

Episcopal JOURNAL

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NEWS Anglican budget may affect Episcopal grant



NEWS Readers pay tribute to Rachel Evans



FEATURE Gumbo cook-off raises funds for Alabama housing

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Archbishop's apology smooths LGBTQ discussion at council meeting

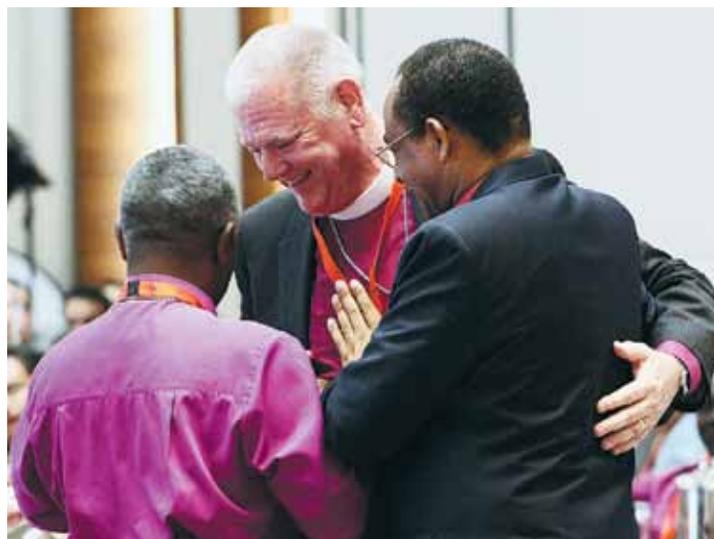
Oklahoma bishop leads weeklong effort toward compromise

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, working with others, preserved the unity of the 17th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council on May 4 by apologizing for his 2020 Lambeth Conference decision about bishops in same-sex relationships. He also agreed to renew the communion's 21-year-old promise to listen to the experiences of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) people.

"I ask your forgiveness where I made mistakes," Welby said. Earlier this year, Welby decided that although bishops in same-sex relationships would be invited to the once-per-decade conference of Anglican bishops, their spouses would not be officially invited.

The April 28-May 5 meeting in Hong Kong came close to breaking down during its last business day over the question of how much the council ought to say about the full



Photo/Paul Fehleley/ACNS

Oklahoma Bishop Ed Konieczny, center, is embraced by Burundian Bishop Eraste Bigirimana, right, and Diocese of Nairobi Bishop Joel Waweru, both of whom opposed a resolution he proposed. Both participated in crafting a compromise.

inclusion of LGBTQ people in the life of the church.

The conflict arose via Oklahoma Bishop Ed Konieczny's resolution calling on the communion's standing committee to gather infor-

mation about the provinces' efforts to listen to people "who have been marginalized due to their human sexuality within the church, society and their respective cultures."

The members did not object to that work. However, a number of them refused to accept the resolution's preamble, which would have reaffirmed "the respect and dignity of persons as Children of God who have been marginalized due to their human sexuality" and stated that "they should be fully included in the life of the Anglican Communion."

The frank but polite debate over the resolution, the intense negotiations that took place during breaks in that debate, and the ensuing completely rewritten resolution proved that "in the end, the love of Christ showed through," Konieczny told

ENS Service after the meeting. "We showed that we're able to have conversation and we're able to understand one another and that we're able to compromise."

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Once bishop, now a 'poster child' for alcoholism, Heather Cook aims to make amends

By Adelle M. Banks
Religion News Service

Once a rising star in the Episcopal Church, Heather Cook hoped to spend her life lessening people's pain.

Instead, months after she was consecrated the first woman bishop in the Diocese

of Maryland in 2014, she was behind the wheel, texting, driving drunk and causing an accident that killed a bicyclist on a Baltimore road.

"Part of the great challenge for me is to know that I, through this experience, have added more pain to the world," said Cook in one of a series of phone interviews from prison before her release on May 14.

Technically, Cook has done her time.

But the former inmate now has a life sentence: determining if redemption might ever be possible after such a tragedy.

Two days after Christmas, she struck and killed cyclist Thomas Palermo, a husband and father of two. She initially left the scene of the accident but was later arrested. Authorities said her blood alcohol level was 0.22, almost three times the legal limit.

She was convicted of vehicular manslaughter, DUI, leaving

the scene of an accident and driving while texting and was sentenced to seven years in prison.

Cook was defrocked by the Episcopal Church and is no longer a priest or a bishop. Instead, for the past three and a half years, she's been inmate number 00442452 at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women.

She hopes to spend her life making amends for what she did.

Cook, 62, agreed to talk with Religion News Service on the condition that this story would not be published until her release from prison.

She described her willingness to be interviewed as "part of my amends" — a word used in the ninth step of the 12-step recovery process.

The former bishop told RNS she did not know at the time of her accident that she had struck a person. Though she declined to discuss more of what happened that day, she does recall texting "we are on our way," refer-

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Photo/Juliet Linderman/AP

Heather Cook leaves Baltimore City Circuit Court in Baltimore with attorney Jose Moline after her arraignment on April 3, 2015.

CONVERSATIONS

Pentecost: How to fix our problems

By Meg Decker



"I KNOW EXACTLY what you need to make Trinity great!"

Having been doing this work for a few years now, I didn't hold my breath in anticipation, but I was willing to hear of a possible solution. The visitor continued, describing a church he knew, with at least one family of parents and children, eager to be an active part of the congregation.

"You need ten families just like that," he continued enthusiastically. "That would make Trinity a good congregation!"

More people — why hadn't I thought of that? And then the really important question: Where can we order those ten families to solve all our problems?

OK, that's probably a bit snarky, but church growth isn't exactly a new suggestion. In this case, finding those ten families to come and fix Trinity is also a backwards solution. How many people would we attract if we invited them to come fix our problems? But are we really in the business of attracting people because of what they can do for us? Don't we invite people for the sake of the Kingdom, not the institution?

As we celebrate Pentecost, let's get our theology going the right direction. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit sent the disciples out to tell the story of salvation. No matter how institutional the church might be, its direction has to be outward, taking the message to others for their sake, not for institutional survival. Still, Pentecost doesn't just recall an unusual experience in religious communication. The message and mission belong to the church, and the church is a communal experience.

We're not Christians alone. Theology of discipleship goes both ways.

This is the part we modern Christians aren't very good at remembering. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote that as the Body of Christ, the church takes up space. By this he meant that faith is not found in abstract doctrines and intellectual assertions. Faith does things. It takes up space in our lives, requiring time and attention. The Body of Christ takes up space in our world as Christians go out and do things in the name of Christ. The church as community and institution is the visible part of the faith. In this case Trinity's problems won't be fixed by finding those ten magical families, but by sending its members out to take up space, faithfully living out the message in whatever way they can.

That might be a no-brainer, but it's also not what we want to hear. The Internet is crowded with the stories of Christians who, for one reason or another, believe that they have outgrown a need for church. The assumption is that more sophisticated, more authentic believers can do it on their own, no longer needing the crutch of doctrines, gatherings and community. We imagine that we can do better alone.

Maybe we could. It is certainly easier to remain calm and peaceful when you don't have to deal with other Christians, with their odd habits, difficult personalities or wrong opinions. You can keep your theological understandings easily intact when you don't see them challenged by the experiences and difficulties of others. You're not going to lose your faith because of the bad behavior of a Christian community if you don't join one. Is that enough?

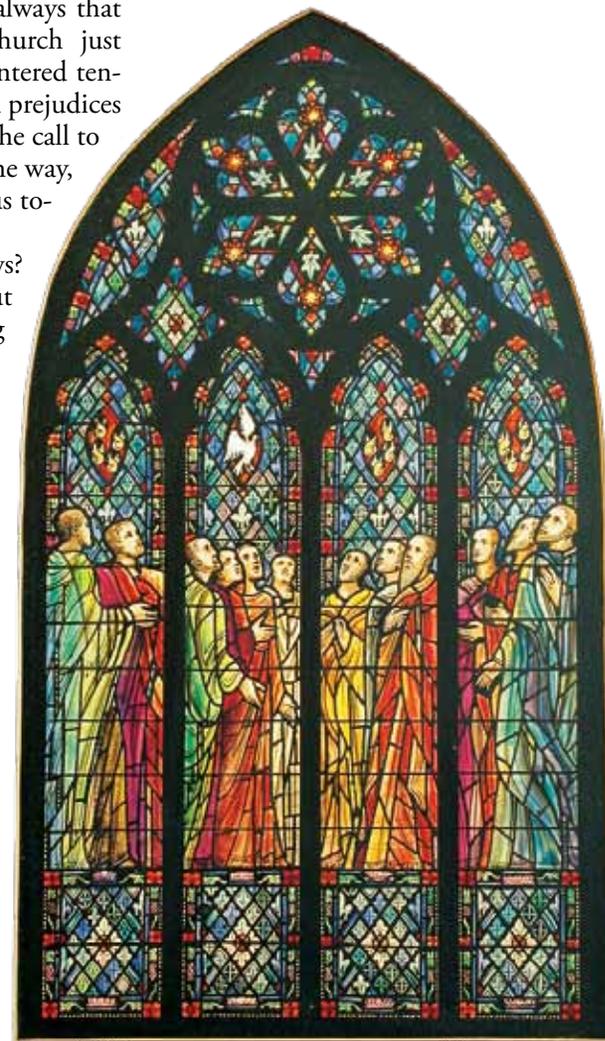
In taking up space, the Body of Christ gets in the way. Bonhoeffer is the dramatic example of this call, of course, standing up to the Nazis, even at the cost

of his own life. But it's not always that dramatic. Sometimes the church just gets in the way of our self-centered tendencies, or of our excuses and prejudices — any of the ways we avoid the call to follow Christ. By getting in the way, at its best the church points us toward following Christ.

So how is this Good News? Not in a comfortable way, but definitely in a life-changing way. The Body of Christ can help us all to see God's presence in the world. On a good day, that's what the Church is doing. Instead of inviting people in to solve our problems, that's even what Trinity is doing. We have a message to share. Pentecost reminds us to do that, and worry about the problems later.

What if we tell some of those stories for a change? Not just the stories of how the church has failed. Let's also hear about how the church has challenged her members to do more. Where has the Holy Spirit used the church to suggest reconciliation instead of division, community instead of competition, healing instead of guilt? How has the church gotten in the way of business as usual in order to offer the option of the Kingdom? All Christians agree that's the option we need. On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit gives us some help in getting there. ■

This post was first published on May 17, 2016 on the website of Trinity Episcopal Church, Escondido, Calif. The Rev. Meg Decker is the rector of Trinity Church.



Photo/Library of Congress

Pentecost Sunday (June 9 this year) marks the day that Christians believe the Holy Spirit descended on the followers of Jesus after his death, resurrection and ascension. The symbol of Pentecost is flames, since the Book of Acts relates that the apostles saw "what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them." In this design drawing for a stained glass window at St. John's Episcopal Church, Tampa, Fla., the apostles receive the Holy Spirit. The window was designed by J. & R. Lamb Studios in 1961.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



THERE'S QUITE A BIT OF news in this issue from the wider Anglican world, reflecting the recent meeting in Hong Kong of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC). The members discussed, among other things, next year's planned meeting of the Lambeth Conference and who has and has not been invited.

Unless one is familiar with the Anglican Communion, one could well ask, what is the Anglican Consultative Council and the Lambeth Conference and why should I care?

The worldwide Anglican church is made up of 40 "provinces" (the Episcopal Church is one) and they send three representatives each to the council's meeting, held every three or four years. The council has no legislative power; it facilitates discussion among its very diverse members about Anglican policies and develops positions on various issues.

It also charts the work of the communion's committees and networks, as well as that of the Anglican Communion staff and the communion's

Standing Committee. The council, by the way, is the only representative body that includes laity.

As for the Lambeth Conference, that's held every decade in Canterbury, England and just about all the active Anglican bishops in the global church are invited to attend sessions on various issues.

The last Lambeth Conference was held in 2008 and Bishop Gene Robinson, the first openly-gay bishop in the communion, was not invited. He came to Canterbury anyway, giving speeches and interviews and attending worship where he could.

A decade later, there are more openly gay bishops and they are officially invited — but not their spouses, because Anglican churches have different views on marriage. It looks like several will show up anyway, as they should, to bear witness to the real people who are the subject of discussion.

The place of LGBTQ persons in the life of the church was the subject of intense discussion at the ACC and the reason we should care is that this is how grace works — people getting together, sharing their truth (hopefully, in love) and hoping God will sort it out. ■

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Editor: Solange De Santis; **Art Director:** Linda Brooks

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Editorial: Send correspondence and letters to the editor at 123 Mamaroneck Ave., #616, Mamaroneck, NY 10543 or editorial@episcopaljournal.org.

