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# THE LIVING CHURCH



Northern Nativity

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CHRISTMAS

## From the Editors

# TLC's Changes in the New Year

Our faithful readers will soon notice that our issues are growing. Starting with the January 8, Parish Ministry Issue, we will switch from a standard 32-page size to 48 pages. This will allow us to tell some longer stories, and to use more photography. We have been thinking for some time that the layout needs a refresh, and hope to phase in some new design elements in the coming months. As always, your feedback is much appreciated.

We will also switch from a 20-issue publication schedule to a monthly schedule. Because of steeply rising costs for paper and postage, we want to keep the magazine affordable for our readers.

We also recognize that most news readers now turn first to our website, livingchurch.org. We are committed to retaining a print news section, but we'll make some judicious changes to the relative proportion of news and feature content in the new monthly format. We remain committed to timely, rigorous, and independent journalism, and the best of it will always be found at our website, which remains free to all.

# THE LIVING CHURCH

December 25, 2022

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# Two Elections, Separated by a Chasm

By Douglas LeBlanc

Two dioceses — Florida and Ohio — elected bishop coadjutors November 19. Both dioceses presented three-member slates. Florida elected in one ballot, though it took four hours because of repeated procedural protests. Ohio elected in two ballots.

But in Florida, the Rev. Charlie Holt is likely to face a formal challenge rooted both in canonical procedures and in disagreements about same-sex marriage.

Ohio elected the Rev. Anne B. Jolly of the neighboring Diocese of Chicago.



Jolly

As president of the Standing Committee, Jolly walked that diocese through a long interim period between Bishop Paula Clark's election and her consecration.

In the Diocese of Ohio, no published questions asked candidates to address same-sex marriage. One candidate, the Rev. Diana L. Wilcox, mentioned her wife's death from cancer in 2006, but did not make any larger points about marriage.

The profile Ohio issued for the election of its 12th bishop alluded to same-sex marriage only twice: "God loves you. No exceptions" is one of two taglines identifying the diocese's core values, and it affirms "Outreach and inclusion ministries to BIPOC, LGBTQIA, and other marginalized communities."

Holt has a conservative record on same-sex marriage, and that record haunts the discussions of his now being elected twice by a majority of clergy and lay delegates. Holt has promised to abide by General Convention's Resolution B012, which requires that bishops make provisions for same-sex weddings. He has also pledged not to discriminate in deployment of clergy or in ordination discernment processes based on sexual orientation.

In the Jacksonville-based Diocese of Florida, proponents of same-sex mar-

riage express alienation from their bishop (the Rt. Rev. Samuel Johnson Howard) and from Holt. They also cite an ever-growing list of procedural objections, challenging the legality of the diocese's second election (which re-elected Holt in one ballot).



Holt

Holt's opponents in Florida chose a two-pronged strategy after he was first elected on May 14: turning to a church court for procedural questions, but also telegraphing to bishops and standing committees that they objected to Holt on theological and cultural grounds. They prevailed in the church court, and Holt withdrew his acceptance of the election results.

On October 26, objectors published a 13-page letter to Howard and to members of the Standing Committee that surveys the many objections they have raised to the second election.

They wrote, in part:

"We hope you will reach the conclusion we have reached: The Diocese of

Florida is not able to have an election at this time. First, because the diocese is not following its own rules for this upcoming election. Next, because the landscape of trust, transparency and fundamental fairness has been so adversely scarred that no election — *regardless of who is elected* — will have integrity. And finally because a veritable 'official endorsement' of one candidate to the exclusion of all others has been unfolding for the past several months.

"We are not requesting nor expecting 'perfection' in any election. We don't feel that's reasonably possible. Many dioceses have had hiccups and irregularities in following canons and elections. The difference is that in most cases, trust, transparency, and the perception of fairness creates the bridge between failure and success. That bridge is, sadly, missing in Florida."

The diocese addressed various points raised by the objectors in a series of videos and through an email announcement sent November 21.

"We hope the guidance from Mr.

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Tim Wynn, our independent parliamentarian, and [the] Very Rev. Timothy Kimbrough, Professor of Canon Law at Duke University, among others, provided you with the clarity and confidence it gave us in our procedural processes,” the diocesan message said. “Both have verified the election’s procedural validity, per our Canons and Robert’s Rules of Order.”

“I was in regular touch with Todd Ousley and the Presiding Bishop’s Office,” said the Rev. Joe Gibbes, president of the Standing Committee, in an interview with TLC. “I would say I was in touch with [Ousley] more often” for the second election.

“He did not give advice that would be considered legal advice related to canonical interpretation. He simply gave insight from his experience, and the canons were sometimes the context for our conversations. Bishop

Ousley was always a great help, but he was neutral and unbiased toward any particular end for us.”

The Rev. Matt Marino of Trinity Church in St. Augustine served on the search committee and helped promote the second election through Let Florida Decide, a response to those seeking postponement of the second election.

“It’s 2022, and apparently it’s not just the right wing that has trouble accepting that they’ve lost an election,” Marino told TLC. “This is an attempt by 30 percent of the diocese to overthrow the will of the 70 percent.”

Marino readily mentions that he served with Holt for about a year at Church of St. John the Divine in Houston. On the staff of that large congregation, Holt “was like Mr. Rogers with a stole,” Marino said.

Marino believes Holt will be confirmed by a majority of bishops and standing committees.

“We had three great candidates, and we were going to elect one of them, and we have done that twice,” he said.

## Attendance Plunges 35%, While Offerings Rise 3%

By Kirk Petersen

It will come as no surprise to hear that church attendance, after years of steady decline, cratered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In its annual release of parochial report data, the Episcopal Church announced November 22 that 2021 average Sunday attendance (ASA) declined 35 percent from the already-depressed levels of 2020, reflecting widespread restrictions on church attendance that continued well into 2021.

In other, more encouraging metrics, reported membership had a much smaller decline of 3.3 percent — in line with recent years — while plate and pledge income increased by 3.3 percent.

There is no way to spin the attendance numbers as positive, but church leaders sought to put them in perspective.

In an exclusive online interview with

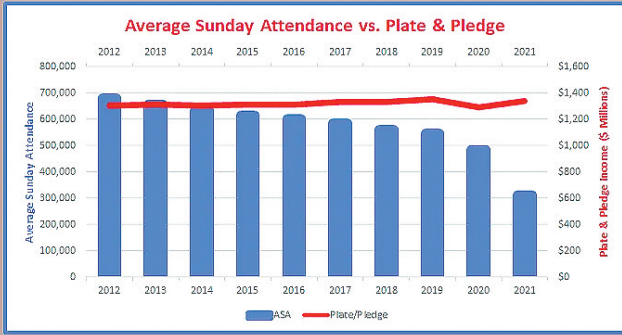
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TLC, Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry acknowledged that even before the pandemic, church attendance in general has been declining for decades.

“Obviously, there is decline. But I’ve got to tell you that as I travel around this church, I’m seeing indices of spiritual vitality. And not just because I’m going somewhere — the presiding bishop’s coming, everybody gets the troops out. No, no, no, I’m telling you, I’m seeing it on the ground. It’s there. It’s bubbling up, if you will, in all sorts of places.”

“As Scripture shows us, God is always doing a new thing,” said the Rev. Canon Michael Barlowe by email. As executive officer of the General Convention, Barlowe has oversight of the church’s extensive statistics-gathering efforts. “The 2021 parochial report data is a modest insight into our cooperation with God’s mission during the time of great social change occasioned by the pandemic. We’ll be able to assess that more fully next year, after we review 2022.”

The numbers are encrusted with metaphorical asterisks and caveats.

- The 35 percent figure overstates the decline in total worship *participation*, because online worship is not included.
- Conversely, one could argue that 35 percent *understates* the pandemic-related decline, as it comes on top of a reported 11.7 percent decline the prior year. ASA for 2021 was reported at 312,691 — down 43 percent over two years since 2019, the last full year before the pandemic, for which ASA was reported at 547,107. This followed years of annual percentage declines in the low single digits.
- While plate and pledge was up 3.3

percent in nominal dollars, the average inflation rate for 2021 was 4.7 percent, as reported in the church’s Fast Facts document — so the purchasing power of the donations declined slightly. Another way to look at it: Even though people were dealing with inflation and economic uncertainty in their own lives, they gave more dollars to the church.

The pandemic decline in attendance is a sharp acceleration of a long-standing trend, while plate and pledge income has held remarkably steady.

Reported plate and pledge income dropped modestly in 2020 to \$1.29 billion, from \$1.35 billion in 2019, but recovered in 2021 to \$1.34 billion, just shy of the 2019 level. Before 2019, plate and pledge had fluctuated for years in a very narrow range, from \$1.30 billion in 2012 to \$1.33 billion in 2018. No

figures are adjusted for inflation.

In announcing the parochial report data, the Church Center noted that attendance has declined in many other denominations as well. The news release cited initial results from a five-year research project titled “Exploring the Pandemic Impact on Congregations” (EPIC), and quoted the project’s principal investigator, Scott Thumma, as saying the results of a summer 2021 survey “clearly show that the pandemic has had a profound impact across the religious spectrum.”

Another clear finding was truncated from Thumma’s quotation. On the EPIC project website, Thumma adds: “... and that some churches are faring better than others.”

Specifically, the EPIC survey states that while a majority of churches reported declining attendance, 28 percent of the 2,074 churches surveyed reported growth in “median attendance” between 2019 and the summer of 2021. The churches represent 38

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Christian denominational groups.

Comparisons between the EPIC and Episcopal data need to be approached with extreme caution, because of fundamental differences in methodology. For example, EPIC reports a median decline of 12 percent between 2019 and 2021 for churches in its sample. At first glance, that makes the Episcopal two-year decline of 43 percent look horrific.

But these are not apples-to-apples numbers. The EPIC data measures both physical and online attendance, while the Episcopal data is based solely on physical attendance. The results obviously would be much closer if the Episcopal numbers included online attendance. It's impossible to know exactly how much closer, but some clues can be extrapolated from the data.

The Episcopal Church continues to

report ASA based solely on physical attendance because it's an objective measure that has been tracked since early in the 19th century. Online attendance is in the Wild West of the statistical world. Facebook, YouTube, and Zoom all have ways of measuring viewers, but they all do it differently.

Barlowe told TLC by email that "we've tried to gauge average weekly online attendance (reported in the AWO column) for the first time — a figure that must be understood as containing a variety of interpretations, since there is as yet no standard measurement of online attendance or viewing."

The "AWO column" is not mentioned in the news release, but can be found in one of the supporting documents, "Average Attendance by Province and Diocese 2019-2021." The various congregations and dioceses reported online attendance however they saw fit. The committee that devised the parochial report "specifically declined to define a standard

method for measuring online worship, because of vast differences among churches in terms of platforms, definitions, and units of measure," TLC reported in January.

With that caveat, total churchwide "average weekly online" attendance was reported at 193,110. If one adds that number to the ASA of 312,691 — in an attempt to parallel the EPIC data — the two-year decline from 2019 changes from 43 percent to 7.5 percent.

In the interview, Curry expanded exuberantly about the spiritual vitality he sees in churches, spinning story after story from his extensive travels. For example, he described a small Northern church that discovered slaveholders among its parishioners from before the Civil War. The church reached out to the community through the Episcopal "Sacred Ground" dialogue series on racial healing.

"They got into relationship with people who were descendants of those former slaves," he said. "And when I was there that Sunday, everybody was in church. *Everybody* was in church. And more than that, this little bitty congregation had at least 10 kids who were acolytes. Now that's spiritual, something's going on there. And it's not just a public show."

## John Rodgers Jr. Dies at 92

By Mark Michael

The Rt. Rev. John H. Rodgers Jr., an evangelical theologian and seminary dean whose controversial 2000 consecration in Singapore sparked the Anglican realignment, died November 23 at 92.

"He was a tireless servant of our seminary and our country as a United States Marine veteran," said a brief tribute that Trinity School for Ministry issued shortly after his death. Rodgers was among Trinity's founders in 1976, and remained connected to it for the rest of his life.

A native of the Midwest, Rodgers graduated from the Naval Academy and served in the Marines before answering

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Rodgers

a call to the priesthood. After studies at Virginia Theological Seminary and a curacy in Washington, D.C., Rodgers earned a doctorate in systematic theology at the University of Basel in Switzerland, studying under Karl Barth, the 20th century's most influential Protestant theologian.

