

Episcopal JOURNAL

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NEWS Court finds Haitian election was flawed



NEWS Pilgrims seek understanding at lynching memorial



ARTS Drumming builds kids' self-esteem at arts camp

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Dioceses respond to Hurricane Florence

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

Episcopal dioceses and congregations along the Carolina coast and further inland offered guidance, resources and prayers to Episcopalians in the line of Hurricane Florence, forecast to bring destructive winds, waves and massive rainfall and prompting evacuation orders for more than 1.5 million people.

The hurricane made landfall in North Carolina Sept. 14 and was downgraded to a tropical storm, meaning lower wind speeds, but rain and floods continued to affect North and South Carolina. The storm was linked to several deaths, and hundreds of people in New Bern required rescue, according to news reports.

As the storm approached, Episcopalians took the threat seriously. Services and church activities were canceled from the Episcopal Church in Okatie, S.C., near the Georgia state line to St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Greenville, N.C. Diocesan officials were in contact with Episcopal Relief & Development and communicated emergency information to their church members. Many Episcopalians on the coast heeded evacuation orders, while others hunkered down as the storm approached.

"There seems little doubt that Hurricane Florence is going to have a tremendous impact across the communities of our diocese, and many are projecting that it will be the most devastating storm that our state has experienced in decades," East Carolina Bishop Robert Skirving said Sept. 12 in a letter to the diocese, which includes coastal North Carolina.



Photo/Culpeper County Sheriff's Office
An aerial view of Emanuel Episcopal Church shows severe flooding in the Rapidan area of Virginia.

His diocese created a "hurricane hub" on its website to provide residents with the latest storm updates and links to other information and resources. The website also invited donations to the diocese's relief fund or to Episcopal Relief & Development.

Active storm season

The Episcopal diocese's actions was one of multiple responses to a range of extreme storms lashing countries from the Pacific to the Atlantic. While Florence was battering the Carolinas, churches and schools in the Philippines were being used as evacuation centers as Typhoon Mangkhut wreaks havoc. Mangkhut also was affecting the Marshall Islands and the Mariana Islands.

At the same time, other major storms lashing land across the globe included Gordon in the Greater Antilles, Cuba, the Bahamas and the United States; and Helene in West Africa,

Cape Verde and the Azores. Isaac was bearing down on West Africa and the Lesser Antilles; Olivia was affecting Hawaii; and Barijat was affecting the Philippines, Taiwan, China and Vietnam. Meanwhile, Joyce was heading toward the Azores.

In the United States, the National Hurricane Center had warned that Florence was poised to bring "life-threatening" storm surges of up to 13 feet and up to 30 inches of rain for coastal North Carolina and northeastern South Carolina, as well as up to a foot of rain on the rest of the Carolinas and Virginia.

The Church of the Servant in Wilmington, N.C., wasn't taking any

chances.

"Thank you to those who were able to come help us get COS ready for Hurricane Florence," the congregation's rector, the Rev. Jody Greenwood, said Sept. 13 in a Facebook post showing a virtually empty church. "Consider hatches battened-down."

By phone, Greenwood said she and her wife left their home in downtown Wilmington to stay with other members of the congregation in a home more securely located away from the ocean. She brought her bicycle so she could get back to the church if driving lanes were impassable after the storm.

The parish, with an average Sunday attendance of about 150, has an emergency plan that involves checking on each parishioner before a storm hits. Greenwood estimated half fled in advance of Florence, and the other half was staying in Wilmington.

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Nuevo Amanecer celebrates the diversity of Latino ministries

By Leigh C. Preston
Episcopal News Service

Nearly 400 people gathered Aug. 27 to 30 at Kanuga Conference and Retreat Center near Hendersonville, N.C., for Nuevo Amanecer, a biennial conference that celebrates and supports Latino ministries.

The theme was "Construimos, Equipamos, Inspiramos" — "We Build, Equip, Inspire." This year, for the first time, the conference included a large presence from Province IX, which includes countries in Central and South America.

The Rev. Bladimir Pedraza was among five participants who traveled from Colombia. He first learned about Nuevo Amanecer (Spanish for "new dawn")

continued on page 7

Participants join hands in prayer during worship at Nuevo Amanecer.



Photo/Millard Cook

CONVERSATIONS

For our new “Conversations” page, *Episcopal Journal* seeks a range of thoughts and opinions throughout the church. Letters to the editor and ideas for opinion columns may be sent to editorial@episcopaljournal.org. The posts below are from the comments sections of various *Episcopal News Service* articles. Some have been edited for length. As of Sept. 1, ENS disabled the comments sections on its website, although readers may comment on stories posted to Facebook and Twitter. *Episcopal Journal* encourages readers to write directly to us at the e-mail address above.

Pilgrimage to memorial

One cannot, one should not condone lynchings anywhere, especially in the U.S. Please go read this piece for Yale University about lynchings and race riots in the United States. It is not a Southern problem but a national problem.

<http://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculumunits/1979/2/79.02.04.x.html>

Charles Pierce
Aug. 29

I did indeed follow the link to the curriculum posted in 1979 by the Yale Teachers Institute and found its content dated and biased. And, to your point, while only four states (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire) were *not* the site of a lynching, it remains that 90 percent of lynchings occurred in Southern or border states. Over 50 percent of all lynchings between 1830 and 1951 occurred in Mississippi. And the significant majority of individuals were African American — whites did get lynched, but largely for aiding and/or defending African Americans.

“Problem” is a polite euphemism for the tyranny of violence inflicted on blacks in this country. It was indeed a Southern evil, and a white evil, and remains so to this day.

Cynthia Weinmann
Aug. 30

Trinity-by-the-Cove Episcopal Church, Naples, Fla., has planned an inter-generational pilgrimage for March 8-12, 2019,

to Atlanta [and] Birmingham, Selma and Montgomery, [Ala.]. We have 40 youth/adults traveling by motor coach. Formation curriculum has been designed to prepare pilgrims for what they will experience. “In the Footsteps of Martin Luther King Jr: Tracing the Biblical Message and Life of a Martyr” will be a pilgrimage of reflection and fellowship.

Frances J Sills
Aug. 29

Sounds very encompassing. I like the focus on MLK’s journey as a spiritual leader working for justice for African Americans. Without his support, I doubt we would have made the progress we have seen so far — acknowledging we have a way to go still.

Sara P. Irwin
Aug. 29

Massachusetts therapy dogs

What a wonderful story! My guide dog, Veronique, is also a therapy pet, certified through TherapyPets, and we volunteer at our local hospital and also do some nursing home visits. Wish we could do more after disasters and other events. Keep up the good work!

Jan Robitscher
Aug. 22

Great to read. My kelpie has accompanied every choir practice and Sunday liturgy in North Melbourne, (Victoria, Australia) beside the organ for the past 14 years and assisted in many wedding and funeral music interviews. Whilst not a therapy dog, he is a much-loved member of the congregation.

Beverley Phillips
Aug. 22

My two pet therapy dogs have been volunteers for hospice. We also visit assisted-living homes, nursing homes and schools. We are involved in the library program Tales for Tails where children read to the dogs. It is a very rewarding ministry for all.

Nancy Bean
Aug. 22

This is an awesome ministry. Pets of all kinds around the world have given life to those who are unable to seek it themselves. Even we who are not in hospitals or other facilities but are in our senior years find our pets to be the most invaluable partners. They keep us busy with many different tasks to support their living. But we love them truly, and they love us. They know a lot about the way of love.

Hugh Hansen, Ph.D.
Aug. 23

I am a proud member of All Saints Episcopal Church in Danvers, [Mass.]. Fran Weil has an abundance of love and compassion, which she shares freely with no motive other than to spread love regardless of species. We are blessed to have Fran, her spouse Gail and their amazing Westies! God has given us such a wonderful gift: the capacity to love, love, love. We at All Saints freely share that gift. Thank you to Fran and Marya, our rector.

Lore Cody
Aug. 23

McCain funeral service

Thank you for this story of John McCain’s faith journey [by Mary Frances Schjonberg]. He was a shipmate and fellow naval aviator that flew in service to his country and his beloved U.S. Navy. Having a narrative of his testament for Christian witness while a prisoner of war is an invaluable example of the power of faith that can sustain us no matter how adverse a situation we may be experiencing.

Dan C. Tootle
Aug. 29

Thank you for this lovely, loving piece. The ending is striking.

Susan M. Paynter
Aug. 29

Powerful story. Thank you for this wonderful tribute to Sen. McCain.

Pat Yankus
Aug. 30

ENS disables comments

[These comments were posted on the ENS Facebook page.]

I have followed ENS for the past few years and in the past few months noticed a marked increase in volatile discussions. As a centrist, both politically and socially, I refused to post anything lest I be judged, called out or schooled by the know-it-alls that needed to have the “last word” on any post. Do we want to be right? Or do we want to be in relationship?

Oscar Lewis Rayburn
Sept. 1

Another question to be asked: Do we sacrifice truth on the altar of unity?

Tony Houghton
Sept. 1

I looked through the recent comments on ENS, and it appears that there were two individuals who were trying to dominate the discussion and discredit all opinions other than their own. They were not dissenters but lockstep followers of the party line. It was probably best that those comments were closed. I agree with whoever it was that said, “This is why we can’t have nice things.”

Kenneth Knapp
Sept. 12

My big concern is, who is listening to those dissenting voices? How do you even consider having dialogue if half of the conversation — disagreeable as it may be — isn’t there?

Mary M. Hutchison
Aug. 31

This is despicable. You don’t like people to disagree with you, so you just cut them off. That is not exactly the way to build confidence or membership. All the while you pretend to be inclusive. I say pretend because this is an action of exclusion. And even you must be able to see that.

Susan Salisbury
Aug. 30

FROM THE EDITOR’S DESK



IF YOU GO TO Google Images or YouTube and search “lynchings,” you’ll quickly witness a succession of sickening photos — for as long as you can stand it. They are pictures of black people hanging from trees, tortured, burned.

What’s even more sobering is that these pictures were not taken surreptitiously, but openly. The white people in the photos look at the camera or point at the bodies, making no attempt to hide their identities.

Given this reality, the new National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala., which commemorates lynching victims, is sobering and beautiful in its austerity. Pillars inscribed with the names of victims — or simply a date and “unknown” — hang from the ceilings of the memorial.

The memorial’s website describes it as “a sacred space for truth-telling and reflection about racial terror in America and its legacy.”

As described in the article on page 6, a group of Episcopalians went on pilgrimage to that sacred

space from their own — St. Bartholomew’s Church in Atlanta.

The congregation, which is 96 percent white, has called its first female and first African-American rector. In a remarkably honest statement in its 2017 search profile, St. Bartholomew’s said that it longs “for a more racially and ethnically diverse community, but have not yet made the necessary changes for that community to flourish. We are seeking new strategies.”

The new rector, the Rev. Angela Shepherd, called facing the history of racial injustice that includes the atrocity of lynching a first step toward countering that injustice.

It’s an open and ongoing question for Episcopal congregations around the country. What’s the first step, and the next step, and the one after that? What kinds of conversations and actions have taken place and need to take place?

If your congregation is addressing such questions, tell us about it by sending an e-mail to editorial@episcopaljournal.org. ■

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Editor: Solange De Santis; Art Director: Linda Brooks

Copy Editor: Sharon Sheridan; Senior Correspondent: Jerrold Hames

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

Business: Michael Brooks at 111-56 76th Drive, #F7, Forest Hills, NY 11375 or business@episcopaljournal.org

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

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NEWS

Peddlers of 'fake news' about Anglican Communion rebuked

Anglican Communion News Service

Secretary General of the Anglican Communion Bishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon strongly criticized people who “militantly present falsehoods” about the communion, despite knowing that what they are saying is untrue. Idowu-Fearon made his comments Sept. 4 as he gave his annual report to the standing committee of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) at the start of its four-day meeting in London.

“Listening to what is going on in the communion has been very encouraging,” he said. But he highlighted several areas of what he called “rumors and gossip,” including the decision to move the next

ACC meeting from Brazil to Hong Kong. The decision was taken, he reminded the committee, after the then-primate of Brazil, Bishop Francisco de Assis da Silva, said that his province could not host the meeting because of economic, political and provincial difficulties.

