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NEWS Panel recommends suspension for L.A. bishop



OPINION 'Fire and fury' opposes Christian theology



ARTS Artist takes mixed media on the road

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Episcopalians rally against bigotry

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

When white supremacists descended on Charlottesville, Va., on Aug. 12, sparking violence that left a counter-protester dead and dozens more injured, Episcopalians and other people of faith were among the most visible groups standing in solidarity against hate and bigotry.

St. Paul's Memorial Church overlooking the University of Virginia campus hosted a prayer service on Aug. 11. The next morning, members of St. Paul's, Trinity Episcopal and Christ Episcopal joined an interfaith prayer service and then participated in a march to Emancipation Park to rally against the supremacists' event planned there. The outbreak of violence prompted authorities to shut that event down before it started.

The three Episcopal churches in the city also have been active in the Charlottesville Clergy Collective, which now is helping the faith community regroup in the aftermath of the supremacists' gathering and the violence.

"I think that it's incumbent upon us as people of faith to claim that ground, that we're all created in God's image, and those who are targets of this hate need people of faith, people of privilege, to show up," said the Rev. Elaine Thomas, associate rector at St. Paul's and the



Photo/Steven D. Martin/National Council of Churches

Clergy from all faith traditions link arms as protestors march through Charlottesville, Va.

co-leader of the Charlottesville Clergy Collective.

The Charlottesville faith community drew support, both in person and verbally, from Episcopal congregations across the country, from Trinity Wall Street in New York to All Saints Pasadena in California, and from several Episcopal bishops and deans who released statements condemning the violence.

"In the days and weeks to come, there will be much to discuss as the 'Jesus movement' responds to the violence and inequality in our world," said Presiding Bishop Michael Curry in a Facebook post. This is a time "to remember in prayer those who died and were injured in the violent clashes in Charlottesville," he said.

Curry, though not in Charlottesville, was engaged with the Episcopal clergy and laity participating in the rally against hatred, said the Rev. Melanie Mullen, the Episcopal Church's director of reconciliation, justice and creation care. Curry conveyed his support

through social media and text messages.

Mullen was among the Episcopal clergy who responded to a call to travel to Charlottesville in a show of unity, though local clergy were the driving force behind the action.

The Rev. Gay Jennings, president of the Episcopal Church's House of Deputies, also released a statement, saying she was "sickened" by the racist violence.

"Even though we sometimes fall short, we Episcopalians strive to be Christians who follow Jesus' command to love our neighbors as ourselves and who have promised to respect the dignity of every human being," Jennings said. "And so, we bear a special responsibility to recognize and atone for the perversions of Christianity espoused by white racists."

Seemingly overnight, Charlottesville became a flashpoint in the ongoing national debate over an increasingly visible strain of racial hatred, promoted by neo-Nazis, Ku Klux Klan members and white

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Solar eclipse is shining opportunity for Episcopal congregations

By David Paulsen

Dixie Nelson, parish administrator at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Alliance, Neb., was working at a motel several years ago when she got a call from a professor in California. He was planning to be in town on Aug. 21, 2017, and wanted to book some rooms — all the rooms.

It was Nelson's first taste of solar-eclipse fever, which since has swept her town and many more along the path of the total solar eclipse on Aug. 21. Episcopal churches along that path, from Oregon to South Carolina, planned to throw out the welcome mat to eclipse-

watching tourists, turning churchyards into campgrounds, hosting viewing parties and inviting the public to contemplate the mysteries of God's creation.

"God made the universe. This is one of his spectacular shows," Nelson told Episcopal News Service.

She was busy arranging for a makeshift campground at St. Matthew's. By Aug. 21, the church property planned to accommodate campers at 30 RV sites and 26 tent sites. The congregation hoped to raise about \$4,000 by collecting a suggested donation of \$25 per night from some of the thousands of visitors expected to descend on this small city in Nebraska's panhandle.

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Photo/WikimediaCommons

A solar annular eclipse — where the moon appears smaller than the sun as it passes across its center — on Jan. 15, 2010, in Jinan, China.

ANGLICAN DIGEST

Anglican Digest is a column of news and features from churches in the Anglican Communion. The following are credited from Anglican Communion News Service.

Third option offered for damaged New Zealand cathedral

The synod of the Diocese of Christchurch will consider donating its earthquake-ravaged cathedral to the country's government as a gift to the people of New Zealand. This new option will go alongside two existing options — to reinstate the existing cathedral or to demolish and replace it with a modern building — when the synod meets to decide the building's future on the last day of its Sept. 7-9 meeting. The iconic cathedral occupies a prime site in a major square in the city. But it has stood derelict since the 2011 earthquake because a local heritage group, the Great Christchurch Buildings Trust, has challenged the diocese's plans to demolish the cathedral and replace it with a modern purpose-built building. The cathedral's worship has been taking place in a temporary "cardboard cathedral."

The diocese won the legal challenges and engaged in consultations and discussions with government officials to find an



Photo/Wikimedia Commons

New Zealand's Christchurch Cathedral shows the effects of a 2011 earthquake.

agreeable solution. After the talks broke down, the diocese decided that the final decision should be taken by the synod.

"By gifting the cathedral building to the government, it would be reinstated to its former glory and managed by them on behalf of all New Zealanders for use as a public space," Christchurch Bishop Victoria Matthews said in announcing the new option.

African Christians study in 'eco-school'

Young Anglicans were among an ecumenical group of Christians from across Africa who took part in a World Council of Churches Eco-School on Water, Food and Climate Justice in August in Lilongwe, Malawi. Some 27 people from Nigeria to Madagascar, and from Ethiopia to South Africa attended the 11-day



Photo/WCC Eco-School Newsletter

African Christians participate in the World Council of Churches' first "eco-school" in Lilongwe, Malawi.

event. The participants studied local, regional, and international manifestations and causes of the water crisis and food security affected by climate change. They examined the situation and challenges from a perspective of faith and ethics, and searched together for possible ecumenical responses to the challenges.

The school was held to "motivate and prepare young people to contribute to the work of the churches at the regional and local level on issues related to water, food, nutrition and climate change towards a sustainable future," the council said.

Child-abuse inquiry advises ending confessional seal

Australia's Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, has recommended that the failure to report child sexual abuse in institu-

Clergy lead cross-cultural mission training in Myanmar

An ecumenical association for theological educators in Myanmar held a training workshop on cross-cultural mission and research approaches in August. The Church of Ireland's Archbishop of Dublin Michael Jackson and Vicar Joshua Raja from the diocese of Birmingham, England, led the four-day event.

Twenty-five theological educators attended the training at the Association of Theological Education in Myanmar (ATEM) training complex in Yangon from different parts of the country.

ATEM has grown from its initial membership of 12 churches and eight theological institutions in 1986 and now serves some 34 member schools. It provides faculty development for member schools; organizes training, workshops and seminars; provides resource materials; and helps to develop theological college libraries.



Photo/The Rev. Dr. Joshua Raja

Participants at August's cross-cultural training program on mission and research approaches, held at the Association of Theological Education in Myanmar training complex in Yangon.

"This training went beyond my expectations introducing the areas that are discussed globally and regionally," ATEM Director Lal Tin said. "This is timely and excellent training for our lecturers, exposing new areas of cross-cultural mission." ■

tions should be made a criminal offense. It said that there should be "no exemption, excuse, protection or privilege from the offence granted to clergy for failing to report information disclosed in connection with a religious confession."

The recommendations are among 85 legislative and policy changes proposed in a report released Aug. 14 that "aimed at reforming the Australian criminal-justice system in order to provide a fairer response to victims of institutional child sexual abuse."

"Before discussing a criminal offence, we consider it important to make clear that persons who know or suspect that a child is being or has been sexually abused in an institutional context should report this to police — not necessarily as a legal obligation enforced by a criminal offence but because it is moral and ethical to do so," the report said. "We understand the significance of religious confession — in particular, the inviolability of the confessional seal to people of some faiths, particularly the Catholic faith. However, we heard evidence of a number of instances where disclosures of child sexual abuse were made in religious confession, by

both victims and perpetrators."

"In a civil society, it is fundamentally important that the right of a person to freely practice their religion in accordance with their beliefs is upheld," it said. "However, that right is not absolute... The right to practise one's religious beliefs must accommodate civil society's obligation to provide for the safety of all and, in particular, children's safety from sexual abuse."

In 2014, the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia changed its canon law in a unanimous vote to permit clergy to report child abuse and other serious offences disclosed in the context of a confession.

In the Church of England, the Archbishops' Council established a working group in 2015 to consider "the Proviso to the Canon of 1603" — the church law that forbids clergy from disclosing information provided in the Confessional.

The inviolability of the seal of the confessional is ancient church law that remains strong within the Roman Catholic Church. Within Anglicanism, the practice of confession, or the sacrament of reconciliation, is more prevalent in the Anglo-Catholic tradition. ■

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Listen. The American scene today is fraught with echoes — voices justifying slavery, the shouting of lynch mobs, the thud of a police club on a black person's head at Selma, and — even the "siege heil" salute in Europe that sent millions of Jews to die.

That is the heritage of the thugs who march with Confederate battle flags and Nazi symbols, proclaiming the superiority of white people — in 2017 — a concept so absurd as to seem unworthy of notice. Yet the apparent support of the president of the United States seems to have given oxygen to this noxious fringe.

When white supremacists marched

in Charlottesville, Va., on Aug. 12, Episcopal clergy and laity were highly visible at the counter-protest, peacefully walking, linking arms, bearing witness to the idea that there are no human divisions when "you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Some counter-protesters were armed. Violence broke out, leading to tragedy when a car driven by a right-wing supporter rammed a crowd, killing one woman and injuring 19.

Christians should consider the virtues of nonviolence as these fraught days progress. As Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. knew, peaceful resistance takes the moral high ground and

prevents criticism on the basis of a false equivalence.

But it's a question with no easy answers. Would nonviolence (even if it had been a concept) have helped the Jews of 1930s Germany? Surely few would equate the "violence" of the armed Jews of the Warsaw ghetto with the Nazi troops seeking to annihilate them.

People of faith know — as King and the civil rights marchers did — that nonviolence carries an enormous psychological and physical risk. The Episcopalians in the streets of Charlottesville took that risk — and lived out the gospel. May we all find the courage to do likewise in the days ahead. ■

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NEWS

Hearing panel calls for Bruno's suspension

Urges returning congregation to its building

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

The hearing panel that considered disciplinary action against Diocese of Los Angeles Bishop J. Jon Bruno issued a final order Aug. 2 reaffirming its draft recommendation that he be suspended from ordained ministry for three years because of misconduct.

The hearing panel also strongly recommended to the diocese that “as a matter of justice” it immediately suspend its efforts to sell St. James the Great’s property in Newport Beach, Calif., that it restore the congregation and vicar to the church building, and that it reassign St. James the Great appropriate mission status.

