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NEWS Britain's cathedrals face financial difficulties



FEATURE Chicago school finds hope at suburban church



ARTS Circus artwork springs into Portland cathedral

Trump policies force reduction of refugee-resettlement network

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) will cut its 31-member affiliate network by six in 2018 because of changing U.S. policy that will reduce the number of refugees to be resettled in this country annually by more than half.

The planned closings are a painful but strategically necessary move, the Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson, EMM's director, told Episcopal News Service. They follow two other recent decisions to shrink EMM's footprint, one directly related to the government's changing refugee policy and one not.

"It's painful. It's horrible, but we hope — we pray — that we have made the right decisions for the health of the overall network and for the well-being of the refugees," he said. "That is our number one concern."

EMM will not resettle refugees through these affiliates for the federal fiscal year 2018 (Oct. 1, 2017-Sept. 30, 2018):

- Refugee One in Chicago (Diocese of Chicago);
- Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida in Jacksonville (Diocese of Florida);
- Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota in Fargo and Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota in Grand Forks (Diocese of North Dakota);
- Ascentria Care Alliance in Concord, N. H.



Photo/UNICEF/Shehzad Noorani

Although she used to be in grade six, Ayesha, who fled to Turkey from the Idlib Governorate of Syria does not attend school.

- (Diocese of New Hampshire);
 - Ascentria Care Alliance in Westfield, Mass. (Diocese of Western Massachusetts).
- Following President Donald Trump's executive orders on immigration that more than halved the number of refugees able to be resettled annually in the country, the U.S. Department of State issued guidance to the resettle-

ment agencies to plan for no more than 50,000 refugee admissions in the coming fiscal year. EMM and the other eight resettlement agencies that work under U.S. federal contracts to resettle refugees "are looking at structuring ourselves to be the right size for fiscal year 2018," Stevenson said.

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From Islam to Roman Catholicism, faith journey leads West African native to Episcopal Church

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service



Photo/Kamano, via Facebook

The Rev. Charles Kamano, left, stands next to Diocese of Connecticut Bishop Ian Douglas at Kamano's service of reception as an Episcopal priest on March 16 at Church of the Holy Spirit in West Haven, Conn.

The Rev. Charles Kamano may seem like an unlikely Episcopal priest.

When he was received in March by Bishop Ian Douglas as the newest priest in the Diocese of Connecticut, the ceremony culminated a long and tumultuous spiritual journey that began thousands of miles away in Kamano's native West Africa, where he was raised Muslim and converted to Roman Catholicism as a teenager.

Kamano, despite his father's harsh disapproval, was so committed to his newfound faith that he was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest. He studied in Rome on a church scholarship but gradually became disenchanted with the church's hierarchy and left it, immigrating to the United States to start a new life — and a search for a new faith home.

He found the latter in Church of the Holy Spirit, an Episcopal church in West Haven, Conn. continued on page 16

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ANGLICAN DIGEST

Anglican Digest is a column of news and features from churches in the Anglican Communion.

Church leaders decry Palm Sunday attacks

Anglican leaders around the world added their voices to a global wave of solidarity after deadly Palm Sunday attacks on Coptic churches in Egypt that killed at least 44 people and injured many more. The terror group Daesh claimed responsibility for the attacks in which a suicide-bomber detonated one bomb inside St. George's Church in Tanta and, hours later, another detonated a bomb-vest outside St. Mark's Coptic Cathedral in Alexandria as the Coptic pope, Tawadros II, was finishing the Mass inside.

"Sadness overshadowed all Palm Sunday celebrations" across Egypt as news of the attacks emerged, said Archbishop Mouneer Anis of Egypt.

"Intensive security measures and regulations" followed the attacks, he said in a message published on ACNS. "This included security personnel emptying all the streets around the churches and cathedrals of cars with extra policemen and



Photo/Athanasius 77/Wikimedia

St. Mark's Coptic Cathedral in Egypt was the scene of a Palm Sunday bomb blast.

sniffer dogs checking all church buildings and worshippers before services start."

In Australia, the assistant bishop in Melbourne Diocese, Paul Barker, attended a press conference alongside other church leaders, including the city's Coptic bishop, Anba Suriel.

"We see this as a double tragedy — that on the day that Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem on a donkey as the prince of peace, such an act of violence should happen," Barker said. "We hope and pray the people will come to know Jesus as a prince who leads in peace."

A number of Anglican churches in Europe are part of the Conference of European Churches. "Egypt is one of the lands of the Bible blessed by the presence of our Lord. Coptic Christians represent a continuity of millenniums in this country, which is considered one of the cradles of human civilization," said the conference's general secretary, the Rev. Heikki Huttunen. "We pray that the Egyptian tradition of mutual hospitality between Christians and Muslims during Easter and Ramadan will give resilience and hope to all Egyptians going through these events caused by godless wrath and evil."

The World Council of Churches general secretary, the Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, appealed to President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi of Egypt and religious leaders across the country "to act swiftly and boldly to safeguard the fundamental religious rights of worshippers of all faiths, to ensure security in the face of violence and to guarantee justice for all people."

"In the face of this brutality, the human family, all people of faith and of good will, must stand together to recommit to respecting and caring for one another, to protecting one another, and to preventing such violence," he said.

— Anglican Communion News Service

March opposes gender-based violence

Archbishop Martin Blaise Nyaboho led a delegation from the Anglican Church of Burundi in a public march of several hundred people against gender-based violence (GBV). The bishop of Rumonge, Pedaculi Birakengana, and members of both provincial and diocesan staff and many schoolchildren joined the

Art highlights refugees

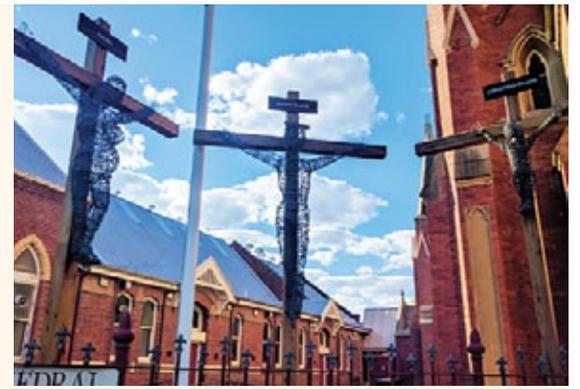
St. Paul's Cathedral in Bendigo, in the Australian state of Victoria, displayed artwork depicting crucified migrants in the run-up to Easter. The cathedral's dean, John Roundhill, said that he hoped the exhibition would "challenge people at this Easter time to make a deep connection between events 2,000 years ago and the plight of refugees in our world today."

The sculptures were created by the Rev. John Tansey, a minister in the United Church in Melbourne, and loaned to the cathedral for the display.

The sculptures include a child and a pregnant woman. They were named Nauru, Manus Island and Christmas Island — the locations of Australia's offshore detention centers for asylum seekers.

"There are still children being held in offshore detention centers, although now far fewer than in the past," Dean Roundhill said.

Australia's policy of detaining child refugees in the centers galvanized him into action, he said. "Back in 2014, I was still a new dean, and I was phoned



Photo/The Very Rev. John Roundhill

The Rev. John Tansey's series of sculptures depicting crucified refugees is on display outside St. Paul's Cathedral in Bendigo, Australia.

by someone I did not know at the time to ask if I might lend a hand with [the refugee campaign]."

"I had not protested before in my life," he recalled. "When I put the phone down, I wondered: If I were not to advocate for children in off shore detention, what would I ever advocate for? It was in the end one of the easiest decisions I have made."

The cathedral has been targeted by groups opposed to its advocacy. It has appeared in a far-right video, and banners that say "Let's Fully Welcome Refugees" — displayed by many cathedrals and churches in Australia — have been stolen twice.

But this has not deterred the cathedral from its advocacy.

— Anglican Communion News Service



Photo/Anglican Church of Burundi

Anglicans take part in a public march in opposition to gender-based violence.

march through the province of Rumonge.

The Anglican Church of Burundi has been working with Christian Aid since the end of last year on a program to mobilize people to end violence against women in the community," according to

the provincial website.

"Violence happens in communities, so the fight [against it] should focus on communities first to enable them to be aware of the issue and have a common understanding of why gender-based violence must be eradicated," said the province's gender-based violence department co-ordinator, the Rev. Jeanne Ndimubakunzi.

Individuals in Rumonge are being trained to train and mobilize people in their communities, advocating for and helping victims and ensuring the restoration of their rights.

The governor of Rumonge described the Anglican Church of Burundi as "the pioneer in this fight against gender-based violence."

— Anglican Communion News Service

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

There's an Anglican connection to the idiom "crocodile tears," which means to put on a bogus show of emotion.

The Oxford Dictionary cites an account of the life of Edmund Grindal, the 16th-century archbishop of Canterbury, that quotes him as saying, "I begin to fear, lest his humility ... be a counterfeit humility, and his tears crocodile tears."

It looks like the archbishop foreshadowed the current U.S. president, who claimed to be so emotionally wrought by a Syrian chemical-weapons attack that affected children that he took military action, bombing the Syrian air base from

which the attack was launched.

However, he seems to be content to let the problem fester "over there" and to continue to restrict the number of refugees the United States admits, including those from Syria.

This has led to the sad news that Episcopal Migration Ministries, one of eight resettlement agencies funded by the U.S. State Department, is closing offices and reducing its affiliate network because of new U.S. government policies that cut the number of refugees to be resettled here annually by more than half.

So American policy apparently is to bomb Syria so it stops its humanitarian crimes, but not to accept too many

ordinary Syrian families seeking a way out of the horror toward a new, safer life.

The Journal's front page also contains the story of a remarkable story of immigration and faith. The Rev. Charles Kamano has traveled a long road from West Africa to Connecticut and from Islam to Roman Catholicism to the Episcopal Church.

Our country is the richer for his presence — as we would be for the presence of Ayesha, the girl on page one who fled to Turkey from Syria and apparently just would like to attend school.

In this big, rich country, can't we offer safety to — in Jesus' memorable phrase — the "least of these"? ■

NEWS

Endangered Anglican cathedrals prompt Church of England review

By Catherine Pepinster
Religion News Service

The future of England's cathedrals — often described as the crown jewel of the nation's architectural heritage — will be examined by a special Church of England working group following a series of disastrous financial crises for the churches.

The archbishops of Canterbury and York, Justin Welby and John Sentamu, ordered the review in the wake of crises that have included layoffs, debts and the sale of assets. On April 10, the 12 members of the group were announced, including its chair, Bishop of Stepney Adrian Newman, and Dean of York Vivienne Faull, who will serve as vice chair.

The group will study how cathedrals are governed, their accountability and how decisions about finances are made.

Most of the 42 Anglican cathedrals were built in the Middle Ages as Catholic churches and were taken over by the fledgling Church of England following

the English Reformation, when Henry VIII ordered the dissolution of monasteries. The maintenance and repair of these ancient buildings is causing much of the cathedrals' financial problems today.

The review group was created following a recent report on the financial crisis at Peterborough Cathedral, a 12th-century former Benedictine abbey in the Midlands that houses the tomb of Queen Katherine of Aragon. Recently, the dean of the cathedral resigned and 12 other staffers were laid off.

A study by its bishop, Donald Allister, warned that the situation there was so grave that it posed "serious risks to the reputation of the whole Church [of England]."

