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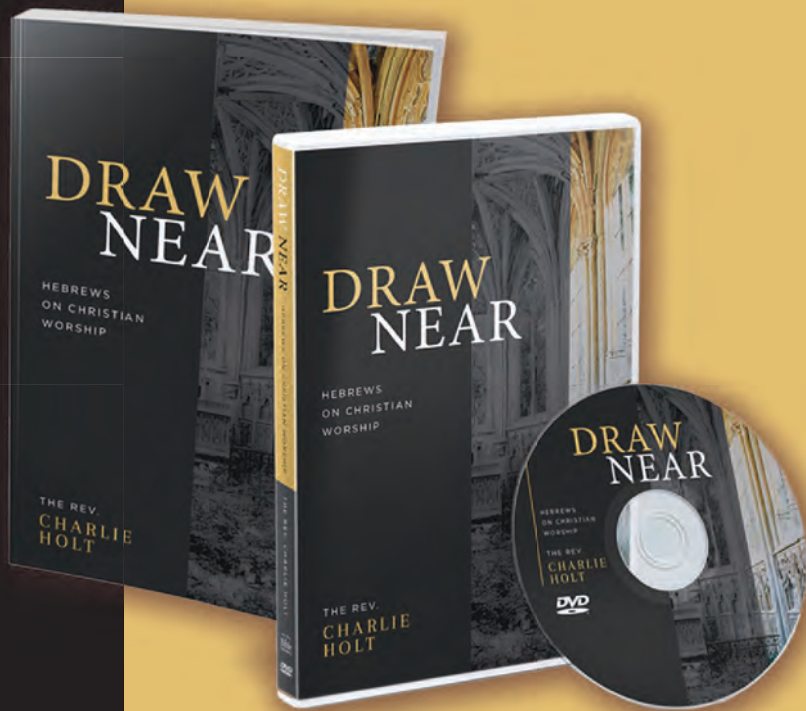
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### ON THE COVER

Alabaster panel showing the murder of Thomas Becket.  
England, around 1425-50 (see page 21).

© The Trustees of the British Museum. This sculpture was made for an altarpiece in a church. It would probably have formed part of a sequence of sculptures showing scenes from Becket's life and death



# Canadian Bishop Resigns After Sexual Misconduct

By Kirk Petersen

A former bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada has relinquished his orders after allegations, which he admits are “well founded,” that he “sent inappropriate sexualized electronic communications to an adult person” with whom he had a pastoral relationship.

Lincoln McKoen, who had been Bishop of the Territory of the People, a diocese in British Columbia formerly known as the Anglican Parishes of the Central Interior, was initially “inhibited” (essentially suspended) on June 1, just days after the grisly discovery of a mass grave of 215 Indigenous children at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, which had been operated by the Roman Catholic Church.

The Territory of the People is headquartered at St. Paul’s Anglican Cathedral, also in Kamloops, about three miles from the site of the former school. The back-to-back events rattled the city of 90,000 to an extent that Archbishop Lynne McNaughton, who is the Metropolitan of British Columbia and Yukon and McKoen’s former boss, felt the need to clarify to the diocese that the action against McKoen “is absolutely unrelated to the horrific discovery at the Kamloops Residential School.”

In announcing McKoen’s resignation, McNaughton said the adult with whom McKoen had inappropriate correspondence “is resident outside the Ecclesiastical Province” of British Columbia and Yukon. She subsequently said he resigned as a priest and

deacon as well.

McKoen was elected bishop by the Territory in January 2020, after serving parishes in Labrador, Ontario, and British Columbia. “His wife Tanya is also a priest,” the *Anglican Journal* reported at the time of his election.

The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls, primate of the Canadian church, said in an announcement: “Pastoral care is being offered to the diocese and all affected. An interim Steering Committee has been put in place. The diocese now enters a time of grieving and discernment about its future episcopal leadership. Please join them in prayer.”



McKoen

## Lambeth’s Focus: Science, Climate Change

By Mark Michael

The relationship between faith and science and the Church’s response to the environmental crisis will be primary themes at next summer’s Lambeth Conference, which focuses on being “God’s Church for God’s World.”

The conference’s communications office featured the issues in a series of short films released in early June, including a special release of “How Is the Church Engaging with Science in Responding to Environmental Issues?” on June 5, World Environment Day.

The Anglican Communion also announced the foundation of the Anglican Communion Science Commission, a group of scientists and theologians from across its 41 provinces who will equip Anglicans “for courageous and confident spiritual leader-

ship in issues involving science.” The commission will be launched at next summer’s Lambeth Conference and hopes to have its first conference shortly thereafter.

The Most Rev. Thabo Makgoba, Archbishop of Cape Town, will co-chair the commission with the Rt. Rev. Stephen Croft, bishop of the Church of England’s Diocese of Oxford. Its work will be coordinated by Dr. Andrew Briggs, professor of nanomaterials at the University of Oxford, and Dr. Stephen Spencer of the Anglican Communion Office.

Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, celebrated the many ways that science has been “a gift to human beings” in an introductory video.

“It is scientific advance that has lifted so many people out of poverty. It is scientific advance that has enabled

the world to feed itself. It is widespread science that has enabled us to produce vaccines at a speed that even five years ago — a year ago — would have been thought unimaginable. It is science that has begun to give us a big picture of our place in the world. It is science that has driven our consciousness of the danger to the world from climate change — and what we can do about it in the future.”

Climate change is “the great emergency of the 21st century,” Welby said in the film about engagement with environmental issues, which focuses especially on the deep effects experienced in the Global South.

Makgoba agreed: “There is a heightened awareness that climate crisis, and some call it ‘climate racism,’ ought to be tackled, because there seems to be a curve that is skewed towards the poor,

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and those with poor infrastructure, who are most affected by climate change.

“For the people of the Global South, it is not an issue of the signs of climate change, but it is the reality of droughts, of rising sea levels; it’s the reality of cyclones in Mozambique that were not there [before], and people being internally displaced.”

The Rt. Rev. David Njovu of the Diocese of Lusaka in Zambia noted similar effects in Central Africa: “Mainly, we’re being affected by either we have a severe drought, or we have floods. In Namibia, they are facing an amazing level of drought, and thereafter, a lot of medical health issues. ... These droughts and floods have an impact on food security because even where we had prepared ourselves, most of these fields are being washed away by these rains.”

Makgoba and Njovu discussed ways Anglicans are acting to address climate change in their regions.

“We came up with a system as a church where we are encouraging people to plant trees,” Njovu said. “In this diocese, when I go out for confirmation, it’s now a rule: each child who is being confirmed must plant a tree.”

Makgoba said that Southern African Anglicans have sometimes taken a more confrontational approach. “We have come together, as interfaith, ecumenically, to speak to the worst polluters. It is science that has empowered us, as the faith community, to say to the mining community, when you pollute the water, you influence the other. When you concentrate on extraction that leads to deforestation, there is an impact on climate change.”

Croft said his service on an advisory body for Oxford University’s Environmental Change Institute has helped him see how crucial the Church’s role can be in facing these issues.

“Every discussion of the advisory board I have been to, the board has wanted to discuss the impact and importance of the faith communities globally in tackling climate change. Because the faith communities are seen as huge potential centers of influence on the world when it comes to climate. To offer a motivation for care

for the world and care for the earth, to offer a sense of solidarity globally, and a concern for the poor, and also to offer practical inspiration and means for change. So the alliance between the scientific community and the Church, and indeed, all the faith communities, is absolutely critical in addressing this global problem.”

“Unless we have a moral revolution and take seriously the need to protect the environment for future generation, it’s going to be tragic, very tragic,” said Professor Eunice Kamara, another member of the Anglican Communion Science Commission, who teaches African Christian ethics at Kenya’s Moi University.

## Assessing and Improving Churches’ Viability

By Kirk Petersen

It’s a story that has played out many times.

A church’s membership dwindles over the years — perhaps the ethnic group the church was built around has mostly moved out of the neighborhood. The last few elderly parishioners — including some who were married in that building half a century ago — scrape together the money for a supply priest every Sunday, while the leak in the roof steadily gets worse. By the time the warden ceremonially hands the keys to the bishop, the outcome has been inevitable for years, the church’s bank account is drained, and the diocese inherits a worn-out building in need of significant repairs.

It doesn’t have to be that way. A church that has outlived its congregation can be closed with dignity, leaving an asset that can be sold in support of other ministries. But it’s a decision that traditionally has been left to the congregation. There will be more such closures as we emerge from the pandemic.

Over the years, some dioceses have made provisions for helping a congregation face reality. The Diocese of Washington is taking a three-pronged approach that also emphasizes revitalizing struggling parishes whenever possible:

- Backed by a \$1 million grant from the Lilly Endowment, the diocese this fall will launch a five-year “Tending Our Soil” program, in which participating parishes will receive trained coaching monthly over a three-year course of “listening, reconnecting, discerning, cultivating, and celebrating as they build capacities for adaptive leadership.” Bishop of Washington Mariann Edgar Budde said, “This funding will provide us the opportunity to take our next faithful steps toward building vital congregations that thrive in their own unique contexts as well as create, test, and refine a scalable plan that can be shared across the Church.”

- Beginning in early 2020, a group of leaders from throughout the diocese developed “Vital Signs of Parish Health,” an assessment tool based on “seven key markers that indicate the relative health of a parish.”

- And in April, the diocese adopted Canon 54, “Diocesan Stewardship and Parish Vitality.” The canon,

(Continued on next page)

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(Continued from previous page)

which was overwhelmingly approved by an online convention, gives the diocese authority to make a formal assessment of a church's viability, and then to take action up to and including the closure of a church.

**Tending Our Soil**

The Rev. Jenifer Gamber, the diocese's missionary for leadership development, said 12 churches have committed to participating in the first Tending Our Soil cohort, a three-year commitment that will begin in September.

The participating congregations will be divided into four groups of three roughly comparable parishes, and each group will be assigned a coach, paid by the diocese, who has gone through the 60 hours of intensive coaching training required for certification by the International Coaching Federation. Coach training is provided by the Holmes Coaching Group, a Maryland-based consulting company.

Gamber, who has been certified and will be a coach, said the training focuses on skills such as asking "powerful questions," "deep listening," and leading people to reach clarity about complicated situations. Lay and clerical participants will learn leadership skills to help them revitalize their parishes, meeting monthly (online or otherwise) with the same peers and coach for the three-year program.

Two more cohorts of 12 churches will begin in the fall of 2022 and 2023, with the goal of training 36 congregations. "You can do a lot with a million dollars," Gamber said with a laugh, referring to the Lilly grant.

**Vital Signs of Parish Health**

This assessment tool was developed by the diocese with the help of the Unstuck Group, an Atlanta-based consultancy whose mission is to "help churches get unstuck."

The Rev. Todd Thomas, whose title with the diocese is missionary for revitalization, worked with a committee from across the diocese to develop seven "Vital Signs of Parish Health":

- Compelling Mission & Vision
- Clear Discipleship Path
- Uplifting & Inviting Worship
- Welcoming & Connecting Ministries
- Blessing Our Community
- Faithful Financial Practices
- Inspiring & Capable Leadership

These seven markers are supported by a group of 15 metrics intended to provide data for the seven markers. Some of the metrics are more easily quantified than others. There's the familiar ASA (average Sunday attendance) and number of pledge units, but also things like "average parish age vs. community" and "percentage of the parish in faith formation."

It's easy to get overwhelmed by seven markers and 15 metrics, but Thomas said: "We don't expect anyone to take on seven different aspects of vitality with their whole energy, but where is the most opportunity? Maybe find that one [aspect] that the Spirit is really pushing and nudging to take to the next level."

The tool is intended to give parishes a fighting chance to revitalize themselves before they reach the level of distress leading to an inevitable closing.

**Canon 54**

The "Diocesan Stewardship and Parish Vitality" canon was the most controversial of the three efforts, to the extent that Bishop Budde called a special convention in April for the sole purpose of debating and voting on Canon 54.

The convention was the closing element of a months-long effort to build support for the new canon. "This is about our responsibility to each other as Christians across the Diocese of Washington," said the Rev. Andrew Walter, canon to the ordinary of the diocese, which has more than 80 congregations in the District of Columbia and four counties in southern Maryland.

A diocesan canon is a legally enforceable document, and some of the language is stark. The statement of purpose says the canon is intended to enable the diocese to "make a determination of whether the long-term viability of a parish as a self-sustaining entity furthering the mission of the Episcopal Church is in jeopardy to the



extent that Diocesan oversight or intervention is necessary.”

A summary document prepared before the vote explains that after a lengthy assessment, “Diocesan Council may recommend further action that would include, but is not limited to: counseling for the parish and its leadership; a change in clergy or lay leadership of the parish; assumption of parish assets and operations by the Diocese; a change in parish status; a merger of two or more parishes; and, closing a parish.”

