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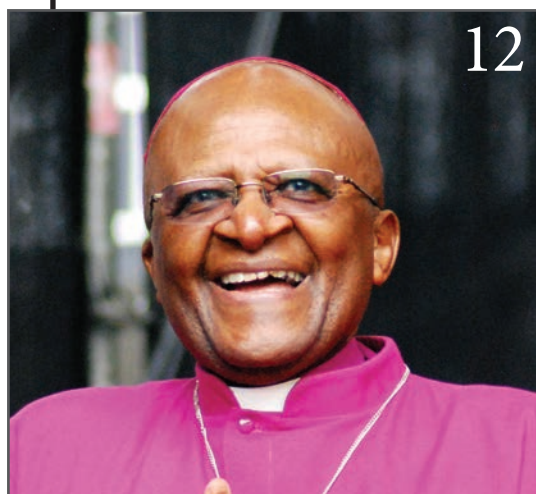
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Wisconsin Dioceses to Formally Consider Reunion

By Kirk Petersen

The three small-but-historic Episcopal dioceses in the state of Wisconsin, which have considered reuniting for half a century, are entering a formal “dialogue” to consider the best path forward in an era of declining church attendance.

“Each diocese is experiencing challenges of being the church in the 21st century while adapting to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic,” the dioceses said in a joint August 18 announcement.

No decision has been made, but the logic for reuniting the three dioceses is compelling, and the timing is favorable. Two of the dioceses already share a bishop: the Rt. Rev. Matthew A. Gunter, Bishop of Fond du Lac since 2014, became bishop provisional of Eau Claire at the beginning of this year, after the retirement of Bishop William J. Lambert III.

The Diocese of Milwaukee also has a provisional bishop, the Rt. Rev. Jeffrey D. Lee, who retired last year as Bishop of Chicago. Lee was elected in April to lead the diocese on a temporary basis after the Rt. Rev. Steven Miller retired last year.

But perhaps the most obvious reason for considering a reunion is the fact that the three dioceses are small.

Milwaukee, the largest of the group, had 49 congregations with an average Sunday attendance (ASA) of 3,033 in 2019, before the pandemic scrambled attendance records. That places its size in the lowest third of all domestic dioceses. The diocese has five full-time employees and a couple of part-timers.

Fond du Lac has 34 congregations, with a pre-pandemic ASA of 1,521, and two full-time employees, plus a couple of part-timers.

Eau Claire has 19 congregations, a

pre-pandemic ASA of 568, no full-time employees, and a part-time bishop and part-time canon to the ordinary. There are 35 individual congregations in the Episcopal Church that are larger than the Diocese of Eau Claire. The only smaller domestic dioceses are Northern Michigan, North Dakota, Western Kansas, and the Navajo Mission.

The three dioceses originally were part of the Diocese of Wisconsin, founded in 1847 to encompass the state. The first Bishop of Wisconsin was the sainted Jackson Kemper, a pioneering missionary and founder of the Nashotah House seminary, whose feast day is celebrated May 24.

Fond du Lac was spun off as a separate diocese in 1875, serving the northeast. Eau Claire was established in 1928 in the northwest, and the Diocese of Milwaukee is the renamed remainder of the Diocese of Wisconsin, serving the southern part of the state.

“Both the Diocese of Fond du Lac and the Diocese of Eau Claire were formed at a time when those areas of the state were booming,” said Matthew Payne, the canon for administration, and historiographer, in Fond du Lac. For example, Fond du Lac once had 12,000 baptized members, he said. Now there are fewer than 4,000.

Representatives of the three dioceses will meet in late September to begin discussions, with each diocese represented by a staff member and someone from a parish, along with the two bishops.

“Bishop Gunter and I have been talking about it since before I accepted the call to come and serve as bishop provisional,” Lee told *TLC*. Reunion is an obvious possibility, but the group will discuss other models as well. “My

hope is we’ll be very creative and energetic at that point and put everything on the table,” Lee said.

Bishop Gunter was vacationing and unavailable for comment.

The Rev. Aaron Zook, canon to the ordinary for Eau Claire, could not be reached for comment.

Fond du Lac and Eau Claire came within a hair’s breadth of forming a junction in 2011, when both

dioceses appeared to have accepted the proposal. But the election was nullified when an irregularity in the counting in Fond du Lac reversed the very close vote in the lay order.

“Financially, all three dioceses are fine,” Payne said, characterizing their financial conditions as “not great” but “not awful.” He said Bishop Gunter intends for the reunion “dialogue” to involve “moving forward in a way that is relational, rather than driven by other factors,” such as finances or timelines.

One important cost-sharing arrangement has already been established. Gunter is still formally an employee of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, but the Diocese of Eau Claire reimburses its neighbor for a third of his salary.

A hypothetical reunion would have to be approved by the conventions of all three dioceses, and then by the triennial General Convention. This cannot be accomplished before the postponed 2021 General Convention is held next summer in Baltimore, because there is not yet any formal proposal for reunion.

“Breakneck speed is not what we’re going for. We’re going for intentional time together to get to know each other, to have open discussions about where we might go,” Payne said.



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Haiti Quake Kills 1,300

By Kirk Petersen

A major, 7.2-magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti on August 14. Nearly 1,300 people were reported dead following the quake, and property damage was extensive.

The quake was centered near Anse-à-Veau in the southwest peninsula of Haiti, roughly 80 miles west of the capital city of Port-au-Prince. It was slightly stronger than the 7.0-magnitude disaster that struck the country in 2010, but the earlier earthquake was centered near Port-au-Prince and killed at least 100,000 people, with some reports claiming as many as 300,000.

The Diocese of Haiti encompasses the entire country, and is the largest diocese in the Episcopal Church by membership. The diocese has extensive relationships and partnerships with Episcopal churches, schools, and dioceses in the United States.

“You would be surprised at the number and depth of ties between people in the U.S. and people in Haiti,” said Serena Beeks, an American in love with Haiti and Haitians who works for the Diocese of Los Angeles. “The networks are very rarely casual acquaintances. They’re usually really good friends.”

Beeks, who is executive director of the Diocesan Commission on Schools in Los Angeles, maintains a mailing list of more than 300 people with Episcopal ties to Haiti, and sent out a flurry of updates after the earthquake struck.

“The Episcopal Church has more than 250 schools in Haiti, it educates more children than the Haitian government educates,” Beeks said. “There are not very many public schools at all.”

The earthquake struck a little more than a month after the assassination of Haiti’s president, Jovenel Moïse, by heavily armed assassins on July 7. Two senior members of his security force have been arrested for allegedly being involved with the plot.

Fighting between rival gangs, who are better armed than the police, has hampered relief efforts.

“Everything’s wrong in Haiti at the

moment, and the only thing that’s not wrong is Haitian people digging each other out of the rubble,” Beeks said.

Woman to Lead Kenyan Diocese

By Jesse Masai
Correspondent

The Ven. Rose Okeno was elected August 1 as the second female bishop for the Anglican Church of Kenya. She will

preside over the Diocese of Butere in Western Kenya, following last year’s resignation of Bishop Timothy Wambunya.

Archdeacon Okeno, a 52-year-old widow, has been in ministry for over two decades. She obtained her bachelor’s degree in theology from Kenya Methodist University.

Okeno has an abiding interest in both the Anglican Communion and the Green Anglicans Movement. She is excited about providing diocesan spiritual and pastoral oversight, and

(Continued on next page)



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advocating for women’s ministry across the Church.

“(I am) well aware that many cultures still hold that women and widows should not serve at such levels. Among other things, I am here to right that notion because it is not biblically correct,” Okeno said, speaking from Butere after her election.

“As women ministry leader in the diocese, I am also responsible for family life training, for which I am so passionate.”

After the 1978 Lambeth Conference, which allowed member churches of the Anglican Communion to ordain women, the Anglican Church of Kenya amended its canons to permit women to join the episcopate in 1980.

In October 2014, the church’s House of Bishops declared a five-year moratorium on the possibility of appointing and consecrating women as bishops in the East African nation. The GAFCON Movement, in which Kenya plays an important role, had asked all its member churches to refrain from consecrating women to the episcopate after its Task Force on Women in the Episcopate, which was led by Kenyan priest Samson Mwaluda, concluded in 2017 that the issue of women bishops “poses a threat to the unity we prize.”

Nevertheless, the Rev. Canon Dr. Emily A. Onyango was chosen as the Kenyan Church’s first female bishop on January 12. She serves as the first assistant bishop of Bondo, a post created by the diocese.

The Kenyan primate, Archbishop

Jackson Ole Sapit, reminded the church’s synod in January, after procedural objections to Onyango’s consecration had been raised, but before the consecration had taken place, that he and the Kenyan church’s House of Bishops had agreed to honor the GAFCON moratorium.

After the synod proceeded to reaffirm a 2019 amendment to the church’s constitution that affirmed women’s ministry in the episcopate, however, he took no further action to block Onyango’s consecration.

Vermont Bishop Finds Budget Problems

By Mark Michael

The Rt. Rev. Shannon MacVean-Brown, Bishop of Vermont, said in a July 21 pastoral letter that her diocese is facing serious financial shortfalls in the near future. Despite relatively healthy budgets in recent years, the diocese is considering various options to ensure future financial sustainability in the face of declining revenue from shrinking congregations.

“The challenges to the financial sustainability of our ministry were decades in the making, and we will not solve them overnight,” MacVean-Brown said. She also quoted the 2018 profile for Vermont’s bishop search that claimed that in deciding to call a full-time bishop, the diocese was “taking a leap of faith ‘in the hopes that s/he would help us continue to discern and explore how God is speaking to us in the changes we anticipate.”

A financial assessment of the diocese conducted by Stephen Burnett, a former partner at Deloitte, she said, “revealed that a financial cliff is on the horizon.” Burnett’s report, which was shared with MacVean-Brown and Vermont’s Diocesan Council on June 16, stated: “The Bishop envisioned financial shortfalls early on in her ministry, and we can reaffirm that there is, in fact, trouble ahead, likely in the first quarter of 2021, where, without intervention, expenditures will far exceed revenues.”

MacVean-Brown said diocesan spending would be immediately restricted, and that one vacant position on the diocese’s six-person staff would remain unfilled. The diocese plans to repurpose some restricted funds for operations and to seek relief from paying its full assessment to the Episcopal Church.

She is working to create a single diocesan finance committee to replace what Burnett’s report called “a staggering number of finance-related committees and subcommittees” that “cloud the financial picture and lead to confusion ... and stymie decision-making.”

These measures, she stressed, will not be enough to deal with financial challenges the diocese is facing. “If we were to cut expenditures enough to survive on current revenues, which are declining as our congregations grow smaller and older, we would have virtually no capacity for congregational support, social justice ministry, care of creation programs, or participation in the wider Episcopal Church—all things that the people of the diocese treasure and that are essential to God’s mission in Vermont.”

Between 2009-19, average Sunday attendance in the Diocese of Vermont declined from 2,537 to 1,866, a decline of 26.4%, only slightly worse than the churchwide average of 24.4%. In the last five years, the average pledge in the diocese rose by 10%, to \$2,083. The diocese has 46 congregations, which is not that small by Episcopal Church standards, but the average church only has a weekly attendance of 40. The diocese is, by far, the smallest in New England, and is, by attendance, about 56% the size of New Hampshire, its neighbor to the west, and 53% the size



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of Maine and Western Massachusetts, its neighbors to the east and south.

The diocese adopted a balanced budget of \$993,450 for 2021 at its October 2020 convention, only a slightly smaller budget than in recent years. The 2020 budget included \$195,000 in investment income, a little less than 20% of total revenue, a likely sign of the substantial endowments that are common in historic East Coast dioceses.

Founded in 1832, Vermont is among the Episcopal Church's older dioceses. The diocese is headquartered at Rock Point, a 130-acre complex on the shores of Lake Champlain in Burlington.

MacVean-Brown said she is pursuing conversations with the bishops of Maine and New Hampshire about sharing resources for ministry and administration.

Assisting Bishop Called, Clark Continues Recovery

By Kirk Petersen

The Diocese of Chicago is settling in for months of anticipation, as the consecration of the bishop-elect has been postponed indefinitely and plans to hire an assisting bishop have been announced.

The Rt. Rev. Chilton Knudsen has been named assisting bishop, and will support the Standing Committee and Clark.

While exercising two weeks before her scheduled April 24 consecration as the XIII Bishop of Chicago, the Rev. Paula Clark suffered a cerebral bleed. Five days later she had successful brain surgery to remove an arteriovenous malformation (AVM), a rare but treatable condition.

After first postponing the consecration until June and then until August 28, the diocese released a video on July 28 in which Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry announced that the consecration would be postponed indefinitely. "We continue to have every expectation that Bishop-elect Clark will make a recovery, enabling her to serve as the Bishop of Chicago."

Curry said he and others had spoken with Clark's physician, who said the

bishop-elect has made "remarkable" progress in occupational, physical, and speech therapy. He said at the physician's suggestion, all parties would meet again in October to evaluate progress.

Knudsen, 74, retired as the VIII Bishop of Maine in 2008 after serving for a decade. She subsequently served as an interim or assisting bishop in several dioceses, including Lexington, New York, Long Island, Maryland, and Washington. Before becoming a bishop, she served two churches in the Diocese of Chicago in the 1980s.

"Bishop Chilton will maintain her residence in Maryland while spending the majority of each month in Chicago," the diocese announced.

Californian Elected Bishop of Iowa

By Mark Michael

The Rev. Betsey Monnot, a parish priest and church consultant from California, was elected as the X Bishop of Iowa on July 31 in Des Moines. Monnot, 54, was elected on the third ballot from a slate of three women, and will be the first woman to serve as Iowa's bishop since the diocese's founding in 1853.

"I am beyond excited to be your new

bishop-elect," Monnot told members of the diocese via Zoom soon after learning of her election. "My heart is full. Thank you so much for your confidence in me. I look forward to our ministry together as we follow God's call into the future that God dreams of for the Episcopal Church in Iowa."

Monnot is serving as priest in charge of St. Clement's Episcopal Church in Rancho Cordova, California, and is the director of Called to Abundant Life, a church consulting and leadership coaching organization.

A graduate of Church Divinity School of the Pacific, she was ordained in the Diocese of El Camino Real, and more recently served for three years as the Diocese of Northern California's missionary for leadership development and networking. She also served as co-rector of All Saints' Church in Sacramento with her husband, the Rev. Michael Monnot. The Monnots have three sons.

Provided she receives the necessary consents from diocesan bishops and standing committees, Monnot will be consecrated December 18 at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown. Presiding

(Continued on next page)



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Bishop Michael Curry will be the chief consecrator. Monnot will succeed the Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe, who has served as Iowa's bishop since 2002.

L.A.'s Bishop Suffragan Moving to West Missouri

The Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce has accepted a nomination as bishop provisional for the 47 congregations in the Diocese of West Missouri. Bruce has been bishop suffragan in the Diocese of Los Angeles since 2010, and serves as secretary of the House of Bishops and as a trustee of the Church Pension Group.

Assuming she is approved in an up-or-down vote at the diocesan convention on November 6, when she is the only candidate, she "will serve full time, in residence in the diocese, for a period of two to three years, beginning in December 2021," the Standing Committee announced. As bishop pro-

visional, Bruce, 65, will be the ecclesiastical authority of the diocese until a bishop diocesan is elected and consecrated.

The Rt. Rev. Martin Scott Field, VIII Bishop of West Missouri, has served since 2011. Earlier this year he set September 14 as his last day in office.

Upper South Carolina Nominates Five

The Diocese of Upper South Carolina announced a five-member slate of nominees on August 14 in its search for the IX bishop of the diocese.

The diocese has announced four nominees from other dioceses, as distant as Arizona, and one priest serving in Greenville:

- The Rev. Furman L. Buchanan—Rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Greenville, South Carolina
- The Rev. D. Seth Donald—Rector of St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, Lake Charles, Louisiana
- The Rev. Thomas A. (Lonnie) Lacy

II—Rector of St. Anne's Episcopal Church, Tifton, Georgia

- The Very Rev. Daniel P. Richards—Rector of Christ Church of the Ascension, Paradise Valley, Arizona
- The Rev. R. Jemonde Taylor—Rector, St. Ambrose Episcopal Church, Raleigh, North Carolina

A special electing convention is set for September 25 at Trinity Cathedral in Columbia. The consecration of the new bishop is scheduled for February 26, 2022.

West Virginia Nominates Three

The Rev. Canon S. Abbot Bailey, the Diocese of Virginia's interim canon to the ordinary; the Rev. Canon Patrick Collins, the Diocese of Easton's canon to the ordinary; and the Rev. Matthew Cowden, rector of St. Michael and All Angels' in South Bend, Indiana, are candidates to become bishop coadjutor of West Virginia, diocesan officials announced August 2.

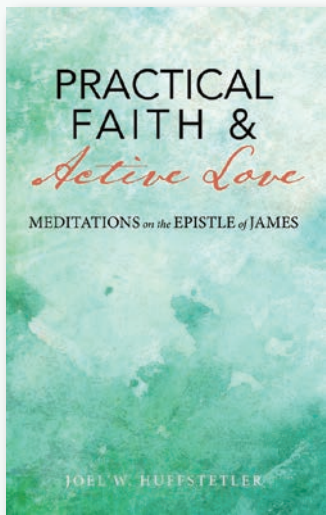
The electing convention to designate a successor to the Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klusmeyer will be held on September 25.

Bailey, 52, served parishes in the dioceses of Connecticut and Virginia before becoming the Diocese of California's canon to the ordinary in 2018. In May, she moved to Virginia to serve as interim canon to the ordinary.

Collins, 56, was ordained in the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania in 2006, served two parishes there, and was the bishop's assistant for transition ministry. He became canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Easton in 2016, and serves as priest in charge of All Faith Church in Tunis Mills, Maryland. His wife, the Rev. Loretta Collins, also serves a parish in the Diocese of Easton.

Cowden, 52, served in the Diocese of Virginia before becoming rector of St. Michael's in 2009. He is chairman of the standing committee of the Diocese of Northern Indiana and a trainer in its Diocesan-Congregational Development Institute.

The consecration of the bishop coadjutor is scheduled for March 12, 2022, and the coadjutor will become VIII Bishop of West Virginia six months later.



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Church in Africa Grapples with Sexual Abuse

By Jesse Masai and Dr. Esther Mombo

On November 11, 2020, protesters in Malawi's Diocese of the Upper Shire called for the removal of their bishop, the Rt. Rev. Brighton Vitta Malasa, alleging that he had committed adultery with the wife of a diocesan priest and fathered children out of wedlock.

A month later, the Rt. Rev. Rufus Victor Ajileye Adepoju of the Church of Nigeria's Diocese of Ekiti West was suspended "for scandal and abhorrent sexual behavior with the wife of a priest under your employment and care."

On March 21, 2021, a priest in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa filed an urgent application at the Western Cape High Court to gag the Rev. June Dolley-Major after she publicly accused him of rape in 2002 at Grahamstown Seminary.

In a YouTube video from the Church of Uganda on April 22, 2021, retired Archbishop Stanley Ntagali confessed his sin of adultery with the wife of a cleric and asked for forgiveness during a thanksgiving service for 60 years of self-governance.

On May 25, 2021, the Anglican Diocese of Namibia's Bishop Luke Lungile Pato issued a countrywide pastoral letter, in which he decried sexual abuse, following the scandalous resignation of one of the church's most charismatic clerics.

Observers of the Anglican Communion in Africa are now raising concern about how provinces across the continent are preparing their bishops for leadership, amid calls for stricter accountability.

Dr. Elisabet Le Roux of Stellenbosch University's Unit for Religion and Development Research in the faculty of theology, welcomes the increasingly open conversation about sex in some African communities and churches, which has often been taboo.

"Where there are leaders willing to (sensitively) challenge the taboo and engage in the task of facilitating con-

versations around sex, we see changes happening. It should be noted that these leaders are not always the male, top-level leaders within churches. Often these leaders are lay leaders within faith communities, and very often women," says the South African, who has for decades studied gender-based violence in religious and traditional communities, in a recent email conversation with *TLC*.

