like John the Baptist, he thrust his finger toward the Lamb of God, and awaited in hope the new city coming down from God. "Just before he died," an onlooker remembered, "His Countenance became fair. His eyes Brightn'd and he burst out into singing of the things he saw in Heaven." Blake's is an Advent vision, pained by the world's ancient wounds, seeing clearly to the truth of things, and full of the joy of heaven. ❑

Psalms of Hope in the Face of Death



Zabur by **Mohammed Fairouz**, text by **Najla Säid**
Various artists
Naxos. Run Time: 56 minutes. $7.99 on iTunes.

Review by David Palmer

This recording contains the 16 sections that make up *Zabur*, a work for orchestra, adult and children's choirs, and baritone and tenor soloists. Zabur is the Arabic word for Psalms, texts that are important to Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, and the composer, Mohammed Fairouz, has used English, Hebrew, and Arabic translations of selected psalms.

The recording uses the performers from the work's 2015 world premiere: conductor Erik Stark, The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, The Indianapolis Symphonic Choir, The Indianapolis Children's Choir, and vocal soloists, Michael Kelly and Dann Coakwell. The execution is masterful, a testament to their careful preparation.

Zabur joins a collection of war-themed works for chorus and orchestra such as Benjamin Britten's War Requiem, written about 15 years after World War II, and *L'homme armé* by Karl Jenkins, which was written during the Kosovo conflict. It's hard not to hear parallels between Zabur and the Britten work, including the performing forces, the juxtaposition of tonal and post-tonal compositional materials, secular poetry declaimed by baritone and tenor soloists, and sacred texts sung by adult and children's choirs.

The choral and instrumental passages alternate with vocal solos which declaim the story of Dawoud (a baritone), a writer who is trapped in a bomb shelter in Syria with his companion Jibreel (a tenor), other men, women, and children. Unable to leave or write on the internet, Dawoud, whose name is Arabic for David (the writer of many of the Biblical psalms), writes for himself and his companions in the shelter.

Dawoud and Jibreel are represented here by baritone and tenor soloists, Michael Kelly and Dann Coakwell, who sing powerfully and expressively. Part of the genius of the Britten work is also evident in Zabur's intersection of Dawoud's psalm-like writing and the psalms themselves. One can hear Zabur's use of Psalm 130 ("Out of the depths I cry unto Thee") as giving voice to the collective anguish of the frightened inhabitants of the shelter.

The piece begins with a choral cry of anguish, representing the voices of those gathered in the shelter while war rages outside. While such intense moments use modern sounds, the work is generally tonal and stylistically eclectic, and later melodies are, at times, like folk or pop music. There are some exquisite moments of *sotto voce* drones, evocative of high-flying planes or a humming generator.

The children's chorus takes the fore in "Can I Tell Them We are Hungry?" Zabur expresses society's concern for its children and for the future that is thrust upon them. With war happening in so many parts of our world, Zabur is not only a work for our time but for every time and place where societies take up arms to resolve their conflicts.

David Palmer teaches composition and piano at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

God with Us *in Hell*

By Hannah Bowman

This is one in a series of four essays on the Four Last Things by the author that will be published this Advent on Covenant*, the weblog of* The Living Church.

The traditional "four last things" of Advent — death, judgment, heaven, and hell—are not always popular. Often our churches would prefer not to explore such matters. But Advent is a time for the church to renew our commitment to engaging the difficult doctrines of our faith. In a world of suffering and injustice, hell is not a concept the church dare ignore.

Engagement with the concept of hell need not lead inevitably to affirmation of punitive condemnation. I am a universalist. But even universalists have to grapple with the reality of hell. Hell may be empty, but we cannot deny its existence. By considering the purpose and nature of hell in our theology—especially in its relation to Christ—we can imagine a universalism that still makes space for real divine judgment.

The first step toward responsible Christian universalism is to affirm the reality of God's judgment upon all of us for our acts. In his book *Dare We Hope That All Men Be Saved?* (Ignatius Press, 1988), Hans Urs von Balthasar posits that our relation to hell is always personal and existential: we can only discuss, conceive of, theologize and speculate about hell (and hope for its emptying) when we understand ourselves as people "under judgment." Whatever our hope for the emptying of hell, we must always assume it to be a "real possibility" for ourselves (164).

A simplistic universalism—a universalism that simply denies hell's existence as incompatible with divine love—abrogates the very idea of divine judgment. Judgment is essential in our broken world of injustice and oppression. The healing of the nations requires not only greater love and inclusion, but that the mighty be cast down and the rich be sent away empty (Luke 1:52–53). The vindication of the righteous demands the judgment of the oppressor—so we must maintain a dialectic of judgment *and* mercy in God's relation to the world.

Each of God's acts of judgment — righting wrong power relations — is also an act of mercy and truth-making aimed at love and good, not our suffering. Even reducing hell to a purifying "purgatory," or giving hell's judgments a temporal limit, still fails to meet the complexity of the tension between judgment and mercy that we face when we face God after this life. Such solutions flatten the tension into a simple order: first God punishes or purges us (judgment), then we receive mercy. This does not do justice to the always-merciful nature of God's judgment. Whatever hell is, it must be consistent with a unified picture of this *simultaneous* judgment-mercy.

Instead of denying the existence of hell, or flattening its reality, we can look to Jesus' statements about hell and his descent into it.

The word Jesus most often uses for hell, Gehenna, places him in the tradition of Israelite prophets, especially Jeremiah. Gehenna was the place where the Israelites unforgivably "burned their sons and daughters in the fire," and the place where, in judgment, destruction will befall Israel (Jer. 7:30-34). Nicholas Ansell, in his book *The Annihilation of Hell* (Wipf & Stock, 2013), suggests that these Jeremiad

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God with Us *in Hell*

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statements of Jesus about Gehenna are, like Jeremiah's prophecies, not intended to be accurate eschatological claims about some afterlife hell, but are instead statements about the historical judgment against Israel, and correspondingly our liability to real and concrete divine judgment *now*.