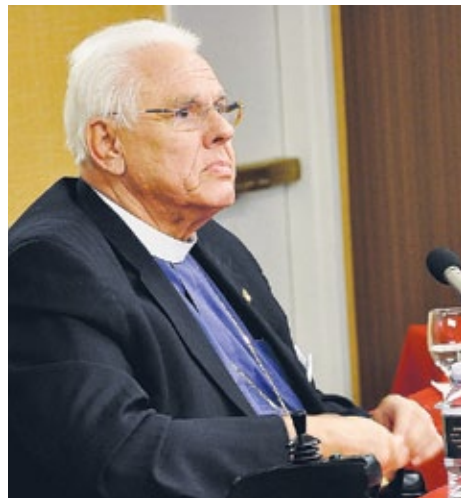
The five-person panel said that it was convinced that the Diocese of Los Angeles, particularly its standing committee with the supportive leadership of its recently ordained and consecrated bishop coadjutor, must choose consciously to engage in self-examination and truth-telling around “these unfortunate and tragic events.”

The hearing panel conducted three days of testimony on those allegations in March. Bruno subsequently attempted to sell the property as the panel considered how to rule on the case. That attempt earned Bruno two ministerial restrictions from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

The most recent came a day before the final order when Curry removed St. James from Bruno’s authority and put the congregation under the control of Los Angeles Coadjutor Bishop John Taylor, Bruno’s successor. (Bruno turns 72, the

Episcopal Church’s mandatory retirement age for clergy, in late 2018.) The previous restriction was designed to prevent Bruno from trying again to sell the property.

The original case against Bruno involved his unsuccessful 2015 attempt to sell the church property to a condominium developer for \$15 million in cash. That effort prompted the members of St. James to bring misconduct allegations against Bruno, alleging he violated church law.



Photo/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS

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

Forty days after the final order was issued, Bishop Catherine Waynick, president of the Disciplinary Board for Bishops that appointed the hearing panel, had 20 days to sentence Bruno as provided in the order. He can appeal that sentence and, if he does, the sentence will not be imposed while the appeal proceeds.

Meanwhile, Curry’s partial restrictions on Bruno remain in force, the order said.

The panel found Bruno guilty of the St. James complainants’ allegations that Bruno violated church 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. 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 aid the church financially; 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 it and locking out the congregation.

Taylor issued a statement saying that “Bishop Bruno’s 40 years of ordained ministry and 15 years as sixth bishop of Los Angeles are not summed up by this order or the events that precipitated it.”

Taylor called him “a courageous, visionary leader.”

“Like every successful executive inside and outside the church, he would be the first to acknowledge that there are things he would have done differently,” Taylor said. “I look forward to continuing to learn from him and consult with him about the life of the diocesan community he has served and loves so well.”

He and the standing committee “will do everything we can to promote a just solution that takes into account the interests of all in our community (including the faithful members of the Newport Beach church) and gives us the opportunity to move forward together,” Taylor said. “In a dispute such as this one, truth-telling, open communication and reconciliation can be difficult for everyone involved.”

The St. James congregants said in a statement that they “deeply thank the

hearing panel for its diligent hard work to get to the truth, administer fair justice and foster reconciliation.” The panel’s final recommendation “points the way forward for the Diocese of Los Angeles and its leadership,” they said.

“We believe the reconciliation process begins now, and we look forward to a time — in the near future, we hope and believe — when we are back in our holy church and the Diocese of Los Angeles is once again a strong, united and joyful community in Christ, dedicated to spreading God’s word and doing His work on earth,” the congregants said.

The congregation has been worshipping in a meeting room at the Newport Beach City Hall. Its canonical status with the diocese is in limbo.

The first attempted sale of St. James occurred less than 18 months after Bruno reopened St. James in late 2013 after recovering the property via a lawsuit prompted by a split in the congregation. Three other congregations in the diocese also split in disputes about the Episcopal Church’s full inclusion of LGBTQ people in the life of the church.

Bruno’s effort to sell the property even after the March hearing, which the bishop tried to conceal, earned him a rebuke from the hearing panel in June. The panel said Bruno had to stop trying to sell the property during the disciplinary process. If he did try, or succeeded, before the panel decided the original case against him, that behavior would be “disruptive, dilatory and otherwise contrary to the integrity of this proceeding,” the panel said at the time. The same was true of his failure to give the panel the information it asked for about the accusations, the notice said. Such behavior violates the portion of canon law that governs the behavior of clerics who face disciplinary actions, it said.

A few days later, on June 29, Curry placed his initial restriction on Bruno’s ministry.

Bruno’s July 10 appeal of the panel’s sanctions failed.

Curry’s Aug. 1 restriction came about 10 days after a draft of the hearing panel’s order became public in late July.

The hearing panel’s order is available at www.episcopaldigitalnetwork.com. ■

Bruno successor plans to sell Newport Beach church

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

Diocese of Los Angeles Bishop Coadjutor John Taylor wrote to the diocese about the disputed St. James the Great Episcopal Church property on Lido Island in Newport Beach, Calif., that is at the heart of disciplinary proceedings against diocesan Bishop J. Jon Bruno.

Taylor’s bottom line is that the contract to sell the property that Bruno struck is legally binding on the diocese.

“In prayerful discernment, we opened our hearts to a variety of possibilities for reconciliation in Christ and healing for St. James and our whole community. But Bishop Bruno has entered into a binding contract to sell the property. The buyer has the legal right to expect the seller to honor the contract,” Taylor



Taylor

wrote in a letter e-mailed to the diocese Aug. 14 and posted on the diocese’s Facebook page. “Much as we might wish it were otherwise, we do not believe that it would be in the interests of the diocese or consistent with our fiduciary responsibilities to endorse any steps leading to breaching or threatening to breach an enforceable contract that could lead to further expense and litigation.”

However, Taylor said, the contract with Burnham-Ward Properties/Burnham USA, a major commercial property owner in Newport Beach, “offers one way forward.”

“Burnham has longstanding ties to the community. It plans to preserve the worship space so it may continue to be used by churches and other community organizations, including St. James if it wishes,” Taylor wrote. “We were encouraged to learn of preliminary conversations some weeks ago between Burnham and a congregation representative about the possible use of the space by St. James.”

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AROUND THE CHURCH

East Tennessee, Delaware dioceses elect bishops

The Rev. **Brian Cole** was elected the fifth bishop of the Diocese of East Tennessee on the fifth ballot July 28 at St. John's Cathedral in Knoxville.

Cole, 49, has served as rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Lexington, Ky., since 2012. He is a native of southeast Missouri and graduated from Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky, with a degree in business administration. He is a graduate of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and did additional study at the School of Theology at Sewanee: The University of the South in Sewanee, Tenn. Cole taught in the religion department at Warren Wilson College near Asheville, N.C., and served on the program staff of the Appalachian Ministries Educational Resource Center in Berea, Ky.



Cole

Ordained to the priesthood in 2002 in the Diocese of Western North Carolina, Cole served as the vicar of Church of the Advocate, a homeless worshipping community in downtown Asheville. From 2005 until he became rector of Good Shepherd, which includes a pre-

school with 180 children enrolled, he was the sub-dean at the Cathedral of All Souls in Asheville. Cole served on Executive Council from 2006-2012 and is an associate of the Order of the Holy Cross.

Pending the canonically required consent of a majority of the Episcopal Church's diocesan standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction, Cole will be ordained and consecrated on Dec. 2 in Knoxville.

Delaware's Episcopalians on July 15 elected the Rev. **Kevin S. Brown** of Charlotte, N.C., on the fifth ballot as their 11th diocesan bishop.



Brown

Pending the required consents, diocesan standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction, Brown will be ordained and consecrated on Dec. 9 in Dover.

Brown is rector of the Church of the Holy Comforter in Charlotte. He grew up in Asheville and studied mathematics and psychology at Duke University. He completed his M.B.A. while in the U.S. Air Force, worked in finance and marketing at FedEx, and launched an investment firm before his call to the priesthood.

At Holy Comforter, he led the merger of separate English and Spanish preschools into a single school focused on bilingual education and dedicated to access for low-income and immigrant families. He previously served as rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Paris, Tenn.

His education includes an M.B.A. from the University of West Florida and a Master of Divinity from General Theological Seminary in New York. Brown will succeed Bishop Wayne P. Wright, who retired in February 2017.

— Dioceses of East Tennessee and Delaware

TRANSITIONS

Church-planting officer named

The Rev. Michael Michie has been named the Episcopal Church staff officer for church planting infrastructure, beginning Sept. 11. He will collaborate in designing, developing and implementing resources, strategies and structures that foster a churchwide movement of new ministries. The position is part of the Church Planting and Mission Development Department, which oversees the creation of a churchwide network for planting congregations, recruiting and training church planters, and establishing new ministries throughout the Episcopal Church.



Michie

Michie will be based in Texas. Since 2005, he has been rector of St. Andrew's in McKinney, Texas, a congregation he planted. The congregation has grown to 650 members with community-based ministries including The Bless Mobile, a food truck ministry. Previously, he was the associate rector of St. Barnabas in Austin, where he assisted in planting the congregation with an emphasis in reaching young unchurched adults.

Michie has served three times as a General Convention deputy from the Diocese of Dallas and was vice-chair of the Congregational Vitality Committee at the 78th General Convention. He is a member of the Church Planting Task Force for the Episcopal Church and president of the Standing Committee for the Diocese of Dallas.

— Episcopal Church Public Affairs Office

closely with the corporate leadership of Nashotah House to implement a new institutional governance structure. He also led a successful effort to ensure the seminary's accreditation remained in good standing and laid the foundation for the upcoming accreditation process by the Association of Theological Schools, the accrediting entity for seminaries in North America. Peay raised more than \$7 million for the seminary's endowment, the single largest fundraising effort in the history of Nashotah House. He also ensured that the gift of eight Whitechapel bells will ring out over the campus, securing the gifts necessary to build the tower to house them.

— Nashotah House Theological Seminary

Brotherhood names reconciliation officer

Floridian Joe McDaniel Jr. has been appointed national vice president of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew's newly created Committee on Racial Reconciliation. He is tasked with creating a strategy to expose the 5,000-member men's ministry to the Episcopal Church's ministry of racial reconciliation.

A former corporate finance attorney in New York, McDaniel was a deputy to General Convention in 2018. He also served as the legislative assistant to the House of Deputies Committee for the Confirmation of the Presiding Bishop at the 2015 General Convention.

He is a trained facilitator in conducting racial-reconciliation workshops in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, where he also serves on its Commission on Ministry and its Curial Commission. He has been a delegate at numerous diocesan conventions and has served as senior warden for Christ Church Episcopal Parish and on a various number of its committees and sub-committees.

"We are very excited about the ability to make a statement about expanding the men's ministry movement into this vital area, which is a priority for the Episcopal Church," Brotherhood President Jeffrey Butcher said. "We need men to address the issue of racism within the wider church and within our own organization. The creation of this Committee on Racial Reconciliation is a statement that tells the church and our members we are very serious concerning the challenges that racism presents us in bringing men and youth closer to Christ."