Nobody relishes the idea of the diocese forcing the closure of a church, and the canon drew some opposition. “It gives bishops the opportunity to interfere in parishes,” said the Rev. Timothy Cole, rector of Christ Church in Georgetown, who spoke against the canon. “I just wanted to try to guard against that.”

Actually, the bishop’s role under the canon is limited to accepting or rejecting the recommendations of the Diocesan Council. The Bishop of Washington cannot take any action against the wishes of a parish in the absence of a recommendation from the council.

The canon provides that a “health and vitality assessment” can be initiated by request of the bishop, Standing Committee, or a member of Diocesan Council. The parish being assessed is required to cooperate by speaking with the assessment committee and providing access to the parish’s books and records.

The leadership of the parish is entitled to participate in the process, and more safeguards were added by amendment at the six-hour special convention. One amendment entitles the parish being assessed to designate one clerical and one lay member of the assessment committee. There is what

amounts to an appeal process, in which the parish has the opportunity to respond to any recommendation.

Another amendment provides that the parish may request an assessment, and Walter said he believes a couple of parishes are actively considering doing so, although no formal assessments have yet begun. Cole said these amendments “considerably alleviated” his concerns, but did not entirely eliminate them.

The Rev. Greg Syler, the rector of two suburban Maryland churches that are seven miles apart, was a member of the team that researched and drafted the canon. He said the group was surprised to find that many dioceses have similar provisions, and the Washington canon was modeled most closely after the Diocese of Chicago’s provisions for “distressed parishes.” (The drafters of the Washington canon deliberately avoided terms like “distressed” and “imperiled,” Syler said.)

The team held eight listening sessions in the eight geographic regions of the diocese, Syler said, gathering input

and responding to concerns. The preparation paid off at the convention, he said, as there were only 13 votes against the canon — and 201 votes in favor.

The diocese hopes to reach hard decisions through negotiation rather than by diocesan fiat, but Syler said it is important for the diocese to have a mechanism for intervening if necessary. “Not having that canon creates this wildly congregationalist polity that completely flies in the face of Episcopal/Anglican ecclesiology,” he said.

“I think the Diocese of Washington is to be commended for this discernment and this vision,” said the Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe, a bishop who leads two adjacent Rust Belt dioceses in Pennsylvania and New York, and has given a great deal of thought to church governance. “Dioceses need to be rethinking what the relationships are, between the congregations themselves and with the dioceses.”

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## Bishop Wayne Smith Nominated in Southern Ohio

The Rt. Rev. Wayne Smith is the sole nominee to serve as provisional bishop of the Diocese of Southern Ohio, where Bishop Thomas Breidenthal resigned for health reasons in late 2020.

Smith, who was X Bishop of Missouri until he retired in April 2020, will be asked to provide the “outside leadership perspective” that the Cincinnati-based diocese said it was seeking when it decided not to renew its six-month contract with Bishop Kenneth Price, who served as assisting bishop since Breidenthal’s resignation. Price had been a suffragan bishop in Southern Ohio from 1994 to 2012.

“While the Diocese of Southern Ohio has a great deal to celebrate, we also have some work to do before we are ready to begin the search for our next diocesan bishop,” the Standing Committee said in a letter to the diocese. “Pending action by Diocesan

Convention, Bishop Smith will begin on August 15, 2021. On that date, Bishop Smith will become the Ecclesiastical Authority and we on the Standing Committee will return to our role as a council of advice for the bishop.”

## Burundi Chooses New Primate

By Mark Michael

The Rt. Rev. Sixbert Macumi, Bishop of Buye, has been elected as the fifth Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church of Burundi. Macumi, 53, will succeed Archbishop Martin Nyaboho, the church’s primate since 2016, when he is installed on August 21.

Macumi is from Muyinga province in Northeastern Burundi, and answered a call to ministry when still a young man. He studied at the Theological Institute of Matana, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1996. He taught for several years at Buye’s Bishop Barham Theological College and at All Saints Cathedral, and served as diocesan secretary from 1997 to 2000. He later pursued further theological studies at Uganda Christian University.

After his return to Buye, Macumi coordinated the diocesan department for evangelism and worked to expand the Boys’ and Girls’ Brigade across the province. In 2005, he was elected as the third Bishop of Burundi. Macumi is married to Clothilde Muhimpundu, a primary school teacher. They have three daughters.

The Diocese of Buye was the first to be established in the Anglican Church of Burundi, in 1965. An Anglican mission was established there by the Church Mission Society in 1936, as British and native missionaries moved into the area from neighboring Rwanda, under the influence of the East African Revival, which began at

Gahini, an Anglican mission station in what was then the Belgian colony of Ruanda-Urundi in 1929.

The Anglican Church of Burundi has about 900,000 members, which is about 8 percent of the small nation’s population. It became an independent province in 1992, and has continued to grow steadily.

The province is part of the Global South Anglicans network, but has been much more engaged in the Canterbury-based Instruments of Communion than its neighboring and historically linked provinces of Rwanda and Uganda. Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi, a former primate, served as chair of the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Unity, Faith, and Order in the 2010s. Some of the church’s bishops, especially Seth Ndayirukiye, the Bishop of Matana, have advocated that the province strengthen its ties to the GAFCON movement.

## Fijian Anglicans Garden Amid Food Insecurity

By Mark Michael

Fiji’s Anglicans aren’t able to gather for services after a late-April outbreak of COVID’s Indian variant led to a severe lockdown across the island nation. But ministry to those in need continues, as they convert their back yards to vegetable gardens, responding to an appeal from their archbishop, the Most Rev. Fereimi Cama.

At archdeaconry meetings earlier this year, the archbishop, who is one of the Anglican Church in Ateoroa, New Zealand, and Polynesia’s three primates, called on Anglicans to plant gardens to feed the hungry, at a time when food insecurity is rising due to the collapse of the island’s tourism-based economy.

The Rev. Orisi Vuki, the Diocese of Polynesia’s vicar general, told *Anglican Taonga* that almost every Anglican household on the island has responded to the archbishop’s plea. “In Fiji we can plant food crops that mature for harvest in only four weeks’ time,” he said. “So we have planted every kind of veg-

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etable: cabbage, greens, beans, pumpkins and root vegetables, most of which is to share.”

“Archbishop Fereimi has led by example,” Vuki said. “In his own yard he has dug a garden and has planted yams and kumara (sweet potato) and other vegetables that now he has been able to harvest and share.”

The Rt. Rev. Henry Bull, Bishop of Vanua Levu, is using the land around his home to grow food for his family and neighbors, and has gone hunting for wild boar and fishing, donating his catch to those in need.

“In our community and country at the moment we have started to pray and focus on farming within our context and trying to encourage others to do so. To be resilient, we believe it is the way to go now,” Bull wrote.

## Congolese Church Provides Volcano Relief

By Mark Michael

The Anglican Diocese of Goma is playing a central role in coordinating relief for thousands of people displaced by the deadly eruption of Mount Nyiragongo, one of the world’s most active volcanos, which is located just six miles from the Congolese city near the country’s border with Rwanda.

The Anglican Alliance reports that development teams from the diocese are assessing the damage and working with chiefs in the villages most severely affected by the blast to distribute food, hygiene items, and household goods. The diocese is part of the Anglican Church of the Congo, one of the 41 autonomous provinces of the Anglican Communion.

The eruption, which killed at least 32 people, began on May 22, when a lake of molten lava spilled over the top of the volcano’s side, flowing toward the city of 670,000 people. Unlike a similar eruption in 2002, when lava flowed directly into Goma, destroying 40 percent of its buildings, destruction was confined to 20 villages on the mountain’s slopes.

Still, the Diocese of Goma’s assessment reports that 4,545 homes were

destroyed, as well as 11 schools, six churches, two health centers, and several larger businesses. One Anglican parish church was destroyed, while others are serving as refugee relief centers. One diocesan school was destroyed, and another is in danger of collapse. The damage leaves approximately 25,000 people homeless.

There is also great concern about continued seismic activity in the area. There were hundreds of aftershocks in the days following the initial eruption, and the lava inside the volcano’s crater has refilled. Fears of a second eruption appear to be subsiding in recent days, but the earthquakes have toppled several buildings.

The BBC reports that some geologists still fear a rare limnic eruption under Lake Kivu, the 1,040 square-mile lake on which Goma is situated. In a limnic eruption, carbon dioxide and methane seep into a body of water, and when heated by magma, escape into the air. As carbon dioxide displaces oxygen in the air, human respiration can become impossible. A limnic eruption under Cameroon’s Lake Nyos in 1986 asphyxiated an estimated 1,800 people in nearby villages.

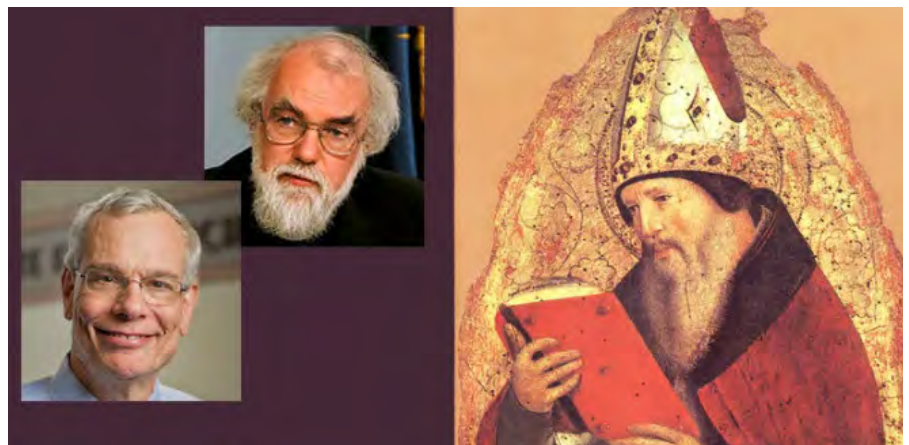
Support for the displaced and vulnerable began pouring into the region almost immediately. Martin Gordon, a CMS missionary who is serving as the diocese’s vicar general, reported that a delegation from an archdeaconry out-

side the diocese brought 300 kilograms (about 660 pounds) of potatoes on May 25, and another Congolese diocese is coordinating relief for the parish of Buvira, which was in the direct path of the lava flow.

On May 28, the local military governor ordered the evacuation of 10 zones in the center of Goma, due to concerns about continuing seismic activity and the possibility of localized lava eruptions. The United Nation reported on May 29 that about 400,000 people have fled the city, and appealed for “urgent international assistance to avert what could be a catastrophe for children.” A BBC reporter said that Goma looks like a ghost town, while the neighboring city of Sake, 20 kilometers away, is full of refugees.

The Anglican presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is concentrated in the region along the country’s Eastern border, where Ugandan missionary Apolo Kivebulaya began his ministry to the people on the edge of the Ituri Forest in 1896. The country’s eastern region, which counts Goma as its largest city, has also suffered considerable violence in recent years, including attacks on Christian hospitals and churches by Islamist groups.

The Diocese of Goma accepts donations for relief and rebuilding through the support page of the Congolese Churches Association.



### “Preaching the Gospel of John with Saint Augustine” with Rowan Williams and John Cavadini

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*De terra veritas*

# What Roy Gets About Worship

On that sweltering morning last July when we held our first service of pandemic-season public worship at Saint Francis, Potomac, Roy was there. There was no vaccine, and lots we didn't know yet about the virus. We did know that 95-year-old men were in the vulnerable category.

But Roy was there anyway. We saved him a seat in the shade and, for once, he left his suit jacket in the car. I remarked to him afterwards that I knew he was tough, but didn't expect to see him back yet. "You can die anytime when you're my age," he retorted. "I might as well die going to church."

Roy could have joined in via our live stream instead. He had a long career as an aeronautical engineer, and he's been an early adopter of plenty of technologies. He happily patches himself into the Thursday seniors' fellowship time on Zoom. But for Roy, the worship of God is a different matter.

I told him last week how encouraging it had been to me to see him in his pew every Sunday through all the challenges of the past year. I know it's not easy for him, that his body is sore in the morning. He doesn't like wearing masks and is still a little self-conscious about the cane. Roy cracked a smile. He said, "It's the highlight of my week. I wouldn't miss it for anything."

\* \* \*

Roy understands something that seems to be missing in the way many American Christians think about worship. The Barna Group conducted a poll of 794 practicing Christian adults in December 2019 about what they call "worship shifting." They asked participants about their engagement with Christian media: how often they listened to Christian music or sermons on the radio, read Christian books, watched a service or sermon from their own congregation online, or "used social media that helps me grow in my

faith." Rates of participation were fairly high, with most responders saying they participated in one of these edifying activities at least occasionally.