But what about the resurrection of the dead to eternal life and to judgment (Daniel 12:2)? Jesus' statements about hell, or Gehenna, present a picture, but not a full one. We must consider also the creedal claim that Jesus "descended into hell."

In his study of the descent into hell in *Mysterium Paschale* (Ignatius Press, 1990), Balthasar writes that because Christ was truly dead on Holy Saturday, in solidarity with all the dead, Christ experienced not only physical death but in a real sense hell, the fullness of abandonment and spiritual death. He concludes, strikingly: "Hell in the New Testament sense is a function of the Christ event" (172).

Here is the idea that hell is *created* by Christ's experience of it. The distinction between a generic land of the dead and hell as an image of suffering judgment derives from Jesus' experience of divine condemnation in his death. The fulness of hell is always borne by Christ. There is no hell outside of or apart from Christ.

The fact of Jesus' solidarity with us under judgment provides the key to the mysterious dialectic of God's merciful judgment:

Hell is the reality of standing always under unavoidable divine judgment, and the reality that Jesus mercifully stands alongside us, and that therefore God Himself is in the depths of hell. The concrete judgment which we face as a constant possibility, for this life and the next, *is* the judgment already experienced as a reality by Jesus.

The hope is not that God will relent, or that the torments of hell will prove only to be temporary. Our hope is that the judgment of God will be righteous, and that we, judged, sinking into the depths of hell, will find Christ there. In hell is also our ransom from it: he who is both judged and judge.

Jesus' coming in Advent is not only his coming as an infant in Bethlehem, nor only his coming as our judge at the end of time. It is also his coming to the depths of death and judgment: his presence in hell which grants it its truest existence while at the same time undoing its sting with infinite mercy. Jesus' presence in hell is the paradoxical symbol of justice that promises us the fullness of mercy and the fullness of judgment of God.

But what happens to those who choose to continue denying God?

My perspective here—writing as one under judgment—is, like Balthasar, to suggest that such questions are less important than to understand hell as a possibility for ourselves as we constantly seek the forgiveness and rely on the mercy of God.

But another answer to the question is provided by the fullness of the doctrine of Christ's descent into hell. For those who experience the judgment of God and continue not to choose to turn to him and rest in his grace, Christ *remains* in hell with them. Separation from God—even by determined choice—is impossible because Christ's death in hell precedes ours. What if you choose to reject God? Then *God himself is rejected along with you.*

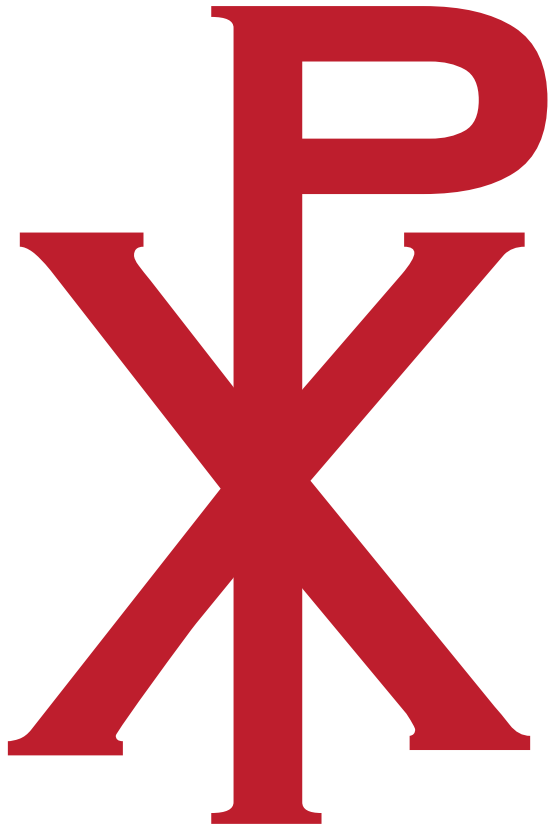
Perhaps this is what makes hell a fitting topic for the season of Advent. The defining fact of hell is that God arrives in it as Emmanuel, God with Us. In Emmanuel, we can face the merciful judgment of God and see it as one unified act of love and solidarity. God's mercy is not a way God saves us from judgment and hell. Instead, God's mercy and judgment coincide. God's setting the world right results in our condemnation as sinners—and in that condemnation, God's mercy pursues us as Emmanuel. Hell cannot be dispensed with. But even hell is ultimately in Christ. Even in hell, judgment is completed and found to be mercy.

Hannah Bowman is a graduate student at Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles; a literary agent at Liza Dawson Associates; and the founder of Christians for the Abolition of Prisons (christiansforabolition.org).

Four Last Things

Beginning with Death and Judgment

(Excerpted from a pamphlet
in The Living Church's series, "Anglicans Believe")



From at least the high Middle Ages, churches have focused on the Four Last Things during the season of Advent. Death, judgment, heaven, and hell rouse people from the festivities of December to ponder matters both profound and, perhaps, profoundly depressing.

The Four Last Things are a popular designation for eschatology, the study of last things or the end. They focus our thoughts on our end and the wider context of the world's end when Christ returns in judgment. The Christian Year begins by fixing our attention on the end.

Possibly because of their sharp contrast to the cheer of the weeks building toward Christmas, the Four Last Things are now rarely topics for Advent sermons. Yet they continue to have a central place in Christian belief and practice. Arguably, they have an even more important place than ever. To see why, we must begin by looking at the intention of each topic.

We begin with death.

In the past, death was an ever-present and imminent stalker. For most people, life was nasty, brutish, and short, and one's demise a constant concern reinforced by the frightful regularity with which children, friends, family, and neighbors perished. The popularity of preaching on the Four Last Things coincided with the arrival of the Black Death. People were understandably eager to know how to prepare for a good death. They knew their mortality all too well, and sought to accept the words of Psalm 103:15-16:

> As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.