“We owe it to him to let people know the truth,” Idowu-Fearon said. “Please tell people the true story before spinners go to work.”

He also dismissed allegations that the Anglican Communion had gone back on what the primates requested at the end of their January 2016 meeting, when they



Left, members of the standing committee of the Anglican Consultative Council, together with staff and advisers, during their annual meeting at the Anglican Communion Office in London.

Below, the secretary general of the Anglican Communion, Bishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon, right, meets with members of the Anglican Consultative Council Standing Committee and staff during their annual meeting in London.



Photos/ACNS

agreed to “consequences” for the Episcopal Church over its decision to change its canons on marriage. “Everything asked for in the communiqué has been done,” he said.

The Secretary General’s report was “an overview of the Anglican Communion and the work of the Anglican Communion Office,” he said.

Speaking about the Lambeth Conference meeting of Anglican bishops, due to take place in Canterbury in 2020, he praised the work of conference Chief Executive Phil George.

“The momentum of expectation for the conference is building and is being evidenced through the engagement with primates in the regional meetings held so far,” he said. The regional meetings, held throughout this year and next, are being held to help set the agenda for the conference.

“As we move towards the Lambeth Conference, there are consistent reminders that it is more than a unique gathering of bishops and their spouses,” he said. “Like all Lambeth Conferences, there is enormous opportunity and expectation: The whole Anglican Communion, the wider Christian Church, other faith communities and the secular world will all be looking to the conference to deliver a refreshed vision for being God’s

church in God’s world.”

Between the January 2016 and October 2017 Primates’ Meetings, there were 16 new primates, he said. There have been seven new primates since then, with more elections due before the Lambeth Conference.

“This rate of change in provincial leadership across the communion creates a significant challenge in terms of the building of relationships and sharing of the journey taken by primates together over the past few years,” he said. “At the same time, it provides great opportunity for provinces to review their position, identify strongly with their peers and ensure maximum involvement in the global issues and initiatives being taken across the communion.”

The report addressed issues including education and understanding in the communion, ecumenical dialogues, finance, growth, provincial ambitions and the state of the communion. ■

South Sudan bishop dies in plane crash

Anglican Communion News Service

Anglican Bishop of Yirol Simon Adut Yuang was one of 20 people killed when a plane carrying them from the South Sudanese capital Juba crashed into a lake as it tried to land at Yirol Airport. Reports say that thick fog around Yirol, in the center of the country, may have played a part in the accident.

Three of the plane’s passengers — two children and an Italian doctor — survived. Other victims included a member of the Red Cross in South Sudan.

“When it arrived, the weather was so foggy, and when it tried to land,



Photo/ECSS

Yuang

it crashed into Lake Yirol adjacent to Yirol town,” regional government minister Abel Aguek told the AFP news agency. “The whole town is in shock. The shops are closed. Some people have taken their relatives for burial. It is a commercial plane that crashed.”

Local fishermen were first on the scene to rescue survivors and retrieve the bodies of those killed.

“Bishop Simon was an energetic young man and is a loss to the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. Please join us in praying for the families and friends of all involved in the accident,” South Sudan Archbishop Justin Badi Arama said.

Yuang succeeded Bishop Daniel Deng Abeil, who died in office in January 2015 from cancer. Yuang was elected in May that year and consecrated and enthroned that July. He leaves behind a wife and six children. ■



Photo/Juba Airport/Facebook

The wreckage of the plane in Lake Yirol, central South Sudan, in which Bishop Simon Adut Yuang was among 20 people killed.

Wales to explore provisions for same-sex couples

Anglican Communion News Service

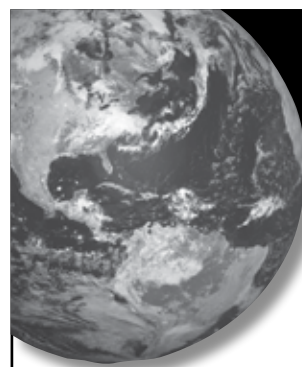
The bishops of the Church in Wales will explore formal provision for same-sex couples in church after a Sept. 12 debate in the province’s synod, or governing body. Members agreed that “it is pastorally unsustainable for the church to make no formal provision for those in same-gender relationships.”

Bishops now will consider “new approaches which could be brought back to the governing body for approval at a later date,” a church spokeswoman said.

“The bishops are united in the belief that it is pastorally unsustainable and unjust for the church to continue to make

no formal provision for those in committed same-sex relationships,” Archbishop John Davies said. “Although today’s outcome does not change the present doctrine or practice of the Church in Wales on marriage, I am pleased that it provides an important steer to the bishops in exercising our ministry of pastoral care and spiritual leadership.”

In June 2017, the Scottish Episcopal Church changed its canon law to remove the definition that marriage is between a man and a woman, paving the way for same-sex marriage in its churches. Before the Wales debate, Scottish Episcopal Church primus Bishop Mark Strange explained the process that his church had followed in reaching its decision. ■



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AROUND THE CHURCH

Diocese of Colorado drops candidate from bishop election

Diocese of Colorado

The standing committee of the Diocese of Colorado on Sept. 6 released the following letter regarding the search process for the diocese's next diocesan bishop.

Dear People of God in the Episcopal Church in Colorado:

In the last several days, we have received reports of serious personal, professional and vocational issues involving the Rev. Canon Michael Pipkin. Because we recognize that these complaints are serious, and because they cannot be resolved prior to our Oct. 27 election, the standing committee voted unanimously on Aug. 29 to remove him from consideration in the upcoming election for the 11th bishop of Colorado.

As these changes in our discernment and election process have unfolded, we have been in close communication with Canon Pipkin's bishop as well as with Bishop Todd Ousley, who works for the presiding bishop and provides oversight and guidance for all episcopal elections. These allegations have been referred to them for further action under the provi-

sion of the Episcopal Church's canons.

Further, we have decided unanimously to proceed with our election with two nominees on the slate — the Rev. Kimberly D. Lucas and the Rev. Canon Ruth Woodliff-Stanley. Both nominees have reaffirmed their enthusiastic desire to continue with us as we seek our next bishop.



Pipkin

We remain deeply grateful for the faithful, careful and thorough work previously undertaken by the search committee on our behalf. We have informed its members of the basis for the recent decisions that have been made, and they have unanimously expressed their unqualified support. Both they and we are confident that the two faithful, talented priests now on the slate possess the gifts to provide strong episcopal leadership to serve God's mission with us here in Colorado.

We know that some of you may have questions about this news.

While it is unusual for a diocese to elect a bishop from a slate of two nominees, it is not without precedent. In our case, the standing committee charged the search committee last January to present a slate of four nominees to the

people of the diocese. The initial slate included three priests because one of the four final candidates decided to stand for election as bishop in another diocese.

With two nominees now on the slate, we trust that the strength of our common life, our commitment to serving God's mission and the work of the Holy Spirit are leading us forward even in the midst of these unexpected changes. On Oct. 27, we will elect a bishop who will work faithfully with us in creating a vision for our future as the body of Christ.

When the standing committee first met last November to pray about and to reflect upon the election of a new

bishop, we identified a passage from Jeremiah that we thought would serve us well during this transition: "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

We are continuing now with the same confidence and trust in God's grace. Thank you for your continued prayer for the election of our new bishop.

Faithfully,

[The letter was signed by Robert Morse, president of the standing committee, and committee members.] ■

Curry returns to work

"I want to thank you for all of the cards, and the well-wishes and, above all, for all of the prayers," Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry said in a recent video message posted on Facebook as he returned to work following prostate surgery in late July.



Curry

"I came through the surgery very well. Everything is good," Curry said. "The pathology report was just fine, and I'm slowly but surely working my way back into the work I love to do." He describes reading through the hundreds of cards and letters sent to him at the Episcopal Church Center in New York, saying, "They are a blessing."

On July 25, Curry shared news that he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer and would be having surgery to remove the prostate gland. "I've been recovering," he said. "I pretty much stayed home and recuperated in August. Things are starting up slowly, but starting up."

Curry has resumed work and recently was in Atlanta to speak at a sold-out benefit dinner for the Day1 media ministry. The Atlanta City Council also honored him.

Day1 is the ecumenical radio and internet ministry formerly known as "The Protestant Hour," which has broadcast sermons by preachers from the mainline denominations each week for 73 years. The program is produced by the Alliance for Christian Media. Curry was a regular contributor to the program in the 1990s, a member of the Day1 advisory board and a former member of the board of trustees.

Dean named in San Joaquin



Newman

The Rev. Ryan D. Newman is the new dean at St. James Cathedral in the Diocese of San Joaquin, "This is the first dean in 10 years due to schism," Bishop

David Rice said in a statement. "This is truly significant moment for San Joaquin as it indicates yet another way we continue to emerge.

Ryan comes to St. James after serving as rector and head of school at All Saints' Church, Kaua'i, Hawaii. "Consistent aspects of his ministry have included building and mobilizing groups, communities, programs, strategic visions and even physical spaces. I have every confidence that the ministry in which Ryan has engaged and the experience he has attained places him most positively to assume this senior position in the Diocese of San Joaquin," Rice said.

— Diocese of San Joaquin

Report data available

Data from the 2017 parochial reports of the Episcopal Church is now available in English and Spanish. The data "continues recent trends, with decline in key membership and attendance figures," said the Rev. Canon Michael Barlowe, executive officer of General Convention. However, "congregational income through pledges and other offerings has increased," even as overall numbers of congregants have decreased, he said.

The parochial report is the oldest, continuous gathering of data by the Episcopal Church. The newly posted documents include:

Episcopal Domestic Fast Facts and Episcopal Domestic Fast Facts Trends 2013-2017

Baptized Members by Province and Diocese 2007-2017

Average Sunday Attendance by Province and Diocese 2007-2017

Statistical Totals for The Episcopal Church by Province 2016-2017

Statistical Totals for The Episcopal Church by Province and Diocese 2016-2017

Domestic Plate and Pledge Income 2012-2017

Average Pledge by Province and Diocese 2012-2017

Financial and ASA Totals by Diocese 2017

Reports can be found on the General Convention website at www.generalconvention.org/research-and-statistics/#PR-Results.

— Episcopal Church Public Affairs Office

Episcopalians join walk for immigrant justice

Episcopalians planned to join others in the New Hampshire faith community for a four-day Solidarity Walk for Immigrant Justice, tracing detained immigrants' path from federal immigration-enforcement offices in Manchester to a jail in Dover to raise



Photo/New Hampshire Council of Churches

A few dozen people gather outside the Norris Cotton Federal Building in Manchester, N.H., on Aug. 7 for one of the regular prayer vigils for immigrants checking in with federal authorities.

awareness of immigrants' plight and to voice their support for them.

"We're following on foot the path that people who are detained and taken to jail are themselves traveling," said the Rev. Jason Wells, an Episcopal priest who serves as executive director of New Hampshire Council of Churches, one of the Solidarity Walk organizers.

The pilgrimage was scheduled to begin Aug. 22 with a short prayer service at St. Anne-St. Augustin Catholic Church in Manchester. The walk then was to leave from the Norris Cotton Federal Building, where offices of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, are located. The building also has been the site of regular prayer vigils scheduled for days when immigrants are known to be checking in with ICE, some fearing they will be detained or deported.

Organizers of the walk invoked the example of General Convention participants holding a prayer service outside an immigration-detention facility near Austin, Texas, as the organizers they planned to gather at the end of their 40-mile journey outside the Strafford County jail, which has a contract with the federal government to hold immigration detainees.

"I think that the gospel imperative is to work for the poor, the marginalized, to really point out injustice and work for justice," said the Rev. Sarah Rockwell, a part-time priest at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Manchester and president of the Granite State Organizing Project Executive Council. "I see this as very much a part of living out a life of faith, and our faith should be consequential."

— Episcopal News Service

AROUND THE CHURCH

Contested Haitian election forces reckoning

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald
The Living Church

A bitter power struggle in the Diocese of Haiti has spread into the rest of the Episcopal Church in the wake of a church court's finding that a June 2 episcopal election was "deeply flawed."