She adds: "We also see faith-based organizations, through the interventions that they implement on, for example, violence against women, facilitate more conversations around sex — which help challenge the taboo."

The absence of rigorous abuse tribunals across the continent of the kind witnessed in Western societies, however, worries the Rev. John Chol Daau, an Anglican priest in the Diocese of Bor under the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan (ECSSS).

"We continue to witness much gender-based violence related to culture happening in Christian families and to Christian leaders across the continent. Some Christian leaders are not condemning it. Others are blessing under-age marriages. We have lacked capacity to address this. We have covered it up. There is also no transparency in accumulation and usage of resources. We are seeing Church leaders promote ethnicity, divide families, and even steal," he says, warning that this is not limited to the ECSSS.

The African Church, he avers, needs to teach more about Christian marriage, accountability, and justice.

"I haven't seen sexual abuse addressed openly in our churches and canons. We are more restorative and communal. We consider such abuse as the community's mistake. Our concept of Christian community has to change, so that when we discipline each other, we are doing so for the body. We must rise up and allow Scripture to discipline us. A majority of the population in Africa is Christian, yet it remains at the heart of the continent's brokenness."

While traditional societies have his-

torically modeled collegial patterns of decision-making, the more hierarchical image of a contemporary African tin-pot dictator has often dashed any hopes for accountability in and outside the Church.

Across East and parts of Central Africa, however, some bishops and priests exercise their authority with reference to the East African Revival, a movement from the mid-1920s to which they owe their conversion.

Few, therefore, were surprised when Archbishop Ntagali said his confession was in the spirit of the revival.

While the revival is an important aspect for Christianity in the region — having affected the faith journeys of many since its inception — it is more than a get-out-of-jail card, said the Rt. Rev. Dr. Emily A. Onyango, the first female bishop in Kenya and assistant bishop of Bondo Diocese.

"The main theology of the East African Revival is salvation through the cross of Christ. Christ died on the cross so that he reconciles us to God and also to each other. Reconciliation and walking in the light are central themes of the revival movement," she says.

She continues: "Another emphasis of the revival is public confession of sin, so that you free yourself from the burden of guilt. Members of the revival believe in living a holy life but also realize people are sinners, hence daily confession of sin. Public confession of sin is supposed to free you from guilt. They realize that if you confess publicly you are unlikely to repeat the same mistake. It is also self-humiliation, a sign of humility and shame for your sin because you are the one confessing and not others talking about it."

Bishop Given Gaula of the Anglican Diocese of Kondoa in the Province of Tanzania believes that, the revival notwithstanding, the Church in Africa faces the incomplete transformation of its traditions, especially on polygamy, a situation complicated by massive

(Continued on next page)

New York City Church Reaches in New Directions During Pandemic

By Neva Rae Fox
Correspondent

While many congregations were forced into withdrawal during the pandemic lockdown, a well-known church cast a wider net beyond its immediate environs to assist neighborhoods 10 miles away while concurrently switching to new business practices.

Church of the Heavenly Rest sits in a tony section of Manhattan: the Upper East Side at 90th St. and 5th Ave. Nearby are the Guggenheim Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Despite its fashionable address, “we are a neighborhood church,” said the Rev. Anne Marie Witchger, associate rector and chief of staff. “Even before the pandemic, we were a neighborhood parish and connected particularly to the art scene. We’ve always tried to reach beyond our immediate blocks.”

Heavenly Rest has long practiced robust outreach efforts, including



offering job skills, MetroCards, toiletries, and appropriate clothing to inmates returning to society; back-to-school backpack drives; holiday toy collections; tending to homebound seniors; and a longstanding arts ministry.

Nonetheless, the pandemic “has taught us a lot,” Witchger said. “It is the movement of the Spirit. It has never been more clear that the church needs to offer hope and stability.”

The Rev. Matthew Heyd, rector, noted that since March 2020, it’s been difficult for many. “We knew helping was part of our call,” he said. “New York was affected in a way that it had not been affected since the Great Depression. We wanted to step out and be of service to our New York City.”

The church expanded its ministries to partner throughout the city.

One of the first issues Heavenly Rest tackled was widespread food shortages. Heyd said that during the pandemic, food pantries immediately faced a high demand. “In the first week we saw the restaurant folks and arts folks who needed immediate help,” he said. Heavenly Rest sprang into action.

Witchger said the goal was to connect feeding programs in need of food with struggling restaurants in need of sales.

“We wanted to buy hot food from restaurants and give the food to feeding programs,” she said. Called Nourishing Neighbors, the initiative garnered a “great reaction.”

While partnering with established feeding programs, Nourishing Neighbors focuses on Black and minority-owned restaurants in East Harlem.

A \$25,000 donation, earmarked for emergency food needs, went a long way for the feeding ministry. That gift, Heyd said, “was bigger than we ever had done before and it was part of our service to the city.”

Then, Heavenly Rest raised \$150,000 on top of \$25,000. “Our people saw this moment and stepped up,” he said. “It was a new moment for us.”

Witchger discovered that “people really wanted to do something. They wanted to do something meaningful.”

(AFRICA - continued from previous page)

unemployment and a culture of silence.

“The result is that some clergymen are killing the church. People expect bishops and such other leaders to not only be above reproach, but also to lead by example. To cover up for their ineptitude, some have since become obsessed with homosexuality and other challenges facing the Church in the West,” he says.

The homosexuality debate for a while became an excuse for senior church management to avoid dealing with sexual harassment and misconduct within the African Communion, including among top leaders.

“We are committed to be holy in Africa. The ties of family bind ever so strongly on this continent at a time when divorce rates remain worryingly high in the global North. We need to continue preaching and teaching faithfully, above culture,” he avers.

Jesse Masai is a freelance journalist based in Limuru, Kenya. Dr. Esther Mombo is associate professor of theology at Saint Paul's University, Limuru. In the next edition, the writers examine patriarchal theology in Africa and a tentative path for the Anglican Communion on the continent.



Photos courtesy of Church of the Heavenly Rest

People were at home during the pandemic and felt helpless.”

Therefore, Heavenly Rest reached out further. “During the pandemic we continued to address food insecurity but in new ways,” Witchger said, such as the Fund for the Not Forgotten, for people who may have slipped through the cracks of assistance.

The church website explains that the fund “helps New Yorkers who have been excluded from Federal assistance, including undocumented immigrants, asylum seekers, workers in the gig economy, formerly incarcerated women and men, and will also support faith communities to use broadband connections to be an even stronger resource to their neighborhoods.”

Witchger said Heavenly Rest’s assistance initiatives were rolled out in three phases. The first supported essential needs. The second, she said, was for “people in immigration detention centers, to help support bail bonds for those awaiting immigration hearings.” The third was “to support New York churches, particularly in Harlem and the Bronx, to be wired for internet connections.”

Stretching its pandemic help was important to Heavenly Rest. “Our expanded sense of community and the expanded sense of our neighbors, and the ability for us to engage way beyond our immediate neighborhood, have been a really important part of this moment for us,” Witchger said.

The pandemic prompted other sig-

nificant behavioral changes at Heavenly Rest.

In response to the Black Live Matter movement, “the Vestry made the decision to make the shift to minority-owned vendors,” Heyd said. “What that means is to support our city. I think about the future of the city, not just in crisis but in recovery, for a stronger city.”

Both Heyd and Witchger see a continued expansion of Heavenly Rest’s ministries in the future, and not ending at the lifting of pandemic restrictions.

“As we emerge from this time, when so much has been lost and there is so much devastation, there is an opportunity to reimagine and rebuild in a way that is stronger, more just, more equal, that the church has a stronger role to play,” Witchger said. “This is the time to step forward, not step back.”

“We are in a mission-claiming process right now. Our hope is that we don’t slide back into 2019. We see a future that is closer to God’s kingdom. That will take prayer, creativity, discernment, and hard work, and we are committed to that.”



Lessons from the Arch: Learning from Desmond Tutu

By Meredith Tilp

In 1984 I was the Africa grants associate for Trinity Church Wall Street. The first time I met Archbishop Desmond Tutu was in the rector's dining room at the parish office building. Having lived in the Transkei (now Eastern Cape Province of South Africa) in 1979 as a teacher, I was a little apprehensive, but confident, as I knew the Xhosa words to say.

Tutu walked immediately to the bartender to exchange pleasantries. He started there — not with the VIPs.

I said, "*Molo mfundisi, kunjani na?*" (Hello teacher, how are you?).

He gave his contagious grin and said, "*Nidiyaphila unjani wena khona, usithetha isiXhosa!*" (I am well, how are you? So you speak Xhosa!).

Mustering my best clicks (the palatal click is essential in Xhosa, and sounds like saying giddy up to a horse). I said, "*kancinci*" (a little).

There began a lifetime of learning near "the Arch," as everyone called him. I saw him at least 20 times in South Africa and the United States, and have saved the numerous letters and handwritten notes we exchanged. My theory and practice of teaching has been infused with his firsthand lessons about compassion, empathy, and justice.

His words and actions teach: visiting a priest in Pretoria Prison whose only offense had been conducting a funeral; walking down a Johannesburg street with soldiers' rifles trained on us; listening to his sermon at my church, St. Peter's in Morristown, New Jersey, where he said to my parents, to my delight, "You have done a wonderful job."

The Arch had it right: the tone, the humor, the focus on individual people, the message of hope despite horrific circumstances of living under apartheid. He didn't say, "Do this!" He taught by



Kristen Opalinski/Wikimedia Commons

Desmond Tutu at a climate justice rally in Durban, South Africa, November 2011.

example, with fierce courage and unwavering adherence to justice. He was Jesus on a skateboard around the world.

His spiritual life is contagious. On many occasions, his secretary Lavinia Crawford Brown would spirit him away for a rest and prayer. Waking up early for Morning Prayer with him, I had spiritual experiences of my own, reading the gospel, saying prayers for others, praying with him for a personal issue, which he never forgot. Tutu could be ferocious in a loving way, however, to the perpetrators of violence.

My favorite Tutu Prayer:

Disturb us O Lord

When we are too well-pleased with ourselves

When our dreams have come true because we dreamed too little.

because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us O Lord

When with the abundance of things we possess,

We have lost our thirst for the water of life.

When, having fallen in love with time, we have ceased to dream of eternity and in our efforts to build a new earth, we have allowed our vision of Heaven to grow dim.

My message to students has always come directly from him: "Hate the behavior, not the person." It was the concept that everyone, even the most wicked, was redeemable. He would say, "I pray for F.W. de Klerk every day." The Arch charged fearlessly into an angry mob to save a person accused of collaborating with the authorities from being "necklaced," burned to death by a flaming gasoline-soaked tire placed over his head. For me, he was taking the moral high ground, and teaching a vivid lesson in nonviolence.

Tutu's Spirituality in Class

Fast forward to the years 2005-13, when I am a public high school teacher in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I made a conscious effort to take the Tutu lessons into my classroom. More than 75% of my students qualify for free, or reduced-priced lunches. They include Hispanics and Native Americans, Dreamers and those whose parents are undocumented.

During Christmastime 2018, sitting in St. Bede's Church in Santa Fe, I began to feel deeply troubled by the federal government's child separation policy; it was Christmas, after all! And Jesus

was a refugee! I always try to engage my students in community endeavors — working at the homeless shelter, for instance, and in model legislatures. Using my government curriculum as the basis, I hatched a scheme to work at a rescue project for asylum-seekers in southern New Mexico.

This project was receiving, feeding, and providing bus and plane tickets to immigrants trying to join family members and sponsors around the nation. Support from St. Bede's parishioners enabled us to raise several thousand dollars for meals and direct monetary gifts to the refugees. I enlisted the support of a wonderful local lawyer, a community organizer, and the Roman Catholic host organization that operated the rescue project and was receiving 90 refugees per week.

Neither the students nor I will ever forget watching as the first parade of 60 parents and their small children left the bus from the border patrol and walked toward us. Forming a circle, we all clapped and cheered and smiled and

hugged them as they came in for the meal we had prepared. We had also helped buy cots for everyone and collected donated books and toys for the children. Our joy at helping was uplifting.

One beautiful young woman, Lara from Honduras, had a little boy named Eduardo. As my students and I were listening and translating their stories from Spanish to English, she recounted this.

"I escaped from Honduras and took the bus and walked the 1,500 miles to the US border. In Mexico, I was taken by the police and raped."

I started sobbing, but my students took over because they understood. Some of their parents had lived the same life, and I hope I had conveyed some of the Arch's love and compassion to them. All 35 refugee parents received \$50 to \$100.

I talked recently with Lara. She had gone to live with her brother in another state, and Eduardo was old enough to enter Head Start.

As we struggle with the pandemic, I

have rejoined the effort to codify the lessons of Desmond Tutu and carry them forward both in Africa and at home. My current energy is devoted to the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation in Cape Town (tutu.org.za) and to my students and the current refugees who have again surged along the border.

In Archbishop Tutu's language, there is an expression "ubuntu." It is a philosophy that permeates my being: "a person is a person through other people." Though I am thousands of miles from my hut on a hillside in the Transkei-Eastern Cape of South Africa and years from the direct influence of the Arch, I am consistently reminded of his lessons in social justice and spirituality.

Meredith Tilp, a teacher in Santa Fe, New Mexico, has worked in education and public health in 25 African countries. She now loves to listen to the song "Under African Skies" by Paul Simon and Miriam Makeba.



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Out with the Old, In with the Old

“**T**o live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often,” wrote John Henry Newman, with an inter-ecclesial bus ticket in his back pocket. He had doctrinal development in his sights, but faithful development incorporates — indeed, often amounts to — restatement: *retrieval*, for a new context. In the grammatical world of faith, to say something fresh is always to say something old that may be heard and understood anew, as times change.

This kind of a thing has informed our decision to introduce with the current issue of *The Living Church* a new/old tag line, displayed at the head of the Contents page: “Serving the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion since 1878.” Anyone familiar with TLC’s history may rightly think there is nothing new here. But the way in which this “new” tagline is, in fact, old is interesting and edifying. To emphasize our concrete and specific ecclesial rootedness as Episcopalians and Anglicans *in the name of a/the “living Church”* is the trick of it, for what is the connection between the two? To answer, we need to have a sense of the breadth and depth of the one Church precisely as catholic, evangelical, and ecumenical, and then be able to believe or hope that our immediate ecclesial location maintains some substantive tie to that Whole.

Church-historical geeks may enjoy surveying the consistency of TLC subtitling (and associated missiological reflection) in this light — sometimes displayed on the cover; more often affixed atop the masthead. With the issue of May 29, 1879 (vol. 1, no. 30), in our second calendar year of publication, editor

Charles Wesley Leffingwell added a tagline to the front of TLC, placed immediately below the title: “A Weekly Record of its News, its Work, and its Thought,” the possessive adjective referring to the singular *Church*, presumptively — hopefully — *alive*. Leffingwell did not name the magazine, but he received it soon after its founding, and tended its pages for 21 years, before handing the work on.

Two issues prior, Leffingwell had reflected on his brief in an editorial “Greeting!” that introduced a program in several parts, placed in service of a *living Church* that apparently, without fanfare, comprehended his own locale and the larger Corpus in question. The relation between the two would inspire considerable parsing anon; but here, at the outset of an issue given entirely to detailed reporting of Episcopal Church news, he prescinded from denominational identification altogether, opting instead, in Anglo-Catholic fashion, for a principled slippage between *church* and *Church*. Thus, firstly, “the paper which represents a ‘living church’ should be an index of its life and growth” by telling “what is going on,” as “a mirror of the times.” In this way, it will “represent the vitality which is at work, unfolding and bearing fruit; it should ‘walk about Zion and tell the towers thereof.’” Second, Leffingwell continued, it should “teach,” helping its readers

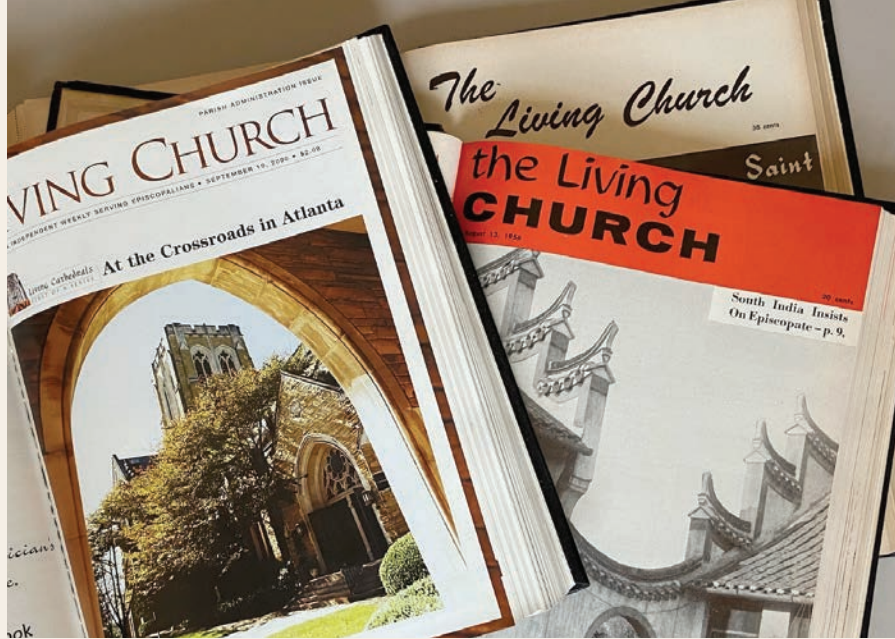
form a right judgement on all questions of policy and organization, of means and methods, so that the Church may be conserved, and the work of saving souls may be set forward. A living Church paper must stand for the Church against all enemies and influences that would hinder her growth or obstruct her

progress. It must watch for her interests, guard her honor, work for her recognition as the Body of Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. (May 15, 1879)

That said, Leffingwell hastened to add, a Church paper must not try to “determine questions of doctrine or settle theological controversies.” That would be to surrender its representative role in the life of the Church, functioning merely “as an organ of a party, a champion of some ‘school,’ an exponent of some editor’s idiosyncrasies.” Instead, Leffingwell concluded in a summons to unity:

We call upon all, bishops, clergy, and laity, to help us build up the Church, and to set it before the world as a living Church. Whatever tends to this is welcome to our columns. Whatever is merely controversial or personal, whatever tends to expose weakness or disagreement, we have no place for. We do not all think alike on all points; it is best we should not. But we all agree in the Faith once delivered to the Saints, and in loyalty to the Holy Catholic Church that was built upon the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. (May 15, 1879)

To read the magazine in 1879, no less than in 1979, was to encounter, indeed, a “Church paper” interested in and eager to serve the whole Christian world *from* a particular place, to wit, the Episcopal Church writ large, as a member of the global Anglican Communion. *The Living Church* always existed in a post-Lambeth Conference world, having been founded 11 years after the first meeting of 1867. Accordingly, TLC’s Catholic-minded editors frequently



Una Sancta of the creeds — that continues as TLC’s editorial practice to this day.

More recently, TLC tried out different subtitles on the cover of the magazine, complementing the masthead: “Serving Episcopalians Since 1878” (1988-94); “The Magazine for Episcopalians” (1994-98); “An Independent Weekly Serving Episcopalians” (Sept. 13, 1998-2007), repeating the same on the masthead with the addition “since 1878”; “An independent weekly supporting catholic Anglicanism” (June 3, 2007-10); and, finally, in my own time, a string of missionally minded adjectives variously beloved and perplexing, depending on who you ask: “Catholic, Evangelical, Ecumenical” (June 13, 2010-21).

The latter two iterations sought to emphasize the close connection between *Episcopal* and *Anglican* in TLC’s conception, set within a wider catholic ambit. As a 2007 editorial explained, “We value our Anglican heritage and take seriously our role as catholic Christians. We attempt to nourish Anglican faith, piety, and practice within the Episcopal Church” (June 3, 2007). In 2010, we wrote that “Catholicism, Anglican or otherwise, must be both evangelical and ecumenical, properly understood Our cause, as ever, is the truth and unifying power of the gospel of Christ, entrusted to his Church, and that is what we hope to continue to proclaim in these pages, in love” (June 13, 2010).