Personal mortality reminds people of what they share with all things. Everything but God is born, lives, and dies. The 1662 prayer book office includes this reminder: "Man, that is born of a woman, hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery. He cometh up, and is cut down, like a flower; he fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay. In the midst of life we are in death." Such considerations instill humility and acceptance of our limitations.

Next is judgment.

Everyone will appear before Christ when he returns to judge the living and the dead. Christians must examine their lives with vigor, facing and confessing their "manifold sins and wickednesses," making amendments wherever necessary. Such examination is given urgency by the reminder that we can never know the hour of our death.

Few ideas have shown greater political effect than the Christian doctrine of judgment. That judges themselves stand under divine judgment reshaped how we understand mercy and judgment. St. Augustine wrote in a letter to a judge perturbed by the interference of clergy on behalf of criminals,

> Judges …, the very avengers of crime, who are not to be influenced by their personal anger but are to be agents of the law, and those who enforce the law against proven injuries done to others …, all these quail before the divine judgment, recalling that they have need of the mercy of God for their own sins, and they do not think they do injury to their office if they show mercy to those over whom they have the lawful power of life and death. (Letter 153:8)

One of the most fruitful characteristics of medieval theology was the struggle to demonstrate how justice and mercy, both found supremely in God, are not contradictory, even if we find it hard to see how.

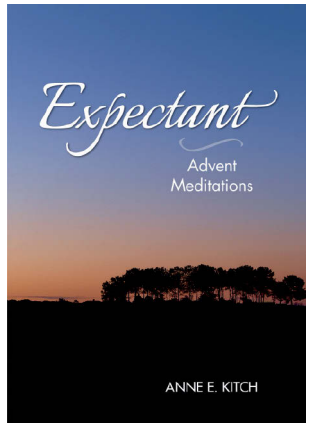
* * *

Our society has lost its capacity to live within proper limits. Our very idea of freedom scorns limitations. To be truly free, we say, is to be unbound from any external limitations: familial, social, religious, political, natural, and, increasingly, physical. Yet, even as pulpits fall silent about the Four Last Things, nature has begun to preach. Without limits, human life doesn't flourish but inexorably embraces death and judgment and all too often creates human hells. Climate change, the Anthropocene, pollution, degrading communities, and unsustainable growth have begun to remind even the most hardened secularists that this life stands always under judgment, whether we like it or not. ❑

BOOKS

Ordinary Encounters with the Holy One

Review by Dominique Peridans



EXPECTANT
Advent Meditations
By **Anne E. Kitch**
Church Publishing, pp. 64, $7.95

As the title of her book and its introduction so clearly suggest, the Rev. Anne E. Kitch captures the heart of the experience of believers in Christ, in the season of sacred preparation preceding Christmas. "For me, the primary stance of Advent is one of expectation: it is a season of waiting and paradox." The original, fitting disposition of the heart in those who look to the *adventus* — that is, to the coming, the approach, the arrival of the Lord in the mystery of the Incarnation — is indeed that of expectation. Hearts animated by the gift of hope *expect*. And of course, "faith is the assurance of things hoped for" (Hebrews 11:1).

The expectation, rooted in faith and in hope, that Kitch invites and explores does not ignore the seeming paradox — better, the mysterious reality — of our pilgrimage as Christians: "already but not yet," a theological paradigm articulated more fully by Princeton theologian Geerhardus Vos (d. 1949) early in the 20th century.

Kitch invites the reader to ask, with her, the poignant question: "What is it like to hold myself expectant, to remain in the tension of looking forward to that which has not yet come and, at the same time, that which has already come?" It is a profound question regarding our actual relationship with our Incarnate Lord, more present than we can imagine, yet *adventus*, coming, and thus promising fulfillment and fullness of relationship. "How can I explore this in-between space?" Kitch asks. And further, given the nature of the Incarnation, God enfleshed, and thus engaging humanity in the stuff of everyday life, she asks, "What ordinary encounters might bring me through the threshold to an extraordinary encounter with the holy?"

What follows, based on psalm verses and a few collects, are meditations, descriptions of daily life — the sound of tires and laughter, wool sweaters and computer issues, snowflakes and wrong car keys. The meditations are accessible in their simplicity and beauty, in which the extraordinary emerges in the ordinary, the holy emerges in the mundane, in which our Lord, as always promised, comes. Kitch's gentle meditations are wonderfully inviting, especially perhaps for those who, at times, feel overwhelmed by the greatness of God or who struggle to find the presence of God, inviting us into relationship.

Kitch's trust in the Word made flesh, *our* flesh, is evident and reassuring and inspiring. She invites the assurance of faith, but it is a faith open to God's many surprises. Acknowledging her own struggles in the spiritual life, Kitch offers the reader an experienced, steady hand, both humble and helpful. And she offers a tool that, as she describes it, can be coupled with the Daily Office and the psalms of the day, for those who may wish to inscribe themselves into the larger prayer of the Church, as the bride of Christ responding with one voice to her Bridegroom.

The Rev. Dominique Peridans is the rector of the Church of the Ascension & Saint Agnes, Washington, DC.

Judgment, Avoiding the Tensions

Review by Cole Hartin

The prevalent form of universalism that has taken hold not only in our churches, but in the popular Christian imagination, has a sentimental appeal.

It goes something like this: "God is loving, and people are basically good, therefore, everyone will get to heaven one day. Besides, life can be hell enough on its own, so why would God make it worse for anyone in the afterlife?"

David's Bentley Hart's recent offering, *That All Shall Be Saved* is a defense of universalism, but of a very different kind. Hart does not deny that God will judge, or that some (perhaps many!) people will suffer in hell. Instead he argues for a hell that does not exist forever: hell is painful, to be sure, but it is purgative, so that when all is said and done, so to speak, all shall be saved.

Hart's book is slim and does not include the weighty scholarly apparatus that one might expect for such an argument, or from other recent treatments on universalism such as Michael J. McClymond's two-volume *The Devil's Redemption* or Ilaria L.E. Ramelli's *A Larger Hope*. Despite Hart's fondness for large words, his book is written so that a well-educated Christian should be able to track with it. His prose is at times delicious, at others caustic, and often humorous. His book is worth reading even for those who might find his argument flawed.