He returned to Virginia to teach systematic theology for 13 years, before resigning because he felt the seminary was drifting leftward. He helped establish Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry — as it was then known — in Ambridge, Pennsylvania, in 1976. He taught systematics to the seminary's first class of 17 students, and two years later became its dean and president, a role he held for 12 years.

Rodgers led Trinity through a season of dramatic growth, molding it into a bastion of conservative evangelical thought, as exemplified by his most important work, *The Faith of*

*Anglicans*, a massive commentary on the Thirty-Nine Articles. Rodgers was also a firm supporter of the charismatic movement, and an outspoken advocate for orthodoxy in the Episcopal Church, especially in matters of human sexuality. He stepped down as dean and president in 1989, but remained on the faculty for over a decade. Many of his former students have become bishops in the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA).

In January 2000, Rodgers and the Rev. Chuck Murphy were consecrated bishops in Singapore by two Anglican primates, Archbishop Emmanuel Kolini of Rwanda and Archbishop Moses Tay of Southeast Asia. Two retired Episcopal bishops, FitzSimons Allison of South Carolina and Alex Dickson of West Tennessee, also participated in the service.

Rodgers and Murphy were commissioned by the Church of Rwanda to establish an Anglican province in the United States for disaffected Episcopalians, while planting new congrega-

tions in areas without a strong Episcopal presence. The new church body led by Rodgers and Murphy was formally established as the Anglican Mission in America (AMiA) seven months later.

Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold said he was "appalled" by the consecration, adding, "We are not helped by voices of panic and catastrophic projection which seek to undermine the careful and patient way we have sought to proceed together in discerning the motions of the Spirit." Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey criticized the consecration as well, calling it "irresponsible and irregular," an action that would "only harm the unity of the Communion."

Rodgers's own bishop, Robert Duncan of Pittsburgh (later the first Archbishop of the ACNA), told the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, "It was bound to happen somewhere, somehow, since the left seems unwilling to make provision for those whose views have actually not changed."

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This intervention in Episcopal Church disagreements by the Anglican Church of Rwanda over issues of human sexuality was among the first in a series by Global South provinces, a movement widely known as the Anglican Realignment. The Continuing Anglican Movement, formed of churches that independently broke away from the Episcopal Church, is older, dating from 1970s controversies over prayer book revision and women’s ordination. GAFCON is the network most prominently associated with the Anglican Realignment today.

Rodgers served the Anglican Mission in America for several more years, as it planted over 200 churches and incorporated Canadian jurisdictions into its common life. He returned to serve as interim dean and president of Trinity for a year in 2007. In 2009, the Anglican Mission in America was a

founding member of the Anglican Church of North America, and Rodgers was a member of the ACNA’s College of Bishops at the time of his death.

Rodgers was preceded in death by his wife of more than 60 years, Blanche, and is survived by their four children and several grandchildren.

## Brazilians Elect Female Primate

By Mark Michael

The Rt. Rev. Marinez Rosa dos Santos Bassotto was elected presiding bishop and primate of the Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil (*Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil*, or IEAB) on November 13, becoming the first woman to lead an Anglican province in Latin America. Bassotto, who will continue to serve as bishop of the Diocese of the Amazon, succeeds the Most

Rev. Naudal Gomes, presiding bishop of the IEAB since 2018.

Bassotto’s Northern Brazilian diocese includes regions that are home to much of Brazil’s Indigenous population, and have been heavily deforested in recent years. She has made advocacy for creation care a major feature of her ministry.

In March, the Archbishop of Canterbury awarded her the St. Augustine’s Cross, which recognizes distinguished ministry to the Anglican Communion for “outstanding service in supporting the Communion’s role in the care of creation and on issues of climate justice, [and] giving voice to the indigenous peoples.” She addressed the bishops of the Anglican Communion on the care of creation during last summer’s Lambeth Conference.

This spring, Bassotto formed part of the Anglican Communion’s official delegation to the United Nations’ Commission on the Status of Women. In 2018, she became the first female bishop elected in Brazil.



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# Australians Face Christmas After the Floods

By Robyn Douglass

**A** raucous festive season is sorely needed in Australia — but we'd settle for a bit of joy and a good dollop of peace on earth. After we've experienced three years of bushfires, COVID lockdowns, and illness, two La Niña events in the Pacific have turned the weather in the east of the country wet and wild.

In central New South Wales, towns and farms are under water, and the crisis is immediate.

But as the astonishing flows drain into the Murray-Darling Basin, the nation's food bowl, rivers' relentless rise is monitored as people in three states prepare for record-breaking surges. Australia's Bureau of Meteorology said to expect two peaks — one in early December and one closer to Christmas.

Anglican churches and agencies are in the center of all this, working and praying. The affected dioceses mostly have small population centers spread across vast areas.

Anglicare, the church's welfare arm in southern New South Wales, has staff meeting the demand for emergency assistance.

In the Diocese of Bathurst, Sue West is Anglicare's manager of disaster recovery. She has rallied her team three times in as many weeks. They work cooperatively with other agencies to receive and register people evacuated from their homes.

"Some people had to escape with nothing but the clothes they stood up in, so we bring essentials like clothing and toiletries," she told TLC.

"Sometimes the shock hits in the weeks and months after. Many people don't know, until a week or so later, even whether they have a home to go to."

After the immediate crisis is over, the team returns for regular recovery visits every couple of days to find out what people need. Support is available from government agencies, but many people need help sorting through what



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they are eligible for — and applying for assistance.

"Especially primary producers," West said. "Their crops are destroyed again, as they were last year. Clients are exhausted. Fodder, paddocks, are under water and the grass is contaminated, and if they had any hay, it has probably washed downstream.

"We had a dairy which was milking regularly, but the tankers could not get in to collect the milk, so it had to be tipped down the drain.

"It will have a huge impact over the long term — and we have to continue to be there to walk with them through the next 12, 18 months, two years. ... We have to be there for the long haul."

West said many people don't know where they are going to be for Christmas. There is a housing shortage throughout the country, and the pressure on accommodation is already acute.

Further south, Bishop Donald Kirk of the Diocese of Riverina told TLC that "just about every parish in my diocese has been affected

by flooding in one way or another."

Bishop Kirk said none of the churches had been inundated with water yet, "though some are holding their breath."

Damaged roads have made travel difficult and many communities have been completely cut off. Riverina clergy spoke of their concern for farmers whose livelihoods are being washed away, and for exhausted emergency workers.

The Rev. Paul Kumasaka of Lake Cargelligo Anglican Church said volunteers in his parish work with Anglicare in disaster recovery. They have had two groups of evacuees flown in, and Kumasaka said he invited community groups, including the parish's Indigenous youth training group, to provide catering. They have been grateful for donated goods, which volunteers sort, pack, and take to people boarding in caravans, hotels, and friends' homes.

Further south on the Murrumbidgee River, at the Parish of Balranald and Cobb Highway, the Rev. Neale Sommersby is keeping in touch with isolated parishioners via phone and a weekly newsletter. But the church is a hive of activity too, and he has invited groups to provide meals for volunteers who are filling sandbags, and for those who attend State Emergency Services training.

In Wentworth, at the junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers, 185 kilome-

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ters (114 miles) downstream, Deacon Mary-Ann Crisp said “people are anxiously waiting to see if their properties or access roads are going to be flooded. It is a difficult time for them.” Meanwhile, they are sandbagging or fixing levees with heavy machinery. In a twist of history, the little church of St. John was built in 1871, the year after a major flood, so “hopefully it is above the present flood level,” she said.

In Renmark, 142 kilometers (88

miles) downstream in the South Australian Diocese of The Murray, the Rev. David Patterson of the Anglican Mission District in Riverland said it has been a slowly unfolding drama as the river rises. This has given his huge parish time to prepare — and gives a new poignancy to the waiting game that is Advent.

Against nature’s big drama, Christmas this year will be a prayerful pause.

“Jesus was also born into an imperfect chaotic world, but there was still

room in the manger for people to come and worship him. Christmas this year will be chaotic for some [people] and a little unknown, but we walk by faith, not by sight,” Sommersby said.

Deacon Crisp prays that “people will feel able to put their trust in God no matter what happens; that families will still be able to come together to celebrate Christmas; and that the community spirit which is evident with neighbors helping each other out continues and restores our faith in humanity.” □

## Guild of Scholars Reunites in New Mexico

By Richard J. Mammana Jr.

The Guild of Scholars of the Episcopal Church has met for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The guild gathered at Santa Maria de la Vid Abbey and nearby St. John’s Cathedral, Albuquerque, October 27-30.

Two dozen members of the 84-year-old organization discussed papers,

mission, mutual encouragement, and fellowship. The guild was reorganized after the Second World War by the medievalist and philologist Urban T. Holmes Jr. (1900-72) with poet W.H. Auden (1907-73) and Vanderbilt-based literary critic Cleanth Brooks (1906-94). The guild includes scholarship in fields unrelated to church history or theology if the scholars are lay Episcopalians. Membership is open through application or nomination.

President Edward Hansen (geological and environment science, Hope College, Mich.) led the meeting and was succeeded by Mark Brown. Jameela Lares (English, University of South Mississippi) maintains social media for the group, and composer Robert Benson of Miami University edits its journal, *Vox Scholarium*. The guild plans to upgrade its website ([guildofscholars.org](http://guildofscholars.org)) in the coming year.

The guild marked the deaths of several members, including its chaplain in perpetuity for several decades, the Rev. Canon J. Robert Wright of General Theological Seminary. Recent retirements include Robert Bruce Mullin, historiographer of the Episcopal Church, and Mark Duffy, canon-

ical archivist of the church.

The guild welcomed three new members:

- Kay Cook (psychology, Gordon College), a parishioner at Christ Church, Hamilton, Massachusetts;
- Michael Krasulski (library and learning resources, Community College of Philadelphia), archivist and historiographer of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, and parishioner at the Church of St. Luke and the Epiphany;
- Jeffrey Toliver (University of New Mexico), Diocese of the Rio Grande. Six guild members have published books since 2018:
- Nicholas Birns, *Anthony Trollope: A Companion* (McFarland, 2021)
- Mary Chilton Callaway, *Jeremiah Through the Centuries* (Wiley Blackwell Bible Commentaries, 2020)
- Philip Jenkins, *A Global History of the Cold War, 1945-1991* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021)
- Norman W. Jones, *Provincializing the Bible: Faulkner and Postsecular American Literature* (Routledge 2018)
- Debora Shuger, *Paratexts of the English Bible, 1525-1611* (Oxford, 2022)
- Peter Williams, *Religion, Art, and Money: Episcopalians and American Culture from the Civil War to the Great Depression* (UNC Press, 2019)



worshiped at the cathedral and the monastery, elected new members, and planned a 2023 meeting at the House of the Redeemer in New York City. Remote participation was available this year.

The Guild of Scholars was founded in 1938 at Hobart College in Geneva, New York, to bring together lay Episcopal academics annually for discus-

# ‘Co-Citizens with the Saints’

By Betsy Rogers

St. George’s Episcopal Church and St. Mark Lutheran Church of Belleville, Illinois, experienced deep unity nearly 20 years before their denominations approved Called to Common Mission’s language of full communion.

Members of the two churches gathered November 5 to celebrate their 40th year of sharing buildings — and a great deal more — in downtown Belleville.

The Rt. Rev. Brian Burgess, Bishop of Springfield, and the Rev. Dr. S. John

enhanced your ministries individually and jointly. If that were not true, that this relationship grew out of missional motive and not out of survival need, I cannot imagine the relationship sustaining at all, much less sustaining fruitfully as it has, all these years.”

After the service, congregants shared a luncheon at Bella Milano restaurant in O’Fallon.

After lunch, three clergy spoke: the Rev. Ron Neustadt, who served 34 years at St. Mark until his 2010 retirement; the Rev. Brian Robison, his successor; and the Very Rev. Mark Ohlemeier, priest in charge of St. George’s.

The story began in 1982, when St. Mark, a young congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church meeting in the Belleville Philharmonic Hall, needed a place for its offices and Christian education. (The American Lutheran Church,

the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and the Lutheran Church in America united in 1988 to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.)

The Rev. Hewitt Johnston, St. George’s rector at the time, welcomed them to the Episcopal campus. Within a year the Lutherans had moved their Sunday services to St. George’s as well, with Episcopalians worshipping at 8 and 10:30 am and the Lutherans at 9 a.m. Christian education is at 9:15 a.m. for Episcopalians and 10:30 for Lutherans.

Both parishes quickly learned the possibilities of sharing the space. They opened a food pantry, run by volunteers from both congregations and still in operation today, that serves hundreds of needy families in Belleville. A Meals on Wheels team includes Lutheran and Episcopal volunteers.