TLC, as a magazine and a larger ministry, has, for nearly 150 years, consistently articulated a core mission. I would summarize that mission as *Catholic* in the broadest sense — at once ancient and global, seeking consensus; *evangelistic*, via a steady focus on the Christian faith as personally and corporately transformative; and *denominationally bound*, with something of a Pauline connotation of bondage, accepted voluntarily for the cause at hand. “I have become all things to all people, that I might by

(Continued on next page)

adverted to the call to wider service, which, as the ecumenical movement gained steam from 1910 on, also led to a more honest wrestling with difference-as-division than Leffingwell had perhaps preferred.

Following the influential work of his father F.C. Morehouse, who helped craft the founding Faith and Order text at Lausanne in 1927 in the interstices of editing TLC, editor Clifford Morehouse took up the cause as a particular call to Episcopalians to set aside pride. With humility, wrote Morehouse, we should recall the Anglican Communion’s having

called upon all of Christendom, in the Lambeth Appeal [of 1920], to come together for conference, prayer, and sacrifice with a view to reuniting the shattered fabric of Christendom — not by glossing over our differences, but by recognizing them frankly and openly, and then submitting to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in reconsidering them and eliminating them, if in God’s wisdom the time has come so to do. (Jan. 6, 1934)

This both/and sensibility — rooted in the local church, mindful of the universal — accounts for the various taglining of TLC over the course of the 20th century. Morehouse the elder barely altered Leffingwell’s formula, to specify the singular institution in question: “A Weekly Record of the News, the Work, and the Thought of

the Church.” In 1934, Morehouse the younger ran with the traditional formula but opted for a local emphasis, replacing “the Church” with “the Episcopal Church.” In 1967, editor Carroll Eugene Simcox opted for a return to the universal in a pleasingly alliterative trio of newly confected nouns: “A Weekly Record of the Worship, Witness, and Welfare of the Church of God.”

Simcox stuck with that until “some vestrymen of a Florida parish” wrote in to suggest that TLC make clearer the fact of its official independence from the Episcopal Church, and that it sometimes espoused “particular points of view on political and other subjects.” This led to a new tagline in 1974, which remained on the masthead until September 1998: “An independent weekly record of the news of the Church and the views of Episcopalians.” With reference to TLC’s independence, Simcox wrote that TLC speaks editorially “to rather than for the church which it exists to serve.” With reference to the phrase *news of the Church*, Simcox wrote that it “should be understood ecumenically and inclusively,” since TLC meant to continue imparting “information primarily but by no means exclusively about the life and doings of the Anglican Communion to which we belong” (all from Jan. 13, 1974). Here we find an embrace of the church/Church distinction — lowercase for a given denomination, including our own; uppercase for the

EDITORIAL

(Continued from previous page)

all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings” (1 Cor. 9:22-23). One sees this last in Leffingwell’s bid to gather all the parties of Anglicanism together in an incipient ecumenical movement — the very impulse that would inspire many Episcopalians and Anglicans to throw themselves

into ecumenism proper, when it came along, and help guide the work. The Chicago Quadrilateral, after all: Made in America, 1886.

On all counts, *The Living Church* has narrated-so-as-to-elevate the news, debates, political protocols, liturgy, teaching, and even notice of appointments, retirements, and deaths

of our corner of Christendom, as a petition to God to use the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion for his purposes. The present vision of TLC (livingchurch.org/mission) aims at this same thing, building on the labors of our forebears. We continue to believe that the future of the Anglican Communion is bound up with seeking and serving the whole of Christianity, and especially, in the West, helping the evangelical and the catholic to communicate and cooperate. With the Anglican Covenant, we accept the call of God to provisionality, marking our own incompleteness as a herald for the whole Church to stand down from one and another declared victory; to repent, confess, and make needed amendments of life on the way to restored fullness, for the sake of the proclamation and receipt of the gospel itself. In this holy work, we seek to start at home, confessing our own disorder on the way to needed reforms that may, by God’s grace, even improve upon the *status quo ante*. Looking back on the last 500 years with our Protestant and Catholic siblings, perhaps we will learn to say *felix culpa*, just insofar as the form of Christ has more surely been unveiled in our midst, through successes and failures both.

A prayer for all our readers, benefactors, fellow Episcopalians and Anglicans, Christian siblings, and others with whom we are called to walk in friendship and solidarity:

Lord, make us faithful in the work you have given us to do, in Jesus’ name. Give us grace to evince his character and courage. And guide our minds and hearts to cleave to the one hope, one faith, and one baptism of your one visible Body here on earth: even your Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, enlivened by your Spirit. Make your Church live truly.

—Christopher Wells



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Trauma-Informed Ministry

By Sinclair C.P. Ender

As the COVID pandemic's end draws ever closer, the more it seems our cultural lens is shifting toward retrospection. We are beginning to think of ourselves as survivors. Lately I have heard it expressed that the pandemic, as a collective traumatic experience, demands that clergy reorient toward a trauma-informed ministry, one that responds to parishioners as if to those suffering post-traumatic stress disorder.

The pandemic has certainly affected everyone's lives, but it has not caused *traumatic* stress in everyone's lives. We know the trauma of the pandemic has been unequally distributed, often according to existing inequality, and that it has exacerbated existing trauma for some, while others have weathered this period relatively unscathed.

Further, not all clergy are called to minister to people's trauma. Among other things, it may even be that some clergy will need a companion in their journey toward healing from the past year's events. As a mentor once told me, "We must always do our best to minister from our scars and not our wounds."

Before the pandemic started, and with proper reflection and training, I was already ministering out of my own scarred-over traumas, and it was my trauma-informed experiences that brought a gentle zeal to my ordained ministry in general, and my discernment of military chaplaincy specifically. At the beginning of 2020, I was ministering to persons experiencing homelessness, as well as the worshipping congregation of Trinity Cathedral in Davenport, Iowa, when I was selected for active duty Naval chaplaincy that summer. Then, everything changed.

It was neither the pandemic nor active duty that brought fresh wounds to my ministry, though. In September of 2020, my wife and I received the phone call that our best friend had died by suicide. That call and the coming months were traumatic. As I write, nine months later, that traumatic grief is a fresh scar

on my soul that is ever healing.

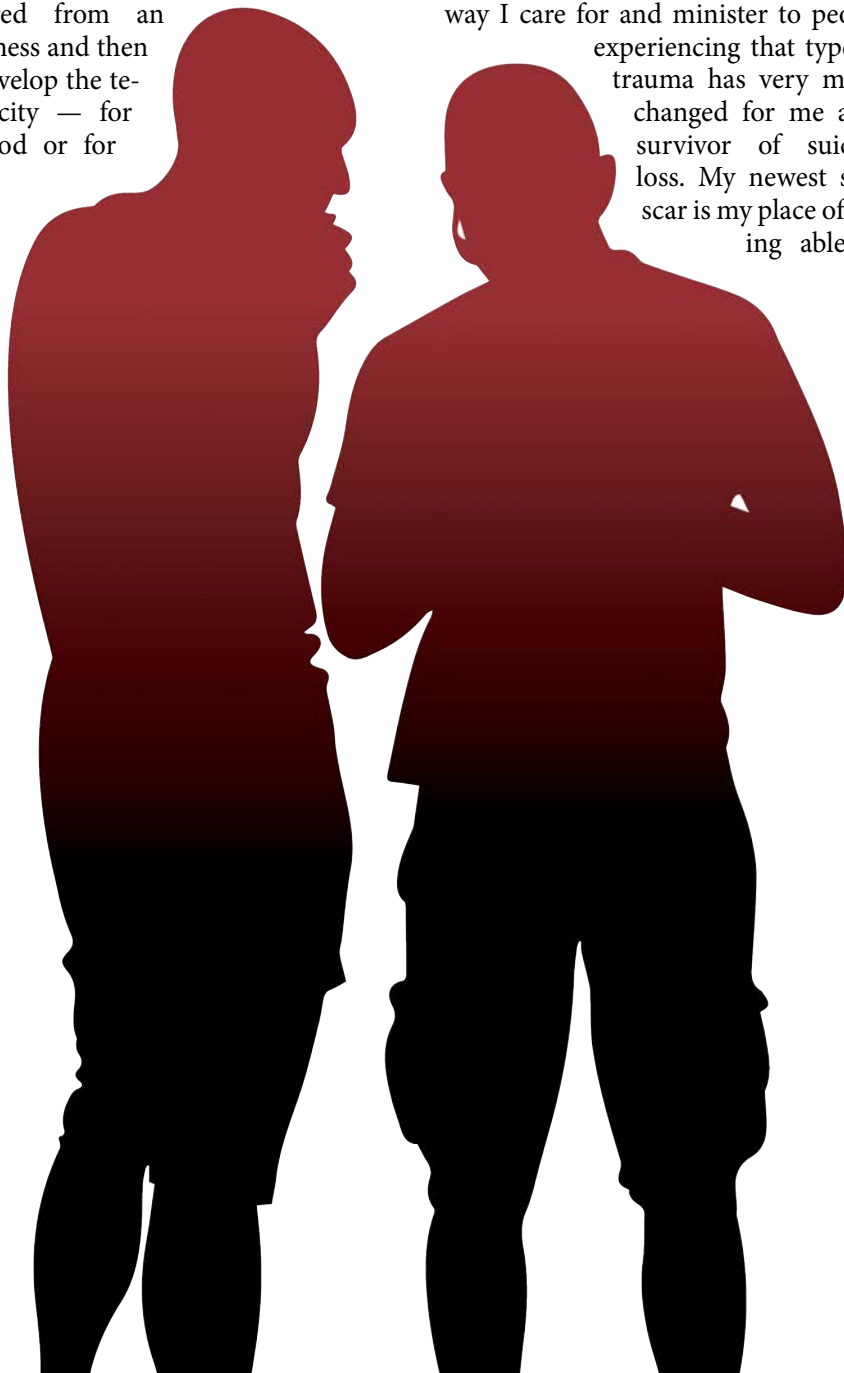
Scarred, but even so, still very painful, and pulling at the non-scarred soul around it. I am trained to deal with death, trauma, and grief, and yet I could not address my own. I was wounded. It took others — mentors, friends, and an amazing group of instructors and fellow chaplains at the Naval Chaplaincy School and Center — to walk with me to a new normal.

It was Carl Jung who coined the term "wounded healer" as an archetype to describe those in the medical profession who have suffered from an illness and then develop the tenacity — for good or for

ill — to use their suffering to form a relationship with their client. Jung stated, "a good half of every treatment that probes at all deeply consists in the doctor's examining himself ... it is his own hurt that gives a measure of his power to heal" (see *On Jung* by Anthony Stevens, Oxford 1994, p. 110).

My education and experience with trauma are not something I would readily wish on anyone. In my current billet, in the last six months I've seen dozens of our fellow humans on the brink, expressing suicidal ideations, or confiding their halted attempts. The way I care for and minister to people

experiencing that type of trauma has very much changed for me as a survivor of suicide loss. My newest soul scar is my place of being able to



meet those experiencing suicidal ideation.

Yet one does not need to experience the same trauma as someone else to minister to them. Trauma is complex and often ambiguous. What looks like one thing often later is revealed to be rooted in something else. For me, and for anyone ministering to people in extreme stress, critical incident response, or post-traumatic stress (please note the difference between PTS and PTSD), the goal is really not to *do* anything. Rather the goal is to *be*—to be a companion.

A wounded healer has to have done the work of self-examination before they can rightly companion someone else's examinations. That is, to minister from one's scars and not one's wounds, one must first learn the difference between the two. A task of any wounded healer is not to fall into your own wound. And it is certainly okay not to be wounded or scarred in the first place.

A note should be made too that acting as a professional chaplain without proper training and support risks ministry malpractice, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress. The work of trauma-informed ministry is not for everyone, and is not done in isolation. In my ministry, I work with some amazing professionals: counselors, therapists, and doctors. We work to-

*As a mentor once told me,
"We must always do our best to minister
from our scars and not our wounds."*

gether to minister to the persons who come to us for care.

For many clergy, the pandemic has created unheard-of pressures while ripping out the foundations of self-care necessary to continue ministry. For many parishioners, the last year-plus may have been their first brush with real, prolonged hardship, or it may have been another in a long list of systemic failures and stress beyond their control. The pandemic has certainly

reshaped our notions of who is in need, who is our neighbor, and what sorts of spaces we may be inviting them into (or excluding them from). Our congregations, our clergy, and the Church are due for some serious discernment about where to go from here, but there is good news.

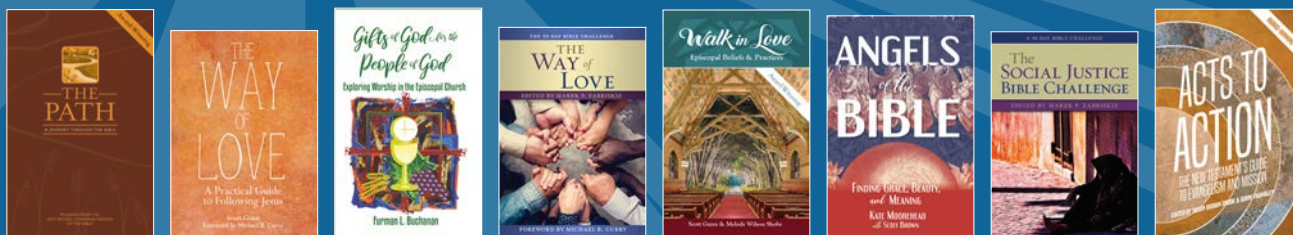
The pandemic may have altered our perspective, but the ministry of the Church remains ever the same, and its ministers and their gifts are as diverse as the world's needs: In the months and years to come, to some will

be given the work of justice—social, economic, or environmental; to some, proclaiming liberty to captives and welcome to strangers; to some, preaching the gospel in this unbelieving age; and to some, being a companion to those on the journey toward healing.

The Rev. Sinclair C.P. Ender is a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps and Command Chaplain at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine.

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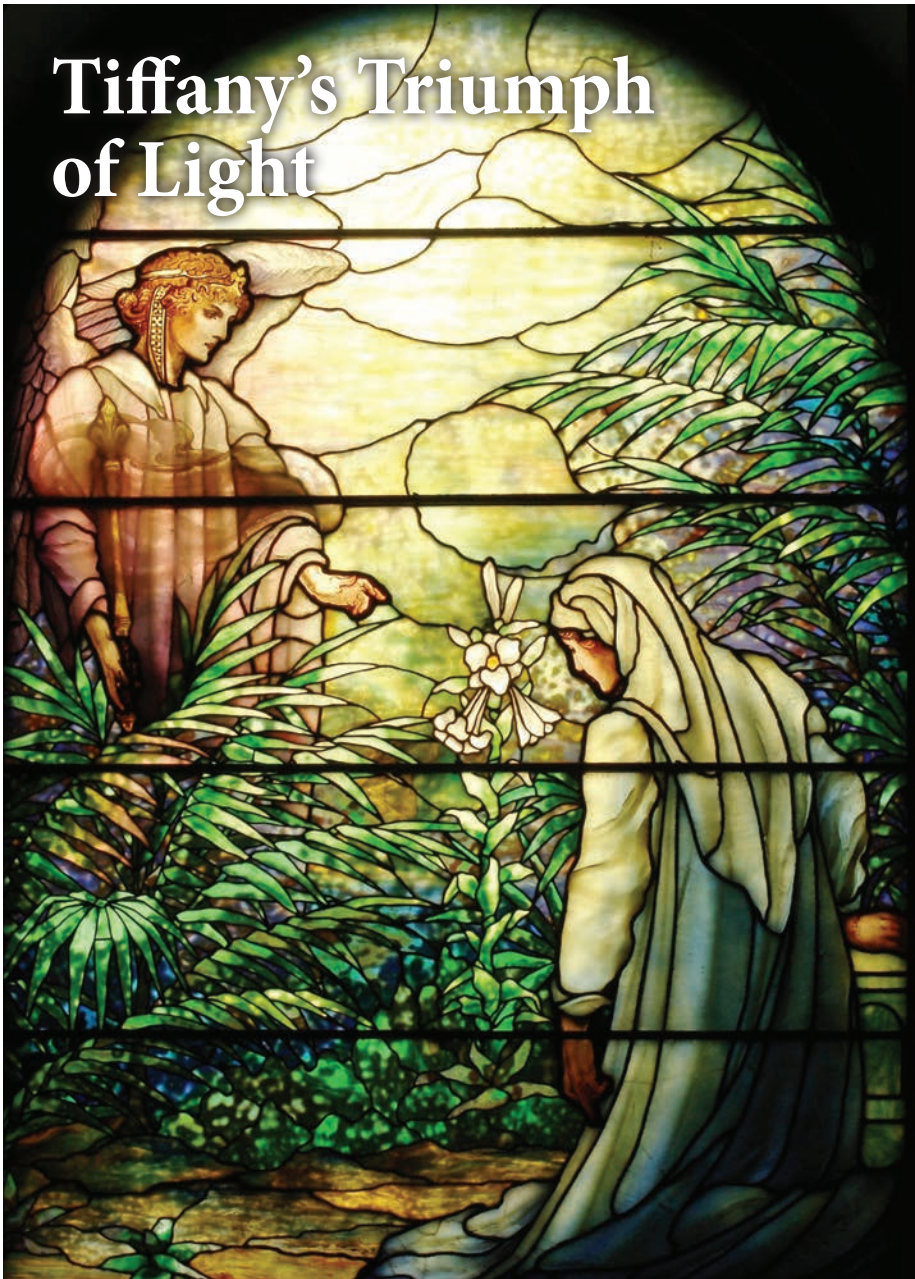
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Tiffany's Triumph of Light



Annunciation- Tiffany Studios, 1914

By Dennis Raverty

In 1894, Louis Comfort Tiffany patented his new processes for the production of stained glass, and the following year the seven magnificent lancet windows over the high altar in Manhattan's Episcopal Church of St. Michael were completed, a marvelous tour de force of artisanry, exemplifying the unique qualities of color and luminosity now made possible by these new technical innovations in glassmaking.

Tiffany's process for the manufac-

ture of colored glass involved treating it with various metallic oxides while still in a molten state. The areas of the glass so treated not only change color, they also increase in opacity, and so these areas appear somewhat darker in the finished window, because they let through less light. By an exquisitely subtle manipulation of this quality of greater translucency darkening into relative opacity, the artist can give the effect of a smoldering, glowing emanation of light arising out of the darkness, gently illuminating the depicted

figures with an ineffable, otherworldly radiance.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the small, easily overlooked window *Baptismal Dove*, high up on the south wall. Here the Holy Spirit descends from an aureole of intense yellow above, a visual hotspot beaming down shafts of light to the somewhat darker, more opaque realms of the clouds and presumably the earth, bringing healing and consolation to those below, in his role as comforter, advocate, and transmitter of enlightenment.

This effect of light emerging from relative darkness is also apparent in a small window in a side chapel at Saint Michael's that depicts the Annunciation. Here the area of greatest translucence and most intense light is just above and to the right of Gabriel. He is crowned with royal diadems as if he were a winged, Byzantine prince and appears to Mary in what seems to be a lush, oriental garden. The prominent lily near the center of the composition represents her purity and state of grace, having just been saluted by the glorious archangel.

But she herself is rendered humbly, accepting her role with self-effacing modesty. The garden setting Tiffany creates for the Annunciation recalls the Garden of Eden, where Eve fell prey to a darker, more sinister, fallen "angel," the serpent.

The Virgin in Tiffany's *Annunciation* turns away from the viewer, lowering her head to indicate her submission to the will of God, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord: let it be done with me according to your word." It is significant that her face is not shown. Mary is presented not as the queen of heaven nor the glorious Mother of God but as an unpretentious peasant girl. This is a suitably Protestant interpretation of Mary's role in redemption; we would not seek intercessions on our behalf from such an unassuming young girl. But she does not so much turn her back on us as she pivots toward the brightness above her, as if to indicate for us our own role in God's unfolding plan: as both witnesses and vessels of the light.