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Advertising: patrick@kevinshanley.com 312-919-1306

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NEWS

New Anglican Communion budget formula has 'extreme potential impact' on Episcopal Church

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

A new formula for setting the level of financial commitments from the Anglican Communion's provinces approved May 4 by the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) has the potential to increase greatly the amount of money expected from the Episcopal Church. The ACC met in Hong Kong from April 28 to May 5.

Anglican Communion Chief Operat-

ing Officer David White acknowledged that the new annual formula, which is based on the number of "active bishops" in a province multiplied by their average salary (including housing costs) multiplied by 10%, produces "the most extreme case of potential impact" for the Episcopal Church.

It would be up to each province to determine the two variables to plug into the formula. The only organization in the Episcopal Church that currently collects bishop and clergy salary information is the Church Pension Fund. It

uses that information to calculate annual pension assessments and eventual benefit levels for each clergy participant in the fund. The Church Pension Fund has traditionally considered that information to be confidential.

It was also unclear how the formula would impact the Church of England, which is the largest contributor.

Episcopal Church ACC members Oklahoma Bishop Edward J. Konieczny, the Rev. Michael Barlowe and Rosalie Ballentine voted against the measure when a show-of-hands vote was called for.

Historically, the Church of England (at 41.4% of the total income) and the Episcopal Church (at 21.9%) have been the two largest contributors to what is known as the Inter-Anglican Budget. General Convention has budgeted \$1.15 million as its total 2019-2021 contribution.

White's budget report says the ACC's unrestricted spending budget in 2019 is about \$2.3 million. "Given the consistent excess of ambition over resources," the report says the budget needs a 5% annual increase in money available for unrestricted spending, as opposed to money contributed for specific programs.

Ballentine told White, "When we look at the proposed formula, just by throwing around some quick numbers, there are some of us whose contributions, voluntary or not but based on this proposal, would increase exponentially."

She asked him for more details about a line in his report that mentions the communion office's willingness to negotiate during a 2020-23 transition period with provinces whose expected contribution would increase or decrease dramatically.

"It is absolutely the case that there will

be discussion," White said. "I recognize that [this] is the most extreme case of potential impact. It is not the case that in our planning that we have assumed that it is possible for the Episcopal Church to move from the current position based on history to that which might be determined purely by strict application of the formula in the [transition] time period or potentially at all, but it becomes a basis for discussion."

"The generosity of the Episcopal Church is not in question," White said, given its budgetary contribution. There is only the question as to how the formula "can be managed against that context," he said.

Combining the \$1.15 million budgeted as its total 2019-21 contribution with money for "global mission development" and salaries and travel for church-wide staff who work with partners across the communion, the current triennial budget includes \$3.89 million for mission and ministry in the Anglican Communion. The triennial budget does not include the work of Episcopal Relief & Development across the communion.

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Photo/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS

Oklahoma Bishop Edward J. Konieczny, left, talks with Anglican Communion Chief Operating Officer David White during a break in discussions about the funding formula for the Inter-Anglican Budget.

Archbishop of Canterbury invites ecumenical observers to 2020 Lambeth Conference

ACNS

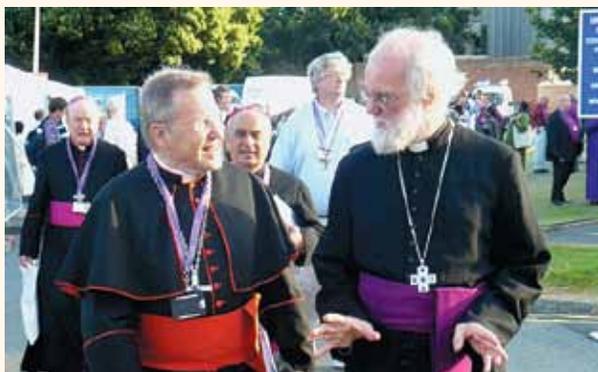
The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is inviting leaders of other Christian churches to send observers to next year's Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops. Invitations are being extended to a greater number of Pentecostal and Evangelical churches and bodies than at previous Lambeth Conferences. A conference spokesperson said that this was to "recognize their importance in the changing face of world Christianity."

The invitations include those churches in communion with the whole Anglican Communion — the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht, the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (the Philippine Independent Church), and the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar. They also include some Lutheran churches in North America and Europe, which are in communion with the Anglican provinces in those regions.

Representatives of more than 30 other Christian churches are being invited to attend as ecumenical observers. These include churches and communions with which Anglicans are in formal dialogue, such as the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Methodist, Lutheran and Reformed Churches and also multi-lateral bodies such as the World Council of Churches and the Global Christian Forum.

In addition to leaders of churches in communion and ecumenical partners, representatives from churches formed by people who left the Anglican Communion are also being invited to send

observers. These churches — the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA), the Anglican Church of Brazil and the Reformed Evangelical Anglican Church of South Africa (REACH-SA) — are not formally part of the Anglican Communion but



Photo/ACNS

Then-Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, right, and Cardinal Walter Kasper, then-President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, walk to an ecumenical reception at the 2008 Lambeth Conference.

are recognized to different extents by some of the communion's provinces.

The Lambeth Conference takes place once every 10 years. The archbishop of Canterbury invites all eligible bishops from the 40 Anglican Communion provinces, or member churches, to take part, as well as the bishops from the five extra provincial dioceses — Ceylon, Portugal, Spain, Bermuda and the Falkland Islands. Recent Lambeth Conferences have been attended by a number of ecumenical guests and observers who attend sessions of the conference and may be invited to speak, but do not vote.

The Lambeth Conference 2020 will take place at the University of Kent in Canterbury from July 23 to August 2. The Lambeth Conference is one of the four instruments of communion, or unity, within the Anglican Communion. The others are the archbishop of Canterbury, the Primates' Meeting, and the triennial Anglican Consultative Council. ■

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AROUND THE CHURCH

TRANSITIONS

Oregon bishop to retire

Diocese of Oregon Bishop Michael Hanley on May 6 announced his intention to retire in January 2021 and called for the election of his successor.

In a letter to the diocese, Hanley wrote, "My reasons for this are quite simple. First, it is time for me. By the date of my retirement, I will be 66 years old and I will have served as deacon, priest, or bishop for just under 40 years. I feel that God is now calling me to focus [on my family and] being a parishioner in the church."



Hanley

Hanley was ordained and consecrated in April 2010 to lead a diocese of 71 congregations and more than 15,000 parishioners. His ministry has included an emphasis on social justice issues, particularly through expanding the diocesan commitment to Latino ministry and his involvement with Bishops United Against Gun Violence.

Hanley also serves as part of the Common Table group of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, which seeks to build relationships between religious leaders and provide a united voice of faith on community topics.

The Standing Committee will oversee the process, which is expected to include an electing convention in June 2020. Further details will be published, but the process typically includes the formation of search and transition committees, the creation of a diocesan profile, and a period of nominations before

the slate is announced.

Hanley concluded his letter, "Thank you, good people, for your help and support over these past nine years. Thank you for your prayers and, perhaps most of all, thank you for allowing me into your diocesan family. It has been an honor and privilege to serve the church with you. I look forward to the rest of my time with you as your bishop."

— Diocese of Oregon

Wyoming bishop to retire

Bishop John S. Smylie of the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming has called for the election of the diocese's next bishop. Smylie will remain on board through the lengthy transition process that will result in the seating of a new bishop in early 2021, if all goes according to plan.

The election of the next bishop is scheduled for the diocesan convention in September, 2020. After the election, diocesan standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction must give consent to the election before the new bishop's ordination and consecration.



Smylie

Smylie will continue to remain fully engaged in the ministry of the diocese throughout the election process, and the work and vision for the diocese will continue until the transition to the next bishop, in 2021.

During his tenure, Smylie oversaw the empowerment of a shared ministry model that values both lay and ordained ministry. Under his leadership, a seminary training program known as the

Iona Collaborative, developed through the Seminary of the Southwest, has resulted in the graduation of over 35 lay and ordained leaders in the diocese.

Recently, Fresh Expressions of Faith, spiritual communities established primarily for the "nones" and the "dones," has the diocese pursuing growth in new and creative ways outside the walls of traditional churches. Smylie challenged the diocese to adopt a vision that calls for the creation of one fresh expression of faith for every traditional church in the diocese in the next decade.

Smylie received his Masters of Divinity from Episcopal Divinity School in 1981 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1982. He served parishes in New Jersey and New York for a number of years before relocating to Spokane, Wash., to serve as dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Casper, Wyo., called Smylie as its rector before his election as ninth bishop of Wyoming in 2010. The Diocese of Wyoming includes 46 churches with approximately 6,500 members throughout the state of Wyoming.

— Diocese of Wyoming

Bucko to join Long Island cathedral

The Cathedral of the Incarnation in the Diocese of Long Island (N.Y.) announced the appointment of the Rev. Adam Bucko to serve as minor canon, beginning in July. Bucko has been an influential voice in the movement for the recovery and renewal of Christian contemplative spirituality. Bucko is also the co-founder of the Reciprocity Foundation, serving homeless and marginalized youth in the city of New York.



From left, Cathedral of the Incarnation Dean Michael Sniffen, the Rev. Adam Bucko and Long Island Bishop Lawrence Provenzano.

As part of his full-time role, Bucko will be involved in the development and launch of the cathedral's new Center for Spiritual Imagination.

Bucko was ordained as a deacon in January 2019 and is currently finishing his training at Nashotah House in Wisconsin, an Anglo-Catholic school rooted in Benedictine spirituality. Bucko will join the cathedral staff in July. Long Island Bishop Lawrence Provenzano will ordain Bucko to the priesthood in September.

One of Bucko's primary roles at the cathedral will be the development of a new initiative, the Center for Spiritual Imagination, which is expected to launch in September. The center aims to take the spiritual heritage of cathedrals as sites of pilgrimage and holy hospitality and reimagine it for the 21st century.

Through a variety of innovative gatherings, programs and services, the Center for Spiritual Imagination is intended to be a catalyst for the integration of contemplative prayer and just practice in daily life.

— Diocese of Long Island

News service's senior editor to retire

The Rev. Mary Frances Schjonberg, Episcopal News Service's senior editor and reporter, said she intends to retire July 1. She joined the presiding bishop's staff in September 2005.



Schjonberg

"It has been a privilege to be one of the Episcopal Church's storytellers for the past nearly 14 years," Schjonberg wrote in her letter to Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. "This job has been my ministry and I hope my work has helped Episcopalians deepen their knowledge of the church we love and find inspiration in the mission and ministry of their siblings in Christ. Now, though, it is time for the next chapter in my own story."

Schjonberg first wrote for Episcopal News Service as a freelancer in 2003. "I have been blessed to have what all journalists hope for: the chance to witness history and be able to write about it," she said.

Those historic events included the election and episcopates of Curry, the 27th presiding bishop and first African American in the post, and the 26th Pre-

siding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, the first woman elected to the post. She helped cover the ongoing story of Bishop Gene Robinson (the church's first openly gay bishop) as well as the ever-expanding efforts towards full inclusion of LGBTQ people in the life of the Episcopal Church.

Schjonberg specialized in reporting on the church's governance and polity, issues affecting clergy and breaking news, especially the impact of natural disasters. That latter reportage began in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and has included numerous other storms, floods, wildfires and earthquakes in Haiti, New Zealand and the East Coast of the United States.

She has covered 40 of the last 41 Executive Council meetings, six General Conventions, four meetings of the Anglican Consultative Council and the 2008 Lambeth Conference. She has won numerous awards from the Episcopal Communicators group for her news and feature writing, as well as for her photography and videography.

— Episcopal Church Public Affairs Office

Sacred Ground race and faith dialogue series offers webinars

Individuals or groups interested in learning more about Sacred Ground: a film-based dialogue series on race and faith (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground>) are invited to an introductory webinar hosted by Katrina Browne, Sacred Ground curriculum developer, and producer/director of the acclaimed documentary *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*, and the Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, canon to the Presiding Bishop for evangelism, reconciliation, and creation care.

Built around a curriculum of documentary films, videos, and readings, Sacred Ground is a 10-part series that considers some of the major chapters of the United States of America's history of race and racism. It focuses on indigenous, black, Latino, and Asian American histories as they intersect with European American histories. It also invites participants to weave in the threads of personal and family story, economic class, and political and regional identity.

In this webinar, Spellers and Browne

share the "why and how" of the Sacred Ground series. Participants will be walked through the online Sacred Ground curriculum and resources, including the password-protected pages,



to receive an overview of all the elements of this resource. There will be time for questions.