At various times the churches have combined for Lenten studies and other educational opportunities. Their altar guilds work closely together, and members of both congregations turn out for



The Rt. Rev. Brian Burgess (left), Bishop of Springfield; the Very Rev. Mark Ohlemeier, priest in charge of St. George’s Church; the Rev. Brian Robison, pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church; and the Rev. Dr. S. John Roth, Bishop of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

workdays to rake leaves, wash windows, and tend to other maintenance chores.

St. Mark and St. George’s worship together, under terms of the Called to Common Mission agreement, on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Ascension Thursday, and Christmas Day. The ELCA adopted Called to Common Mission in 1999, and the Episcopal Church adopted it a year later.

The clergy in these one-pastor congregations appreciate having a colleague at hand, and often stand in for each other in hospital visits. During various periods of clergy vacancy at St. George’s, the Lutheran pastors have been generous in supplying at St. George’s. Office staff help each other, including on ever-vexing tech issues. The directors of music collaborate and substitute for each other as needed.

Four years ago, the two parishes established a joint task force to oversee property management and improvements. This team has made major improvements to the physical plant, including new storage areas and a new bathroom, and has transformed the buildings and grounds, correcting years of deferred maintenance and some neglect.

Most recently, the two parishes have decided to publish a shared pictorial directory. Each congregation will have its own section, but the two will be joined in a spiral binding — an apt symbol of the growing unity and mission they have experienced. □



The combined choirs at the 40th anniversary celebration

Roth, Bishop of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Church in America, helped celebrate this Ruby Jubilee.

Burgess was celebrant at a 10:30 a.m. Eucharist, and Roth preached. The two churches’ choirs joined in leading music. St. Mark’s handbell choir provided the prelude. Youth and adult members of both parishes read lessons, led prayers, and served as acolytes.

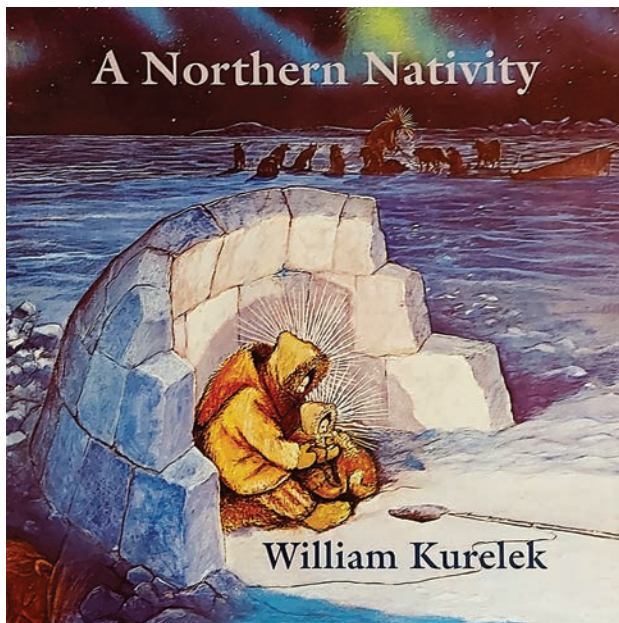
“We are not here this morning to congratulate ourselves for the level of Christian unity that St. Mark and St. George’s have achieved over 40 years,” Roth preached. “Rather, we are here this morning in gratitude to God for the blessing it has been — in this particular context, in this particular arrangement — to be co-citizens with the saints and household of God.”

Roth said the relationship grew out of a commitment to mission in two healthy parishes. “Both St. George’s and St. Mark were vibrant congregations going into 1982-83,” he said. “You came together because the relationship

# A Northern Nativity

By Cole Hartin

William Kurelek (1927-77) was a Canadian artist and author who spent much of the



second half of his anguished life grappling with Catholicism. His is not likely a name that would be familiar to many Americans, which is too bad. Canadians are more likely to recognize his work, especially his children's books, *A Prairie Boy's Summer* and its companion, *A Prairie Boy's Winter*, though his religious art is far more compelling.

Kurelek, born to a family of Ukrainian immigrants and raised in the vast prairies of Alberta and Manitoba, painted in a folksy style that reflects the loneliness of the barren landscape, but also the joys of life on a Western Canadian farm. Kurelek eventually fled his rural life, studied at the Ontario College of Art in Toronto, and from there moved to England in his 20s. While he was raised in the Orthodox faith of his family, he drifted into atheism. It was during his treatment for depression and schizophrenia in England that one of his therapists, a devout Catholic, reintroduced him to faith, after which he was conditionally rebaptized and received into the

Roman Catholic Church.

After Kurelek's conversion, his art took on more religious themes that reflected his revitalized spirituality and served as an apologia for the Catholic Church. These religious explorations started to meld with Kurelek's depictions of modern Canadian life and combined often unsettling Christian imagery with domestic scenes. For example, *The Autumn of Life* depicts the smiling faces of a farming family as they prepare for a fall portrait. At first glance, the image is cheery and nostalgic, but on closer inspection one sees a nuclear blast in the background, and more unnerving even than this, a naked, crucified Christ only slightly visible from a nearby tree, surrounded by tormenting dogs.

The combination of traditional Christian symbolism with homey family scenes is what Kurelek does best, in my view. Often these works are startling and at times grotesque, pointing to uncomfortable realities that require fortitude of the viewer. Many of Kurelek's more startling works would be best reserved for adult or perhaps mature teenage viewers. One notable exception to this, however, is his children's Christmas book, *A Northern Nativity*, though it is increasingly difficult to hunt down. (I recommend trying AbeBooks.)

In this beautifully illustrated volume, Kurelek walks the reader through a sequence of dreams. He writes from the perspective of himself as a 12-year-old boy and suggests that these dreams occurred leading up to the Christmas season. Kurelek evokes a trance-like atmosphere with his prose and

images that brings to mind the same tranquil ambiance as *The Polar Express*.

While many children's Christmas stories play up vague sentimentality, or cheap moralism, *A Northern Nativity* sets itself apart with a sustained reflection on the Incarnation, the Holy Family, and how we might easily dismiss them.

The book is set up so that each dream is portrayed with an image, and an adjacent page of text that describes the scene, including the 12-year-old William's reaction to it. Each dream is a reimagining of the nativity of Christ in many of the varying landscapes of Canada, from the Rocky Mountains in the West, to barren fields, greasy car garages, and fishing shacks on the East Coast. The only constant is harsh conditions, and reverent depictions of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus making their way as a family.

I was reading this to my oldest son, Ambrose, who is 6, and I found myself often overwhelmed with emotion. Each image and its accompanying reflection are worthy of meditation, but I found a few particularly striking.



In the Mountains

One image that stood out was the Holy Family trekking across a snowy pass into the mountains somewhere in the West. They overlook a vista of skiers and luxurious chalet, while Joseph leads Mary, who is atop a small horse, hunched over to keep her son warm. William wonders if the skiers will notice them, and if they will be welcome in such a decadent vacation environment.

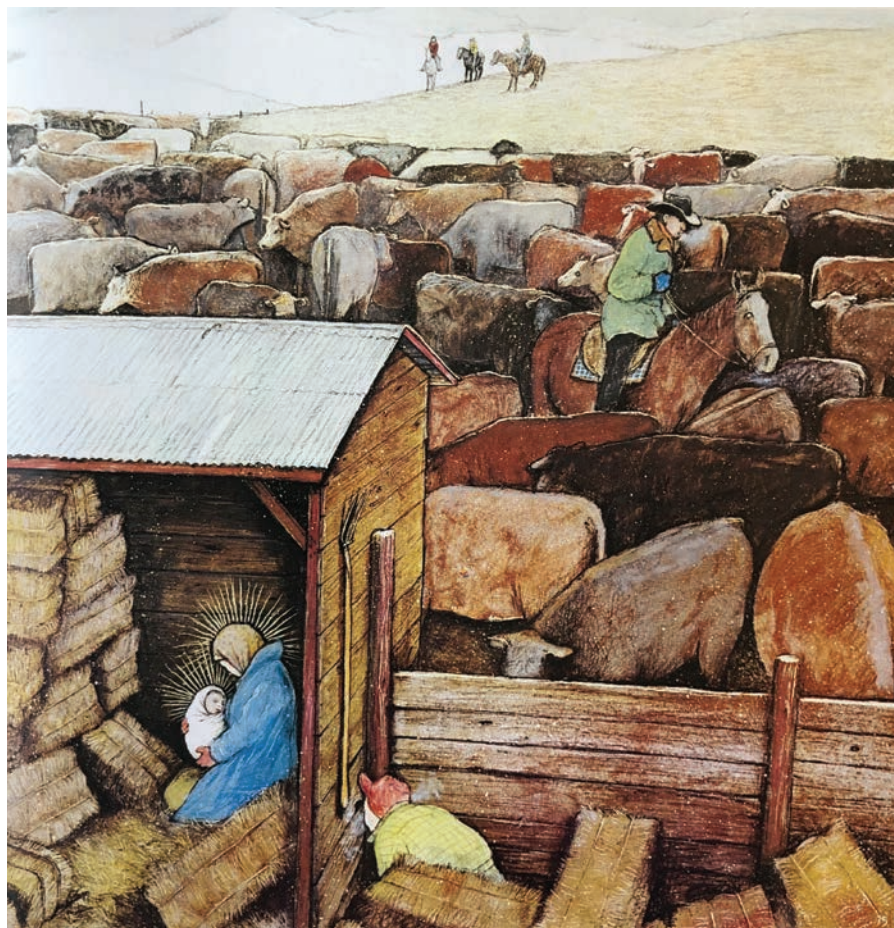
Another image shows a room full of adults, mostly men, who are crowded around tables in a sparse hall that has been decked out for the Christmas season. Volunteers, Kurelek tells us, have given their time on Christmas Day to cook a turkey dinner with all of the fixings for the poor in the neighborhood. We can see the Holy Family, who are Black in this dream, sitting in the middle of the crowd, with their heads bowed, eating the meal along with everyone else who is down and out.

The image of the Arctic featured on the cover of the book is also illuminating. Mary sits in a half-igloo with Christ, who is holding a husky puppy, while Joseph is in the background of the frigid night, feeding his sled dogs, preparing for the journey ahead. In this painting, the Holy Family are Inuit.

The combined force of the book is a reminder of the humanity of Christ, that he took on flesh among a particular people, and entered the world not as a universal man, but as a poor, first-century Jew. Kurelek imagines what Christ's Incarnation might look like in Canada at the time he was writing, in the nitty-gritty, often heartbreaking realities of life. In all of the images, the Holy Family is poor, often relying on the kindness of strangers. These images stir the heart and evoke love for Christ, somehow bringing greater attention to what he suffered by recasting his life among different people in a different time.

With the glut of children's Christmas literature, it is difficult to find treasures like *A Northern Nativity*. It would make meaningful reading for any family this season.

*The Rev. Dr. Cole Hartin is rector of St. Luke's Church in St. John, New Brunswick, where he lives with his wife and four sons.*



The Cowboys' Christmas



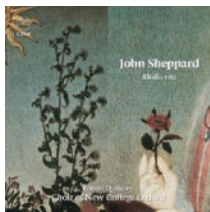
Northern Nativity



For the children in your life, it's never too early to encourage an enthusiasm for the languages of theological scholarship! You can find alphabet blocks and refrigerator magnets for Greek and Hebrew, and for other classical Christian languages like Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, and Ethiopic. Children will

delight in learning an alphabet that their parents and teachers probably can't read, and they will definitely thank you later if they go to graduate school for theology or the humanities.

*Dr. Liza Anderson, teaching professor of church history and ascetical theology at General Theological Seminary*



The composer John Sheppard served as leader of the choir at Magdalene College, Oxford, and then in the choir of the Chapel Royal during the English Reformation. He composed liturgical music for both English and Latin texts during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary Tudor. *Media vita* (Linn Records, 2019) by the choir of New College, Oxford, under the direction of Robert Quinney, offers a selection of Latin motets drawn from Old Testament texts, as well as hymns from the Latin liturgy.

*The Rt. Rev. John Bauerschmidt, Bishop of Tennessee and president of the Living Church Foundation*



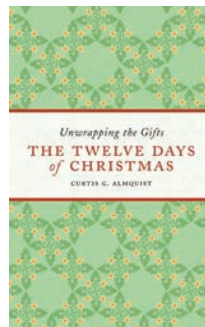
The *Rand McNally 2023 Large Scale Road Atlas* is on my Christmas list, in part, because of smartphones. It's no longer easy to pick one up at a gas station or truck stop. MapQuest and Google Maps have little in common with the real deal: sturdy paper over which you can trace roads, rivers, and mountain ranges — all the places we can go in this magnificent continent.