St. Michael's Victory in Heaven (detail) Tiffany Studios, 1895

In the series of slender lancet windows above the high altar, this quality of radiant luminosity, evident in the smaller windows, reaches its dramatic climax. It depicts Saint Michael the archangel triumphant, surrounded by all the angelic hosts of heaven who hover and swirl about him in dizzying profusion, the individual vertical windows forming part of one larger, overall horizontal composition.

The scene depicted is from chapter 12 of the apocalyptic book of Revelation. According to that text, a rebellion broke out in heaven, in which Michael and the angels battled the forces of evil, represented by the dragon and his fol-

lowers. After a fierce war, the angels of darkness were defeated and thrown down to the earth, where they spread disorder, confusion, and chaos. The dragon cast from heaven became the serpent and the prince of lies, trying to thwart God's plan through the deception of humankind here on earth.

The windows, however, do not depict this cosmic struggle between the forces of good and evil but rather represent the triumphal rejoicing in heaven after the downfall and expulsion of the rebel angels, whose defeated minions do not even appear in the windows at all, apparently scattered by the brilliance of the divine light, as morning mist dissi-



Baptismal Dove-Tiffany Studios, 1907

pates before the rising sun.

Standing erect upon the world globe, left in obscure semi-darkness below, and clothed as a medieval knight in full, resplendent armor, his shield by his side, the Archangel Michael gazes upward. His youthful, innocent face is represented without a trace of conceit for the victory he has just won; instead, he seems to ascribe all glory and honor to God, whom he looks up to adoringly. We are reminded of St. Paul's injunction to put on the "whole armor of light," as we wait in hopeful anticipation for God's ultimate triumph over evil, sin, and spiritual darkness in our benighted world.

The windows were commissioned and fabricated during one of the darkest economic recessions in decades, triggered by the "panic" of 1893, when several large banking concerns collapsed. The following years, as the century drew to a close, were marked by labor disputes and union activity that was brutally repressed. The assassination of President McKinley in 1901, and the rise of the anti-trust policies of his successor, Teddy Roosevelt, brought an end to the idealistic yearnings of the Gilded Age as America entered the progressive era of the new century.

In the 21st century, on the other side of two world wars, the Holocaust, the Cold War, the attacks of September 2001 and in the continuing shadow of our current domestic civil unrest, Tiffany's message of light, truth, and reason triumphing over evil, lies, and darkness in the inspiring windows at St. Michael's Church can once again take on a renewed and urgent poignancy.

Dr. Dennis Raverty is an associate professor of art history at New Jersey City University, specializing in art of the 19th and 20th centuries.

The Inexhaustible Cup

In accordance with the 11th Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous, this essay is published anonymously.

Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another. Proverbs 27:17

Christians love to use the analogy of a rock tumbler to describe the process of sanctification through life in intentional community. I've heard the image invoked in settings that include Episcopal Service Corps sites, residential seminaries, and communities of monks and nuns. You begin with a bunch of extremely unpromising looking pebbles, but when you throw them into a rock tumbler together, they will knock each other around and gradually knock off one another's rough edges, until eventually they all come out smooth and polished and reflective of the light.

It is, perhaps, a little bit hackneyed, but there is nevertheless something in that image that I have always found compelling, and which gave me reason to hold on in hope during the moments when Christian community life was at its most vexing — whenever I found myself thinking that I really preferred the church as an abstract concept over the daunting daily challenge of actually having to walk the path of sanctification alongside a bunch of other flawed, wounded human beings.

One time, however, when I was at a vocational discernment retreat, our mentor paused thoughtfully after giving the requisite rock tumbler analogy and looked at me very sharply.

That's all well and good ... unless one of your pebbles is a lot harder than all of the others. You have to make sure your rocks are well-suited to one another before you go sticking every interesting looking pebble into your rock tumbler. Softer pebbles won't be able to polish a much harder one, and a harder pebble will just pulverize all of the softer ones to dust, and in the end there is no benefit for any of them.

I worry that I might be a hard pebble. I have found very little of authentic Christian community in the Episcopal Church, although I have continually sought it. Church was more often a place to act professional and put together rather than a community in which to be vulnerable and authentic. Indeed, the one exception that I discovered to all of the façades of self-protection and self-promotion was in the Episcopal Church's drinking culture. Here, in late night theological conversations and church gossip sessions, walls crumbled and vulnerabilities were expressed. Only over wine or whiskey were tears shed, grievances aired, and fears openly admitted.

In my own experience, alcohol is the

primary medium through which we show love in many Episcopal circles, and buying someone drinks is often the awkward way in which we try to express things like friendship or concern. Being both younger and poorer than most people at most church meetings meant that I usually had rather a lot of people eager to buy me drinks. It somehow never occurred to me that perhaps my easy ability to keep pace with all of them wasn't necessarily a positive thing. I tend towards over-scrupulosity and acute self-awareness about all of my sins and inadequacies, and yet somehow I couldn't even see the fact that alcohol was becoming a problem for me. After all, I was usually drinking with a bunch of priests and bish-



ops! What could possibly be more innocuous, more respectable, than that? Several years ago I went through an especially difficult personal situation, and the response of nearly all of my church friends was just to send me alcohol. The vivid memory of all of those bottles so lovingly mailed to me from clergy around the country is one of my most striking memories of the Episcopal Church — a sincere and heartfelt and generous expression of care, and yet hardly an impulse that would result in my flourishing.

The first AA meeting that I attended was the group that met at my own parish. I am told that this was wildly eccentric of me, and I was genuinely surprised to find that there were no other parishioners there, but it honestly never occurred to me to seek help anywhere else. Drinking terrible coffee in the basement of my own church is, after all, pretty much the epitome of my comfort zone. But in many ways, alcohol proved to be the first problem I had faced for which the Episcopal Church was of absolutely no help whatsoever. Indeed, all of my church friends, perceiving my unhappiness but misdiagnosing the cause, responded by constantly trying to buy me drinks. Yet, through the recovery community, I began to encounter a different kind of intentional community, one where people showed up as their full selves, where they didn't try to hide their wounds, where they didn't flinch from one another's pain. It was the kind of community I had always looked for in church settings, but had never actually found.

When the pandemic hit last spring, I was barely three months sober — still unsteady and uncertain, still struggling to find my way out of the maze into which I had wandered. My parish, like many others, cancelled all programming suddenly and without warning. That didn't just mean that worship services were suspended, but also that recovery meetings were shut down, with no time even for people to communicate with one another first or to make a new plan. Maybe that was prudence. I am all too aware of the suffering and the loss that subsequent months would

bring to so many people. Yet I sometimes worry that in our haste to respond swiftly to this new and emergent danger, we somehow allowed ourselves to forget the fact that people die of other things also.

And so when I went to my AA home group to celebrate three months of sobriety, I encountered only a locked door, without even a sign to indicate what had happened, or who we might call. I had suspected that this would happen. It was, after all, my own church, so I knew that worship services that morning had been cancelled. (Not merely moved to Zoom, but actually cancelled, with instructions to “worship at home with our families” or to watch the National Cathedral.) That foreknowledge did not really prepare me for how utterly gutted I felt, standing there in the

the appropriate format for a meeting, and we certainly didn't have any of the right books. But the four of us huddled under a single umbrella in the sleet, sharing our stories, trying our best to offer strength and hope to these others who were suffering, even though we all possessed little enough of either quality ourselves. I told them rather forlornly that I was celebrating three months of sobriety. So very little — and the fact that I could be three months into such a journey and still not be in possession of a single phone number was certainly not a resounding endorsement of my great success in the program. But they were so unreservedly, unselfishly proud of me, rejoicing with me in spite of their own sufferings and struggles.

They all seemed to feel like they ought to give me something, even

*When the pandemic hit last spring,
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still unsteady and uncertain, still struggling
to find my way out of the maze
into which I had wandered.*

March sleet in a dark parking lot, faced with only a locked door. That memory has been suspended in my mind for the last 15 months, somehow perfectly foreshadowing the utter ecclesiastical abandonment that would characterize the subsequent year, during which we offered no corporate worship, even online, and I heard from no one at all.

But I wasn't alone in that dark parking lot on that miserable March evening. Three other people also came looking for that meeting, all of them even newer to sobriety than I was, none of us yet socially embedded enough to really know what was going on or who we could even call to ask, yet all driven there by loneliness and desperation and a desire for hope. Even though we hadn't quite learned to trust yet. Even though all of us had half-expected to be abandoned by this new community just as we had been hurt by so many others before.

We had only the vaguest idea about

though we didn't have any official chips or tokens or medallions. But everyone started to fish around in their pockets, looking for anything moderately appropriate that they could give. Finally, one of them triumphantly produced three small pebbles — ordinary stones, but ones that had been polished in a rock tumbler until they sparkled with light. “They're like us,” he said, pressing them into my hand. “They polish one another until finally they shine.”

It took the better part of a year for the parish to remove that AA meeting from its calendar, and it is still listed in the AA meeting directory even though it has long since disbanded. Yet I still went every Sunday night for more than a year to stand in front of a locked door, just in case someone new should come, out of fidelity to a memory. That kind of sheer obstinacy may be more willfulness than virtue, but the thought that

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maybe someone else might need me to be there kept me sober during a time when there was no one else other than God to even know or to care.

I never saw any of those people from the parking lot again, and that fact haunts me somewhat. I want to believe that they are well, somehow thriving against the odds during the past year of devastating isolation. Statistics would suggest otherwise. But I want to believe it. And I'm honestly not quite sure how

I would forgive my own church if they are not.

It is that same kind of stubborn fidelity to a memory that has enabled me to continue to love and long for the church and the sacraments during a time when both have been almost entirely absent from my life. On my desk I keep an icon of the Inexhaustible Cup, which depicts Mary offering a eucharistic chalice with the infant Christ in it. It is a late icon by Orthodox stan-

dards, revealed in the 19th century in the context of recovery from alcoholism. When I first acquired it, however, I knew it only as an icon that depicted the Eucharist. It was only within these last 18 months that I suddenly understood very acutely what it meant to represent — the kind of infinite longing that no amount of alcohol would ever be enough to assuage, but which only Christ in the Eucharist can perfectly satisfy.

I missed out on most of the customary external trappings during most of my first 18 months of sobriety — no colorful plastic chips, no terrible coffee in church basements, no hugs. In a similar way, I have been without the

We give to one another out of our own emptiness and brokenness and lack, but those gifts that are freely given in spite of our poverty are somehow immeasurably blessed.

sacraments and rites of the Church — those material things that make the gospel visible and tangible, through bread and wine, oil and water. But three tiny pebbles now sit in front of my icon of the Inexhaustible Cup, as a tactile reminder of the fact that divine grace is offered in all kinds of unexpected places. We give to one another out of our own emptiness and brokenness and lack, but those gifts that are freely given in spite of our poverty are somehow immeasurably blessed. I hope that my hands can always remain open — to receiving grace under even the most unexpected forms, and to passing on grace that I never realized I had to give.



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Being Parochial Christians in a Consumer Culture

By Mark Clavier

One of the joys of living in a Welsh market town is that my wife and I have ready access to local food. Two or three times each week, I walk from my home within the medieval walls of Brecon Cathedral down to an indoor market to buy meat, fruit, vegetables, and cheese. Most of these are produced locally or regionally on the farms that have dotted the beautiful Welsh landscape here for centuries. My wife and I have come to know our local shopkeepers by name. Our consumption not only supports the local economy, but it also allows us to know the people who are integral to it. Relationships, even friendships, have consequently developed, some of which have borne their own fruit in my ministry.

It took us a couple of years to become aware of this. But once we did, we began to treasure how wholesome and humane a way of living it is. As usual, my wife was the first to recognize the goodness of our local habits and to nurture them. At her prompting, we set our minds to rooting

ourselves economically as much as possible in the place where we live. We started to buy flour from a local mill and make our own bread, built beds for growing our own vegetables, and reduced our online purchases to a minimum. We have even begun to order books through our local independent bookshop, which frankly requires tremendous patience on my part.

The more we've rooted ourselves locally, the more connections we have formed with our neighbors. I've enjoyed helpful conversations with experienced bakers, learned tricks of the trade from more accomplished gardeners, and have gone out for a pint or two with shopkeepers I've come to know. In the process, our network of local relationships has expanded and thickened, further rooting us in the place where we live. It's now rare that I walk into town without being stopped for a sociable conversation. We have, in fact, made Brecon a home.

From an economic standpoint, although we've curtailed the scope of our consumption, we remain essentially consumers. Local producers

create and sell products that we purchase to consume for our needs and pleasures. And to a degree, this is true. We certainly don't bake enough bread or grow enough vegetables to be net-producers and we continue to spend more than we ought on goods and services we don't really need. In short, we remain very much middle-class people.

On the other hand, our consumption fosters relationships we otherwise would have missed. As many of these activities are time-consuming, they also encourage us away from the sofa and laptop. If we remain consumers, as indeed we do, then we've also become altogether different from those who preoccupy marketers. In fact, a welcome byproduct of our lifestyle is how rarely we come into the range of marketing. Birdsong and conversation have replaced the sales pitch as the background noise of our lives.

I'd like to believe that if we continue on this trajectory, then we may become something so different from regular consumers that we'll warrant a different name. My vote for that name would be for the original meaning of the word *parishioners* — of the geographical parish — whose daily lives are limited to but also enriched by living within the boundaries of a particular place and among the people who make that place their home. The welfare of our home increasingly takes priority in our lives and both limits and orients how we inhabit that home spiritually, socially, and economically.

Sarah and I are, in fact, discovering and appreciating one of the traditional virtues of Anglicanism in England and Wales: the parish. Before the rise of consumerism, the parochial system rooted people and their faith, culture, friendships, work, and economic life to a particular place, the boundaries of which they marked each year on Rogation Sunday. At the



Gary Butterfield photo via Unsplash

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ETHICS

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center of that home was the parish church, which functioned, in a humbler way, as Eden did for creation and the Holy of Holies for Israel. Heaven and earth, the mundane and the divine, church and community all interconnected to bless the land, the hearth, and home.

In much of the Western world, con-

sumerism has dug up many of the roots that connect people to the places where they live. When I go shopping at our local supermarket, I can buy almost all the same goods I could find in grocery stores in America. When I lived in Oxford, I was continually struck by how tourists from all over the world dress alike and listen to the same music. That consumerism ruins our planet's ecology, turns everything (including

human beings) into commodities, and destabilizes identities is undeniable and much criticized. But none of this could have happened had consumerism not first successfully uprooted people from their homes and alienated them from their neighbors. A people estranged from creation and the real people around them quickly becomes a people detached from God. Thus, consumerism goes hand in hand with secularization. We live in a world evoked by marketing and oriented toward short-term financial profit.

“Love your neighbor as yourself” and “It is more blessed to give than to receive” — these two teachings alone tell us that God didn't create us to be economic units or consumers. He created and redeemed us to be (in George Herbert's memorable phrase) his “secretaries of praise,” whose lives are blessings to others. We can only fulfill that vocation of stewardship by devoting ourselves to the places where we live and the people who are our actual neighbors. By God's love working in us in this way, we can sanctify our homes. The challenge for our churches, therefore, is how to plant and nurture the roots that tie us to creation and bind us to our neighbors.

After he was fashioned from humus and God's breath, Adam was given the tasks of “keeping and tending” the garden that was his home. These, not coincidentally, are the same duties given to the priests who served in the Holy of Holies. I think “keeping and tending” also describe our calling as Christians in a consumer culture. The cultivation of whatever is true, good, beautiful, and unifying in the communities where we live makes God's love a reality among our neighbors and promotes the health of all God has created. I can think of no greater witness against these times than that.

The Rev. Canon Mark Clavier is a residential canon of Brecon Cathedral in Wales and the author of four books, including the forthcoming A Pilgrimage of Paradoxes: A Backpacker's Encounters with God and Nature (Bloomsbury).

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Why Spirituality Matters for Theology

Review by Christopher Holmes

Simeon Zahl, university lecturer in theology at Cambridge University, argues that it is important to attend to experience and “that in speaking about ‘experience’ in Christian theology we are speaking at the same time about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.” In chapter 1, Zahl discusses how humans “are always embedded in social and natural environments.” Theologians need to take seriously, despite Karl Barth’s misgivings, “the experiencing subject,” or “embodied subjectivity for traditional dogmatic reasoning.”

In chapter 2, Zahl chastises what he perceives as a “tendency towards abstraction in theological discussions of the Holy Spirit,” focusing instead on the “experiential dimensions” of pneumatological doctrine (75, 79).

Zahl deepens and extends this trajectory in chapter 3, asking about how “salvation is ‘experienced.’” Bringing 20th-century Protestant voices like T.F. Torrance, neo-Thomists like Servais Pinckaers, and contemporary Protestant theologians (namely Kathryn Tanner) into the conversation, Zahl maps the strengths and weaknesses of each. I found his treatment of those figures and others illuminating, though a tad predictable. Neo-Thomists are, for example, chided for inferring “that all human action is soteriologically freighted in a more or less distinct way.” Also important is Zahl’s sense that what modern theology distinguishes — “experiential and ontological realities” — pre-moderns did not. I concur!

In chapter 4, there is an interesting and insightful discussion of the law-gospel pattern. The law, Zahl adjudges, prepares “a person for experientially and soteriological efficacious encounter with the gospel.” The law-gospel dynamic is advanced “as an affective pedagogy.”

In chapter 5, Zahl takes up the Augustinian language of delight, describing how delight in God moves the affective heart of sanctification to



The Holy Spirit and Christian Experience

By Simeon Zahl

Oxford, pp. 272, \$85

the fore, thereby downplaying our “desiderative attachments to sin.” Augustine is the hero in Zahl’s genealogy, for Augustine offers the “most profound syntheses of ontology and experience that Christian thought has achieved.”

With Augustine more so than any other voice in the tradition, we receive instruction regarding the “core affective patterns of encounter with the Spirit.” Augustine advances — and this I found fascinating and something really worth ruminating on — an approach that makes “constructive sense of the problem of ‘non-transformation’ in Christians.” Zahl concludes by telling the reader why he has written the book, its constructive purpose being “to show that there is in fact a *third* alternative available to Protestants.” Instead of having to choose between justification by faith or soteriology oriented toward “participation in God,” there is another alternative anchored in the affective and experiential, the “irreducibly social.”

This is a significant but odd book. It is significant, especially for Protestants like me, reared as I was on the theo-

gies of Barth and Torrance, to acknowledge afresh the extent to which ontological and experiential categories are by no means mutually exclusive.

Zahl’s basic point is that “spirituality” matters for theology. This is hard to disagree with. That said, what I find odd is that experience seems to be appealed to in a somewhat fateful way. Do we not need theology (or, more specifically, revealed truth) to understand and elucidate our experience? Experience, in Zahl’s argument, functions as a kind of given that does not require theology for its handling.

What I also found odd is Zahl’s reading of the modern tradition. There is, Zahl notes, a “problematic tendency toward abstraction in much modern systematic theology.” I do not think this is a very charitable judgment. One need only think about Barth’s *Evangelical Theology* to note the importance of what Anna Williams in *The Architecture of Theology* calls “the personal dimension.” Yes, Barth does not talk in Augustinian terms encouraging of holy desire, which is unfortunate. That said, the issue is how to best honor the subjective dimension of Christian doctrinal claims. This is something Barth and many “modern” theologians consider important.

Zahl has written a stimulating monograph encouraging us to experience, to feel, and desire the graciousness of God “in an affective and pneumatological key.” Though I do not always concur with his reading of the tradition, I found his overall concerns important to contemplate and indeed edifying. It would be nice, as his career unfolds, to see Zahl lean more upon the apostolic and prophetic testimony of Scripture in order to make his points, and less on various theorists in drawing attention to the “requirement of practical recognizability.”

Christopher Holmes is associate professor of systematic theology and head of the theology program at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand.

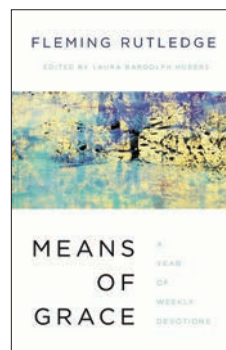
Grace for All Seasons

Review by Molly Jane Layton

If you have ever wondered what it would be like to listen to the Rev. Fleming Rutledge preach every Sunday for a year, then her latest book is for you. This collection presents her sermons lightly edited into devotional form, following the seasons and feasts of the church calendar. The devotions are selected from Rutledge's years of preaching and reflect the ethos of each Church season, rather than strictly following the Scriptures of any given year in the lectionary. In an "Author's Preface," Rutledge refers to herself as a

biblical storyteller, and these devotions collectively weave the story of God's grace as we journey through the liturgical year.