This free one-hour webinar is offered on Tuesday, June 11 at 1pm EDT. Register at https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_pShYFolmTHywyPUCqr_NbA.

Registration is required. Go to www.episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground to begin to explore the Sacred Ground webpages, and to sign up to receive additional resources.

For questions, please contact Katrina Browne at consultantbbc@episcopalchurch.org.

The webinar is supported by Episcopal Migration Ministries. ■

OBITUARIES

Jean Vanier, who ministered to developmentally disabled, dies at age 90

Religion News Service

Jean Vanier's ministry to people with developmental disabilities began with a simple gesture: He invited three men who had spent the majority of their lives in a large institution to come and live with him.

The four settled into a house in the small village of Trosly-Breuil in France in 1964. Soon more homes opened, and L'Arche, a worldwide network of homes where people with and without intellectual disabilities live and work together as peers, was born.

Vanier, a Catholic who believed people with developmental disabilities were intrinsically worthy and had something to give and teach others, died May 7 at age 90 in France.

A winner of the Templeton Prize and numerous other honors, Vanier (pronounced Van-YAY), transformed the way people think of caring for the disabled.

But his impact was just as great on Christian ethics.

"He was a person of profound humility that was able to see into the heart of disabled people and know that they were fully human," said Stanley Hauerwas, a Christian ethicist and Duke Divinity School professor emeritus.

Hauerwas, who co-authored a book with Vanier, "Living Gently in a Violent World: The Prophetic Witness of Weakness," said Vanier challenged people's presumptions of self-importance and showed that the least presentable people are part of God's plan and, indeed, its very core.

It was not a given that Vanier should devote his life to people at the margins. He was born into a prestigious, well-to-do Canadian family. His father was the British monarch's representative in Canada, Governor General Georges Vanier. Vanier trained for a career as a naval officer with the British and later Canadian navies but then resigned his commission and went to France, where he earned a doctorate in philosophy. His appeared to be a life of upward mobility.

But in 1964, he decided to follow his mentor, a Dominican priest named Thomas Philippe who had become a chaplain to a small institution for people with disabilities. Wanting to be close to him, and horrified by the way disabled people were treated in institutions, Vanier bought a house nearby and took in people with profound developmental and intellectual disabilities.

"The cry of people with disabilities was a very simple cry: Do you love me? That's what they were asking," Vanier wrote. "And that awoke something deep within me because that was also my fundamental cry."

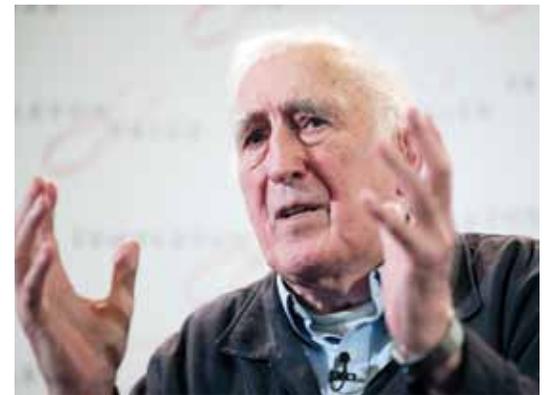
While the L'Arche organization — the word means arch or bridge — was sometimes critiqued for not addressing policy concerning people with disabilities, it was also prized for offering homes where disabled and able-bodied could live side by side as equals. Daily rituals, such as meals, prayers and birthday celebrations, are shared.

Susan McSwain, who co-founded a Durham, N.C.-based Christian nonprofit that offers various programs for developmentally and intellectually disabled people, said Vanier was a major influence on her work.

In particular, she cited Vanier's commitment to mutuality in friendship.

"A lot of work with people with disabilities comes from a mindset of someone who has something to give somebody who doesn't have something," said McSwain, the co-founder of Reality Ministries. "It's a one-way street. Jean Vanier turned all that on its head by saying, 'We're incomplete without each other.'"

His work was also distinctly Christian, though L'Arche homes are ecumenical and interfaith.



Photo/AP/Letteris Pitarakis

Jean Vanier, the founder of L'Arche, gestures as he talks during a news conference in London in 2015.

Vanier talked of the brokenness of both the disabled and the abled, and of the transformation that can happen through relationships of mutuality. He also founded a similar organization, Faith and Light, which consists of small groups that meet regularly to support and celebrate people with developmental disabilities.

"I'm not interested in doing a good job," he wrote. "I'm interested in an ecclesial vision for community and in living in a gospel-based community with people with disabilities."

Bill Gaventa, who directs the Summer Institute on Theology and Disability, said the homes created by L'Arche — there are now 150 communities in 38 countries — were meant to be spiritual.

"At the heart of that community was the sense of spirituality and a spiritual journey that they were all undergoing together," Gaventa said. "For him, it was about being called to be with the marginalized, the weak and the wounded, or as the Apostle Paul would say, 'the foolish,' and what we learn there, rather than from the powerful and the mighty."

L'Arche homes function much like extended families, said Tom Murphy, who has lived in a L'Arche community since 2002 and serves as a member of the board of directors for L'Arche Boston North.

"L'Arche is a place that provides services and care and licenses with the state to make sure disability services are carried out with excellence," said Murphy, who is writing his doctoral dissertation on Vanier. "But along with that is family."

For Vanier, who never married and early in life considered the priesthood, living among people with disabilities was a religious calling. ■

Rachel Held Evans, Christian writer of honesty and humor, dies at age 37

By Emily McFarlan Miller
Religion News Service

Rachel Held Evans, a popular progressive Christian writer and speaker, died May 4 at age 37 after a brief illness.

Evans had been in a medically induced coma for several weeks. Her husband, Dan Evans, informed followers and supporters of his wife's death on her website.

"I cannot express how much the support means to me and our kids. To everyone who has prayed, called, texted, driven, flown, given of themselves physically and financially to help ease this burden: Thank you. We are privileged. Rachel's presence in this world was a gift to us all and her work will long survive her," he wrote.

On April 14, Evans tweeted that she had been admitted to the hospital with a "flu + UTI [urinary tract infection] combo and a severe allergic reaction" to antibiotics.

Later, in an update, Dan Evans said that she began having "unexpected symptoms" while receiving treatment for an infection and that doctors found her brain was experiencing constant seizures. Doctors had placed her in a medically induced coma while working to determine the cause and treatment, he said.

Evans is best known for her popular blog and best-selling books, including "A Year of Biblical Womanhood," "Searching for Sunday" and, most recently, "Inspired." She also served on President Obama's Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

She wrote openly about her faith journey, which led her from Bryan College — a conservative evangelical school known for promoting belief in a literal, six-day creation — to the mainline Episcopal Church. Along the way, she chronicled her faith, doubt, honest questions and evolving beliefs with a sense of humor.

That didn't come without controversy, including pushback from more conservative Christians over "A Year of Biblical Womanhood," which celebrated an egalitarian view of women's roles in both marriage and the church.

But in her writing, she presented a vision of the church as a place with room for everyone.

"This is what God's kingdom is like: a bunch of outcasts and oddballs gathered at a table, not because they are rich



Courtesy photo

Rachel Held Evans

or worthy or good, but because they are hungry, because they said yes," she wrote in "Searching for Sunday."

Fellow writers praised Evans for sharing the considerable platform she built, both on her blog and at "Why Christian?" and "Evolving Faith," the conferences she co-founded for evolving or progressive Christians who aren't sure where they belong on the spiritual landscape.

Evans was raised in a nondenominational, evangelical Christian family in Dayton, Tenn. — the home, she liked to point out, of the 1925 Scopes "Monkey Trial," the watershed case about teaching evolution in schools that caused many conservative Christians to feel alienated from the American mainstream.

As a student at Bryan, Evans began asking tough questions about her faith, like why God would send people to hell, which she wrote about in her first book.

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NEWS

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“Maybe what little bit of what we did here can be an example for the larger communion and, for those who chose to stay away, that maybe in some way this will help them at least think about coming back.”

Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda did not send members to the ACC-17 meeting. Some bishops have said they will not attend the Lambeth Conference because they object to the theological stances of other bishops and provinces.

The Rev. Michael Barlowe, the Episcopal Church's clergy member on ACC, called Konieczny's weeklong effort “courageous.” The Episcopal Church, he said after the meeting, was served well by Konieczny “graciously trying to engage a very controversial subject.”

The entire ACC was gracious during the nearly three hours of debate and negotiation, said Rosalie Ballentine of the Diocese of the Virgin Islands, The Episcopal Church's lay member.

“It does show that we can disagree in a loving way,” she said. “Some of us in The Episcopal Church sometimes need to learn to step back and realize that it's really supposed to be about Jesus, about God, about how we walk in faith, as opposed to getting our way. A lot of that was demonstrated today.”

Debating ‘included’ versus ‘welcomed’

The language in the resolution's preamble touched all the rifts in the communion over sexuality and went too far for some. It got no better when an amendment proposed changing the last clause, “they should be fully included in the life of the Anglican Communion,” to “they are fully welcomed in the life of the Anglican Communion.”

The members debated the nuances of being “included” or “welcomed,” and whether the understanding of either word changed when translated into other languages.

Konieczny accepted the amendment to move the resolution forward and it passed 38-20, with 17 abstentions.

During the ensuing debate on the resolution, Sudanese Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo said that in his majority-Muslim country “tomorrow the church will be closed” if the ACC agreed to the resolution. “If we pass this resolution, we are sending a very wrong signal” to the church and the world, he said.

Bishop Eraste Bigirimana, from the Burundian Diocese of Bujumbura, said the communion has been divided since Anglicans formally began talking about sexuality at the 1998 Lambeth Conference. The division, he said, comes because not all believe that “the Bible is very clear: fornication is a sin, adultery is a sin, homosexuality is a sin for the Christian.” Bigirimana said, “The Bible has to be our reference.”

Diocese of Nairobi Bishop Joel Waweru opposed the resolution because it “sets doctrine,” something the ACC does not do. He said ACC members “have not had any time to discuss issues of human sexuality” but were now being asked to vote on a resolution about it. And,

Waweru argued, the resolution ought to be expanded to include people who have suffered discrimination for any reason.

“As one coming from the global south,” the bishop said he agreed with others who worried that passing the resolution would give fodder to conservative Anglicans, prompting even more of them to boycott the 2020 Lambeth Conference.

Canadian Diocese of Edmonton Bishop Jane Alexander told her colleagues that the ACC resolution simply reminded the church about the yet-unfulfilled commitment the 1998 Lambeth Conference made via Resolution 1.10 to listen to LGBTQ people.

If the ACC cannot reaffirm the respect and dignity of those who have been marginalized due to their human sexuality, she said, “then my heart is broken and we've broken our Baptismal Covenant,” and “we didn't mean a word” of the Code of Conduct, which members passed at the start of the meeting that contains a similar statement.

Near the end of nearly 45-minute debate, Konieczny said he would not support a proposal that was made to delete the entire preamble. He said he worked on the resolution all week and accepted “multiple revisions” because he was conscious of the differences that ACC members represent.

“I'm distressed. My heart is broken. My faith is challenged that” the council cannot affirm the statement made in the week-old Code of Conduct and “that we want to send a message to the world that we will respect you at a distance, but you're not welcome. This is not the body of Christ in which I belong,” Konieczny said.

For the ACC to debate whether anyone was a child of God and welcome in the church “is beyond my understanding,” he said, adding that 50% of the geographical areas of the member churches “disenfranchise, incarcerate and execute people who differ in their human sexuality, yet we say nothing.”

“Instead, we're worried about the politics instead of the people.”

After the members paused to pray, ACC Vice Chair Margaret Swinson ruled that the proposal to delete the preamble “destroys the spirit in which this motion was offered too much” for her to exercise her discretion to allow it to come to a vote.

Welby suggested that the council pause for table group discussion. That pause led into what became a nearly 50-minute “tea break,” during which various combinations of members and staff huddled, sometimes joined by Konieczny, trying to craft a compromise. Welby was often at the center.

With that draft in hand, Swinson asked the members to listen to Welby and decide if they could accept it as a compromise. He reminded the members that the Anglican Communion has fiercely disagreed in the past about contraception, divorce and women's or-

dination. “So, we must not panic” about the current chapter in the communion's nearly 30-year-old debate about sexual identity, Welby said.

The archbishop of Canterbury is known as the “focus of unity” for the ACC, Lambeth Conference and the Primate's Meeting. In that spirit, Welby said it is his “fault and my responsibility” that certain people are upset because some people were invited to the 2020 Lambeth Conference and others were not.

“It may be that at the end of time, I

from a lack of formal interpretation or translation services.