— Brotherhood of St. Andrew

UNCSW delegates sought

Applications are being accepted for a provincial delegate and up to 20 churchwide delegates to represent the Episcopal Church at the 62nd Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) in New York from March 12-23. They will attend the official UNCSW proceedings at the United Nations and will represent the Episcopal Church/Anglican Communion in advocacy at the United Nations, including doing joint advocacy with the group Ecumenical Women.

The 2018 UNCSW Priority Theme is "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls."

Applications are open to an adult or

youth (ages 15-18) of any gender who can speak to the theme and is willing to participate in advocacy at UNCSW.



UN Commission on the Status of Women

Youth must be accompanied by an adult chaperone, preferably a parent or legal guardian. Women and girls from rural communities or with experience living in or working with rural communities are particularly encouraged to apply.

Delegates will be responsible for their own travel, housing, program expenses and fundraising.

Application deadline is Sept. 15.

For more information, contact Lynnaia Main, Episcopal Church representative to the United Nations, at lmmain@episcopalchurch.org.

— Episcopal Church Public Affairs Office

General Convention accepting youth applications

Applications are being accepted for high school students who want to participate in the General Convention Official Youth Presence at General Convention July 5-13 in Austin, Texas.

"Under the current Rules of Order of the House of Deputies, members of the [Official Youth Presence] are granted seat and voice in that house," said Bronwyn Clark Skov, Episcopal Church director for formation, youth, and young adult ministries. No more than two youth from each of the Episcopal Church's nine provinces will be selected.

The Episcopal Church budget covers

travel, lodging and meals for OYP participants attending the orientation weekend and General Convention.

Deadline for applications and nominations is Nov. 1. All applicants must identify a non-family member nominator who can complete an on-line essay nomination form by Nov. 1. Nominators may be contacted in early January and applicants will be notified of their status in February. The Official Youth Presence team will be announced in March.

Questions should be directed to Skov at bskov@episcopalchurch.org or 646-242-1421.

— Episcopal Church Public Affairs Office

Nashotah House dean steps down

The Very Rev. Steven Peay, dean and president of Nashotah House Theological Seminary in Wisconsin, stepped down on Aug. 31. Peay has been appointed research professor of homiletics and will remain affiliated with the seminary. Garwood P. Anderson, academic dean and professor of New Testament studies, will become acting dean, effective Sept. 1.

During his tenure, Peay worked



Peay

NEWS

Historical Society honors scholar, awards grants

Historical Society of the Episcopal Church has awarded the 2017 Nelson R. Burr Prize to the Rev. Daniel Handschy, rector of Church of the Advent, Crestwood, Mo. He is honored for his article "Samuel Seabury's Eucharistic Ecclesiology: Ecclesial Implications of a Sacrificial Eucharist" published in the March 2016 issue of *Anglican and Episcopal History*.



Handschy

The Burr prize honors scholar Nelson R. Burr, whose two-volume "A Critical Bibliography of Religion in America" and other works constitute landmarks in the field of religious historiography.

The society also has announced \$12,000 in grant awards, designed to support scholars in significant research and publications related to the history of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. Recipients are encouraged

to publish, when appropriate, in "Anglican and Episcopal History," the society's quarterly academic journal.

Recipients are:

- Ryan Butler, a Ph.D. candidate in history at Baylor University, towards a month-long trip to visit archives in London, Birmingham and Canterbury as part of his dissertation on the trans-Atlantic connections and influence of the Clapham Sect.

- Thomas Ferguson, rector of St John's Episcopal Church, Sandwich, Mass., to undertake a 10-day research trip to the Russian Federation as part of a book project on the past 25 years of Anglican ecumenical relationships with churches in the former Soviet bloc.

- Karl Hele, associate professor and director of First Peoples studies, School of Community and Public Affairs, Concordia University, Montreal, to do archival research at the Library and Archives of Canada in Ottawa as part of a book project on Hannah Foulkes Chance, mid-19th-century Anglican missionary among

the First Nations communities in Canada.

- Simon Lewis, a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Oxford, toward travel to archives across the United Kingdom to pursue his post-doctoral research on lay participation in theological controversies in England and colonial America during the first half of the 18th century.

- Ross Newton, a recent recipient of a Ph.D. in history from Northeastern University, to undertake a weeklong archival trip to Boston as part of his post-doctoral research into the experience and condition of African Americans in the Anglican churches of Boston during the revolution and early years of the republic.

- Zachary Stone, a Ph.D. candidate in English at the University of Virginia, to consult archives in Oxford and Cam-

bridge as part of completing his interdisciplinary dissertation on medieval depictions of the English Church in the late 14th/early 15th century.

- Gregory Wiker, a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Rochester, for a three-week research trip to Bermuda, where he will consult parish vestry records as part of his investigation into the shifting political and religious sensibilities of this colony, that after the American Revolution became pivotal to British imperial policy.

- Thomas Ferguson was awarded the inaugural Robert W. Prichard Prize for the best application received. The award comes with a cash prize and was established in 2016 to honor Prichard's decades of service and commitment to the society.

— Historical Society of the Episcopal Church

Applications accepted for 2017 Jubilee Ministry grants

Applications are being accepted for grants to help designated Jubilee Ministries in their mission to create a more just society

and confront structures that promote cycles of poverty and inequality.

"Jubilee Ministries, created by an act of General Convention in 1983, encourage a ministry of joint discipleship in Christ with poor and oppressed people to meet basic human needs and to build a just society," said the Rev. Melanie Mullen, Episcopal Church director of reconciliation, justice and stewardship of creation.

"Jubilee Ministries seek to fulfill Christ's mandate found in the Gospel of Matthew — to provide food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, welcome for the stranger, clothing for the naked, healing for the sick, and companionship for the captive."



More than 700 ministries across the Episcopal Church have achieved Jubilee status as recognized by Executive Council.

The 2017 grants of \$1,000 to \$5,000 will be awarded to initiatives of Jubilee Centers that make a positive and measurable impact in the lives of those in need. Successful applications will demonstrate sustainability, a commitment to working with and empowering God's people and a localized understanding of the "Jesus movement."

The deadline for applications is Sept. 29 at 5 p.m. Eastern time.

Proposals must be approved by a center's diocesan bishop and, if applicable, the diocesan Jubilee officer.

For more information, contact Meghan Ritchie at mritchie@episcopalchurch.org or 212-716-6067.

— Office of Public Affairs

Educational scholarships granted

Ninety-two educational scholarships totaling \$298,852 were awarded in July to students in 40 Episcopal Church dioceses and seven provinces of the Anglican Communion for the 2017-2018 academic year.

Scholarships were available for ethnic communities, children of missionaries, bishops and clergy, and other groups for education and training. "Funding for the program is derived from annual income of designated trust funds established by generous donors," said Margareth

Crosnier de Bellaistre, Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society director of investment management and banking.

The lists of trust funds and scholarships and other information can be found at www.episcopalchurch.org. The next cycle of scholarships will be for the academic year 2018-2019 and will open in March.

For information, contact Ann Hercules, mission, budget & finance management associate, at ahercules@episcopalchurch.org.

— Office of Public Affairs

Committee is studying clergy couples

The Task Force to Study Dual Call Couples has released a video, "Dual Call Couples: Gifts & Challenges for the Church," available at www.episcopalchurch.org/dual-call, as a tool for vestries, search committees and congregations.

General Convention created the task force in 2015. The Church Pension Group estimated in 2013 that the Episcopal Church was home to approximately 428 dual call couples. Approximately 14 percent of active priests are married to other Episcopal clergy.

"A big part of what we do is getting the wider church talking about dual call — the challenges and the opportunities," said Bishop Douglas Fisher, task force chair. "We have not made definitive state-

ments — we have invited dialogue."

The group reached out to couples in the dioceses of its members and crafted questions for each couple. In the video, couples discuss real-life challenges priests who are married to other priests face. A couple from the Diocese of East Tennessee talks about their joint discernment process and about sharing life together at the seminary in Sewanee; another from the Diocese of San Diego addresses sharing a call as co-vicars.

The task force said it hoped these honest reflections from dual-call couples would open conversation on the congregational level. The task force will make its full report to the 79th General Convention in 2018.

— Office of Public Affairs

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NEWS

CHARLOTTESVILLE continued from page 1

nationalists who describe themselves as part of an “alt-right” movement. But religious leaders in Charlottesville say they know the tension has been building for months over the city’s plan to remove a statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee.

Support for that decision was not unanimous, even in a college town seen as more liberal than much of the rest of Virginia. Yet “people of conscience from a variety of perspectives have made a good-faith effort to strive for understanding and reconciliation in seeking a resolution to the painful local question of our statues,” said the Rev. Will Peyton, St. Paul’s rector.

“And it’s very clear that that good-faith effort has made us a lightning rod, because people came from far and wide to express their white-supremacist views,” he said. “It’s not about Robert E. Lee.”

The push to remove Confederate monuments has fueled tensions in other cities as well, including New Orleans and St. Louis. The Charlottesville Clergy Collective was formed in 2015 in response to another outbreak of violence fueled by racial hatred — the killing of nine black worshipers at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., by a white gunman.

The collective began meeting once a month. “So that we trust each other, we know each other,” Thomas said. “So that when things like this come up we are able to address them quickly.” The gather-

ings now draw representatives from 50 to 60 congregations, including all three Episcopal churches, Thomas said.

After a May 13 white-nationalist rally, the group started meeting nearly every week to discuss how the congregations would respond when hate groups came to town.

The City Council voted 3-2 in February to remove the Lee statue. Opponents of the removal sued. In June, the city renamed Lee Park, home of the statue, Emancipation Park.

On July 8, when a small group of Ku Klux Klan demonstrators from North Carolina marched in Charlottesville, the Charlottesville Clergy Collective organized a unified, peaceful counter-demonstration and events in which an estimated 2,000 people participated.

That rally drew barely 30 participants, who “looked like clownish misfits,” Peyton said. “Everybody in town knew that [Aug. 12] would be bigger.”

‘Truly horrifying’

Billed as a “Unite the Right” rally, the August event drew white supremacists from far beyond Virginia. Peyton said he saw one car with a license plate from Ontario, Canada. An Ohio man was charged with driving a car into a crowd of counter-demonstrators, killing one and wounding 19.

On the eve of the supremacists’ rally,



Photo/Bill Parnell/Diocese of Massachusetts

The Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston hosts a prayer vigil for peace and justice.

as anxiety grew in Charlottesville, St. Paul’s hosted a prayer service organized by a group called Congregate Charlottesville that featured guest speaker Cornell West, a philosopher and political activist who teaches at Harvard, and the Rev. Traci Blackmon, executive minister of justice and witness ministries of the United Church of Christ. About 700 people packed the church to capacity.