Despite complying with the "Cathedral Measures," a document governing cathedrals drawn up in 1999,

in the creation of the new ACT Alliance, the ecumenical branch of the WCC for Relief and Development.

Ntahoturi represented Burundi's Protestant churches during peace and reconciliation negotiations in Tanzania, which were instrumental in bringing peace to Burundi. He is vice chair of the Burundi Truth and Reconciliation Commission and chair of the Inter-Anglican Standing Committee on Unity, Faith and Order.

— Lambeth Palace

Bible translated into Kurdish Sorani language

A team of Bible translators in Kurdistan, northern Iraq, working against the backdrop of civil unrest and religious persecution, has completed the first translation of the whole Bible into the Central Kurdish Sorani language.

For the last eight years, Church Mission Society mission partners, Joel and Ruth Hammond (name changed for security reasons) have worked alongside indigenous Kurds and other foreign nationals drafting text; checking names, terminology and style; and finally checking both the Old and New Testaments so they could be published together for the first time as the complete Bible.

The entire translation of Old and New Testaments took 28 years to complete. It will enable six million native Sorani speakers to hear and read the Bible in their own language for the first time. As well as in physical copies, the new translation is available digitally, both through the YouVersion app and a newly designed Kurdish app called Pertukekem ("My Book").

— Anglican Communion News Service



Pages from the Lindisfarne Gospels are projected onto Durham Cathedral in Durham, England, in November 2009.

Peterborough is in trouble, Allister said, suggesting the document is "clearly insufficient to prevent the problems that occurred."

Another distinguished cathedral in financial difficulty is Durham, founded in the 11th century in northeast England and the location of the shrine of St. Cuthbert.

It has an annual deficit of £500,000 (\$621,000), and its annual report states that it is not raising money fast enough to cover running costs.

Exeter, a cathedral in southwest England with the longest vaulted ceiling in the world, has a predicted deficit of £175,000 (\$217,000) after a failed and costly plan to restore the Roman baths on the site. There has been talk of staff reductions, and the dean is expected to retire.

Guildford, a postwar cathedral near London, also is struggling, following a major renovation and the removal of asbestos. Plans to secure an endowment fund by developing its land for housing were rejected by a local council.

"The buildings themselves are a huge problem," said Newman. "It is possible to see a cathedral as an albatross, but they are also our best assets."

Despite their problems, England's cathedrals attract large crowds and millions of tourists a year.

Around 55,000 people were expected to attend Easter Sunday services.

Nine cathedrals use entrance fees to help finance their buildings, on top of grants from the main Church of England funding body and other fundraising grants and events. The rest are averse to charging tourists and are looking to alternatives, such as more visitor attractions and museum displays.

A temporary government fund to mark the centenary of World War I helped provide £40 million (\$49 million) over two years for repairs.

"The World War I fund was a god-send," Faull said. "Major building works and urgent repairs are the shocks that can cause the financial problems, especially for the smaller cathedrals."

Cathedral deans will lobby the government for a similar fund, she said. ■

ANGLICAN DIGEST continued from page 2

Anglican representative named to Holy Sea

Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi, primate of the Anglican Church of Burundi from 2005 until 2016, will become the representative of the archbishop of Canterbury to the Holy See and director of the Anglican Center in September. He succeeds Archbishop David Moxon, who retires in June.



Ntahoturi

Ordained in 1973, he furthered his theological training in England. He then returned to Burundi and joined the civil service, becoming chief of staff to President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza. After Bagaza was overthrown in a military coup in 1987, Ntahoturi was jailed until 1990. In 1992, he became provincial secretary of the Anglican Church of Burundi. He was consecrated bishop of Matana Diocese and archbishop of Burundi in 2005.

Ntahoturi has chaired the Council of Anglican provinces in Africa and been a member of the Anglican Consultative Council Standing Committee. He has served as a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches since 1998 and as co-moderator of the Permanent Committee on Collaboration and Consensus, which brings together representatives of the Orthodox, Anglicans and Reformed churches. He also served on the Executive Committee of ACT (Action of Churches Together) International and participated

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AROUND THE CHURCH

Pastoral, human resources staff join church

Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry has named Diocese of Eastern Michigan **Bishop Todd Ousley** as bishop for the Office of Pastoral Development, while **Raphaelle Sondak** will become the church's new director of human resources.

Ousley will serve as chaplain to bishops and families, providing pastoral care, guidance and support in crisis and disaster intervention, bereavement counseling and conflict resolution. He will be responsible for the processes in the Title III canons on ministry development that pertain to bishops, as well as the processes in the Title IV canons on clergy discipline that pertain to bishops. He also will provide oversight of bishop search processes.

Ousley, who will be based in Michigan, will begin his new position on July 5. He replaces Bishop Clay Matthews, who is retiring.

He has been bishop of Eastern Michigan since 2007 and previously served as diocesan canon to the ordinary. Before coming to Michigan, he was rector of churches in Texas, where he has served on the board of the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin.

Ousley was House of Bishops liaison with the House of Deputies Committee on Confirmation of the Presiding Bishop and vice-chaired the bishops' legislative committee on ministry at General Convention 2015. In 2012, he chaired the House of Bishops legislative committee on small congregations. He is a member of Bishops United Against Gun Violence, has chaired the House of Bishops planning and pastoral de-



Ousley



Sondak

velopment committees and has served as a member of the Court of Review for Trial of a Bishop.

Sondak, who will report to the church's chief operating officer at the

Episcopal Church Center in New York, is the human resource director at Catholic Guardian Services, a social-services agency in the New York region. Previously she served as director of human resources at Visiting Nurses Association of Hudson Valley, the American Institute for Foreign Study and HELP, USA.

She also has been an adjunct professor teaching human resources management at Mercy College and served on the Hudson Valley Hospital Center board of directors.

— Episcopal Church Public Affairs Office

Atlanta grants fight poverty, oppression

The Episcopal Community Foundation for Middle and North Georgia will grant \$70,000 to four organizations that are lifting people from poverty and oppression in the Diocese of Atlanta.

Crossroads Community Ministries will receive \$20,000 towards starting its Crossroads Connect job readiness program, which will provide access to computers, resume assistance, interview coaching and classes on teamwork, time management and financial planning.

Emmaus House will receive \$25,000 to launch its new Parent Café program. Based on the principles of adult learning and family support, it will help parents and their families manage stress, acquire leadership skills and form healthy, supportive relationships with their neighbors, institutions and the community. The program will be a partnership between D.H. Stanton Elementary School and Emmaus, a diocesan mission.

Housing Initiative of North Fulton/HomeStretch will receive \$10,000 towards housing a family for a year in its Supportive Housing Program, which helps families move from homelessness to stability. This program covers costs associated with utilities, repairs and client services such as life skills education, mentoring and case management.

Lost-n-Found Youth will receive \$15,000 towards a new Youth Drop-In Center in midtown Atlanta that will increase its capacity for assisting homeless LGBTQ youth and open its current location for revenue-generating opportunities. Lost-n-Found's internship program with The Road, a program of the Episcopal Service Corps of Atlanta, allows youth who may have felt rejected by their churches to reconnect with religion or spirituality.

— Episcopal Community Foundation

Episcopal clergy detained at Maundy Thursday demonstration

Several diocesan clergy were among those arrested in Los Angeles during a Maundy Thursday (April 13) Interfaith Day of Prophetic Action to protest recent actions of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Agency.

About 300 demonstrators gathered at the La Plaza United Methodist Church and marched along Los Angeles Street, waving signs and chanting, "Immigrants are welcomed here."

Inspired by Holy Week, demonstrators participated in footwashing and other religious rituals.

The Rev. Joanne Leslie, archdeacon, among those arrested, said she hoped to "pull the eyes of the public to the problem of deportation.

"What ICE is doing is heartless and

unnecessary," Leslie said in an email to The Episcopal News, the diocesan news website. "The prophet Ezekiel says, 'Divide it up as your inheritance and include in it the resident aliens who have made themselves at home among you and now have children. Treat them as if they were born there, just like yourselves.'

"This is what we are called to do. But we are doing the opposite, and it is a sin," she said. "We are tearing apart families, 'criminalizing' people who have worked hard, paid taxes, contributed to their communities and have been loved as our neighbors, in many cases for years."

Troy Elder, bishop's legate for Global Partnerships, also participated in the march but was not arrested. He and the group marched to the Metropolitan Detention Center. "We could see detainees

looking out through tiny windows down at us," he said. He said the protestors waved their signs "and sang songs and just stood in solidarity" with the detainees.

The group called for the release of Romulo Avelica-Gonzalez, who ICE arrested in February after he dropped his daughter at her Lincoln Heights school.

Also arrested were the co-facilitators of Episcopal Sacred Resistance, the diocesan sanctuary task force — the Rev. Francisco Garcia, rector of Holy Faith Church in Inglewood and the Rev. Canon Jaime-Edwards Acton, rector of St. Stephen's Church in Hollywood — and the Rev. Mike Kinman, rector of All Saints, Pasadena. About 35 were arrested for blocking the entry to the detention center. They were released shortly afterwards.

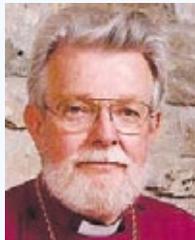
— Diocese of Los Angeles

OBITUARIES

Robert Hibbs

Former Diocese of West Texas Suffragan Bishop Robert "Bob" Hibbs died peacefully in his home surrounded by family on April 17. He was 84.

Born in Philadelphia, Hibbs was ordained deacon and priest in 1957. After some graduate work in Canada, Hibbs served on the faculty of St. Andrew's Theological Seminary in Quezon City, Philippines, for 15 years as sub-dean and later dean. He then served on the faculty of the Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas. For five years, Hibbs served in the Diocese of Northwest Texas as vicar of St. Peter's, Borger, and vicar/rector of St. Stephen's, Lubbock. In the Diocese of West Texas, he served as rector of St. Barnabas, Fredericksburg, from 1993 to 1988 and assistant rector of Church of the Good Shepherd, Corpus



Hibbs

Christi, from 1988 to 1996.

Hibbs was ordained and consecrated bishop in 1996 and served as suffragan until December 2003. His passions included Recovery Ministries, both in the diocese and the wider church, and the Cursillo movement.

— Diocese of West Texas

Frederick Houk Borsch

Bishop of the Diocese of Los Angeles from 1988 to 2002, Frederick Houk Borsch died in his sleep in his Philadelphia home April 11 from complications of myelodysplastic syndrome, a form of leukemia. He was 81.



Borsch

Borsch held teaching posts in England, at Seabury-Western Seminary in Illinois and at General Theological Seminary in New York before becoming dean and president of the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, Calif., where he served from 1972 until 1981.

That year he became dean of the chapel and religious life at Princeton University in New Jersey, where he remained until his 1988 election as bishop.

Borsch returned to academics after leaving the Diocese of Los Angeles, serving as professor of New Testament and chair of Anglican studies at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. The seminary honored him in 2014 by instituting the Frederick Houk Borsch chair in Anglican studies. Contributor of essays, articles and poetry to a number of journals and newspapers, Borsch was the author or editor of some 20 books.

— Episcopal News Service

Alfred Clark Marble

Former Diocese of Mississippi Bishop Alfred Clark "Chip" Marble Jr. died March 29 at his home in Greensboro, N.C., with family members at his bedside. Marble, who had been in declining health for some time, was 81.