That All Shall Be Saved is structured in three parts. The first frames the questions about the traditional doctrine of hell through Hart's experience, including his reflections on a sermon from his childhood Episcopal priest. The second is comprised of four meditations on God, judgement, personhood, and freedom. Finally, the third part is a kind of summary and conclusion.

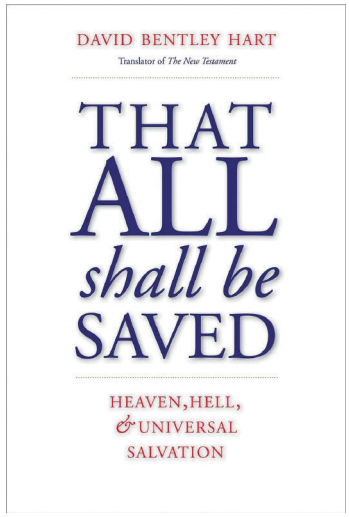
For Hart, arguing that all shall be saved is a deeply moral project. At the heart of his book are really two issues. First, Hart cannot believe that a finite rational creature could ultimately reject God in any final sense. And second, that a God who would create a humanity whom he knew would be capable (and willing) to reject him with finality, and so would suffer eternally in conscious torment for this rejection, is not very good at all. In Hart's own words, "the God in whom the majority of Christians throughout history have professed belief appears to be evil" (73).

The rest of the text is really an expansion and deepening of these themes.

Hart does engage significantly with Scripture, both translating and commenting on the many passages that would suggest universal salvation. Furthermore, he deftly skates around passages that do seem to suggest eternal perdition. His treatment of Scripture is not perfect, but his case is clear and to the point.

As far as tradition goes, Hart simply dismisses it. For him, the majority of Christians, especially those in the West, have simply misread Scripture, and have propagated hideously unbiblical and irrational beliefs about hell. To dismiss such large swaths of Christians, along with the teaching of weighty documents such as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the Athanasian Creed, might be laudable to Christians with shallow ecclesial roots, but it is a bold move for those committed to the authority of the Church.

Jesus notes that there are some truths that are left to the mature, telling us not to cast our pearls to swine (Matt. 7:6). This teaching was termed "the doctrine of reserve" by the Tractarians. There are some points of tension in Scripture that are better left unresolved, or if they are resolved speculatively, it may be best to leave it to the saints to figure out.

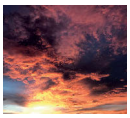


That ALL Shall Be Saved
Heaven, Hell & Universal Salvation
By **David Bentley Hart**
Yale. pp. 232. $26

One critique of Hart's book is his unwillingness to accept ambiguity, to simply trust in the goodness of God, rather than to concretize his goodness by making sure we have the last steps of his plan pinned down. Can the Christian not begin to love and trust God, without knowing how exactly the eschaton will look? There is a pathway to trust God in Christ, that leaves the words of Scripture to exist with the tensions they have, and to simply proclaim them. Synthesis may well bring some comfort, but God reveals himself in nature, in Scripture, in a person, none of which can be summed up so tidily.

Hart's book will be a standard text when it comes to discussing universalism. His florid prose is not only a pleasure to read, but he gets to the heart of the universalism debate incisively, in a relatively short book that most Christians will find readable (and affordable).

Cole Hartin is assistant curate of St. Luke's, Saint John, New Brunswick.



Cæli enarrant

John Jewel, Confident Visibilist

Last time I introduced some basic Augustinian rules about the one Church as, at once, a visible and invisible society. As *visible*, the Church is an institution in history to which we may point, that properly codifies orthodox teaching to be obeyed and trusted, within which one must ordinarily be born through baptism in order to be saved. Visible membership in the Church is not enough, however, to guarantee salvation, for the Church's true members must believe and live out their faith, and finally persevere to the end by God's grace, all of which will be hidden in important ways both from others and from the would-be faithful themselves. This is the *invisible* aspect of the Church's life. That everything is not always as it seems is perplexing, but it also accounts for the *mixed* character of the Church, which the Lord describes both as a consequence of attack by an enemy and in terms of God's just judgment in the end (see Matt. 13:24-30). The Church, like her members, is on pilgrimage, and awaits her consummation in the marriage supper of the Lamb (see Rev. 19:6-9).

John Jewel

National Portrait Gallery/Wikimedia Commons

I will turn in a third column to Richard Hooker, the oft-heralded architect of Anglican ecclesiology, but John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, comes first, having preceded Hooker by a generation and, in fact, served as his patron at Oxford. Hooker would later describe Jewel as "the worthiest divine that Christendom hath bred for some hundreds of years" (*Laws* II.vi.4). Be that as it may, it is interesting to ask where Jewel's passionate *Apology of the Church of England* (1562; see the 2002 edn. from Church Publishing) falls along the Augustinian axis of invisible visibilism. I will attempt to answer by taking seriously Jewel's own constructive theological account, which he offers self-consciously in the teeth of fresh Christian division that demanded uncomfortable inter-ecclesial adjudication.

I say *uncomfortable*, but that may sound moralistic, as if the requisite battle for the Church's purifying ought not call forth, on occasion, a righteous indignation and concomitant courage to answer the enemies of the Church and the gospel. In the latter spirit and with such a purpose in view, Jewel warms to his subject, and his text evinces the frisson of reform, taking the fight to his opponents. For we have, writes Jewel, "put ourselves apart not as heretics are wont, from the Church of Christ, but as all good men ought to do, from the infection of naughty persons and hypocrites" (Pt. IV; p. 65) — and more than that, from the "fellowship" of "men, who, though they be not, yet at least seem and be called Christians" (Pt. IV; p. 66). To be sure, these same imposters, having "left nothing remaining in the Church of God that hath any likeness of this Church, *yet will… seem* the patrons and valiant maintainers of the Church," as all heretics always have. Here Jewel notes Arians, Nestorians, Ebionites, and "Mahomites" (or "Saracens"); in an earlier list he includes the Eutychians, Marcionites, Valentinians, Carpocratians, Tatians, and Novatians — in short, "all them which have had a wicked opinion either of God the Father, or of Christ, or of the Holy Ghost, or of any other point of the Christian religion" (Pt. III; p. 42). Curiously, in both lists of heresies, Jewel fails to mention Donatists, the *ecclesial*

heretics, whose teaching and actions occasioned St. Augustine's having insisted that the true Church sits secretly within the all-too-visible bounds of a mixed assembly, attended by good and bad Catholic alike. Faced with genuine ecclesiological conundra, the Donatists erred both through premature departure and an embrace of over-realized visibility. In this way, the Donatists occasioned misbegotten division, that is, the very thing prompting Jewel's own writing, amid the ruins of the western Church in his day.