This story starts in the darkness of Advent as the Church waits for the second coming of Christ and then proceeds through Epiphany, tracing "the transition from the manger to the cross." In Lent, Rutledge helps us to face the reality that the "universal human condition is one of bondage under the reign of Death," and then in Easter to "hold on to the promise that God has entered our pain and ... been killed by it, yet has been raised tri-



Means of Grace

By Fleming Rutledge
Eerdmans, pp. 279, \$24.99

umphant from the dead never to die again." Each devotion is its own episode, telling the greater narrative of God's plan for our salvation.

But it is in the season after Pentecost, in the week in and week out of ordinary time, that Rutledge's storytelling is at its best. Here, she refuses to shy away from the pain and suffering, from the sin and death, that define human existence in our world. She relentlessly tells us of how God breaks into our lives by sending Jesus Christ to rescue us. "It is an unparalleled drama of desperate peril and miraculous deliverance — and it is not only my story, but your story." This is a story which bears repeating, which we desperately need to hear told and retold as we live our lives awaiting the final act of God's plan for our deliverance.

In the preface, Rutledge explains the theological convictions that underlie her sermons. In the act of preaching, a "word from the Lord" can create a reciprocal event between the preacher who offers it and those who receive it, as the Word of God, Jesus Christ himself, is present to both. She does acknowledge that reading a sermon is different from hearing one. Still, the reader of this devotional who expects to hear God's word of grace and redemption will find it here, week by week.

Molly Jane Layton is a candidate for Holy Orders in the Episcopal Diocese of New York and a senior in the MDiv program at Virginia Theological Seminary.

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Partner Spotlights 2021

Letter from the Editors

Dear reader,

Each year we've begun to ask our Partners, organizations that support TLC's ministries, for a glimpse into their own communities. In spring and summer of this year, we collected dozens of stories and photos to this end, catching us up on what the Lord has been doing. We've come to think of this collection as a kind of annotated family photo album, and it's what you'll find in the following pages.

This year's snapshots have been deeply influenced by recovery and reorientation after 2020. But they're also deeply colored by service, hope, self-examination, and gratitude. In these pages you'll read about justice initiatives and jazz concerts, racial reckoning and Easter reopenings, food drives and vaccination clinics, budget crises and financial boons — plenty of material to rejoice in, learn from, and offer in prayer. We hope this is a feature that you will come to look forward to annually.

These slices of life represent just a few of our friends around the Anglican Communion who give to TLC's ministry year by year. A complete list of all our Partners can be found at livingchurch.org/partners. To become a Partner, you can contact Dr. Christopher Wells (cwells@livingchurch.org).

It has been a real blessing to receive and read these stories.

Thank you again to all who contributed to this special spread.

Faithfully yours, in Christ,

The Editors





Consortium for Christian Unity

The COVID-19 pandemic affected us in much the same way it did all other churches and ministries: all travel and face-to-face meetings came to a standstill, and although we were able to stay in touch with key supporters and constituents through social media, the mission of breaking down barriers between people by unprogrammed, Christ-focused gatherings could not be carried out.

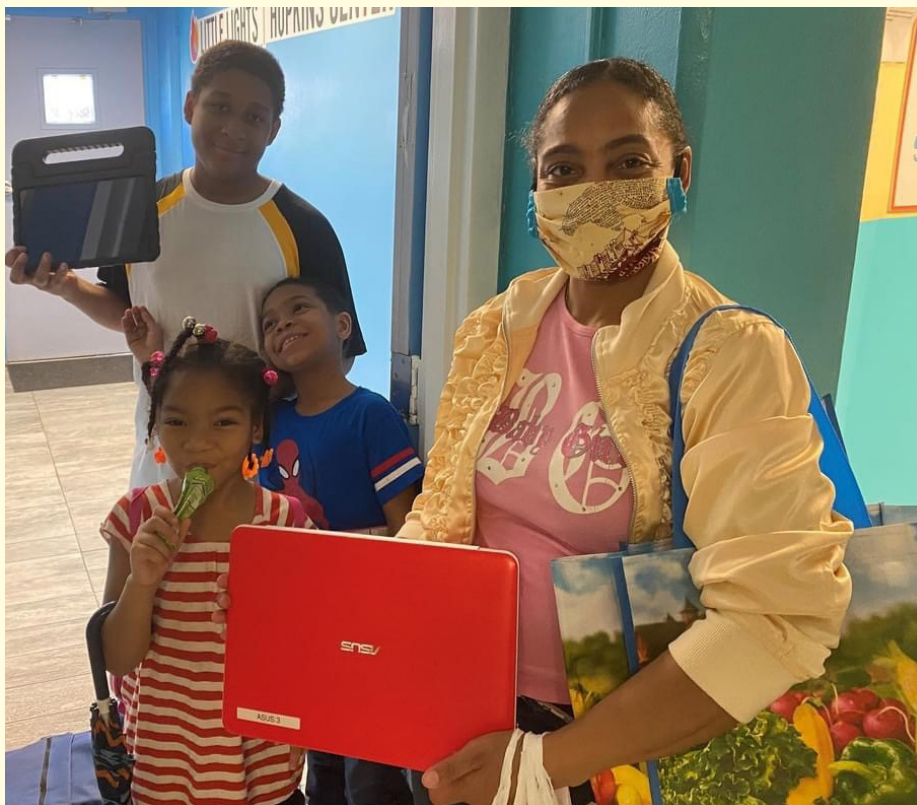
Additionally, we find an increasing number of people proclaiming Christianity to be at odds with the graciousness

necessary to wage peace and bring reconciliation. This further complicates our mission. Add to that Coronavirus, safety, and their politicization, and we find ourselves in the middle of arguments right and left (no pun intended) that call into question our very reason for being.

Yet Jesus' desire that we move toward each other has not changed. We are confident that a return to our ministry of mutual, inter-Christian reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18) can proceed.

Finally, we have been greatly saddened by the illness of one of our key

principals, Thomas Noland. After a year of baffling health symptoms, in September 2020 Tom was found to have an inoperable soft-tissue sarcoma in his chest. Chemotherapy has not proven effective, and more recently he underwent a radiation trial in St. Louis. Hundreds of friends are praying for Tom's complete recovery, and we invite you to join us. We can't imagine our ministry without Tom at the helm, but God is ever good and faithful, and our overarching prayer is for Christ to be glorified through every development.



All Saints Church

Chevy Chase, Md.

In June we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone for our nave (and 124 years as a local congregation). What a milestone! So, naturally, we've been thinking a lot about history and the impact of our ministry in the 21st century.

When All Saints began, Chevy Chase was a sleepy, distant suburb of Washington, D.C., a place where folks who had the means went to escape the hustle and bustle of the city. It was more rural than urban. Here — literally on the line separating D.C. and Maryland — people of faith planted a church to worship God and serve their community. Today, All Saints straddles that same line, and the community around us is still relatively well-off. But other things have changed: we are more urban and diverse, transportation is faster, and the

city has grown up around us. But people of faith still worship here and serve their community.

Our growing partnership with Little Lights is a particular blessing. This local non-profit “empowers under-served youth and families in Southeast Washington, D.C., through practical assistance, racial reconciliation, and the love of Christ.” A few short miles away, Southeast D.C. is now so close. We serve and partner with our neighbors in providing the hungry with boxes of fresh produce and meat, tutoring students, joining their *Race Literacy 101* class, and volunteering with their fun-filled VBS.

God is at truly work in Chevy Chase, in Southeast D.C., and in the world! We are blessed to be one small means of revealing his kingdom here on earth.



Diocese of Long Island

Even as our churches begin to reopen their doors, our parishes and their ministries continue to serve their neighbors, as many of the inequalities laid bare and intensified by the pandemic remain. For instance, North Brooklyn Angels serves 3,000 meals per week out of its mobile soup kitchen, delivers meals to 90 homes per week as part of its “Senior Safe” initiative, distributes 100,000 pounds of pantry goods per month, and organizes “Baby Days” to deliver diapers, wipes, and more to parents in public housing.

“Operation Feed the Front,” organized by the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Garden City, brings hundreds of meals a week to those in need in Nassau County. Twice a week, volunteers deliver groceries, boxed meals, sandwiches, and juice to God’s people on the street. And these are but two examples of many throughout Brooklyn, Queens, and Nassau and Suffolk counties.





Diocese of West Texas

This year, the Rt. Rev. David Reed selected a verse from Luke chapter 10 to guide our life and ministries together: “Nevertheless, the kingdom of God has come near.” “Sin embargo, el reino de Dios ya está cerca.” This theme has been given shape in countless ways across West Texas in the life of our churches, as they reshaped ministries and worship with Staycation Bible School, outdoor worship and pageants, movie nights, family camping retreats, and Zoom Bible studies. It has also been fleshed out in service. In addition to hurricane season, the impacts of COVID-19 on the immigration crisis at Texas’ southern border took a desperate situation from bad to worse.

Through the generosity of congregants and Episcopal Relief and Development, we have been able to stock local food pantries, build hurricane/COVID-19 readiness kits, and provide translation, medical care, vaccines, hygiene items, and baby supplies to migrants. Funds raised also established the Emergency Immigration Housing Fund, providing temporary safe shelter for asylum-seekers released from detention centers. Clergy, lay leaders, ministers, and staff have kept on holding together, in spite of everything and with every good reason to walk away. Again and again, through it all, God’s kingdom is made known among us.



Christ Church Cathedral

Nashville, Tenn.

The much-anticipated return to in-person worship was eagerly embraced here at the Cathedral community, and we’ve incorporated lessons learned about the value of electronic gospel proclamation into the customary expectations for Sunday worship.

The summer preaching series from 2020, “Listening to Voices across Black America and the African Diaspora,” continued in the summer of 2021. Featured preachers included: the Rev. Willie Jennings (Yale Divinity School), the Rt. Rev. William Mostert (Johannesburg, South Africa), Ms. Iman Syler Green (Southern Maryland), and the Rev. Kevin-Antonio Smallwood (Silver Spring, Md.), to name a few.

In-person Vacation Bible School, prison visitation, and Sunday morning ministry to the indigent all resumed, and the community has begun to look forward to a time in the late fall when the full spectrum of parish life will return. It will not be “like before.” But for the sake of Christ we will proclaim him, seek him, and serve him to the glory of God.



St. Francis Episcopal Church

Potomac, Md.

The praise of God through beautiful music is deeply important at Saint Francis Church. When the pandemic restricted our ability to sing together, we found a novel solution through the ingenuity of Mark Morgan, a parishioner and professional trombonist. Mark organized a trombone choir to lead a parking lot service of Lessons and

Carols on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, with lots of vigorous singing within the safety of our socially distanced cars. The choir returned for an encore on a sunny Easter morning. At St. Francis we understand more clearly now why the classical composers so often chose the trombone as a sign of “the voice of God.”

Holy Spirit Episcopal Church

Waco, Texas



There are more than 47,000 people within a 10-minute drive of Holy Spirit who aren't active in a church.

We are orienting ourselves to reach them. Already, a few have started to arrive! A local man showed up to one of our outdoor services, recently married and with several children. He said he knew it was time to come back to church as he started to turn his life around. He's been an active attendee both online and in person, and we'll miss him when he and his family move.

Another man saw that our Pentecost Park with walking trail, trees, and benches was open to the public and thought that was amazing. He asked about starting a pickleball league. The rector told him he needed to get to know the people of the church. He has been here almost every Sunday since, is in formation, and is actively wondering with us about the growth of the parish.



Diocese of Dallas

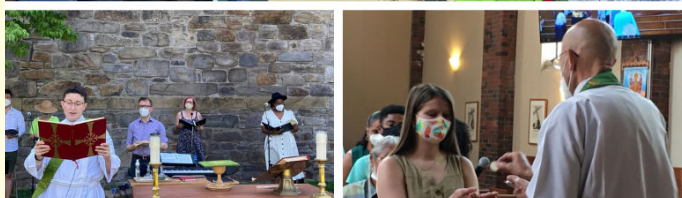
The Episcopal Diocese of Dallas has been busy with ordinations recently and has placed four curates in parishes and ministries. Julian Borda, the Rev. Audrey Sutton, the Rev. Miguel Carmona, and the Rev. Katie Gerber formed their pastoral skills in the pandemic, including ministering to those dying of COVID-19. One curate summed up the experience: “I gained confidence to provide pastoral care in the strangest, most challenging, and risky situations.” The diocese currently has 23 people discerning Holy Orders and God’s call.

A new ministry emerged when thousands of migrant children from Central America crossed the border into Texas, of which 1,500 were relocated to the convention center in Dallas. A group of EDOD priests, deacons, and parishioners serve once a month at the center,

where they bring instruments and worship bulletins for a church service that has been popular with young migrants. The volunteers have said they have all been moved to tears ministering to the children who are without their families and traumatized from their journey.

A new season is coming for St. Matthew’s Cathedral, where a project to sell land around the church will give the parish money to remodel, create an outdoor worship/event space, provide underground parking, and offer a more public witness to the gospel in a growing neighborhood just east of downtown Dallas. The cathedral’s rector, the Very Rev. Rob Price, has brought new energy and momentum to the church and is leading the congregation in prayer and preparation for new ministries and growth.





Diocese of Washington

We're in year two of a five-year strategic plan that launched just before the pandemic hit. Even as our parishes, diocesan staff, and bishops responded to the needs of our congregations and wider communities, we made progress in the three key areas of the plan: church revitalization, faith formation and equipping leaders, and striving for equity and justice. In 2021, we're welcoming the first cohort of 12 parishes to our Tending Our Soil thriving congregations initiative, sharing the "Vital Signs of Parish Health" with our congregations, expanding our School for Christian Faith and Leadership, and digging deeper into the history of systemic racism in the diocese with the start of a parish history project. We're excited by where the Holy Spirit is calling us.

Diocese of Massachusetts

Our journey through the pandemic continues to spotlight the ways we are "members one of another" (Rom. 12:5). Interdependence is the theme this year as we join with the Diocese of Western Massachusetts to pray, learn, act, and advocate in response to our bishops' March climate emergency declaration, and as we commit to reckoning, repentance, and restoration through our revitalized Racial Justice Commission. This fall, we anticipate offerings from new working groups exploring the potential of collaborative ministry, including partnerships and shared leadership models already in place and bearing fruit, and creative new ones called for by the changing contexts across our diverse diocesan community.



St. George's Episcopal Church

Dayton, Ohio

The pandemic required an explosion of innovation at St. George's: new tech, cameras, and live-streaming, online Bible studies and book groups for all ages, and monthly contactless food drives which have garnered more food than our old weekly drives. Perhaps most exciting has been the restructuring of our service times. We divided our old main service at 10:30 a.m. in two (9 a.m. and 11 a.m.), originally to space out attendance. However, we have found that these two services are both growing, and we plan to keep this pattern. The pandemic has been hard, but some blessings have and will come from the experience.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Baton Rouge, La.

Here in South Louisiana, we are known for treating strangers like family. A few weeks ago we hosted our first official front yard BBQ. We had hot dogs, hamburgers, potato salad, baked beans, desserts, and enjoyed a fun time on our front lawn. We also recently held VBS, where children spent the week learning about life in Jesus' time — including donkeys! Holy Grounds Coffee Shop just opened: a new way to gather over coffee and homemade treats together. The pandemic has been challenging, but St. Luke's is a great place to be enveloped in the love of the Lord and experience the culture and beauty of South Louisiana.



Diocese of Southern Ohio

Procter Center is a jewel in our diocese. Situated on 200 acres in rural Ohio, this retreat and event center has grown from a simple farmhouse and barn given to the diocese in 1954 to a modern residential camp and conference center. A few years ago, business development manager Danielle Vogel and summer interns began harvesting vegetables and raising livestock on six of the acres, providing food for the center and goods to sell at stores and local farmers markets.

Procter offers a full summer camp, but for decades, the farm and the camp operated separately. In 2020, the pandemic shut down camping operations. Early in 2021, the decision was made to open again, with a key addition to our leadership: new Farm Camp director

Amy Melena. Campers now spent time on the farm plot, where they learned love for the earth through hands-on farming. Some were even brave enough to nibble the edible flowers they planted. Amy linked their efforts into the theme of their camp session. “Camp is a place for campers to come experience who and how they can be in the world. The farm allows them to participate in God’s action hands-on and learn how they can impact our food system from seed to harvest.”

And so it was that after Procter Center lay fallow during the pandemic of 2020, new life burst forth in 2021, and this spiritual home to the diocese was suddenly living more fully into its name and setting.





Christ Church, Georgetown Washington, D.C.

For Christ Church, 2021 has been filled with providential developments. As one of the first parishes in Washington, D.C. to reopen for in-person corporate worship in 2020, we have steadily returned to something close to a full schedule of services as the vaccination rate has climbed and COVID restrictions have relaxed. Early in the year, we were delighted to bring back our choir, masked, first as a quartet, and on Pentecost at full strength, as we confirmed more than a dozen teenagers and adults.

When the mask mandate ended in Washington in May, it was astonishing to arrive in church and see, for the first time in more than 15 months, faces! As the world emerges from its pandemic wilderness, we look forward to continued regathering as the body of Christ.

All Souls' Church

Oklahoma City

All Souls' celebrated in June 2020 when we changed our corner sign to read "In Person and Online." Not only have we continued to worship in person, but we have overcome the hurdles of getting our video, sound, and internet working ... all at the same time! Throughout the pandemic our goal was to stay connected to each other as much as possible, and that continues today. Our clergy keep close tabs on our homebound parishioners, Sunday school teachers are teaching in person and offering video lessons and activities online, and Knights of North Castle VBS had a "royally" successful event this summer. Even Father Yoder donned a knightly costume to welcome the kids to VBS ... sword included! Finally, collections for our school outreach programs continue. Imagine being an elementary school child learning from home all year with no access to age-appropriate books. We couldn't tutor this year, but we've kept our Little Library just outside Van Buren El-

ementary well-stocked. Our band of "Little Librarians" has delivered more than 500 books in both English and Spanish, and our outreach efforts in the neighborhood school have expanded to help families with food and essential items. Thanks be to God.





Diocese of Springfield

In spring 2021, we enjoyed a fresh sense of mission as we returned to worshipping in person together, and we look forward to the election of our next bishop. From new stained glass at Trinity, Jacksonville, major renovation and repair work after last year's fire at St. Paul's, Alton, new solar panels at Emmanuel, Champaign, and a new roof at St. John's, Centralia, the gift of time this year has meant that care and love are being put into these and other parish grounds all over the diocese. We have also seen building projects come to fruition during this year, especially at Church of the Redeemer, Cairo, where their new building has given them more space to gather and operate and now also accommodates a new martial arts program. Our communities have dedicated time and love to both new and ongoing outreach ministries that focus on giving small but necessary items to those in our neighborhoods: a new Little Free Library at Christ the King, Normal, the Blessing Box free pantry at St. Mark's, West Frankfort, a new relationship between the Salvation Army shelter and the Parish of Tazewell County, and the Dignity Box nursing home ministry at St. Thomas, Salem.

The clergy of the diocese gathered at the annual Mass of Christ, and our diocesan Cursillo and ECW are looking forward once again to planning in-person retreats in the coming months.





Christ the King Episcopal Church

Santa Rosa Beach, Fla.

For Christ the King, 2020-2021 has been a period of stepping out in faith and trusting in God. And thus far, we have been blessed by God's grace, mercy, and love. In March of 2020 we broke ground on a new building for our Parish Day School — the Tree House Episcopal Montessori School — which will increase the capacity and scope for this thriving ministry in our community. In summer 2020 we created our first-ever full-time staff position for children and youth minis-

try. Our new director of Family Faith Formation, Dani Robertson, joined us in August, and we are already experiencing the fruit of that ministry. In the spring of 2021, we launched a capital campaign — “Rooted + Grounded in Love” — and reached our financial goal in June. This campaign is helping us further the reach of our mission to provide worship, multi-generational Christian formation, and outreach ministries that remain faithful to the Anglican ethos and tradition.