A second question asked, "Do you ever rely on these Christian resources

**Inasmuch as  
hybrid church means  
the production of more  
theologically robust,  
accessible, attractive  
Christian teaching, it  
surely is a gift for our  
times, but it is no substitute  
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like these instead of attending church?" Overall, about 13 percent of respondents said they did. Among millennials, the digitally native generation also struggling with the burden of making sleepy children presentable on a Sunday morning, the percentage of those who often "worship shifted" rose to 34.

Barna will surely conduct another poll, asking similar questions, any day now. After more than a year of habituation to digital ways of worshiping, I shudder to imagine what the totals will show. And you really don't want to see Barna's more recent poll about what active Christians say they are doing while they watch those church service live streams.

\* \* \*

But is worship-shifting worship at all? Certainly, some church leaders seem to think so.

A March issue of evangelical leadership expert Carey Nieuwhof's podcast *Church Pulse* focused on preparing for our new "hybrid church" future. Jon Adamson, the longtime digital coordinator for metro Atlanta's North Point Community Church, said he had been discussing these trends with the megachurch's pastor, Andy Stanley, for years. As he put it:

Church attendance is not decreasing, it's decentralizing. People are watching [Stanley's] content, but they are watching it [on] multiple channels now. They might come to church one week of the month. They listen on podcast the next week. After that they watch a video on demand on YouTube; and the week after that they might catch it midweek on a seven-minute version of the message on YouTube....

When I'm feeling lonely, I want to search, "how do I overcome loneliness," or "how do I find hope." And I want to watch that content, and it happens to be on a Wednesday. Unfortunately, I think that for a lot of church leaders, the only on-demand that they think of is that they demand that people come to their church building, at a certain place, at a certain time of the week to access their content. And that's not the reality of the world anymore.

"Yeah," responded Nieuwhof, "Nobody's sitting around on Thursday night at 9:00, waiting for the latest *The Office* to drop. If you want to watch *The Office*, you just go watch *The Office*."

To be fair, while Adamson has no problems with busy people substituting a seven-minute version of the pastor's message for coming together to worship God and share the sacraments, he does believe that weekly small group gatherings to "talk about [a church's] content" are essential. Accurate statistics on how many evan-

gelicals actually attend a weekly small group are very hard to find, but it's surely far fewer than those who claim to attend worship services each week. Once the notion of a duty to worship God in community has been discarded, can a weekly small group commitment remain intact for long?

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Is Christian worship reducible to listening to sermons? Maybe — for an evangelical video producer and a pastor who spends most of his week preparing 45-minute sermons. But the analogies that come so quickly to Nieuwhof and Adamson give me pause. Is Christian worship entertainment, even in part?

I'm in the content production business, at least as editor of *The Living Church*, and I want our stories, podcasts, devotional texts, and video conferences to be as engaging and helpful as possible, to Christians at all levels of faith development. I rejoice in the creative gifts being shared in local congregations across the Church: the determined effort that so many have made to produce and release content that will provide faithful and pastorally attentive answers to the deep spiritual questions being asked by troubled people.

Inasmuch as *hybrid church* means the production of more theologically robust, accessible, attractive Christian teaching, it surely is a gift for our times, born of the Spirit's work. But it is no substitute for the public service of the Christian assembly, where we are gathered to praise God for his mighty acts, to receive his grace, and offer ourselves in the one body as living sacrifices.

But if *hybrid church* is a movement that imitates, more or less intentionally, the joyless grind of the entertainment industry — a zero-sum game in which the “content producer” with the biggest video editing and search engine optimization team wins — then surely it is of the Evil One. It's ominous that, even as he sings the praises of the “content-driven” future, Nieuwhof's number one “New Disruptive Church Trend Every Church Leader Should Watch” is “market consolidation.”

Inasmuch as hybrid compounds our cultural embrace of passive, individu-

alized forms of entertainment and consumerism's scorn of patience, generosity, and self-control, it can hardly claim to be building up the Church. If it makes it easier for Christians to abandon their local communities and avoid the messy work of real relationships, it will hinder us in a crucial missionary vocation of our time. Incarnational religion simply cannot be fully practiced in digital spaces.

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I expect that most of our churches will be live streaming until Christ returns in glory. Live-streamed worship has come as a great gift to many in the last 16 months of crisis, allowing continued access to the proclamation of God's Word and true, albeit only spiritual, means of sacramental grace. Live streaming will continue to be very helpful to the permanently or temporarily homebound.

If, as seems likely, most “church shopping” will be done first from the living room chair in the future, an attractive live stream will soon become what a functional website was 15 years ago: the preferred way to let potential congregants know your church is still alive and kicking.

But this is also a crucial moment for church leaders to make the case for public worship, to urge people winsomely and graciously to come back as soon as possible, so that the house of God may again be full, and all voices united in praise and thanksgiving. It's a time to resist the slouch toward consumerism, and to explain why God is rightly praised in the assembly of bodies and voices that gives public witness to his glory.

Mature, proficient Christians belong, like Roy, in the pews every Sunday. The worship of God should be the highlight of their week, as the fullest anticipation of that glorious destiny set ahead of us — heaven being notoriously long on public liturgy and short on video sermons. After a year of forming bad habits, we need someone to explain why it's worth all the trouble.

In my next column, I will dive into some classic Anglican sources on the duty of public worship, in order to turn up resources for our pastoral moment.

—Mark Michael



## Presenting Hybrid Church Effectively

By Neva Rae Fox

While there are divergent opinions about online services and worship, there is common agreement that a hybrid offering can be effective in reaching people who may not return to a post-pandemic, in-person setting.

Hybrid has been defined as a combination of an in-person service with an online service, either livestreamed or recorded, of the Eucharist, Morning Prayer, Compline, Noonday Prayer, or a Bible study.

Even those who may not be enthralled with hybrid recognize its value.

“The digital world is a new mission frontier,” said Bishop Pierre Whalon, chair of the House of Bishops' Ecclesiology Committee. “And the church needs to be there. And the church needs to know how to use it.”

The Rev. Lorenzo Lebrija, director of Try Tank Experimental Lab, sees hybrid as the church's future. “Hybrid is expanding. It's not going away.”

“Online engagement is our front door,” said Canon Mike Orr of the Diocese of Colorado. “It is necessary to keep online and virtual for the health and growth of the church and our mission field.”

Bishop Andy Doyle of the Diocese of Texas has been addressing web ministry for almost a decade. “I talked about it as a necessity as evangelism,” Doyle said. “This kind of worship is important; more and

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more people coming to church after viewing worship online.”

Doyle, author of *Embodied Liturgy: Virtual Reality and Liturgical Theology in Conversation*, added: “Online is another door that the church can open to people who are seeking. They are finding us online, they are looking for places.”

The goal for most is not just to do hybrid, but to do it well. The key lies in the presentation of online services. Effective hybrid is more than just setting a up a stagnant camera and recording the service. The Rev. Hannah Wilder, curate at St. Mark’s City Heights in San Diego, said today’s world demands high quality. “Millennials have more of an awareness and an expectation of a good online experience.”

Many courses, resources, videos, and books are available, designed to assist the novice as well as the professional in Zoom, YouTube, and online skills.

“Parishes, whether on a shoestring or with resources, are really doing online well,” said Joe Swimmer, executive director of the CEEP Network, said, but “What about the tools? Zoom, Facebook — none of these were created to share the Good News.”

CEEP offers several digital workshops and courses at no cost.

A 10-minute video prepared by professional actor Sean Close for the Diocese of New Jersey recommends technical tips on staging good Zoom videos, covering such practical points as set-up, background, lighting, and consulting notes. His focus, Close said, is to “help achieve connection” between the presenter and audience.

To Lebrija, hybrid is “a congregation that does both in-person and digital offerings well.” He believes hybrid is the way to go. “It is an awesome opportunity for the church,” he said. “Digital — that’s where we are mostly. We rushed to go digital. We thought it was a short-term thing.”

The pandemic proved to be long term. Try Tank, a joint venture of Virginia Theological Seminary and General Theological Seminary, has created a course for both clergy and laity: “Being a Top Notch Hybrid Church.”

The aim, Lebrija explained, is to present “hybrid and how to do this



‘Do your best to fill the frame,’ actor Sean Close offers, among other advice, in a video prepared for the Diocese of New Jersey.

Go to <https://bit.ly/2UCQdGd>

right.” The course, based on four pillars, focuses: theological reflection, production, forming a functioning digital community, and effective fundraising.

Two sessions, of more than 250 registrants each, sold out quickly, indicating the desire for this information in today’s church. Lebrija will consider multi-lingual if there is a call for it. “Based on requests, the course materials will be offered in Spanish at a later date,” he said.

Orr, a trainer for both his diocese and Caffeinated Church, addressed the need for new equipment for effective online. “A lot of churches are rushing to create a hybrid worship experience: upgrading their sound and lighting and installing multiple PTZ cameras in their worship spaces. I hope they are doing so as a well-thought out and planned response in discerning that they can equally engage both an in-person audience and an online audience, simultaneously, without favoring one audience over another.”

He added, “Some churches are taking the concept of hybrid church even further to try to encourage engagement by both audiences by adding screens in church worship spaces where an in-person audience can see and interact with the online audience. This is great and I applaud the creativity and enthusiasm of churches who are experimenting in this way.”

The Rev. Tim Schenck of St. John the Evangelist in Hingham, Massachusetts, doesn’t think hybrid will ever go away. “From my perspective, we invited a new technology,” he said. “It’s here to stay. I plan to livestream until the Second Coming.”

In his article “Hybrid Church: A Way Forward for Church Leaders,” Schenck challenges clergy and lay leaders to reflect and consider the future. “Resurrection, rather than resuscitation, is the model I believe the church must embrace in order to move forward in a post-pandemic world,” he wrote. “As much as we might hope for it to be so, things will never fully return to the way they once were, not fully, anyway.”

Among his recommendations are an interactive Prayers of the People, a parish-specific smartphone app, and a digital ministry team.

Hybrid is essential in the Diocese of Central New York. “For the clergy, I am urging and encouraging and empowering training on how to do hybrid,” said Bishop DeDe Duncan-Probe. “We started to do trainings in June 2020. It has been well-received by a large a portion of the clergy.”

Despite all the support, hybrid is not one size fits all.

While believing “the digital realm is an opportunity for us,” Lebrija said, “It’s not for everyone. There are some churches that shouldn’t do it. I am not saying that everyone needs to do it. But it’s available.”

“We need to ask bigger questions about online church,” Doyle said. “When to use it, what platforms to use, etc.”

Swimmer reflected on the possible long-term effect of hybrid. “We won’t know what seeds have been planted for years. I believe we have planted seeds of renovation and innovation. It is proof that the church is adapting and adjusting.”

*Next: Hybrid Part 3: Is there a future for hybrid in the church?*

# Progress in the Pandemic: Christ Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma

By William Hargrave

When the Rev. Everett Lees assumed the role of Christ Church's rector in 2011, the average Sunday attendance (ASA) was about 40. Years later, just before the pandemic, Christ Church was identified as one of the fastest-growing Episcopal parishes in the country, with a 2018 ASA of 207, and 230 for 2019. Tulsa's population grew by only half of one percent between 2013 and 2018, according to the World Population Report, while Christ Church's ASA grew by 93 percent.

Lees says that one of the defining moments in the life of the parish was when parishioners collectively shifted their priority from trying to do everything to doing just a few things really well. This attitude particularly benefited Christ Church in the pandemic, when, rather than busying himself and the church staff with increasing their online presence, Lees worked to meet his congregation's other needs.

"There's no need to do what others are already doing well, and it's important to be totally okay with that" he said. "There are already Daily Office podcasts. You can really just sit there and say, 'Hey, Alexa, pray Morning Prayer.'"

So instead, Lees focused the parish's efforts on community building. "Pre-COVID, we thought of community as the service we attend. While this isn't bad, what it told us was that we need to have connecting points other than the Sunday morning worship."

As a result, Christ Church has been organizing small groups based on the study of Scripture and a custom curriculum adapted from a sermon series based on the Alpha course.

After recognizing that there was a growing number of families in the area, the church "made some intentional decisions to really build children's programming," Lees told *TLC*

last year. "We were fortunate in that we had some folks who had some experience with Godly Play, and we were able to implement that."



The church also hired a children's minister, "before we even had a lot of kids," he said. "We jumped out in a leap of faith, and we built something for the congregation we hoped to become." It has paid off

— up to a third of current attendance is kids fifth grade and below. The current ASA is about 140.

In addition to offering outdoor services for the last year, Christ Church has also been arranging concerts for local musicians as an opportunity for members of the community to simply come together again. The church also supports opportunities to give blood, and volunteers pack meals for those who were displaced during the pandemic. "What are people wanting post-COVID? That sense of community that pandemic exposed such a deep hunger for," Lees said.

Christ Church's summer programs include a spiritual retreat focused on liturgical and contemplative prayer, and classes on the fundamentals of the Christian faith and the Anglican church, all free and available to anyone who is interested. Christ Church's Facebook page lists one frequently asked question: What if I can't attend all the sessions? "It is ok if you can't attend all sessions, the week you miss will likely cover the secrets of life."