The Augustinian student expects Jewel to acquit Anglicans of just this sinful charge, while at the same time leveling it against his opponents: *they* are the unduly dividing and departing Donatists. That he does not redounds, in part, to his decision to portray Rome *not* as simply erring — as, therefore, potentially still sitting on the permeable perimeter of the Church, like the Donatists — but rather as itself Antichrist. Quite simply, Jewel views Rome as "the very same harlot of Babylon and rout of devils whereof is prophesied so plainly in the Apocalypse" (Pt. IV; p. 74). It follows that the Roman church "is severed from the Gospel" — borrowing the phrase, remarkably enough, from St. Cyprian himself (Recap.; p. 137).

And this suggests a second reason for the absence in Jewel's *Apology* of any real wrestling with Donatism, namely, his not having taken up Augustine's tripartite teaching about the Church as visible, invisible, and mixed. Specifically, the invisibility of the Church has gone missing, subsumed by an unstinting institutionality made to bear the burden of the whole. And with the disappearance of invisibility goes, too, the mediating admission that the one Church suffers unfaithfulness, confusion, and error — even heresy — from within: *sin*, that one day will be rooted out, but not yet.

Bumping into the apparent reality of wheat and tares side by side, just as Jesus promised — for there they are: "this great crop and heap of heresies grow up amongst us" — Jewel declines to draw the dominical conclusion, imagining instead the immediate "vanishing" of heresy once the gospel is permitted properly to shine, like the sun burns off the mist of the morning. As he urges:

> Let [the Roman Catholics] make a proof, let them give the gospel free passage, let the truth of Jesus Christ give his clear light and stretch forth his bright beams into all parts, and then shall they forthwith see how all these shadows straight will vanish and pass away at the light of the gospel, even as the thick mist of the night consumeth at the sight of the sun. (Pt. III; p. 43)

Charitably, Jewel seems not so much anti- as pre- or simply non-Augustinian. Irenical perorations on the mixed body and the necessary hiddenness of the city of God may be spoken of again anon. For now, the Church herself must be re-set, re-initiated, as Jewel says, "upon a high and glistering place, in the top of an hill (see Isa. 2:2), and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (see Eph. 2:20)" (Pt. IV; p. 76). And the Church *has been* so restored, he insists, as may be seen not merely by baptism as a public marker of membership but also by a demonstrable holiness of the faithful, since "God hath plucked us out 'from the power of darkness, to serve the living God' (Rom. 8:11), to cut away all the remnants of sin…; that it may *appear* how… the Spirit of sanctification is in our bodies and… Christ himself doth dwell in our hearts" (Pt. II; p. 39). Sanctification, the usually-long process of Christian perfecting that, please God, may issue in the salvation of one's soul — at the end of the pilgrim journey — is here presented as a kind of souped-up baptism, comparably public and susceptible of scrutiny.

Jewel's dogged focus on differentiation is understandable in the context of defending the Church of England's recent re-structuring, with henceforth no ecclesial or juridical overlap with the Roman Catholic world: a clean break. But his portrait of the one Church, or his own church, as they are in Christ and in history is innovative by traditional standards. In a bid to raise the bar on a sullied, cultural Christianity with too-little verve, Jewel proposes in its place a hopefully reformed Christianity no less culturally embedded with wildly inflated expectations for verifiable success, *pace* both tradition and Scripture (cf. Heb. 12:1). All visibility, all the time. Balls and strikes.

Thirty years hence, locked in hand-to-hand combat with the Puritans, Hooker will approach these questions differently.

—Christopher Wells

PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Tony Andres** is vicar of St. John the Baptist, Ivy, Va.

The Rev. **Brandon Ashcraft** is curate of Good Shepherd, Austin, Texas.

The Rev. **Lindsey Briggs** is assistant priest of Christ & St. Stephen's, New York.

The Rev. Dn. **Julett Butler** is deacon of St. Paul's, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

The Rev. **Virginia Carr** is priest-in-charge at St. Mark's, Lappans, Md.

The Rev. **David Chavez** is missioner for border ministries of the Diocese of Arizona.

The Rev. **Rainey Dankel** is interim associate rector of St. Paul's, Richmond, Va.

The Rev. **Tracy Dugger** is rector of Nativity, Port St. Lucie, Fla.

The Rev. **Victoria D. Duncan** is priest-in-charge of St. John's, New City, N.Y. and St. Paul's, Chester, N.Y.

The Rev. **Maurice Dyer** is associate priest of St. David's, Radnor, Pa.

The Rev. **Chris Exley** is associate rector of St. Peter's in the Great Valley, Malvern, Pa.

The Rev. **Allen Farabee** is interim rector of St. Catherine of Alexandria, Temple Terrace, Fla.

The Rev. **Van Gardner** is assistant rector of Good Shepherd, Ruxton, Md.

The Rev. **Jane Gober** is rector of Christ Church, Ridley Park, Pa.

The Rev. **Farrell Graves** is rector of St. James the Fisherman, Shallotte, N.C.

The Rev. **Lisa Graves** is priest-in-charge of St. John's, Tuckahoe, Yonkers, N.Y.

The Rev. **Catie Greene** is rector of St. Paul's, Steamboat Springs, Colo.