Camp Allen

Navasota, Texas

Being a large conference center/camp, we had a 65% reduction in revenue during COVID. This was a long way to fall with over 100 employees who were used to welcoming 56,000 guests annually.

So, in the height of the COVID crisis, we looked at who was getting hurt the most and how we ought best to rebound. If we made a major reduction in staff, it would take longer to recover, and as we are in a remote area, we knew some of our staff could not find other work quickly.

So we started the Grace Fund. This fund was named for the young daughter of the Day family who live on our property. We were inspired by her words, “I hope Camp Allen campers can return soon, because this is where Jesus lives.”

In the early stages of the Grace Fund, we set a goal of \$35,000 to distribute packages to our hourly workers. Those workers were impacted because their hours were reduced and they had no overtime pay. We used the camp buying power to secure food items for our staff families. It was warmly received, and we repeated the distribution each Friday. Today the fund has reached \$95,000 and has helped send family members to summer camp.



Diocese of West Virginia

When people think of the Mountain State, they think of whitewater rafting, beautiful mountains, fall foliage, and some of the friendliest people in America. We would add: resilience, kindness, and a love for each other. There also is a sense of pride in the heritage here. There are many places where farming still connects us to the land and the gifts of nature. More mountain land exists here per square mile than in any other state. While the state works to re-open, we see the virtual world in a different way than we did in early 2020. We see a place for connection and a place to bridge the miles that stretch across the mountains. We see a worship space that has no walls or boundaries. Since the start of COVID-19, the diocese has hosted Noonday Prayer and daily Compline, as well as Sunday liturgy. Through this and virtual services hosted by various parishes, we found ways not only to worship but to deepen our ties. The diocese and its parishes are seeing visitors drop in for services and former members participate. At times, it can seem like a family reunion — something communities and families in the state hold special.



Christ Church Episcopal Tulsa, Okla.

How do you worship, learn, and gather in a pandemic? That is what every church has wrestled with the past year. Over 2021 we transitioned to offering online worship with the installation of new cameras and a soundboard. A number of people found us online and are a part of our community.

We supplemented the Alpha Course scripts to serve as our Sunday sermons for a period of time, and we use them as videos for classes. (The clergy have all decided we were not made to be TV evangelists.)

One of the best things about this time has been the development of the Concert Series at the Farm, an outdoor music event where the community can gather for live music, fellowship, and time together. We've welcomed many musicians, including Kaitlin Butts, Jamie Lin Wilson, the Red Dirt Rangers, and John Fullbright.



Diocese of Texas

Service, resiliency, and partnership are the three words that best describe the culture of the Diocese of Texas in 2021. While many people faced food insecurities due to job losses, Christ Church, Nacogdoches — a micro-church located in East Texas — rose to the occasion when their deacon, the Rev. Wanda W. Cuniff, took the initiative to help her local food pantry. She placed a red wagon on the front porch of their parish, and a year later, parishioners and friends have donated over 3,700 pounds of non-perishable foods to the East Texas Food Bank. St. Thomas the Apostle, Nassau Bay, has been hosting a food distribution every month. In March, they served over 347 people with boxes of cereal, peas, plantains, and chicken. College students at Houston Canterbury distributed more

than 1,100 care packages to fellow students. In May, the Diocese of Texas, along with other Houston congregations like St. James', St. John the Divine, and St. Martin's, hosted a Mega Outdoor Health Fair, inviting local hospitals and vendors to help out Third Ward residents who have suffered job loss, family disruption, financial hardship, illness, and death. These congregations have formed such a strong partnership, they have promised an annual return. Our Commission on Hispanic Ministry hosted a Lay Leadership Conference in June for our lay leaders, extending its invitation to all Latin America. Leaders and folks across the diocese have come together as one, not only to help their neighbors, but communities beyond their reach, just as Jesus Christ taught his disciples.





Church of the Redeemer

Sarasota, Fla.

For longtime members as well as people just passing by, Redeemer's bright red doors send a message of comfort and hospitality. Without saying anything, the doors beckon, "Come on in!" It sure helps, though, when someone echoes that message and offers more words of welcome. A few months ago, our facilities manager, Steve Wernet, was about to leave for the day when he ran into a couple who had stumbled onto the Redeemer campus.

It had been a long day for Steve, but instead of ushering them away so he could head home, he struck up a conversation with the pair. Steve told them about Redeemer and took them on a tour of the property, showing them the church, parish hall, classrooms, and gardens. Thanks in part to Steve's friendliness, no doubt, the couple decided to join Redeemer. When another potential new member called the parish office recently asking if we knew

someone who could give her piano lessons, our receptionist, Diane Knox, knew just how to help her. She shared the name and number of her granddaughter's piano teacher, and the woman is now happily taking lessons. She's also become a member of Redeemer. Whether offering a grand tour or the name of a piano teacher, that friendly face or friendly voice on the other end of the telephone can make all the difference, perhaps now more than ever.



Episcopal Church in Minnesota

The first six months of 2021 have been as messy, joy-filled, and surprising as any Minnesota spring. As vaccines have been distributed around the state, many by our own faith communities, in partnership with medical providers, we entered into perhaps the most confusing and challenging chapter of COVID yet. Our faith communities have been faithful, patient, and above all creative as each has discerned its own path to regathering. So many of our faith communities discovered incredible gifts in this past year that we want to hold onto. Worshiping outside may present audio challenges, but sunshine and connecting with

neighbors more than make up for them. While online gatherings don't allow for hugs, meeting via Zoom has allowed us to reconnect and deepen our relationships with dear friends who've moved away. And our call to seek genuine racial justice and reconciliation remains as urgent and holy as ever. The twin challenges of George Floyd's murder and the cascading consequences of that offense, and the escalating fight over the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline at the headwaters of the Mississippi, continue to call every Minnesotan Episcopalian, every day, to recommit to God's mission of healing the whole world, and our own neighborhoods, with love.

Church of the Good Shepherd

Corpus Christi, Texas

Coming back to in-person worship in June of 2020 was a big blessing! Safety protocols and guidelines helped many of our older parishioners feel so comfortable that they said, "Church is the safest place I go each week!" Never have we felt so moved and humbled by the simple things our worship had to offer: Holy Eucharist, singing, Sunday school, confirmation, and outreach.

On Rally Day in September 2020, we all gathered on the church lawn to enjoy a church family picnic. By Easter, church attendance was on fire! Tear-filled eyes could be seen everywhere — there was so much joy. You could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit. Each baby step we have taken over the last year to get back to "normal" has filled our hearts with a new gratitude. May blessings abound as we move forward!





St. David's (Radnor) Church

Wayne, Pa.

This has been the year of “missing” — missing our friends, missing our families, missing our church; in short, missing life! Yet God has deepened our faith and our sense of community during the pandemic by giving a different shade of meaning to what we may actually have been missing. St. David's worship has been vibrant in-person and online. We continue to learn together and care for one another. Our education series on social justice and how we treat others reminded us of what we were missing: compassion. We started a new partnership with the Hispanic Missioner, Mother Jessie Alejandro, and the Church of the Crucifixion in Philadelphia. Together we have fed hundreds and provided clothing and financial support in an effort to bring back to a community what has long since been missing: hope. Our sewing ministry gave out 8,943 masks and 861 Days for Girls kits to our partners in the area and in Uganda. We have provided a help that was missing: protection. Our children have collected over 12,000 can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House to fund what was missing: healing. St. David's makes Christ known to others by continuing to reach out to serve local and international communities. We continue to demonstrate our faith through learning what is really “missing” from our busy, everyday lives: recognizing the living Jesus and the ceaseless opportunities to love our neighbors.





Diocese of Oklahoma

In response to the nationwide protests and increasing unrest around racism and racial justice, the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma has chosen to root ourselves in our baptismal covenant's call to respect the dignity of every human person by taking the time to listen, learn, and build Beloved Community. Through several diocesan-wide efforts, Episcopalians in Oklahoma have contributed to the work of racial reconciliation. The annual Bishop's Appeal in 2020 raised funds for our brothers and sisters in Christ at the Historic Vernon AME Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Vernon is the only Black-owned building

to survive the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and was the only Tulsa Church to run a feeding ministry throughout the pandemic. The Rt. Rev. Poulson Reed was pleased to give Vernon's pastor, the Rev. Dr. Robert Turner, a large gift on behalf of the diocese to help renovate their kitchen and create a prayer wall for racial reconciliation. The prayer wall dedication was held during the Centennial Memorial of the Tulsa Race Massacre on May 31. We invite the wider Church to join us in remembering the Tulsa Race Massacre through prayer, reflection, and engaging in this work of healing.



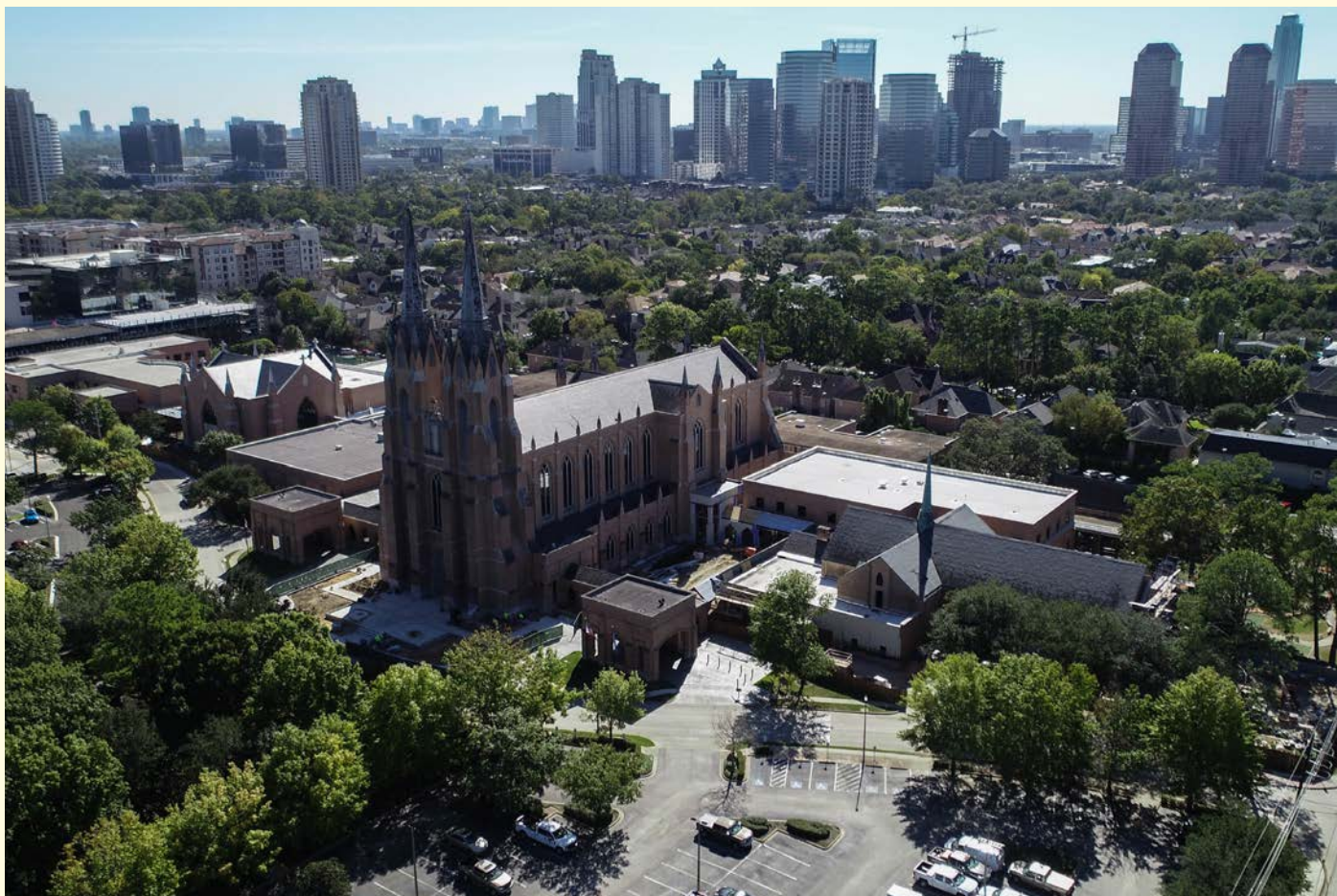
Church of the Holy Faith

Santa Fe, N.M.

God is doing new things at Holy Faith! As we rejoice over coming together after the pandemic, we are learning new ways to be the Church, gathering in new settings for fellowship, finding new avenues to reach out to the neediest in the community, and offering new means to stay connected with one another.

Holy Faith is back in person, celebrating and offering the sacraments, studying the Bible, feeding the hungry, and worshiping the Lord in the beauty of holiness. But Holy Faith is also using this season of innovation to install a state-of-the-art audio and video system to broadcast Holy Faith's beautiful Anglo-Catholic liturgy to those who are not yet ready to return or who want to engage from afar. We invite you to drop by if you are in Santa Fe.





St. Martin's Episcopal Church

Houston, Texas

“Homecoming” is the theme for us here at St. Martin's. After the long dark season of the pandemic, we're beginning once again to open our doors to provide traditional and contemporary worship, discipleship, mission, outreach, and fellowship. In August of this year, the parish will gather to celebrate, dedicate, and consecrate the completion of 10 new and/or renovated buildings, including a new 650-seat parish life center for worship and education, a 200-seat traditional “English village style” Christ Chapel, and a new pastoral care center, music hall, welcome center, gift shop, and several new outdoor meditation and prayer garden areas. The project was made possible by the Building for the Ages Campaign, supported by generous pledges.

As the 15-acre campus reopens, its leadership celebrates a new homecoming and looks forward to furthering its

mission to make and grow disciples of Jesus Christ and expanding its commitment to mission and outreach beyond its doors. At present, the parish commits over 25 percent of its annual bud-

get to support ministries of the diocese outside the doors of St. Martin's, as well as dozens of local ministries that serve the needy and underserved of Houston and beyond.





St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Austin, Texas

Of the many liturgical and virtual experiments of this year — many of them failures(!) — we will look back fondly on at least two successes. The first we called the Family Picnic Eucharist. Picture blankets and campchairs scattered around a makeshift front-lawn altar; children writing down on Post-Its names to pray for and sticking them to our “Lord, have mercy” board; a socially distanced Story Circle; and a reverently chaotic Communion. The second was our outdoor Easter Vigil, where we christened a new horse trough baptismal font by baptizing eleven new Christians, and where the light for the Easter proclamation came from stars, string lights, and glowsticks.



St. Peter's Episcopal Church

McKinney, Texas

St. Peter's is happy to be worshipping in person again (singing together is good for the soul!) and to have a full calendar of summer fellowship events. In the last year, we have really stepped up our hunger relief efforts. We kept our Little Free Pantry full, passed out 154 grocery bags full of food at Easter, and held an event called “Empty Bowls,” in which we raised \$85,000 to fight food insecurity in North Texas. We are also installing a new pipe organ, and our choirs are preparing for an active fall.



St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church

Tucson, Ariz.

We are joyfully and carefully emerging from lockdown at St. Michael and All Angels! We have resumed worship in person, with music, singing, incense, and all the trimmings. After nearly a year operating almost entirely online, we are happy to be returning. Through the last year we adapted our outreach ministries: our food pantry, our cooperation with Casa Maria Catholic Worker, our partnership with Native friends in the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, our international medical work in Guatemala, and St. Michael's Parish Day School. We pray that as we continue to emerge, God will grant us increase in number and holiness. If you are ever in Tucson, please join us to give glory to God!





Church of the Incarnation

Dallas, Texas

“What’s the magic to this partnership?” Pastor T (Shawn Torres) from Pilgrim Rest Missionary Baptist Church and our director of student and young adult ministries, Pam Coghlan, get fielded with this kind of question often. In 2016, they worked together on a community project for a lower-income neighborhood, and for five and a half years now, our youth groups have been inseparable.

“As I think about our friendship, it does not escape me how different we are, but it is those differences that make us stronger,” said Pam. “Many times, I used to rely entirely on my expectations

to accomplish challenging goals, sincerely thinking that I needed no one’s help. But when God drew our two youth groups together and continued drawing us together, that’s when I realized what the body of Christ must look and feel like. We work well together because it is of God — not magic.” The challenges of this past year slowed the partnership down but pushed us to think outside the box. Thus Camp Rose was born, a summer camp predominately run by our youth groups, designed to serve lower-income children, combining literacy programming with fun. At first glance, Camp Rose seems like a nice service project, but its impact is far-reaching.



Diocese of Olympia

Over the past year, the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia has provided support to our congregations in communities impacted by the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and racism. We have provided grants and other financial assistance to churches and ministries providing hunger relief, like St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Seattle and Chaplains on the Harbor in Grays Harbor. We have also been working alongside our ethnic ministries and BIPOC ministers to provide support to those who have been harmed by the sin of racism and take the first steps toward wholeness and healing across the diocese through listening sessions, educational opportunities, and more intentional partnerships.





Parish of Calvary-St. George's

New York City

We are open! After an excruciatingly long hiatus, hungry-for-church New Yorkers from all different denominations and no church background at all are coming. It's been great.

We've witnessed lots of new faces, a strong desire for personal connection, and a rebirth of spiritual interest — you heard it right, even here in the Northeast.





Trinity Episcopal Church

Vero Beach, Fla.

Trinity continues to thank God for the unexpected ways our church has grown through the pandemic. We now offer “family friendly” worship online that includes an online service bulletin and Sunday School lesson so that everyone is able to participate together. Trinity also hosts interactive online lectures and book studies, such as on C.S. Lewis’s *Screwtape Letters*. Unexpected blessings continue as the

number of people joining online worship and lectures rise and the message of the gospel is spread over the world! We thank God as we begin another year of our Christian preschool, with every safety precaution that will keep teachers and children safe and healthy. Finally, Trinity will continue to increase our endowment in order to secure the continued growth of the church.



Diocese of Southwest Florida

The Episcopal Church in Southwest Florida has continued to share Christ’s love to the communities of our 79 congregations. Churches continued to operate through the challenges of Coronavirus, both online and in person. As a diocese, we evolved through many stages of safety requirements during the pandemic, based on local county health and fire safety regulations and CDC guidelines. Lay-led concerts, book studies, and the Daily Office flourished. Congregations rallied to put services online: the diocese went from only 10 parishes regularly streaming, to over 70 congregations today. Streaming activity energized many congregations to the point of even gaining new members. Our food pantry network received new grants from Episcopal Charities of Southwest Florida. Our vestry retreat gathering included a record 309 clergy and vestry in a first-ever Zoom gathering. And our two parish church plants, in Parrish and Wesley Chapel, continued their growth.





Church of St. John the Divine

Houston, Texas

2021 brought a return to the familiar St. John the Divine, and we're growing in new and innovative ways! In January, our community gathered to reconnect with each other and meet our new rector, the Rev. Dr. R. Leigh Spruill, at a socially distanced outdoor and livestreamed service. We celebrated Easter together at two outdoor services, and we continue weekly worship together in person and online. Our new YouTube channel, The Door, has already grown to over 200 members. Online and in-person groups and studies offer everyone ways to learn and grow wherever they are, and we continue to serve others in new ways. In April, we packed 30,000 meals for children in Zambia, served by international non-profit Family Legacy. We look forward to serving local community partners at three Summer Service Sundays.



Society of Mary

Because of COVID, the Society of Mary, American Region, held its 2021 Annual Mass remotely on YouTube from St. Clement's Church, Philadelphia, with Father Richard Alton, Rector, celebrating, Fr. John Alexander, SoM Superior, preaching, and four socially distanced singers providing music. Our annual meeting was also held by Zoom and was well-attended. Several new wards and cells have been formed while existing ones have showed ingenuity in finding ways to keep providing fellowship and communal prayers for members. The Blessed Virgin Mary has often engendered comfort and hope during plagues throughout history and continues to do so today.