Toward the end of the service, Peyton learned they had company nearby on the University of Virginia campus. A group of torch-carrying white supremacists had marched to the iconic rotunda across from St. Paul’s and had gathered at the statue of Thomas Jefferson. Peyton went outside to analyze the scene.

“I could see the line of torches coming down the steps of the rotunda,” he said. “I could see the torches and I could hear the chants of ‘white lives matter.’”

The demonstrators did not seem to be aware of the prayer service that was underway, he said. When the service concluded, rather than draw attention to themselves by all leaving out the front, Peyton and other local religious leaders coordinated a more inconspicuous exit from the church in smaller groups that dispersed quickly.

The next morning, the kickoff inter-

faith prayer service was held at the First Baptist Church. Then one procession made its way to Emancipation Park while another group stopped first for an event at a black-heritage center before moving on to the First United Methodist Church, across the street from Emancipation Park.

Soon, chaos broke loose.

“It was truly horrifying,” Thomas said, describing bands of white supremacists roaming the streets hours before their rally at noon, in some cases picking fights with counter-protesters on their way to the park. “They came to town to cause violence, there’s no question about.”

They were “menacing,” Peyton said, with some carrying shields, clubs and Nazi flags. Some were dressed professionally, while others wore black helmets and black sunglasses, he said. “When I watched all these people on Saturday unloading from these vans, they were all clearly eager for violence.”

Less than a half hour before the “Unite the Right” was scheduled to begin, city police declared it an unlawful assembly. Minutes later, Gov. Terry McAuliffe declared a state of emergency.

The Diocese of Virginia announced on Facebook that none of its clergy or parishioners had been injured. The deadly afternoon crash targeting counter-protesters was followed by an eerie quiet that raised concerns that the supremacists were planning more violence in the evening, Peyton said. The interfaith gathering concluded with a prayer vigil at the Methodist church, and everyone went home safely in groups before sundown.

Charlottesville leaders say they don’t think this is the last they’ve seen of the hate groups.

“We’re just catching our breath right now. Everyone here is exhausted,” Peyton said. “We just need to continue to build bonds between our congregations.” ■

COMMENTARY

We are all Heather Heyer

By Donna P. Price

I was not there in Charlottesville, on Aug. 12 when the Fascists invaded my loving hometown of diversity and inclusion. I was not there when a domestic terrorist deliberately drove a vehicle into a crowd of peaceful citizens heading home after protesting hate and violence, killing her and wounding 19 others in a murderous act of domestic terrorism.

But as a lawyer, former trial judge, retired United States Navy Captain, JAGC; as an Episcopalian — member of a faith that practices that I must love my neighbor as myself — and as a transgender woman who has suffered loss simply for living the life that God desires for me to live as an authentic person, I knew that I had to be there for Heather Heyer’s memorial service, honoring a courageous woman, a Good Samaritan, who was present at that time and place knowing that she, like each of us, had a moral obligation stop to help those at risk: in this instance, by responding to the attack by the Fascists, Nazis, KKK, Alt-right, and their sympathizers. For, as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said about Scripture passage about the Good Samaritan: “The question is not what will happen to me if I stop and get involved;



Photo/Jerry Hames

Donna Price is interviewed by a CNN correspondent entering a theater in Charlottesville, Va., for the memorial service for Heather Heyer, who was killed during demonstrations on Aug. 12.

the question is what will happen to that person if I do not stop and get involved.”

I knew that silence in the face of hate was complicity. I knew that to not stand up for our beliefs was to permit evil to overtake good. I knew that the only way to stop the madness that has overtaken our country was for all of us — black and white, rich and poor, Jew and Gentile — to practice our faith, a faith that does not permit us to be complicit in immorality.

Our faith requires us to practice, not just preach, our obligation to love our neighbor as ourselves. ■

Captain Donna Price retired from active duty in 2003 after serving 25 years in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General’s Corps and after 35 years of military legal experience.



Photo/Sharon Sheridan

Rallying against hate

The Rev. Margaret Otterburn, rector of Church of the Messiah in Chester, N.J., greets Charles Boddy, president of the Warren/Sussex County Branch of the NAACP, during an Aug. 13 rally in Bedminster, N.J., close to where President Donald Trump was vacationing. The gathering was protesting a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Va., and other issues such as new immigration restrictions. Protestors also observed a moment of silence for Heather D. Heyer, killed in Charlottesville when a car drove into a group of counter-protestors.

NEWS

ECLIPSE continued from page 1

An even bigger celebration was expected in Hopkinsville, Ky., said to be near the point of greatest eclipse. Astronomers describe that as the point where the moon's shadow will take its most direct aim at the Earth during the total eclipse. With that the distinction, Hopkinsville was marketing itself "Eclipseville."

"The community's been talking about it for years and getting ready," said the Rev. Alice Nichols, rector at Grace Episcopal Church in Hopkinsville.

Nichols said she had heard estimates that more than 100,000 visitors might converge in Hopkinsville on Aug. 21, which would quadruple the city's non-eclipse population of about 32,000. She contacted Episcopal churches across Kentucky inviting parishioners to come to Grace Episcopal to view the eclipse. Grace Episcopal didn't offer camping, but visitors could pay \$30 per adult and \$15 per child to reserve one of 75 parking spots and join the church viewing party, with proceeds benefiting the church's Graceworks ministry.

Grace Episcopal also planned to offer its guests a boxed lunch before the total eclipse began at 1:24 p.m. Eye protection was included. Nichols stocked up with 300 certified sunglasses, a must for anyone wishing to view the eclipse.

"I hope that it starts people asking questions," Nichols said in a phone interview with ENS. "I hope that it will kind of bring attention to the fact that religion and science are not at odds with each other."

Solar eclipses are not unusual. Partial solar eclipses can occur several times in a year, as they will in 2018. In a partial eclipse, the moon passes in front of the sun but does not block it altogether. A total solar eclipse is rarer, occurring only when the moon passes fully in front of the sun, darkening part of the Earth and creating a thin, shimmering corona around the edges of the moon.

Nowhere in the world will experience a total solar eclipse again until July 2019, when South America will get its turn in the shadow. The August eclipse generated additional excitement in the United States because it is the rare total solar eclipse that only will be experienced in this country, and from coast to coast.

The real reward, though, was viewing "the most beautiful thing you can see in the sky," as one astronomer described the corona to NPR.

For those unable to travel on Aug. 21, a partial eclipse was to be visible across all of North America. In Spokane, Wash., the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection invited all to a viewing party starting at 10 a.m. In Lexington, Ky., the Episcopal Church Women of St. Alban's Episcopal Church invited viewers starting at noon.

Those two churches were in the zone where it was possible to see an eclipse of more than 90 percent — weather permitting.

"I'm afraid to look at the forecast," said Nichols, the rector in Hopkinsville, said before the eclipse. But even if

the skies were cloudy, Nichols said, she would count on "a really interesting experience" of passing through the moon's shadow. Clear skies would bring "an amazing experience."

Fair weather odds was one of the selling points for Nebraska, where Alliance promoted itself as offering better than an 80 percent chance of clear skies on Aug. 21.

"Alliance won the geographical lottery," Nelson said, adding the city's popularity as an eclipse destination had been bolstered by the nearby outdoor art installation Carhenge. (Think Stonehenge,

but made out of old cars.)

As parish administrator, Nelson, 63, typically spends most of her time producing St. Matthew's newsletter, helping church committees, updating Facebook and taking care of other church business. More recently, eclipse planning took over her days as the congregation prepared its 56 campsites.

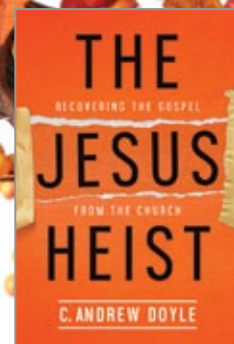
The church took reservations for minimum three-night stays, so the excitement would stretch across the weekend leading up to the Monday eclipse. The St. Matthew's outreach committee planned to serve breakfast to campers

that Sunday and Monday, and a cookout was planned for Sunday evening.

The city began stepping up its preparations about six months ago, Nelson said. Hotels were all booked, eclipse-related events were scheduled over the pre-eclipse weekend and Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts was expected to make an appearance. Many of Nelson's neighbors underestimated at first what the eclipse would mean for Alliance, but they ultimately braced for a big turnout.

"It's going to be huge," she predicted before the event. "It took them a while to wrap their minds around it." ■

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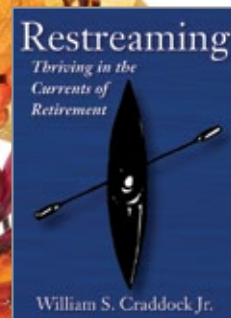


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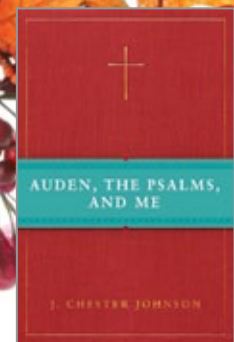
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COMMENTARY

Christianity does not justify Trump's 'fire and fury'

By Steven Paulikas

Following President Donald Trump's Aug. 8 threats of "fire and fury" toward North Korea, Robert Jeffress, the evangelical pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas and a presidential adviser, released a statement claiming that God had given the president authority to "take out" North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. Jeffress was the president's selected preacher at the traditional pre-inauguration liturgy at St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C., and claims to speak with Trump "on a variety of issues."

Regardless of his political credentials, Jeffress's theology is shockingly uninformed and dangerous, and it is a sobering reminder of the power of misguided moral statements to influence matters of life and death in policy. President Trump's language, which he intensified a few days later, evoked apocalyptic nuclear war. Despite what either of the men claims, there is no possible Christian justification for provoking such a conflict.

In an interview with *The Washington Post*, Jeffress backed up his argument by citing Paul in Romans 13, a famous passage on the relationship between earthly and divine authority. Yet even the casual reader of the Bible will be hard-pressed to recreate this interpretation of Romans. In order to reach his desired conclusion, the pastor rips this passage from its context; Paul is telling Christians to obey the Roman authorities in temporal matters such as taxation, not justifying the authority of one ruler over another.

What's more, Jeffress seemingly fetishizes his own message of violence over the clarion call to love of Romans 13:8: "Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law." Jeffress predicts that "pacifist Christians" will turn to Romans 12:17, "do not repay anyone evil for evil," to refute him. Beyond his curious citation of this obvious contradiction to his own argument, it is hardly necessary to invoke it given his grossly negligent treatment of the scripture he himself has chosen.

The 20th-century theologian Karl Barth wrote "The Epistle to the Romans," a work belonging to the theological canon that has influenced generations of Christian leaders since its publication in 1919. A thinker of the Christian Reformed tradition, Barth sought to counter the liberal religion of his time with a theology rooted in "the Word," and he found a fertile field in Romans.

Barth prophesies against polemicists like Jeffress, writing of Romans: "Should this book come into the hands of such persons, they ought not to begin with the 13th chapter. Those who do not understand the book as a whole will understand least of all what we now have to say."