The Office of Pastoral Development is preparing for the rare possibility in which election results are not ratified by a majority of bishops with jurisdiction and a majority of diocesan standing committees. A leadership vacuum in Haiti would then need to be filled before March, when Haiti Bishop Zaché Duracin reaches the mandatory retirement age of 72.

"This is uncharted territory," said Bishop Todd Ousley of the Office of Pastoral Development. "We would certainly counsel them to seriously consider and accept the idea of a bishop provisional" who would serve during the vacancy.

Ousley said he would not select a provisional bishop for Haiti, but would instead identify a set of candidates for Haiti's standing committee to consider presenting to an electing convention.

Duracin, who tried to stack the electorate ahead of the June 2 vote, according to an Aug. 16 report from the Province II Court of Review, is warning that Haitians will not accept a bishop from another country or one who is imposed on them.

"If Haiti is denied the opportunity to have a Haitian bishop of its own choosing, I believe it will cause significant problems for the diocese and for its ministry in Haiti," Duracin told The Living Church via e-mail.

The crisis is adding another hurdle to Haiti's many financial challenges. Episcopal donors are bypassing the embattled diocese and finding other ways to support Episcopal institutions in one of the world's poorest countries.

Since 2016, the Episcopal Church has twice imposed a moratorium on

fundraising for church projects in Haiti, including the Centre d'agriculture Saint Barnabas (CASB), a technical college. Each time, reasons included the need for better systems of accountability from the diocese.

In April, the Episcopal Church eliminated the job of fundraiser for Haiti projects, a position held by Dan Tootle. He since has established a nonprofit, the CASB Support Group, to assist the school, which has seen enrollment plunge from a high of 85 to 13 today amid its severe cash shortage.

"We're no longer supporting the college through the Episcopal Church," Tootle said. "We just realized that, if this was ever going to get done, we were going to have to do it ourselves."

Factional divisions in the Diocese of Haiti came to a head June 2 when Duracin's favored candidate, the Rev. Joseph Kerwin Delicat, prevailed. The results were promptly contested. This included allegations that Duracin had swelled the ranks of voting clergy loyal to him by ordaining 35 new deacons since November. Those ordinations increased the number of clergy votes by more than 50 percent, from 61 to 96.

Protesters charge that delegates opposing Duracin were housed without food far from the voting location and subjected to various forms of intimidation, including the presence of armed guards and interrogation during the convention.

Contestants alleged that both of the primary candidates on the ballot, Delicat and the Rev. Noé Bernier, belong to the Duracin faction of the diocese. A third candidate, the Rev. Samuel Saint Louis, was a token place-holder only, they say, and as such received no votes.

The court's report said Duracin and the standing committee were "chiefly responsible" for the "deeply flawed" election. Duracin told The Living Church that the court's findings were "simply wrong" and stemmed from

"sham" proceedings that would not allow all participants to review evidence and blocked cross-examination of witnesses.

Not all accusations were deemed credible. Delicat was exonerated of a charge that he had done nothing to rescue a pregnant woman who, accusers said, was "beaten, tortured and humiliated" in Delicat's presence by a priest who wanted her to abort his child.

But the six-page complaint nonetheless highlighted dysfunction in the Episcopal Church's largest and poorest diocese. Altercations reportedly broke out between lay and clergy delegates; some involved police as well. Longtime participants in Haiti ministries say the acrimony and distrust are taking a steep toll on the church's mission in Haiti.

"It's a very grave situation," said the Rev. Sam Owen, priest-in-charge of the Haitian Congregation of the Good Samaritan in the Bronx, N.Y., where he has served since 2012.

"It is bad down there. I don't think you can overstate that. It's a distraction from the mission of the church. What the prayer book says is that our mission is to restore unity with God and people through Christ. And this is as ununified as you can get."

As bishops and standing committees weigh whether to accept results of the June 2 vote, three possible possibilities loom large: Delicat could be consecrated bishop; a provisional bishop could step in; or the Diocese of Haiti's standing committee could be empowered to govern with ecclesiastical authority. Opponents object to the last option because the committee is heavy with Duracin allies. He's critical of the idea, too, albeit for other reasons.

Vesting a standing committee with ecclesiastical authority "is always difficult for any diocese," Duracin said. "But in this case, the unfounded accusations made against the members of the standing committee will make calling for another election problematic, at best."

That sets the stage for supporters of Duracin and Delicat to wage their battle on two fronts. They are allied with a bishop who has been accused of authori-

tarianism, corruption, patronage and vindictive tactics, such as frequently re-assigning priests who have opposed him and not paying certain clergy for months or years. In Haiti, priests are paid by the diocese, which is funded by a stipend in the Episcopal Church's budget.

An opposing faction draws inspiration from the legacy of former Suffragan Bishop Ogé Beauvoir, a cosmopolitan figure who has lived abroad and pursued a more progressive vision for the diocese, according to Tootle, who served as a missionary in Haiti before becoming a church fundraiser.

Now a second front has opened up to resist the perception of bullying at the hands of richer, whiter Americans in the Episcopal Church. Duracin and Delicat

loyalists are pushing back against what they regard as a likelihood of new, colonialist-style meddling in Haitian affairs.

"Many within the leadership of the Diocese of

Haiti believe that the report represents an attempt by the American Episcopal Church to interfere in the lawful administration of the Episcopal Church in Haiti, reminiscent to the multiple American invasions of Haiti which have taken place since its emancipation in 1804," Duracin said.

But some observers say the situation in Haiti is too broken, too split along theological and class lines, to raise up effective local leadership.

"That diocese cannot elect someone from within their own ranks who can bring that diocese back together," Tootle said. "That is not possible. It is that badly divided."

Inspiring potential donors to support the diocese again, Tootle said, must involve three steps: establishing a Creole-speaking provisional bishop; installing a chief operating officer to manage diocesan resources; and galvanizing a more transparent, reinvigorated Haiti Partnership Committee to raise money for projects.

Resistance is to be expected, but that is not sufficient reason to let the church in Haiti collapse amid its divisions, Tootle said. ■



Delicat



Beauvoir



Duracin

Convention raises \$20,000+

More than \$20,000 was collected in daily worship offerings at July's General Convention to support mission and ministries of the Episcopal Church.

Ministries receiving the offerings are Episcopal Migration Ministries, Episcopal Relief & Development and two historically black Episcopal colleges and universities: Saint Augustine's University in Raleigh, N.C., and Voorhees College in Denmark, S.C.

During each service, worshipers were invited to designate their offerings for one of these. Undesignated cash or checks were divided equally among the three. Visitors to the Episcopal Church Office of Development's booth in the General Convention exhibit hall also were invited to make a gift or pledge.

Giving via phone text was a popular option, generating more than \$15,300. An additional \$4,700 was received from plate giving via cash and checks. Offerings made during the United Thank Offering's in-gathering worship service on July 6 totaled \$1,740 for the UTO.

Overall, more than 600 donors gave.

— Episcopal Church Public Affairs Office



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Pilgrimage to new 'lynching memorial' fosters racial understanding

By Michelle Hiskey
Episcopal News Service

A spiritual pilgrimage can lay bare old scars, change who you are and how you see other people. That's what many members of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in Atlanta reported after seeing the new National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the story it tells of the more than 4,400 people who were lynched in this country.

The 82 travelers also stopped at the Legacy Museum nearby, which connects slavery and racial terrorism to mass incarceration in the United States.

"I don't think anything can fully prepare one for the atrocity that is part of our history," the Rev. Angela Shepherd, St. Bartholomew's rector, said in her sermon on Aug. 26, the morning after the pilgrimage.

Between 1877 and 1950, white mobs hanged, burned alive, shot, drowned or beat to death more than 4,400 African-American men, women and children.

Facing that history, is a critical first step to countering the racial injustices embedded in American society, Shepherd said.

Building this bridge is important at St. Bartholomew's, which in April called Shepherd as its first female rector and first African-American rector. Located in DeKalb County, a fast-growing refugee and non-English speaking county that includes part of Atlanta, St. Bartholomew has a membership that is 96 percent white.

"We long for a more racially and ethnically diverse community, but have not yet made the necessary changes for that community to flourish," its 2017 search profile said. "We are seeking new strategies."

Facing barriers

The St. Bartholomew's travelers' encountered transportation challenges on their 340-mile round trip journey.

Their departure was delayed while the chartered bus service located an approved driver. Near Tuskegee, Ala., the bus broke down in the summer heat. The three-hour delay extended the travelers' time for considering the history of racial violence along the Interstate 85 route, as researched and shared by trip organizers. Near the Newnan, Ga., exit, the 1899 lynching of Sam Hose drew trainloads of Atlanta spectators who watched his burning and mutilation, with parts of his body taken as souvenirs. Near Lanett, Ala., four African Americans were shot 300 times and left strung up beside a baptismal font outside a church in 1912.

In preparation for the journey, the group had read and discussed "The Cross and the Lynching Tree" by black liberation theologian James H. Cone, who

made a connection between deaths by mob violence and the crucifixion of Christ.

As the travelers reached their destination, Shepherd read from the book's closing exhortation, that Christians grasp the cross and lynching tree as blueprints for racial reconciliation.

"We were made brothers and sisters by the blood of the lynching tree, the blood of sexual union, and the blood of the cross of Jesus," she read. "No gulf between blacks and whites is too great to overcome, for our beauty is more enduring than our brutality."

Personal connections

At the national memorial, no selfies were allowed. The coffin-sized, rusting metal sculptures — each representing a county in which lynching occurred, and stenciled with the names of those executed — are meant to inspire individual and communal commitment to a just and peaceful future.

"Your names were never lost, each name a holy word," Elizabeth Alexander wrote in the poem "Invocation" posted at the memorial.

The six-acre memorial grew out of the conviction that lynching was the most powerful way that Americans enforced racial inequalities after slavery ended. This violence spurred the exodus of 6 million African Americans (the Great Migration) from the South.



In downtown Montgomery, Ala., the pilgrims rest at St. John's Episcopal Church, where the Rev. Robert C. Wisniewski Jr., rector (in light blue shirt), explains its history as the home church of Confederacy President Jefferson Davis.

The country's first national memorial acknowledging victims of lynchings is based on research by the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), led by Bryan Stevenson, a public interest attorney, bestselling memoirist ("Just Mercy") and MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Grant recipient. Stevenson has said that this work is driven by his Christian faith, nurtured in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

For some in the mostly white St. Bartholomew's group, the memorial sculptures summoned personal history. Nora Robillard found 10 names inscribed on the one for Clarke County, Miss., where she was born.



Pillars inscribed with the names of victims of lynching in Southern states hang from the ceilings inside the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala.

Juliana Lancaster recognized a surname on the Spalding County, Ga., memorial. "I think I found a relative," she said.

"Fifteen unknown people in Texas died on my birthdate," said Loren Williams. "I can't believe I will celebrate another birthday without thinking about that."

Meanwhile, Shepherd discovered familiar names on memorials for the counties in Kentucky and Tennessee where her family is rooted.

In DeKalb County, St. Bartholomew's established itself as a community leader in civil rights, AIDS outreach, LGBTQI issues, homelessness and other concerns starting in 1954. According to the memorial, the last of four lynchings documented in that county occurred in 1945.

"The past is never dead. It's not even past," said Williams, quoting William Faulkner.

"The fact that we went as a church, a community of faith, amplified, almost prism-like, the ferocity of getting as close as we possibly could to the evil reality of lynching," trip organizer Scotty Greene said. "Our shared faith in Christ got us down that road to do that. For me, this pilgrimage was functioning as Ken Wilber described religion: 'not a conventional bolstering of consciousness but a radical transmutation and transformation at the deepest seat of consciousness itself.' As another pilgrim shared with me, I'll never be the same."

Biblical names dotted the memorial's sculptures: Amos, Emanuel, Caleb, Luke, Solomon, Ephraim, Isaac, Moses, Simon, Elijah, Abraham, Samuel and Mary. A minister from Hernando County, Fla., Arthur St. Clair, was lynched in 1877 for performing an interracial wedding.

Somber legacy

At the Legacy Museum, built at the riverfront where slave-trading businesses once outnumbered Montgomery's churches, the travelers learned how the elaborate narrative of white supremacy allowed racial terrorism to flourish as a social custom outside the law.