“Out of respect and love and affection for our archbishop and out of love and affection for our member churches, and especially for my brothers in the global south, and for the unity of the church,” Konieczny said that he was “willing to accept this amendment from my brother, Joel.”

Struggling to speak, Konieczny said he wanted his “brother bishops in the south” to know that “we are willing to talk and walk in unity and love together, and encourage them to come and meet with us.”

Waweru's amendment passed 83-0 with three abstentions in a straw poll meant to test its strength. Waweru, Chilongani and Bigirimana came to Konieczny to hug him. The Kenyan bishop kissed Konieczny's episcopal ring, and he responded in kind as the members began to sing “Bless the Lord, my soul.”

The council formally convened and passed the amended resolution “by general consent.”

The resolution, titled “The dignity of human beings,” says “The Anglican Consultative Council

- notes with concern the pattern of invitations to the Lambeth Conference 2020 and requests that the Archbishop of Canterbury as a focus of unity ensures that a listening

process is put in place with supportive and independent facilitation in order to hear the concerns and voices of people especially those who have felt themselves marginalized with regard to sexuality. The Archbishop of Canterbury will also be responsible for compiling all the work done in this area across the Anglican Communion since Lambeth 1998 and reporting to the [ACC] Standing Committee and ACC18.

- requests the Archbishop of Canterbury to look at all issues of discrimination across the Anglican Communion and make recommendations to the Standing Committee and to report back to ACC18.”

The council later rejected a previously filed resolution that would have asked Welby to consider establishing a theological task group to clarify the core identity and boundaries of the Anglican Communion in the 21st century.

Konieczny said he feared the resolution's actual intent was to create a body with the power to declare “who's in and who's out in the Anglican Communion.” The vote, 43-35 with eight abstentions, came after Swinson ruled that it had passed after her request for “general consent,” and Konieczny, along with a third of his colleagues, requested a show of hands. It was the first time in recent memory that the ACC refused to accept a measure favored by the archbishop of Canterbury.

“Praise God that you voted against what I wanted,” Welby later told the members. “That's Anglicanism.” ■

Full ENS coverage of the meeting is available at www.episcopalchurch.org.



Photo/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS

From left, Diocese of Nairobi Bishop Joel Waweru puts his hand on Oklahoma Bishop Ed Konieczny's shoulder as he and Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, center, read a possible compromise to a resolution that threatened to derail the ACC meeting.

will understand that I got that wrong, and I will answer for it in one respect or another on the day of judgment,” he said. “Where I handled it badly, which I am sure I did, for one group or another, I want to apologize to you because I have not helped the communion, either for those who are concerned by who was invited or those who are concerned by who was not invited.

“I ask your forgiveness where I made mistakes.”

The compromise wording, which came to the council as an amendment by Waweru and eliminated the original preamble, notes “with concern the pattern of invitations to the Lambeth Conference 2020” and asks Welby to put in place a listening process “with supportive and independent facilitation in order to hear the concerns and voices of people especially those who have felt themselves marginalized with regard to their sexuality.”

Welby must also organize the collection of the work already done in the communion since Lambeth 1998 Resolution 1.10 called for such a process. He is to report to the Standing Committee and ACC-18 in 2022. Lastly, the resolution asks him to report to both groups about “all issues of discrimination” across the communion.

After his apology and explanation of Waweru's amendment, Welby apologized in French and translated the amendment into French. He asked Diocese of Northern Argentina Nick Drayson to translate both into Spanish and Diocese of Central Tanganyika Bishop Dickson Chilongani to do the same in Swahili. Members for whom English is not their first language struggled throughout the meeting

NEWS

Splinter Anglican group announces alternative meeting

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

The turmoil over the 2020 Lambeth Conference continues, most recently with a communiqué from the leaders of the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON), reiterating their contention that the gathering of Anglican Communion bishops is flawed because it will include bishops from provinces that allow same-sex marriage.

The group also announced that it will call a meeting of Anglican Communion bishops for June 8-14, 2020, in Kigali, Rwanda, just weeks before the Lambeth gathering. In 2008, its inaugural year, GAFCON staged a similar pre-Lambeth meeting in Jerusalem. When GAFCON was formed in 2008, its founders said “moral compromise, doctrinal error and the collapse of biblical witness in parts of the Anglican Communion” had reached a critical level.

“On the one hand, we have no interest in attempting to rival Lambeth 2020,” GAFCON’s May 2 letter from its Primates Council said. “On the other hand, we do not want our bishops to be deprived of faithful fellowship while we wait for order in the communion to be restored.”

The council said the Rwanda meeting is meant primarily for bishops who have already decided to boycott Lambeth. However, any bishop of the Anglican Communion who supports its “Jerusalem Declaration” and Resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference, defining marriage as “the lifelong union of a man and a woman” is invited.

While Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has been criticized for his refusal to invite the same-sex spouses of bishops to the 2020 Lambeth Conference, GAFCON said in its 2018 “Letter to the Churches” that Welby should not invite bishops from provinces that “have endorsed by word or deed sexual practices which are in contradiction to the teaching of Scripture and Resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference, unless they have repented of their actions and reversed their decisions.”

“We have not yet received a response from the Archbishop of Canterbury,” the council’s letter said.

As noted in the 2004 Windsor Report, Lambeth Conference decisions do not carry the force of canonical law in part because there is no single set of canons applicable across the entire communion.

GAFCON’s 2018 letter also asked Welby to invite as full members to the Lambeth Conference bishops of the splinter groups known as the Province of the Anglican Church in North America

and have no intention of doing so.

“I did transfer out of a revisionist body that had left the teaching of the Scriptures and the Anglican Communion, and I became canonically resident in another province of the Anglican Communion. I have never left.”

Foley said being given observer status “is an insult to both our bishops, many of whom have made costly stands for the Gospel, and the majority of Anglicans around the world who have long stood with us as a province of the Anglican Communion.”

During the Anglican Consultative Council’s recent meeting, Secretary General Josiah Idowu-Fearon said that GAFCON had acted in a way that “causes confusion and potential division.” He said that calls for GAFCON bishops to attend Lambeth as full participants were divisive because the bishops “are clearly not members of the communion.”

GAFCON’s letter also announced that it had affirmed the interim report of its Task Force on Women in the Episcopate, which after a “four-year comprehensive study,” recommended that GAFCON provinces should not allow women to be bishops “until and unless a strong consensus to change emerges after prayer, consultation and continued study of Scripture among the GAFCON fellowship.” ■



and the Province of the Anglican Church in Brazil. Instead, on April 26, Welby announced that he had invited the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), the Anglican Church of Brazil and the Reformed Evangelical Anglican Church of South Africa (REACH-SA) to send observers to the conference. They will have the same status as representatives from other Christian churches, such as the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Methodist, Lutheran and Reformed churches, and multilateral bodies including the World Council of Churches and the Global Christian Forum.

Archbishop Foley Beach of the Anglican Church in North America, the new chair of GAFCON’s Primates Council, responded by saying Welby had based his decision on “a partisan, divisive, and false narrative by wrongly asserting that I left the Anglican Communion. I have never left the Anglican Communion,

AC BUDGET continued from page 3

The Inter-Anglican Budget is heavily dependent on the provinces’ contributions, which account for 73% of all unrestricted income. Ten of the communion’s 40 provinces and six extra-provincial



Photo/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS

Episcopal Church ACC member Rosalie Ballentine of the Diocese of the Virgin Islands asks for more information about the Inter-Anglican Budget.

churches contribute 94% of the income. They are (in percentage order) Church of England; the Episcopal Church; Australia; Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia; Canada; Wales; Ireland; Hong Kong; Scotland; and Japan.

White’s report said “several” provinces contribute “substantially below the sum requested.” According to a chart in the report, 16 provinces paid nothing in 2018: Brazil, Burundi, Central Africa, Central America, Congo, Nigeria, North India, Mexico, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, South East Asia, South India, Tanzania, Uganda and West

Africa. Fifteen paid nothing in 2017, 17 in 2016 and 16 in 2015.

The current voluntary contribution has been calculated based on the province’s historical contribution plus annual inflation. White’s report suggests that the number of active bishops in a province is a reasonable indication of its size and the average salary of bishops in a province points to its financial strength. The formula would automatically adjust for numerical and economic growth and for inflation, the report said.

The budget report said total income might increase by 20%-40% if the proposed formula is applied and if half of the current non-contributing provinces started to make regular annual contributions.

The communion’s standing committee has regularly discussed “introduction of an operational sanction,” White said, and has considered telling those provinces that can afford to contribute but do not that their representatives to ACC meetings and the Primates Meeting would not be reimbursed by the ACC’s budget, as they are now. However, the resolution passed by ACC members does not include that provision.

In a separate resolution, the ACC accepted a six-year strategic plan for the Anglican Communion Office’s work that could potentially at least double the office’s current annual spending of £2.0 to £2.5 million (\$2.6 million to \$3.2 million). It says that \$6.6 million in spending by 2025 is “a reasonable ambition.” ■

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NEWS

Episcopalians join thousands on pilgrimage to historical site at former Japanese internment camp

By Pat McCaughan
Episcopal News Service

Episcopalians from the Diocese of Los Angeles were among thousands who journeyed April 27 to Manzanar National Historic Site, one of the 10 internment camps where nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans were held during World War II, an injustice that speakers said must “never happen again.”

In the desert heat and in the shadow of the snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountains, the Kyodo Taiko drummers from the University of California Los Angeles opened the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the first pilgrimage to the former war relocation center in 1969. The day’s events also included stops at the visitor’s center, the museum and a recreation of the rustic wooden barracks that had housed four families each.

The site is located near Independence, Calif., about 220 miles north of Los Angeles.

During an interfaith service, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and Shinto worshippers laid flowers at the iconic Manzanar cemetery monument, where some detainees are buried.

A crowd estimated at about 2,000 listened to speakers who included representatives of the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation and the National Park Service, local activists, politicians, community organizers and Tomochika Uyama, the Japanese consul general in San Francisco.

Nihad Awad, co-founder of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), thanked the Japanese-American community for its support in difficult times and told the gathering that the injustices leveled against Japanese Americans must never be permitted to happen again.

After teaching his children about the mass incarcerations of Japanese Americans during the war, they feared the same fate amid growing anti-Muslim sentiment in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, Awad said — so much so that his 10-year-old daughter “packed a suitcase and was ready to be picked up by the federal government.”

“CAIR and a lot of civil rights organizations are working hard each day to ensure that this will never happen to her or any children in America,” he said to cheers and applause.

Awad’s story felt very personal for Glenn Nishibayashi, a member of St.



Photo/Ben Soriano

Episcopalians joined worshippers at an interfaith service, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first pilgrimage to Manzanar internment camp, one of 10 where 120,000 Japanese Americans were held during World War II.

Mary’s Episcopal Church, a historically Japanese American congregation in Los Angeles. His mother, Frances Kako, was 16 when she and her family were sent to the camp in Heart Mountain, Wyo.

Kako’s family ran a business that traded goods between the U.S. and Japan, but after the Dec. 7, 1941, attack by Japan on Pearl Harbor, “they had to shut down the business; they lost everything,” Nishibayashi told ENS.

Nishibayashi, 62, a retired financial planner, was among several dozen Episcopalians from the Los Angeles diocese who made the bus trip to the camp to commemorate the anniversary.

“To think how far we still have to go,” he said. “I realized that we are not much better than we were 75 years ago. It feels like we’re heading backwards these days. It reminds me that we have to be vigilant about fighting racism and xenophobia. While it was in the past, it’s also in the present.”

Nishibayashi and other children of camp survivors say their parents rarely, if ever, discussed those experiences. “It was a dark time for them, and they really didn’t want to share about it. Essentially, they were in prison when they had done nothing wrong,” he said.

His son Kendall’s search for answers led them to Heart Mountain and the discovery of photos of Nishibayashi’s grandfather and his mother’s speech as valedictorian of the first high school graduating class at the camp. Published in the Heart Mountain Sentinel at the time, she told some 240 classmates, “we face the future with faith in the U.S.”

Although forced to leave behind all they held dear, Kako called it “a tribute to American democracy ... that we have been able to pick up so quickly the strings that we dropped, and that we, as a body, are privileged today to take part in this graduation ceremony.”

“We, as the graduating class have two choices before us today,” Kako wrote. “We can remain passive and live in the memory of the things we loved and knew back on the Pacific Coast. Or else we can stand strong and erect and look straight into the future.”

She charged the group to “look forward with a faith in democracy that is shining and strong, for we know that the real America has a big and understanding heart.”

Still, Nishibayashi said, his mother struggled with depression most of her adult life, he believes, because of her camp experiences.