Marble served the church as deacon, priest and bishop for almost 50 years. He served as bishop coadjutor beginning in



Marble

1991 and became Mississippi's eighth bishop in 1993. After retiring as diocesan in 2003, Marble served as an assisting bishop in the Diocese of North Carolina from 2005 to 2013.

Marble's ordained ministry began as a curate at St. James' in Jackson in 1967. He served at St. Timothy's in Southaven, Holy Cross in Olive Branch, St. Peter's in Oxford (where he also served as chaplain at Ole Miss and at Church of the Nativity in Water Valley) and Mediator in Meridian, and as a member of the staff in the Diocese of East Carolina.

As bishop in Mississippi, Marble gave his support to a build a strong diaconate ministry. "It was the vision of Bishop Marble that brought the vocational diaconate into being in this diocese," Bishop Duncan Gray III said in 2013 when announcing the name change of the diaconal program to the A.C. Marble Center for Theological Formation.

— Diocese of Mississippi

FEATURE

Episcopal Church Memes uses Facebook popularity to mix laughs, evangelism

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

The Rev. Art Bass is a trial lawyer and Episcopal deacon in Cleveland, Tenn. He also happens to be the mastermind behind one of the most popular Episcopal-themed pages on Facebook — a page he maintained mostly in anonymity until he was confronted with his growing online popularity at a diocesan workshop.

One of the speakers at the workshop was advising congregations to use social media to reach parishioners and the community. One of the examples cited as effective outreach on Facebook was the widely popular humor page Episcopal Church Memes.

Bass listened quietly. After the presentation, he went up and introduced himself to the speakers.

“That’s me,” he told them. “I post those funny photos and captions.”

“That was the first time I ever told anyone in my diocese that I was doing this,” Bass, 66, said in a phone interview with ENS. “I don’t hide the fact that I do this page, but I don’t make a big deal about it either, because it’s not about me.”

Instead, Bass sees Episcopal Church Memes as his humble Christian ministry, spreading the good news and promoting the Episcopal Church, one impact-type-face headline at a time. At nearly 70,000 followers, the message and the humor clearly are connecting with his page’s audience.

Bass, a lifelong Episcopalian, says he takes his faith seriously but thinks a bit of humor goes a long way when evangelizing. He’s been known to sprinkle one-liners into his sermons — “Every good homilist does” — because, he said, often that is what worshipers will remember days later. And he’s convinced Jesus had a sense of humor.

Take Matthew 19:24, the Gospel passage about how a camel trying to get through the eye of a needle would find that squeeze easy, compared to a rich man’s efforts to get into heaven.

“That’s humor, that’s hyperbole,” Bass said. “I’m sure some of the people who heard Jesus tell that parable probably chuckled.”

Jump ahead a couple millennia, and Jesus’ biblical one-liner might be told (or retold) as a meme. For those unfamiliar with this social-media phenomenon, a meme is incredibly easy to produce: Take a popular stock image, like Grumpy Cat or The Most Interesting Man in the World, and use an online meme generator to add a snarky caption or witty joke. Then post away.

But it’s much harder to make a meme funny, harder still to make a funny

meme go viral. Bass’ successful formula on Episcopal Church Memes could be seen at work in his March 21 post featuring Grumpy Cat. In this image, the perpetually downcast Siamese has found his way into a church or cathedral. Bass’ caption in big bold letters reads: “Holy Eucharist to be followed by a special meeting of the vestry? Heaven and hell on the same day.”

As of March 23, that image had been shared from the Episcopal Church Memes page more than 350 times and generated plenty of approving comments, like St. George Pinckney’s quip: “For God so loved the world, that he didn’t send a committee.”

The Most Interesting Cat in the World

The best memes can feel both timeless and ephemeral, like a high-protein snack for the funny bone, but the first

one Bass ever created served a very specific ecclesiastical purpose in his role as deacon at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Cleveland, Tennessee.

It was early fall 2012, and St. Luke’s was preparing for its annual Blessing of the Animals. Bass was thinking of ways to get more people to come to the church with their pets. He also had been following a popular Facebook page that offered a steady stream of funny Catholic memes.

Combining the two, a social-media marketing plan was born.

Bass started with the iconic image of the gray-bearded Dos Equis pitchman known as the Most Interesting Man in the World, who says in ads, “I don’t always drink beer, but when I do, I prefer Dos Equis.”

In Bass’ variation, a cat took the place of the Most Interesting Man. His caption put these words in the Most Interesting Cat’s mouth: “I don’t always allow priests to bless me. But when I do, it’s Father Joel Huffstetler at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church.”

It was a big hit when Bass shared it on his personal Facebook page. “I got a lot of comments from people,” Bass said. “They came back and said, ‘Do you have more of these?’”

He didn’t yet, but if Catholic memes could promote the Catholic faith, Bass thought, why not Episcopal memes to promote the Episcopal faith?

Since then, he has produced or shared thousands of memes and cartoons for his Facebook audience, averaging 20 to 25 images a week. He typically updates the feed on weekdays, with a couple of memes to start the day, another couple in the afternoon or evening and a cartoon in the middle.

Some are meant to educate people about theological concepts, like

transubstantiation, which got the “Princess Bride” treatment in a Feb. 11 meme.

Others aim to leave them laughing in the pews, like this Jeff Foxworthy meme that has been shared nearly 1,400 times since March 12: “If you think Nicodemus is a patch to quit smoking, you might need to stop sleeping through the sermon.”

Bass couldn’t identify a favorite, though one that sticks out in his mind featured Sherlock Holmes and his assistant, Watson.

Watson: “I say, Holmes, as an Anglican, how do you explain eucharistic real presence?”

Holmes: “That, my dear Watson, must always remain a divine mystery.”

That generated a lively theological discussion in the responses.

Bass usually takes weekends off from posting — but not from thinking up funny captions. That’s the tough part, given how many images he’s already created, he said.

“That’s a lot to do, without repeating,” Bass said. “To come up with something that’s new and novel gets harder all the time.”

A meme from April 13 features Rod Serling and a reworking of Serling’s “Twilight Zone” opening.

“Imagine a church that seeks to serve Christ in all persons and respects the dignity of every human being. You have just entered the Episcopal Zone.”

Bass said he was happy with that one, which has been shared 2,300 times, though some people commented that the clever reference to the old TV show might be lost on anyone younger than 50.

Sometimes he also shares images submitted by his followers, giving them credit. Generally, political memes are off-limits. And he’s dabbled in other social media, but Facebook is where he spends most of his time and has found his biggest audience. Bass encourages followers to share his images wherever they wish.

If you’re working in the digital sphere, part of your success is defined by what the industry calls metrics, so take a quick

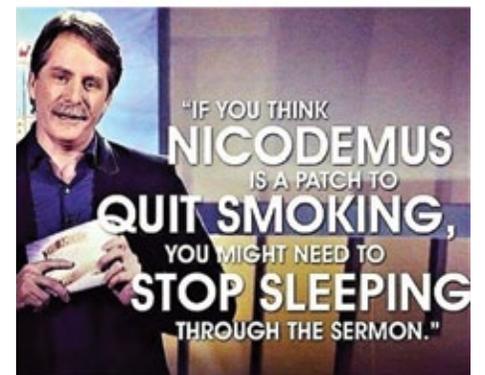
Episcopal Church Memes
March 21 at 6:49pm · 📍

Someone is a little grumpy about vestry duty this Sunday!



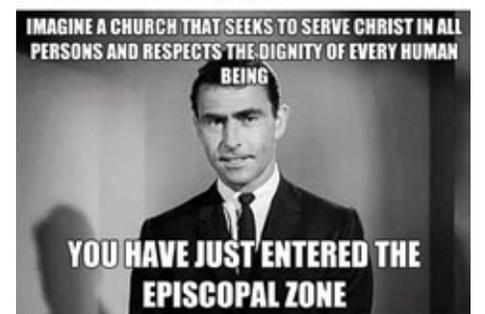
Episcopal Church Memes
March 12 · 📍

The Gospel for the Second Sunday in Lent: John 3:1-17



Episcopal Church Memes
April 13, 2016 · 📍

You have just entered the Episcopal Zone!



look at the numbers.

At the time of this story, Episcopal Church Memes stood at 68,843 likes. To put that in perspective, the Episcopal Church’s Facebook page is approaching 162,000 likes, while Episcopal News Service clocks in at 11,500. ■

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NEWS

IMMIGRATION continued from page 1

The other resettlement agencies are Church World Service, Ethiopian Community Development Council, HIAS (formerly known as the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), International Rescue Committee, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Migration and Refugee Services and World Relief. (By federal law, refugees only may enter the U.S. under the auspices of one of those agencies.)

"We're also looking at how we structure ourselves to stay healthy during the remainder of this year because much of the funding that comes from the federal government is calculated on the number of refugees coming to the United States," Stevenson said.

Thus, if fewer refugees enter the United States than previously, resettlement agencies such as EMM will receive far less federal money than anticipated. That reduction also makes it harder to provide ongoing services to refugees already resettled in the United States.

Administrators at all nine agencies have been forced to make choices in light of the policy changes.

"It's important for us to have a system where refugees are resettled where it is safe, where it's affordable, where opportunity is given to them to thrive as new Americans," Stevenson said.

With those concerns in mind, he said, each agency has been making choices based on where it operates now, where it operates in partnership with other agencies and where, given the anticipated nationalities of future refugees, former refugees have formed communities that can support newcomers.

"We don't want to leave a community completely in the lurch," Stevenson said.

An unsettling time

The weeks since Trump took office have been difficult and unpredictable for the nine resettlement agencies.

On Jan. 27, Trump issued an executive order that suspended the entry of refugees into the United States for at least 120 days. The order also said that, when the administration lifted the ban, there would be further restrictions on potential refugees from seven Muslim-majority countries.

Further, Trump said that, after the ban ended, he would allow only 50,000 refugees into the United States instead of the anticipated 110,000 this fiscal year. By federal law, the president makes an annual deter-

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees designates people as "refugees" if they are fleeing persecution, war or violence — a legal definition distinct from "immigrants."

mination of the maximum number of refugees that will be allowed to resettle in the United States. All nine agencies had geared up with people and offices to resettle the larger number of refugees.

U.S. District Judge James Robart in Seattle on Feb. 6 temporarily blocked Trump's action, leaving the State Department's refugee-admissions program in limbo. Trump issued a second executive order March 6, removing Iraq from the list of seven countries and rewording his first order in an attempt to avoid new allegations that it violates the U.S. Constitution's religious freedom guarantee. The new order maintains the reduction in the number of refugees who can enter the country after that work resumes.

The March 6 order is on hold while federal district court judges consider challenges to it. On March 29, U.S. District Judge Derrick Watson in Hawaii issued a longer-lasting hold on the order. Watson earlier had imposed a temporary restraining order. The ruling is in effect until Watson orders otherwise, including during an appeal, which the Trump administration filed the next day.

The government also has appealed the ruling of a federal judge in Maryland that blocked the order. And Robart, the federal district judge in Washington, has not yet ruled on challenges to the second order.

The executive order's impact on EMM's bottom line is especially drastic because EMM is a unique ministry of the Episcopal Church, both structurally and fiscally. While not separately incorporated, as is Episcopal Relief & Development, EMM receives very little money from the churchwide budget, instead receiving 99.5 percent of its funding from the federal government. Its main office is housed at the Episcopal Church Center in New York.