While faith in God enabled many African Americans to endure inhumane treatment, their oppressors often saw their domination as a God-given right.

"Lord, how come me here?" is a lyric to a spiritual sung at the museum by holograms of actors depicting chained slaves. Exhibits showing how slavery gave way to a legal system meting out excessive punishment to African Americans included a newspaper report that a 14-year-old African-American boy was sentenced in 1944 to die in South Carolina's electric chair. Because the boy was too short for his head to reach the electrodes, guards used

a Bible as a booster seat.

"The stunning justification that 'the other' is not really a human being — and therefore deserves slavery, lynching, unfair prosecution, segregation, languishing imprisonment, legal killing — brings home to me the objectification of human beings in our society," said pilgrim Marilyn Hughes. "It hurts in my heart, and it hurts our nation. And yet, there is still love enough for forgiveness and healing. This was my learning."

Seeking reconciliation

The memorial and museum have hosted more than 100,000 visitors since opening in April.

Pilgrimages like this demonstrate that "the work of racial healing and reconciliation in the church will be done most effectively at the parish level," said Catherine Meeks, founding executive director of the Absalom Jones Episcopal Center for Racial Healing in Atlanta. "It delights me to see a parish taking the initiative to do this work."

St. John's Episcopal Church in downtown Montgomery, known as the parish where Confederacy president Jefferson Davis worshiped, has hosted several groups, including the one from St. Bartholomew's, in conjunction with their visits to the memorial and museum.

Its rector, the Rev. Robert C. Wisniewski Jr., related how Episcopalians of Montgomery built the church and installed a Tiffany stained-glass window.

"I loved looking at the beautiful decor, but it reminded me of how easy it is to be lulled into ignoring the ugly foundation of our privilege," said Virginia Murray of St. Bartholomew's. "The rector's informal talk to us also demonstrated the challenges the Episcopal Church has, to make a place for Episcopalians on all stages of the reconciliation process. Although my church building was erected after slavery ended, I am still voluntarily a member of a denomination that was complicit in slavery, lynching, etc." ■

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

NEWS

NUEVO continued from page 1

at the Evangelism Matters conference in March in Ohio, and he said he was thrilled when his bishop invited him to participate. Pedraza expressed gratitude for the opportunity to reflect and share with people from other cultures.

"It has been a wonderful experience," Pedraza said. "It is a reminder that we are all equal in the church, and that we all have the same love."

The first Nuevo Amanecer took place in Los Angeles in 2002. Six years passed before it was offered again, in Atlanta. In 2010, the conference found a home at Kanuga, where it is now held every two years. It is organized by the Office of Latino/Hispanic Ministries in partnership with Kanuga, and this year's conference received additional support from the Episcopal Church Foundation and Forward Movement.

From the start, the focus of Nuevo Amanecer has been formation and fellowship, said the Rev. Anthony Guillén, missionary for Latino/Hispanic ministries and director of ethnic ministries for the Episcopal Church. When he first began in his position, many people involved in Latino ministries felt very isolated from each other, and Nuevo Amanecer provided an opportunity for them to learn in community, he said.

The majority of participants are laity, he noted. "Why are they coming to a ministry conference? They're coming because they want to learn and be trained. They recognize that they have gifts, and they long to be evangelists and leaders in this church."

"Our vision is to create a place where people can come together, whether they



Photo/Millard Cook

A group from Trinity Episcopal Church in Greeley, Colo., dances during the opening Eucharist. Yuri Rodriguez of Christ Church Cathedral in Indianapolis directed the team of choir members and instrumentalists.

are just starting and discerning about Latino ministry, or whether they have been in the pews for several years and they're hearing God's call to do more, or whether they are already in leadership and looking for more training," he said.

This year's conference included three keynote speakers: Bishop Daniel Gutiérrez of the Diocese of Pennsylvania; Bishop Rafael Morales of the Diocese of Puerto Rico; and the Rev. Stephanie Spellers, the presiding bishop's canon for evangelism, reconciliation and stewardship of creation. Each addressed one part of the conference theme.

Gutiérrez reflected on building up the

For Latinos and for every person of color, we are not an outreach project. We are the church.

— The Rev. Anthony Guillén



Photo/The Rev. Edgar Giraldo Orozco

Nearly 400 people gather at Kanuga Camp and Conference center near Hendersonville, N.C., for Nuevo Amanecer, a biennial conference that celebrates and supports Latino ministries.

church. He sought to correct harmful language, he said. "For Latinos and for every person of color, we are not an outreach project. We are the church."

He urged participants to be bold and to take risks for the sake of the gospel. "I passionately believe in the transformative and redemptive power of Jesus Christ," he said. "I passionately believe in the courage and faithfulness of his followers. I passionately believe in you. What we do here will change the church and the world."

Morales emphasized the importance of prayer and formation in equipping people to be disciples and evangelists. "We are ministers of love" and called to show the face of God to the world, Morales said.

Spellers affirmed the gifts already present within the community. "Nobody is trying to give Latinos something you don't already have," she said. She recounted the many ways she had been inspired by the Latino community, saying, "You have changed my life and grown my faith."

She called on all participants to let their light shine bright. At the end of her presentation, all joined her in singing "This Little Light of Mine" in both English and Spanish.

Besides the plenary sessions, participants had the opportunity to attend a variety of workshops, with topics such as the state of immigration in the United States, LGBTQ ministries, Latino music within the Episcopal Church and the use of social media as a tool for evangelism.

Sandy Milien, a recent college graduate from the Diocese of Southeast

Florida, helped lead a workshop about the Beloved Community StorySharing Campaign. She said she was very moved by the responses of the participants. "It's great when people come up afterwards and tell you that your workshop touched them in unexpected ways," she said. "That's when you see the love of God working in people."

This was Milien's first time attending Nuevo Amanecer. Her mother, an Episcopal priest in Miami, has participated in the conference several times and encouraged her to come. "It is such a great way for people of different ministries in the Latinx community to come together and see that we are more than just our small churches," she said. "We are a big part of the Episcopal Church."

Agatha Nolen, a participant from the Diocese of Tennessee, said she learned a great deal during Nuevo Amanecer. She has wondered how her congregation could better engage with the growing Latino population in her hometown of Nashville, she said.

"One thing that I've learned here is that there's not a one-size-fits-all model,"

she said. She was grateful to learn about ways that non-Spanish speakers can become involved in Latino ministries, she said. "In our diocese, we don't have a lot of priests who speak Spanish, and that has always been identified as a barrier. Maybe it's not as much of a barrier as we really thought."

The conference included worship, with music directed by Yuri Rodriguez, associate director of Hispanic music and ministry manager at Christ Church Cathedral in Indianapolis. She worked with the liturgy team to select a broad range of music, from indigenous Latin American music to contemporary music by Latinx composers.

"My vision was to bring together the Anglican choral tradition with our Latin-American rhythms and musical language," she said.

The conference also featured an original composition, "Un Nuevo Amanecer," written by Ana López and the Rev. Hipólito Fernandez Reina for the occasion.

The worship services, like the conference as a whole, celebrated the diversity of ministries within Latino communities. Preaching at the closing Eucharist, the Rev. Nancy Frausto, a priest in the Diocese of Los Angeles, told participants that God had brought them into the Episcopal Church to share their unique gifts.

"God has called us to the Episcopal Church to share our experiences, our history, our tradition, our language, our music," she said. "Each one of you has gifts that the church needs now." ■

The Rev. Leigh C. Preston is an instructor in pastoral Spanish and Latino/Hispanic ministry in the School of Theology at Sewanee: The University of the South in Sewanee, Tenn.

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NEWS

Denominations repent for Native-American land grabs

By Emily McFarlan Miller
Religion News Service

“You cannot understand our history as a country until you understand the history of the church.”

That’s how Mark Charles — a Navajo pastor, speaker and author — began his presentation to a room full of missionaries in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), gathered this summer for their annual meeting in Woodstock, Ill.

He was laying out the origins of the Doctrine of Discovery, the idea first expressed in a series of 15th-century papal edicts and, later, royal charters and court rulings, that justified the discovery and domination by European Christians of lands already inhabited by indigenous peoples.

In recent years, several mainline Protestant Christian denominations have passed resolutions repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery. Now they’re considering how to act on those denunciations.

Some are creating educational resources on racism dealing with the doctrine and related themes. Others are calling for “full disclosure” on their denomination’s involvement in land grabs and massacres of Native Americans. Some have suggested returning church land to the indigenous people who originally lived there.

Like the push to come to terms with racism, the toppling of Confederate monuments and the rise of Christian nationalism, these efforts represent ways the mainline is wrestling with the nation’s original sins.

“I’m encouraged that more and more Christian people seem on board to at least raise awareness,” said Steven T. Newcomb, the Shawnee/Lenape author of “Pagans in the Promised Land: Decoding the Doctrine of Christian Discovery” and co-founder and co-director of the Indigenous Law Institute.

“I think we’re exploring this together in terms of where it can go and the kinds of healing activities that can take place, and the reset of an honor and a respect for the original nations and peoples.”

Claiming domination

The way Newcomb describes the Doctrine of Discovery these days is “a claim of a right of Christian domination.”

It was first expressed by Pope Nicholas V in the 1452 papal bull “Dum Diversas,” which — along with subsequent bulls “Romanus Pontifex” and “Inter Caetera” — created a theological justification for Christian rulers seizing the property and possessions of non-Christians.

That doctrine became enshrined in a number of other documents, including the “Requerimiento” read to indigenous peoples in what is now the United States,

explaining their land had been donated to Spain and demanding they accept the authority of the pope and of the king and queen.

Protestants didn’t immediately embrace the doctrine, Charles said. But he hears its echoes in Puritan John Winthrop’s famous “city on a hill” speech, he said. Newcomb recognized it in the 1823 Supreme Court decision *Johnson v. M’Intosh*, which established that the U.S. government, not Native-American nations, determined ownership of property.

It was referenced as recently as 2005 in the Supreme Court ruling *Sherrill v. Oneida*, in which justices held that the repurchase of traditional tribal lands did not restore tribal sovereignty to that land.

The doctrine, said Newcomb, led to policies like those that took Native-American children from their homes to attend boarding schools operated under the motto “kill the Indian, save the man,” causing intergenerational trauma still felt today.

Newcomb has written about presenting Pope Francis with a copy of his book in St. Peter’s Square and meeting with a Vatican official at the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, part of two decades of efforts to get the pope formally to renounce those 15th-century edicts.

Led by the Episcopal Church, Protestant groups slowly have begun to wrestle with the doctrine and are awakening to the need to address its ugly legacy.

Denouncing the doctrine

John Dieffenbacher-Krall, now chair of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine’s Committee on Indian Relations, can’t remember when he first heard about the



Pope Alexander VI’s papal bull “Inter Caetera” from 1493. This papal bull gave Spanish explorers the freedom to colonize the Americas and to convert Native peoples to Catholicism.

Doctrine of Discovery. He’s worked for public-policy and advocacy groups most of his adult life and volunteered with the Maine Coalition for Tribal Sovereignty since 2002.

But it’s still shocking to him, he said. On the Sunday after Columbus Day 2006, he asked the rector of his church, St. James’ Episcopal Church in Old Town, Maine, for permission to preach



Descendants of the victims of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre attend a ceremony in their honor during the United Methodist Church General Conference on May 18, 2016, in Portland, Maine.

about it. He called on the church, the diocese, the denomination and the entire Anglican Communion to renounce the doctrine.

“As we reconcile ourselves with the indigenous people of the Western Hemisphere, we also do our part in helping to reconcile this broken world with God,” Dieffenbacher-Krall preached.

The next year, the Diocese of Maine’s convention passed a resolution repudiating the doctrine. The Episcopal Church adopted a similar resolution denominationwide at its 2009 General Convention.

Other mainline Protestant denominations since have approved similar repudiations. These include the United Methodist Church, the Unitarian Universalist Association, the United Church of Christ, the Community of Christ, Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a number of Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) meetings.

The executive committee of the World Council of Churches — which includes 350 churches, denominations and fellowships around the world — also issued a statement repudiating the doctrine and calling on member churches to learn about the history and issues facing indigenous peoples in their areas.