His father, Masaru Nishibayashi, was 18 when his family was sent to the camp in Jerome, Ark., Nishibayashi said. “They dressed in their Sunday best,” he said. “They did not resist. My father told me that ‘we were silent. No one spoke out or spoke up for us. We knew we were alone.’” His father’s family members also lost their business, which included renting Asian artifacts and props to Hollywood film studios.

Masuru Nishibayashi served as a translator for U.S. Army military intelligence under Gen. Douglas MacArthur, he said. Although detained, he was granted a special pass to come and go from the camp, a card that Nishibayashi still possesses. After the war, his father earned a doctorate in chemistry and became a research chemist.

St. Mary’s, where his parents met and married, still bears witness to the past.

A stained-glass window depicts the shields of the dioceses where the 10 internment camps were located. At the top of the window is the Episcopal Church shield; they are connected by a depiction of barbed wire.

Near the baptismal font is a plaque, listing names of those who served in World War II, including members of the famed 442nd unit. Considered to be the most decorated unit in U.S. military history, its members were made up almost entirely of second-generation Japanese Americans, who fought while many of their family members were in camps.

“My father’s name is on that plaque, and I show it to people when they come to St. Mary’s,” Nishibayashi said. Also posted in the church are copies of Executive Order 9066, signed in 1942 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorizing creation of the camps, and of a “reparations letter” that decades later accompanied \$20,000 payments to survivors.

Nishibayashi laughed. “It’s part of the family lore that my grandmother died on the day [President] Reagan signed that [reparations] act. We call it her last act of defiance, as if she were saying, ‘I’m going to live long enough so you have to say sorry to me.’”

Sharon Matsushige Crandall, 53, also was on the bus trip. For her, the act of standing on the land where Japanese Americans once were held reduced the



Photo/Dick Snyder

A recreated sign is displayed outside one of the rebuilt barracks.

sting of past shame connected with their detention and helped alleviate present challenges of feeling caught between cultures.

Crandall also noted the sea of Americans of Asian, African, Latino and European descent, of all ages and genders, who attended the commemoration. “It felt so good to see such a diverse group of people there,” she said. “Years ago, the only people that would even care about something like that were other Japanese people.”

“It was very emotional for me,” she told ENS. “It was almost like the minute I stepped off that bus, I could just feel it, a sense of being understood in that space, with all those people.”

Although her parents shared details of their camp experience with her, she has no tangible record of their early lives, she said. “Sometimes, people post pictures on Facebook of their parents when they were kids, and it makes me so sad,” she told ENS.

“I don’t have any idea what my mom was like growing up. Her family’s possessions were being stored in a church,

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Photo/Kathy Nishibayashi

Glenn Nishibayashi, in front of the iconic monument marking the cemetery at the former relocation center. The obelisk reads “Soul Consoling Tower.”

NEWS

COOK continued from page 1

ring to herself and her golden retriever, Teddy, before the collision.

She said she has repented for the DUI accident and the loss of Palermo's life.

"Repentance is two things, at least," she said. "Repentance is a feeling and repentance is also amendment of life. In the beginning, I was absolutely overwhelmed with shame and grief and hopelessness at what had happened that I'd been responsible for."

Palermo's family opposed her requests



Courtesy photo

Heather Cook speaks during the S.O.B.E.R. October 2017 event at Maryland Correctional Institution for Women.

to leave prison early as well as the length of her prison sentence, saying she had not been given enough time for her crimes.

"While no amount of prison time would seem sufficient, we feel the court today could have sent a stronger signal that our community takes driving while under the influence and driving while distracted seriously," said Alisa Rock, a sister-in-law of Palermo, speaking for the family after Cook's sentencing. "It feels lukewarm."

The Palermo family, through its attorney, declined to comment for this story.

Her fellow Episcopalians have mixed feelings about Cook. There is anger over her crimes and a feeling that she was an embarrassment. She's also forced the denomination to rethink its often-cozy relationship with alcohol that caused some members to call themselves "Whiskeypalians."

A commission set up after Cook's arrest found that the Episcopal Church often failed to intervene with clergy who struggled with alcoholism.

"In many instances, devoid of expectations for substantive recovery and amendment of life, the desire to forgive has undermined the church's collective responsibility to due diligence in the work of screening, recognizing, and diagnosing impairment in church leaders, as well as intervening and treating when appropriate," a denominational report found.

After her arrest in 2014, it was revealed that four years earlier, Cook had been stopped for drunken driving on the state's Eastern Shore. Some diocesan members said information about the initial incident was not disclosed when Cook was elected as suffragan, or deputy, bishop.

Bishop Todd Ousley, who heads the Episcopal Church office tasked with responding to its Commission on Impairment and Leadership's 2017 recommen-

dations, has known Cook for more than a decade. He once served with her on a church committee on congregations in small communities.

He described Cook as "a very gifted priest" with the "potential to be a very gifted bishop but also someone who had a dark side to her."

Some of her peers questioned how Cook ever became bishop in light of her drinking and driving history.

Diocese of Maryland Bishop Eugene Sutton was not available for an interview, but spokeswoman Carrie Graves said: "We hold Rachel Palermo and her family in prayer, and we pray for Heather Cook and all involved in the aftermath of this tragedy."

Bishop Chilton Knudsen, 72, who was chosen to replace Cook in the Maryland diocese, said she has met with her predecessor "on my own volition" and because "I also want Heather to know that not everybody in the Episcopal Church has it out for her."

Knudsen, an expert on alcoholism who is celebrating 31 years of sobriety this month, said people in the Baltimore-based diocese continue to have a range of emotions about Cook.

"I think if there is distress or anger, it's about the entire disruption of life and not just about a DUI that didn't get aired in the light of day," said Knudsen, who is now assisting bishop in the Diocese of Washington.

"She will have people who will be mad at her for the rest of their lives. That's their problem, in my view, but I believe the majority of people are past the worst of the anger and distress and sadness that I saw."

Knudsen also took on another role in Cook's life at the prison: She was the officiant at Cook's wedding to longtime companion Mark Hansen, 61, a lay Episcopal minister and recovering alcoholic who lives on the Eastern Shore and met Cook when they were both attending General Theological Seminary.

The fall 2017 ceremony occurred in the same room where Hansen and Knudsen have visited her in separate one-hour slots, with a table next to the guard's desk serving as the altar for her wedding. Murals on the walls around them feature cartoon characters and female superheroes painted by a prison art club.

Cook, who usually wore a denim shirt, blue jeans and white sneakers for visitors, was permitted to wear a powder blue dress for the occasion.

The former bishop said she never lost her faith while in prison.

But she did feel a lost sense of purpose because she no longer held holy orders within the Episcopal Church. Now, she said, she has claimed a new role.

Cook, a self-described "poster child for alcoholism," hopes to advocate for women who are in prison and those who struggle with addiction.

The daughter of an Episcopal priest who said he was an alcoholic, Cook spearheaded "S.O.B.E.R. October" events for the last two years at the prison, serving as a keynoter and organizing other speakers on the topic of sobriety.

Maryland prison officials declined requests for interviews about Cook's time

in prison.

Gerard Shields, a spokesman for the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, said Cook earned time off for good behavior.

"She was infraction free, worked at one of our Maryland Correctional Enterprise shops, attended alcohol counseling and provided ministerial help to other inmates," he said in an email.

Cook's parole application packet includes a letter of apology she wrote to Palermo's widow as part of a Victim/Offender Impact Class Education program.

In a page and a half, she expresses sorrow for the "tidal wave of pain" she has caused, says she prays for the family and recalls the apology she made on the day she was sentenced in 2015.

"I am sorry that my failure to take action about a disease of addiction cost your husband's life," she wrote.

"I am sorry I drove carelessly and took my eyes off the road, not seeing what had happened so not responding quickly to render help. I'm sorry that the publicity made everything harder and deprived you of the privacy of your grieving. I hurt for all of it."

The Rev. Lettie M. Carr, a chaplain at the prison for 22 years through 2017, said Cook served as her clerk. Carr said the former bishop helped inmates sign up for classes and handed out religious material.

"She learned to make peace with herself and with God and with the system," said Carr, now an associate pastor at First Baptist Church of Glenarden in Landon, Md.

"I trusted her, never had any hesitation with her, never sensed any, if you will, competition. She never tried to exalt herself in any way. She was very respectful of the other residents."

Cook once addressed a crowd of some 150 inmates at an ecumenical gathering around Thanksgiving, about a month

and a year after she had arrived at the prison in the central Maryland town of Jessup.

Though no longer an official faith leader, Cook said she views the mutual support among inmates as a form of ministry.

"This system is so bleak and cold that we do that for one another, that when one is weak, another is strong," she said of life in the prison that houses women with security levels ranging from pre-release to maximum. "I have been the recipient as much as I have been the giver."

Ousley hopes the church has moved from "potentially appearing to be a clergy protection society" to one where Episcopalians will report a staffer who seems to be impaired. He said the screening



Photo/Adelle M. Banks/RNS

Mark Hansen married Heather Cook in 2017.

process for bishop candidates has been enhanced and is likely to become even more stringent.

"We don't want to have another incident like that," he said of Cook's accident and Palermo's death. "And we don't want someone to die and we don't want our clergy to be hurting and not functioning at their best. So it's about love and care for the whole community."

Upon hearing of some of the denomination's changes and plans, Cook said "God bless the Episcopal Church for doing what they've done." ■

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Episcopal Church ready for next wave of growth through new church plant grants

The Episcopal Church's Task Force on Church Planting and Congregational Redevelopment announced today that its first set of grants for New Episcopal Communities are now available for Episcopal dioceses and other groups who are developing new worshipping communities and missional enterprises.

The grants are part of a \$2.5 million initiative funded by General Convention in 2018 that seeks to support emerging communities in the Episcopal Church and that builds partnerships within and beyond the church, expands the language of ministry, and creates new ways for the church to engage the people of God.

"Building upon the successes of our 89 new congregations and missional enterprises over the last few years, we are eager to help the Episcopal Church take the next step forward through this new round of grant funding," said the Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner, the task force's chairperson. "We are ready to help our dioceses and planters continue the 'Jesus Movement' through specific grants that are targeted for each phase of new ministry development."

Four categories of grants are now available to new Episcopal communities:

- Discernment Grants of up to \$5,000. These one-time grants are for people discerning a call to start a new ministry. Funds can be used for assessment, research and feasibility studies.

- Seed Grants of up to \$30,000 to begin a new ministry, which assist with start-up costs and initial operating expenses of an experimental new ministry after a discernment period is completed and a ministry plan is developed. No matching funds are needed for these grants.

- Growth Grants of up to \$30,000 to assist in deeper and fuller development of new ministries as they meet the goals of their ministry plan established in the Discernment and Seed grant phases on their way to sustainability and health. These grants require a dollar-for-dollar match or other in-kind support provided by the combined contributions of the partner congregation and/or diocese.

- Harvest Grants of up to \$40,000 to assist ministries with potential for long-term growth in building capacity and in promoting sustainability beyond grants. These grants require a dollar-for-dollar match or other in-kind support provided by the combined contributions of the partner congregation and/or diocese.

"We've learned so much from our community of planters and thriving new congregations and mission enterprise zones over the past three years of new ministry development," said the Rev. Thomas Brackett, the Episcopal Church manager for church planting and redevelopment. "This new round of grants provides the church with what we believe to be the best tools for a nimble, flexible, responsible

grant-making structure that promotes growth, accountability, and creativity."

Grants may be used to develop or strengthen new worshipping communities or enterprise-based ministries, not in the relaunching or development of an existing ministry. Church plants and new congregations may assume traditional or innovative forms, but their primary gathering point is around word and sacrament, out of which their ministry flows. Mission Enterprise Zones primarily gather around ministries of service, justice, and mercy with communities of a particular demographic. They are experimental in nature and may be designed to run for a limited amount of time.

The principal leader or mission developer of any new ministry must take part in a mutual discernment and assessment process before grant applications can be considered. Mission developers must also receive regular coaching by an International Coaching Federation licensed or trained coach.

The deadline for the first round of grant applications is July 15, 2019; applications will then be accepted afterwards on rolling basis through the end of the current ministry triennium in 2021.

For more information, or to apply for a grant, visit <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/church-planting-and-missional-development>. ■

EVANS continued from page 5

"Evolving in Monkey Town" was published in 2010 and later re-released as "Faith Unraveled."

Evans brought her sense of humor to those questions in 2012's "A Year of Biblical Womanhood," in which she took the Bible's instructions for women to hilarious extremes and shared what she learned from women of diverse faiths, including Amish and Jewish women.