*William Hargrave is a summer intern at the Living Church Institute, and a philosophy major at the University of the South (Sewanee).*

*Christ Church, Tulsa, is a partner of The Living Church.*



Christ Church concentrated on doing a few things well in response to the pandemic.

# Church Musicians Look to a Post-Pandemic Return

By Neva Rae Fox  
Correspondent

The Rev. Barbara Cawthorne Crafton praised the Association of Anglican Musicians, the primary group for Episcopal church organists and choirmasters, on their ability to adapt and accept COVID-19 restrictions, and for “conquering Zoom” when she addressed 558 members in a Zoom meeting June 14.



Crafton

“You showed yourself on people’s computers, on people’s phones, you sang duets, with yourself sometimes. It was remarkable to see,” she said. “One of the first super-spreader events was a choir. We asked, ‘Are we ever going to sing again?’” AAM members found a way. “You gave us such beauty, and it was completely unexpected beauty.”

“My hope, my belief, is in the awe that you have inspired in your people in order to do this crazy thing, and to do it so well, and do to it week after week, when you were experiencing isolation, and perhaps bereavement.”

“Remember,” she said, “we have one great high priest. It isn’t the rector — it’s Jesus. He has firsthand experience with fear.”

She hopes musicians continue their ministry and “reach up and touch the hem of the robe.”

Looking to the immediate, Crafton said, “As we begin the glimpse the greenery of another new Pentecost season, I used to think green was so boring. Now that long green season, it just feels so glorious to me, so gloriously ordinary. We will have a new ordinary.”

AAM President Marty Wheeler Burnett echoed the spirit of Crafton’s remarks. “Today, there is joy — indeed, great rejoicing — as in-person worship resumes and choirs gradually return to singing,” she said. “There is also grief — we have lost loved ones, friends, and colleagues. For some, there is emotional trauma and physical and mental

exhaustion. Some of you have experienced budget cuts and layoffs.

“Our pastoral role as church musicians has moved even further toward the forefront in this past year, and many of us believe this is a permanent shift,” Burnett said.

Burnett addressed the differences brought on by the pandemic. “We have changed. The church has changed. We don’t know all the ways, but we already sense that things will not be the same. New online communities have formed, both within and beyond our parishes. New hybrid models of church, with members who may live far away and may never be physically present, are growing as we speak. Livestreaming is here to stay. Addressing systemic racism can no longer be ignored. How will we as Episcopal church musicians and clergy embrace not just new technology, but an evolving model of the Church for the post-pandemic world?”

Burnett named one of the organization’s accomplishments. “During the pandemic, AAM became a trusted voice in the public square, joining a coalition of music organizations to fund COVID-19 research and being called upon to provide advice and information through webinars, articles, and Zoom meetings.”

At the end of the conference, Burnett’s term of office expired, and Sonia Subbayya Sutton became president. She has been an organist and choirmaster for nearly 40 years, including 20 years at St. Alban’s in Washington, D.C.

The daylong event featured panels and presenters reflecting on the pandemic-changed world.

In “Bringing Our Best Selves to our Vocation: Safeguarding Our Profession in a Time of Uncertainty,” church musicians Marilyn Haskell and Stephan Griffin talked about the future of the church and music.

Believing the Episcopal Church “will be here in 50 years,” Griffin said, “we have work that needs to be done to rework the systems in place.”

He sees church musicians surviving “if and how we educate our staff, col-

leagues, parishioners, vestry on what we do. What are we doing to bring up the next generation of choir members?”

“If the church as we know it collapses, it will be because something better will be developing to take its place,” Haskell said. “The church in 50 years may look differently as it is today, but it will still be made up of our beliefs. If we begin to assess what is essential for a community of believers to do work as Christians, we will be better prepared for the change that will come.”

Haskell addressed the concept of musicians as pastors. “We have to evaluate ourselves, what we see as the pastoral nature of our work, and negotiate with the rest of the staff what our role is. Are we pastors to just the choir, or to all?”

Griffin agreed. “It’s a very delicate balance. Before musicians employ in pastoral work, there has to be a conversation with the pastor. Not all musicians are trained in pastoral care.”

Haskell spoke to the importance of congregational singing, which “comes from experience. I believe it can work in all congregations. Get off the organ bench once in a while. Walk out in front of the congregation. Teach a song using your voice. And listen to what comes back to you.”

Griffin and Haskell said musicians have a role in the church’s stewardship program.

“We often recognize the time commitment in the music ministry,” Griffin said. “But we need to remind our choir about the importance of stewardship.”

He added, “We can’t expect people to understand us unless we engage them in conversation. We can’t expect others to advocate for us if we don’t do that for ourselves.”

Haskell reminded AAM, “This is a servant ministry. Meet people where they are musically and take them to a new level. It actually means ‘respect the dignity of every human being.’”

Lydia Beasley and Jacquelyn Matava, staff singers at St. Mark’s, San Antonio, presented *Getting Back Into Vocal Shape*, a lively video featuring practical ideas, exercise demonstrations, and tactics for

singers to prepare after the pandemic.

“We have all lived in masks for the last year and a half,” Beasley said. “But singing in masks can be difficult.”

Among their many ideas: offering singers more breath marks; focusing on familiar hymns and anthems when returning; recognizing that enthusiasm among the individual singers may differ; and exercising the body and the voice.

The importance and value of coaching and mentoring — both in receiving and in giving — was the focus of a panel presentation, “Put Me In, Coach! Coaching Relationships for Musicians and Clergy that Support a Healthy Church.”

A collage of submitted videos featuring new works and anthems by AAM composers prepared during the pandemic offered a sampling of different styles from churches of various sizes. The new works reflected life during the pandemic as well as the aftermath of George Floyd’s death, fires in the West, and other significant events of the past year.

Bishop Neil Alexander, AAM chaplain and former Bishop of Atlanta, noted, “Sixteen or so months ago, we entered a season of transition the likes of which none of us had ever experienced. We were in uncharted territory — uncharted territory vocationally. As savvy with technology as some of us may be, we prepared ourselves for live music, performed in sacred spaces, with real people singing — yes, singing — to the accompaniment of real instruments.

“While we long for the return of so much we have missed, do we really want to bring all of it with us? While we deeply desire something that begins to feel like normal, most of us will admit that not all that was normal was good.”

He added, “Dr. Fauci has reminded us this pandemic will come to an end; and some point it will be over. No pandemic lasts forever. Which leads me to ask: What do we want to be, who do we want to be, when it is over? What will be the same as it used to be? What will be forever new? What will we want to take with us into the future? What will we want to leave behind as a gift of the pandemic? Those questions lead, or can lead, I believe, to profound self-examination.”



Photos courtesy of Church and Politics Summit

Dr. Ezekiel Mutua (center), CEO Kenya Film Classification Board making his point during a panel discussion at the Church and Politics Summit 2021. Listening is the Rev. Edward Buri (left) and Rt. Rev. Thegu Mutahi, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa.

## African Church Leaders Seek Faithful Political Witness

By Jesse Masai and Esther Mombo

Church leaders from across Africa say they intend to pursue a biblical approach to politics.

At the “Church and Politics Summit 2021” held in the Kenyan capital June 16-18, clergy of various denominations, Christian business leaders, heads of theological schools, current and aspiring politicians, student leaders, and concerned citizens declared that they would create meaningful dialogue between the Christian community and the political marketplace to address challenges facing the continent.

The Rev. Dr. Canon Rosemary Mbogo, provincial secretary of the Anglican Church of Kenya, asked Christians in the East African nation to prepare for the country’s 2022 general election.

“We challenge Christians to be salt and light and be at the frontline in providing solutions to our social-economic problems, rather than being spectators in public affairs. Moving forward, we will cascade conversations to the grassroots and work together to

effectively fulfil our commitments,” she said.

The church, which played an important role in Kenya’s democratization during and after the Cold War, has in recent years come under sharp scrutiny, especially after the disputed 2007 General Election, during which an estimated 1,300 people were killed and over 500,000 displaced.

From 2003, key leaders in the church and wider civil society had adopted a posture of “constructive engagement” with retired President Mwai Kibaki, whom they had helped usher into power after decades of a single-party dictatorship.

“A church that is weak on the inside cannot be strong on the outside. God is calling us to action, but unless we deal with the software of our Christianity, we have no basis to do advocacy. God is asking us to act justly, to do right with other people and do right in every situation,” said the Rev. Canon Dr. Sammy Wainana, provost at Nairobi’s All Saints Cathedral.

Dr. David Oginde, bishop emeritus

(Continued on page 20)

# Covenants and Communion: The Church(es) in Europe

By Robert Innes and  
Mark D.W. Edington

On the threshold of a new church year this past November, the two of us — together with our three colleagues who comprise the bishops of the various Anglican jurisdictions in Europe — met as the College of Anglican Bishops in Continental Europe. We gather in this way, under normal circumstances, twice each year; once by ourselves, and once as a meeting on the shoulder of the larger annual gathering of Old Catholic and Anglican bishops in Europe.

This year, our conversation focused on concluding an effort begun in 2006, when some of us — and, in some cases, our predecessors — first took up the task of drafting a covenant to guide our relationships. The result was an agreed version of the “Porto Covenant,” a document signed by all five bishops.

It might be said that the effort leading to this outcome took root in a moment of disappointment; the need for such a covenant arose from the abandonment of a project of the 1960s and 1970s to form a single Anglican province in Europe, one that would bring together in a single structure churches of the Church of England, the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church, the Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic Evangelical Church, and the Episcopal Church.

That these churches emerged as they did and where they did is something of an anomaly in the story of the Anglican diaspora. Worship provided by the Church of England in Continental Europe predates the Reformation, and overseas Church of England

congregations were placed under the jurisdiction of the bishop of London in 1633. (That included, until 1783, responsibility for Church of England parishes in what would become the United States.) “Ambassador’s Chaplains” were often the focal point of these communities, and were often quite distinguished; William Wake, who served from 1682 to 1685 as Ambassador’s Chaplain in Paris, would later become Archbishop of Canterbury.

Americans gathered for worship in Paris as early as 1814, although until the middle of the 19th century many there sought out Church of England gatherings if they wished to find familiar patterns of worship. Congregations of Americans began worshipping according to the use of the Episcopal Church by at least 1855, and the first congregation took shape in August of 1858.

This was a period of difficult, if not strained, relationships between Britain and the United States; and indeed the emergence of an Episcopal congregation in Geneva is not unconnected from the tribunal held in that city over the *Alabama* Claims in the early 1870s.

The churches of Spain and Portugal emerged under other conditions. The same rejection of the doctrines of the First Vatican Council (of 1868) that brought about the emergence of the Old Catholic Churches elsewhere in Europe can be glimpsed as the organizing principle that brought forth these two distinct churches, Spain in 1868 and Portugal in 1880.

We do not intend here to recite the long and complex history traced by these individual Anglican churches. It will suffice here to say that each

emerged to address distinct needs, under unique circumstances. They have evolved into churches that share with each other the common bond of communion with the See of Canterbury while called by God to distinct work in the same vineyard.

With this in view, we reject the notion that “overlapping” jurisdictions among us in Europe is inherently problematic. For one thing, as Archbishop Justin Welby reminded us when we met together with him in 2019, we have had overlapping jurisdictions with the church of Rome for five centuries. But more to the point, we regard our work together as that of neighbors, not competitors, placing the fact of our common identity in communion with Canterbury as a shared bond within which we have both the chance and the challenge to model new ways for Anglican churches to work together.

Our shared presence in Europe in some ways challenges core assumptions about how the Anglican past might shape our shared Anglican future. We have received a strong tradition that the ministry of bishops in our church is to be understood geographically; and indeed, the canons of the Episcopal Church state this explicitly:

It is hereby declared as the judgment of this church that no two Bishops of Churches in full communion with each other should exercise jurisdiction in the same place, except as may be defined by a concordat adopted jointly by the competent authority of each of the said Churches, after consultation with the appropriate inter-Anglican body. (I.11.4.)





American Cathedral in Paris

Wikimedia Commons

the plight of refugees and migrants among us, and those who fall prey to the evil of human trafficking; and the need to instill in a rising generation the hope of the gospel's promise. These are priorities we share.

It is important to note that the covenant we have agreed to is between bishops, not churches. It is founded on our shared ministry and our common concern and mutual regard for each other. By accepting commitments to share more information with each other, to rotate among ourselves responsibility for our annual conversations, and to be in conversation with each other about the emergence of new communities and new ministries, we seek to build habits of collaboration aligned with our personal relationships in ministry.