Stevenson has said that 90 percent of the contract money directly goes to resettling refugees. EMM retains about \$2

It's important for us to have a system where refugees are resettled where it is safe, where it's affordable, where opportunity is given to them to thrive as new Americans.

— The Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson



Photo/EMM via Facebook

The Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson and the national staff of Episcopal Migration Ministries meet for a retreat at the Episcopal Church Center in New York as EMM and the eight other resettlement agencies in the United States face cuts due to changing U.S. policy on refugee admissions.

million for administrative costs, including all national staff salaries. Any unused money goes back to the government.

The affiliates receive money via EMM from the federal contracts and thus face big budget cuts when no refugees enter the country. EMM's network is a mixture of three types of affiliates. Two are essentially EMM branch offices. The rest are independent operations that work only with EMM or with EMM and Church World Service and/or Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.

Affiliates are using cash reserves, fundraising and whatever support EMM can give them to pay their employees and cover leases and other operating expenses. Executive Council agreed in February to give EMM \$500,000 to help it through 2017. The agency itself recently announced a fundraising campaign to bridge the funding gap.

In fiscal year 2016, which ran from Oct. 1, 2015, to Sept. 30, 2016, EMM resettled 5,762 refugees to the United States from 35 countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burma, Afghanistan and Syria. Already this fiscal year, EMM welcomed 2,766 refugees and anticipated resettling 6,175 people until Trump signed his order Jan. 27. Overall, all nine agencies have resettled approximately 38,000 refugees this fiscal year, Stevenson said.

Since the Trump administration's policy shift, EMM has reduced its national core staff by 22 percent due to the reduced federal funding. It announced in late February that it would close its more than 30-year-old Miami of-

fice because of changes made by former President Barack Obama to U.S. policy on Cuban migrants.

Reducing the affiliate network by six and closing the Miami office equals a 23 percent reduction in the network, Stevenson said. "We are hopeful that will be sufficient."

Some of the other nine resettlement agencies also have announced decisions. World Relief said in mid-February that it would lay off more than 140 staff members and close offices in Boise, Idaho; Columbus, Ohio; Miami; Nashville, Tenn.; and Glen Burnie, Md.

Church World Service has begun a \$1 million fundraising campaign.

Stevenson noted that the reduced number of refugees and the decisions the agencies must make will hurt the economies in the affiliates' cities. Landlords who rent to refugees, employers who hire them and the language teachers, medical personnel and school employees who help them integrate into U.S. society will lose money or jobs, Stevenson predicted.

"We're making the best strategic decisions that we can every day based on the information we have in front of us," he said. "So, given the information that we have now and the assumptions that we're all working across all nine resettlement agencies, we believe that that adjustment in our network size will properly position us to be a healthy network for resettling refugees come the end of a suspension and into fiscal 2018."

Meanwhile, Episcopal Church Director of Government Relations Rebecca Linder Blachly told ENS that her office would continue to help those in the administration who will decide if the ban can be lifted after 120 days "be confident that we have a good process in place" for resettling refugees. ■

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NEWS

Georgia lynching victims remembered as racial-reconciliation efforts expand

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

In one of the darkest corners of American history — the lynching of black victims by white attackers — details of many of these decades-old killings long have remained a mystery as present-day researchers seek to identify the victims and bring racial healing to their communities.

Those efforts have gained steam in Georgia, where last year the Diocese of Atlanta launched a three-year series of pilgrimages intended to bring these victims and their stories to light. At the same time, a group of residents in one west-central Georgia community, LaGrange, has worked with police, civic leaders and churches to come to grips with a nearly forgotten lynching in the city.

“The wind of the spirit is blowing ... and moving us to the realization that in order [for] racial healing to occur then we have to deal with lynching,” said Catherine Meeks, who heads the Diocese of Atlanta’s Beloved Community: Commission for Dismantling Racism.

Meeks praised the work of the LaGrange group, named Troup Together after Troup County, where the town is located. The diocese and Troup Together are pursuing separate but parallel efforts with similar goals: to remember lynching victims, reveal their untold stories and encourage racial reconciliation.

Nearly two years of work by Troup Together culminated in January in a public apology issued by Police Chief Lou Dekmar for his department’s role in the lynching of Austin Callaway in 1940. Callaway was found gravely injured on the side of a highway after being taken from a cell at the LaGrange jail by a white mob, an injustice enabled by LaGrange officers.

In March, white pastors spoke at a church service to confess white congregations’ complicity in Callaway’s death and other acts of racial violence. The dedication of a historical marker at Warren Temple United Methodist Church and a cemetery service for Callaway and more than 500 lynching victims in Troup County and around the state followed.

St. Mark’s Episcopal Church is among several LaGrange congregations working with Troup Together. The church hosted a luncheon for Callaway’s relatives and those of two other lynching victims before they attended the church service in March.

“While we can’t change [the past], we can acknowledge the horror of it and regret it and make our atonement,” said Janet Beall, a retired educator and long-time member of St. Mark’s who attended the ceremonies along with St. Mark’s rector, the Very Rev. R. Allen Pruitt.

Troup Together evolved from a biracial book group in LaGrange that



Photo/courtesy of Wesley Edwards

A historical marker remembering lynching victims in Georgia is unveiled in LaGrange.

two years ago read and discussed “The Cross and the Lynching Tree,” a 2011 book by James H. Cone. The group’s subsequent research into local history turned up information on the lynching of Callaway. That led to a prayer service in September 2015 marking 75 years since the killing. The reconciliation efforts grew from there.

“Our goal is to learn to love our neighbors, and I find that we really can’t do that in any meaningful way unless we know each other’s stories,” said Wesley Edwards, a leader of Troup Together. “Even though we live in the same community we don’t share the same histories as racial groups, and there’s a lot that we don’t know or appreciate across the boundaries of race about each other.”

Cone’s book draws a direct parallel between Jesus’ death on the cross and the deep suffering of American blacks that continued after slavery into what he identifies as “the lynching era,” 1880 to 1940.

“In that era, the lynching tree joined the cross as the most emotionally charged symbols in the African American community,” Cone says. “Both the cross and the lynching tree represented the worst in human beings and at the same time ‘an unquenchable ontological thirst’ for life that refuses to let the worst determine our final meaning.”

In segregated communities across the South, the intended message of a lynching was fear, Meeks said.

“The purpose of it was to terrorize black people and any white people who were going to sympathize with black people, so lynching was about terror,” Meeks said. Its roots were in a thread of American society that held a belief in white supremacy, she said, “and that same white-supremacy thread continues to haunt us in this country.”

The Commission on Dismantling Racism, whose anti-racism training program has served as a model for other Episcopal dioceses, is working to honor the 600 or so people documented to have died from lynching in Georgia. Its first pilgrimage, in October, brought nearly 200 people to Macon, Ga., and the site where in 1922 a lynch mob dumped the

body of John “Cockey” Glover.

The commission has a busy 2017 planned. A second pilgrimage is set for Athens in October, Meeks said, and her commission is working to open a center for racial healing near Morehouse College in Atlanta by that month. The commission also is encouraging parishes in the diocese to hold screenings of the movie “13th,” about racial injustice in the American prison system.

Meeks and her team also want to establish a permanent memorial to Georgia’s lynching victims that incorporates the list of names, similar to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Meeks is in contact with the Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta as one possible location.

“There is great interest in this idea,” Meeks said, estimating a two-year timeframe for the project to come together.

There are plenty of victims to remember, including some whose precise fate

“Our goal is to learn to love our neighbors, and I find that we really can’t do that in any meaningful way unless we know each other’s stories.”

— Wesley Edwards

remains unknown.

Bobbie Hart, one of the Troup Together leaders, never knew her paternal grandfather. He vanished decades ago while working on the railroad, and the more Hart and her sister learned about him and his mysterious disappearance, the more they became convinced that he had been the victim of a lynching, she said.

Hart, who was raised Baptist and now attends a Methodist church, knows relatives of Austin Callaway but was unaware of his lynching until working on Troup Together with Edwards. She said she was overcome with emotion while attending the group’s prayer service for Callaway in 2015.

“I felt a sadness come over me, and I prayed and I felt the need to ask the Lord to forgive the men that did this to them,” said Hart, now 64. “And I felt that it was important that, me being a black female ... I chose to forgive this injustice.” ■

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FEATURE

Chicago school and suburban church are partners in hope

Tutoring part of church's outreach

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

At Community Christian Alternative Academy, in one of Chicago's most violent neighborhoods, the dead are remembered a generation later in bold, black paint.

Snake. Pookie. Johnny Rae. Malek. And others — their names and the years when they died affixed to two-dimensional tombstones under the letters "RIP" in the outdoor mural that towers over the school's entrance on South Pulaski Road in North Lawndale on the city's west side. Because the artwork hasn't been updated since its creation, these deaths run from 1989 through 1994.

"It was a way that the students were expressing their grief," school founder Myra Sampson said. "Some of those 'resting in peace' were students, and some were family members of students."

The mural is a product of an era whose violence is not easily forgotten. The murder rates in the early '90s often are cited as a bleak reference point when tallying Chicago's recent surge in gun violence and homicides. Last year, 34 people were killed just in North Lawndale, according to the Chicago Tribune, and Chicago's citywide toll rose to 786 in 2016, the most of any city in America. The deadly trend has continued in 2017. The year's homicide total had hit 155 as of April 7, according to records kept by DNA Info.

Chicago, though not alone in facing such grim statistics, was the setting for a conference hosted by a group of Episcopal bishops who see behind the violence an "unholy trinity" of guns,



Photos/David Paulsen/ENS

Community Christian Alternative Academy in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood specializes in helping dropouts earn their high school diplomas.

"Chicago has been the focus of much of the country's attention on issues of urban gun violence, so it's my hope that this conference makes a contribution to the creation of effective responses to this epidemic," Diocese of Chicago Bishop Jeffrey Lee said in an e-mail. "One of the vows a bishop makes at his or her ordination is 'to defend those who have no helper,' in the name of Jesus Christ. I can think of few issues more compelling than this one to make good on that vow."

More than a statistic, shooting deaths deeply affect communities like North Lawndale. Sampson said eight of the city's homicide victims during the 2015-16 school year were current or past CCA Academy students. She couldn't recall a year when the school was hit so hard. So far in 2017, nine of the city's homicides have been in North Lawndale, according to DNA Info.

"Our students see so much death and a lot of time don't have anyone to help them process that," Sampson said.

The nondenominational charter school, which specializes in helping dropouts earn their high school diplomas, has had a partner in St. Mary's Episcopal Church since opening in 1978. A former rector was friends with Sampson. Early

on, the congregation in suburban Park Ridge helped the school fill out paperwork, gave \$1,000 to create the school's reading lab and secured the down payment for its current building through a \$30,000 United Thank Offering grant. More recently, the church formed a group of a dozen tutors who take turns traveling to the school once a week and providing students one-on-one help with

their homework. Such individual attention, Sampson said, may prove critical in helping these 200 or so students, ages 16 to 21, grow into adults who can beat the cycle of violence in their neighborhood.

The gravity of the challenge is written on the wall: The victims memorialized in the school's mural — the youngest, 15, the oldest, 21 — were the same age as students who now pass on their way inside each day.