When she was growing up, the word "evangelical" had seemed synonymous to her with "real" or "authentic," she told Religion News Service several years ago. She finally abandoned the label in 2014, after a number of evangelical Christians canceled sponsorships for children in need after the charity World Vision announced it would employ people in same-sex marriages. (World Vision later reversed that decision.)

That incident "confirmed what I'd been suspecting for a while — that my values were simply out of line with the evangelical culture's values," she said. "And by then, I'd just grown weary of fighting for a label that no longer fit."

She wrote about her subsequent journey away from church and what kept leading her back in 2015's "Searching for Sunday," and about rediscovering a love for Scripture in 2018's "Inspired."

She worshipped with her family at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Cleveland, Tenn.

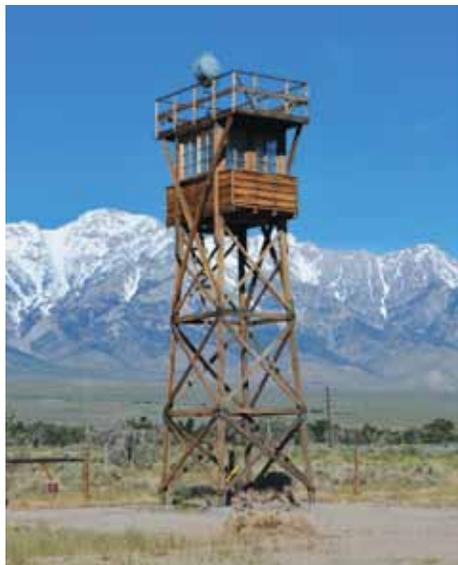
"Death is a part of life," Evans wrote this year in a Facebook post at the beginning of Lent, the solemn time of penance and fasting many Christians observe leading up to Easter.

"My prayer for you this season is that you make time to celebrate that reality, and to grieve that reality, and that you will know you are not alone. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust." ■

MANZANAR continued from page 8

but the church was burned. People in the community always believed the church was burned because it was known that they were helping the Japanese."

The community was Brawley, a rural farming area inland from San Diego. Her farmer grandparents were poor, with seven children and few resources. The family plunged into survival mode when her grandfather was arrested, days



Photo/Dick Snyder

A recreated guard tower stands at the site.

after Pearl Harbor, suspected of being a spy because he had a short-wave radio. Soon after, the family was sent to the camp in Poston, Ariz.

"My mom was 9 years old when they went to the camp," Crandall said. "When my grandfather was arrested, he told my grandmother that, as long as you stay in the United States, I'll find you. But if she went back to Japan, he wasn't going to look for her."

When the war ended and families were released, her grandmother had nowhere to go. They stayed in the camp, eventually returning to Los Angeles, Crandall said.

In spite of the challenging times, the family still found a way to focus on joy, an important part of the story, she said. "They arrived to a brown desert, and when they left, they left a green oasis. That's the Japanese way, to make it better than when you arrived. They planted gardens and tried to make it a home."

Yet, ever afterward, "my mother lived lean, very lean," Crandall recalled. "She was absolutely someone who didn't cling to things, to memorabilia and things like that. Whenever I would complain as a teenager, she'd say, 'Imagine if you were told to pack a bag and take only what you could carry out the door? What



A recreation of wooden barracks depicts the rustic conditions under which detainees lived, with no heat or running water.

would you carry?"

The shame associated with the camp experience prompted her parents to raise her and her siblings "as fully American," but they felt caught between cultures, Crandall said.

"I think that part of this intergenerational trauma is this face of, who am I and where do I belong? I'm not fully American because of the way I look. But my parents raised us to be fully American. Part of that was being Christian and eating a certain type of food and not speaking my native language," she said.

"I think they were worried that we would be identified as not American and not loyal, and people don't understand that today, and I think sometimes people shame me for that."

The trip to Manzanar, part of a Transformational Journeys pilgrimage offered by All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena, Calif., released some of that shame, she said. "I felt when we were at Manzanar the shame that I think that my family and all the internees must have felt, and the importance of naming it so we don't pass it on." ■

COMMENTARY

How safe is your place of worship?

By Christopher P. Scheitle and
Jeffery T. Ulmer
Religion News Service

Many Americans may be wondering what security measures are in place at their place of worship after a gunman's attack on a San Diego synagogue service on April 27 left one person dead and three others wounded.

The same question was raised after 11 people were killed in the Oct. 27 shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh.

The San Diego synagogue, Chabad Poway, had no security guards — it couldn't afford them. An off-duty border patrol agent was among the congregants, and there are reports he both tried to disarm the shooter and then chased after him outside of the synagogue.

Chabad Poway Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein told *The New York Times* that a hired security guard may have stopped any attack before it began.

"This may have been prevented if we had that," said Goldstein, who was injured in the attack.

President Donald Trump also alluded to this question when he said "the results would have been far better" if the Tree of Life congregation had armed guards or members.

According to news reports at the time, the Tree of Life synagogue did not have armed guards present at the time of the shooting. Many community leaders rebuked Trump's statements and argued that increasing armed security was not the solution.

We are a sociologist and criminologist who in 2015 conducted a national study of religious congregations' experiences with, fears of and preparations for crime.

Our study, which was supported by the National Science Foundation, featured a survey of over 1,300 places of worship and in-depth interviews with more than 50 congregational leaders.

We asked each leader — individuals with significant knowledge of the congregation's operations — about the congregation's history of crime, its security measures, the individual's assessment of future crime risk and fears, and a vari-

ety of questions about the congregation's operations and neighborhood.

While neither the Chabad Poway nor the Tree of Life synagogue was part of our study, the results of this work may hold useful insights for conversations about crime and security in places of worship. Here's what we found.

Crimes, most commonly vandalism and theft, were committed at about 40% of congregations in the year prior to the survey. This overall percentage was not significantly different across religious traditions.

When we dug deeper, though, we found that synagogues and mosques deal with crime-related problems that are much different than the average church.

Our survey found, for instance, that synagogues and mosques were three times more likely than congregations overall to have received an explicit threat in the prior year.

Respondents also reported significantly greater fear that congregants would be assaulted or murdered on the congregation's property. This helps explain another pattern we found: Jewish and Muslim congregations are in many ways far ahead of congregations representing other religious traditions when it comes to thinking about and implementing security measures.

The survey showed that 40% of congregations have in place at least four of the 18 security measures asked about in our survey. About 43% of congregations have an alarm system, 28% use security cameras and 25% have taken steps to restrict the number of entries into their buildings.

Our interviews found that most places of worship have a hard time implementing security. Some of this is simply not enough money. Larger and wealthier congregations tend to have more security in place.

synagogues and mosques were much more likely than the average congregation to have security cameras, restricted entry points, security guards and other security measures. For example, only 17% of all the congregations in our survey

reported any use of security guards, whether full-time, part-time or for special events. This compares to just over 54% of synagogues and 28% of mosques. Synagogues are also more likely to have communicated with their local police.

Beyond the statistics, our in-depth interviews with leaders of congregations found that synagogues and mosques tend to put a great deal of thought into security. For synagogues in particular, our interviews found that local organizations are effective at sharing information and resources about security threats and strategies — for example, the Jewish Community Relations Councils.

The U.S. must find ways to address the threats and violence against synagogues, mosques and other places of worship. In the meantime, congregations can evaluate their security risks and precautions.

The sparse resources of most congregations present some limitations, but there are steps they can take at little or no cost. For instance, congregations can assess whether entry points should be restricted to increase the ability of staff and members to observe who enters the building.

Congregations are not alone in these efforts. Many local police departments will conduct a security assessment for specific congregations or offer a workshop for multiple congregations. Furthermore, many congregations have members who have relevant skills, from installing new locks to setting up security cameras. Simply starting a conversation within your community can help your congregation identify these resources.

This is an updated version of an article originally published on Nov. 2, 2018. ■

Christopher P. Scheitle is an assistant professor of Sociology at West Virginia University and Jeffery T. Ulmer is a professor of sociology and criminology, at Pennsylvania State University. The views expressed in this commentary do not necessarily represent those of Religion News Service. This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license.



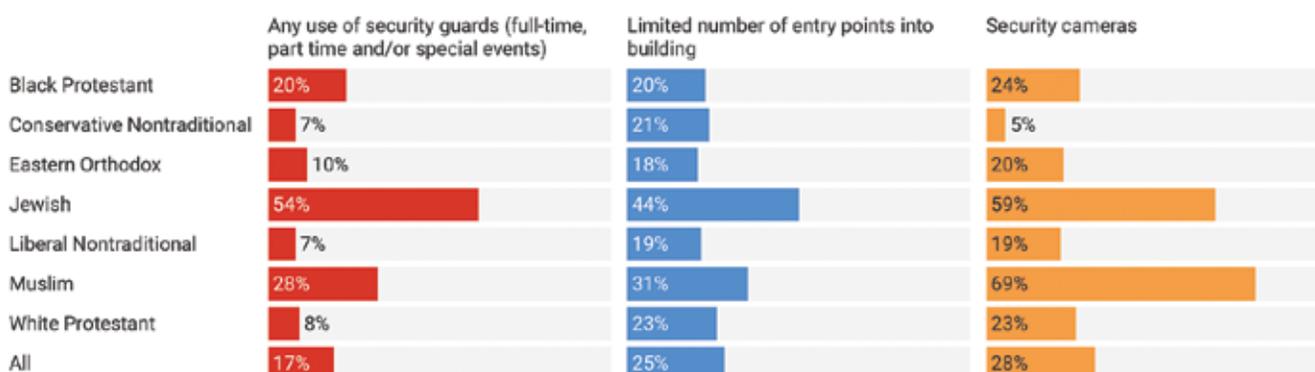
San Diego County sheriff deputies stand in front of the Chabad of Poway synagogue on April 28 in Poway, Calif. A man opened fire inside the synagogue as worshippers celebrated the last day of Passover.



A Fairfax County police officer controls traffic as worshippers make their way to the Dar Al-Hijrah Islamic Center in Falls Church, Va., in December 2015.

Security measures in places of worship across the US

In 2015, researchers surveyed more than 1,300 religious congregations about what types of security measures they had in place. Below are some of the results.

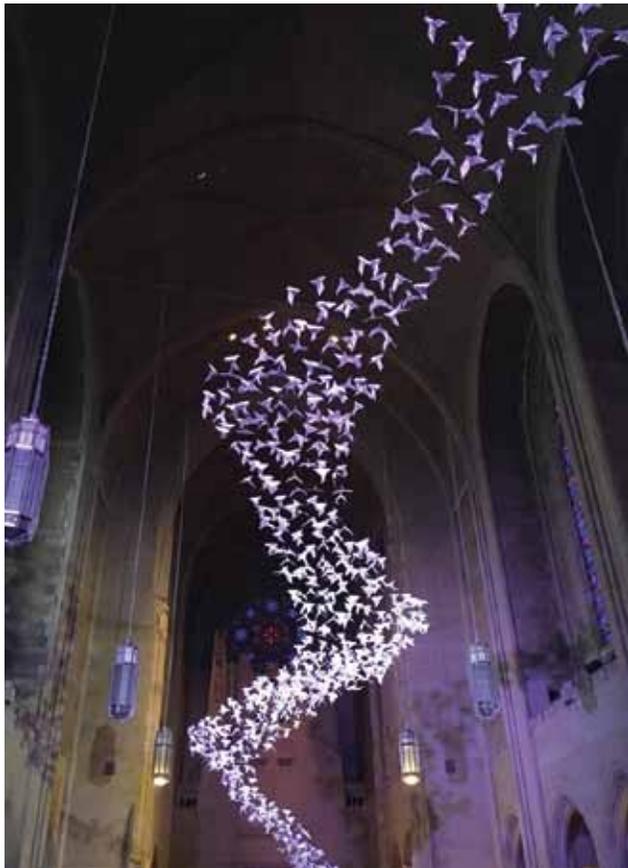


Liberal nontraditional includes groups like Unity and Unitarian-Universalist. Conservative nontraditional includes groups like Jehovah's Witnesses and Christian Science. The survey did not sample Catholic congregations.

Chart: The Conversation, CC-BY-ND • Source: [Review of Religious Research, 2018](#) • [Get the data](#)

FAITH AND THE ARTS

“Les Colombes” soars in New York church



Photo/Pamela A. Lewis

By Pamela A. Lewis

From Jerusalem to Munich, Salisbury and London, and most recently Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, the art installation “Les Colombes” (“Doves”) has been journeying around the globe since 2007. Now in its first East Coast venue, the extraordinary display is on view at the Episcopal Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York through August 18.