These are times of significant change for the church, and in particular for the presence of both the United States and Britain within Europe. While the challenge of Brexit is much in the headlines, the reality is that the United States has been undergoing its "Amexit" from Europe since the early 1990s; of the more than 350,000 U.S. troops in Europe in the 1980s, only roughly one-tenth remain today, with a consequent reduction in both America's civilian presence and cultural sway. Episcopal churches in Europe, once almost entirely expatriate in membership, now comprise a tremendous diversity of membership from all parts of the Anglican Communion — and from the local community. The same is true of many Church of England chaplaincies here.

In the decades to come, all of our churches in Europe will need to contend with new questions about our identity, our witness, and the mission to which God calls us in the years ahead. We give thanks that closer links between us, and between our colleagues in episcopal ministry in Europe, will be a basis on which we can undertake that work.

*Robert Innes is the Church of England's Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe. Mark D.W. Edington is Bishop in Charge of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe.*

It is the emphasis on *place* here that is, in a word, misplaced. Our churches each emerged in the same place in response to different purposes, called by God to different ministries among different populations. Instead, our relationship is founded on the unique and blessed circumstance of being *in communion in the same place*. It is more helpful to think of our episcopal jurisdictions as *personal* rather than *territorial*. There is some analogy here with the way in which different Orthodox churches are present in different European countries beyond their home country.

Neither the Church of England nor the Episcopal Church in Europe are "churches of the land" in the way that the Roman Catholic Church is in Poland, or the German Evangelical Church is in parts of Germany. Our churches took root among diaspora communities, and over many years have evolved and grown to welcome

and serve those who are nationals of the nations in which we are planted. And because both the Church of England and the Episcopal Church use the English language, and English is a global language, we attract worshipers from many different countries who have settled in Europe. (Of course, both of our churches also have congregations offering worship in languages other than English.) All four of our churches have a different polity, different understandings of God's mission, and different patterns of worship. We acknowledge painful differences in teaching on human sexuality.

Yet as Christians and Anglicans we confront the shared challenge to offer a compassionate, compelling Christian witness on issues like the scourge of racism and the requirement for reckoning and reconciliation; the damage humans have wrought to God's creation, and the Christian call to act in ways to repair and restore the climate;



A display of multi-colored hands below the cross at an Adelaide church

# Seeking Reconciliation with Indigenous Australians

By Robyn Douglass  
Correspondent

The Fourth of July is an uncontroversial day of national celebration in the United States. Australia's national day has become an annual argument.

We'd never say no to a public holiday, but Australia Day, January 26, marks the day in 1788 when 11 shiploads of convicts claimed Sydney for white settlement. Australia's First Peoples regard it as "Invasion Day," not one for celebration. Increasing numbers of Australians respect that.

So National Reconciliation Week, which falls from May 27 to June 3, is

taking on a wider significance. It was started as the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation in 1993 and was supported by Australia's major faith communities. It's the anniversary of the 1967 referendum that changed the Constitution to include Aboriginal People as citizens, and the 1992 High Court *Mabo* decision that wiped out the legal fiction that Australia was founded on "terra nullius," empty land. It also marks "Sorry Day," the national apology to the Stolen Generation — the untold thousands of Aboriginal people who were taken from their families by police and welfare agencies to be brought up in institutions.

National Reconciliation Week

stretches beyond seven days, and beyond churches. But it started with churches.

The Anglican Church of Southern Queensland (also known as the Diocese of Brisbane) covers an area larger than the state of California, stretching from the subtropical eastern coast to the deserts. It includes the metropolis of Brisbane and the Gold Coast, subtropical rainforest and desert mining towns. Sandra King has been Southern Queensland's Reconciliation Action Plan coordinator for 18 months. This year has been easier than last year, when events were held on Zoom and activities were devised for shutdown.

"Aunty" Sandra spoke to *TLC* in the

“We have to reconcile ourselves with God first to reconcile ourselves with fellow human beings.”

—The Rev. Canon Bruce Boase



The Rev. Canon Bruce Boase

Anglican Focus photo

middle of more than two weeks of events and presentations, to Anglican agencies, parishes and schools. Many of the speakers came, like hers, from shattered families.

Her own family hid the secret of being stolen for 70 years. The children promised never to talk about it and were never allowed to “go back to country.” They were finally told the truth in 2008 when the national “Sorry Day” broke the silence.

A proud Quandamooka and Bundjalung woman, King said many stories are simply heartbreaking.

“Some people are still trying to find out who their mob is and who their family is,” she said.

Saddest of all, the intergenerational trauma continues. Broken families, higher rates of imprisonment, poorer health, and poverty are the legacy of white settlement, and many Aboriginal people simply don’t trust churches.

King, who was surprised by the progress of the church in Southern Queensland, said the church is doing “its

best to learn and understand how they can help — they want to learn more.”

And there is much to share. Many Aboriginal people hold fast to a strong Christian faith, she said.

“Aboriginal people are very spiritual people. We have always believed in a higher power — God or dreaming, it’s up to the person what they call it.”

King said Christianity shares with traditional beliefs the trust in the creator “who made the land and humans, and put everything under the law.”

Aboriginal people are required by their law to respect the land and other people, and “only take what is needed from the land, from what God created.”

So churches hosted all kinds of forums to hear from Australia’s First Nations people, from meditations to a popular demonstration of “bush tucker” (indigenous Australian food) by a renowned Indigenous chef.

In St. John’s Cathedral, a “yarning” (storytelling) event was held for people to hear from “wise warriors,” Aboriginal women. It was well attended, in

person and online.

The Dean, the Very Rev. Dr. Peter Catt, said the cathedral hosted events around this time every year, and this one had been inspired by a climate conversation earlier this year.

“That event involved listening to a number of First Nations people to get their perspective on climate change and care for the planet,” he said.

Not far from the grandeur of Brisbane cathedral, the inner-city church at Milton nestles under the shadow of a huge sports stadium.

The Rev. Ceri Wynne said the parish acknowledges Indigenous ownership at every service.

“We are on sacred ground, not just when we worship, not just in the church, but for the people who were the original custodians, the Jagera and Turrbal people,” she said.

The parish’s monthly reflective service on Saturday evening was dedicated in May to hearing the words of Aboriginal people. Wynne said the

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# Seeking Reconciliation with Indigenous Australians

(Continued from previous page)

contemplative nature of the service was helpful.

“If you are listening to words of lament from Indigenous authors about their history and their present, and you sit in silence with those words, you are trying your very best to let the Spirit talk to you. It is an encounter with the divine that would definitely resonate very deeply with a lot of people,” she said.

Wynne hopes the work of listening will move the parish to local action. “As a community we acknowledge we haven’t really started, but it’s about getting out of the way — getting our egos out of the way and listening to the words of people.”

There was a different reconciliation service in the suburban Green Hills parish. The Rev. Canon Bruce Boase is acknowledged as a leader in the diocese on reconciliation issues.

A gently spoken Wakka Wakka man, Boase said reconciliation with Aboriginal people has to start with our relationship with God.

“As a Christian, I believe we have to reconcile ourselves with God first to reconcile ourselves with fellow human beings,” he told *TLC*.

“That’s what we have to do to heal rifts — learn things from one another and come together in a situation where we can actually hear one another’s stories.” He said the service in his parish was inspired by his Catholic brothers

and sisters, and includes an act of reconciliation.

This year, he said, he asked people to take a stone, warm it with their hands and near their hearts, and place it at the foot of a cross, “as a symbol of their reconciling themselves with God, and also as a starting point for the reconciliation with others. That’s fairly powerful.”

Boase holds hope that the wider Australian community will come to terms with their First Nations, and be a community of equals.

“Reconciliation is an integral part of our Christian life ... that’s where we come from and if anyone needs to take the lead in it, then it ought to be the Christian churches,” he said.

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## African Church Leaders Seek Faithful Political Witness

(Continued from page 15)

of Christ Is the Answer Ministries, said the church’s prophetic witness has been weakened by discordant voices, ethnic rivalries, money from special interests, and lack of wisdom.

“Politics in our context is more an art of manipulation leading to exploitation. Who will bring the voice of reason and stop the misuse of power, if not us the church?” he asked.

He added: “When the affairs of the nation are left unguided by the principles of the kingdom, then ordinary men and women shall inevitably suffer alienation: the powerful will oppress the weak, the rich will exploit the poor, and the majority will overshadow the minority. It is for this reason that Christians must engage society and influence it for the good of all.”

The Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, who heads Kenya’s National Cohesion and Integration Commission, also rallied the church to hold the political elite to account.

“Politics is too important to be left in the hands of politicians. The church cannot keep quiet while the political class is mistreating the masses or when the masses are misbehaving. The best leaders listen to the biblical instructions on the fair administration of

nations through just rule,” he said.

Kobia, a Methodist clergyman, who was the first African to be elected General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, is spearheading efforts to contain occasionally alarming levels of hate speech in the nation.

“Politics can be eventful, painful, and uncertain,” said the Rev. Dr. Lazarus Chakwera, President of Malawi and a Pentecostal theologian. “But the conviction that God calls one into politics will keep them going. We are missionaries in the political arena where harvest is bountiful, and the workers are few. Let us get out of our comfort zone and be found faithful.”

A member of the advisory board at Christians for Social Action, Dr. Ron Sider, urged Christians across Africa to draw lessons from their counterparts in the United States in the wake of last November’s heated general election.

“Our Declaration of Independence affirmed that everyone has been made in God’s image. The church was, in the 19th century, at the forefront of ending slavery. At the start of the 20th century, the church supported trade unions and workers’ rights. In the 1960s, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other church leaders backed the

civil rights movement. On May 27, 2003, President George W. Bush — who is an evangelical — signed legislation authorizing the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief into law, in the process touching millions of lives across Africa,” he said.

Dr. Sider noted the church’s quest for a biblically balanced agenda in the American public square had been hampered by the failure on the part of White Anglo-Saxon Protestants to recognize people of color as brethren in Christ, coupled with an unwillingness to listen to each other and initiate conversations across the political divide.

“The church also allowed politicians, specifically former President Donald Trump, to stir up racism and an idolatrous nationalism. This was amplified by one-issue politics for evangelicals and Catholics, including on abortion. If you want your politics to be biblical, you’ve got to find out what [else] God cares about,” he said.

Sider urged African Christians to understand their world and interpret Scriptures faithfully.

*Jesse Masai is a freelance journalist based in Limuru, Kenya. Dr. Esther Mombo is associate professor of theology at Saint Paul’s University, Limuru.*

# The Life, Death, and Afterlife of a Rock Star Saint: Thomas Becket at the British Museum

“Thomas Becket: Murder and the Making of a Saint”

The British Museum, Bloomsbury, London

May 20-August 22, 2021, £17

Review by Charlotte Gauthier

Few English saints have captured the popular imagination as thoroughly or enduringly as Thomas Becket, the medieval Archbishop of Canterbury and staunch defender of ecclesiastical privilege whose murder at the hands of four of King Henry II's knights in Canterbury Cathedral on December 29, 1170, echoes down the centuries to the present day.

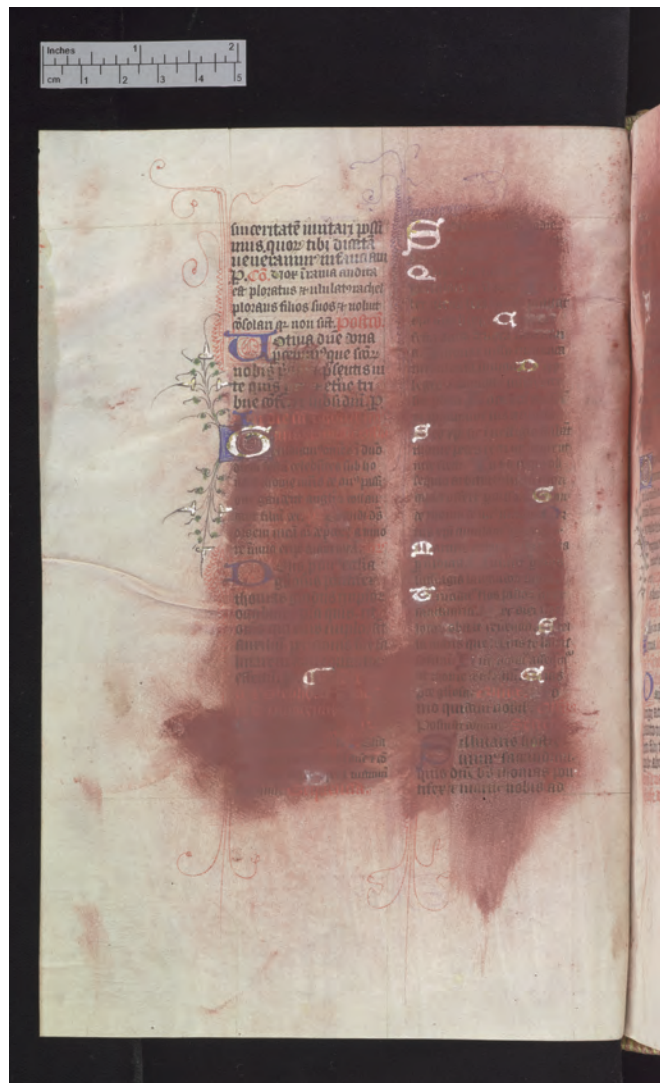
*Becket: Murder and the Making of a Saint* was to have marked the 850th anniversary of the prelate's death. Delayed for a year by the COVID pandemic, it has certainly been worth the wait. An extraordinary collection of over a hundred objects from churches, libraries, museums, and private collections all over Europe charts Becket's life and legacy from boyhood through his early and rapid promotion in ecclesiastical circles, to his murder and the rapid spread and final suppression of his cult.