“It’s not that denominations have thought of it; it’s that they’ve been called on by indigenous peoples to live out their faith,” said June L. Lorenzo, who is Laguna Pueblo/Dine and a ruling elder at Laguna United Presbyterian Church, part of PCUSA.

Lorenzo was part of the team that wrote a report to PCUSA following up on its repudiation. The report detailed how the Presbyterian church played a role in creating and implementing government policies affecting Native Americans; how, because those policies largely were linked to land, the church’s work among Native Americans was, too; and how some Presbyterians throughout history have supported Native Ameri-

cans’ sovereignty and can model this for the church today.

That report and another resolution expanding the PCUSA’s response to the doctrine both passed this summer. Among the actions they suggest: Each General Assembly meeting should begin with an acknowledgment of the indigenous people on whose land it takes place; and the church will encourage its seminaries to “give voice” to Native American theologies and direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to create educational resources on racism dealing with the doctrine and related themes.

What’s next?

After a two-hour presentation tracing the impact of the Doctrine of Discovery through U.S. history, Charles asked this summer’s gathering of ELCA missionaries how they felt.

“Convicted,” said one. “Enraged,” “deceived,” “ashamed” and “complicit,” chimed in others.

“It’s important to acknowledge how this history makes us feel,” said Charles, who is writing a book about the doctrine with North Park University professor Soong-Chan Rah.

“There’s a reason we don’t talk about these things. There’s a reason we have a mythology and not a history book. We literally don’t know what to do with this. It drives us crazy.”

A gathering of about 100 religious and indigenous people hosted by the Skä-noñh — Great Law of Peace Center, recently asked that question in Liverpool, N.Y.

“Obviously, a lot of this is merely symbolic,” said Philip P. Arnold, founding director of the center and associate professor and chair of the religion department at Syracuse University.

But, he said, “What would it look like for each of the Christians who attended the New York gathering to return to their home churches and work alongside the indigenous people in their communities?”

More than words

Newcomb said he hadn’t heard many

NEWS

Church backs new Lakota translation of prayer book as tribes seek to preserve language

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

The Episcopal Church is expanding its investment in translations of the Book of Common Prayer into indigenous languages, with the Diocese of South Dakota receiving a United Thank Offering (UTO) grant to pay for a new Lakota translation.

That grant comes a year after a similar grant was awarded to the Diocese of Alaska in support of a translation of the prayer book into Gwich'in, the language of many Native Alaskans. Future translations may include the prayer book used by Navajo Episcopalians.

"Language is important. Without it, you can't really understand or appreciate the culture of the people," said the Rev. Bradley S. Hauff, Episcopal Church missionary for indigenous ministries. "And a big part of the [indigenous] culture is spirituality, and just knowing the language really opens up doors for understanding that English does not."

The nine tribes in the Diocese of South Dakota rely on a partial translation of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer known as the Niobrara Service Book. The language is comprehensible but archaic, said the Ven. Paul Sneve, the diocese's archdeacon, who is overseeing the translation.

"I always tell people, if you can imagine the difference between speaking King James English and speaking English on the street, they're a little different," Sneve said.

There are other linguistic challenges as well, such as the Lakota language's lack of gender pronouns. References to God as male are difficult to translate. "It actually makes it kind of awkward. We don't talk that way," Sneve said.

The \$45,000 UTO grant will allow



Photo/David Paulsen/ENS

The Rev. Robert Two Bulls Sr., second from left, leads the Prayers of the People at the June 2017 ordination of his daughter, Twilla Ramona Two Bulls, as deacon during the 145th Niobrara Convocation at Red Shirt Table, S.D.

Sneve to assemble a team of elders and other fluent Lakota speakers, who will meet and discuss the linguistic, theological and cultural factors necessary to produce a full Lakota translation based on the 1979 prayer book. But Sneve said he hoped to go beyond the prayer book and develop additional liturgical resources based on the needs of Indian congregations and communities in the diocese.

The rate of youth suicide and overdose is high among native people in South Dakota, so one goal is to develop a funeral liturgy that can be adapted for burying a child, he said. Home blessings and blessing of tombstones are part of some tribal cultures, so Sneve said he hoped this project would accommodate those as well.

"It's not just a translation of the '79 book," he said. "It is our book."

Some parts of the prayer book, includ-

ing baptismal rites and Rite II's Eucharistic Prayer A, already have been translated into modern Lakota, which can be understood by all nine tribes despite their differences in dialect, Sneve said. And the Dakota hymnal is a cherished part of services in the diocese, he said.

By adding to those resources, the Episcopal Church also hopes to help preserve languages at risk of being lost at a time when many younger Native Americans are learning English as their first language.

"Language and culture are so intimately connected," South Dakota Bishop John Tarrant said. "A lot of anthropologists say, when you lose your language, you lose part of your culture."

The Episcopal Church, through its historical missionary work with indigenous populations, was at least partly complicit in the U.S. government's ef-

orts to assimilate Native Americans into white culture while eradicating their culture, including language. In the face of that history, Tarrant said, the church is offering "tremendous support" for cultural preservation efforts, particularly with the backing of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, House of Deputies president.

Tarrant also keeps in contact with the bishops in Alaska and Navajoland to share ideas about new ways to support indigenous communities. When Alaska received a \$40,000 UTO grant last year to pursue a Gwich'in translation of the Book of Common Prayer, that helped motivate South Dakota to apply for its own translation grant.

"The church has been and should be a place where indigenous languages can be learned, expressed in that way, safeguarding them and promoting them," Hauff said. "Any attempt that we as a church can make to preserve these languages is our obligation."

Sneve, too, contacted other dioceses that have undertaken prayer book translations, seeking guidance as he starts the process in South Dakota. His counterparts in the other dioceses have been friendly and helpful, he said. "What is good for one tribe is good for all of them."

Once he forms committees to work on the translation, they will start making "some hard decisions," such as whether to include the entire Psalter and risk delaying publication. The house blessing is another example of a liturgical resource that the committees must decide whether it is worth the time to produce or is better left for the future.

Sneve has no definitive timetable yet for completing the task, but he estimated it would take at least two years before a translation was ready for publication. ■

LAND GRAB continued from page 8

churches seriously discuss returning land to the indigenous peoples to whom it once belonged. But he does remember times non-Native Christians have asked him what they could do to be "allies" to Native Americans.

He told them to go home and have their churches draw up documents acknowledging they are on the territory of the nation originally from that place.

For one Pacific Northwestern church, he recalled, that proved to be a challenge. Members of the congregation had to deal with their fears about what it would mean if they acknowledged they were on someone else's land.

"There was a lot of discussion and dialogue that occurred," he said. "People had to come to terms with their own psychology and their fears."

Alongside its repudiation in 2012, the United Methodist Church called for a study providing "full disclosure" of the involvement of prominent Methodists

and the denomination as an institution in the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre.

At their next denominational meeting in 2016, United Methodists held a ceremony honoring the descendants of the victims of that massacre. The denomination also released a 173-page report detailing how U.S. troops led by Col. John Milton Chivington, a pastor in the Methodist Episcopal Church, killed 230 Arapaho and Cheyenne people who were peacefully camped along Sand Creek in what was then the Colorado Territory.

This summer, St. John United Methodist Church in Bridgeton, N.J., incorporated elements of Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape and other Native American cultures into its vacation Bible school curriculum, and the denomination's Oregon-Idaho Conference returned 1.5 acres in Oregon to the Nez Perce nation.

The ELCA's first test after its denunciation in 2016 came about a month later: There were clashes within the denomination over action to stop the



Photo/RNS/Emily McFarlan Miller

The Rev. Mark Charles — a Navajo pastor, speaker and author — discusses the Doctrine of Discovery with a room of missionaries in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, gathered July 26 for their annual meeting at the Loyola University Retreat and Ecology Campus in Woodstock, Ill.

Dakota Access pipeline on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton later released a statement

supporting the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe after visiting the camps where hundreds of Native Americans and supporters had gathered on the reservation.

Now — as the denomination builds its Native American Ministry Fund and plans to observe its repudiation at next year's Churchwide Assembly — Prairie Rose Seminole, a member of the Three Affiliated Tribes of North Dakota and program director for the ELCA's American Indian Alaska Native Ministries, said she was seeing hope.

"I'm seeing people willing to put themselves in a space where they're going to learn other narratives about who we are as a church, and that's really promising to me because I feel that's who we are as Lutherans," Seminole said. "You are living your faith in action when you are questioning the truth around you and finding out what's missing." ■

NEWS

Washington National Cathedral hosts McCain funeral

By Episcopal Journal

Three former U.S. presidents and international leaders were among 2,500 invited guests who honored Sen. John McCain during a Sept. 1 funeral service at the Diocese of Washington's cathedral in Washington, D.C.

McCain, who died Aug. 25 from brain cancer just before his 82nd birthday, was a long-time Arizona senator and former Republican presidential nominee who also had spent years as a prisoner of war after being shot down over Hanoi during the Vietnam War.

A series of ceremonies marking McCain's death began Aug. 29 when his body lay in state in the Arizona Capitol. The next day, a memorial service was held at North Phoenix Baptist Church. McCain's body also lay in state in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda on Aug. 31. McCain was buried Sept. 2 at the U.S. Naval Academy Cemetery in Annapolis, Md., beside his Naval Academy classmate and lifelong friend, Adm. Chuck Larson, following a private service in the academy's chapel.

At McCain's request, on Sept. 1 former President Barack Obama, a Democrat, and George W. Bush, a Republican, were among those who paid tribute to the six-term senator during the cathedral service. Former President Bill Clinton also attended.

The list of speakers also included former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, former Sen. Joseph Lieberman and Meghan McCain, one of the senator's daughters. The Rev. Edward A. Reese, president of St. Ignatius College Preparatory in San Francisco, preached. Hollerith, Diocese of Washington Bishop Mariann Budde and the Rev. Jan Cope, cathedral provost, also participated in the service.

Located on the highest hill in the nation's capital, Washington National Cathedral has been the setting for many presidential funerals and other services at times of national crises and natural disasters. There have been prayers for peace and services to remember the victims of the school shooting in Newtown, Conn., Hurricane Katrina and the 2010 Haitian earthquake, among others.

The Very Rev. Randolph Marshall Hollerith, cathedral dean, said he expected McCain's funeral to be the largest such service held in the cathedral since former President Gerald R. Ford's funeral service in 2007.

It is an honor for the cathedral to host such services, he said. "It is an opportunity to honor a grieving family and to help a grieving nation. It is also an opportunity to show the Episcopal Church at its best with powerful and comforting liturgy, Hollerith said.

History of faith

McCain was baptized an Episcopalian and was the great-grandson of an Episcopal priest. However, for the last 27 years he has worshiped at North Phoenix Baptist Church.

It appears that McCain never became a member of the church, which, like all Baptist-affiliated churches, requires full-immersion baptism. Ten years ago, then-pastor Dan Yeary

told the Baptist Global News website that he had "dialogued" with McCain, then in his second bid to become president, about such a baptism. (Episcopalians believe that a person who has been baptized at any age with water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit does not need subsequent re-baptism.)

McCain spent five and a half years as a POW in North Vietnam, a time that included torture and extended periods of isolation, some of it because he was the son of the admiral who commanded the war in the Pacific. In a 1973 essay for U.S. News and World Report, he wrote that he prayed not for "superhuman strength or for God to strike the North Vietnamese dead" but for "moral and physical courage, for guidance and

wisdom to do the right thing." "I asked for comfort when I was in pain, and sometimes I received relief. I was sustained in many times of trial." In 2007, he told the Christian Science Monitor, "There were times when I didn't pray for one more day or one more hour, but I prayed for one more minute. So, I have very little doubt that



Sen. John McCain's casket rests before the altar at Washington National Cathedral.

Photo/Wikimedia Commons/President.gov.ua

it was reliance on someone stronger than me that not only got me through but got me through honorably."

The Monitor reported that McCain helped run what it called a "covert church." Every Sunday, after the mid-day meal ended, the dishes were washed and the guards had departed, the senior officer in the area would signal that it was time to pray together by coughing in a way that signaled the letter "c" for church — one cough and then three coughs, said Orson Swindle, who spent the last 20 months of his captivity with McCain.