Tutoring part of church's outreach

Park Ridge is in many ways worlds apart from North Lawndale. Residents in this northwest suburb live in modest, well-kept houses with yard signs supporting candidates for alderman, school board and parks board. During the week, they typically commute to work at office jobs in Chicago or run their own businesses in Park Ridge, said the Rev. Patrick Skutch, St. Mary's rector of two years.

His congregation is diverse in age, Skutch said, but mostly white. It also is active in the community — for example, organizing a monthly Second Sunday Sack Lunches drive to pack meals for the hungry.

"People here really have a passion for serving others," Skutch said.

The tutoring program was started by church member Dava Kondiles, a recently retired music teacher.

"The first year it was kind of an experiment," Kondiles said. "We weren't even sure what we were going to do."

Now in its third year, the program has become a valued part of the CCA Academy routine. Every Tuesday, five of the tutors from St. Mary's, most of them women, spend four hours at the school, tutoring one group of students in the

morning and a second group in the afternoon.

The emphasis typically is on seniors who need the extra push to graduate, and students appreciate the tutors' help, said Sampson, the school's chief education officer. "A lot of our students are academically behind, and so sometimes the only way you can grasp a concept and move forward is if someone has some time to spend with you so that you can learn that concept."

Kondiles, a 64-year-old Skokie resident, said the tutors might get as much out of the sessions as the students they witness growing in their education. The tutors see themselves as delivering tools that will help these students rise out of poverty.

"I call it the education brigade," Kondiles said. "That's the great leveler."

Shootings hit close to home

In even the best traffic conditions, it takes about a half hour to drive from St. Mary's to CCA Academy. The streets of North Lawndale pass in front of apartment buildings, auto body shops, liquor stores and retail centers, where the bright lights of stores contrast with the side streets' duplexes, some of them displaying boarded-up windows.

By most indicators, North Lawndale is besieged by violence and poverty. A Chicago Tribune report in March that



Volunteer tutors Dava Kondiles, left, and Paula Risk discuss their work with CCA Academy students at a coffee shop near St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Park Ridge, Ill.

poverty and racism. Bishops United Against Gun Violence's conference was to be held at the Lutheran School of Theology from April 20 to 22 in Hyde Park.

The conference aimed not only to illuminate the problems at the intersection of guns, poverty and racism but also to bring a Christian message of hope and reconciliation, the bishops said.



A placard inviting prospective students to "Enroll Now" is positioned outside CCA Academy.

focused on the neighborhood's plight put the indicators in perspective: Last year, out of 77 Chicago neighborhoods, North Lawndale had the fifth-most violent crimes, fifth-most homicides and second-most shootings, at 282.

The neighborhood once was home to the Sears, Roebuck & Co. headquarters, as well as Zenith, Sunbeam and Western Electric. Then, in the 1950s, "white flight" coupled with a surge in black residents. Riots in 1968 over the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. were followed by years of decline and industries closing, according to the Steans Family Foundation. Now, 21 percent of North

continued on page 9

FEATURE

CHICAGO continued from page 8

Lawndale's working-age population is unemployed, 43 percent of households live in poverty and nearly 28 percent of residents do not have a high school diploma, the Tribune reported.

'Enroll Now' sign

CCA Academy has been a fixture of the neighborhood for 39 years. It fills more than 18,000 square feet of a former bottle-cap factory, a building that today would be unrecognizable as a school if it weren't wrapped in telltale murals and signs, including a moveable placard encouraging potential students: "Enroll Now."

The school grounds have been free of violence, Sampson said, but death surrounds them. She estimates three or four of her students each month grapple with the sudden death of a relative or friend, typically a casualty of gunfire. And those who escape danger still may be traumatized by the violence they witness on the streets, she said.

Students don't readily share such experiences with their tutors from St. Mary's, and the lesson-minded tutors don't want to pry. Their presence in these students' lives often speaks for itself, as in the aftermath of the 2016 killing of a CCA Academy student by Chicago police, a high-profile incident that shone a dim spotlight on North Lawndale.

The student, 16-year-old Pierre Loury, reportedly was fleeing police at a traffic stop when he was shot by an officer on April 11. Police said Loury had threatened the officer with a gun. The killing sparked criticisms of the force and demonstrations by Loury's family members and their supporters.

The tutors from St. Mary's learned of the tension in North Lawndale from a school administrator in a phone call that night. When they arrived Tuesday morning, "the atmosphere was pretty electric," said Paula Risk, 69, a retired nurse and fellow tutor. Some students were working through their feelings by making posters in memory of their slain fellow student, who was to be remembered at a vigil that night.

The drive back to Park Ridge on a day like that can feel like going through decompression, Risk said, but the tutors also see hope to balance the tragedy and are committed to these students.



This closeup of the mural memorializing victims of violence shows the years of their deaths date from 1989 to 1994.

'One of the vows a bishop makes at his or her ordination is "to defend those who have no helper," in the name of Jesus Christ.'

— Bishop Jeffrey Lee

"We're called as Christians to help other people, so you help how you can," Kondiles said.

'People want something better'

The problem of gun violence is bigger than one school or one church, even one city. Chicago has unfortunate company in places like St. Louis, which some have called the country's real murder capital because it has the highest per capita homicide rate. And a Wall Street Journal analysis in February identified Chicago, Baltimore, Milwaukee and Memphis as the four largest American cities that have seen homicide totals approach or break records set in the 1990s.

Poverty, racism and violence are "an insidious trinity of evil forces," said Diocese of Maryland Bishop Eugene Taylor Sutton, who coined the phrase "unholy trinity."

"We see it playing out here in Baltimore almost daily," Sutton told ENS. "By far, most of the victims of violence are poor and people of color. Also, most of the perpetrators of gun violence are poor and persons of color."

Chicago has the additional burden of becoming a presidential punching bag. After lamenting generally about crime and poverty as "this American carnage" in his inaugural address, President Donald Trump days later singled out Chicago's violence for scrutiny, warning he would "send in the Feds" if the city didn't solve the problem itself.

Skutch, the rector at St. Mary's, said he thought Trump's reaction belied the complexity of the issue. "A lot of our cities in America struggle with the same reality," he said. "It's one thing to stand outside it and criticize it. It's another thing to be in it."

And while gun violence doesn't plague Park Ridge residents, "our neighbors' children deal with that on a daily basis," Skutch said, so his congregation is reaching out any way it can.

Outside support is welcomed in North Lawndale, where children often

don't have the same extended family and institutional support that past generations may have relied on, Sampson said. With help from St. Mary's, students at CCA Academy typically graduate at a rate of 90 percent or higher.

There's more in that achievement than a piece of paper to hang on the wall, she said.

"We have young people in Chicago who are 20 and 21 who have not had a job," she said. "When adults integrate as contributing members of society ... we consider that a success."

North Lawndale is a tough neighborhood, but she also sees hope and perseverance, she said.

"It is a neighborhood with a lot of poverty. It's a neighborhood with more than its share of crime," Sampson said. "But in many ways the good, positive thing is that it's a neighborhood where people want something different, want something better. They have accepted us and appreciate when someone inputs into the community and into the lives of the students." ■



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NEWS

Disciplinary panel considers allegations against Los Angeles bishop

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

Three days of testimony in the ecclesiastical disciplinary hearing for Diocese of Los Angeles Bishop J. Jon Bruno ended in Pasadena, Calif., on March 30 without a resolution.

Church Attorney Raymond “Jerry” Coughlan, appointed to represent the Episcopal Church, and Diocese of Los Angeles Chancellor Richard Zevnik did not make oral closing statements. They will submit written briefs for the hearing panel to consider before making its decision.

“I have no idea how long our decision will take, but there are other canonical processes involved that could mean this could go on for a while,” Diocese of Southern Virginia Bishop Herman Hollerith IV, president of the panel, told spectators.

The allegations detailed at the hearing stem from Bruno’s behavior during and after his unsuccessful 2015 attempt to sell St. James the Great Episcopal Church in Newport Beach to a condominium developer for \$15 million. Church members initially filed the disciplinary complaint against him.

The St. James the Great complainants alleged that Bruno violated church Title IV canons because he:

- failed to get the consent of the diocesan standing committee before entering into a contract to sell the property;
- misrepresented his intention for the

property to the members, the clergy and the local community at large;

- misrepresented that St. James the Great was not a sustainable congregation;
- misrepresented that the Rev. Canon Cindy Evans Voorhees, St. James’ vicar, had resigned;

- misrepresented to some St. James members that he would lease the property back to them for a number of months and that the diocese would financially aid the church; and

- engaged in conduct unbecoming a member of the clergy by “misleading and deceiving” the clergy and people of St. James, as well as the local community, about his plans for the property and for taking possession of the property and locking out the congregation.

Bruno said in his response brief to the panel that five of the allegations must be decided in his favor because “undisputed evidence establishes no canonical violation.” He said the sixth allegation concerning alleged misrepresentations to Voorhees presented conflicting evidence for the panel to weigh. However, he called it a “she-said (he told me he wouldn’t sell the property), he-said (I never said I wouldn’t sell the property) dichotomy.”

The panel can take actions ranging from dismissing the allegations to removing Bruno from his ordained ministry. Bruno or Coughlan would have 40



Photos/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS

Above, left to right, the Rev. Canon Kelli-Grace Kurtz, convening chair of the Diocese of Los Angeles’ program group on missions, discusses with the ecclesiastical disciplinary hearing panel what the diocese requires of mission congregations.

Diocesan Chief of Staff David Tumilty tells the hearing panel about diocesan Bishop J. Jon Bruno’s concerns over the financial health of the diocese and his decisions about St. James the Great Episcopal Church, Newport Beach.

Clare Zabala-Bangao, diocesan coordinator for mission congregations, tells the hearing panel about her efforts to have St. James’ lay leaders and the Rev. Canon Cindy Evans Voorhees, the vicar, file required monthly financial reports.

Left, Diocese of Los Angeles Bishop J. Jon Bruno spent nearly seven hours March 29 and 30 talking to the hearing panel considering the disciplinary action against him.



days to appeal its decision to the Court of Review for Bishops.

March 30 began with Bruno spending nearly two hours answering questions from Coughlan and Zevnik about his March 28 testimony. The questions covered topics aimed at understanding Bruno’s actions and motivations surrounding his attempt to sell St. James. High among the motivations was providing money to fund the diocese’s ongoing mission and ministry.

Money was an issue, Bruno and other witnesses said, because the diocese had spent more than \$10 million on the lengthy litigation that eventually returned four properties to the diocese that had been held by disaffiliated Episcopalians. Bruno said the expense was worth it to set a precedent about church property ownership in the diocese and in the state. He went forward with the actions even after then-Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold and his chancellor, David Booth Beers, advised against it, he said.

Bruno and others discussed evidence showing that the sale of St. James also was one possible way for the diocese to have the money to buy the remaining interest in some commercial properties in Anaheim. Donors had bequeathed to the diocese a partial interest in those properties. The properties produce income for the diocese, which also thought it might be able to sell the property near Angel Stadium. One document showed that properties appraised at \$140 million. The diocese since has borrowed the money to acquire a 100 percent interest in the properties.

Some other March 30 witnesses said Bruno also wanted to leave the diocese in good financial health when he retired. Bruno turns 72, the Episcopal Church’s mandatory retirement age for clergy, in late 2018. His successor, John Taylor, is due to be ordained and consecrated on July 8.