Fearlessly curated, the exhibition starts as it means to go on: with a lavish depiction of Becket's murder. Alone at the entrance stands a Limoges reliquary — exemplar of a veritable industry of enamelled reliquaries turned out in their hundreds to please an eager medieval public — illustrating the bloody scene in deceptively naïve medieval enamel. Below, knights brandish sword and axe while Becket's companions look on, hands raised in impotent horror. Above, mournful monks prepare Becket's body for burial while flights of angels sing his soul to its rest.

Having set the mood, the exhibit retraces its steps, illustrating Becket's London boyhood with bone ice skates and gaming pieces, his early manhood with documents from Becket's mentor Theobald of Bec's time as Archbishop of Canterbury, and the future saint's rapid rise to political and ecclesiastical prominence with his commission as chancellor, a contemporary episcopal miter and crozier, and a luxurious Gospel manuscript.

Would-be visitors should reacquaint themselves with the outlines of Becket's conflict with Henry II before attending. While the descriptions of a series of illuminated folios on loan from a private collection outline their internecine dispute over ecclesiastical privilege, which came to a head with the coronation of Henry the Young King and Becket's excommunication of the bishops involved, there is little time or room to elaborate.

Sound and physical design make the compact exhibition



Missal whose red ink blots out the liturgical texts for Becket's feast

Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library

space feel at once expansive and intimate. A dramatic animated video of Becket's murder, complete with a slow-motion shot of spurting blood worthy of Quentin Tarantino, caps the first third of the exhibit. Its chilling effect is deepened by an illuminated manuscript — the only object in that space — depicting a shard from the murderer's broken sword and a piece of Becket's severed skull flying across the scene. The video's austere soundtrack, the chanting of the minor doxology, fills the entire exhibition. Those who miss the placard explaining that the music is from a re-creation of the vespers being sung by the monks of Canterbury Cathedral at the moment of Becket's murder

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## CULTURES

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will find the soundtrack in a small but well-stocked gift shop at the exit.

The remaining two-thirds of the exhibit detail the extraordinarily rapid spread of the Becket cult to places as far away as Sicily, Sweden, Spain, and the Holy Land, ending with the cult's brutal suppression by Henry VIII in 1538 and its continuance by exiled English Roman Catholics. A superb Swedish baptismal font and a Norwegian reliquary recapitulate the by-now familiar scene of Becket's murder, attesting to the saint's popularity throughout Christendom. A multiplicity of pilgrim badges and other artefacts underscores the popularity of the saint's cult within England. In the late 12th century, the shrine at Becket's London birthplace employed a man to melt down and recycle the thousands of lead ampullae of Becket's miraculous blood carried home to the capital by Canterbury pilgrims. The number and variety of surviving pilgrim souvenirs on display in the exhibition captures some of this roaring trade.

The highlight of the exhibition is without doubt a series of medieval stained-glass windows, carefully transported from Canterbury Cathedral, depicting some of the numerous miracles attributed to the intercession of St.



Reliquary casket showing the murder of Thomas Becket

Limoges, France, about 1180-1190. ©Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Thomas Becket. These range from the commonplace to the amusingly fantastical: prominent among them is a series of panels depicting the story of a criminal who prayed to Becket for mercy after having been judicially blinded and castrated. The final panel in the cycle rather charmingly depicts the rehabilitated miscreant pointing to his eyes, while an astonished onlooker points at his groin. A flourishing tree in the corner implies the man's complete restoration.

Henry VIII dominates the visitor's final moments in the exhibit: a life-sized rendering of Holbein's famous portrait commands the space. The

curators have taken pains to highlight Henry's early devotion to Becket, making the display of three mutilated service books more shocking. Henry VIII personally oversaw the complete destruction of Becket's shrine at Canterbury in 1538, and ordered his feast day to be scrubbed from the liturgical calendar. Rather than dispose of books with prayers for Becket's feast, many priests chose to scratch out or otherwise cover the prayers to comply with the king's edict suppressing the Becket cult. One missal on display is covered in an ocean of ink red as fresh blood.

Some visitors might object to the exhibition's emphasis on Becket as a prototype for English Roman Catholics, including John Fisher and Thomas More. It closes with a few artefacts highlighting the suppression of Roman Catholicism in England and the continuation of Becket's cult on the Continent and among recusants. Last to greet the visitor is a reliquary purporting to contain a piece of Becket's skull, smuggled out of England during the Elizabethan era. *Becket: Murder and the Making of a Saint* is a whirlwind tour through the life, death, and afterlife of England's most popular medieval saint. As turbulent now as he ever was, Becket continues to divide opinion 851 years on.

*Charlotte Gauthier (@FaraiUnVers) is a historian of the later Middle Ages.*



# 'Gandhian Christians'

Review by Titus Presler

Mary Cattan's perceptive biography of Murray and Mary Rogers offers a compelling story that will strike a chord with those exploring inter-religious encounter, cross-cultural mission, mystical spirituality and innovative Christian community. Central is Jyotiniketan — Sanskrit for "Place of Uncreated Light" — the Christian ashram they established in 1954 in the village of Kareli in north India, and which they moved successively to Jerusalem in the 1970s, Hong Kong in the 1980s, Ontario in the 1990s, and finally Oxford until their deaths in 2006 and 2007.

Murray and Mary were a married Church of England couple who moved to India with their children as missionaries of the Church Mission Society in 1946, Murray as chaplain to Allahabad University's Agricultural Institute, where, he said, "the cross was talked about but not much in evidence." Disillusioned with the mission establishment, they spent a year at Sevagram, the ashram established by Mahatma Gandhi, where they felt "the cross was not talked about, but it was very much there." They began to consider themselves "Gandhian Christians."

Jyotiniketan embodied the Rogers' longing to live out Christian community in solidarity with the poor of India and nourished by the spirituality of Hinduism as expressed through the Vedas, Bhagavad Gita, and Upanishads. For them and the several companions who joined them over the years, each day began with silence, followed by the Eucharist enriched by Indian texts and Sanskrit chants. Community members were distinctive in wearing the saffron robes typical of Hindu pilgrims.

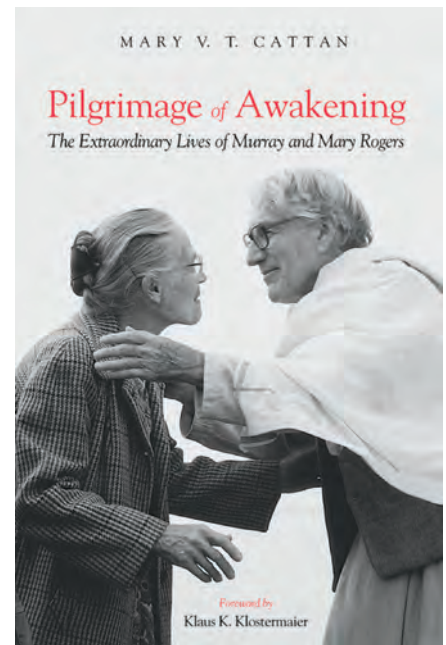
Jyotiniketan had "four marks to live by": the centrality of worship, prayer and silent meditation; simplicity in solidarity with the poor; obedience through shared lives, resources, and

decisions; and "expanding awareness that we are called to harmony, solidarity and unity as an essential response to God's creation." The community's mixture of married and single persons evokes comparison with Nicholas Ferrar's Little Gidding.

Though Max Warren of CMS supported the Rogers' ashram venture, they broke off their mission connection in 1966 and became more dependent on the generosity of people in India and around the world who were intrigued by their life commitments. Jyotiniketan inhabited small, humble spaces that were loaned or donated by well-wishers.

Crucial spiritual mentors and personal friends and were Henri Le Saux, the French Benedictine who lived in India as a *sannyasi* ascetic and went by the name Swami Abhishiktananda, and Raimondo Pannikar, the well-known theologian and author of *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism*. The post-India homes of Jyotiniketan brought them into dialogue with Islam, Judaism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Native American spirituality, which further enriched their theology and worship. Peripatetic Murray often spoke at interfaith gatherings organized by the World Council of Churches and other bodies.

Contemplation bore fruit in action, which brought Murray into conflict with church authorities, especially when the community's public policy stances disturbed the church's equilibrium with governments. Jyotiniketan became unwelcome in Jerusalem, where Murray criticized the Israelis for occupying Palestinian land, and in Hong Kong, where he criticized accommodation to the mainline Chinese government in advance of the 1997 transfer of Hong Kong from Britain to China. Community members also participated in environmental and anti-nuclear activism.



## Pilgrimage of Awakening

The Extraordinary Lives of Murray

and Mary Rogers

By Mary V.T. Cattan

Pickwick, pp. 442, \$51

Cattan details all this and much more in an exceptionally well-researched and sensitive biography. She writes as one nourished by the Rogers' ministry at Christ Church, Greenwich, Connecticut, where they made extended visits biennially from 1979 to 1996.

Yet she does not avoid discussing difficult aspects of the Rogers' life. One is their decision to send their three children to live with a family back in England, which one child found especially difficult. For an anti-colonial couple committed to the Indian milieu, this was a strikingly regressive move, especially when the Woodstock boarding school, full of expatriate children, was less than a day's train journey away.

Another is the somewhat distant relationship between Murray and Mary, complicated by his platonic but temporarily too close relationship with Heather Sandeman, one of their two lifelong fellow community members.

My spiritual life was indelibly

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imprinted by the couple during a Jyotniketan-style retreat for students at the base of the Himalayas. Yet I also experienced how their witness was divisive between my parents, both scholars of Indian religions. My mother went on periodic retreats at Jyotniketan and shared the Rogers' enthusiasm for Teilhard de Chardin, while my father objected to their dependent semi-mendicant lifestyle, which he thought imposed on other Christians. Few were neutral about Murray and Mary Rogers.

One aspect of their approach merits more scrutiny. The Hindu traditions that Jyotniketan incorporated were Brahmanic, accessible to the elites of Hinduism. Given the oppression inherent in the Hindu caste system, dependence on this stream of spirituality may be problematic, and it may help explain why Kareli's Hindu villagers did not frequent Jyotniketan liturgies.

Indigenous Christian theology in India today instead relates the gospel to the spirituality of the *Dalits*, the outcasts, from among whom the vast majority of converts to Christianity came. The approach of Jyotniketan, Pannikar, and others needs to be brought into dialogue with this liberative movement of Hindu-Christian theology.

Mary Cattan's tribute to the Rogers and the life of Jyotniketan is arresting and luminous. Her work invites a wider audience to explore the vision of a remarkable community and consider what it may contribute to the missional, inter-religious, and societal urgencies of today.

*The Rev. Canon Titus Presler, ThD, is president of the Global Episcopal Mission Network, has mission experience in India, Zimbabwe and Pakistan, and was president of the Seminary of the Southwest. He is the author of Horizons of Mission and Going Global with God: Reconciling Mission in a World of Difference, and coauthor of Questing: The Way of Love in Global Mission.*

## A Mold-Breaking Missionary

Review by Jean Cotting

*The Mission of Apolo Kivebulaya* is worthwhile reading for anyone wishing to learn more about indigenous missionary efforts in eastern Africa in the first half of the 20th century. Kivebulaya is a fascinating subject because he defies so many of the common patterns associated with his era and region.

By examining Kivebulaya's work and ministry, Wild-Wood educates the reader about the general landscape against which Kivebulaya broke the mold imposed by later historians and missiologists. Even in semantic terms, Kivebulaya went against the norms. He considered himself a missionary and not an evangelist, which is the term usually used to refer to indigenous individuals preaching the gospel.

Furthermore, he spent most of his active years away from his native Uganda, working primarily among the Bambuti people in the Ituri forest in eastern Congo. He was also different in that he was not a member of royalty or the upper echelon of Ugandan society, like most of the indigenous clergy of this period and locale; he was a commoner. Because of these factors, his ministry was transregional in nature, demonstrating the universal appeal of the gospel message rather than focusing on a purely local inculturation. Wild-Wood's introductory chapter provides an excellent crash course in east African church history.