St. Mark's Cathedral

Shreveport, La.

In a year when we're all looking toward the future, we at St. Mark's are reflecting on our history and the faithfulness of God in the Episcopal Church in Western Louisiana for nearly 200 years. In March of 1839, on the banks of the Red River, Bishop Leonidas Polk held the first formal church service in what was then the newly established town of Shreveport. Although his visit was controversial at the time (Shreveport was known to be an almost lawless gambling and trading town), the same small group who came to listen to Bishop Polk began to grow in numbers and eventually organized themselves into St. Mark's Episcopal Church in 1859. The small parish grew rapidly over the years, and in 1957 we moved to the historic Highland neighborhood. In 1990 St. Mark's became the Cathedral Church of the diocese. From our spiritual roots to our architecture, we're grateful, and we anticipate where God will lead next.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

Richmond, Va.



Like just about every other church in the world, St. Matthew's is rediscovering itself. Freshly returned to our building for worship after 15 months of exile, we begin to see that there remain many things, and people, yet unrecovered. So how shall we know and love each other anew? How shall we search out and love our neighbors now? The truth is that those are old questions, perennial questions, for just about every church in the world. But here is a new question for us, that will help us answer the old ones: what has God been recreating in us and for us during our long exile?



Diocese of Central Florida

Who knew our 2021 Diocesan Convention theme, “Weaker, Deeper, Stronger,” would be prophetic? The pandemic exposed fault lines that highlighted our weaknesses, deepened our faith, and summoned our strength.

Soul care: The pandemic helped us get creative. All Saints, Winter Park, restarted its Glennon House healing ministry. In a season of pain, the work at this former B&B met critical needs, offering prayer by phone, Zoom, and now, in person.

Food insecurity: Some churches had only a small food pantry — or none at all. But hungry people can’t wait on committees. St. John the Baptist in Orlando’s Washington Shores neighborhood kicked its food pantry into high gear and still delivers donated carloads every week.

Health needs: Florida’s plan of using Publix supermarkets for vaccine distribution worked well — for some. Few Hispanic neighborhoods have these stores. Father José Rodríguez, vicar at Jesús de Nazaret in Orlando’s Azalea Park community, brought vaccination centers to Spanish-speaking Episcopal churches and other Latin-friendly sites.



St. George’s Episcopal Church

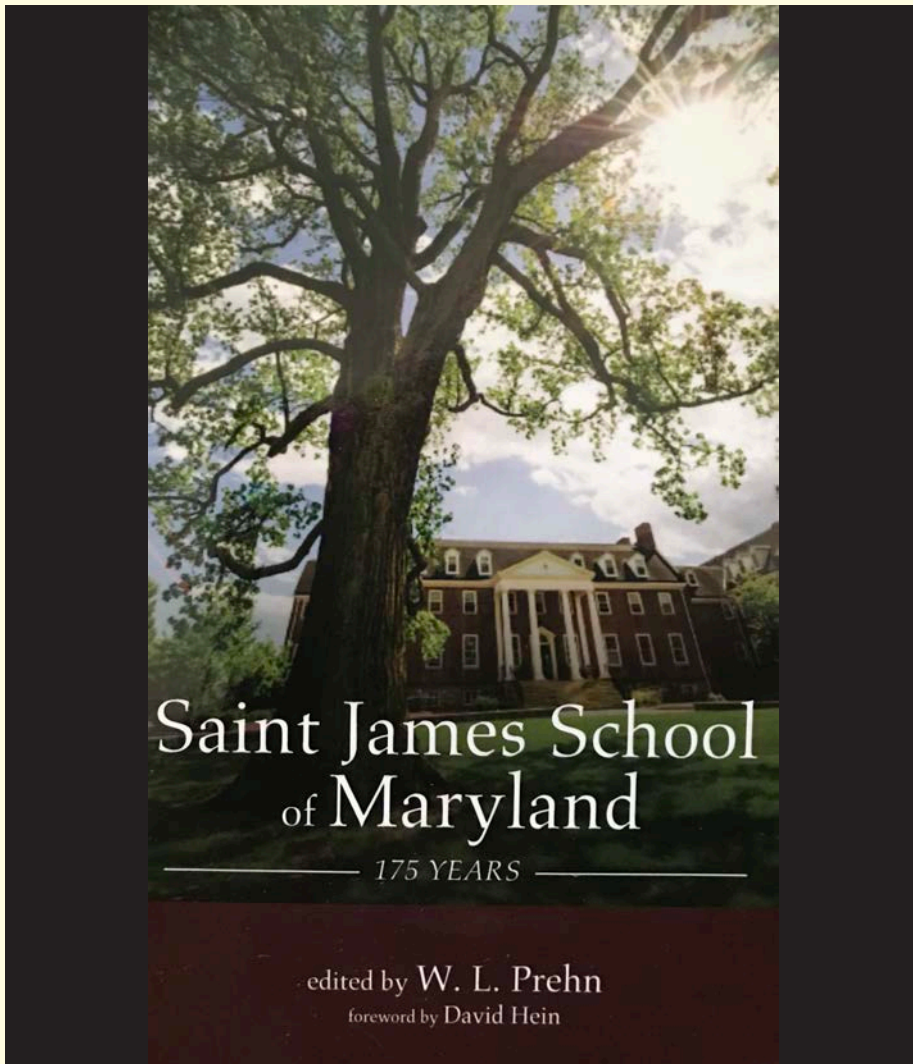
Nashville, Tenn.

Since its inception, St. George’s Enterprise Ministry (SGEM) has been proud to help some of Nashville’s most innovative social enterprises. At its core, SGEM strives to help our community by supporting and building up businesses that have a social impact. Simply put, we want to make a lasting difference by helping businesses and leaders who help others.

Every year we are excited and energized by our partners, who receive grant funding and mentorship with the goal of becoming established, self-sustaining organizations. Maybe it’s because 2020 was such a bumpy ride, but we are particularly impressed by our current group of tenacious, energetic,

and savvy social enterprises. At Crossroads Campus, at-risk youth are taught skills related to the care of animals through their grooming, retail, and pet food business. At Humphreys Street coffee shop, youth are being raised up into leaders through mentorship opportunities and empowering job skills, such as customer service, marketing, and craftsmanship. With Project Return, men and women returning to the community after incarceration find employment and supportive services. These SGEM partners are actively helping Nashvillians live better lives — with dignity and grace. To learn more about this ministry, visit stgeorgesnashville.org/sgem.





Saint James School

Hagerstown, Md.

This year has seen the publication of a book on our history: *Saint James School of Maryland: 175 Years*. The authors made some fascinating discoveries; for example, the founding rector of Saint James, John Barrett Kerfoot (1816-81), was an extraordinary classroom teacher who discovered, in the words of editor Chip Prehn, “a principle as important to the history of education as lift was to the history of aviation: that if you would have authentic ‘academic excellence’ in a school, the entire community must aim *above* ‘academic excellence.’” The school got truly remarkable results working with (sometimes) rather ordinary students by focusing on virtue. Lloyd Breck, founder of Nashotah House Theological Seminary, was a student under this method. Another

thing which stands out is the school’s resilient response to adversity — the Civil War, World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, their changes of the ’60s and ’70s, and now COVID — while remaining true to mission. The most important discovery was accomplished by Dr. Emilie Amt. She uncovered that, during the Civil War years, some members of SJS owned slaves. And at least one enslaved woman was purchased by Dr. Kerfoot, in order to free her. Dr. Amt’s careful scholarship on the enslaved members of the SJS community is invaluable. This is not a book designed just to look handsome on the coffee table, but to help any careful reader understand what Saint James is for, and its foundational and formational role in the wider Church School Movement.



Collegiate Church of Saint Paul the Apostle

Savannah, Ga.

Saint Paul’s has been serving Savannah and the Episcopal Diocese of Georgia in the fullness of the Catholic and Reformed faith of the Anglican Communion since 1852. As a collegiate church, we are committed to empowering the body of Christ to serve and minister, and we see the diversity of our religious histories, interests, and cultures as one of our strengths as a parish family. Through the pandemic we developed protocols which allowed us to keep our regular schedule of food distributions and to distribute supplemental resources as needed.

In light of mandated shutdowns and the need to connect with the parish and the public, we worked extensively on our links with the web and massively upgraded our Wi-Fi network. This included the installation of fiber optic cable and campus-wide Wi-Fi, which now allow us to livestream from any corner of the complex. We also developed a distribution program of the Blessed Sacrament, which became a model for the Diocese of Georgia, allowing many to receive the Host from the Church during very stressful times.



Episcopal Church in Connecticut

Our focus on racial healing, justice, and reconciliation continues to expand in 2021. A sweeping set of resolutions, known collectively as Resolution #7, “Acknowledging & Confronting Systemic Racism, White Supremacy, & Anti-Black Bias,” was approved at our 2020 Annual Convention. It set forth ambitious goals for the future, including the creation of a Reparations Task Force to “study and make specific recommendations to the (2021) Annual Convention as to reparations by ECCT and individual Parishes, Worshiping Communities, and Intentional Episcopal Communities in partial compensation for 400 years of discrimination and bias based on race.” The task force was announced in April and includes eight clergy and four lay members, seven of whom are people of color. They have begun their work by expanding our understanding of “reparations,” by inviting participation in a set of weekly reflections via ECCT’s weekly e-news, challenging us to grow together in this holy work.



Diocese of Pennsylvania

Despite the pandemic, we continued to innovate and grow. We reopened our third church in three years. The reopened Church of the Crucifixion will minister to all people, with a specific focus on the growing Hispanic population in Philadelphia. Each day, the church doors are open to the community. In late 2020, the diocese successfully petitioned the state of Pennsylvania to recognize clergy as essential workers and started clinics all across the diocese to vaccinate clergy and lay people. The work of addressing racism continues. In addition to requiring anti-racism training for all clergy, the diocese launched the Loving Presence Group,

started by clergy and expanded to laity, to lead us in dismantling racism in the diocese. Their report on the path forward was unanimously approved by all diocesan governing bodies. Partnering with Villanova University, we launched Serviam. This comprehensive online learning platform will empower and equip both laity and clergy. Through our free Digital Disciples program and tech grant program, we assisted 60+ churches with adapting to virtual worship, providing equipment and internet access to sanctuaries. As church doors reopen, we look forward to the many ways in which our diocese will be different, and by God’s grace, better.





St. Francis in the Fields

Harrods Creek, Ky.

For St. Francis in the Fields, 2021 has been a year of strengthening our team and infrastructure while also participating in God's mission to our community. Our vision is to make and grow disciples of Jesus Christ by drawing all generations into worship, formation and mission. By God's grace, we are off to a good start! We have welcomed several new staff members, and have started raising money for a new playground, while also hosting strategic discussions to launch several new key ministries in the next two years. Parishioners have sent Valentine's Day gift packets to our homebound and elderly members that include cards and drawings from our children, along with tasty treats. We have hosted several blood drives, and our youth and children's ministries have spearheaded a project to build beds for children in our local community. Additionally, we held our first outdoor confirmation service for 36 people, narrowly dodging the ar-

ival of cicadas! Our goal has not just been to survive the pandemic, but to open ourselves to God's grace within this historic moment, so that we might flourish and even take new ground during this season.



Diocese of Upper South Carolina

We are made up of more than 60 congregations, schools, and institutions in 22 counties across the upper part of the state. Over the past year, our diocesan youth events continued in online formats and just recently regathered in person for a 5th grade retreat and Happening. Congregations across the diocese continued to serve their communities, adapting feeding ministries to operate safely during the pandemic, offering space for vaccine clinics for the community, and deepening relationships with local schools. The Church of the Epiphany in Spartanburg (a small historically African American congregation), is an example of what all of our congregations have been able to do. Epiphany has expanded its community garden ministry to six new neighborhoods and has continued its youth ministry through literacy programs and a youth sports league. Despite the challenges present in 2021, Epiphany — and all of the congregations in EDUSC — have continued to make, equip, and send mature disciples of Jesus!





Grace Church

New York, N.Y.

Grace Church draws its members from the greater New York metropolitan area. Since relocating to the Greenwich Village area of Manhattan in 1846, we have enjoyed an especially close relationship with this neighborhood south of Union Square, and we strive to serve the people who come inside our doors — virtually or in person — regardless of who they may be. After being at the epicenter of the pandemic in the spring of 2020, we reopened for in-person worship in September and managed to stay that way through the school year without any COVID incidents, thanks be to God. Outdoor “coffee-less coffee hour” was a hit, even on freezing winter Sundays. Throughout the year we also continued to support local agencies of mercy. This summer we delivered canned goods to a nearby food pantry. We are gearing up to being back in full swing this September.



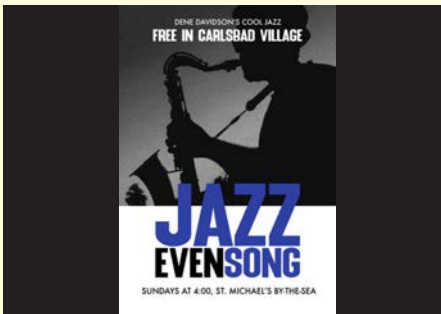
Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue

New York, N.Y.

Located in the heart of Midtown Manhattan, we can take the pulse of New York, and the larger world, simply by opening our doors. From our front steps, we have witnessed the city’s gradual reopening and return to a new kind of normal. As of July 2021, we are once again visited by a steady stream of faithful pilgrims taking refuge in this “oasis of prayer” on hot summer days, lighting candles at Our Lady of Fifth Avenue, and our pews are filling up on Sundays and Summer Feast Days. Inside our physical walls, and in digital rooms, the parishioners, lay leaders, and clergy of Saint Thomas have spent the first half of

2021 connecting through prayer, adult education, Sunday Zoom programs for children and families, and by sharing our unique Anglican choral heritage over livestreams watched the world over. In numbers, that’s 308 liturgical services, 98 webcasts, 33 gatherings for our children and families ministry, and one newly ordained priest. On March 14, 2021, the Rev. Sr. Marie Promise Atelon SSM celebrated her first Mass at our High Altar. 2021 has been a year of connection and resilience, and also careful planning for the future, when we look forward to growing in faith with parishioners in person and online.





St. Michael's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church

Carlsbad, Calif.

We are the oldest church in Carlsbad, established in 1894. We celebrate a “beachy” version of the ancient Christian faith: we’re the host to public pickleball courts and the Carlsbad Music Festival, and we welcome *all* pilgrims on their spiritual journey, no matter the stage. Things may look different these days with “blog Mass” and video sermons, but worship of Our Lord Jesus Christ is still the heartbeat of this spiritual community. To God be the glory! The most welcome additions to parish life during “Coronatide” have been a weekly Sunday jazz Evensong with a world class jazz band, as well as a weekly online “solemn blog Mass” for at-home worship. Also, we are blessed to host the 50th anniversary of the invention of the boogie board this month! The inventor, Tom Mory, is a jazz drummer who has been playing at our Sunday Evensong.



St. Matthew's Cathedral

Dallas, Texas

St. Matthew's Cathedral went *al fresco* in 2020-21! While livestreaming a service from inside the nave, our principal service moved outdoors and over 20 young adults “walked up to our table,” joining the parish during the pandemic season, largely through the charisma of the “Mass on the Grass.” Our food *pantry* became a *porch*, and we are have given food to over 200 individuals and households a week in the outdoors and all kinds of weather, dramatically expanding our outreach during this season of food insecurity.



St. Paul's Bloor Street

Toronto, Ont.

“The Rev's Kitchen” epitomizes the response of St. Paul's Bloor Street to the twists and turns of 2021. As Canada's largest Anglican church, we have been able to repurpose our commercial kitchen to serve delicious take-out meals, through Uber Eats, to nearby condo dwellers. All the proceeds have gone to provide meals for vulnerable people living on the streets of Toronto. We would never have dreamt up such a ministry without the pandemic. 2021 also brought a change in leadership, as the Rev. Canon Dr. Barry Parker retired and the Rt. Rev. Jenny Andison was appointed our eleventh rector. Our ministries are evolving as we determine how to do ministry in a hybrid way, aided by the technology in our newly renovated main sanctuary. Several online offerings will be expanded due to the response. A participant in DivorceCare lives in England — the timing works better! Sharing the gospel since 1841, St. Paul's Bloor Street is looking forward, in hope, to the new ministry opportunities opening up, as we remain rooted in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Murfreesboro, Tenn.



This winter St. Paul's had the chance to buy the family-run grocery next to our church. We had so many questions. What would our church be like after the pandemic? Could we afford it? What is God calling us to do? Our conversations and prayer together helped us grow from thinking of this as an opportunity for ourselves to considering how we can be part of something new God is doing. We have gotten clarity that God is calling us to make Jesus real in our downtown neighborhood, gathering and evangelizing whether we buy the grocery or not. This clarity is finally what allowed us to buy the grocery. For our church, the grocery has become not simply a building or a space for future parking, but a family business which employs our town's residents, gives our neighbors access to fresh foods, and allows us to keep growing God's kingdom in downtown Murfreesboro.

LETTERS

On Staying Safe

“A Classic Anglican Case for Public Worship” by Mark Michael [August 8, 2021] helpfully gathers up the reasons given historically by earlier Anglican Divines for the public worship of God. However, when asking questions “for today,” he seems to worry about what people may think of us Christians if we “stay safe at home” rather than bear faithful witness in public at church. His tone and word choice seem to demean “some leaders in our church” who “seem bent on besting” the public health “mandarins” in their “zeal for social distancing.”

He worries more about our witness to our non-believing neighbors if we stay safe at home, and even asks if that is “the most loving thing to do.”

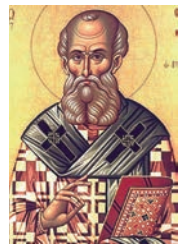
Thinking to support his point about bearing public witness, he cites a story written by John Keble about “the aged” in his Hursley parish who came to service even though infirm. Does this author not understand that for the first year of COVID-19 “the aged and infirm” suffered with the highest death rate? Does he not understand that “today” the scientists are warning that the COVID-19 variants are even deadlier and up to three times more transmissible than one year ago?

Scripture tells us that the “Enemy of our embodied souls is ever on the prowl, seeking to devour.” This virus attacks our very breath and organs, which sacramentally are his body and blood—an organic (not online) reality we liturgically celebrate, “He in us and we in him.” If we heed St. Paul, we should be watchful and vigilant, lest we be “devoured.”

I close with Bob Dylan’s prophetic lyric: “Let us not talk falsely now / The hour is getting late.” We know about and pray daily for a Christian brother at church who has been fighting COVID and remains in intensive care after eight months.

Rather than name-calling and pitting our church leaders against the medical scientists, perhaps *TLC* could explore the apocalyptic worldview of St. Athanasius, who wrote centuries

ago that Christ had to be lifted up on a cross to make a path for our souls to ascend through the darkness of all the demons swarming in our atmosphere!



St. Athanasius

Lest we think that does not apply to “today,” C.S. Lewis reminds us that “the 12th century Platonists were living in the same celestial year as we moderns.” These are just a few thoughts I am sharing in response to just this article. My husband and I have enjoyed reading *TLC* for over ten years!

Susan Wendling
Via email

Mark Michael responds:

In times of crisis, wise leaders must weigh multiple goods to determine the best course of action for those they serve. During the pandemic, I have been very grateful for those within our church who have argued for cooperating with public-health mandates and protecting the most vulnerable. I have been especially grateful when their arguments, like yours, have been rooted in the doctrine of the Incarnation instead of the utilitarian logic that drives most of our public decision-making in these matters.

My aim was to lift up another important good that has historically shaped our deliberation at times like this, the key role of public worship in Christian discipleship. My frustration, which you correctly gleaned from my rhetoric, is not with good arguments like those you have made, but with the fact that I hear so few like those I was making in our church.

The need for Christian communities to discern in times of pandemic is nothing new, but the widespread disappearance of public worship during them certainly is. I must leave Athanasius and the demons to one more knowledgeable than me, though the ascetical tradition Athanasius helped shape paid rather more attention to the vulnerabilities of the soul than the body. And few things are more risky, spiritually speaking, than the assumption that our current situation is so deeply exceptional.

PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Laurent De Prins** is rector of Epiphany, Opelousas, La.

The Rev. **Aelred Dean** is rector of St. Mary’s, Middlesboro, Ky.

The Rev. **Alison Donohue** is chaplain at the Episcopal Church at Yale, New Haven, Conn.

The Rev. **Peter Fones** is parish priest at Trinity, Waterloo, Iowa.

The Rev. **Andrew Gerns** is priest in charge of St. John’s, Clearwater, Fla.

The Rev. **Donna Gerold** is interim rector of Trinity, Wetumpka, Ala.

The Rev. **Shane Scott Hamblen** is interim rector of St. Ambrose’s, Foster City, Calif.

The Rev. Canon **James Harlan** is the Diocese of Southern Ohio’s canon evangelist.

The Rev. **Jim Harris** is priest in charge at All Saints’, West Plains, Mo.

The Rev. **Rondesia Jarrett-Schell** is parish priest at St. Stephen and the Incarnation, Washington.

The Rev. **Charles Jenkins** is director of pastoral care and chaplain at Bishop Gadsden Episcopal Retirement Community, Charleston, S.C.

The Rev. **Kris Kramer** is interim priest at St. Mary’s and St. Stephen’s, Morganton, N.C.

The Rev. **Kirk LaFon** is rector of St. George’s, Griffin, Ga.

The Rev. **Jill LaRoche-Wikel** is rector of St. John’s, Glen Mills, Pa.

The Rev. **Jesse Lassiter** is priest in charge of St. Peter’s, Norfolk, Va.

The Rev. **Amy Lythgoe** is interim rector of St. Joseph’s, Lakewood, Colo.

The Rev. **William Lytle** is rector of Christ Church, Gilbertsville, N.Y.

The Rev. **Mary MacKenzie** is interim rector of St. Paul’s, Seattle.

The Rev. **Joy Magala** is interim pastor at St. Mary’s, Mariposa, Calif.

The Rev. **Robert Malm** is interim priest at St. Peter’s, Buzzards Bay, Mass.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Malphurs** is rector of St. Alban’s, Bovina, Miss.

The Rev. **Abby Murphy** is rector of Advent, Westbury, N.Y.

The Rev. **Michael Humphrey Nchimbi** is missionary of Calvary, Louisiana, and St. John’s, Eolia, Mo.

The Rev. **Kevin Neill** is vicar of St. John the Evangelist, San Francisco.

The Rev. Dr. **Ben Nelson** is chaplain of TMI Episcopal School, San Antonio.

The Rev. **Brent Owens** is rector of Good Shepherd, Jacksonville, Fla.

The Rev. **Sara Oxley** is priest in charge of Ascension, Orlando, Fla.

The Rev. **Steve Pace** is parish deacon at Our Saviour, Montpelier, Va.

The Rev. **Nancy Packard** is interim rector of St. Alban’s, Reading, Pa.

The Rev. **Anna Page** is a battalion chaplain in the U.S. Army.

The Rev. Canon **Thomas D. Quijada-Dis-cavage** is canon for formation and transition ministry in the Diocese of Los Angeles.

The Rev. **Alison Quin** is director of Grace

Year and director of formation at Grace, Millbrook, N.Y.

The Rev. **Sujanna Raj** is interim pastor of St. Stephen's, Ferguson, Mo.

The Rev. **Ben Randall** is associate rector of Galilee, Virginia Beach, Va.

The Rev. **Rik Rasmussen** is priest in charge of St. Paul's, Sacramento, Calif.

The Rev. **Cristina Rathbone** is rector of Grace, Great Barrington, Mass.

The Rev. **Mary Reddick** is parish deacon of San Romero, Houston.

The Rev. **Gretchen Strohmaier** is priest in charge of St. Paul's, Hamilton, Mont.

The Rev. **Sonia Sullivan-Clifton** is chaplain at Episcopal Day School, Augusta, Ga.

The Rev. **Audrey J. Sutton** is curate of St. Philip's, Frisco, Texas.

The Rev. **J. Peter Swarr** is rector of Trinity, Portland, Maine.

The Rev. **Michael Sweeney** is middle school chaplain at St. Christopher's School, Richmond Va.

The Rev. **Stewart Tabb** is rector of Ascension, Norfolk, Va.

The Rev. **Robert Taylor** is priest in charge of St. Francis, Greenville, S.C.

The Rev. **Peter Thaddaeus** is rector of Grace, Cuero, Texas.

The Rev. **James Thibodeaux** is rector of St. Christopher's, Olympia, Wash.

The Rev. Canon **Allisyn Thomas** is interim priest in charge at St. Bartholomew's, Poway, Calif.

The Rev. **Todd Thomas** is rector of St. Timothy's, Washington, D.C.

Canon **Abigail Urquidi** is the Diocese of Los Angeles's canon for congregational support.

Mr. **Ben Urquidi** is the Diocese of Southern Ohio's communications specialist.

The Rev. **Bradley Varnell** is canon missionary for community life at Christ Church Cathedral, Houston.

The Rev. **David Vickers** is priest in charge of St. Paul's, Greenville, Mich.

The Rev. **Christian Villagomez** is supply priest at St. Alban's, St. Petersburg, Fla.

The Rev. **Carmen Viola** is supply priest at Christ Church, Riverton, N.J.

The Rev. **Ansley Walker** is curate of St. Christopher's, Pensacola, Fla.

The Rev. Dr. **Lawrence R. Walters** is interim priest at Nativity, Indianapolis.

The Rev. **David Wantland** is associate rector at St. Peter's, Savannah, Ga.

The Rev. **Meredith Eve Ward** is associate rector at Ascension, New York.

Retirements

The Rev. Dn. **Tom Herlocker** as parish deacon of Grace, Winfield, Kan.

The Rev. **Carver W. Israel** as rector of St. Philip's, Brooklyn, N.Y.

The Rev. **Gary Jones** as rector of St. Stephen's, Richmond, Va.

The Rev. **Albert Kennington** as vicar of Immanuel, Bay Minette, Ala.

The Rev. **David Kent** as vicar of St. Timothy's, Iola, Kan.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Searle** as vicar of Our Saviour, Secaucus, N.J.

Deaths

The Rev. Canon **George Irwin Chassey Jr.**, a veteran of the D-Day Campaign who served as a senior canon in the Dioceses of South Carolina, Los Angeles, and Upper South Carolina, died July 24 at 99.

Chassey was a native of Bridgewater, Massachusetts, and attended Bridgewater State University before enlisting in the U.S. Army Air Corps. He served for four years in the 353rd Fighter Squadron as a crew chief on the P-51 Mustang, and saw combat in England, France, and Germany. He landed on Omaha Beach on the eighth day of the D-Day invasion and helped to establish the first Allied air strip before being transferred to Germany, where he assisted in the liberation of a concentration camp.



After he was mustered out of military service, he studied at the University of Paris, and then earned two degrees from Stetson University before answering a call to the priesthood. He trained for the ministry at St. Luke's School of Theology at the University of the South and was ordained in the Diocese of Upper South Carolina in 1959, beginning his ministry as curate at St. Martin's in the Fields in Columbia.

He went on to serve as rector in Barnwell, South Carolina, and at Holy Trinity Church in Charleston before becoming canon to the ordinary for Bishop Gray Temple of South Carolina in 1969. After Bishop Temple's retirement in 1980, Chassey became canon missionary for stewardship and development for the Diocese of Los Angeles, and returned to Upper South Carolina in 1983 to complete his active ministry as canon for administration.

Chassey served as a deputy to four General Conventions, and was the director of development at the Episcopal Retirement Community in Still Hopes, West Columbia, where he spent the last decades of his life. He was preceded in death by a son, and is survived by Mary, his wife of 78 years, two daughters, six grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

The Rev. Monsignor **Laurence A. Gipson**, who led two of the Episcopal Church's largest parishes before becoming a Roman Catholic priest, died on July 29 at 78.

Gipson grew up in Memphis and graduated from the University of Memphis and Yale Divinity School. He was ordained in 1970, and served parishes in Nashville and Knoxville, Tennessee, before becoming dean of the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1982.



He became rector of St. Martin's in Houston in 1994, and led the parish through a time of major growth. Under his leadership, the current church, parish hall, cloister and playground were constructed, and the congregation grew to over 7,000 members, becoming the Episcopal Church's largest con-

gregation. Yale Divinity School awarded him a doctor of divinity in recognition of his dynamic leadership.

He retired from St. Martin's in 2008, and became a Roman Catholic four years later, speaking often in public interviews of his gratitude to the Episcopal Church and his former colleagues and parishioners. Gipson earned a degree in theology from the University of St. Thomas, and was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest within the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter in 2013, at 71. He assisted at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Walsingham in Houston and St. Gregory the Great in Mobile, Alabama.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Mary Frances, and by two children, and three grandchildren.

Robert Francis McKendree, a popular musician in the Episcopal Church and beyond, died of cancer June 10 at 74.

He was born in Springfield, Massachusetts, in May 1947. McKendree began his professional career playing at coffee houses around Auburn, New York, and Syracuse University. Moving to Glens Falls, New York, he formed McKendree Spring, a rock ensemble that the legendary manager Bill Graham called "one of the best unknown bands in the world."

According to his website, McKendree was walking around his New York City neighborhood one day, looking for inspiration, when he discovered a small Episcopal church. The next Sunday he and his wife, Diana, attended services and found an engaging, faithful, mission-focused, and artistic gathering of seekers. It was a breakthrough for McKendree, opening a new spiritual path that led him to take time for reflection.

He and his wife moved to Cape Cod, where, setting aside his music, he began to work with youth, build houses, and make furniture, eventually feeling a deep longing to make music again. Emerging from this soul-searching period, he began to work under the aegis of the Episcopal Church. He continued to broaden his calling with concerts, as music and worship leader, designer and coordinator of conferences, keynote presenter, mentor, and workshop leader. He released six CDs of his work, as well as producing recordings for other artists at his studio in Hendersonville, North Carolina.

In 2012, with friend and colleague Ann Holtz, he formed AwakeningSoul, a partnership hosting an annual conference embodying "Sustenance, Sanctuary and Inspiration."

"AwakeningSoul is a coming together of all the things I care most about — relationships, trust, soul-searching, inspiring conversation, beautiful music and art, laughter, and a palpable awareness of the presence and nearness of God," he said.

A celebration of his life and ministry is planned for 2 p.m. September 11, at Kanuga Conference Center in North Carolina.



No Distinction Between Them and Us

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Jesus sets off into Gentile territory, first to the region of Tyre, northwest of Galilee, and then further north to Sidon. In both places, he performs miraculous healings, demonstrating that his mission extends to a universal church, to Jews and Gentiles alike. God called Abraham and Abraham's descendants to be a blessing to all nations. So the Savior of the Jews would be the Savior of the world. This universal hope did not, however, overturn a special covenant with the Jewish people. Even St. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jews first and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

In one of the strangest passages in the New Testament, a Syrophenician woman appears to push a resistant Jesus, pressing him to extend his healing power beyond the Jewish people. She has heard about him. She comes to him, bows down at his feet, and pleads for her sick little daughter. Jesus seems to object. "Let the children — the Jews — be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs" (Mark 7:27). With an agile and quick wit, the woman responds, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs" (Mark 7:28). "Then he said to her, 'For saying that, you may go — the demon has left your daughter'" (Mark 7:29). "For saying that," that is, for her boldness, for her importunity, for her pleading, Jesus rewards her.

Jesus is the healer, but in this story, the woman is a secondary hero. She draws out of Jesus the full scope of his saving mission, after which there are no limits to its reach. Having healed the woman's daughter, Jesus, still in Gentile territory, heals a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech. Jesus puts his fingers in the man's ears, touches his tongue, and cries out, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

Indeed, the grace and healing of Christ are opened in these stories to every family, language, people, and nation.

What is Jesus doing today for Jews and Gentiles? He is doing what he has done. He liberates a little girl from oppression and so calls everyone to freedom. He opens our ears and unties our tongues so that we hear about the mighty acts of God and praise him with our whole being (Ps. 146). He gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and strength to the lame (Isa. 35:5-6). He gives food to the hungry, sets prisoners free, lifts up those who are bowed down, cares for the stranger, sustains orphans and widows. If something or someone or some action is good, true, beautiful, healing, and righteous — Jesus is at the center of it.

He comes to the regions where we live. We have heard about him. Do we go to him? Do we fall at his feet? Do we plead from the depth of our need? Do we trust that he will help even us, unworthy though we are? Are we bold to say, "Help me"? In some sense, all prayer is an acknowledgment of need, recognizing that our very being and sustenance come, moment by moment, from God. "Oh God, make speed to save us. O Lord, make haste to help us." Be bold in the power of the Spirit to plead your cause.

For God is an ear of compassion.

Look It Up

Mark 7:26

Think About It

Jesus, who is Wisdom, is said to have grown in wisdom. Did the Syrophenician woman teach Jesus how far he would stretch out his loving arms?

Death Unto Life

The confession of St. Peter is no indication that Peter possesses special knowledge or privilege in and of himself. He indeed is the first to say of Jesus, "You are the Christ," but he is also quick to deny the necessity of Jesus's suffering and, by implication, the need to share in the cross of Christ. So, he speaks correctly but without sufficient understanding. St. Matthew's version of Peter's confession leaves no doubt that the confession itself is a gift from God, not a unique insight of St. Peter. "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven" (Matt. 16:17). If we may speak of a Petrine privilege, it is the privilege of receiving a gift. This same gift is offered to anyone anywhere who comes to faith. "To all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh or the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

Now, here is the gift — not merely a confession of words, but a deed that scandalized the Jews and seemed like foolishness to the Greeks. "Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:31). *Christian faith is faith in the crucified and risen Lord.* Indeed, we know the Lord as truly risen only if we know him first as crucified and our lives crucified in him.

Jesus is the new humanity who endures the death of the Old Adam, so that sin and death no longer have dominion over him or his children. We, the children of God, are caught up in this mystery. We each take up our cross, and we die with Christ. "Do you not know," St. Paul asks, "that all of us who have been baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by

baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4). "We know," St. Paul continues, that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and that we too might no longer be enslaved to sin" (Rom. 6:6-7). The old self, the *ego*, the body of sin, every manner of depravity and destruction, are all put to death on the cross.

We die; we no longer live. Jesus died on the cross, and we died with him. He died for us, but not instead of us. Dying in union with him, we undergo what Karl Barth called "the vast negation beyond which by grace we stand" (*Commentary on Romans*). Or, as St. Paul says, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). Christ is our life. We have no other.

Here is a glimpse of new life in Christ. Christ is the Wisdom of God. He is perfect; he revives the soul, is sure and just, rejoices the heart, and gives light to the eyes. He endures and is true, is righteous, and bestows riches. He enlightens, offers great rewards, and makes us friends of God. He is more beautiful than the sun and excels every constellation of the stars (Ps. 19:7-11; Wis. 7:27-29). He is all in all. He is our life and salvation.

Look It Up
The Collect

Think About It

Only a contrite and broken heart can be led by the Spirit.



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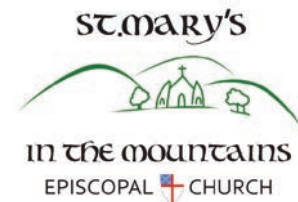
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Rector, Christ Episcopal Church, La Crosse, Wisconsin

Christ Episcopal Church, in scenic downtown La Crosse, Wisconsin

is seeking a full-time rector. Situated on the banks of the

Mississippi River, La Crosse hosts three

colleges and two world-class medical

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the largest parish in the Diocese

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lay leadership. Our OTM Ministry Portfolio and

Parish Profile are at ceclax.org. Questions should be addressed to Sr Warden Carla

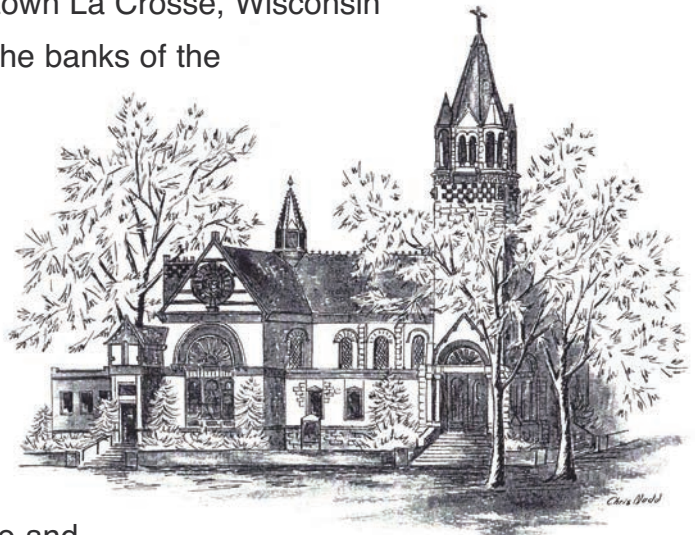
Corbin (carlacorbin25@gmail.com) or Jr. Warden Tim Donahue

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Submit your letter of interest, resume, and OTM Profile by email to search@ceclax.org or

U.S. mail the materials to Christ Episcopal Church, PO Box 2908, La Crosse, WI 54602.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.



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We invite applications until October 1, 2021.

Additional information about our church and community can be found at www.diofdl.org/transition

THE STEVENSON SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY SEEKS ITS NEXT DEAN. The Diocese of Central Pennsylvania seeks applications for the position of Dean of the Dean T. Stevenson School for Ministry. We seek a teacher-scholar and administrator who shares The Stevenson School's mission and values, and commitment to the broad spectrum of formation for ministry in The Episcopal Church. Using deep experience in both online and in-person instruction and formation opportunities, major programs of the Stevenson School include local certification for ordination as deacon or priest (bi-vocational / "worker priests") and all canonically approved lay ministries. The Stevenson School employs a high degree of collaboration with other church institutes including but not limited to local seminaries and inter-denominational resources in its mission. We seek applicants who share SSFM's commitment to the formation of ministers for the Episcopal Church that are pursuing vocations in congregations.

For more information, visit diocesecpa.org/the-stevenson-school-for-ministry-dean-search.

To apply for the Stevenson School for Ministry (SSFM) Dean position please provide:

- A Letter of Interest including an essay, of no more than 1,000 words, to tell us the following:
- A description of your own faith journey and theological perspective
- Your vision of formation for ministry in the next five to ten years and how we will meet the needs of the Church
- A detailed Resume or CV
- Your OTM, or other Transition Ministry profile, if applicable

Please send all documents to **Carolyn Patterson**, Human Resources Administrator, Diocese of Central Pennsylvania (cpatterson@diocesecpa.org).

For more information about the school, visit diocesecpa.org/stevensonschoolforministry. To learn more about Central PA, visit visithersheyharrisburg.org.

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- be filled with the Holy Spirit and full of energy!
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Applications invited until October 1, 2021 to The Rev. Meredyth Albright
Transition Ministries Officer
Diocese of Fond du Lac
262.309.3880
meredythalbright@gmail.com

SPIRITUAL FORMATION: Christ Church Cathedral in Indianapolis is seeking a Canon for Spiritual Formation to work with the Dean and other leaders to revitalize the Cathedral's formation ministries in order to help those at the Cathedral become a people who can articulate and embody their distinctive perspective of the Christian faith that is Anglicanism and the Episcopal Church. The Canon is an executive leader in a diverse and multi-staff environment and duties include:

- Collaborates to develop and implement a comprehensive Christian formation program for adults in both English and Spanish.
- Identifies, recruits, trains, supports and motivates leaders and volunteers.
- Coordinates lectures, guest speakers, seasonal retreats, and fellowship opportunities.
- Manages and supervises the Director of Youth and Children's Ministries.
- Prepares and manages the approved Spiritual Formation ministry program budgets

Ideal candidates have a familiarity with progressive Christian tradition and theology, conversational proficiency in Spanish, a personal and professional character that demonstrates an authentic commitment to Christ and Christian standards, and a passionate desire to help people discover the love of God and to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. For the full job description and education and experience requirements, visit: ccindy.org/canon-for-spiritual-formation.

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