Michael Pendry, an artist, set designer and actor, created “Les Colombes.” At Heavenly Rest, the installation was created in partnership with Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison, an organization that provides college education, life skills, and reentry support to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated men and women.

Thousands of white origami doves were folded by members of Hudson Link, New York City schoolchildren, Heavenly Rest parishioners and people around the world. The work is intended to bring attention to the issue of mass incarceration in the United States, and also explore what “release” means to individuals in prison or recently released. Those who folded the doves wrote messages of peace, resilience and hope, and their thoughts on the concept of “release.”

With its lofty, Gothic-inspired dimensions, the 150-year-old Heavenly Rest’s high-vaulted ceiling is the

perfect backdrop against which the paper doves “fly” (suspended by almost invisible cables) above the nave in an entrancing serpentine formation. “The doves create an atmosphere of calmness, gentleness and virtue as they fly through the air in an arrangement which appears to be a loose flock of birds. Folded by so many people, the doves in their unity stand for the right to peace and freedom for all people,” Pendry said.

“Les Colombes” is the culmination of the first year of programming under the new arts initiative at Heavenly Rest that has included group, solo, and collaborative exhibitions, as well as educational and spiritual programming focused on those shows.

For more information, contact Lucas Thorpe, program organizer, at lthorpe@heavenlyrest.org. ■

Pamela A. Lewis writes about topics of faith. She attends Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Presiding bishop wins broadcasting award for royal wedding sermon

By Episcopal Journal

The London-based Sandford St. Martin Trust announced that Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will receive its Sandford St. Martin Trustees’ Award in recognition of the huge media impact generated by his sermon at the May 19, 2018 wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

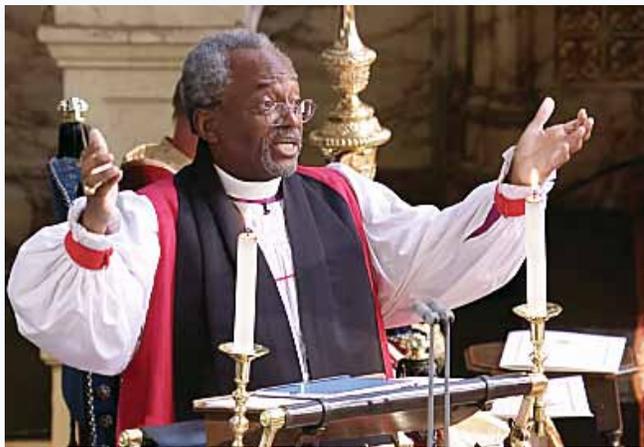
The sermon, the trust said, “helped to bring a better understanding of religious belief and its modern relevance to a new audience.”

An estimated 1.9 billion people watched Curry, the first African American to head the U.S.-based Episcopal Church, tell a congregation of royals and celebrities that “love is the way.”

Bishop Jan MacFarlane, chair of the Sandford St. Martin Trust, said, “one of the indisputable broadcasting highlights of the 2018 royal wedding was Bishop Curry’s sermon. His words were broadcast around the world and were instrumental in shining a spotlight on the central role faith plays in the wider social discourse, and on how religion can be both hugely engaging and unifying for the public.”

“His reminder to audiences of the ‘important stuff’ in life — like fellowship and love — has been crucial at a time such as this, when the social and political divisions in the U.K. and around the world are being so deeply felt.”

The Sandford St. Martin Trustees’ Award rec-



Photo/video screen shot

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry preaches during the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

The U.K. writer, broadcaster and former chairman of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Trevor Philips, will dedicate Curry’s award at a special ceremony at Lambeth Palace in London on June 13. Curry videotaped his acceptance speech for the ceremony because a scheduling conflict prevents him from accepting in person.

The Sandford St. Martin Trust is an independent, non-profit organization. It has been making annual awards for the best programs about religion, ethics and spirituality since 1978.

The trust engages with a wide range of media organizations, individual journalists, broadcast content-makers and other media figures, many of whom give their time and expertise voluntarily to support the trust’s work. This work includes contributing to and participating in conferences, festivals and training as well as on-going public consultations and debates on the future of broadcasting.

The trust supports thought-provoking, distinctive programming that engages with issues of faith, morality and ethics. ■

ognizes individuals, programs or organizations which have made outstanding contributions to their audience’s understanding of religion, ethics or spirituality. Previous recipients include author, journalist and broadcaster Joan Bakewell, composer Sir John Tavener, journalist Lyse Doucet and broadcaster and historian Neil MacGregor.

Book asks ‘who is my neighbor?’

Review by Solange De Santis

Jesus often spoke in parables, reducing complex ideas to straightforward stories that his listeners would understand.

Jennifer Grant’s “Maybe I Can Love My Neighbor Too,” a large-format book with jaunty illustrations by Benjamin Schipper, follows the same principle.

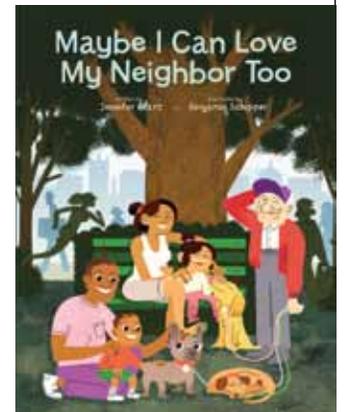
In Grant’s previous book, “Maybe God Is Like That Too,” a boy notices examples of virtues such as kindness and patience in the city where he lives and thinks, “maybe God is like that too,” concluding that “maybe I can be like that too.”

“Maybe I Can Love My Neighbor Too” is also set in an urban landscape — a most welcome addition to children’s books set in suburbia or the countryside.

A verse from Leviticus 19:18 — “Love your neighbor as yourself” appears on the dedication page. The reader might also recall Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan, who stopped to help a man in distress after others had passed by. Jesus asks, “which of these was this man’s neighbor?”

In this book, a girl who lives “at the corner of 9th and 19th in apartment 4-A” wonders if all the people in a new building across the street will be her neighbor. Her mother replies that “every single person is our neighbor, whether they live next door, or across the street, or far, far away.”

But how can she “love” her neighbor if there are so many people? Prompted by her mother, the girl begins to notice all the small ways people demonstrate love towards each other in daily life. She realizes a universal truth — loving one’s neighbor is within everyone’s reach. ■



Maybe I Can Love My Neighbor Too

By Jennifer Grant
Illustrated by Benjamin Schipper

Beaming Books, 2019
32 pages, \$16.99

FEATURE

Death row inmates' stories featured in prison ministry's tour of churches

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

An Arkansas Episcopal congregation's prison storytelling ministry will embark in June on a brief tour, visiting Episcopal churches from Missouri to Texas to stage dramatic readings of death row inmates' first-person stories.

Prison Story Project, founded by Kathy McGregor at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Fayetteville, spent the summer of 2016 helping 11 inmates write about their lives and the experience of awaiting execution at the Varner Supermax prison in Grady, Ark. The inmates' stories are collected in "On the Row," a script for six actors. The script's incarcerated authors also formed the audience for its first performance in October 2016.

Six months later, two of the 11 contributors to "On the Row" were executed by the state of Arkansas.

The executions drew national attention as part of the state's rush to carry out eight executions in April 2017 before Arkansas' stock of lethal injection drugs was to expire. Four of the eight men were put to death, while the other four executions were postponed amid vocal opposition from anti-death penalty activists, including Arkansas Episcopalians. The Episcopal Church has long taken a public stance against the death penalty.

Although the executions are referenced at the beginning of "On the Row," McGregor told ENS that the inmates' words are presented mostly as they were written, before anyone knew of the state's plans for expedited executions. The script is structured to build a compelling narrative arch, and the stories avoid any overt arguments in favor of abolishing the death penalty.

"We're not political about that. We just let the words of the inmates speak for themselves," McGregor said, yet the project seeks to show the humanity behind those words in ways that may surprise listeners.

The Episcopal Church's opposition to capital punishment is well established, dating back more than 60 years. General Convention has passed numerous resolutions on the issue. A resolution adopted last year calls for all death row inmates' sentences to be reduced, orders letters to that effect be sent to all governors of states where the death penalty is legal, and enlists bishops in those states to take up greater advocacy.

Prison Story Project makes clear that readings of "On the Row" are presented in the context of the church's advocacy. It is promoting the upcoming tour as "a call to action ... for parishes and dioceses to explore and understand the reasons for our opposition; the inequity as applied to minorities, the poor and those who cannot afford adequate legal representation; the contribution to continued



Photo/Kathy McGregor

"On the Row" features six actors reading the words of death row inmates.

violence, and the violation of our Baptismal Covenant."

The number of executions nationwide has dropped steadily since 1999, from a high of 98 that year to 20 in 2016, according to the Death Penalty Information Center. Arkansas is one of 30 states with the death penalty, including all of the states on the Prison Story Project's four-city tour — Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas.

The host churches:

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Kansas City, Mo., June 13

St. James' Episcopal Church, Wichita, Kan., June 14

Christ Church Episcopal, Tulsa, Okla., June 15

Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, Dallas, Texas, June 16

A second "On the Row" tour is planned for October around Arkansas.

St. Paul's in Kansas City has been active in a range of social justice ministries that emphasize giving a voice to the voiceless in society, the Rev. Stan Runnels said in an interview with ENS.

Runnels spent four years in the late 1980s as a volunteer chaplain to death row inmates in Mississippi. "I found death row inmates to be remarkably honest about some of the deep questions of life and faith and spirituality," he said. "Because there's nothing like knowing the day you're going to die, or the day the state wants to kill you, to grapple with the deep questions of life."

When McGregor founded Prison Story Project in 2012, her initial focus was on holding writing workshops at a correctional center for women in northwest Arkansas. A second class of inmates in 2013 produced stories that were compiled in a script titled "Stories From the Inside Out," with performances in the prison and out in the community.

From the start, the hope was that writing would allow the inmates to face the truth of their lives and find redemption, McGregor said. The "outside" performances of the inmates' words achieved a second goal of giving the public a sense for the real lives of those locked away out of sight.

After several subsequent classes, McGregor and her team turned their focus to death row. They reached out to officials at Varner in 2015, and after months of conversations, they received permission to begin working with death row inmates in May 2016.

Out of 34 inmates on death row, 11 volunteered and were selected for the project. McGregor and the project's creative writing director met with the inmates once a month and followed up by email, giving them prompts to begin their writing and coaching them on techniques. Write from the heart,

McGregor told them.

The written compositions were then shared with the project's theater director, Troy Schremmer, who suggested additional prompts to elicit more detail from the inmates. When Schremmer had enough material, he compiled the inmates' writings into the narrative that became "On the Row."

Six actors visited Varner for their first staged reading in front of the inmates, who were separated in individual cells because they are not allowed direct contact with each other, McGregor said.

The first public performances were held in October 2016 at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Additional performances were scheduled in 2017, but McGregor and her team didn't learn until February that the state planned to execute eight prisoners in 10 days at the end of April.

Four of the "On the Row" writers were among those scheduled for execution. Jack Jones, sentenced for the 1995 rape and strangulation of a 34-year-old woman, was executed on April 24. Kenneth Williams, convicted of killing a university cheerleader in 1998 and then killing another person after escaping from prison in 1999, was executed April 27. Last-minute stays of execution were granted for the other two inmates who had worked with McGregor's team. ■

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FEATURE

Alabamians, Episcopalians battle it out over gumbo

Cook-off raises money for Birmingham low-income, senior housing

By Michelle Hiskey
Episcopal News Service

After Hurricane Katrina disrupted people's lives across the Gulf Coast, inland cities welcomed the displaced and strangers offered shelter and services. For some evacuees to Birmingham, Ala., the hospitality became permanent, and the influx led to an Episcopal fundraising event celebrating the distinctive comfort food called gumbo.

Gumbo Gala, which took place May 4, is in its 14th year as the largest Episcopal event in Alabama. The gala annually raises about \$100,000 for Episcopal Place, which provides 141 units of affordable housing and independent living in Birmingham for seniors and adults



A group called Toni North and the Birmingham Soul Sisters won the 2018 Chef's Choice Seafood Award at the 2018 Gumbo Gala.

with disabilities.

According to Episcopal Place's history, a "mustard seed" started it in the 1970s when an elderly Episcopalian wrote to then-Bishop Furman Stough about no longer being able to live by herself and having no place to go. The gumbo competition that started in the wake of Katrina today enables Episcopal Place to care for older adults with fixed or limited incomes who cannot afford rising apartment rents or maintain a home.

Get the dog!

As Hurricane Katrina approached the Mississippi coast in August 2005, Lynnes Thompson told his wife Linda, "Get the dog! We're gone." The storm destroyed their home as the couple headed to family in Birmingham, 350 miles northeast of New Orleans.