The diocese was hard-hit not only by the litigation costs but also by the 2008 recession, said diocesan Chief of Staff David Tumilty. The diocese cut staff and programs such as one that provided counseling for priests, he said. The California “corporation sole” through which Bruno controlled some but not all diocesan property and other assets also was

Bishops Against Gun Violence facilitate Utah conference

A group of more than 60 Episcopal bishops facilitated an April 20-22 conference in Chicago that worked to curtail the epidemic of gun violence in the United States. “Unholy Trinity: the Intersection of Racism, Poverty and Gun Violence” was grounded in scripture, liturgy and theology.

The conference featured a “three-note” panel of African-American leaders offering perspectives on poverty, racism and gun violence and included Bible study focused on the conference themes as well as a prayerful procession to sites of gun violence on Chicago’s South Side.

Workshops at the conference were devoted to helping participants work with police, young people, legislators, the media, anti-violence advocacy groups and other constituencies to reduce gun violence.

“Our goal is to continue creating a network of Episcopalians inspired and equipped to work against gun violence and the social forces that drive it,” said Bishop Mark Beckwith of the Diocese

of Newark (N.J.), one of three co-conveners of Bishops United.

The “three-note” panelists were the Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas, Susan D. Morgan Distinguished Professor of Religion at Goucher College and canon theologian at Washington National Cathedral; the Rev. Julian DeShazier, senior minister of University Church in Chicago and a hip-hop artist who performs as J.Kwest; and Natalie Moore, a reporter for WBEZ, Chicago’s National Public Radio affiliate, and author of “The South Side: A Portrait of Chicago and American Segregation.” The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, served as moderator.

Bishops United Against Gun Violence is an ad hoc group of nearly 70 Episcopal bishops who have come together to explore means of reducing levels of gun violence in the United



Photo/John Craigie

Members of Bishops Against Gun Violence demonstrate in Salt Lake City at the 2015 General Convention.

States and to advocate for policies and legislation that save lives. Bishops United works against gun violence by forming relationships and coalitions with interfaith colleagues, fellow advocates, and families whose lives have been touched by gun violence; giving voice to voiceless victims through public liturgy, advocacy, and prayer; and supporting each other in efforts to end gun violence in local communities. ■

COMMENTARY

Learn to stay in the present moment with 'I Am'

By Jan Griffin

Recently I rediscovered a “secret” that’s been known for thousands of years, taught in the sacred wisdom of many cultures including my own, written about in hundreds of books (some I’ve read!). It’s something I’ve learned and taught, preached and practiced, and repeatedly forgotten.

I totally forgot it during this difficult winter. Stuck at home, I stared at the ice and snow, and willed winter to be over. Impatiently demanding the end of bad weather, I didn’t enjoy the free time the ice and snow gave me.

My lack of peace came from rejecting the present, wanting to be in a wished-for future.

Then, just before Christmas, a dear friend was diagnosed with a rare stage 4 cancer. Christmas was holy but hardly merry, as I prayed for the best possible outcome: “When the chemotherapy is over, the cancer’s over, too!”

My prayers were all focused on my wishes for her future, largely ignoring what’s happening right now.

Concentrating on the outcome, I missed seeing how her illness has brought so much joy into her daily life. The out-

pouring of love and support has made each day rich and wonderful. Taking the healing journey one day at a time, she has found joy in receiving acts of love and in thanking all who have helped.

I have decades of experience working with people in crisis, to help them stay in the present moment and not give in to either magical thinking or premature grief about what might happen. But it took me weeks to reconnect with what my faith has taught me.

I finally rediscovered “the secret” while reading the blog of a young woman also facing a very difficult cancer diagnosis (are there any easy ones?). As she poured out her fears about possibly not seeing her child grow up, a wise friend said: “Don’t skip to the end.”

That’s that secret: Don’t skip to the end; stay in the present moment, in the “now.”

This is what I had forgotten. The confinement of a harsh winter was not about what I could not do for days on end, it was about what I could do with the gift of every day’s unscheduled time. The healing journey for my friend is not about a sprint to the finish line, but a daily journey of faith and love and joy.

“Don’t skip to the end.” Stay in the “now.”

The Scripture of my faith tradition commands us to pay attention to what’s happening, to look, to listen, to discern the signs of God’s presence in daily life, even in circumstances we really don’t

want. The power of God’s love is here, working in our hearts and in our communities, but we need to take notice and go where it leads us. Transformation to a better outcome only can happen when we pay attention to God at work right now.

In the biblical story of Moses and the burning bush, Moses asks God what to say if he’s asked God’s name. “I Am,” says God, not “I was” or “I will be.”

God is with us, in the here and now. Whatever is happening, God is with us to reveal opportunities for showing love, giving support, working for justice and

enjoying creativity, healing and serving.

It’s easy to say that all we have is today, but it’s also easy to “skip to the end,” to put our awareness onto the wished-for future. But God’s power to transform our lives is found in the present moment, where I Am waits for us to show up now. ■

The Rev. Janice Griffin serves as a congregational developer for the southwest region of the Diocese of Spokane. This column appeared in March in the Tri-City Herald, Kennewick, Wash., and is reprinted with permission.

BRUNO continued from page 10

getting strapped by frequently having to cover operating deficits in what is known as the Mission Share Fund budget, Tumilty said.

The need for recovering capital was a theme in the March 30 testimony. For instance, when Coughlan asked Bruno who now was liaison to the Anglican Communion Compass Rose Society, an \$110,000 job that Bruno had offered to Voorhees, Bruno said the job was unfilled. “I don’t have the money to have it now because I am paying for two years of litigation,” he said, referring to the Title IV proceedings.

“Whose fault is that?” a few members of the audience asked softly but clearly. Testimony March 30 also showed that the sale of St. James caused controversy between at least two diocesan leaders. The Rev. Canon Melissa McCarthy, standing committee president during 2015 and 2016, told the panel that then-Bishop Suffragan Mary Glasspool called her to inquire about a possible sale of St. James. McCarthy said Glasspool told her that, as standing committee president, McCarthy had a duty to block the sale. She said Glasspool asked her to contact an Episcopal diocesan chancellor whom McCarthy knew and whom Glasspool thought could help develop an argument against the sale.

Glasspool planned to contact other Episcopal bishops about the sale, Mc-

Carthy said. After praying for a day, McCarthy said she contacted Bruno to tell him about the conversation because she learned that the bishop had confidentially disclosed the offer to buy St. James during a meeting of diocesan executive leadership.

“The bishop suffragan had called the president of the standing committee and enlisted her support to undermine what the bishop diocesan was doing,” McCarthy said. “And [because she] had broken his confidentiality, I felt like he needed to know.”

Although Bruno did not ask for it, the standing committee approved his effort to sell St. James during a special June 8, 2015, meeting more than two months after he accepted the offer. Because the title to the property resided in the corporation sole, McCarthy said, Bruno believed he could act without committee approval.

“We want to have some way to clearly show our support,” she said. “Unique circumstances” surrounded that decision because, by June 8, McCarthy said, “there had already been a social-media campaign launched,” and other opposition to the sale had formed.

When Bruno formed the intention to sell St. James and whether and when he disclosed that intention to Voorhees and the members of St. James has been disputed. Voorhees and others have insisted that they believed Bruno wanted them to revive St. James so that it could continue in the hard-won building. ■

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FAITH AND THE ARTS

Episcopal artists are challenged to create God stories

By Episcopal Journal

Recognizing the re-emerging power of storytelling as a catalyst of spiritual connection and transformation, the Episcopal Church and Visual Arts (www.ECVA.org) envisions the next virtual gallery exhibition on its new website as “Telling God Stories in the 21st Century.”

Deborah Cantwell of Los Angeles, an ECVA board member, took up the challenge to build the concept of the coming exhibit, which seeks to answer the question “God, how can I share your love with this world?”

“Telling God stories in the 21st century is not limited to sacred texts that have been translated with great reverence to icons, frescoes, stained-glass windows and magnificent sculptures,” Cantwell said. “The digital age has expanded our choice of media and our opportunity or method of making the story public. This revolution is changing our dialogue on the spiritual and sacred as well.



Cantwell

“At the heart of all of these art forms is the story and the artist’s interpretation of that story to give understanding and allow the viewer to more fully engage in the experience.”

Dr. Paula Artec of Phoenix, a watercolor artist, art therapist, liturgical art designer, illuminator and the curator for ECVA, cites growing interest among academics and theologians in storytelling that can be life-changing.

In May, “Narrating Science, the Power of Stories in the 21st Century,” a conference at the University of Guelph, west of Toronto, will address the growing interest beyond the scientific communities in narratives that concern the global community through the power of television documentaries, literature and social media.

Last fall in Bucharest, a conference called “The Power of Storytelling” was built upon the idea that stories can change our worlds. The event brought together superstar storytellers in all fields — media, arts, business — to show the potential of stories to connect people, heal wounds, move us to action and drive change.

Two years ago, philosophy professor Brian Braman of Boston College wrote about “Our Faith, Our Stories,” reflecting



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH VISUAL ARTS

upon “the power of stories to both nurture and share our faith.” He stressed the importance of stories in faith formation.

For the coming ECVA exhibition, artists are invited to choose almost any medium in a subject that relates to the text. A call to artists for an exhibition to be unveiled in late summer or early fall will be posted in May on the website.

It will be the second exhibition since the inauguration of the new website, designed by the Rev. John Rollins of High Bridge, N.J., earlier this year. “O Antiphons — Praising The Names of Jesus,” the first new exhibition in two years from ECVA, includes 45 examples of art from those whose works embellish the sacred texts and written word of God through the ancient crafts of calligraphy and illumination.

“The O Antiphons [sung by choirs before and after the Magnificat at vespers on the seven days before Christmas], were selected as a meditative text for contemplation and illumination,” said Mel Ahlborn, president of ECVA. The

hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” is a paraphrase of these antiphons.

Ahlborn encourages individual artists and parish teams, as well as regional ECVA chapters, to submit work for the coming exhibition. She describes the new website as the central core of the group’s mission of encouraging the visual arts in the life of the Episcopal Church.

“It is where ECVA curators and artists present the art of members of the Artists Registry,” she said. “The board began planning an update to its website in late summer last year with two primary goals: giving the site a responsive design that would display effectively across devices such as laptops, smartphones and tablets, and updating the membership services at the Artists Registry to receive online payments.

“The new ECVA website offers a responsive design and a streamlined navigation that will, we hope, make for a welcoming place to experience the artists’ own words and engage with the art they create.” ■

Sculptor and chaplain Gurdon Brewster dies

By Jerry Hames

The Rev. J. Gurdon Brewster, an outstanding sculptor whose work has inspired others, died April 7, four days before his 80th birthday. He had suffered a heart attack and stroke in February.

Known for a deep commitment to college chaplaincy throughout his ministry, Brewster had a special reverence for music, art, dance and nature, family members said. In retirement, when he was not in his studio sculpting, he could be found riding his tractor or walking his farm, Green Pastures, in Newfield in the Finger Lakes Region of central New York. He loved poetry and could recite many poems.

As a student at Exeter preparatory school in New Hampshire, he developed an interest in sculpture. During his senior year at Union Theological Seminary in New York, he made a portrait bust of the great theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, one of his teachers, that is displayed in the seminary’s library.