Wild-Wood begins in the first chapter by emphasizing the reverence with which he is remembered today among east African Anglicans. Though perhaps unfamiliar to many Westerners, he is memorialized in song, poetry, and plays as an iconic representation of Christian evangelization. Churches and roads in the region are named after him and in textbooks



### The Mission of Apolo Kivebulaya

Religious Encounter and Social Change in the Great Lakes, c. 1865–1935

By Emma Wild-Wood  
Cambridge,  
pp. 336, \$85; \$24 ebook

he receives more mention than the Ugandan martyrs.

He was born in 1864 in Kiwanda, Uganda, the elder of twins, to a family of commoners in the Kingdom of Buganda. At this time commoners were essentially invisible in terms of historiographic documentation, and so beyond a rather slim autobiographical account, little is known about his early life. Wild-Wood does an admirable job of providing detailed descriptions of his lineage and its implications, and the significance of being a twin in the Ganda culture. One implication is that twins are associated with healing powers, and so it is no surprise that young Waswa (his given name) was apprenticed to an *omusawo* (a healer).

During this time, he transitions from the tribal religion of his family to the study of Islam, which he later acknowledges as an important stepping stone in coming to the Christian faith. It was after a brief stint in fighting for the British against the Banyoro that Kivebulaya wrote, “The greed to become a man of God seized me.” What follows is an amazing odyssey of the challenges and triumphs of a profoundly important figure in east African Christianity.

Wild-Wood's biography of Kivebulaya is a fascinating study of the interplay between historical, political, religious, and cultural worlds, tracing how its subject influenced and molded this



landscape, and the legacy that he left behind. Throughout the book, the highly detailed explanation of culture and custom is especially helpful to the Western reader. Wood's knowledge of the language and her ability to point out the subtleties and nuances of terminology gives the book an added layer of richness.

*The Rev. Jean Cotting is rector of St. James, Piqua, Ohio, and a doctoral student in theology at the University of Dayton.*

## Australia's Good Book

Review by Robyn Douglass

“Bible Basher” is an Australian insult for someone who engages in enthusiastic proselytizing, or just someone who talks about Christianity a bit. There is a group of Bible Bashers who stake out the main entrance to Adelaide's central railway station (and, incidentally, casino) every Friday night. They try to hand out free Bibles, which come with loud imprecations of doom for sinners and unwashed.

The skeptics have a point, the Bible has been at least partly responsible for dour, “wowser” (killjoy) morality for the 233 years of European settlement in Australia. But as historian and broadcaster Dr. Meredith Lake demonstrates in this fascinating history, the Bible has a much more commendable role in the development of one of the world's oldest and most successful democracies.

The structure of Australian social life owes some of its best parts to the good book. While a history of the Bible in Australia is entwined inevitably with a history of churches, Lake's focus frees her from denominational constraints. The Scriptures are home territory for her, as she was raised in the evangelical Anglican Diocese of Sydney.

*The Bible in Australia* was first released in 2018, to wide acclaim. It took a slew of prizes, including the Prime Minister's award for Australian history. Revised and updated, it was reissued in 2020.

The penal colony founded in Sydney

in 1788 was meant to be a place of atonement and restoration. Supplying Bibles to the convicts became a small industry for the next 50 or so years. While some were used for smoking and wastepaper, many convicts drew consolation from the suffering Christ, likening their banishment to exile from Eden. Tattoos on convicts, on the record as “distinguishing marks,” often featured texts, biblical imagery such as crosses, and even illustrations copied from Bibles.

As the colonies opened to free settlers, Australia was recast as a promised land and Europeans took seriously the charge to “fill the earth and subdue it” (Gen. 1:28). They were God's gardeners, taming the wilderness, and in the case of South Australia, Lutherans set up a paradise of dissent akin to the Mayflower pilgrims.

Anglican, Catholic, Methodist, and Presbyterian influences in Australia are evident in the liberal foundations of its political and social life. The world's oldest Labor party was founded in Australia by men who believed the worker was worth his hire (Luke 10:7).

As Lake describes it, the “discourse of national righteousness” shaped a community that, at its best, strove to provide for every member through welfare organizations and national provision for the elderly, invalid, and unemployed. To this day, Australian parliaments begin each sitting day with the Lord's Prayer.

But this is only half the story, and Lake is meticulous in describing how Australia's Indigenous people were invited to engage with the Bible. People who had occupied the land for around 50,000 years inevitably questioned the authority of these new sacred stories.

The 19th century saw the flowering of the evangelical movement, and missionary endeavors in Australia were a double-edged sword. While they sought to convert Australian Aborigines from a way of life practiced for tens of thousands of years, missionaries recorded and promoted indigenous languages, often so they could translate the Scriptures. Many took seriously Galatians 3:28, acknowl-

edging the Indigenous people's entitlement to salvation through Christ, and their equal status as children of God.

Lake demonstrates that it was Christian humanitarians who saw clearly that Indigenous people had a right to retain their land, and a few bold Christians exposed and denounced the mas-



### The Bible in Australia

A Cultural History

By Meredith Lake

New South, pp. 544, \$39.99

sacre of Indigenous people.

In 1938, the 150th anniversary of white settlement, William Cooper of the Yorta Yorta people wrote to the prime minister of the day “from the standpoint of an educated Black man who can read the Bible upon which the British constitution and custom is founded.” He asked how a professedly Christian nation could murder Aboriginal people and take from them, without compensation, the land which God gave them. As Lake comments, “Cooper's questions and his challenge to white nationhood remain significant today. They go to the heart of what it might mean for the Bible to continue to shape the Australian nation.”

Modern, multicultural Australia appears less attentive to the Bible than the old white Australia, but the popularity of new translations continues to surprise. Similarly, the Bible remains a powerful inspiration for artists, from writers to rock musicians, not all Christians. But as Lake makes clear, the Bible has never been confined to the churches.

The success of her study suggests there is still plenty of interest in the sacred text, and perhaps a new generation curious about the source of inspiration for many Australian institutions.

*Robyn Douglass is a freelance journalist based in Adelaide, Australia, and a correspondent of The Living Church.*

# Aspirational Evangelicalism

Review by Andrea L. Turpin

Thomas Kidd begins *Who Is an Evangelical?* with admirable self-disclosure: he considers himself one. I should therefore do likewise: I too own the label and, like Kidd, I mean it in a theological rather than a cultural or political sense. In fact, I was a member of Kidd's Baptist church before joining an Anglican parish. The question is whether the way we use the word to describe ourselves can generalize. Who is an evangelical — and who gets to decide who is an evangelical?

Kidd defines evangelicals as “born-again Protestants who cherish the Bible as the Word of God and who emphasize a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit” lived out through evangelism and service. This definition says nothing about how evangelicals vote or their stance on social issues. This is by design.

A #NeverTrump evangelical, Kidd is pushing back on the popular association of evangelicals with Republican politics and Trump in particular. He wants to convince both journalists and coreligionists that this association is not the essence of evangelicalism. That the latter might need convincing should perhaps give us pause.

Fundamentally, I would characterize *Who is an Evangelical?* as a work of historical theology. Though a historian, Kidd at root makes a theological claim about what constitutes normative evangelicalism, what evangelicalism *ought* to be. He supports this claim with a search back through history to discern the common thread in the movement of people who use the label and who retain some level of convincing connection with the generation before.

The first Christians to consider themselves evangelicals — in the mid-1700s — saw their emphasis on a conversion experience and subsequent intimate walk with the Holy Spirit as what distin-

guished them from other Protestants, who shared a commitment to the Bible as final authority. This latter commitment only became a distinguishing mark of evangelical identity after the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the early 20th century. Inasmuch as these

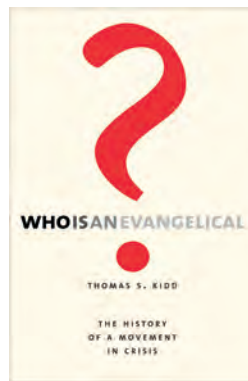
traits have characterized subsequent generations of evangelicals, it is in one sense reasonable to declare them the essence of evangelicalism.

At the same time, movements can change. For example, today's Republican and Democratic parties have very different platforms than they did shortly after the Civil War — or even in the 1950s. A growing body of scholarship, some of which predates and some of which came after Kidd's book, offers a more sociological definition of contemporary evangelicalism centered on a common culture of consumption (books, media, conferences, etc.) and political activism.

Kidd acknowledges the role of shared media in creating evangelical identity but simultaneously notes that the lives of many evangelicals center less on politics than on their church and family, evangelism, and charitable giving. That said, the association of white American evangelicals with conservative politics is empirically accurate: 81 percent voted for Donald Trump. While the two-party politics of abortion certainly contributed, can a purely theological definition of the movement fully account for this fact?

In keeping with his theological rather than sociological definition, Kidd takes care to include women and ethnic minorities throughout his history of evangelicalism, even though they may not have held much formal power or even worshiped in the same churches. And it should be noted that both supported Donald Trump in lower numbers than white evangelical men; the movement looks different when they are included. (Although Kidd's focus is the United States, he also considers global evangelicalism for context.)

Still, Kidd acknowledges that evangelicals have long lived out their faith in the political realm. They have understood the Christian life to involve evangelism



## Who is an Evangelical?

The History of a Movement in Crisis

By Thomas S. Kidd

Yale University Press, pp. 200, \$26

and service, sometimes with politics as a vehicle to help save the nation. But they haven't always agreed

on what policies would do so.

Kidd argues that “evangelicals have been at their best when using their political sway to defend the weak and oppressed (such as slaves) ... rather than seeking to impose evangelical practices, ideas, or standards of conscience on the public.” This is very much a theological rather than a historical claim, and one that some contemporary evangelicals would contest.

Kidd accordingly grapples with some of the troubling aspects of evangelicals' political engagement. He pulls no punches on white evangelicals' track record on race relations. Kidd fully admits—and berates, repeatedly—that portion of the movement for failing to live out Scripture's teachings on racial equality.

Specifically, he calls out the hypocrisy of claiming calls for racial justice were political, and hence beyond the church's responsibility, while embracing anti-communist or pro-life activism. By contrast, Kidd only cursorily considers the injustices evangelical leaders have historically perpetrated on women, from excluding them from decision-making to ignoring accusations of sexual abuse. Likewise, while he highlights Black evangelical civil rights advocacy, he overlooks evangelical feminism, which could have strengthened his argument.

Kidd's definition of evangelicalism, as it applies to the current generation, is semi-descriptive. They really do share many of the theological convictions and service impulses of early evangelicals. It's also semi-aspirational — they have too often allowed other weeds to grow up and choke out those priorities. Explaining this reality will require further reflection.

*Andrea L. Turpin is associate professor and graduate program director of history at Baylor University.*

**Appointments**

The Rev. **John D. Alexander** is interim priest at St. Uriel the Archangel, Sea Girt, N.J.

The Rev. **Sandra Casey-Martus** is assistant dean of Trinity Cathedral, Easton, Md.

The Rev. **Don Davidson** is interim priest at Holy Trinity, Wyoming, Mich.

The Rev. **Rachel Endicott** is interim priest at St. Paul's, Bellingham, Wash.

The Rev. **John Hill** is rector of St. Philip & St. James, Denver.

**Deaths**

The Rev. **Beverly K. Weatherly**, a former missionary who served parishes in North Carolina, Connecticut, Virginia, and Maryland, died May 28 after a year-long battle with MDS and leukemia, at 71.

Weatherly was born in Indiana, Pennsylvania, and raised near Columbus. A graduate of Ohio State, she worked in business and public administration before beginning studies for the ministry at Princeton Theological Seminary and General Seminary. She met her husband, the Rev. John Weatherly, working at a neighborhood Vacation Bible School in Trenton, New Jersey.

She was ordained in 1986, and following ministry as a curate in New Jersey, she served with her husband as Episcopal Church appointed missionaries in Brasilia, Brazil, for two years. Following ministry in Wilmington, North Carolina, and Darien, Connecticut, Weatherly was associate rector of Christ Church in Alexandria, Virginia, for ten years. She became rector of St. Andrew's in Leonardtown, Maryland, in 2019, and continued in ministry until shortly before her death. She served for many years as moderator of the Randolph Church, a nondenominational summer chapel in Randolph, New Hampshire.

She is survived by her husband, and by three children and seven grandchildren.

The Rev. **Willis Barnum Coker McCarty**, a onetime vice president of the Episcopal Church's House of Deputies and the long-serving rector of one of Jacksonville's largest parishes, died May 30 at 91.

A native of Jacksonville, McCarty was a graduate of the University of the South, receiving a bachelor's degree from the college and a master's in divinity from its seminary. Following his ordination in 1956, he served as rector of parishes in Apalachicola and Panama City, Florida, and as the director of the Diocese of Florida's Camp Weed and its youth department.

He became rector of St. Mark's in Jacksonville in 1971, and served until his retirement in 1995. The church grew significantly under his leadership, and he oversaw a series of expansions and renovations of the church plant, including the construction of a youth center.