The Rev. **Kim Guiser** is rector of St. Mark's, Honeybrook, Pa.

The Rev. **Asha Guiser** is Sunday missioner of St. Mark's, Honeybrook, Pa.

The Rev. **Leigh E. Hall** is interim campus minister of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

The Rev. **Julie Hoplamazian** is associate rector of St. Michael's, New York.

The Rev. **Joseph Hudson** is rector of Good Shepherd, Venice, Fla.

The Rev. **JoAnne Izzo** is interim priest-in-charge of Trinity, Roslyn, N.Y.

The Rev. **Becky Jones** is rector of St. James, Wheat Ridge, Colo.

The Rev. Dn. **Samuel Katulick** is deacon of Messiah, Winter Garden, Fla.

The Rev. **Daniel Kline** is associate rector of St. Paul's, Chestnut Hill, Pa.

The Rev. **Martha Korienek** is chaplain of Cathedral School for Boys, San Francisco.

The Rev. **Sean Lanigan** is rector of St. Mary's, Ardmore, Pa.

The Rev. **Deborah A. Lee** is associate rector of St. Bartholomew's, New York.

The Rev. **Daniel Lennox** is chaplain of Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, N.Y.

The Rev. **Will Lowry** is rector of Holy Spirit, Gulf Shores, Ala.

The Rev. **Robert Mails** is rector of St. George's, York Harbor, Maine.

The Rev. Dn. **Suzanne McNiff** is deacon of St. James the Less, Scarsdale, N.Y.

The Rev. Dr. **Robert Magoola** is rector of St. George-St. Barnabas, Philadelphia.

The Rev. **Kathleen Moore** is transitional deacon of St. James, Arlington, Vt.

The Rev. **Earl Mullins** is interim rector of St. James, Leesburg, Va.

The Rev. **Samuel Ndungu** is rector of St. Peter's Phoenixville, Pa.

The Rev. Dn. **Robin Newman** is deacon of St. Luke's, Bronx, N.Y.

The Rev. **Michael Palmisano** is associate rector of Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, Pa.

The Rev. **Brian Rallison** is rector of Holy Innocents St. Paul's, Philadelphia and Grace Church and the Incarnation, Philadelphia.

The Rev. Canon **Franklin L. Reid** is priest-in-charge of Good Shepherd, Bronx, N.Y.

The Rev. **Carolyn Rosen** is assisting priest of St. Andrew's, Arlington, Va.

The Rev. **Marilyn Roth** is rector of St. Paul's, The Dalles, Ore.

The Rev. Canon **Mark Seitz** is canon to the ordinary of the Diocese of West Virginia.

The Rev. Dn. **Gordon Sims** is deacon of Good Shepherd, Maitland, Fla.

The Rev. **Don Smith** is rector of Grace, Monroe, La.

The Rev. Dn. **Kimberley Spear** is deacon of St. Edward's, Mount Dora, Fla.

The Rev. **Amy Spagna** is rector of St. James, Woodstock, Vt.

The Rev. **Patricia Stansfield** is rector of St. John's, Corona, Calif.

The Rev. Dn. **Edward Switzer** is deacon of Hope, Melbourne, Fla.

The Rev. **James Teets** is rector of St. Mary's, Dade City, Fla.

The Rev. Dn. **Peter Tepper** is deacon of the Cathedral of St. Luke, Orlando.

The Rev. **Jessie Thompson** is deacon-in-charge of St. John's, Essington and St. James, Prospect Park, Pa.

The Rev. **Alejandra Trillos** is rector of St. Paul's-San Pablo, Salinas, Calif.

The Rev. Dr. **Lynda Tyson** is dean of the Province One School for Deacons.

The Rev. **James Walton** is rector of All Saints, Torresdale, Pa.

The Rev. **Kristin Wickersham** is rector of St. Peter's, New Kent, Va.

The Rev. **Jill Roche Wikel** is priest-in-charge of Ascension, Parkesburg, Pa.

The Rev. **Sarah Woods** is interim chaplain of Trinity School, New York.

Ordinations

Diaconate

Fort Worth: Lainie Allen (St. Luke's in the Meadow, Fort Worth, Texas), **Corrie Cabes** (St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Keller, Texas), **Leslie Guinn** (Good Shepherd, Granbury, Texas); **Maddie Hill** (All Saints', Fort Worth, Texas).

Northern California: Tim McDonald, Jane Snibbe

Priesthood

Alabama: Polly Robb (St. Luke's, Scottsboro, Ala.)
Georgia: **Kevin Veitinger, Nathan Wilson**.
New Jersey: Daniel Hall (Advent, Cape May, N.J.)
Northern California: Ann-Marie Genato, Alexander Price Leach, Julie D. Vice
Southwest Florida: Michael David Winslow Cannon (associate rector of St. John's, Tampa, Fla.)

Received

Southern Ohio: The Rev. Dn. **Vahagn Azizyan** (from the Armenian Church of America)

Retirements

The Rev. **Robert Malm** as rector of Grace, Alexandria, Va.

The Rev. **Jan Nunley** as priest-in-charge of St. Peter's, Peekskill, N.Y.

The Rev. **Alison Quin** as rector of Christ the King, Stone Ridge, N.Y.

The Rev. **J. Douglas Ousley** as rector of Incarnation, New York.

Deaths

The Rev. Canon **Millard F. Neal, Jr.**, who served Florida parishes after a career in military and civil service, died October 21, aged 90.

The son of an Episcopal priest, Neal served in the US departments of Commerce, Defense, the Interior, and Energy following his graduation from Bethune-Cookman College. He was also an Air Force veteran, serving in Korea and Japan, and he wrote eight books about naval operations. During the Civil Rights Movement, Neal served as coordinator for Episcopal priests who participated in the 1963 March on Washington, and also was deeply involved in the Poor People's March of 1968.