Barth takes pains to demonstrate that Paul is not calling for theocracy or a government controlled by the Christian church. Quite the contrary, Barth declares in his commentary on Jeffress's favored passage, "Men have no right to possess objective right against other men." It is worth noting that Barth became a leader in the anti-Nazi Confessing Church of Germany.

Jeffress told *The Post*, "God has endowed rulers full power to use whatever means necessary — including war — to stop evil." I argue that recent

history already has demonstrated that the invocation of evil in political rhetoric leads to violence. Think of how President George W. Bush's "axis of evil" created the moral framework for the Iraq war.

If we accept that someone or something is evil, we believe that the individual or entity will cause harm that must be prevented at all costs. This is the highly flawed argument Jeffress offers in support of a first strike against the North Korean leader and is doubtless contributing to the growing number of Americans in favor of war.

There has been discussion about whether the president's bold words on Kim were improvised or part of a strategy to push China into cracking down on North Korea. Jeffress's comments reveal a third dimension: a corrupted theology that could supply a misguided moral thrust to the president's potential course of action. Seen in this light, the vision of "fire and fury" should be taken very seriously and at face value, an apocalyptic statement resulting from a highly unorthodox theology with no basis in the Bible.

So how can we bring a halt to this march toward war?

The answer lies in theology and ethics as much as it does in politics and strategy. Secular and religious people alike must be aware that moral arguments — whether or not they involve religious tropes — are not just political sideshows but rather can determine the outcomes of the most important policy decisions of this or any time.

There is such a thing as incorrect theological and moral thinking, and the best way to neutralize it is with an intellectually and morally superior argument on the same terrain. Only good theology can de-

bunk bad theology. We all must engage in this work as if the future of this republic and its place in the peaceful order of the world depend on it — because they do.

Above all, we must acknowledge that government in a liberal democracy such as ours produces outcomes determined by the wider moral environment to which it belongs. As its tolerance of horrors like slavery attest, America's system of government was not designed with an internal moral compass. Rather, it reflects the ethical norms of the society that sends representatives to it. As George Washington said in his Farewell Address, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports." If we accept a religious and moral argument that perverts Christian scripture to justify a potential nuclear war, politicians are not solely to blame.

Barth himself countered the idea of theocracy by pointing to the temptation of Jesus. In Matthew 4, Jesus rejects the Devil's offer of authority over all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus will worship him. In this context, the urge to control the global order is malevolent, not divine.

A wiser spiritual adviser than Jeffress would counsel the president that there is no conceivable argument to be found in Christian Scripture for threatening death and suffering on a huge scale. His distorted interpretation of the Bible has added more poison to the country's already-faltering moral condition at a time of international crisis. ■

The Rev. Steven Paulikas is rector of All Saints' Church in Brooklyn, New York. This column first was published in The New York Times and is reprinted with permission.

Council calls for end to hostilities between U.S., North Korea

Episcopal Journal

The National Council of Churches on Aug. 10 called for an immediate cessation of hostile acts and rhetoric between the leaders of North Korea and the United States. "Steps must be taken immediately to avoid the possibility of a cataclysmic nuclear war. Increased tension and destabilizing actions and rhetoric by both sides make such a war more likely," it said in a statement.

Last May, the United States deployed the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile system in South Korea, seen as a destabilizing move by China and other neighbors and a threat by North Korea, the council said. "At the same time, North Korea's testing of missile technology is well known. The nation's development of a miniaturized nuclear weapon brings destabilization unseen since the end of the Cold War, and its apparent new capacity to launch intercontinental ballistic missiles is of

great concern."

The leaders of the two countries' threats of hostilities are "beyond alarming," it said, calling upon them "to tone down their similar and mutually inflammatory rhetoric."

The movement of U.S. military assets, including aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines, to the region "places the world on the brink of war," the council said. "Threats by North Korea regarding an attack on Guam place the U.S. and its allies in a precarious position, bringing the world closer to the possibility that a quick and devastating nuclear exchange will take place."

Bilateral dialogue must take place, aggressive language be discarded and paths to peace be pursued, the council said. "We will continue to urge our government to tone down its rhetoric and to utilize diplomacy and work with the many partners, both governmental and nongovernmental, who stand ready to assist both the United States and North Korea to de-escalate this crisis." ■



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NEWS

Texas 'bathroom bill' defeat means 2018 General Convention stays in Austin

Curry, Jennings say church continues opposition to anti-immigrant bill

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and House of Deputies President the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings expressed thanks Aug. 16 for the defeat of a "bathroom bill" seen as discriminating against transgender people in Texas and said General Convention would convene in 2018 in Austin as planned.

"We give thanks for all of the Texan Episcopalians, elected officials, business leaders and advocates who raised their voices publicly against this proposed law and the physical, spiritual and emotional damage it threatened to do to transgender people," the two presiding officers wrote. "Now that we can be more confident that transgender deputies, exhibitors, advocates and guests can travel to Texas safely and with dignity, we have no plans to ask Executive Council to reconsider the location of the 2018 General Convention."

General Convention is scheduled to meet July 5-13 in Austin.

Curry and Jennings warned, however, that they, the bishops of Texas and other

refused even to hold a hearing on it. Well-financed and visible opposition by major Texas employers, including energy companies, also helped defeat the bill.

The bill said that anyone using a public multiple-occupancy restroom, a shower or changing facilities in Texas, including at public and charter schools, must use the gender-labeled facility that matches the sex stated on the person's birth certificate, driver's license, personal identification certificate or state license to carry a handgun. It also would've overturned local and individual school districts' policies on bathroom use.

Texas Speaker of the House Joe Straus firmly opposed the bill, and Curry and Jennings supported his stance. They wrote to him in July, before the special session, to follow up on a letter they sent to him in February.

They reminded him that General Convention moved from Houston to Honolulu in 1955 because the Texas city could not offer sufficient guarantees of desegregated housing for its delegates.

In March, Curry and Jennings were the lead signers on an amicus brief filed by 1,800 clergy and religious leaders in a U.S. Supreme Court case involving transgender-bathroom use policies.

On Aug. 1, a broad coalition of mainstream Texas religious leaders spoke out against Senate Bill 3 and other so-called "bathroom bills" that would discriminate against transgender youths and adults.

The speakers, who represent millions of mainstream faith-community members, included leaders from the

Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions and a nondenominational Christian parent of a transgender child.

More than 350 people gathered in Austin on the Capitol steps and under the shade of oaks lining the walkway to lend their voices in opposition to the contentious "bathroom" bill in a day of interfaith advocacy sponsored by Texas Impact.

"This is what theology looks like," General Presbyter Sallie Sampson of Mission Presbytery in San Antonio told the crowd.

Mufti Mohamed-Umer Esmail of Austin also spoke at a press conference. "The Quran states, God is the one who shapes you in the wombs however he pleases," Esmail said. "The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, 'Indeed God does not look at your faces and bodies, rather he looks at your hearts and deeds.'

"I call upon the governor of Texas and the legislature: Enough of the transphobia! Y'all means all!" he said, echoing the slogan on signs that many carried.

After the press conference, Texas Impact offered a brief training on the "10 commandments" of speaking with elect-

ed officials. Then small groups met with individual senators and representatives and their staffs.

Texas Impact set up the Interfaith Advocacy Day and helped to prioritize House members to be visited. According to Texas Impact, a minority misrepresent that the faith community supports the bathroom bill, and it was important for legislatures to hear from others of faith who did not. "Regulating who uses what bathroom is a solution in search of a problem," the group said, pointing out

that proponents could not point to a single incident not already addressed by the Texas Penal Code. Further, the group called the bill a waste of time when the state has real challenges.

Texas Impact is a statewide religious grassroots network whose members include individuals, congregations and governing bodies of the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths. Texas Impact exists to advance state public policies consistent with what it says are universally held social principles of the Abrahamic traditions. ■



Photo/Diocese of Texas

The Rev. Lisa Hunt, rector of St. Stephen's, Houston, and the Rev. Jon Page, pastor of First Congregational Church, Houston, meet with Rep. Todd Hunter, chair of the Calendar Committee of the Texas Legislature, during an Interfaith Advocacy Day Aug. 1.

Episcopalians remained concerned about Texas Senate Bill 4, which goes into effect Sept. 1. The bill threatens law-enforcement officials with stiff penalties if they fail to cooperate with federal immigration authorities, and it forbids municipalities from becoming so-called sanctuary cities. The bill also allows police officers to question people about their immigration status during arrests or traffic stops.

"Between now and next summer, we plan to follow the progress of legal challenges to Senate Bill 4 closely and to explore ways to lend the support of the Episcopal Church to Texans who oppose this discriminatory, anti-immigrant law," they said.

Saying that recent violence in Charlottesville, Va., shows that "there is darkness in our land," Curry and Jennings asked Episcopalians to "join us in continuing to pray and to speak out for all of God's children who have reason to be afraid in these frightening times."

While the Texas Senate had passed the latest iteration of the so-called bathroom bill, Senate Bill 3, earlier in a special session, the bill failed when the state House



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SEMINARY

NEWS

Episcopalians vow to ‘melt the ICE collusion’

By Pat McCaughan
Episcopal News Service

Episcopalians joined about 200 immigration activists in front of the Los Angeles County Hall of Justice on Aug. 3, bearing signs, beating drums and chanting “Escucha, estamos en la lucha” (“Listen, we are in the struggle”). They also chipped away at a melting ice sculpture, shaped in the letters I-C-E, acronym for the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency.

Gathered in the 90-degree heat, they chanted, “Melt the ICE Collusion,” challenging Los Angeles Sheriff Jim McDonnell’s support of federal deportation policies deemed unjust, said the Rev. Francisco Garcia, co-chair of Episcopal Sacred Resistance, the sanctuary task force of the Diocese of Los Angeles.

“In California, we really have an opportunity to show a different way,” said Garcia, rector of Holy Faith Episcopal Church in Inglewood.

“We are hearing all kinds of things coming from the White House in terms of immigration ... including the president painting this broad picture of immigrants as criminals and how bad these people are and how they have hurt our country. But in California we can be a community that really does welcome and include all and make that policy and practice.”

The gathering of Jewish and Christian clergy and laity also intended to show that activists will keep fighting for immigrant rights, chipping away at law-enforcement policies and agencies that intimidate undocumented people and prevent them from reporting crimes when they are victimized, he said.

“Recent history has shown that President [Donald] Trump’s statement about detaining and deporting only ‘violent felons’ has meant in practice the targeting and detention of people who have lived in this country for years or decades, have become central pillars of their communities, are supporting families and whose only crime is having come to this country illegally,” according to a letter the group tried to deliver to McDonnell.

They were not allowed inside the Hall of Justice, where McDonnell’s office is located. Instead, they encountered barricades and a wall of deputies stationed outside, but they were promised that the letter would be given to the sheriff, said the Rev. Jaime Edwards Acton, rector of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Hollywood, the task force’s other co-chair. “We also wanted to highlight the stories of those who are affected by these policies,” he said.