The signal was the call for "a solid stream of thought among those of us there," during which the men in their separate cells silently said the Pledge of Allegiance, the 23rd Psalm, the Lord's Prayer "and anything else you'd want to [say] in there that would get us some help — but not out loud," Swindle said. "If we were heard talking, they would come in and start torturing us."

Toward the end of the war, the North Vietnamese put the POWs together in a room, and the prisoners were able to have organized Sunday church services. McCain said he became a chaplain, "not because the senior ranking officer thought I was imbued with any particular extra brand of religion, but because I knew all of the words of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed."

McCain said he conducted the services and gave a short talk. "We had a choir that was marvelous. ... The guy who directed it happened to have been previously the director of the Air Force Academy choir," he said.

George "Bud" Day, a fellow POW, told Religion News Service, that McCain "was a very good preacher, much to my surprise. He could remember all of the liturgy from the Episcopal services ... word for word."

McCain recalled the first Christmas the prisoners were allowed to have a service together. Some of the men had been held for seven years. The North Vietnamese handed McCain a King James Bible, a piece of paper and a pencil. He jotted down bits of the nativity story from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. He read parts of the story in between Christmas hymns.

"We got to the point where we talked about the birth of Christ and then sang 'Silent Night,' and I still remember looking at the faces of those

guys — skinny, worn out — but most of them, a lot of them, had tears down their faces," McCain told the Monitor. "And they weren't sorrow, they were happiness that for the first time in so many years we were able to worship together."

In his book "Faith of My Fathers," the senator called service "more sacred to me than any service I had attended in the past, or any service I have attended since."

McCain also recalled a Christmas Day when he was allowed to stand outside for 10 minutes in a courtyard. A guard came beside him and then drew a cross in the dirt with his sandal and stood there for a minute, looking at McCain silently. A few minutes later he rubbed it out and walked away, McCain recalled. This was the same guard who a few months earlier had come to his cell one night to loosen the ropes that held McCain's arms behind his back in a painful position.

In an essay titled "The Moment I Came to Love My Enemy," McCain called this guard his Good Samaritan and said that in that courtyard "for just that moment I forgot all my hatred for my enemies, and all the hatred most of them felt for me ... I forgot about the war and the terrible things that war does to you. I was just one Christian venerating the cross with a fellow Christian on Christmas morning."

Different perspectives

Diocese of Arizona Bishop Kirk Smith told Episcopal News Service that he knew McCain from two perspectives. As a policymaker, the senator met with Smith at least three times to discuss immigration, a controversial topic in the state. "He was very down to earth and receptive and wanted to hear what we thought," Smith said. "He was a good listener."

Once, on the spur of the moment, Smith invited McCain to attend an interfaith meeting on immigration south of Phoenix. Surprisingly for a man whose schedule was often made months ahead, he said, the senator was free that afternoon and came.

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Photo/Office of Sen. John McCain

Sen. John McCain, who died Aug. 25 of brain cancer, served in the U.S. Senate from 1987 until his death. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1983 until he entered the Senate.

NEWS

HURRICANE continued from page 1

She hoped to let them know whether Sunday services could resume on Sept. 16. If so, the services necessarily would be simple. No bulletins were printed before the storm. The congregation's organist was staying in Alabama.

"If we have services, it's going to be mostly to give people something to do and be in community with each other," Greenwood said.

Across the city, fellow Wilmington congregation St. Andrew's On-the-Sound Episcopal Church had closed and cancelled its 11:15 a.m. Sunday service.

"Please, as always, pay attention to bulletins and warnings from local government," the Rev. Richard Elliott, rector, said on the church's Facebook page. "Err on the side of caution. Exercise common sense. If you are in a safe place and it is not safe on the roads, stay in the safe place. We will have church services another time. ... Let us hold one another close in our hearts."

Grace Cathedral in Charleston, S.C., said it was under a mandatory evacuation and canceled many of the congregation's regularly scheduled activities for the week.

"We pray for our community, for all

travelers, and all those affected by this coming storm," the cathedral said on its website. "We pray for the safety and security of all. We ask for God's guiding hand upon all first responders and all agencies that provide relief in the days ahead."

Relief agency assists

The Episcopal Church in South Carolina, which includes Charleston and the state's coastal congregations, worked with Episcopal Relief & Development starting Sept. 10 to plan for the storm, according to a post on its website. The agency was supporting 11 dioceses in the storm's path.

"Leaders throughout this region have extensive experience preparing for and responding to disasters and have powerful networks of relationships and ministries in their communities," Katie Mears, senior director of Episcopal Relief & Development's U.S. Disaster Program, said in a press release. "This wealth of experience and deep community connections will allow diocesan leaders to effectively serve those most in need."

Inland preparations

Although the communities along the



Photo/Diocese of East Carolina

The Diocese of East Carolina's "hurricane hub," located on its website, provides residents with the latest storm updates and links to other information and resources.

Carolina coast were expected to be hit hardest by Hurricane Florence, churches further inland were taking the storm just as seriously.

Western North Carolina Bishop José McLoughlin said in a Sept. 12 letter to the diocese that he and the rest of the Carolinas and Virginia bishops had been on daily conference calls to coordinate church response, including via an emergency-alert system.

"We are doing everything in our power to ensure that we all stay connected during the upcoming natural disaster," McLoughlin said. "Please keep the other dioceses that are in the path of Hurricane Florence, as well as all first responders, in your prayers."

The Diocese of North Carolina, which encompasses the middle third of the state, issued a notice Sept. 13 saying diocesan offices would be closed for the day and on Sept. 14. It also offered assistance for congregations that sustained damage to their churches and to clergy needing pastoral support.

Within that diocese, the Rev. Lisa Fischbeck, rector of Church of the Advocate in Chapel Hill, posted Facebook photos of the church's stained-glass chapel windows being boarded up to protect them from potential storm damage.

Episcopal leaders in the region spent the week before the storm preparing for it, said North Carolina Suffragan Bishop Anne Hodges-Copple told Episcopal News Service by phone. By Sept. 13,

with plans in place, it felt like the "calm before the storm," but behind-the-scenes communications continued among all affected dioceses, she said. "There is a huge collaboration going on."

The Episcopal Church is familiar with this kind of response because of the expertise provided by Episcopal Relief & Response but also because of the frequency

of similar disasters in recent years.

September marked a year after Hurricane Harvey hit Texas and Louisiana hard, prompting the mobilization of the dioceses there to help with relief efforts. Later in the month, Hurricanes Irma and Maria devastated much of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and the Episcopal dioceses there still are working with residents to bounce back. Irma also hit the mainland United States, and Episcopal dioceses from Southwest Florida to South Carolina helped their congregations prepare for the storm and deal with the aftermath.

Hodges-Copple referenced storms from even farther back — Hurricane Hugo in 1989 and Hurricane Fran in 1996 — that hit the East Coast, including the Carolinas. Not everyone in her diocese today may remember those storms, but emergency communications have improved since then as technology has evolved, she said. Even in remote, rural areas, the church is working to make sure no residents are forgotten during and after a major storm like Florence.

Often, the most immediate relief can offer is a calming presence in the face of calamity.

"There's going to be times when all we can do is be still and be prayerful," Hodges-Copple said. ■

Anglican Communion News Service and other news outlets contributed to this report.

McCAIN continued from page 10

"He was very well loved and respected in Arizona, even though some people disagreed with him," Smith said. "I disagreed with him on a lot of things, but people admired his character and his forthrightness."

Smith recalled McCain's sometimes-changing stance on immigration, but he also recounted a story that McCain told to explain why he eventually favored amnesty for immigrants. The senator had gone to a naturalization ceremony and had seen empty seats in the front row with combat boots in front of each chair. They represented soldiers who had died in action while they were in the process of becoming United States citizens.

"That was the thing that pushed him over," Smith said. "He said, 'If these young men were willing to give their lives for this country, why aren't we making them citizens?'"

The soldiers were posthumously made citizens, Smith said.

Smith also knew McCain by way of the senator's aunt, his mother's identical twin sister, who was a parishioner of his at St. James' Church in Los Angeles. He would remind McCain of that connection, Smith said, and that led to swapping of stories.

McCain attended Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Va. While at the school, McCain was influenced by English teacher and football coach William Ravenel.

"I worshipped him," said McCain, according to Robert Timberg's "John McCain: An American Odyssey." "He saw something in me that others did not. And he took a very personal interest in me, and we spent a good deal of time together. He had a very important influence on my life."



Photo/Office of Sen. John McCain

Then-President Richard Nixon greets John McCain as he returns home after his 1973 release from captivity in North Vietnam.

Diocese of California Bishop Marc Andrus recalled on Aug. 27 that he heard McCain speak twice at Episcopal High School while Andrus was the school's chaplain. The senator said that, as a student, he was not happy about the school's compulsory chapel services.

"During those daily services that I imagine not only bored but frustrated McCain, something unexpected happened: He memorized prayers, parts of psalms and other spiritual resources that he says sustained him and others during his almost six years of imprisonment in Vietnam during the Vietnam War," Andrus wrote. ■

This story includes material from an Episcopal News Service story by Mary Frances Schjonberg and other news sources.

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FAITH AND THE ARTS

Children drum the rhythms of life at camp

By Sharon Sheridan
Episcopal Journal

Trevor attended his first summer drumming camp at St. Stephen's in Millburn, N.J., three years ago, and he keeps coming back — this year as a counselor-in-training.

"It's good being a counselor. You can help out kids," said Trevor, 13 (Trevor and other teen participants' last names are withheld to protect their privacy.) Throughout the August afternoon, he enthusiastically joined in the day's activities: dancing, drumming, decorating T-shirts, playing on the church lawn, eating dinner, competing at Bingo, making s'mores over a campfire.

Shepherded by paid staff plus youth and adult volunteers, about 10 children a day attended the weeklong PATCH (Parents and Their Children) drumming camp at the church in late August.

During the school year, the PATCH program, supported by the Diocese of Newark Prison Ministry, transports children with incarcerated parents to visit their parents at the Essex County Correctional Facility in Newark. It also provides Christmas parties and presents for the children, back-to-school backpacks loaded with school supplies, and summer camp opportunities or supplies.

Each day during the annual summer drumming camp, the PATCH children learned drumming and dance skills from professional instructor and performer Yahaya Kamate. They also enjoyed games, dinner and snacks and created crafts projects, including decorating T-shirts honoring Nelson Mandela's 100th birthday and painting "kindness rocks" with slogans such as "Be the change you want to see in the world," which they placed in the church garden.

At week's end, about 40 family members and friends attended a final performance of drumming, dancing, singing and a skit about the life of Mandela, the late anti-apartheid leader and former president of South Africa. Each child recited a piece of Mandela's biography; then all proclaimed together: "I am Nel-



Campers, counselors and staff learned drumming from professional drummer and dancer Yahaya Kamate, bottom left. Top left, campers commemorate the 100th birthday of Nelson Mandela. Top right, the church's music director and one of the camp coordinators, Kim Williams, confers with a young drummer.



Photos/Sharon Sheridan

son Mandela!"

Some of the children, like Trevor, were repeat campers.

"Next year, I'm coming again" to be a counselor-in-training, said Shekinah, 13. She enjoys "the drumming, the dancing, especially the art, and the singing."

"I hope they really want to come back — to something creative and fun and authentic," said Kim Williams, church music director and one of the camp coordinators. Kamate is a good role model for the children, she noted. "I love his way with the kids. He's firm in his expectations. He just naturally commands respect. But he also is kind and gentle with them."

A native of the Ivory Coast, Kamate plays the djembe and the doundoun (a bass drum) and was a member of his country's national dance company before coming to the United States in 1994. He currently teaches at the Alvin Ailey School in New York as well as leads workshops at various schools, hospitals, churches and juvenile detention centers.

At the camp, he sat at the head of a circle of colorful drums, where campers, staff and counselors practiced drumming techniques and rhythms. A large poster behind him listed words and phrases to help drummers remember different melodies, or rhythm patterns. Some also provided positive motivation, such as "Yum, yum! Eat my veggies" and "Never give up."