He represented the Diocese of Florida as a

(Continued on next page)

# A Different King

“James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, ‘Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.’ And he said to them, ‘What is it you want me to do for you?’ And they said to him, ‘Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory’” (Mark 10:35-37). Their desire for position and power is, in some measure, shared by all the disciples. “When the ten heard it, they began to be angry with James and John” (Mark 10:41). Everyone, it seems, wants to be *someone*, a person of dignity, fame, renown, and glory. On a small scale, this may be harmless, the desire to be respected in one’s obscure sphere of influence. But, magnified by real power over human beings, this desire can be dangerous.

“So Jesus called them and said to them, ‘You know that among the Gentiles those whom you recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all’” (Mark 10:42-44). In the kingdom that Jesus announces and is building, power is a form of service, not tyranny. So, for instance, even the pope has been called for many centuries *Servus Servorum Dei*. And do we not often speak these days of *servant leadership*?

“Recognized rulers” are necessary for the governance of the human community. They may work to restrain evil, punish crimes, and promote the common good. Their “recognition,” however, depends to a great extent on public displays of power, and this power requires that rulers constantly guard their reputation and perceived dignity. Playing the part is nearly everything. It is no surprise, then, that rulers will at times act in unjust ways to protect their position. Two New Testa-

ment stories illustrate the point. First: John the Baptist accused King Herod of entering an unlawful marriage. To appease the anger of his wife, Herod had John imprisoned. One day, Herod gave a great party to which he invited many dignitaries. Among the festivities, Herod’s daughter danced before him and pleased him. Then, in the presence of everyone, he solemnly swore, “Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it” (Mark 6:22). At the request of her mother, she asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter. The king, constrained by his oath, had John beheaded. Second: Pilate, having found no fault in Jesus, handed him over. Why? He did it “to satisfy the crowd,” that is, to protect his position in a display of pathetic power.

So the world turns. Who will deliver us from this body of death? Is life only a play for power and prestige and reputation?

Strangely, everything changes with the entrance of a new king into our lives. Carried into our hearts, he calls forth dancing with songs, lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, cymbals, shouts, the sound of the trumpet, leaping and dancing (2 Sam. 6:5-16).

You wonder, “Who is he, this King of glory?” (Ps. 24:10). Jesus Christ is the King of Glory enthroned upon the heart and welling up to eternal life. For a moment, at least, forget yourself and your place in the world. Jesus Christ has come that your joy may be complete. He has chosen you, adopted you, lavished you with grace and every spiritual blessing (Eph. 1:3-7). Accept his love and joy. Hear him say, “Dance me to the end of love” (Leonard Cohen).

**Look It Up**

Verse 5 of Hymn 646

**Think About It**

Transport of delight

(Continued from previous page)

deputy to ten successive General Conventions, was vice president of the House of Deputies for three years, and served two terms as a member of Executive Council. He also was a chaplain to the Florida Army National Guard, retiring with the rank of colonel. He served as an interim in several large Florida parishes in retirement.

McCarty is survived by his wife of 65 years, Betty Ann, and by three daughters and five grandchildren.

The Rev. **Edgar Elijah Shippey**, a priest and entertainer who founded two youth leadership programs focused on music and service, died May 27, at 83.

Raised in Fort Smith, Arkansas, Shippey was a graduate of the University of Arkansas and the Seminary of the Southwest, and began his ordained ministry in 1963, leading two rural Arkansas parishes and assisting the chaplain at the University of Arkansas.

He became an assistant at Trinity Cathedral in Little Rock in 1964, and founded the Retreat Singers, a folk music choir, shortly afterward. Shippey wrote some of the music the group performed, including "A Folksong Life of Christ." The Retreat Singers traveled across the United States and Canada during summers in the late 1960s in a bus dubbed "The Holy Roller," performing in churches and engaging in service projects, including building a school on a Navajo reservation in Utah. They recorded two albums and were featured in *Life* magazine. In the summer of 1968, they made an eight-week tour of Europe, performing for the King of Sweden and the assembled bishops at the 1968 Lambeth Conference.

Shippey moved to Novato, California, in 1969, to serve as assistant rector at St. Francis Church, and founded a similar group, the California Wind Children. He was rector of Holy Trinity Church in Ukiah, California, for 11 years, and completed his active ministry at St. James in Coquille, Oregon. He was chaplain to the retired clergy of the Diocese of Oregon at the time of his death.

Shippey served as chaplain for summer camps for several dioceses, and had a ministry to troubled youth and people suffering from addictions. He was also a gifted ventriloquist, performing several times on television, and a longtime Rotarian. He is survived by his wife, Tina, and by a son, Adam. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Abigail.



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

Edgar Shippey and the Retreat Singers

2 Sam. 7:1-14a or Jer. 23:1-6 • Ps. 89:20-37 or 23

Eph. 2:11-22 • Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

## Divine Compassion

The prophet Jeremiah calls the people of God a flock without a good shepherd, and Jesus uses the same metaphor in the Gospel. "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" Jeremiah says. "It is you who have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them" (Jer. 23:1-2).

Jesus, traveling by boat with his disciples, lands on the shore. A crowd is waiting. "As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd" (Mark 6:34). He had compassion on them because he saw them scattered; he saw them "divided and enslaved by sin" (BCP, p. 254). He saw the ruin of human beings alienated from God and set against each other.

Though addressed to a Gentile audience, the Epistle to the Ephesians well describes humanity as a whole without Christ. "Remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12-22). There is, of course, a deep and true sense in which God is in the world always and everywhere, sustaining all things in being. However, our awareness of this presence is often so dulled that we live as if "without God in the world." We are scattered, enslaved, without hope, and without God. Jesus Christ finds a fallen and fractured humanity to which he extends his all-embracing compassion.

The compassion of Jesus, no doubt, includes deep feelings, but it also includes a response to physical and spiritual needs. "Jesus ordered the disciples to get all the people to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave

them to his disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them. And all ate and were filled" (Mark 6:39-42).

And, to assure that this feeding of the many would continue to the end of time, on the night before he suffered, "He took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, and gave it to them, and said, 'This is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many'" (Mark 14:22-24).

Remember, you were at one time without Christ. You were divided and enslaved by sin. Now, Christ has come to you in the depth of his compassion, offering his body and pouring out his blood for you, and feeding you with new and everlasting life. In the dying body of Jesus, we see the death of something in us, something which *must die* for the new being to emerge. The hostility that divides human beings and divides the human heart is put to death on the cross (Eph. 2:16). The old humanity is dead! A new being united in Christ emerges from the cross and grave.

Thus, amid our differences and diversity, we are in Christ citizens with the saints, members of the household of God, built up and joined together as a holy temple. Divine compassion has gathered us, fed us, and made us a "dwelling place for God."

In the infinite compassion of Christ, we are one body, his body. United in his mercy and love, we refuse to hate anything God has made (Collect for Ash Wednesday).

### Look It Up

Psalm 23

### Think About It

Green grass, the warm sun, soul food, and a new being.

## Human Need and Divine Generosity

With divine power, the prophet Elisha turns a jar of oil into a vast supply, the sale of which delivers a woman from debt and the loss of her two children into slavery. Next, the prophet declares that a barren woman will give birth, and when the child falls ill and dies, the prophet stretches his body over the child and revives him. In a time of famine, the prophet commands that a stew be prepared, and when it proves poisonous, he makes it healthy by adding some flour. Finally, the hero-prophet feeds 100 people with 20 loaves of barley and a few fresh ears of grain.

And what is our Lord's meaning? Poverty, desperation, and nothingness are the raw material of miracles, the stuff upon which supernatural mercy brings forth increase and growth. We come before God in our weakness and need. We are, as St. Augustine reminds us, "some [tiny] portion of creation, carrying about our mortality, carrying a testimony of our sin and the testimony that you resist the proud." We have, to be sure, gifts of memory, reason, and skill, but they are not sufficient to nourish a genuinely human life. Burdened with our mortality and sin and knowing that we have no strength within ourselves to help ourselves, we are a pit of endless need.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit," Jesus says, and "Blessed are those who mourn," and "Blessed are those who hunger" (Matt. 5:3-6). There is an emptiness and void that ought to be exposed and over which the Spirit of God moves. "For God alone my soul in silence waits; from him comes my salvation" (Ps. 62:1). "The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, and you give them food in due season. You open wide your hand and satisfy the needs of every living creature" (Ps. 145:16-17).

Jesus beholds our need. "Jesus went up on the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was

near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?' He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, 'Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to eat a little.' One of the disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?' (John 6:9). This question speaks to us. What are they — our resources — in the presence of our gaping need, in a world of want and suffering?

With compassion and power, Jesus takes the little we have and transforms it into nourishment. "Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' ... Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost ... they filled twelve baskets'" (John 6:10-13).

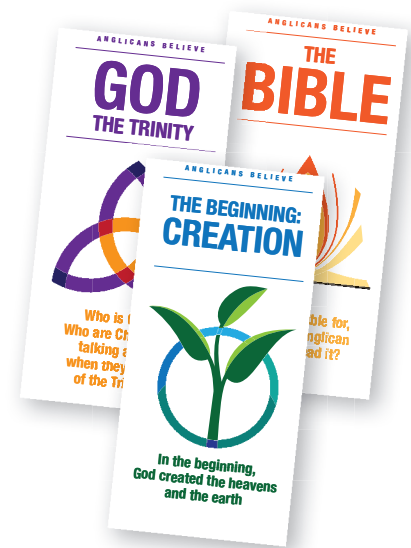
What is the food Jesus offers? Barley bread and fish represent a kind of Eucharist. He took, he blessed, he distributed, and all were satisfied. In sacramental communion and the innumerable sacramentals of creation, Jesus gives himself, the riches of his glory, to strengthen our inner being. He dwells in our hearts so that we are rooted and grounded in love. Our emptiness becomes the fullness of God.

### Look It Up

Psalm 145:15

### Think About It

Fallen and bowed down, you are ready to be raised up and nourished.



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## Repentance and Divine Food

An essential part of learning anything is reviewing. We learn and review the Church's liturgy through frequent participation. But do we remember its components and their deeper meanings?

The Holy Eucharist has two main parts, the Word of God and the Holy Communion. The first part begins with our arrival, when we enter in silence, with humility and gentleness, patience, and mutual love. We prepare ourselves to hear the Word of God in unity of Spirit and with bonds of peace (Eph. 4:2-3). Invariably, we feel and know that we must again repent in the presence of the Lord and each other. We have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Repentance is necessary and bracing work and a requirement for participation in Holy Communion. We are summoned to face our offenses, our wickedness, our transgression, our iniquities, none of which deny the importance of a proper self-regard. We are the children of God, and so we should and must love ourselves, but we must face ourselves too. Repentance is not morbid. It is an opportunity to cry out, "Purge me, wash me, give me joy and gladness again, create in me a clean heart, renew a right spirit within me, sustain me with your bountiful Spirit" (Ps. 51:8-13). The call of Christ is always "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Matt. 4:17).

Having repented and been forgiven, we await the extraordinary gift of Holy Communion. Recalling the children of Israel in the wilderness, we also receive from God a surprise beyond knowing. Indeed, the children of Israel received manna, which means, "What is it?" The Christian Eucharist is that surprise amplified, reminding us that God will meet us again and again in unexpected ways. Poet W.H. Auden calls us to this renewed sense of wonder. "He is the Way. Follow him through the Land of Unlikeness; you will see rare beasts and

have unique adventures."

Expectantly, we see the clouds above, and the doors of heaven opened (Ps. 78:23). "He rained down manna upon them to eat and gave them grain from heaven. So mortals ate the bread of angels; he provided for them food enough" (Ps. 78:23-25). So we take, as if from the hand of Jesus, "the food that endures to eternal life," "true bread from heaven," "the bread of God that gives life to the world" (John 6:27-33). Even more, we receive Jesus himself, who said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). Thus we enter, by faith, heaven itself, or rather heaven enters us.

Consider three theological voices bearing witness to heaven within us. Richard Hooker: "Was it possible that they should hear that voice, 'Take, eat, this is my body; drink ye all of this, this is my blood'; possible that doing what was required and believing what was promised, the same should have present effect in them and not fill them with a kind of *fearful admiration at the heaven which they saw in themselves?*" Using similar words, Anthony Sparrow writes: "Is it possible to hear [the words of institution] and not be filled, as with a kind of fearful admiration, so with a sea of joy and comfort for the *heaven which they see in themselves?*" Finally, Jeremy Taylor wrote, "Throw away with great diligence and severity all unholy and all earthly thoughts and *think the thoughts of heaven*" (J. Robert Wright, *Prayer Book Spirituality*).

We repent of our sin; that is, we turn around. Turn where? To the one true heaven, Jesus Christ our Lord. Receive him and welcome him with fearful wonder.

### Look It Up

John 6:35

### Think About It

Jesus is the food that endures unto eternal life.

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