The letter cited several cases, including that of the Rev. Noe Carias, leader of the Southern Pacific District of the Assemblies of God Church for more than two decades. Carias is married to a U.S. citizen and has two young children. He was detained during a routine July 24 check-in with an immigration officer.

According to published reports, Carias



Photos/Cam Sanders

Episcopal clergy join about 200 interfaith immigration activists calling upon the Los Angeles sheriff to stop collaborating with Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents in detaining and deporting undocumented people.

was deported in 1993 as a teenager, but he returned to the United States and ignored a deportation order two years later. He had been granted one-year stays in 2015 and 2016, but earlier this year a request for a third stay was denied.

Carias, according to the letter e-mailed to McDonnell earlier in the day and given to deputies, “is and has been a faithful and very active member, local church leader and ... has 25-year-old deportation orders resulting simply from entering the U.S. without permission as a teenager.”

The Los Angeles Times reported that ICE explained the July 24 action in a written statement, calling Carias “a repeat immigration violator who has assumed multiple identities and nationalities over the years in order to evade federal immigration enforcement.”

“During previous encounters with immigration authorities, his actions have established a pattern of misrepresentation or deception to law enforcement, resulting in his removal from the United States on at least three occasions,” the report said.

The activists also cited the nationally publicized case of Romulo Avelica-Gonzalez, 49, arrested in front of his daughter, now 14, after dropping off another daughter at her Lincoln Heights school.

In mid-August, an immigration appeals court denied the final deportation order for Avelica-Gonzalez.

The case is set to be returned to the local immigration court that initially ordered that he be deported. That means Avelica-Gonzalez is still in deportation proceedings, but it could take years for a judge to enter a new decision.

According to a Los Angeles Times report, lawyers for Avelica-Gonzalez in June settled two convictions, which were for driving under the influence and for receiving stolen car tags, in the hope that



Activists at a Los Angeles rally chip away at a melting ice sculpture, symbolizing chipping away at what they consider unjust Immigration and Customs Enforcement policies and practices.

authorities would vacate the deportation order.

The letter also urged McDonnell to halt opposition to state Senate Bill 54, known as the California Values Act, authored by Senate President Pro Tem Kevin De León, a Los Angeles Democrat, which would prohibit state and local law-enforcement agencies from using resources to investigate, detain, report or arrest people for immigration enforcement.

De León has argued that the bill,

which would make California a sanctuary state and prohibit ICE agents from entering county jails without a warrant, is needed to ensure public safety.

But Garcia said that, as the Trump Administration has intensified its rhetoric, McDonnell has joined increased efforts to lobby state lawmakers to prevent the bill’s passage.

“We demand that, at the least, you stop lobbying against SB54,” the letter said. “We also urge you to stop the Sheriff’s Department’s cooperation with ICE. The Trump era deportation agenda does not represent the will of the vast majority of Angelenos. As faith leaders and faithful residents of this city, we ask you to work with us to create a city ‘in which righteousness dwells,’” said the letter, signed by Christian, Jewish, Muslim and a range of interfaith immigration-activist groups.

Other law-enforcement agencies have responded differently. The California College and University Police Chiefs Association supports SB54. Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck has said that he would not engage in law-enforcement activities based on immigration status, nor would the department work in conjunction with Homeland Security on deportation issues.

The California Senate has passed the measure. It goes next to the State Assembly and, if approved there, to Gov. Jerry Brown to be signed into law.

During the rally, a handful of counter-protestors, carrying signs saying they support law enforcement, attempted to disrupt the demonstration, Edwards Acton said.

Garcia said they were not deterred by the protestors or being turned away by deputies and will continue to reach out to McDonnell.

“We plan to keep the pressure up, to pray and act,” Garcia said. “We’re going to continue to, as people of faith, make this case, so we can actually have a face-to-face sit-down with him.” ■

NEWPORT continued from page 3

Walter Stahr, an attorney and St. James member, wrote in an Aug. 14 e-mail to the congregation that he and the Rev. Cindy Voorhees, the St. James vicar, met earlier in the day with Taylor; the Rev. Rachel Nyback, head of the Standing Committee; and Bob Williams, canon for community relations.

“They informed us that they have decided to proceed with the sale of the St. James property to Burnham Ward,” Stahr wrote. “They stated that there is a binding, legal agreement with a future closing date, which they did not disclose, for the sale of the property. They assured

us that if St. James the Great wishes to continue as an Episcopal congregation, they will support us — just not in our building. We will provide more detail as events unfold. I know how devastating this will be for many of you, but the story is not over.”

The hearing panel that considered disciplinary action against Bruno issued a final order Aug. 2 reaffirming its draft recommendation that he be suspended from ordained ministry for three years because of misconduct. It is awaiting word on whether Bruno plans to appeal that sentence.

The text of Taylor’s letter is at www.episcopaldigitalnetwork.com. ■

NEWS

Long Island diocese removes Confederate memorial

By Amy Sowder
Episcopal News Service

A work crew sawed two Robert E. Lee plaques off a tree on church property in south Brooklyn, N.Y., fewer than 24 hours after the Diocese of Long Island received the first of many calls about the Confederate memorial.

The Rev. Khader El-Yateem, a community activist and founder of Salam Arabic Lutheran Church in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Bay Ridge, made the first call, responding to concerns he heard Aug. 14 from community residents.

At issue were two tree plaques at St. John's Episcopal Church in Fort Hamilton, near a still-active military base in Brooklyn. From 1842 to 1847, more than a decade before Robert E. Lee led the Confederate Army, he was stationed at the U.S. Army's Fort Hamilton. He was a member of the church, along with Stonewall Jackson, who was baptized there, said Long Island Bishop Lawrence Provenzano. Lee planted a tree near the church, and the plaques commemorated him.

The first Brooklyn plaque was placed in front of a maple tree in April 1912 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, according to a sign near where Lee once planted a tree. The tree died, and the Confederate group replanted it



Photos/Denise Fillion/Diocese of Long Island

A crew working with the Diocese of Long Island saws into one of the plaques commemorating Robert E. Lee.

in the 1930s, and again in the 1960s, Provenzano said. The church's last service was in September 2014, and the building is under contract to be sold. The congregation merged with Christ Church in Bay Ridge.

El-Yateem called the diocese at 10:30 a.m. Aug. 15. By 10 a.m. Aug. 16, the plaques were being taken down, to be stored in diocesan archives. El-Yateem expressed gratitude for the quick response. "We needed to take that sign down in support and solidarity of those who are victims of hate and racism in this country," he said.

The Brooklyn removal was part of a wave of swift removals of public memorials of Confederate leaders across the

country after white supremacists, white nationalists and neo-Nazis converged on the University of Virginia campus in Charlottesville, protesting the removal of a Lee statue. After violent clashes with counter-protestors, one person was killed and 19 injured on Aug. 12.

"We're in a mess with the rhetoric coming out of the White House and how people are feeling emboldened by the rhetoric," Provenzano said. "We've got to preach the gospel and, more importantly, live it. Shame on us for not removing those plaques before it was brought to our attention. This pastor reminded us that, when people pass this church property, there's a commemoration to a general who fought to preserve slavery."

In two days, Provenzano's office fielded about 120 calls and e-mails about the church's plaques, speaking 2-to-1 in favor of removal, he estimated. Those requesting the plaques remain in place included people he identified as neo-Nazi and white supremacist. "Those were nasty," Provenzano said.

Responding to President Donald Trump's Aug. 15 news conference in which he warned of the slippery slope of removing statues of historical figures who had anything to do with owning

slaves, including Presidents Jefferson and Washington, El-Yateem said that there is a big difference between a historical figure who owned slaves and one who led a war against the United States to preserve slavery.

"General Lee needs to be remembered, but not celebrated in our churches and streets. Because of his actions, over 300,000 people died as he fought to preserve slavery in this country," El-Yateem said.

The plaques and statues shouldn't be erased, but kept in archives and in museums, he said. ■

Amy Sowder is a freelance writer and editor in Brooklyn, N.Y.



Diocese of Long Island Bishop Lawrence Provenzano addresses reporters with Pastor Khader El-Yateem, right, outside of St. John's Episcopal Church in Fort Hamilton before the plaques are removed.

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FAITH AND THE ARTS

Caroline Coolidge Brown: *A modern itinerant artist*

By Jerry Hames

An accomplished multi-media artist and watercolorist who loves to experiment, Caroline Coolidge Brown has many tools in her arsenal. Acrylics and chalk, pens and glaze, paper and tissue, maps and book pages, rubber stamps and cardboard stencils, and much more can be discovered in her Charlotte, N.C., studio.

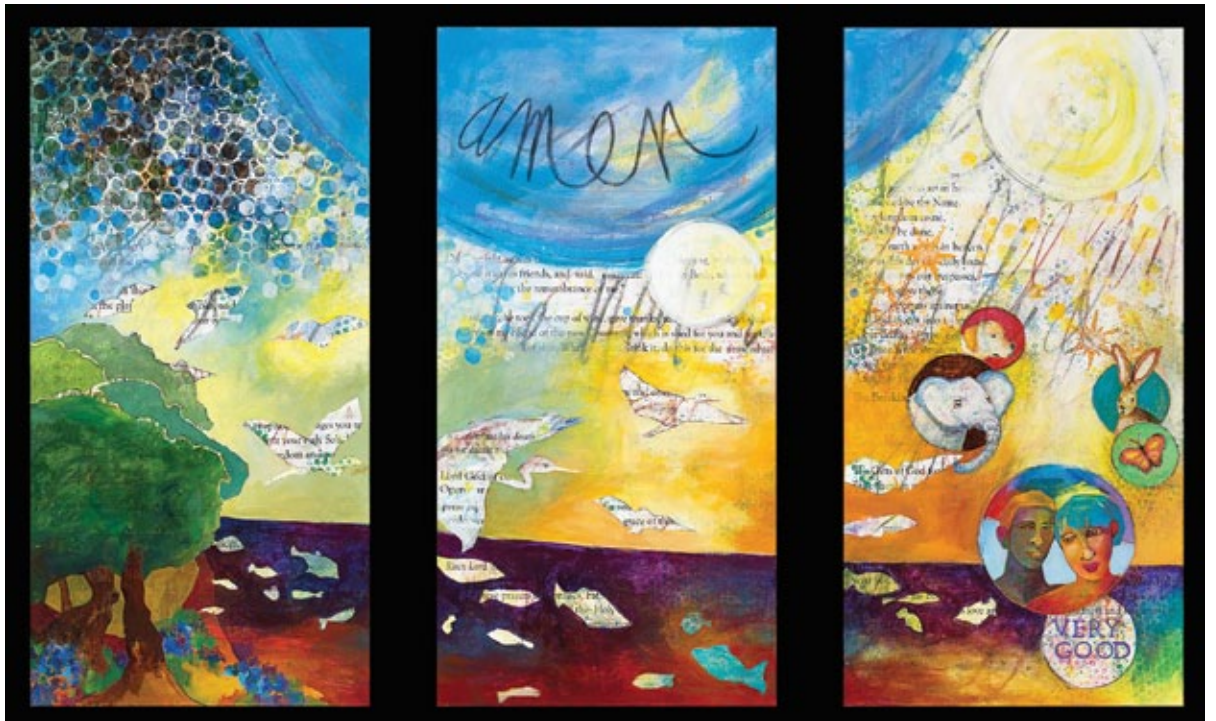


Photos/Caroline Coolidge Brown
Clockwise from left are: a watercolor page from the North Carolina artist's journal; a mixed-media triptych of the Creation story commissioned last year by Calvary Episcopal Church in Richmond, Texas; and several hand-painted images inspired by the landscape of southwest Ireland and printed from carved linoleum during her artist-in-residency there in March.