He was ordained as a priest of the Diocese of Southwest Florida in 1989, and served parishes in Clearwater, Pinellas Park, and Tampa. He had a long association with the Cathedral of St. Peter in St. Petersburg, which had been his sponsoring parish, serving as the priest-in-charge and in various assisting capacities for more than 20 years. Neal is survived by three children, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

The Rev. **John Splinter**, a native of Wisconsin who served parishes throughout the state in many decades of priestly ministry, died October 25, aged 78.

A native of Watertown, Wis., Splinter was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Madison and Nashotah House. During an active ministry of over three decades, he served parishes in Racine, Greendale, Tomahawk, Antigo, Marshfield and Oneida. In retirement, he served several interim posts and as Sunday supply in congregations throughout the dioceses of Milwaukee and Fond du Lac.

Splinter had a deep love of the natural world, and was an avid hunter, fisherman, birdwatcher, gardener, and wildlife photographer. He volunteered for many years at Aztalan State Park, and loved his family cabin in the North Woods. He was also a voracious reader, and a strong promoter of choral music, in the parishes where he served and through his participation in a series of community choirs. He is survived by Barbara, his wife of over 53 years, two sons, and three grandchildren.

SUNDAY'S READINGS | 1 Advent, December 1

Isa. 2:1-5; Ps. 122; Rm. 13:11-14; Matt. 24:36-44

Wake from Sleep

It is nearly impossible to remove from our minds the association of Advent with the birth of Jesus and a host of holiday expectations that now precede Christmas by at least two months. This is a secular holiday upon which a large part of the economy depends; so, in this secular context, the birth of Jesus is important only insofar as it can be used to prompt selling and buying. This is perhaps not good, but it is not entirely bad either. A season of gift-giving, family gatherings, special meals, and celebration can (notwithstanding the unavoidable stress) build up families and communities. The wise men from the East brought gifts. The exchange of gifts can be a beautiful act of love.

For a few moments and with some effort, however, we are invited to step out of the world, which is what we do every time we come to church, and live and breathe the church's own liturgical life, which is, fundamentally, the active and real presence of Christ. Christ is here and Christ speaks, and today he says nothing of his birth. He speaks not of his first Advent, his first arrival, but of his final coming at the close of the age. Speaking of the end of all things, Jesus says, "But of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Matt. 24:36). "Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming" (Matt. 24:42). Keep vigil and be ready. The Lord is coming and you do not know when. The Nicene Creed uses the future participle to highlight the immediacy and suddenness of Christ's final coming, saying, "he is about to come to judge the living and the dead." The customary English translation, using the future tense (he will come), obscures this entirely. *He is about to come* at any moment!

And indeed, just as he will come at the end in a moment of time we cannot know, he is coming moment by moment in what one theologian has called the middle Advent. Jesus came in his infancy, and he will come at the end of time, and he is arriving now in both grace and judgment. This is the moment, St. Paul tells the church in Rome, when we are called to "wake from sleep." The day of the Lord's arrival is near, and so, "Let us lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires" (Rm. 13:12-14). Having put on the Lord Jesus in baptism, we "lay aside the works of darkness" and walk honorably in the light." This transformation is in progress. Stay alert to the coming of Christ moment by moment so that "when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, [you] may rise to the life immortal" (Collect).

Advent is the time of waiting, the time of expectancy, the recognition that Christ is coming now in his Spirit and will come again in radiant glory. Strikingly, there is a long tradition of welcoming the arrival of Christ in the dark hours just before dawn. One Latin hymn for the morning pleads, "Bear away the darkness of minds" (*Aufer tenebras mentium*), "put to flight the crowd of demons" (*fuga catervas daemonum*), "expel drowsiness" (*expelle somnolentiam*). Wake up. Keep watch for the urgent presence grace and judgment.

Look It Up

Read Romans 13:13.

Think About It

Do not sleepwalk toward death. Open your eyes. Keep vigil.

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SUNDAY'S READINGS | 2 Advent, December 8

Isa. 11:1-10; Ps. 72:1-7, 18-19; Rom. 15:4-13; Matt. 3:1-12

Peace and Judgment

In one of the most beautiful messianic texts in the Old Testament, we hear of a shoot that shall come forth from the stock of Jesse, one filled with wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, a messenger of peace, "the wolf shall live with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid . . . and a little child shall lead them" (Isa. 11:6). This is the peace we hope for, and it is the peace of Christ our Lord.

At the center of this announcement, however, there is a phrase so incongruous to our expectations that we may pass over it unnoticed. We have ears, but we do not hear. We must, therefore, discipline ourselves to see and hear an unusual and startling word. "For whatever was written in former days," says St. Paul, "was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). At the center of this messianic announcement, we are told this: "He shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked" (Isa. 11:4). The psalter augments this with the promise, "he shall crush the oppressor" (Ps. 72:4). In the gospel reading, John the Baptist warns the Pharisees and Sadducees, "Even now the axe is lying at the root of the tree; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matt. 3:10).

We have in this world, to be sure, human beings who plan and intend harm. There are people who take pleasure in inflicting suffering and misery on others. There is individual and collective evil to which a civil society cannot turn its back. The innocent and vulnerable must be protected and there are people who work night and day to do just that, to whom our respect is owed and for whom our prayers are needed. This is captured well in a collect appointed for the Feast of the Holy Innocents, the commemoration of Herod's order to slaughter all male children under the age of two. In this prayer we say, "Receive into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might *frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace*" (BCP, p. 238). Yes, this is work that must be done.

Evil and goodness, however, are not neatly divided. Evil is a contagious distortion of the good to which all the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve are subject. One of the reasons we are so horrified at explicit and egregious evil is that we recognize something of it in ourselves. Earlier versions of the collect for the Holy Innocents, one from 1549 and the other from 1662, say something quite different, envisioning the children as martyrs to be imitated. This may trouble us, but there is an important theological truth in what these earlier prayers say: "Mortify and kill all vice in us."

Ultimately, we must speak of evil, face it, and repent of it because it exists in us. We will never have the full peace of Christ while housing demons. Coming to Christ in baptism, we were asked to "renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God, to renounce the evil powers of this world that destroy the creatures of God, to renounce sinful desires that draw you from the love of God." This must be done if we hope for and really want hope, joy, and peace.