*The Rev. Dr. Annette Brownlee, chaplain and professor of pastoral theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto*



Everyone is Anglican at Christmas, and our sacred liturgy is the most evangelical tool we have. With those compass points in mind, I capture pictures of children living out their ministries boldly and without apology. My intent is to capture them sanctifying life, time, and space with their consecrated lives. I send the framed photos to parents, grandparents, aunts, or uncles. I ask that they enjoy the image by displaying it on their desk, allowing it to stimulate conversations with colleagues.

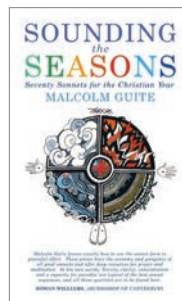
*The Rt. Rev. Brian Burgess, Bishop of Springfield*



*Unwrapping the 12 Days of Christmas* by Curtis Almquist, SSJE, is a Christmas favorite of mine and helps me slow down during the two weeks after Christmas. My wife and I have made it a perennial practice to add these short, daily readings to our daily prayers. The chapter on Mary is particularly helpful, and I have often shared it with friends who want to

better understand an Episcopal/Anglican articulation of the mother of our Lord.

*The Rt. Rev. Matthew Cowden, Bishop of West Virginia*



Malcolm Guite's *Sounding the Seasons: Seventy Sonnets for the Christian Year* is an excellent gift, either as a work of literature or as a manual of devotions. The sonnet form enables the poet to say just enough to reach the heart without overwhelming it. A priest of the Church of England and a singer-songwriter, Guite intends his poetry to "be profound without ceasing to be

beautiful." I think he succeeds magnificently.

*The Rev. Lawrence Crumb, a longtime TLC contributor and a retired priest of the Diocese of Oregon*



*Decline and Fall* (1928) is a social satire by Evelyn Waugh. The novel follows the fall and redemption of theology student Paul Pennyfeather as fate casts him between Oxford, a Welsh boarding school, English country homes (both ancient and modern), and even prison for a spell. *Decline and Fall* is an excellent gift for the student, priest, prison guard,

Englishman, or country squire in your life.

**Weston Curnow**, a TLC contributor and a journalism student at the University of Kansas



Christmas in Australia is either hot or bloody hot, but traditions die hard. Some years ago, a retired caterer in our parish suggested cooking puddings and selling them as a fundraiser. If Christmas Day proves a scorcher, just roll out the fruit salad and

keep the pudding for a “Christmas in July” dinner. But Christmas pudding is best reheated in a billy over a campfire.

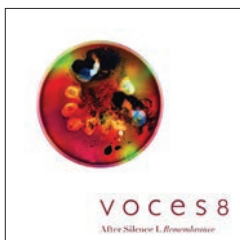
**Robyn Douglass**, a TLC correspondent based in Adelaide, Australia



How about a gift that soothes our bodies, which in turn revives our minds and spirits? Physical therapists and serious athletes use massage guns to relieve muscle discomforts

and pains. After a long Sunday on one’s feet, it is a nice way to relieve stiffness and muscle tension. They come in many styles and prices to fit one’s budget.

**The Rev. Philene M. Ware Dunn**, a supply priest in the Diocese of Virginia



One of the great prayers in our Anglican tradition was created from some words of a sermon by John Donne: “Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening to the house and gate of heaven.” For

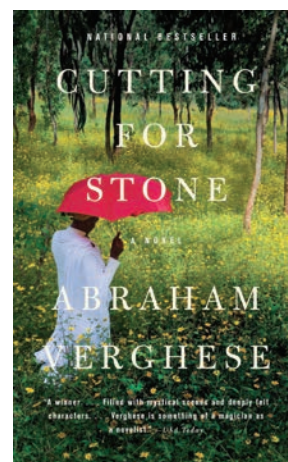
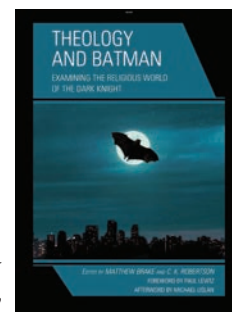
many years I have used this prayer at every funeral

liturgy at which I have presided, and we heard it sung to Sir William Harris’s stunning setting at the Committal Service of Queen Elizabeth II. The British ensemble VOCES8 has a splendid recording of this piece on its CD *After Silence*.

**The Rt. Rev. Peter Eaton**, Bishop of Southeast Florida

High on my list of books is *The Power of Reconciliation* (Bloomsbury Continuum) by Archbishop Justin Welby, followed by *Theology and Batman: Examining the Religious World of the Dark Knight* (Lexington Books).

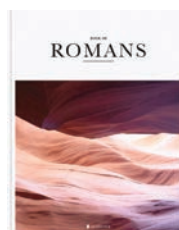
**Neva Rae Fox**, a TLC correspondent based in Somerville, New Jersey



Traveling to Kenya and back takes me no less than 60 hours. During this past November’s passage, I read *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese, an American physician born to Indian Christian parents in Ethiopia. The second novel that rescued me from those interminable hours aloft is *Warlight* by Michael

Ondaatje, a Sri Lankan émigré author who now makes his home in Toronto. Ondaatje writes with such understanding about growing up that I feel as if he sits at a corner table in my memory.

**The Rev. Patrick Gahan**, rector of Christ Episcopal Church, San Antonio



If you want to send the warmth of the Holy Spirit or wrap someone in God’s never-failing love, then send Nordstorm’s Bliss Plush Throw (bit.ly/3AMD7s1). I also love Alabaster’s books of the Bible (alabasterco.com). They are elegant,

creative, beautiful — just like our church! Alabaster wants to help everyone experience God’s beauty in the world.

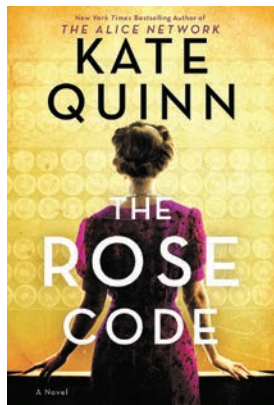
**The Rt. Rev. Elizabeth Gardner**, Bishop of Nevada

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# Gift ideas from friends of THE LIVING CHURCH

(Continued from previous page)

Historical fiction is my genre of choice when I need an escape from present-day woes; it also helps me keep my momentary afflictions in perspective. *The Rose Code* by Kate Quinn centers on three women who worked at Bletchley Park in England to break the Enigma code during World War II, and is one of the few novels by a living author that I will read again.



*The Rev. Nathan Humphrey, rector of St. Thomas' Anglican Church, Toronto*



Pilgrimage trekking poles have not only saved my tired feet and weak knees after too many ambitious miles, but they also provided a handhold when ancient pathways were an overgrown bramble, a steep descent, or a mess of slippery stones. Opt for a collapsible pair in a composite material that are sturdy and compact enough for checked baggage, since TSA doesn't always take kindly to the carbide tips in carry-on luggage.

*The Rev. Jeff Hupf, rector of St. Martin's on the Lake, Minnetonka Beach, Minnesota*

The monks of Monastero di San Benedetto in Monte brew delicious abbey ales and sell them through the web ([birranursia.com](http://birranursia.com)). I love to support these monastics (who are rebuilding after devastating earthquakes) and to foster their "Birra Nursia" motto: *Ut Laetificet Cor* ("that the heart may be gladdened").

*Richard Kennelly, a home brewer who serves as treasurer of Leadership Transformations and is a new member of the Living Church Foundation*

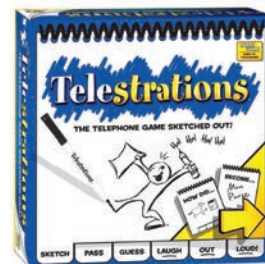


Since my children were quite small, we have each opened one present on Christmas Eve — our Christmas pajamas. My daughters are now 22 and 25, and they still look forward to opening those Christmas pajamas. If you are looking for traditional, cozy, Lanz nightgowns, check out the Vermont Country Store ([vermontcountrystore.com](http://vermontcountrystore.com)) for an amazing selection.



*Heidi Kim works with the Episcopal Church in Minnesota to engage the ministry of racial healing and justice-making.*

My husband and I love playing games, and our favorite for parties is *Telestrations*. A hilarious combination of the childhood games Pictionary and Telephone, it's a multigenerational crowd-pleaser that involves sketching and describing what others have sketched.



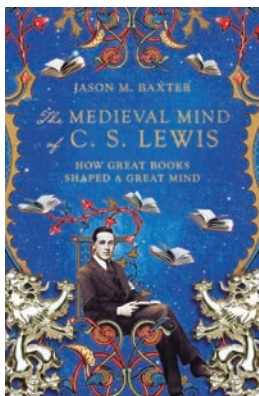
*The Rev. Molly Jane Layton, associate rector for congregational care and worship at the Parish of Calvary-St. George's in New York City*



In 2021 my niece Alicia Joy LeBlanc was the co-director of *Gun and a Hotel Bible*, which builds on the Beatles' song "Rocky Raccoon" to weave a story about lost faith, betrayal, temptation, and the hound of heaven. It's available for streaming on many platforms.

*Douglas LeBlanc, an associate editor of TLC*





Readers who already enjoy C.S. Lewis's popular works might be astonished at just how much of the great Western literary and theological tradition made its way into every page of those books. In *The Medieval Mind of C.S. Lewis* (IVP), medievalist Jason Baxter shows that for Lewis, the living, breathing tradition of Boethius and Dante could cast a counter-spell

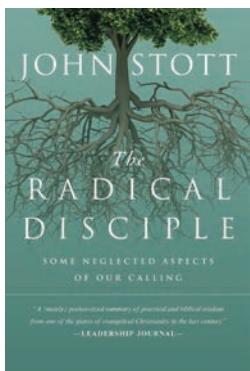
against the "evil enchantment" of the allegedly demystified, secularized modern world.

*Ben Lima, an art historian, and a parishioner at Church of the Incarnation in Dallas*



The most precious gift one can receive is a memorable experience with friends and family. Nearly every town in America has an escape room. The task is to solve a mysterious puzzle within an hour. I always learn something extraordinary about my fellow escapees.

*The Rev. Dr. Ian Markham, dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary*



I suggest *The Radical Disciple: Wholehearted Christian Living* (2010), through which John Stott issues an evergreen call to non-conformity in the face of pluralism, materialism, relativism, and other contemporary trends that threaten to swallow us. Like Stott, I have sometimes won-

dered if anything is more essential to evangelism than a Christlike evangelist.

*Jesse Masai, a TLC correspondent based in Nakuru City, Kenya*

It's never too late to start a new tradition. For almost 20 years, my family has given me a nativity set each Christmas. They vary in every way imaginable: size, scene, country of origin.



The only thing that is consistent is the reminder of, and focus on, the incredible gift of Jesus and the incarnate nature of God. These nativity sets come from places we have traveled, fair trade shops such as Ten Thousand Villages, eBay, and neighborhood yard sales.

*The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey Mello, Bishop of Connecticut*

For someone who appreciates the practical, sympathetic, or apocalyptic: a winter sickness prep kit. (Call it something more appealing.) Include a set of soft hankies, beeswax lip/nose balm, mentholated cough drops, a hot-water bottle, chicken soup mix, Lemon Zinger tea, honey, warm socks, or a big bottle of Olbas peppermint oil.



*Amber Noel, an associate editor of TLC and director of the Living Church Institute*



When I was serving as a priest in Colorado, my wife and I discovered Enstrom toffee (enstrom.com), based in Grand Junction. Its famous recipe came to be during World War II, when Chet Enstrom made toffee for parents to send to their children serving overseas at Christmas. The almond toffee is the best I've had.

*The Rt. Rev. Poulson Reed, Bishop of Oklahoma, and a member of the Living Church Foundation*

(Continued on next page)

# Gift ideas from friends of THE LIVING CHURCH

(Continued from previous page)



The older of my two sons has a knack for choosing motion pictures that suit my tastes. He got me hooked on those written and directed by Tom McCarthy. The first I watched was *Win Win* (2011). Most recently, I watched *Stillwater* (2021). *Spotlight* (2015) might be the best-known. Each involves characters who aim to do good, but they do not

always do right. Weaved into each story are themes of sin, mercy, and grace, the latter especially. Invite some friends for dinner and a McCarthy movie, but hold dessert for the end, when you can talk about how you saw these themes emerging. (*Win Win* is still my favorite!)