During her time in Charlotte, she was very involved in the local art scene. Besides exhibiting in numerous juried art exhibitions, Brown co-founded the Ciel Gallery with seven local artists, was a member and instructor at the Wingmaker Arts Collaborative, taught at a community college and at the John C. Campbell Folk School, led classes in urban sketching with pen and ink and watercolors, conducted monthly "mixed-media clambakes" (also known as visual journaling) and responded to requests for private commissions.

A recent work, commissioned last year by Calvary Episcopal Church in Richmond, Texas, is a 19-square-foot mixed-media painting in three panels based on the Creation story. "The creation theme has always been a favorite of mine," said Brown, a sustaining member of Episcopal Church & Visual Arts.

"Three major texts were my inspiration for this piece, each telling the story of God's creation and love," she said. "The foundational story of the first chapter of Genesis provides the brilliant imagery and the power of the creative



"It's the curse of a mixed-media artist. You can never pass an antique shop without going in and looking around," she joked in explaining how she purchased a 1926 yearbook and made use of some of its illustrations for a King Lear work.

A prolific artist, Brown also creates linoleum prints, monoprints, collographs, silk-screen prints, and etchings when she is not leading retreats, teaching, visual journaling, exhibiting her latest work, traveling or undertaking a commission.

Like the itinerant artists of old, she has taken these skills from place to place. The Browns moved to New York in 2005 when their two daughters were 6 and 8 years old, leaving friends at Grace St. Luke's in Memphis to meet new ones at General Theology Seminary, where her husband, Kevin, began studies for ordination. Upon his graduation, they settled into life at Grace Church in Paris, Tenn. After three years, they moved to Charlotte to make the Church of the Holy Comforter their home.

Now, after seven years in North Carolina, Brown soon will pack up her studio and printing press in preparation for a move to Delaware in October as Kevin prepares to be consecrated the Diocese of Delaware's next bishop.

process ... darkness into light, sky and waters and creatures of all kinds, people of every color. That is a vision of God's love bringing us into being.

"Second, the first chapter of John empowers us to live into the story. We read, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God'... God breathed, spoke and

brought the light of Jesus — the Word made flesh — into our creation."

Third, Brown used "the poetry" of Eucharistic Prayer C with its imagery of "the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns ... and this fragile earth, our island home" and embedded this language into the background. "It represents the sacrament that brings us together with God, into the light of Christ, each Sunday morning," she said.

In the triptych, Brown included illustrations that Texans would recognize — the wide Brazos River, strong oak trees, patches of bluebonnets, blue herons in flight and a curious jackrabbit. To portray the diversity of creation, she added an elephant, a butterfly and a dog.

"My Adam and Eve steer away from traditional figures ... symbolizing the rainbow of our identity and diversity, along with the rainbow of God's promise to Moses — a covenant and commitment to God's people."

Brown spent last March as an artist-

continued on page 13



An example of mixed-media visual journaling — a miniature four-fold book made of construction paper obtained at hardware store roofing departments, prepped with an acrylic primer, then decorated with imagination.



FAITH AND THE ARTS

Refugees rescue Tennessee church

By Pamela A. Lewis

Even the most fertile imagination would be stretched to think that a group of refugees from a country 12 time zones away from the U.S. East Coast could save a struggling Episcopal church in Tennessee. But the Reverend Michael Spurlock would attest that such thinking is not far-fetched at all.

It certainly seemed like an unlikely outcome when Spurlock arrived in July 2007 at All Saints' church in Smyrna.

A Tennessee native, he'd taken a winding path to the Episcopal priesthood, exploring Roman Catholicism, painting and publishing before attending Nashotah House Theological Seminary in Wisconsin and graduating in 1997. (He currently serves on the clergy staff of Saint Thomas Church in New York.)

During the ten years before his arrival at All Saints, the church had progressed from mission to full parish status. In 2006, however, it broke apart over the controversies then roiling the Episcopal Church. All but 12 members of the congregation left, taking its bank accounts, furnishings, vestments and Communion ware, but leaving a \$850,000 mortgage with interest-only, monthly payments of \$5,500.

Both Spurlock and Diocese of Tennessee Bishop John Bauerschmidt were reluctant to sell the property, although that appeared to be the best option. Bauerschmidt advised, "Just go down and be a good priest to them," Spurlock recalled. A friend from Spurlock's seminary days, Karl Burns, told him, "If you turn that place around, you'll be a hero. But if you don't, no one will blame you, because that's impossible!"

In 2008, three newcomers arrived at All Saints. They were members of the

Karen (pronounced *kub REN*) ethnic minority from eastern Myanmar (formerly Burma) that had been persecuted for having sided with the British against the Burmese who collaborated with the Japanese during World War II and for being Christians. The three were among the Karen who had journeyed to America to escape continuing oppression.

The Karen in Myanmar, said Spurlock, were "subsistence farmers who lived off the land." Led by Ye Win, a man in his late 20s or early 30s, and former resistance fighter against the Burmese collaborators, the refugees needed housing, food and a place to worship without fear. In Smyrna, about 70 Karen joined the original group of three, filling All Saints' pews, Sunday school and youth group.

Spurlock was truthful. "We don't have a lot of resources to help your community," he told them. "But you are welcome here. You come on and join us, and we'll all figure it out together."

But it became increasingly difficult to keep up All Saints' expenses, and it was decided to sell the church. All Saints received a purchase offer, the diocesan council made its necessary inspections, and requisite permissions were given. But "nobody wanted to sell the church," recalled Spurlock.

Taking a break from preparing the budget, Spurlock went out on the church property. "While out walking, God spoke to me and said that he had given us farmland, had sent us farmers from the other side of the world, and that we were to start a farm here on the property." This could provide enough food to feed the Karen, and the church might be able to sell the surplus to cover its costs.

"Michael, isn't it just like God to show up at the 11th hour?" said the bishop when Spurlock told him of his



Spurlock

a parish and become a vital part of that community, sharing joys and sorrows with these new friends, and watch your children grow up with theirs. Then the 'call' comes again, and we move back into transition, knowing that we could easily have lived happily ever after right there.

... The tears will begin when we pack up the house, and start heading down the road."

But her message also contained optimism and anticipation, for Brown looks forward to becoming part of the Episcopal and artistic communities in her new home. "We are excited to know Delaware as our new family," she wrote. "We are eager to know what the Holy Spirit has in mind for this chapter of our lives and to discover how we will work together to make the world a better place." ■

For more on Caroline Coolidge Brown's art, visit www.carolinecbrown.com.

encounter.

Within three months, the All Saints congregation cultivated the rich dirt on the church farm's 22 acres, growing 20,000 pounds of produce. Ten percent went to feed the refugees, and the rest was sold locally or donated to food pantries. The revenue was enough to keep All Saints' alive. The farm was named "Kurios," the Greek word for "lord."

The All Saints congregation now numbers about 350 — 80% Karen, 20% Anglo, according to Spurlock.

"God is 'philoxenos' [Greek for

lover of strangers]," Spurlock said. "If you are not a lover of strangers, you are working against God's own heart. You don't get to pick who comes through your church door, but you are entirely responsible for how you treat them." ■

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

"All Saints," a film based on the story of the Rev. Michael Spurlock and the Karen refugees, opened in August in select theaters.

BOOK REVIEW

Book invites geeks on the ultimate quest for meaning

Review by Shelley Crook

Geeks, meet the Episcopal Church. Episcopal Church, meet the geeks. It's the premise of "The Ultimate Quest" by Jordan Haynie Ware that you guys have a lot in common and should get to know each other better.

Ware is not only an Episcopal priest, podcaster and feminist, but she's also a "Battlestar Galactica" aficionado and a half-orc sorcerer (when she's playing Pathfinder.) This makes her something of an expert regarding the places where church culture and nerd culture intersect, and Ware draws convincing parallels between these two worlds that may seem, at first glance, to have little in common.

Here's how she describes the book's premise:

"Christians thirst for adventure, have a sense of destiny, and desire to participate in something bigger than oneself as much as any questing gamer. The geek's obsessive need to understand how something works, to read the manual, to build a complex vocabulary ... these are traits that particularly the Episcopal tribe of Christians have in spades. We both form intense community bonds, we affect nerdy insular jargons, and we view change with suspicion."

This is not only clever, but it's also a timely bridge to build. While church attendance continues to fall across the board, it's the 18-30 age group that most noticeably is absent from the pews. Millennials appear to be Ware's primary target audience, but this book talks the right cultural language to play well to teen/confirmation groups, too, and it would make a solid educational pick.

The Ultimate Quest is more than an entertaining read. Beneath the geeky references lies a comprehensive introduction to all things Christian and, more specifically, all things Episcopalian. Ware gives a concise overview of the organizational structure of the

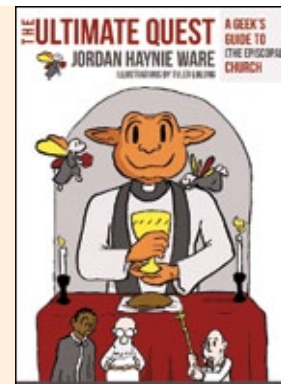
church, the Book of Common Prayer, orders of ministry, the liturgical year, the theological underpinnings of the denomination, even General Convention.

Plus, as a bonus, she demystifies lingo and jargon. If you don't know the difference between a purificator and a corporal, or an alb and a chasuble, you'll soon find out — aided by Tyler Lolong's funny, charming illustrations.

The Ultimate Quest: A Geek's Guide to (the Episcopal) Church

By Jordan Haynie Ware

Church Publishing
176 pages, \$16



My one quibble with Ware's book is that, while she does a sterling job of presenting our hero, Jesus, she ignores the rest of the cast. Where would Frodo have been without the Fellowship? Where would Jesus have been without the disciples, or Paul? This is a purely selfish response, however; Ware's writing was so entertaining and on-point on other topics that I would have loved to see what she made of Christianity's supporting actors, too.

In "The Ultimate Quest," Ware has cast her net wide, hoping to reel in the geeks, the nerds, the Trekkies, the D&D players and others not usually targeted by the church while encouraging those of us already in the pews to view our faith from a different angle. It's creative evangelizing.