Look It Up

Read Psalm 72:4.

Think About It

Jesus is crushing the oppressor in you because he loves you. Your contrite heart is his home.

SUNDAY'S READINGS | 3 Advent, December 15

Isa. 35:1-10; Ps. 146:4-9 or Cant. 3 or 15; James 5:7-10; Matt. 11:2-11

The Home of Christ

In the Eastern Orthodox tradition, before the moment of baptism, a child is stripped naked and handed to the priest who fully immerses the child three times in the name of the Holy Trinity. Emerging from the water each time, a splash of water, no doubt, hits the parents, godparents, the priest and assisting servers. It is a beautiful moment when a life, though a gift and though beautiful, is transferred to higher existence; a mere human becomes the vehicle and home of Christ. In the moment of stripping, the child is exposed in all his or her vulnerability.

This naked exposure reveals the totality of human life. What will happen in time? How weak are we, really? The moment comes — it always does, inevitably — when we know how low and vulnerable we are. The prophet Isaiah, speaking to the nation in a time of devastation, is speaking, no less, about us, collectively and personally. Life can be, at times, a dry land, a desert waste, a wilderness, a hopeless string of one apparently meaningless event after another. People are weak and feeble and fearful. They are often blind to the glory of God and deaf to the voice of the Word. People are oppressed, bound, and cast down. As every medical professional knows, particularly in the prosperous West, and especially in the United States, depression and anxiety are an epidemic. There is a lot of despair at hand, and it should be named and it should be faced. There is, thankfully, medical help that is often effective. But deeper questions lurk in all this human despair.

Baptism is preemptive action. Baptism acknowledges that we need "grace and mercy" not simply as a momentary dose of divine kindness, but as a real participation in the life of God. The naked and vulnerable human being is plunged into the waters of baptism to emerge anew as a son or daughter of God, as one who becomes "the household of God." The kingdom of God is at hand in baptism. God is at work, and something extraordinary happens as the life of Christ is transferred, in the power of the Spirit, to the newly baptized. In this moment and all subsequent moments baptism does its mysterious work.

The Scriptures help us describe it. The parched earth becomes glad, the desert rejoices and blossoms and sings. The glory of the Lord is seen with the eyes of faith. Hands are strengthened, feeble knees are made firm, the fearful heart becomes strong and confident. the Word of God is heard in Scripture, tradition, every human discipline, and in all the wonders of nature. The tongue is the instrument of a new song. (Isa. 35:1-6). "The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them" (Matt. 11:4-6). We may take offense at these words if read in their most literal sense, but that would be to read them wrongly. They are signs and metaphors of new life that is mysterious and hidden and yet absolutely real. In baptism we meet the grace of the Christ, the energy of Christ, the power of Christ, the unadulterated reality of Christ, and from that reality a new life begins.

Anything that may happen to any human being may happen to a Christian. We are in the world. We share all the sufferings and joys of humanity. But our lives are not merely human. They are the home of God who brings life from death.

Look It Up

Read Matthew 11:2.

Think About It

Baptized into Christ, you have everything. There is no other.

That all may be one

The mission of the Consortium for Christian Unity is to provide a forum for individuals and organizations committed to unity within the Body of Christ to associate with each other, to become relationally connected, to exchange information and ideas, and to offer mutual edification. The consortium is dedicated to the practical fulfillment of Jesus' prayer in John 17:21 that all believers in Christ "may be one."

The consortium fulfills its mission in three ways:

— It hosts and sponsors dinners, receptions, and similarly unstructured, strategic social opportunities for Christians to become better acquainted, using hospitality as a means of reminding Christians that the similarities uniting them are far greater than the differences dividing them;

— It strives to advance the worldwide movement toward Christian unity by connecting like-minded groups and individuals who may be geographically distant and not known to each other; and

— It supports the Community of St. Anselm, an annual cohort of about 30 people from all over the world, aged 20 to 35, who devote 10 months of their lives to the cause of Christian unity through prayer, service to the poor, and for half the cohort, monastic living at Lambeth Palace, under the auspices of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

For more about the Community of St. Anselm, please email us at contactus@theconsortiumforchristianunity.org.

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ASSOCIATE: St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto, California — We seek an Associate Priest with gifts in the areas of homiletics, education and formation, liturgies, pastoral care, and leadership development. All of our previous Associates have found St. Mark's to be a good, healthy and supportive place to learn and grow and develop skills for future parochial, diocesan and national church positions.

Our Associate works in concert with the Rector for the spiritual nurture of the parish that all might deepen their relationship with God through the rich and varied resources of the Christian tradition. In accordance with ordination vows the Associate will preach and preside over various sacramental rites of the church and tend to the souls of individuals and groups seeking counsel and guidance. Depending on the needs of the community the Associate also raises up and supports leaders and volunteers and teaches forums and workshops. Fresh ideas are encouraged. The Associate's ultimate focus will match personal gifts with the needs of the parish.

To apply please submit the following via email to the Rev. **Matthew McDermott (matt@saint-marks.com)**: Cover letter, OTM Profile, resumé, two sermons (video links preferred, audio accepted). Our search will remain open until we hire an applicant.

RECTOR: The Episcopal Church of the Advent in Tallahassee, Florida, seeks a full time Rector for a theologically progressive congregation that values traditional worship, a vibrant music program, diverse educational opportunities, and participation in community outreach. Average Sunday attendance is approximately 120. Further information about the parish and a job description can be found at www.advent-church.org. Cover letter, resume, and OTM profile should be sent to **Mark Baird** at **adventbaird@gmail.com**.

RECTOR: Trinity Episcopal Church in Muscatine, Iowa, seeks a full-time rector who will help us grow in love and faith. We seek a shepherd who will inspire our worship, support our many and varied ministries, and model our mission of making Christ known with love and compassion. Please apply at: **iowaepiscopal.org/Bishop/deploymenttransitions.htm**

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