In the summer of 1961, while still a seminarian, Brewster was invited by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to be an assistant minister at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. He lived with the King family and worked with youth in the church and from around the city. He returned in the summer of 1966 with his wife, Martha, and their two

daughters and wrote about his experiences in a memoir, “No Turning Back.”

In 1962, he and Martha went to Madras, India, for two years in an experimental church program where he taught American history and directed student volunteers in surrounding villages. His experiences in India inspired him to spend 10 years creating a group of sculptures he called “The Hunger Series.”

“My desire to create images of hunger came from living in India, a country I love,” Brewster wrote. “A mother trying to nurse her child; men barely able to move, begging to be seen and cared for; children standing around everywhere with large bellies; a man, a fragment



Photo/Gurdon Brewster Collection

Of his “Jesus and Buddha Dancing,” Brewster wrote: “Imagine the leaders of the great religions dancing together.”

of a life with his child, were among the countless images with which I identify. Not a day passes in our beautiful Finger Lakes that these people do not walk with

me in some way along my journey.”

Upon returning to the United States, he began his work as the Episcopal chaplain at Cornell University. In the next 35 years, he sponsored 40 people for ordination and established a permanent endowment to support chaplaincy ministry at Cornell.

“In the 1970s and ’80s, when many full-time campus ministries were threatened with reduced funding, in part because of their witness to social and political justice, Gurdon pushed for an institutional solution that would give campus ministries a sense of tenure and stability,” said the Rev. Mark Harris, coordinator for national campus ministry at the Episcopal Church Center in New York at that time. “He argued for, and campaigned for, endowments for campus ministry that would provide funding that was not dependent on popularity, social and political stance, and even success measured by numbers alone.”

While working at Cornell, Brewster led several Freedom Ride trips to Atlanta for members of the college community to help them learn about the Civil Rights Movement. He also led trips to Haiti.

In 1999, he retired from Cornell, giving him the opportunity to focus on his sculpture. A sculpture of Martin Luther King and images of the Civil Rights Movement that he finished



Photo/Gary Hodges Photography

Gurdon Brewster with “Prophetic Thunder,” a bronze sculpture of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., with 50 different images from the Civil Rights Movement flaring out behind King’s head. “I hope it will help educate,” Brewster said last year when the sculpture was unveiled.

last year were featured in a one-person show at the State of the Art Gallery in Ithaca, N.Y., and his work is in collections throughout the country.

To see Brewster’s lifetime work, including a 20-minute video on how he created a bronze sculpture, go to www.gurdonbrewster.com. ■

FAITH AND THE ARTS

Oregon cathedral plays ringmaster

By Susan Spelman

The circus pulls into town this spring at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland, Ore., where a multimedia art show intends to reflect the spirituality of this special world.

The opening reception on May 12 promises to be a three-ring affair, with acrobats, aerial artists, stilt walkers and jugglers performing in Trinity's Kempton Hall. The juried exhibit, "The Circus," offers original work by more than 30 artists in the Portland area through a broad variety of media, from paintings, drawings, watercolors, pastels, prints, quilts, photography to wood carvings and even an 18-inch free-standing carousel by ceramics artist Elisabeth Sullivan. It runs until July 2.

The idea for the exhibit grew out of a conversation about using circus performers to entertain at the opening reception of Trinity's annual May exhibit, said Allan Oliver, chair of the Trinity Arts Commission. "It goes beyond 'circus' to encompass the larger 'circus of life,' the full range of the human experience. This broad concept allows for spectacle.

"At that time we had no idea that the world would feel as circus-like as it does today," he added.

Reflecting on the connection of the circus to faith, Oliver said, "One of the iconic art expressions in theater is 'Godspell,' which has characters from the circus. It was derived with a lot of the scriptural understanding that the Passion seems foolish to those who are not believers. There is an artistic tradition that portrays Jesus as the holy fool.

"This year's show relates to one of a previous year's themes where we had thought about having elements of circus performers at the opening related to the liturgy, but didn't go that far at the time. We had even thought about having a high-wire performer, but it wasn't the right time. Last spring the idea resurfaced and broadened to include a variety of performers."

At that time, the cathedral's arts commission was brainstorming for a theme for its May 2017 exhibit. The members wanted something festive and were open to stretching the boundaries of both art exhibits and opening receptions in a church setting. "The cathedral's arts-conscious community welcomes challenge," Oliver noted.

The arts long have been integral to Trinity's mission, its congregation and its urban community. The Trinity Arts Commission was formally founded in 2004.

Pieces in the upcoming exhibit, curated by the commission,



Photo/Laura Hopper

Laura Hooper's painting, "Done Performing," is part of the juried exhibit "The Circus" at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland, Ore.

include: a painting by Linda Barnes depicting a carnival setting with dancers and booths; an acrylic painting of a cougar draped over a table; and a multicolor carved wooden piece by Bob Scheppps depicting a juggler balancing chairs.

"For the past four years, our shows have had clear themes," Oliver said. "This one has brought a lot of interesting work, all the way from folksy carnival scenes to overtly political expressions. One piece of textile art, a colorful quilt, portrays various figures from the Trump administration in a circus motif."

"The Circus," part of Trinity's ongoing program of diverse art exhibits, was curated by the arts commission. The jury for the show was chaired by Oliver, a former gallery owner, textile artist and presenter. Also judging entries were commission members Michael Manwaring, an internationally known graphic designer who does graphic work for Trinity; Randall Vemer, a painter and art instructor at the Oregon Society of Artists and former arts commission member Gerrie Congdon, a textile artist who has exhibited nationally. ■

Susan Spelman is a New York-based writer.



Photo/Elisabeth Sullivan

"Carousel," ceramic art by Elisabeth Sullivan.



Photo/Marlana Stoddard Hayes



Photo/Bill Bachhuber



Photo/Bonnie Garrett

"Acrobats," acrylic ink on paper by Bonnie Garrett.

Left, "Remnants of Joy," textile art by Sally Sellers.

Far left, "Spring Pink," a monotype with painted elements by Marlana Stoddard Hayes.

BOOK REVIEW

Book analyzes the complex way of the cross

Review by Pamela A. Lewis

In the introductory pages of this exhaustive and probing work, the Rev. Fleming Rutledge reminds us that Christianity is “unique” in that this is a religion whose adherents worship a crucified man. While she examines, analyzes and persuasively reassesses the various ways in which the death of Jesus Christ has been understood, Rutledge returns to this central idea throughout this two-part and nearly 700-page opus.

Its theological heft notwithstanding, “The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus Christ” is an accessible study from which those of all denominations, lay and ordained, can benefit. Even the extensive (and sometimes humorous) footnotes are a feast.

Once an outlawed religion, Christianity is now “mainstream.” Therein lies the problem, Rutledge argues. The early Christian preaching that had proclaimed the in-breaking of God upon human history in the person of an itinerant Jewish teacher who would be condemned and executed in the most hideous and dehumanizing manner ever devised, in what early theologian Origen called “the utterly vile death of the cross,” was significant, and still should be.

Yet, Rutledge decries that the modern-day church, whether

liberal or conservative, has completely abandoned “theologia crucis,” or the preaching of the cross, having supplanted it with what United Church of Christ minister Anthony B. Robinson terms “Christianity lite.” Rutledge protests that the power in St. Paul’s Corinthian letter’s assertions that say, “We preach Christ crucified” and that the cross is a “scandal” and a “stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,” is absent from too many of today’s sermons.

“Personal engagement with the cross is difficult and painful, but leaders of congregations will have a hole in the center of their ministry without it,” she observes. In iconographic terms, the gruesome depiction of Christ’s crucifixion, as in 16th-century artist Matthias Grünewald’s Isenheim altarpiece, is a more accurate

representation of his death than the more sanitized iterations that Western art has produced.

The necessity of a coherent interpretation of the Crucifixion, because the death of Jesus on a Roman cross lacks such an explanation, figures among the major themes Rutledge advances. There is, she posits, a need to understand why Jesus’ death was, as St. Paul put it, an “offense,” and a need to provide an understanding of crucifixion itself. Without clear interpretation, our preaching and teaching are meaningless, reducing the cross to “a mere token or amulet leading to superstition and magical thinking.”

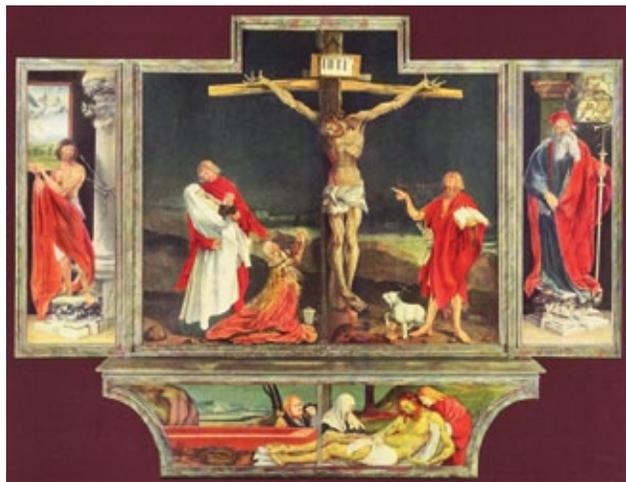
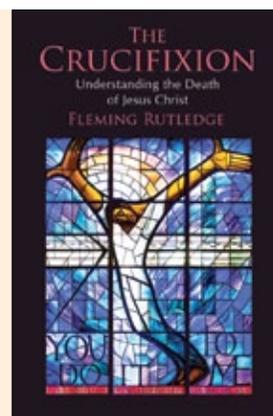
In a “bridge chapter” devoted to St. Anselm, Rutledge offers a “reconsideration” of his thought on justice, the “weight” of sin and the nature of Christ’s self-offering, which he argued was not an occasion of penal suffering but of “rectification.”

Biblical “motifs,” which allow for understanding and interpreting the Crucifixion, occupy the second part of the book. Here, Rutledge explains the ways in which the Old and New Testaments speak to each other. The “Christus Victor” motif, denoting Christ’s victory over the Powers of Sin and Death (Rutledge capitalizes these words) and his ending of their dominion over humanity,

The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus Christ

By the Rev. Fleming Rutledge

Wm. B. Eerdmans
696 pp., \$30



Photo/Wikimedia Commons

Isenheim altarpiece, oil on wood, circa 1515.

reflects the “apocalyptic war” initiated by God’s decisive intervention into history. It is this divine agency that is at work in Rutledge’s most striking theme of “substitution,” the underlying motif that girds all the others while not superseding them, and which most fully explains the meaning of Jesus’ death.

“Crucifixion” is a work of extraordinary scholarship, honesty and deep faith. This is not a page-turner; it is the patient reader who will be rewarded with the enriching material Rutledge has corralled from the best of ancient and modern religious thought, biblical scholars, the nightly news and her many years of experience as a priest. Those who have questions about the Crucifixion would do well to read her answers. ■

Pamela A. Lewis writes about topics of faith. She attends St. Thomas Episcopal Church, New York.

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Episcopalians differ on church’s activism and mixing faith and politics

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

Politics and religion. They’re the topics you’re not supposed to talk about. But what if you want to avoid a conversation filled with fireworks, where each side views the role of government in Americans’ lives, those influenced by people speaking out as Christians, from viewpoints.

Can protest be a righteous expression of one’s faith? C journey, is there a risk in engaging too deeply with it? How do we know when it is it appropriate to speak out? Diverse congregations across the United States: these questions.