*John Schuessler, TLC's managing editor*



My go-to option for purchasing Christmas gifts is Thistle Farms ([thistlefarms.org](http://thistlefarms.org)) of Nashville, founded and still led by the Rev. Becca Stevens. With the mission of “helping women survivors overcome and heal from systems of prostitution and exploitation,” the folks at Thistle Farms fund their work by selling all sorts of things made by women. I love to give its handmade candles. As it says on the box, “a single candle lights up the darkest night.” Not a bad message for Christmas!

*The Rt. Rev. Rob Skirving, Bishop of East Carolina*

This year, I’m looking to give (and receive) things that make home cozier, such as warm and breathable boiled wool slippers ([nym.ag/3XwegCD](http://nym.ag/3XwegCD)). For smaller budgets, try Paine’s Balsam Fir Incense ([bit.ly/3AN04eJ](http://bit.ly/3AN04eJ)) to bring a New England Christmas to your house. Finally, if you’re looking for a theological book, I recommend *The Valley of Vision*, a beautiful collection of Puritan devotional material.



*The Rev. Canon Dr. Kara N. Slade, associate rector of Trinity Church, Princeton, and canon theologian of the Diocese of New Jersey*

As your gift to your community, buy from local artists, farmers, and businesses. How great it would be, as well, to take some cookies to our neighbors who are of different political affinity and religious affiliations. In this season of abundance, I invite you to share a gift with those who are different, near and local.

*The Rt. Rev. Jos Tharakan, Bishop of Idaho*



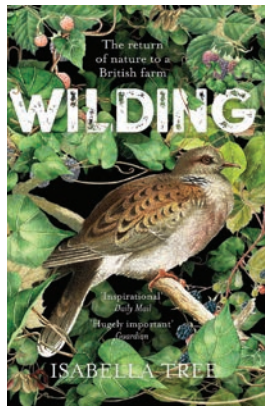
I always suggest Douglas Kaine McKelvey’s Every Moment Holy series ([everymomentholy.com](http://everymomentholy.com)). Volume I is a book of prayers for things like changing diapers, preparing a meal, beekeeping, and gardening. *Volume II: Death, Grief, and Hope* is a necessity for walking through seasons of darkness.

*Leslie Eiler Thompson, owner of Rogue Creative Consulting and TLC's digital content manager*



We're focusing on nonprofit items, produced locally (and preferably within the diocese). That will include jars of marmalade made by the bell ringers of the Hampshire parish of Crondall & Ewshot, and bottles of gin ("Spirit of St Mary's") distilled for the Surrey parish of Ewell. But if you push me to recommend a book, it might be *Wilding* by Isabella Tree.

*The Rt. Rev. Jo Bailey Wells, Bishop of Dorking*



*It's a Wonderful Life* has become my ultimate Christmas favorite. It features angels prominently and depicts how miracles can happen when you need them the most. It is a two-hour and ten-minute gift of reflection, inspiration, and love at Christmas time for families and everyone.

*Melissa Williams-Sambrano, a TLC correspondent based in Chaguanas, Trinidad*

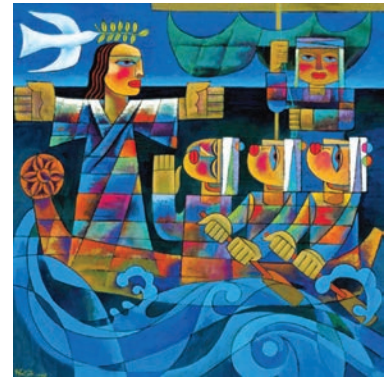


As my husband and I look at our son's ever-expanding collection of toys, we are leaning toward gifts focused on others this year. Several organizations sell chickens, honeybees, goats, ducks, alpacas, cows, or even a water buffalo for a family. We may give our son a small stuffed animal that reminds us to pray for the family who receive the animal.

*Theresa Wilson, director of the Louisville Fellows Program in Kentucky*

Over the years I have shared the Art of He Qi (heqiart.com) with family, friends, and church leaders around the world. His wonderful posters and prints reflect his efforts to help change the "foreign image" of Christianity in China. His 1998 work *Peace, Be Still* depicts Christ stilling the waters in bold colors reminiscent of stained glass.

*The Rev. Bruce W. Woodcock, the Episcopal Church's Asia and the Pacific partnership officer*



Several years ago, I saw a copy of *Plough Quarterly* (plough.com) on the desk of a colleague. I was astounded by the literary quality, theological reflection, and aesthetic sensibility of the publication. I discovered that undergirding its publishing ethos is a fundamental conviction that faith has the power to transform every aspect of life.

*The Rev. Dr. Manoj Zachariah, rector of St. Anne's, Annapolis, Maryland*



What I want this year is a Light Phone (thelightphone.com), a de-engineered smartphone that keeps all the good (directions, music, texts) while ejecting the bad (social media, internet apps). Andy Squyres has published *Poet Priest Vol. 2*, a print edition of his inspired work on Instagram.

*Dave Zahl, founder and director of Mockingbird Ministries*



# The People Who Bequeathed the Prayer Book

Review by Richard J. Mammana Jr.

The internal dynamics of one small Welsh family over 120 years shaped the English-speaking Christian world as we know it between 1485 and 1603. There were six Tudor monarchs — Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Jane Grey, Mary I, and Elizabeth I — all descendants of a French marriage with an ancient clan of Wales called Tuduriaid Penmynydd. They came to power through force at the end of the medieval period and were replaced after the death of a 70-year-old maiden queen who launched the mercantilism that became colonialism.

A breathtaking exhibit at New York's Metropolitan Museum gives us a sense of what this all *looked* like while it was happening — as the second Tudor Henry broke with Rome and took his many wives, as worship was introduced in English, during the severe Marian reaction, and in what we know now as a settlement under Elizabeth I. The exhibit is worth an entire afternoon punctuated by pauses for resting legs in the café.

The religious contexts for the several regnal changes are explained faultlessly, and illustrated with paintings, books, and objects assembled to give a comprehensive material account of the several English Reformations. The items have never been brought together in one place since they were part of their various palace and church collections more than four centuries ago, and the foremost donor to the exhibit was the late Queen Elizabeth II.

We see the pre-Reform splendor of Roman Catholicism in an illuminated Book of Hours from circa 1500 that belonged to Mary of France. The rise of humanism and revival of interest in antiquity is illustrated in tapestries of classical and religious topics. The com-



Henry VIII, ca. 1540  
Workshop of Hans Holbein the Younger (German, Augsburg 1497/98–1543 London) Oil on panel  
Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool (WAG 1350)  
Image Courtesy National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

prehensive programs of religious change wedded to carefully crafted images of rule are shown over and over in priceless examples that are the immediate background for European exploration of the Americas, Africa, and Asia, as well as the fractured Protestant and Catholic worlds all Christians know today.

Standouts are hard to pin down, because one could study each object and excavate meaning from it at leisure while not attending to the whole in its assemblage. Images of Henry VIII, though, are important, no more so than in the juxtaposition of a well-known portrait by Holbein with a full suit of his armor. We see the king of the reform and one of its prime movers as he decided to be depicted, and in the very leather and steel battle clothing he wore. The effect and the immediacy of Henry's presence to the museum visitor



Field Armor for King Henry VIII  
Milan or Brescia, Italy, ca. 1544. Steel, partly etched and gilded, leather  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1932 (32.130.7a-1)

## The Tudors

Art and Majesty  
in Renaissance England  
By Elizabeth Cleland and Adam Eaker  
Yale, pp. 352 pages, \$65

### Exhibit

Through January 8  
Free with Metropolitan  
Museum admission



Designed by Pieter Coecke van Aelst (Netherlandish, Aelst 1502–1550 Brussels); possibly woven under the direction of Paulus van Oppenem (Brussels, active ca. 1510–45)  
 Detail of *Saint Paul Directing the Burning of the Heathen Books*, from a nine-piece set of the Life of Saint Paul, before September 1539  
 Wool (warp), wool, silk, silver, and gilded-silver metal-wrapped threads (wefts)  
 134 x 216 in. (340 x 550 cm) Private collection

is powerful, giving a sense of the power of his will as he opposed the papacy and consolidated religious and temporal power in himself, in the arrangement that will be received by King Charles III at his coronation in 2023.

Another stunning object is a Henrician tapestry of St. Paul burning heathen books. We see the king's effort to establish identity with religious reform in the New Testament, linking his work to purify the church with similar activities by the apostles themselves. The Roman clothing of the heathen is instructive and pregnant with meaning.

From later in the Tudor period, we have a domestic object: a Chinese ewer from the Ming Dynasty that likely belonged to Elizabeth and was given by her to Sir Walter Raleigh, first Governor of Virginia. That colony, named for the Virgin Queen, cemented English claims in the New World in actions that con-

tinue to be contested by churches and communities that repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, as Episcopalians have on an official level. The reality of globalization, in progress already in about 1585, is crystallized here: a Chinese jug for bathing water or handwashing, given by a Tudor queen to a colonizer of the Chesapeake and its islands.

### Online or at the Museum

The exhibit is an extraordinary and seamless example of how museums are adapting to life in the midst of pandemic; it had been scheduled for October 2020. The delay allowed the museum to expand its already rich offerings of online audio tours, high-quality images of the objects on display, and even gallery title descriptions.

The accompanying exhibit catalogue is the usual very fine work of Yale University Press, which comes with a pun-

ishing price point in the museum store but can be ordered at much lower cost online. The book's essays situate each part of the exhibit in a narrative of Tudor life, display, and after-history.

The rich published, online, and streaming audio resources of this exhibit mean it will endure as a learning resource long after it closes. They also raise the question of whether one must still go to a museum to experience an exhibit in its completeness.

The answer is a resounding yes. Just as a photograph of a fireplace gives us the feelings of warmth but not actual heat, the digital or printed experience of a museum installation is still a clean different thing from visiting on two legs. For people of the Book of Common Prayer, the opportunity to walk among the faces and clothing of the family who bequeathed it to us is an inestimable gift. □

## More Christmas Music Worth Your Time

By Benjamin M. Guyer

Long ago, I wrote that a lot of Christmas music is morally problematic and aesthetically painful. At the time — that strange, dreamlike time before COVID — I recommended a handful of musical selections that fused musical artistry with mostly traditional content. It is difficult for Christmas music to not feel cheap, which too easily undermines the more noble aspirations of the season. But with a good soundtrack, it is possible to regain some of the focus so easily lost (often overwhelmed) as we make our way toward Bethlehem.

### Bruce Cockburn, *Christmas*

Bruce Cockburn is to Canada what Bob Dylan is to the United States. Both specialize in folk rock, and although one might debate who is the better lyricist, Cockburn is by far the better vocalist and guitarist. His *Christmas* features 14 traditional songs and one original composition. In addition to the familiar, such as “Silent Night,” it also includes culturally diverse selections, such as “Ríu Ríu Chíu” (a Spanish carol), “Les Anges dans nos Campagnes” (the French carol that inspired “Angels We Have Heard on High”), and “Mary Had a Baby” (an African American spiritual). And, although “Jesus Ahatonnia” is familiar to Canadians, most Americans will likely not know it. Acoustic from beginning to end, *Christmas* is a fitting introduction to the breadth of the holiday.

### Deep Sea Diver, *It's Christmas Time*

Deep Sea Diver is known for mixing raw, post-punk energy with diverse timbres, often more akin to those found in shoegaze. Its most recent release, *Impossible Weight*, was voted the top album by KEXP Seattle in 2020. (Full disclosure: my first guitar lesson was taken during COVID-19 via Zoom with the band's lead songwriter and frontwoman, Jessica Dobson.) *It's Christmas Time* veers slightly more

toward pop. Layered and looped, familiar songs are complemented by the original “It's Christmas Time (and I Am Still Alive).” But the album is at its most powerful with its closing song, which finds Dobson belting “O Holy Night” accompanied only by her guitar. In this, it's every bit as raw as anything found on the band's other albums.