If you're a young Episcopalian and you're looking for a leader, a role model or a companion on the quest, you could do worse than to check out Ware's Twitter feed and podcast. I suspect she's a rising star in the Episcopal Church. May the Force be with her. ■

Shelley Crook is a New-York based writer.

ARTIST continued from page 12

in-residence in Listowel in southwest Ireland. It was "an amazing month ... green hills, spring daffodils and sheep and wonderful people," she said. "I had to work with limited materials, so [I used] hand-carved linoleum, printed by hand ... and colored with watercolors."

Experimentation and improvisation also have been themes of her monthly "clambakes," Brown's version of mixed-media visual journaling. Working from a new theme each time, participants created four-fold books in a process that she called a "real exploration of ideas and techniques in a format that's not meant to be a finished product or hung on the wall. It's really more like art therapy!"

As the time draws near for the Browns to leave Charlotte, she reflected on her mixed emotions in a website post. "Surely the hardest part, for the priest and his family, are the moves. You live with

BOOK REVIEW

Australian Aboriginal artwork illustrates faith in new book

Proceeds to fund Bible translations into indigenous languages

By Robyn Douglass

In the clash between European culture and Australia's first nations, the Christian churches often have been seen as villains, imposing Western beliefs on cultures that had been active for tens of thousands of years.

But there's another side to this history. Christian missionaries wrote down and preserved languages and customs. One of the oldest charities in Australia, the Bible Society, celebrates its 200th anniversary this year. It still is widely involved in translating the Bible into indigenous languages.

The society is celebrating its anniversary in part by publishing "Our Mob, God's Story," which uses artwork by aboriginal people to illustrate their faith.

Old and New Testament stories look both familiar and very different: wise men as emus; time in the wilderness as walkabout; the Creation recast as the Dreaming.

Book co-editor Christobel Mattingley is an author and Anglican who has lived with and written about aboriginal people for more than 40 years. Overseeing the publication was a careful project taking more than five years, she said. Aboriginal artists selected the 115 works by 65 artists.

The artists were not paid but retained ownership of the images. Proceeds will support translations of the Bible into more aboriginal languages.

Mattingley has worked with Kurna people in South Australia, but the editors wanted to connect with as many communities as possible to invite their contribution, she said.

She speaks with passion about ab-

original people in that they have always understood the mysteries and glories of creation. That was the foundation of their lives and their culture," she told The Living Church. "Jesus was a natural follow-on from their beliefs."

Co-editor Louise Sherman echoed that perspective.

"Jesus goes beyond culture. It's us who limit him. We cast him as a Western man, but he was a Middle Eastern Jew, living in a culture where his people were oppressed by the Romans," she said.

Australian Aborigines relate to that dispossession, that sense of being made aliens in their own land. But the mood in "Our Mob, God's Story" is more of celebration, of joy in expressing faith with creativity.

The book includes two works by the Rev. Robyn Davis, assistant priest in the Anglican parish of Swan Hill in northern Victoria and a member of the Waddi Waddi people. "If I don't paint or draw every day, I don't feel right," said Davis. She described her art as a form of prayer and said a prayer is contained in each of her paintings, which she de-



Photo/courtesy of Robyn Davis

"The Gift," by the Rev. Robyn Davis, a member of the Waddi Waddi people, used traditional aboriginal imagery to create a Nativity scene in which the Wise Men are depicted as emus.

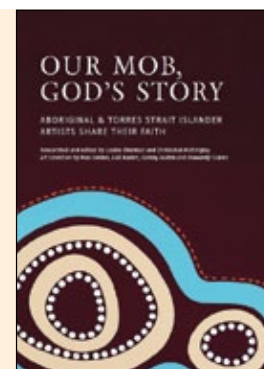
original people's dispossession from their land — and about their understanding of Christianity.

"I describe them as 'Old Testament'

Our Mob, God's Story: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists share their faith

Edited by Christobel Mattingley, Louise Sherman

Bible Society in Australia
240 pages, \$49.99



scribes as "contemporary Aboriginal art." She sees every picture in her mind's eye before she executes it, she said. "God puts that there for a reason; it needs to go to somebody. It's a record of the prayer which is in the painting."

Her paintings always go with a story, and every one of her works includes a small gold cross, she said. "People can find the cross if they follow the story."

Is there any difficulty walking between Christianity and her aboriginal heritage?

"It's easy," she said, after laughing. "Before the white men came, we had the Great Creator Spirit. It was the same God, just a different name. God is the white fellas' name, but we knew already." ■

Robyn Douglass is a journalist based in Adelaide, South Australia, who studied art history at the University of Melbourne. This story originally was published in The Living Church.

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FEATURE

'Summer in the City' offers refugee youth a domestic mission field

By Lynette Wilson
Episcopal News Service

On a hot, humid evening in late June, a group of 18 young people set out from St. Matthew's Cathedral in central Dallas to nearby Garrett Park, a popular spot for homeless people. They carried a cooler of Gatorade and trays of sliced watermelon.

Offering a cold drink and watermelon to the homeless men and women seeking shade and to the children playing in the park was the last task on the day's packed agenda. The group already had visited residents of a nursing home; practiced a skit based on the story of Jesus' healing of a paralyzed man; and eaten lunch with neighborhood low-income children enrolled in Bishop's Camp, an annual diocesan summer camp.

It was all part of "Summer in the City," a weeklong, domestic mission trip where youth in the Diocese of Dallas camp out at the cathedral and spend their days engaged in mission, including encounters with people living on the margins.

"[Part of it] is focused on serving homeless people, impoverished people in the Dallas area," said Amanda Payne, youth minister at St. James Episcopal Church in Lake Highlands, a neighborhood in northeast Dallas. "We're about 15 minutes away from our church, so it's not far, but it's removing the kids from their everyday environment and letting them see that there is poverty and need so close to home."

It was the second year that Payne's group — the majority of them Burmese refugees, mostly of the Karen ethnic minority — participated in Summer in the City. As in the previous year, some of the most intense interactions happened between the youth and homeless people in Garrett Park.

"How many times do you get a chance to stop in a safe situation, especially as a teenager, to interact with someone who's been on the street for 10 years?" asked Payne, adding that the gospel calls on Christians to reach out to the poor, not shy away from them. "People that are poor get life; and interacting with them helps us understand why Christ had such a heart for the poor."

Many of the Karen boys and girls were born in refugee camps in Thailand after their families fled violence in Myanmar, formerly Burma, the Southeast Asian site of a decades-long civil war. Some 100,000 Burmese refugees, many of them ethnic Karen, continue to live in refugee camps along the border in Thailand.

It is a place where people "are running for their lives," said Moo Eh Hser,

18, who spent the first half of her life living in and around the refugee camps in Thailand. Her parents, she said, fled Burma because the military was driving Karen out of their villages. "There was no freedom for them, no peace for them."

If the military came and a person

mission for these people who live on the street who is some ways have more resources than they do," said Payne, who often sees the youth reach into their wallets to give what little money they have to those on the street.

"Giving when it doesn't make sense

... for me it rages against what is fair. They are giving even though it doesn't make sense for them to give," she said. "But that's the kingdom of God."

St. James' youth group this year has grown from eight to 50, most of them Karen. They live in a cluster of apartments not far from

wasn't money left for clothing or other necessities.

"I thought that's where my life would start and that's where my life would end," he said. "My dad told me we moved here so that I could have a better life and not have to struggle like he did."

When the family first arrived in the United States they received little help from the resettlement agency assigned to their case, he said. Through Karen connections, they found St. James.

"That's when I started knowing a lot of people who love me and my family," he said, during an interview with ENS at Our Saviour Episcopal Church in Dallas, where the group spent the morning harvesting figs from trees and cherry tomatoes and squash from the garden, some of which was donated to a food pantry.

As one of the older members of the group, he is a role model. During lunchtime, while eating with the Bishop's Camp children, he held his table's attention and later led the youth group in the cleanup.

Moo Eh Hser joined St. James' group two years ago. Once, while serving meals at a homeless shelter, she decided to stand at the end of the serving line and hug people. She hugged 411 people that day.

She isn't afraid to serve others, in fact, she said. "It's also beautiful while you are doing it, God shows miracle and mystery ... everybody has a story."

This fall, she plans to study business and theology at Howard Payne University, a private, Baptist university in Brownwood, Texas. She attends both St. James and Dallas Karen Baptist Church, where services are in Karen. ■



Photos/Lynette Wilson/Episcopal News Service

Above, Moo Eh Hser carries a watermelon to be offered to homeless men in a Dallas park.

Right, youth from St. James Episcopal Church and Church of the Epiphany examine fruits and vegetables they harvested from a garden at Our Saviour Episcopal Church in Dallas.

Below, Summer campers share a fist bump during lunch in Dallas.



couldn't hide, they would kill them, she said. "It's still happening. There's still war going on. It's just that they have to run for their lives, people taking over their land. It's just hard for them."

Her family was lucky. Less than 1 percent of refugees worldwide ever are resettled. Many children are born and raised in refugee camps. Of the 22.5 million people with refugee status, more than half of them are younger than 18, according to the United Nations refugee agency.

In Dallas, the Karen youth come from working-poor families and often live in food-insecure households. Witnessing another side of poverty can lead to interesting questions and compassion, Payne said. They sometimes struggle to understand how someone who speaks English cannot find a job, she said. Many of their parents work long hours in meat-processing plants or other low-skilled jobs, their opportunities limited by their level of English proficiency.

"We're asking them to show compas-

Vickery Meadow, a neighborhood just west of Lake Highlands and home to a diverse population of immigrants and refugees. Young people from Church of the Epiphany in Richardson, a suburb to the north, also attended Summer in the City.

St. James began working with Karen refugees when Catholic Charities, a refugee-services provider, contacted the Rev. Cliff Gardner, the former rector, and asked him if he was interested in working with a group of Karen Anglicans in Vickery Meadow.

Gardner began offering Communion in an apartment complex. A year or so later, families began coming to the church. Karen children attended vacation Bible school. Parishioners, led by Ginny Keeling, stepped up to help the new members learn English, and relationships began to form.

"There's a really nice community of people out here," said 17-year-old Soe Win, who came to the United States when he was 9. "A lot of people support us, like St. James, the church community."

The teen spent his early years in a refugee camp. His parents had permission to work outside the camp, he said. They got picked up early in the morning and worked all day for the equivalent of \$2 or \$3. That covered food, but there

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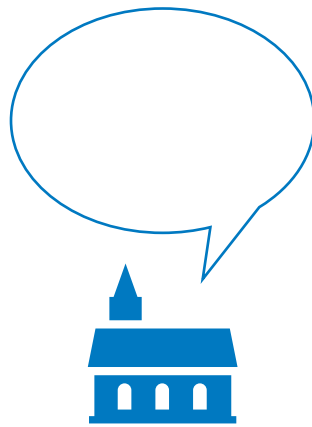
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