Episcopal involvement in political causes and d grown in recent months. Episcopalians joined million try Jan. 21 for the Women’s March on Washington demonstrations. Several hundred joined a March 6 4 in Baltimore, one of several cities that hosted s March 10, Episcopal leaders joined activists in War support of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe pipeline that the tribe says i



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

FAITH AND THE ARTS

Art creates pathways to new homes, human connections

By Kevin Cummings

What makes a house a home? One answer: a touch of beauty on the walls, especially if the new resident was formerly homeless.

That's the goal of the Art-n-Soul program at Church of the Holy Cross in Dunn Loring, Va., in the Washington, D.C., area, where paintings also are helping to mend lives and reinvigorate creativity.

Founded by the Rev. Jamie Samilio in 2013, the program gathers people once a month at the parish hall for a painting party. Those paintings are donated to Pathways to Housing DC, an organization that provides apartments and support for homeless people. At Pathways, clients can select one of the paintings for free to hang in their new apartment.

"We give them the furniture, the utensils and the sheets, but what truly helps an apartment become a home is the art that we get from Art-n-Soul," said Christy Respress, Pathways' executive director. "Each person moving into their new apartment is able to choose a piece that speaks to them."

Pathways reports it has helped more than 700 people move into new apartments and supports them with education, employment and professional treatment for mental- and physical-health issues.

An unintended consequence of the art program may be the most important. Many clients have undergone intense trauma and have serious medical and physical challenges, said Jeremy Weatherly, Pathways' development manager. The art that hangs at Pathways' office acts as a tool to generate dialogue between clinical professionals and clients, he said.

Some of the art is worth talking about for beauty or tone, another piece for its strangeness, while other paintings could depict a touchstone in someone's life. For example, a painting of a beach scene reminded one troubled man of the place he grew up in Puerto Rico, which led to a dialogue with social workers and eventually a reconnection with family.

"Art is universal. It can open up a con-

versation about something other than a person's homelessness or mental illness or their next doctor's visit," Respress said. "Art connects people — human to human, which is often critical for people recovering their lives after years living on the street."

The other side of the project is the social opportunities and creativity it generates for the artists, who have ranged in age from 6 to 80. Samilio, associate rector at Church of the Holy Cross, teaches people how to paint, but most importantly she teaches them to enjoy the process.

"If it's not fun, I don't do it," she said. "Everybody wins here. We have good



food and we listen to good music, and people get a housewarming gift that they know was painted for them specifically to have something beautiful in their home."

Here's how it works: Parishioners and community members pay \$25 to be a part of the painting party one Saturday each month, which includes people who have never painted before and others who rediscover their talents.

Painters create what speaks to their own heart and minds, while thinking of the future owner of the piece, said Samilio, who has an art degree from Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pa.

"I tell people, 'This may be the only piece of art in this person's house, so the most important thing we can do is paint something that sets a tone and mood,'" she said. "If you were in your house, think about what colors say safety and security and joy and peace. Now let's put those colors together and paint something beautiful."

Samilio believes God has given everyone the ability to create art, said Parishioner Marjy Jones, who asked Samilio to help

Raymond Johnson, a Pathways to Housing DC client, sits in his new apartment with his Art-n-Soul artwork by Jamie Samilio.

Photo/Patrina Williams



Photos/Jamie Samilio

Clockwise from far left, paintings done by: Elsa Marsden (age 12); Maude Hales (director of communications at Church of the Holy Cross, Dunn Loring, Va., who helps with the art program); Sherri Arnaiz; and Megan Hoskins.



her learn to paint before Art-n-Soul started.

"As she introduced the program, a memory of the clear fuchsia color of fireweed in Alaska took over my consciousness, and, through her guidance and encouragement, the image came to fruition on the canvas in front of me," Jones recalled.

Jones said she discovered "a long dormant creative spark."

"My hope is that the person who chose my painting will experience the same joy and wonder of God's creativity that I felt while painting the canvas," she said. "Art is meant to be shared."

Each painting is on an 18- by 24-inch canvas, big enough to make an impact but manageable enough to take home on a bicycle or bus, Samilio said.

Clients at Pathways always "light up" when they learn they can choose a painting just like at a store or gallery, Weatherly said. "The art is a really important part of the process of somebody being able to take ownership of their home and personalize it and use it as an expression of themselves."

For more information, visit www.Art-n-Soul.net and www.pathwaystohousingdc.org.

Kevin Cummings is a freelance writer for the Sewanee School of Theology in Tennessee.



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MOVIE REVIEW

Honey, I tried to disprove Christianity...

By Ken Valenti

The idea that fuels the movie “The Case for Christ” might make one just a little uneasy. A journalist uses his investigative-reporting skills on a mission to prove that the Christian faith his wife suddenly finds so nurturing is based on a bunch of hokey. On its own, that aim seems somewhat — what’s the right word here? — peevisish?

Yet this is the crux of the movie, and it is based on a true story (specifically, on the 1998 book of the same name by reporter Lee Strobel.) But the film, starring Mike Vogel as the Chicago Tribune reporter and Erika Christensen as his wife Leslie, is realized fully enough to keep things interesting and emotionally grounded.

Strobel shows not a shred of doubt

in his atheism as he turns his sights on Christianity. But a funny thing happens on his way to the conclusion he is so certain he’ll be able to reach. Each scholar he approaches, hoping to dismantle the story of Christ’s resurrection, manages to parry his cynicism with more facts and sources than he is ready for.

Where this leads is no secret. If you need to be told, look again at the title.

But the getting there is quietly compelling, and Director Jonathan M. Gunn and screenplay writer Brian Bird wisely keep their eyes, for much of the time, on Strobel’s struggles with his wife’s newfound belief, which he sees as a betrayal of the relationship they have built.

They are obviously a loving couple, even if Lee has a touch of obstinacy. Indeed, the question that may resonate with viewers as much as how to prove or disprove Christianity is whether a marriage can hold together if one person finds sustenance from the faith while the other only can reject the idea.

“I can’t even pretend to go along with this,” Lee tells Leslie when she reveals that she has been going to church.

Strobel lives for facts. Lauded in the opening scene for reporting on problems



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Mike Vogel as Lee Strobel on his investigation into Christianity.

with the Ford Pinto (the movie begins in 1980), he tells his colleagues in an in-office speech that facts are “our greatest weapons” against superstition and tyranny. To him, beliefs in God and Christianity are nice stories, nothing more.

Leslie may start out with the same point of view, but she begins to see things differently when their young daughter is rescued from choking in a restaurant by a nurse who later tells them that God deserves credit for putting her in the right place at the right time.

Gunn presents things simply, using the right period details (look at Lee sporting a mustache, shaggy mane and short-sleeved, button-down shirts) with lots of natural lighting. He doesn’t overdramatize the story, allowing Strobel’s

inquiry and relationship with his wife to drive the narrative.

Vogel convincingly conveys a top reporter’s abilities, skilled at asking probing questions or working a reluctant subject. Christensen gives Leslie’s transition an authentic feel — it is one of careful consideration, not blind piousness.

For all that, one facet less than convincing is Strobel’s actual change of heart. When it comes, even with all that it follows, it feels too sudden, too much like flipping a switch. Yet the reason he later gives for accepting the transformation is convincing. What’s more, it’s a reason that, wouldn’t you know it, is about more than a strict reliance on facts. ■

Ken Valenti is a New York-based writer.



The Strobel family, Alison (Haley Rosenwasser), Leslie (Erika Christensen) and Lee (Mike Vogel) welcome a new member, Kyle.

NEWS

KAMANO continued from page 1

After more than six years serving the church and the surrounding community, he was welcomed as an Episcopal priest on March 16 in a service of reception, rather than ordination, since the Episcopal Church accepted his ordination as a Catholic priest.

“It was like the brightest day of my life,” Kamano, 45, told ENS in a phone interview.

Kamano works part time as chaplain at Yale-New Haven Hospital and recently began pursuing a master’s degree in social work at Southern Connecticut State University. He feels fortunate, he said, to find his calling in the Episcopal Church and is looking forward to serving wherever he is needed.

“He’s a very loving, highly intelligent grounded Christian leader,” Douglas said by phone.

Kamano is “really inhabiting the Anglican way of being a Christian,” he said. “He appreciates a sense of shared authority while being a church that is episcopally led.”

As a boy growing up in Sierra Leone, Kamano’s religious routine involved going with his family to their mosque, praying in Arabic and fasting regularly. His father practiced the austere Wahhabi form of Islam, which is dominant in Saudi Arabia and influences that country’s laws demanding strict religious

‘I was contrasting the worldview of the Christian way of living to that of the Muslim worldview.’

—The Rev. Charles Kamano

adherence. Wahhabism also has been linked to the rise of extremist groups in the Middle East, notably the group known as Islamic State, or ISIS.

At age 6, Kamano begged his father to let him attend a local Catholic school where some of his friends went. His father agreed after hearing from other parents that a good education would give his son professional advantages as an adult.

Along with his education, he developed an appreciation for the faith of the nuns and priests who taught him.

“The more I grew ... I was contrasting the worldview of the Christian way of living to that of the Muslim worldview,” Kamano said. He saw Christian values as universal values, like showing charity, loving your neighbor, doing no harm or violence. While Muslims in more-tolerant sects also emphasize love and charity,

his father’s worldview, in Kamano’s eyes, was strict and demanding.

When he decided at age 16 to take catechism classes to convert to Catholicism, he had to do so in secret. None of his family members attended his baptism, and he said his father even threatened to kill him when he made known his desire to attend seminary.

Fearing for his safety, he fled to his parents’ native Guinea with help from his mother. After seven years of seminary studies there and in Mali, he was ordained in 2001 and assigned to two Catholic parishes in Guinea. He later studied in Rome on a church scholarship.

As the years passed, Kamano said, he began to question the rigid hierarchy of the Catholic Church and some of its teachings. Some of its top-down mandates, such as priest celibacy, seemed to him out of touch with the daily lives of Christians.

“Why can’t you live up to a vocation as you are, as God wanted you to be?” Kamano asked himself.

In 2009, when Kamano expressed his reservations to his bishop in Rome, he lost his scholarship. Later he found himself at a spiritual crossroads and in early 2010 resigned from his service in the Catholic Church.

Unable to return to Sierra Leone for fear of religious persecution, Kamano decided to resettle in Connecticut,

where in 2008 he had served an internship in the Archdiocese of Hartford. When he first attended Church of the Holy Spirit in West Haven, he didn’t expect the warm welcome from the Rev. Lisa Hahneman.

“He pretty much hoped to sneak in and sneak out,” Hahneman, Holy Spirit’s rector, told ENS. “And, as I like to say, I beat him to the back door.”

She greeted him on his way out and learned that he was a Catholic priest looking for an Episcopal congregation.

“I was fascinated,” she said. He told her more of his background when they met later that week. She began working with him to develop the process by which he eventually was received as a priest in the church.

Kamano became a reader during Sunday services at Church of the Holy Spirit. He ministered to French-speaking West Africans in the area. And he accompanied Hahneman to church services for the Haitian community in nearby Bridgeport, where Hahneman handled liturgical duties and Kamano preached in French.

“I came to deeply respect his journey and the depth of his spirituality,” Hahneman said.

Kamano said he felt humbly blessed. “I have always loved the priesthood,” he said. “I know how privileged I am to be called by God — even though I am nothing, I am human.” ■