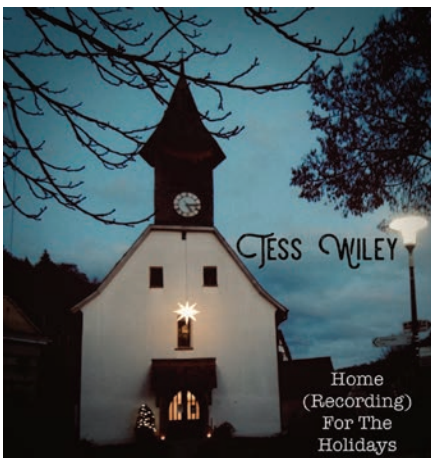
### Low, *Christmas*

Low, primarily the duo Alan Sparhawk and his late wife Mimi Parker, combines a minimalist musical aesthetic with existential depth — and, occasionally, humor. *Christmas* is the same, while featuring Parker's vocals more than some other Low releases. The classic “Little Drummer Boy” is given an unyielding wall of sound; “Blue Christmas” is more radio-friendly. But as with Low's other work, *Christmas* most resounds with the blunt lyrics that drive its original compositions. As Sparhawk sings in “If You Were Born Today”: “We'd kill you by age eight.” The bridge and chorus then rehearse various of Jesus' words, including the Beatitudes. It's not standard holiday fare — thankfully.

### Tess Wiley, *Home (Recording) for the Holidays*

Tess Wiley is best known as the short-lived guitarist of Sixpence None the Richer. She helped propel the band into noisier territory with its 1995 album *This Beautiful Mess*. Wiley moved on to a career in indie rock, and released two acoustic Christmas songs in 2020 that she had rediscovered on a defunct hard drive. And the songs are stellar. The first is “Es ist ein Ros entsprungen” (“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”); the second is “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” The sparse instrumentation highlights Wiley's world-weary singing, which makes the lyrics more believable. It's what the holiday ought to be made of.

*Ben Guyer is a lecturer in the Department of History and Philosophy at the University of Tennessee at Martin.*



# Revealing the Incarnation

## The Art of Advent

A Painting a Day  
from Advent to Epiphany

By Jane Williams

InterVarsity, pp. 152, \$17

## The Art of Christmas

Meditations On the Birth of Jesus

By Jane Williams

InterVarsity, pp. 114, \$17

Review by Phoebe Pettingell

For those looking to deepen their spiritual appreciation of Advent and Christmastide, these two short volumes of meditations by Jane Williams, using paintings from various artists, prove a most valuable resource. Like her husband, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, she is a systematic theologian, able to express her deep perceptions in clear, graceful prose. Williams has chosen a spectrum of paintings, some familiar, others less so, and her observations on each inspire and enlarge the reader's appreciation of the subject.

*The Art of Advent*, originally chosen in 2018 as former Archbishop of York John Sentamu's book for the season, and prefaced by him, focuses on the strange and complex nature of this prelude to the Incarnation. Advent is a time of renewal, the beginning of the Church year, a promise of the coming of One who will reverse the consequences of the Fall; yet even in the birth of Jesus, his suffering and death is forecast, while the prospect of his Second Coming brings terror as well as hope.

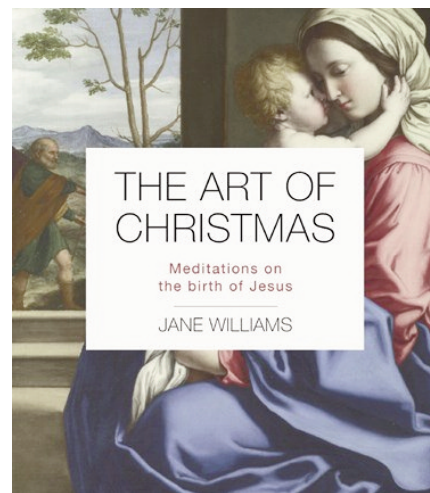
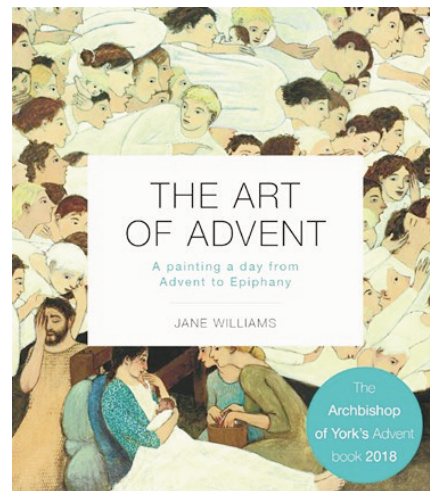
Williams delves into all these topics as she ponders her chosen paintings, beginning with the classic Advent themes of Death, Judgment, Hell, and Heaven. Death is illustrated by Albrecht Dürer's engraving of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse; Judgment by Hieronymus Bosch's weird depiction of a dark and broken

world of horrors beneath a serene sky where Christ sits over the rainbow surrounded by the righteous, and flanked by Mary and Adam, and angels with trumpets sound the joyful news of order restored as it was originally intended. Hell is again illustrated by Bosch from his "Garden of Earthly Pleasures," in which every aspect of nature becomes warped and perverse, with humans surrounded by monsters and monstrous creations, while in the background, dark cities are partially illuminated with flame. Heaven, in contrast, is portrayed by Rembrandt's "Return of the Prodigal Son" radiating the love of the father as he embraces his long-lost boy.

Musing on a 16th-century painting of Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat, after the floodwaters have receded, Williams observes:

John's Gospel says that "all things" come into being through the creative power of the Son of God, and although the Gospels concentrate on the human reaction to Jesus, there are indications that the created world reacts too. Jesus stills the storm, walks on water, removes sickness, rides a donkey; in other words, he interacts with the physical environment as a human being who is fulfilling the role given to human beings in that first Genesis theology—to exercise God's power for the good of all creation. In Romans 8, Paul writes that the whole of creation is in bondage and, like us, full of hope .... Creation, too, is waiting for God's liberation in Jesus Christ, just as much as we are, and the two liberations are inseparable. (p. 61)

Williams does not limit herself to Western art, but includes African and Indigenous paintings that again broaden our horizons. And she often points out that many depictions of the biblical story take place in the artist's



own time and setting, precisely because these events are more than history. For us to fully understand them, they must be present to us as well. At the end of each meditation, Williams includes questions for the reader, which might also be used for group study. This book will continue to expand my understanding of Advent for a long time.

*The Art of Christmas: Meditations on the Birth of Jesus* concentrates on the various characters that make up the story of the Incarnation: angels; Mary and Elizabeth (with its echo of Hannah in 1 Samuel); Joseph; shepherds; creatures earthly and heavenly, human and animal; kingdoms, earthly and heavenly; the Wise Men; the Holy Family; and so forth, ending with Jesus' heavenly family of the Father and Holy Spirit.

Each section begins with passages from the Gospels, which, like the Medieval Nativity plays, include not just the birth and what leads up to it,

(Continued on next page)

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but also the Flight into Egypt and the Massacre of the Innocents (although none of the rich pictures illustrating these events are included). Once again, Williams's meditations on the chosen paintings are enlightening, even daring. Discussing "The Adoration of the Magi" by Pieter Breughel the Elder, she observes:

[The Black King's] crown seems to be a series of upright thorns, bound around his head, and he is carrying a golden ship with a long, trailing chain. Whether Breughel intended it or not, a modern viewer sees a slave ship, and a man who knows the cost of human sin, and offers the myrrh to the child who will undergo death on a cross in an unjust world. Although the peak of the Dutch involvement in the slave trade was not until after Breughel's death, the fabulous wealth of Africa had already inspired rapacity, and the brutal trade in human lives was already underway in other parts of Europe. (p. 76)

In seasons when the cultural emphasis is on sentimental versions of happy families, along with acquisition, so that some churches now hold "Blue Christmas" services for those who can't feel the expected joy, Jane Williams's two volumes remind us that these two seasons' real depth is much more significant and complicated, with a wide range of emotions: yes, the promise of "Peace on Earth and Good Will," of which Jesus Christ's Incarnation brought a foretaste, has a fulfillment which will only be completed when he returns to bring New Heaven, New Earth. In the meantime, Williams shows how, in the range of artistic representations she has chosen, Christians can now call God "Our Father." What we see in these paintings is not just the birth of Jesus but also our own new birth into God's family.

*Phoebe Pettingell is a writer and editor living in northern Wisconsin.*

## Fear and Love of God's Holy Name

### Saving Fear in Christian Spirituality

Edited by Ann W. Astell  
Notre Dame, pp. 432, \$60

By Mac Stewart

The grammatically ambiguous title of this volume gives a good indication of its goals. On the one hand, "fear of God," a thematic touchstone of Christian spirituality in its biblical and historical sources, has in recent generations not often been in the central current of mainstream Christian preaching and writing. The authors of these essays thus seek to "save" fear from being lost to modern Christian piety. On the other hand, the reason such fear is worth preserving is precisely because it is "saving." The "fear of the Lord" is not only the beginning of wisdom; it also accompanies and assists our salvation all the way to heaven.

On the first point, part of the reason fear needs "saving" is not just because it has been ignored in modern theology, but also because it has often been presented in a warped form. True, the quintessentially modern theology of Schleiermacher found no place for the "fear of God," as Julia A. Lamm's essay shows, other than as a general sense of awe at God's infinitude and the utter dependence of all reality on God.

But a spirituality of fear takes center stage, according to Maj-Britt Frenze, in the popular eschatology represented by the best-selling *Left Behind* series. In the latter case, though, what we have is not so much the traditional "fear of the Lord" of historical Christian spirituality as a hyperventilating angst to avoid the Great Tribulation by being raptured. It is understandable that, as Todd Walatka observes, liberation theologians like Jon Sobrino tend to avoid the language of fear, with its connotations of anxious withdrawal, in their attempts to direct God's call in Christ toward an active and concrete sharing in the suffering of the

poor in their distress.

But Walatka also shows that a more integrated approach is both possible and preferable, citing homilies of Oscar Romero that seek to rouse the consciences of people trampling on human dignity precisely by invoking the terrible power of the just and holy God who will call all people to account.

Brenna Moore, meanwhile, observes that some versions of fear-spirituality in modernity have substantial "intellectual and literary heft," and treats Léon Bloy's work as an example of a "fear-based faith" that sought to deploy traditional Christian fear against a pleasant, self-satisfied, bourgeois piety that neglects the suffering of the poor. Bloy's effectiveness as a modern, Moore argues, comes from his "demythologization" of fear: hell is absolutely of this world and not the next, and anyone who denies or ignores this is not being honest about the reality and depth of injustice that most people experience here below.

If such voices complicate a simplistic account of the maturation of modern Christian spirituality beyond a medieval piety of fear, the main theme that unites the essays in this volume has to do with what makes fear "saving." It is true, of course, that in a certain sense "perfect love casts out fear." But it is also true that fear, properly understood, amplifies and enriches love.

Rudolf Otto looms large here: God is *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, who both repels by his might and attracts by his majesty, and this dialectic of repulsion and attraction, linked in Scripture (as Pieter G.R. de Villiers's essay shows) not just to a vague sense of pious awe but to all the raw physical and visceral effects that we might associate with encountering a wild animal (hair on end, knees quaking, etc.), is what "fear of God" properly means.

And while the traditional Augustinian sequence is right — servile fear of





punishment gives way, under love's influence, to the chaste fear of displeasing one's divine lover — John Sehorn argues convincingly that fear of punishment may yet, in Augustine's thought, have a place in mature Christian spirituality as the "needle" that opens up the spiritual space which charity (the "thread") is to occupy. Fear of God, in this sense, can be an instrument that not only leads to love, but also gives to that love a richer quality than it would otherwise have, inasmuch as it continues to impress upon God's chaste lover an image of God's infinitude as above all an infinitude of mercy.

For those who pray to have a "perpetual fear and love" of God's holy name, this volume is a salutary reminder that, in our relationship with the Lord, these two dispositions belong together.

*The Rev. Mac Stewart is priest associate at All Saints', Chevy Chase, Maryland.*

## Heaven in Ordinary

### The Italian Renaissance Altarpiece

Between Icon and Narrative

By David Ekserdjian

Yale, pp. 496, \$75

Review by Gavin Dunbar

For the heirs of 19th-century aesthetic romanticism, the Reformation's iconoclasm is a rich source of Duffyesque lament for the stripping of altars and Dearmerite fantasies of a truly *tasteful* reformed English Catholicism. Such laments and fantasies fit into liberal privileging of experience over doctrine, but they also appeal to the conservative suspicion of the apparent declension from ancient sacred to modern secular. Both responses to this history fail to grasp the fulfillment of Catholic antiquity in the medieval and early modern era, or of the Christian sacred in the Christian secular.