Positive messages also accompanied some of the sequences of dance moves, such as: "I will fall. I will sit. I will get up. I will survive."

Beyond the ability to master a drumming sequence, Kamate says he hopes to instill skills that campers will use in school and elsewhere, such as patience and working together. He also stresses equality. "We are all the same," he said. "Because I'm teaching, that doesn't mean

that I'm better than them."

JaTaria, 15, reflected on what she had learned from when she first was a camper to becoming a counselor.

"When I was a camper, at first I was kind of scared and shy," she said. "Over time, I learned how to play drums ... I learned how to dance better."

She found being a counselor hard but rewarding work. "I love kids," said JaTaria, who aspires to be a nurse practitioner or lawyer. "It was incredible. I'm proud of them. ... I learned how to be patient with kids. I learned how to drum, like a traditional African drum. I learned how to let myself be free and let my personality come out."

The annual drumming camp costs about \$7,500, with the biggest cost being the daily van to transport the children to and from the church, Williams said. Some food is purchased, some donated. Some staff, including a retired Newark special education teacher, are paid. "It's very important to have consistent leadership," Williams explained.

Volunteers — young and old — also are crucial to the program's success.

"I always feel like this is kind of the heart of who St. Stephen's is," Williams said. "We do ministry. It's not a check-book church." ■

Sharon Sheridan is a member of the Diocese of Newark Prison Ministry.



S'mores over a campfire.

Yahaya Kamate, left, a former member of the Ivory Coast's national dance company, teaches dance moves to campers and counselors at the PATCH drumming camp.

FEATURE

Therapy dogs are soothing ambassadors for Massachusetts church's pet ministry

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

Paxton may not understand the full significance of his calling, but the 10-year-old Westie is one of All Saints Episcopal Church's most dedicated ministers serving as Jesus' paws in the world.

As a therapy dog dispatched by Perfect Paws Pet Ministry at All Saints in Danvers, Mass., Paxton and his human, Fran Weil, have brought the soothing presence of a canine companion to students of all ages, nursing home residents, hospital patients and recovering addicts in drug-rehabilitation centers. Weil says she always is amazed by the sense of calm that can be conveyed from simply patting her dog's head.

"As terrific as the response is to our dogs wherever we go, it's so rewarding for us," Weil said. "It is really God's work, and we are so blessed to use one of God's creatures to do this amazing outreach."

Weil, the therapy-dog coordinator for the church, is one of several parishioners with dogs certified to do this work, along with the other 600 active members of Dog B.O.N.E.S. Therapy Dogs of Massachusetts. Some of these therapy dogs were called on to provide comfort to victims of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. Others regularly serve as captive listeners for elementary schoolers



Photo/ENS via Facebook

Fran Weil's therapy dog, Paxton, visits with members of the MCBA Book Club at the Peabody Institute Library.

learning to read.

In another case a while back, Perfect Paws dispatched one of its therapy dogs to provide "a little comfort time" for the family and friends of a 10-year-old who was hit and killed by a train, Weil said. It offered "a wonderful diversion" from the pain of loss, she said.

Episcopal churches across the country are engaged in pet ministries of various kinds. One of the most common is annual services offering pet blessings, typically held in early October around the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals.

The Episcopal Church Asset Map,



Photo/Fran Weil

Perfect Paws Pet Ministry therapy dogs pose with their owners in Danvers, Mass.

though not a comprehensive listing, shows at least a dozen congregations that take their pet outreach a step further, from pet-supply collections to fundraisers benefiting a local no-kill animal shelter.

All Saints is fully engaged with a therapy-dog ministry, thanks largely to the work of Weil, 71. She describes herself as a longtime lapsed Catholic who began attending Episcopal services late in life and "had never experienced such welcome ever." She has worshiped at All Saints since 2001.

Her role with Perfect Paws is negotiable: founder, lead volunteer, honorary pet chaplain. Each title might be appropriate, she said. She also sometimes serves as a pet-bereavement counselor, and she accompanies pet owners on trips to the veterinarian when they must make tough decisions about life and death.

Weil's love of animals is nearly universal.

"I love any animal. I've never met an animal I haven't liked," she said. "Well, I haven't met a tarantula. I might be a little reluctant."

All Saints launched Perfect Paws Pet Ministry in May 2010 with a monthly evening Eucharist for pet owners and their pets — rabbits, birds, cats, but mostly dogs. A story about the service got picked up by the Associated Press and drew national and even international attention to the ministry, Weil said, but the outreach has remained local.

"We started this because we realized that people find God in different ways, and so often it's through their animals," she said. "We often say it's not an accident that 'God' spelled backward is 'dog.'"

The services draw a 30 to 50 people, some of whom have attended from the beginning, even if their pets have since died.

Only a handful of the pet-service regulars are All Saints parishioners, said the Rev. Marya DeCarlen, All Saints rector. Perfect Paws has become a distinct worship community centered around pet ownership.

"It is a place for humans and their pets to share life transitions, so a lot of grief work happens in these services. And a lot of joy and appreciation is lifted up in these services," such as new pet adoptions, DeCarlen said.

"It parallels our own lives when we join a community. This community is really more than Eucharist. It is the body of Christ sharing life transitions with each other."

DeCarlen began serving at All Saints a little over four years ago and initially found the pet services a bit overwhelming, but she quickly warmed to the ministry and asked parishioners to suggest ways of expanding it beyond the monthly services, she said.

All Saints now collects pet food to donate to the local food pantry, and members minister to police and military K-9 handlers who have lost their dogs. About five times a year, the church hosts therapy-dog workshops in the parish hall led by Weil and another parishioner.

Most dogs, regardless of breed, can serve as therapy dogs as long as they aren't skittish, can handle unfamiliar environments and can be trained to follow basic commands and negotiate around objects, such as a wheelchair or walker, Weil said. The bond between dog and owner is the most important factor, she said.

"Nobody knows the dog better than the owner," she said. "It's always good to know that the person has a good rela-

tionship with the dog."

Any organization can contact Perfect Paws or Dog B.O.N.E.S. and request a free visit from a therapy dog. Most of Perfect Paws' therapy dogs spend time in schools, whether easing high school students' stress before and during exams or helping younger students learn to read.

Younger students are encouraged to read directly to the dog, an experience shown to have measurable benefits in improving reading skills.

"They feel inhibited when reading in front of peers ... but they don't in front of the dog," said DeCarlen, whose 13-year-old Labrador, Blue, is often on the receiving end of such readings.

"That has been a wonderful experience, to see children not only read but to use expressions. They want the dog to have a reaction when they read," DeCarlen said. As for Blue, "he just loves to be doted upon."

Dogs are known for giving unconditional love, which is one reason why reading to dogs is so beneficial, Weil said. "The dog's never going to say, 'That's the wrong word. You didn't pronounce it right.'"

It's like a theatrical performance, she added, with the children suspending their disbelief and reading as if the dog is really understanding the story.

The parishioners from All Saints who participate in the therapy-dog ministry have become like a family, Weil said. This includes supporting each other in times of grief, particularly over the past year, during which four of the dogs died, she said.

That grief mirrors what many pet owners feel at the loss of longtime companions who, too, felt like part of the family. This was another motivation for All Saints to step up its outreach and its message of welcome.

Pets have "taken on a bigger importance in people's lives, and when that happens you bring what's important to you to church, whether it's in your mind



The Perfect Paws Pet Ministry at All Saints Episcopal Church in Danvers, Mass., hosts a September meeting of the West Highland White Terrier Club.

or heart or spirit," DeCarlen said. To be a member of the body of Christ, she said, is to embrace a sense of purpose in those relationships while spreading compassion to others, whether they walk on two feet or four paws. ■

BOOK REVIEW

'Darkening Age' explores a missing history

Review by Shelley Crook

Are you sitting comfortably? I'm going to tell you a story. You've heard it before. It's a narrative that most of us grew up with, and if we haven't thought about it too deeply, it's quite likely the narrative we unquestioningly accept.

Once upon a time, Christians were horribly persecuted by the evil Romans. Usually fated to a grisly end in an arena full of hungry lions — except when they were torn apart by dogs or set on fire instead — the early Jesus-followers were stoic and brave in death. In life they typified godliness, peace and every other positive attribute, in contrast to the sexed-up, gluttonous and violent Romans. So it was no wonder the pagans signed up for Jesus in droves. Skip forward a century or several and Christianity, now a huge movement, manages to topple the evil Roman Empire through the sheer power of the love of Christ. The End.

And the rest is history, right? But what about the rest of history? While it's obvious, on reflection, that the accepted narrative of the early Christian period is a gross simplification, what isn't obvious is the nature and depth of what's missing. "The Darkening Age" is a book that fills in the gaps. In doing so, it challenges

the foundation myths of our faith.

Author Catherine Nixey — a British classics scholar and journalist, and the daughter of a former monk and a former nun — details the "orgy of destruction" waged by Christians in the early centuries of the faith. Nixey argues that, in waging a systematic attack on classical culture in the name of Jesus, Christianity sent Western civilization into a thousand-year decline.

The specific crimes Nixey details here in excruciating detail include the destruction of religious art and architecture such as the Parthenon Marbles in Greece; the murder of the philosopher-mathematician Hypatia, flayed with broken pottery, her eyes gouged out; the obliteration of 90 percent of classical literature, including not only texts theologically challenging to Christianity but also more sadly (to me, at least) anything remotely fun; and the destruction of the temple of Serapis, the "most magnificent building in the world."

Nixey's narrative is, in places, gratuitous — she's not averse to using florid language and gore to make a point — and occasionally she veers into hyperbole. But still, this is a meticulously researched and thought-provoking read. It's also a depressing illustration of how the persecuted so easily can become the persecutors; of how the religiously intolerant, violent Romans acceded power to the religiously intolerant, violent Christians. She writes:

"Tens of millions of people had converted — or were said to have converted — to a new and alien religion, in under a century. Religions that had lasted for centuries were dying with remarkable rapidity. And if some of these millions were converting not out of love of Christ but out of fear of the enforcers? No matter, argued Christian preachers. Better to be scared in this life than burn in the next."

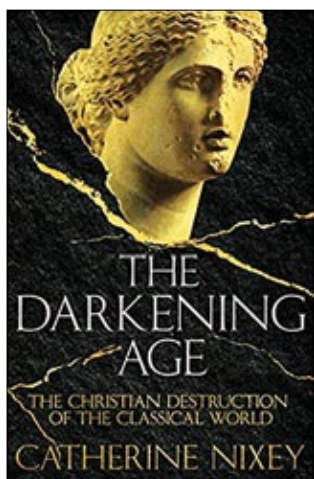
Nixey avoids drawing conclusions or extracting lessons in this book, and she doesn't make parallels with the present day or comment on the modern church. Her only goal appears to be the illumination of the worst Christian behavior in

history that nobody knows about.

This is a valid endeavor in its own right. Nixey details the pitfalls of Christianity as a philosophy: how, precisely, the early Christians justified their terrible behavior through their faith. Perhaps this understanding renders us less doomed to repeat our history.

This book leaves us with an understanding of our early Christian history that is uglier and a lot more complicated than the happily-ever-after version we're used to, but that's no bad thing. After all, a difficult truth is always preferable to, and a lot less dangerous than, a pretty lie. ■

Shelley Crook is a New York-based writer.



The Darkening Age
By Catherine Nixey
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
352 pages, \$28

Harvest Season reflections released

The Episcopal Networks Collaborative is offering "Harvest Season Reflections 2018" for the final two months of Pentecost.

Offered by laity and clergy active in the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice, Union of Black Episcopalians and Episcopal Ecological Network, reflections explore themes of equity and respect for labor, creation care, joy in creativity, Sabbath rest and gratitude for co-laborers. The focus is on labor because the bountiful harvest demonstrates the unification of the labor of God and people as experienced in the offertory of the Eucharist, the collaborative said in a press release.

The reflections are part of the Joint

Education and Advocacy effort of the Episcopal Networks Collaborative. Previously, the collaborative has offered justice reflections for the Sundays of Advent, a Lenten reflection series, reflections for the creation season and O Antiphons reflections.

A copy is available for download at www.enej.org/assets/pdfs/Harvest-SeasonReflections2018.pdf.