Because Linda Thompson has chronic health issues, the couple needed somewhere stable near medical facilities, like Episcopal Place. Within a month, they and their dog moved in, as did three other couples from Katrina's path.

"For these survivors, initially it was about shelter and food. Then it was dealing with emotional and mental health issues," recalled Episcopal Place social worker Shannon Atchenson. "One couple had lost a dog. There was some depression and anxiety. We wanted to give residents a sense of belonging because, when you've lost your home, that's important."

Residents don't have to pay for sup-

portive services like transportation, food delivery and pet care; those are covered by donations to the Episcopal Church Foundation and volunteers. With need rising in the hurricane aftermath, Episcopal Place knew "we weren't going to get support from the government for the Katrina people or for anyone," Atchenson said.

Meanwhile, as a way of settling in, Lynnes Thompson, a Baptist, began a nondenominational Bible study at Episcopal Place.

"Episcopal Place has done more than their part for all of us," said Lynnes Thompson, now 78. "It's quite expensive to operate a place like this that's so good."

Rising water, changing direction

A year before Katrina, Hurricane Ivan had flooded Episcopal Place. Staff sent out an SOS, and Amanda Ward, Episcopal Place's activities and volunteer coordinator, recruited her classmate Matt Ennis to help. The power was out at his corporate job, so he didn't mind wet vacuuming the flood water at Episcopal Place.

Volunteering that day made him realize that he wanted to work more closely with people in need. The next day Ennis quit his job. He was a volunteer supporting Ward's fundraising efforts at Episcopal Place when Katrina hit.

"Amanda and I had seen how a chili cook-off was a good business model because you charge people to cook and to eat," said Ennis, a member of All Saints' in Birmingham. "We had these new residents from Hurricane Katrina, so how about gumbo?"

Despite running out of the main attraction, the first Gumbo Gala raised almost \$10,000 for Episcopal Place, with jazz and a second line parade that celebrated the Gulf Coast evacuees. Over time, it created even more community pride as Episcopal Place residents competed with their own gumbos and felt supported by their Birmingham neighbors.

Ennis married Ward in 2007, built a nonprofit fundraising firm and every year gathers their two kids and assorted relatives and friends to compete in the Gumbo Gala. His secret to prize-winning gumbo is the rich seafood broth he prepares in advance with discarded fish scraps from a seafood market.

"Call it a progressive mindset or a sense of social justice, but when Episcopalians get an opportunity like this to help, they just do it," said Ennis.

Easy to rue/ruin the roux

Early on, St. Luke's and St. Mary's were the church teams to beat in the quest for the Most Divine Gumbo, which

is determined by the palate of Alabama Bishop Kee Sloan and two local priests. Church of the Ascension called its team the Gumbo Filers, a nod to filé, the powdered sassafras originally used by Native Americans that gives gumbo its flavor. One of the church's members, Nancy Sharp, lives at Episcopal Place and competes on the team.

The Gumbo Filers twice have won the first-place trophy (an engraved golden stockpot) behind the leadership of professional chef John Wilson, who first tasted gumbo while apprenticing in New Orleans.

"It's so hard to describe gumbo because it's an entity unto itself," he said. "You have to be in the South and taste a lot of gumbo to understand. Everyone makes it their own way and it's all wildly different. It's so complex that you need the first few spoonfuls to try to appreciate what's going on."

Originally from Boston, Wilson maintains that the heart and soul of any decent gumbo is the roux (pronounced "rue"), a thickener of flour and fat that originated in French cooking. At least one Gumbo Filer will keep a constant eye on the roux. "It needs to be a deep dark color, like roasted chestnuts," Wil-

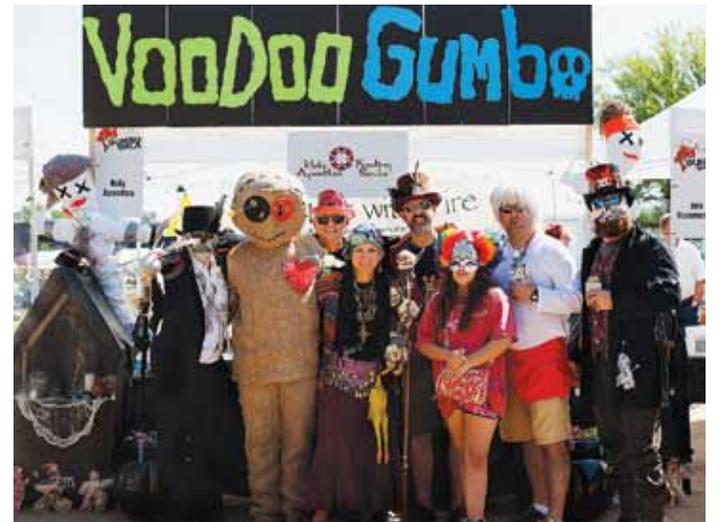


The Wednesday Morning Sinners team from All Saints' Episcopal Church has competed in all 14 years of the Gumbo Gala, the biggest Episcopal event in Alabama.

son said. "If you can get it to that point without burning it, you are going to have a good gumbo."

To the roux, his team will add broth, meat (this year it's smoked duck) and locally grown vegetables diced the day before. Their competition entry is 15 to 20 gallons, some of this and some of that, making a sum that is greater than its parts. For Wilson, the multiplying effect (more fish focused, less on loaves) reflects Episcopal outreach.

"Gumbo is typical of what we do and who we are: We help people in need," Wilson said. "Cooking is what I do, so



Photos/Sara Walker

The Episcopal Church of the Holy Apostles vied for the Most Divine Gumbo trophy and the Spirit Award at the 2018 Gumbo Gala.

that's what I contribute."

Pit crews tend fires, not tires

Competitive cooking for charity draws well in the South, especially in the months between college football seasons. While only the churches compete for the Most Divine Gumbo prize, the Gumbo Gala has divisions for professional chefs, amateur cooks and student teams.

Wilson directs the culinary arts program at nearby Wallace State Community College, which sends a team of chefs-in-training to compete in the Gumbo Gala's student competition. So will its rival, Jefferson State Community College.

"I think we have an edge on them because I've won this a couple of times and know what the judges are looking for," Wilson said. "It's about layers of flavor and how you've put that together. The judges are pretty experienced professionals with good palates, and they can taste those layers."

This year, 15 churches competed in a field of 35 to 40 teams. All Saints' Episcopal Church sent two teams: the Young Adults and the Wednesday Morning Sinners, a team of retired men who have competed in every Gumbo Gala, a 14-year streak. A newcomer in the professional division is Bright Star, in operation since 1907 as Alabama's oldest restaurant.

"Despite all of the spirited debates and hoopla of which gumbo is best, one thing is for sure: this delicious comfort food that calls Southerners back home is made up of many different ingredients that all arrive from many different places, much like Episcopal Place and the church," said Jamie Whitehurst, director of development at Episcopal Place.

"Each ingredient is wonderful on its own, and when they all come together to make gumbo, something magical happens. In that regard, we are proud Episcopalians who come from many backgrounds, with many ideas and understandings of God's word." ■

Michelle Hiskey is an Atlanta-based freelance writer and member of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church.

NEWS

Nebraska churches serve communities devastated by floods

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

The catastrophic floods that hit Nebraska and neighboring states in March submerged whole neighborhoods and turned some river communities like Fremont into isolated outposts. The rising Platte and Elkhorn rivers blocked roads into and out of the Fremont area for days.

"Fremont was basically an island," said the Rev. Sarah Miller, whose small congregation at St. James' Episcopal Church has been on the front lines of relief and recovery efforts.

At the same time, the Missouri River swallowed parts of the Omaha suburb of Bellevue, particularly two rental home communities on the city's south side. Hundreds of residents were displaced by the flooding. "That whole area was pretty well wiped clean," the Rev. Tom Jones, rector of Church of the Holy Spirit, told ENS.

The floodwaters have since subsided, and more than 5,000 Nebraskans have applied for federal assistance, according to the state. The federal disaster area includes dozens of counties throughout Nebraska and Iowa. Some displaced residents returned to find their homes and possessions destroyed by the floods, which were caused by an unusually snowy and wet winter.

The Diocese of Nebraska, while partnering with Episcopal Relief & Development, has rallied its 52 congregations behind the flood victims and, in places like Fremont and Bellevue, provided direct support to the residents most affected by the disaster and its aftermath.

St. James' began by filling tote bags with three days' worth of toiletries and supplies for flood victims, a variation on its ministry of assembling similar donations for domestic violence victims. On April 11, the congregation resumed its regular community meals, and some residents displaced by the floods were among the 25 to 30 people who attended, Miller told ENS.

"We know that this can be an overwhelming time for people," said Miller, the priest-in-charge at St. James'. Sunday services at the church typically draw about 25 worshippers.

Her disaster response includes providing pastoral care for struggling neighbors as they cope with their flood losses, and she picks up on their cues when deciding how St. James' will follow up next. "We're really trying to listen to folks to figure out what's needed and how we can possibly respond."

Some church members are dealing with emotional loss because the floods destroyed personal treasures, like family photos. Since others in the congregation have photos taken with the flood victims at past events, they have been encouraged to share the images, a step toward rebuilding lost photo albums.

The congregation at St. James' also is considering a "laundry love" ministry to serve the increased number of neighbors

who have been forced to use laundromats because their homes and appliances were damaged.

No Episcopal church facilities were seriously damaged by the flooding in Nebraska, according to the Diocese of Nebraska, though two families from Jones' congregation in Bellevue were among those who were left homeless. At one point, the roofs of their mobile homes were barely visible above the rising Missouri River, Jones said. More than a month later, they have found permanent housing and are "very optimistic" about the future.

"The community really, really came together to provide all kinds of support for the people who were impacted," said Jones, whose average Sunday attendance is about 100. He mentioned another parishioner who offered temporary shelter to a family whose basement had been flooded, and there have been many other examples of neighbors helping neighbors. "They really came together and met



Photo/Nebraska State Patrol via Twitter

A flooded street in Fremont, Neb.

assessments of the damage caused by the flooding and to identify both immediate and long-term needs of communities," the agency said in an online statement.



Volunteers prepare food for distribution at Church of the Holy Spirit in Bellevue, Neb., through the church's mobile food pantry ministry.

St. James' Episcopal Church in Fremont, Neb., filled tote bags with supplies for flood victims in the immediate aftermath of the disaster.

those immediate needs."

His congregation also is among those getting a boost from the diocese's work with Episcopal Relief & Development, which is providing logistical support in the relief and recovery phases. Episcopal Relief's expertise comes from years of experience responding when natural disasters strike around the country, and this month it sent two representatives to Nebraska and Iowa "to help diocesan leaders conduct as-



Photos/Church of the Holy Spirit

gregation's food distribution ministry, which is several years old.

The Bellevue church, through its partnership with the Food Bank for the Heartland, had scheduled events every two months to distribute thousands of pounds of food from the Omaha-based food bank, typically serving 100 to 120 families. It now can increase the frequency of its food distribution to every month, filling a gap left by two other Bellevue churches that had decided before the flooding to stop holding distribution events.

The most recent distribution was April 27, and although the number of families hadn't increased in the wake of the floods, Jones said he saw some new faces. He thinks the need will increase as other flood relief efforts phase out.

Nebraska Bishop Scott Barker applauded Episcopal Relief & Development for its support, and he praised the work of individual congregations and Episcopalians around his diocese.

"I'm proud of our ability to rally to serve," he said in an interview with ENS. "It's a difficult bit of work, because the damage is spread over such a giant geographical area but principally in isolated pockets. ... We're trying to be really prayerful and discerning about a long-term response."

One long-term question is whether small communities in Nebraska will survive if most of the towns' residents are told their homes are too badly damaged to return to them. Though survival isn't in doubt for Fremont, a city of about 26,000 people northwest of Omaha, Miller said the smaller towns on Fremont's outskirts face an uncertain future. If those residents choose to take the federal assistance and relocate elsewhere, "that place just basically disappears," she said.

For those who stay to rebuild and repair, recovery won't happen overnight.

"It's setting in how long this is going to take," Miller said. "I think people are feeling frustrated navigating the system, trying to figure out how the inspections work, how they get back into their homes,

how to work with FEMA."

But for those who didn't lose everything, they are approaching a difficult future while still feeling "grateful and lucky," she said. "There's a sense from a lot of people that it could have been worse." ■

Episcopal Relief & Development is helping the dioceses pay for emergency supplies for residents, such as food, gas and clothing, and Church of the Holy Spirit will use a \$2,000 grant from the agency paired with \$1,000 from the Diocese of Nebraska to bolster the con-