Lavishly illustrated by Yale University Press, *The Italian Renaissance*

*Altarpiece: Between Icon and Narrative* by David Ekserdjian is a comprehensive and detailed taxonomy of the Italian altarpiece from the 1200s to the 1500s. It traces the multiplication of the single-field gold-ground icon in the multipanel and multistory polypych, housing each saint in individual niches; the rise and fall of the *predella* (the horizontal band elevating the main panels of the altarpiece for better visibility, which became an important place for complementary narratives); and the eventual supersession of both polyptych and *predella* in the single-field quadrangular *pala* of the Renaissance, in which elements of both were integrated. The saints once isolated in their niches were united in the informal grouping of the *sacra conversazione*, and the narrative explored in the *predella* found a place in the same panel as the iconic personages.

Ekserdjian's account centers on what he calls "the consistent feature" of altarpieces across this period: "the need their creators felt to square the circles of the iconic and the narrative .... Time and again, artists strove to find ways to enliven and energize the inherently static Virgin and Child with Saints altarpiece, which is in essence iconic..., above all by treating the saints narratively, so that their attributes are used to tell their stories and not simply to identify them."

In this "squaring the circle of the iconic and the narrative" one recognizes the reconciliation of infinite and finite, of divine and human, at the center of the Christian tradition, which unfolds historically in the development from the divinized humanity of late antique art (the otherworldly symbolic abstraction of the Byzantine icon) to the humanized divinity of early modern art (the naturalistic realism of the late medieval and Renaissance narrative). As Ekserdjian notes, it is a mistake to see this as a straightforward linear movement from one pole to another: just as the polyptych and *pre-*

*della* disappear even as their elements are taken up into the *pala*, so is the iconic persistent in the burgeoning narrative.

Except for the late Leo Steinberg (an American of Bolshevik Russian-Jewish extraction), art historians rarely show a deep understanding of Christian doctrine, or its implications for art. Ekserdjian is no exception, but he points in the right direction. As Christian art moves from the imaging of divinized humanity to humanized divinity, it is only realizing more fully

the implications of divine and human in the person of Christ, as set forth in the ancient Christology of Chalcedon, not least in the emergence of the Christian secular out of the Christian sacred — a movement in parallel with the developments in theology that gave birth to the doctrinal distinctions and clarifications made by the Reformers.

In Counter-Reformation Italian art, this Christian secular — "heaven in ordinary" — appears so very powerfully in the shocking realism of Caravaggio, with which Ekserdjian concludes his volume. The light that shines so dramatically in the darkness to expose human frailty — dirty feet, bloated cheeks, prostitutes, and ruffians — is always the light of grace.

In the Protestant North, this Christian secularity appears in the portraits, landscapes, still lifes, and interiors of the Dutch painters — even, notably, in the interiors of Vermeer and the portraits of Van Dyck, both Roman Catholics who found patronage in Protestant societies. It's true that the visual arts did not effloresce to the same degree in Protestant England as they did in the Netherlands; but perhaps the work of the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists and poets like George Herbert may be regarded as some measure of compensation, as witnesses to "heaven in ordinary."

*The Rev. Gavin Dunbar is rector of St. John's, Savannah, Georgia.*



## PEOPLE & PLACES

### Appointments

The Rev. **Carleton Bakkum** is long-term supply priest at Christ Church, Smithfield, Va.

The Rev. Canon **Steven Balke** is canon for outreach and pastoral care at St. James Cathedral, Chicago.

The Rev. **Barbara Ballenger** is interim priest in charge of St. Peter's, Glenside, Pa.

The Rev. **Kristin Barberia** is school chaplain and associate priest for family ministry at St. Michael and All Angels, Tucson, Ariz.

The Rev. **Karen Barfield** is priest in charge of St. Andrew's-on-the-Hill, Canton, N.C.

The Rev. **Francis Thomas (Tom) Crittenden** is interim rector of Christ Church, Winnetka, Ill.

The Very Rev. **Low Crusoe** is dean of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan's Northern Clericus.

The Rev. **Miranda Cully** is head chaplain at St. Mary's Episcopal School, Memphis, Tenn.

The Rev. **Kyle Cuperwich** is rector of Grace, Pemberton, N.J.

The Rev. **John D. Daniels** is middle school chaplain at the Episcopal Academy, Newtown Square, Pa.

The Rev. **Robert Davenport** is interim rector of St. Bede's, Santa Fe, N.M.

The Rev. **Joy Davis** is parish deacon at St. Paul's, Albany, Ga.

The Rev. **Shawn Evelyn** is assistant rector of St. John's, Lafayette Square, Washington, D.C.

The Rev. **Emily Ewing** is pastor of Redemption, Locust Point, Baltimore.

The Rev. **Mark Feather** is interim rector of St. Luke's, Anchorage, Ky.

The Rev. **Jureck Fernandez** and the Rev. **Rebecca Goldberg** are priests in charge of Holy Child & St. Martin, Daly City, Calif.

The Rev. **Laurie Finn** is director of social services at Grace St. Paul's, Tucson, Ariz.

The Rev. **Beth Lind Foote** is transition rector of St. Paul's, Burlingame, Calif.

The Rev. **Katrina Grusell** is interim rector of Christ Church, Binghamton, N.Y.

The Rev. **Carrie Guerra** is rector of St. Francis, San Antonio.

The Rev. **Irma (Mimi) Guerra** is the missionary for Hispanic Ministries for the Diocese of Atlanta.

The Rev. **Jason Haddox** is vicar of Trinity, Lawrenceburg, Ind.

The Rev. **Joseph Hagberg** is priest in charge of Grace and St. Thomas-by-the-Sea, Panama City Beach, Fla.

The Rev. **Jane Milliken Hague** is interim rector of All Saints', Princeton, N.J.

The Rev. **Christian Hawley** is rector of St. Mark's, San Marcos, Texas.

The Very Rev. Dr. **Gary R. Hall** is president of Bloy House, Los Angeles.

The Rev. **Benjamin Hankinson** is director of admissions at Nashotah House Theological Seminary, Nashotah, Wis.

The Rev. **Jonathan Hanneman** is rector of St. Andrew's, Las Cruces, N.M.

The Rev. **Glenda Hardin** is parish deacon at the Belton Church Plant, Belton, Texas.

**Rick and Helen Hargreaves** are interim executive directors of St. Christopher Camp and Conference Center, Seabrook Island, S.C.

The Rev. **Jude Harmon** is rector of Trinity, Menlo Park, Calif.

The Rev. **Edwin Johnson** is director of organizing at Episcopal Community Mission, Boston.

The Rev. **Patti Johnson** is rector of St. James, Au Sable Forks, N.Y.

Mr. **Allen Kight** is chief executive officer of Camp Allen, Navasota, Texas.

The Rev. **Joe Kimmel** is curate of St. Anne's-in-the-Fields, Lincoln, Mass.

The Rev. **Stacey Kohl** is priest in charge of St. Paul & St. James, New Haven, Conn.

The Rev. **Michaelene Miller** is associate rector at St. Margaret's, Little Rock, Ark.

Dr. **Douglas C. Mohrmann** is teaching professor of New Testament at General Theological Seminary, New York.

The Rev. Dr. **Jennifer (Jenny) Glaze Montgomery** is priest in residence at Redeemer, Midlothian, Va.

The Rev. **Trent Moore** is rector of St. Stephen's, Culpeper, Va.

The Rev. **Landon Moore** is the Diocese of Long Island's vicar for vocation.

The Rev. **José Ignacio Martínez Gama Olivares** is curate of Epiphany, Richardson, Texas.

The Rev. **Aaron Oliver** is priest in residence at St. Gregory's, Parsippany, N.J.

The Rev. **Santiago Rodriguez** is priest in charge of Ascension, Cranston, R.I.

Ms. **Rebecca Roetzel** is executive director of Camp Mitchell, Morrilton, Ark.

The Very Rev. **Casey Rohleder** is dean of the Northwest Convocation in the Diocese of Kansas.

The Rev. **Lance Schmitz** is priest in charge of Redeemer, Oklahoma City, Okla.

The Rev. **Kathlyn Schofield** is priest in charge of St. Stephen's, New Hartford, N.Y.

The Rev. **Kathleen Schotto** is priest in charge at Nativity and Holy Comforter, Cedarcroft, Baltimore.

The Rev. **Justice (Justi) Schunior** is associate priest at St. Martin's, Charlotte, N.C.

The Rev. **Bill Schwartz** is long-term supply priest at Christ the King, San Diego.

The Rev. **Tim Schenck** is rector of Bethesda-by-the-Sea, Palm Beach, Fla.

The Rev. **Evan Thayer** is rector of Trinity, Demopolis, Ala.

The Rev. Dr. **Eric Thomas** is a Louisville Institute postdoctoral fellow and assistant professor in New Testament and queer theologies at General Theological Seminary, New York.

The Rev. **Rhonda Thomas** is parish deacon at Church of the Servant, Wilmington, N.C.

The Very Rev. **Barkley Thompson** is rector of St. Mark's, Little Rock, Ark.

The Rev. **Catherine Thompson** is rector of Annunciation, Lewisville, Texas.

The Rev. **Jennifer Vath** is rector of Trinity, Topsfield, Mass.

The Rev. **Jean Vinson** is clergy in charge of Emmanuel, Franklin, Va.

The Rev. **Craig Volcelka** is interim vicar of St. Antony of Egypt, Silverdale, Wash.

The Rev. **Stephen Voysey** is interim priest at St. Michael's, Marblehead, Mass.

The Rev. **David Wacaster** is rector of Grace, Georgetown, Washington, D.C.

The Rev. **Mason Waldhauser** is curate of Trinity, Vero Beach, Fla.

The Rev. **Allan Wallace** is rector of St. Paul's, New Albany, Ind.

### Ordinations

#### Priesthood

Atlanta: **Karen Anderson** (curate, St. Edward's, Lawrenceville), **Andrew Blakemore** (curate, Trinity, Columbus), **William Drosos** (associate rector, St. Thomas, McLean, Va.), **Andrew Gordon** (curate, Christ Church, Macon), **Trey Phillips** (director of youth ministry and curate, St. Catherine's, Marietta)

Bethlehem: **Bruce Edward Gowe** (priest in charge, Christ Church, Stroudsburg, Pa.), **Joseph Allen O'Rear**

Central Florida: **Patricia Orlando** (assisting priest, Cathedral Church of St. Luke, Orlando)

Central Pennsylvania: **Jody Barthle** (priest in charge, Transfiguration, Blue Ridge Summit, and Calvary Chapel, Beartown), **Alyssa Pasternak-Post** (associate rector, St. John, York)

Chicago: **Kendall Batten-Kalantzis** (chaplain, Clermont Life Plan Community, Denver), **William Olivier Bouvel** (associate clergy, St. Chrysostom's, Chicago), **Barnabas Eliah Pusnur** (associate rector, St. Paul & the Redeemer, Chicago)

Colorado: **David Norman Musser** (assisting priest, St. Luke's, Fort Collins)

East Carolina (for Virginia): **Suzanne Hood** (associate rector, Christ Church, New Bern)

Eastern Oregon: **Taylor Brooks Clark** (assisting priest, St. Stephen's, Baker City)

Florida: **Charlie Erkman** (vicar, Holy Comforter, Crescent City)

Indianapolis: **Jason Fortner** (curate, St. John's, Lafayette), **Joél Muñoz** (assisting priest, St. Francis in the Fields, Zionsville)

Iowa: **Nora Banister Conley Boerner** (curate, Trinity, Iowa City)

Long Island: **Matthew Tees**

Louisiana: **Annie Knasz Jung** (associate rector, Trinity, New Orleans)

Maryland: **Columba Salamony** (rector, St. Mark's, Penn Yann, N.Y.)

Michigan: **Katherine Beck-Ei** (rector, St. John's, Clinton) **Eric Braun**, **Donna Lockhart**

Minnesota: **Julia Domenick** (associate rector, St. John's, Boulder, Colo.), **Paul Ehling**, **Gwen Powell**, **Denise Stahura** (assisting priest, Nativity, Burnsville), **Christy Stang** (assistant rector, St. Stephen's, Edina), **Aaron Twait** (assisting priest, Christ Church, Woodbury), **Pat Van Houten** (parish priest, St. Mark's, Lake City)

Mississippi: **Elizabeth Folk Graham**, **Rebecca Gail Walton** (curate, All Saints', Tupelo)

#### Retirements

The Rev. **John Runkle** as vicar of St. James', Sewanee, Tenn.

The Rev. **Sheila Seekins** as priest in charge of Trinity, Lewiston, Maine

The Rev. **Ted Smith** as rector of St. Stephen's, Liberty, Texas

The Rev. **Susan Springer** as rector of St. John's, Boulder, Colo.