Questions and comments may be addressed to iris@speravi.com. ■



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Episcopalians work to mobilize voters
By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

The election in November should catch no one by surprise at the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in Philadelphia. Dozens of church members are participating in voter-education drives, and the congregation's goal is 100 percent participation on election day.

Civic engagement also is running high at Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Decatur, Ga., an Atlanta suburb. The congregation is sending parishioners to canvass the neighborhood around the church in support of statewide efforts to register up to 1.2 million new voters.

And the Diocese of Indianapolis has hosted voter outreach events where church volunteers are part of an interfaith initiative seeking to reach more than 100,000 Hoosiers who haven't voted before.

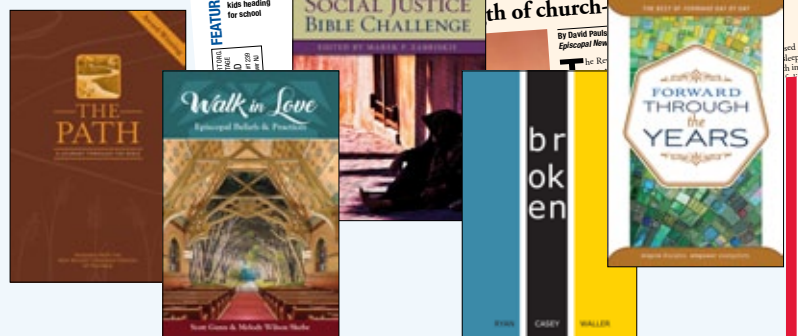
These are among Episcopalians' efforts to assist the nation to engage voters in the November elections.

"We often talk about how Jesus' life shows us to be politically active. ... We need to care about the most vulnerable members of our society," said Deacon Carl Duncan, the church's Office of Government Relations in Washington, D.C.

"Voting and participation in our government is a way of participating in our common life, and that is a Christian obligation." Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said in a video statement before the 2016 presidential election. The Washington office's Episcopal Public Policy Network referenced Curry's comments Aug. 7 in an updated message about upcoming elections.

The message provides voting resources, including links to voter registration information, voter voting policies and polling locations. It also links to the Episcopal Church's voter "toolkit," which provides further guidance on individual action to mobilize communities in ways guided by faith.

"We encourage Episcopalians to engage in the democratic process this fall by promoting voter registration, learning about candidates on the ballot in your area, making a plan to vote on Election Day and helping yourself to do the same," said Office of Government Relations Director Rebecca Lineberger. "Our Vote Faithfully Toolkit prompts resources for parishes and individuals to involve and to participate in our civic duty. The Aug. 7 message was perfect for addressing an upcoming newsletter in her diocese where not everyone has time to volunteer."



www.forwardmovement.org

(Episcopal Journal is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable corporation registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.)

NEWS

San Francisco cathedral a key host at climate summit

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

The Diocese of California played a prominent role when thousands of climate activists, experts and people of faith gathered in San Francisco for a three-day Global Climate Action Summit spearheaded by Gov. Jerry Brown.

Before the summit, many Episcopalians joined a Sept. 8 march as part of a series of worldwide demonstrations known as Rise for Climate, Jobs and Justice. Grace Cathedral hosted workshops and other events, including a kickoff worship service on Sept. 12 called the Multi-Faith Service of Wondering and Commitment.

"The environment and climate is a hugely important issue for Grace Cathedral," said the Very Rev. Malcolm Clemens Young, the cathedral's dean.

Faith, he said, "teaches you that there's something beyond the human. There's something beyond human culture and human interests."

"It's important because we have such an outsized impact on the world," Young said. "It's important for us to be conscious of that and really see ourselves as protectors of the world."

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and the Dalai Lama each were expected to contribute remarks at the service by video. Scheduled speakers included House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-California, and Patricia Espinosa Cantello, executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The service was to highlight faith-based efforts around the world to care for the planet, including several related resolutions General Convention passed in July.

The 2015 Paris Agreement, which sought voluntary limits on countries'

carbon emissions, has been a key rallying point for climate activists, especially after President Donald Trump announced in 2017 that he would withdraw the United States from the agreement, saying it put U.S. economy at a global disadvantage.

The Episcopal Church has been involved in the We Are Still In movement, in which cities, states, companies, faith organizations and other groups have pledged to maintain the commitments of the Paris Agreement even if the U.S. government won't. General Convention Resolution A018 specifically encouraged Episcopalians to participate in that movement.

The Episcopal Church should "set an



The Global Climate Action Summit logo.

example, in the spirit of the Paris Climate Accord, by making intentional decisions about living lightly and gently on God's good earth, for example, through energy conservation, renewable energy, sustainable food practices and gardening," the resolution says.



Photo/Grace Cathedral, via Facebook

The front window of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco is bookended by banners showing the halves of the Earth, one of several art installations designed by artist-in-residence Sukey Bryan.

Care of creation was identified as one of three top priorities of the Episcopal Church, along with evangelism and racial reconciliation, during Curry's tenure as presiding bishop. General Convention's numerous resolutions addressing environmental stewardship date back decades.

Diocese of California Bishop Marc Andrus has been at the forefront of that advocacy and regularly has led delegations on behalf of the presiding bishop to United Nations gatherings on climate change. The next U.N. Climate Change Conference, known as COP24, will be held in December in Poland.

"This summer, the Episcopal Church took a historic step and committed itself through multiple resolutions to keeping the Paris Agreement," Andrus said. Episcopalians are part of "a great movement of faith people" fighting for action against climate change, he said.

Andrus recalled speaking to Brown while both attended COP23 last year in Bonn, Germany. The governor shared with Andrus his belief that "faith is important to justice work, as a foundation to climate action specifically," he said. When Brown mentioned holding a multi-faith service to launch his Global Climate Action Summit, Andrus suggested Grace Cathedral.

Since then, Andrus, the diocese, Interfaith Power & Light and GreenFaith worked with Young's staff at the cathedral to plan the service and 20 workshops affiliated with the summit, which was based at San Francisco's Moscone Center.

Grace Cathedral also has become a hub for environmentally themed artwork, thanks to Sukey Bryan, the cathedral's artist-in-residence. She used a construction wall as a canvas to depict a river. Fire sculptures and tile work featuring ocean waves were displayed around the building. Bryan's 70-foot banners featuring oak trees greeted those entering the cathedral, and a giant planet Earth hung from the cathedral's front window.

"It's fantastic," Andrus said of Bryan's work. "Just beautiful."

Each year, the cathedral picks a different theme for its artist-in-residence. This year's is "Truths."

"Climate change was one of the big truths we wanted to talk about through this year," said Young, the cathedral dean.

He is a surfer and has seen firsthand the impact of a changing climate on the ocean water where he surfs, he noted. As water levels rise, he has been told, the road he takes to get to the ocean someday will disappear.

"I think there's a sense of hopelessness when it comes to the climate. There's a sense that nothing we do will matter," es-



Diocese of California Bishop Marc Andrus (in purple) and Sheila Andrus help lead the faith contingent at the Sept. 8 Climate March in San Francisco.

pecially with the federal government no longer behind a global solution, Young said.

He said he hoped the summit and the Sept. 12 service at the cathedral would bolster people's spirits and encourage them to work toward practical outcomes, he said. "I really believe that when you gather people together to work on a problem, novel solutions come up." ■

Bishops request support for gas-explosion victims

Diocese of Massachusetts

At least two church families in Lawrence, Mass., and one in Andover were affected by fires sparked by gas explosions that prompted mass evacuations in the state's Merrimack Valley about 25 miles north of Boston on Sept. 13.

One Lawrence teenager was killed and at least 20 people injured in the disaster, which caused at least 60 separate fires and the evacuation of thousands of people from their homes, according to news reports. The following day, many schools and businesses remained closed and some 18,000 electric company customers were without power. The cause of the explosions remained under investigation.

All three Episcopal churches and one Episcopal school in the affected

communities — Christ Church in Andover, St. Paul's Church in North Andover and Grace Church and Esperanza Academy in Lawrence — reported no property damage and no known personal injuries.

"The prayers and concern of our entire diocesan family are with those in the Merrimack Valley communities affected by this disaster," Bishop Alan M. Gates said. "Bishop Gayle Harris and I, together with regional Canon Martha Hubbard, have been directly in contact with the clergy of our parishes in those communities and our colleagues at Esperanza Academy. A number of their families have been directly affected, together with countless others who will need our support in the weeks ahead."

The bishops asked all congregations in the diocese to consider an offering in support of a diocesan relief response. ■

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BOOK REVIEW

Mitford companion book offers insight into Karon's faith

Review by Peggy J. Shaw

Twice before, in "Patches of Godlight" (2001) and "A Continual Feast" (2005), author Jan Karon has offered readers collections of inspirational writings. These words of comfort and celebration, as she called them, included favorite poems, prayers and quotations from her fictional series protagonist, the Rev. Timothy Kavanagh.

Karon's new book, "Bathed In Prayer," coming Oct. 30, also includes poignant quotations, Scriptural passages and literary snippets, but intertwines them with scenes from her novels set in Mitford, a fictional village nestled in the North Carolina mountains. Faithful readers will treasure the compilation.

"Bathed in Prayer" follows Father Tim's journey from being a 60-year-old bachelor to taking in a stray dog "as big as a Buick" to fostering (and later parenting) an 11-year-old boy to courting and marrying his vivacious neighbor to serving as an Episcopal supply priest in the Outer Banks.

Karon presents these and other remembrances in order, by novel, with commentaries prefacing the stories.

Readers discover, for example, how

Karon feels about one rough-hewn character: "Buck Leeper is one of my favorite characters. He made a U-turn in a fast-food parking lot and came back to Mitford to find what we are all hungry for."

She mentions risky research: "I dropped (literally) into a wild cave to research this episode. Never again."

And she shares a simple lesson on making the world better: "In a funeral for Mitford's master cake baker (Esther Bolick), Father Tim reminds us that we don't have to do great things to make a difference."

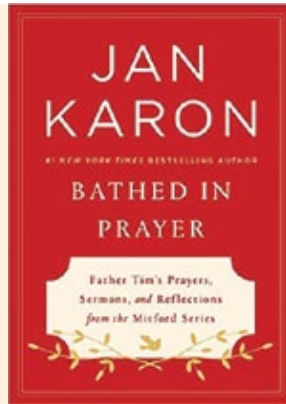
Karon also offers glimpses into her own faith journey and writing life: her first attempt to write a book, at 10; feeling, as a child, the emptiness of Blaise Pascal's "God-shaped vacuum"; her mid-life decision to surrender her life, and work, to God; and the realization that everything is in God's timing.

"I had prayed for years about stepping out on faith and writing a book, and now I had done it, and I just assumed that everything was covered ... While I thought this was the mountaintop, God still had me in the valley. Which was a good thing. Because like Linus with his

Bathed In Prayer: Father Tim's Prayers, Sermons, and Reflections from the Mitford Series

By Jan Karon

G.P. Putnam's Sons
240 pages, \$13.52



blanket, I had my mantra: *Keep going, don't look back. I am with you.*"

Keep going, she did, into her early 50s, and the result was "At Home in Mitford." Thirteen other novels in the series followed.

In "Bathed In Prayer," Karon explains that she chose to give readers a refuge from life: "In Mitford, a reader may find sorrow and disappointment, sickness, and loss, but there will always be connection and community, a safe place to run."

Karon created that refuge, in part, through using prayers and Bible verses, such as these, repeated in her new book:

"Let us come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help us in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)

"I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29-11)

"Worry about nothing... pray about everything." (Paraphrase of Phil. 4: 6-7)

"In everything, give thanks." (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

"Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'" (Isaiah 30:20-21)

But Karon's latest work is more than a quote journal. It is a worthy companion to the Mitford series, with fresh insights amid the familiar stories, and the author's same, strong connection to her readers.

Indeed, it begins with a simple yet elegant dedication to those readers. It closes with Psalm 28:7: "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him and I am helped; therefore, my heart greatly rejoices; and with my song will I praise him."

"Bathed In Prayer" is Jan Karon's joyful song.

Peggy J. Shaw is former senior editor for Dalmatian Press/Intervisual Books/Piggy Toes Press and the author of several books for adults and children. ■

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