The Rev. **Rick Vinson** as rector of Trinity, Solebury, Pa.

The Rev. **Verne Walter** as vicar of St. James, Sonora, Calif.

The Rev. **Harry Walton** as rector of Trinity, Canton, and Trinity, Stoughton, Mass.

The Rev. **Michael Ward** as rector of Walnut Hill Church, Lexington, Ky.

The Rev. **Harrison West** as rector of Christ Church, Guilford, Conn.

### Deconsecrations-Closures

East Cooper Episcopal Church, Mt. Pleasant, S.C.  
St. Augustine's, Mason, Mich.

St. Luke's, Manchester, Mo.

### Deaths

The Rev. **Frank G. Adams**, a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died October 13 at 96.

Born in New York City, Adams was a graduate of Rutgers, Drexel, Monmouth, and Villanova universities. He studied for ordained ministry at Nashotah House. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1970.



He enlisted in the Navy at age 17 and flew seaplanes as an aviation radioman, participating in U-boat barrier patrols from bases in Brazil. After the war, he studied at Rutgers and remained a member of the Naval Reserves. His seaplane squadron was recalled to active duty in 1950 during the Korean War.

After completing his studies at Rutgers, Adams began work as an industrial engineer with the Ruberoid Corp. (now GAF). He worked for the Radio Corporation of America from 1959 to 1993.

He began his ordained ministry as a non-stipendiary cleric in New Jersey. After his retirement from RCA, the family moved to Chestertown, Maryland. He served as curate at Emmanuel Church in Chestertown and priest in charge at Christ Church IU in Worton. (The initials honor benefactor Isaac Usilton.)

Adams is survived by Lisbeth Ann (Bunny), his wife of 72 years; a son; a daughter; eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.



The Rev. **Alberly Charles Cannon Jr.**, a U.S. Army veteran known for his ministry among homeless persons and AIDS patients, died October 27 at 86.

Born in Greenville, South Carolina, he was a graduate of The Citadel and the University of the South's School of Theology. He was commissioned an Army lieutenant and served on active duty at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He was ordained deacon in 1963 and priest in 1964.

Cannon worked among the deprived and homeless citizens of Greenville, having served on the staff of United Ministries, where he helped establish the Place of Hope. He was a past chairman of the board of Project Host, and a member of the Greenville Homeless Coalition, AID Upstate, the AIDS Task Force of the Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina, and the National Episcopal AIDS Coalition.

He served Episcopal churches for 33 years in South Carolina and Florida.

He was married for 44 years to Nancy Sterling Cannon, until her death in 2001. He is survived by a sister, three sons (two of them Episcopal priests), a daughter, 10 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

The Rev. Dcn. **Charles de Saussure Jett**, who served as an agent of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service before his ordination, died October 17 at age 83.

A native of Milledgeville, Georgia, he was a graduate of the University of South Carolina. He was an NIS agent until retiring at 50. He then earned another bachelor's degree in his studies for the diaconate and was ordained in 1995. He served in the dioceses of California, Idaho, South Carolina, and Spokane.

Jett's wife of 61 years, Jane, preceded him in death in 2020. He is survived by two brothers, a daughter, a son, six grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

The Rev. **Alfred Joseph Jewson**, who died November 5 at 78, was a former Roman Catholic priest married to a deacon.

Born in St. Louis, Jewson spent all his years of ministry in Missouri. He was a graduate of Cardinal Glennon College, Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, and St. Louis University School of Divinity.



He served as a Catholic priest from 1968 until 1974, when he was received into the Episcopal Diocese of West Missouri by Bishop John C. Buchanan.

He and his wife, Dayna Geddes Jewson, were married in 1988, and she was ordained to the diaconate in 2004.

While serving in the Diocese of West Missouri, Jewson was a regional dean and a member of the Commission on Ministry for 12 years.

When the Jewsons moved back to his hometown, he became a supply priest to many congregations.

"We mourn for the loss of our friend, counselor, and priest," said an announcement from the Diocese of Missouri on the day after his death.

The Rev. **Louise Lusignan**, who was drawn deeper into faith when her husband survived a hiking mishap in 1978, died September 28 at 79.

When the Lusignans were on vacation in Colorado in 1978, he became lost while hiking a canyon alone. When searchers found no sign of him, she flew back to their parish, St. Columba's in Washington, D.C., where she had been serving as a lay volunteer.

She asked the community to pray that Michael would be found. A parishioner suggested praying that he would find his way out. Dehydrated and hallucinating, Michael did find his way out. The experience drew her more deeply into the life of faith and the church community she had found.

Born in 1943, she graduated from Pomona College in 1965 and headed east, where she

taught at schools in Pennsylvania and in Washington. She earned a master's degree in teaching from Antioch-Putney Graduate School of Education in Vermont, and a master's degree in library science from the University of Western Ontario.

She graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary in 1988. She was ordained deacon that year, and priest in 1989. She served as an associate rector at St. Columba's from 1988 to 2000 before answering a call to serve as an associate at St. John's in McLean, Virginia, until her retirement in 2013.

Lusignan is survived by her husband, a brother, nieces, and nephews. She is remembered for her warmth, sense of humor, commitment to pastoral care, and love of cats.

"My idea of a great day," she once wrote, "is to putter around the house, take a long walk, either alone or with Michael, sit on the deck with a cup of tea, or stretch out to read a murder mystery with our two cats, Polycarp and Miss Punk, on my lap."

The Rev. **James Hugh Magers**, the Episcopal Church's director of stewardship from 1992 to 2000, died December 8 at 82.



A native of Abilene, Texas, he was a graduate of Texas A&M University and began studying law at the University of Texas at Austin. Realizing that he "wasn't sorry enough to be a lawyer," he felt called to ordination and attended Virginia Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1968.

In Texas he worked in missions and parishes in a dozen cities. In his role with the Episcopal Church Center, he taught in churches in all 50 states.

Magers was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in his 60s, but his family said he kept his sense of humor to the end.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Joan; a sister; and four granddaughters.

The Rev. **Walter Szymanski**, a parish priest, family therapist, and advocate for gay rights in the Episcopal Church, died October 19 at 83.

A native of Pittsburgh, he was a graduate of St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry, St. Bernard's Seminary, and Colgate Rochester-Crozer Divinity School. His master's degree was in theology and psychology. He was received as a priest from the Roman Catholic Church in 1973. He served several parishes in the dioceses of Rochester and Pittsburgh, and joined the Anglican Society of St. Francis in 2002.



His writing for Integrity, the former caucus of gay and lesbian Episcopalians, included "Blessings of Same-Gender Relationships" (1982), "As We Believe God" (1982), and "Family Ministry in a Homophile Community" (1981). An obituary prepared by Szymanski's family described him as "companion and friend of Paul Marrocco for over 40 years," and his entry in the *Episcopal Clerical Directory* said they married in January 1984.

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SUNDAY'S READINGS | Christmas Day, December 25

Christmas I: Isa. 9:2-7 • Ps. 96 • Titus 2:11-14 • Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

Christmas II: Isa. 62:6-12 • Ps. 97 • Titus 3:4-7 • Luke 2: (1-7) 8-20

Christmas III: Isa. 52:7-10 • Ps. 98 • Heb. 1:1-4 (5-12) • John 1:1-14

## A Great Joy to All People

Christmas is a festival of joy. It is a moment and season marked out for our renewal as we again joyfully receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Redeemer, revealed to us as the holy child. If celebrating the liturgy at night, we see even darkness shining with the brightness of the true light. We know ourselves in Christ as the adopted sons and daughters of God, and so we become Christlike and thoroughly new (the Collects). The Lord for whom the world has waited is here, and he is the joy of all creation.

We are thus summoned to an extraordinary joy. "Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the whole earth" (Ps. 96:1). "All the whole earth" is the cosmos alive with exultation. We hear a voice resounding in the heavens: "I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" (Luke 2:11-14).

The joy of Christ's arrival is the theme of the moment and the 12-day season set apart with the name Christmas. Amid this message of happiness, however, a warning is issued, and an explanation necessary. The warning is brief and almost cryptic. "And [Mary] gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloths," a beautiful image of maternal affection. Then we hear this: "and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7). Indeed, there was no room for Jesus, no place, apart from a feeding trough, to lay his tender flesh in first seconds of his early life. In this image, there is a suggestion of the world's rejection that

would hound him all his days. St. John puts it this way: "He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him" (1:10-11). It is possible — God forbid, on this most holy day — to turn away from Jesus, which would rob not the day but you of all joy. May the Spirit open the door of your heart!

An explanation answering a question: Why is this an event of unimaginable importance? St. Paul's Epistle to Titus gives an answer. "For the grace of God has appeared," that is, Jesus Christ among us, "bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good work" (Titus 2:11-14). Christ is here to make us new: forgiven, redeemed, and commissioned to some good and glorious work.

With your mind's eye, "Go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place" — for you, for your life, and your joy.

Look It Up  
The Collects

Think About It  
Rich in theology

## Our Lord Has a Name

Today bears an important title: The Holy Name of our Lord.

Giving and receiving a name is a way to establish identity, purpose, and order. And its profound significance is well illustrated “in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens” (Gen. 2:4). Observing that “It is not good that the man should be alone,” the Lord created companions, creatures to accompany and serve humankind. These creatures were, in a sense, subordinate to the woman, but they were important nonetheless as creatures known by name and thus entering the interior life of the man. “So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name” (Gen. 2:19). A name rescues a being from “a formless void” and says, “This is who I *am*.” Strikingly, in previous prayer books, the minister spoke with a certain gravitas, saying to the godparents immediately before the moment of baptism, “Name this Child” (BCP 1928, p. 279).

Our Lord has a name. “An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins’” (Matt. 1:20-21). At every utterance of the name of Jesus, we remind ourselves that we have been saved, rescued, redeemed, and forgiven. By the name of Jesus, “wickedness is put to flight and sin is washed away” (Easter Vigil). Indeed, Orthodox Christians the world over repeatedly utter and contemplate the famous Jesus Prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” We do well, in our own way, to hold the name of Jesus

in great reverence. In fact, during the celebration of our liturgy, many will bow their heads when hearing the Holy Name.

An ancient Christian hymn tells us that the whole created order genuflects before the wonderful name of Jesus. “Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:5-11).

The majesty of the divine name, the reason for its exaltation, is rooted in Jesus emptying himself. He became what we are in every respect, though without sin, and he redeemed and rescued us so that “we might receive adoption as children” (Gal. 4:5).

As the adopted children of God, we are bearers of the divine name. As Jesus is the Son of God by nature, we are the sons and daughters of God by adoption and grace. In this sense, the name of Jesus is our name. We know ourselves in him. Like Mary, we carry Jesus in our bodies and ponder him in our beating hearts (Luke 2:19).

**Look It Up**  
Hebrews 1:1-4

**Think About It**

A name more excellent than angels, a name indeed above all names. Bow the head; bend the knee.

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Review of applications will begin January 1, 2023.



**GENERAL SECRETARY:** The Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion (CUAC) has begun a search for its next General Secretary. Information about CUAC and a detailed job posting can be found at [CUAC.org](http://CUAC.org).

**CATHEDRAL DEAN: The Episcopal Church in Wyoming** is now inviting applications for the dean of our historic cathedral, St. Matthew's in beautiful Laramie, the home of the University of Wyoming. We believe God has been preparing the way for one of the most exciting phases of ministry in and through St. Matthew's Cathedral — a future that builds on its remarkable history, strategic ministry and tremendous potential. This unique opportunity at the cathedral comes at a distinct moment in the life of the Episcopal Church of Wyoming as we seek to serve “Christ on the New Frontier.” As a diocese, we are finding ourselves on the verge of something new, focusing on a “frontier” vision of the future, through an ongoing exploration of spiritual discovery that engages the frontiers of our hearts, minds, churches, and communities.

As our cathedral finds itself entering a new chapter in its historic ministry and mission, we believe it is positioned for its most fruitful days ahead, toward thriving in depth and breadth. We believe that St. Matthew's Cathedral is primed to serve in new and fresh ways in a spiritually transformational role within the cultural and educational heart of Wyoming. This is one of the most exciting opportunities within the Episcopal Church as we envision a cathedral in the 21st century.

We invite you to explore joining us on this adventure of seeing Christ walk the Wyoming road.

Interested candidates should send their CV/resume, OTM profile, and a cover letter to Canon Jessica Reynolds, canon for finance and administration & transitions officer for the Episcopal Church in Wyoming – [jessica@episcopalwy.org](mailto:jessica@episcopalwy.org)

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