

# J *Episcopal* JOURNAL

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**NEWS** Pentecost marks acceptance of Holy Spirit's gifts



**FEATURE** Former officer turns to prison ministry



**ARTS** Designers interpret vestments and accessories

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## Executive Council wraps up its triennial work, looks to General Convention

By Mary Frances Schjonberg  
*Episcopal News Service*

**T**ying up loose ends, moving the mission and ministry of the church forward and saying good-bye to half of its members, Executive Council on April 23 wrapped up its triennial work.

In its last official act of the 2016-2018 triennium, the council spent 45 minutes in executive session at its meeting in Austin, Texas, reviewing its work during the last three years.

At a news conference after the council adjourned, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said it had concluded its work “with laughter, a sense of joy and a sense of accomplishment.”

House of Deputies President the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings said that the council and the church’s executive leadership team had clarified their roles and responsibilities, as well as their obligations to each other and the wider church.

“I think we’ve grown immensely in our respect for one another,” she said. “We trust one another. We don’t always agree with each other, but we seem to be able to just keep at it. When we don’t agree or when we have an issue, my experience has been that we speak the truth in love.”

The Episcopal Church has a tradition of calling leaders who bring wisdom, spiritual centeredness and deep experience, said the Rev. Michael Barlowe, executive officer of General Convention and secretary of the council. Curry and Jennings, he said, embody that tradition.

Both Jennings and Curry said they were looking forward to returning to Austin for the 79th meeting of General Convention in July. “The ‘Jesus Movement’ is beginning to grow roots,” Jennings said, adding that she was excited to discover what new ideas would bubble up at convention. Curry agreed, saying he anticipated that this meeting of convention would “be going deeper.”

On April 23, the outgoing chairs of the council’s five committees gave their final reports. Some included exhortations about the future work of the council as leaders in the Episcopal Church. Anita George, chair of the council’s Joint Standing Committee on Advocacy and Networking, said that her committee was charged with “giving voice and connecting Episcopalians for the purpose of advancing the work of joining in God’s mission of justice, peace, reconciliation and transformation.”

Achieving that goal begins with each Episcopalian, including the church’s leaders, George said. During this meeting, Advocacy and Networking members “engaged in lengthy deliberations regarding the ongoing and critical need for Executive Council and the Episcopal Church to engage in deep training and discussions around racism and racial reconciliation,” she said.

Committee members discussed the fact that “many examples of incidents within and without the church remind us that the work is far from over,” George said.

The committee “urges the church to require all leaders of the Episcopal Church, including



Photo/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS  
*The Rev. Jabriel Ballentine, right, who is a continuing Executive Council member, pays tribute to member Anita George during the council’s celebratory dinner.*

Executive Council, to engage in antiracism training and deep conversations around race,” George said. “It further encourages the church to engage in discussion to explore the use and power of potentially harmful language when interacting with the wide and diverse groups that comprise our beloved church.”

The committee said church leaders must recognize that “even with the best intentions we may insult or harm others without sensitivity to inappropriate language when we are engaged with good works,” George said.

As she departs the council, George said, she

*continued on page 8*

## Presiding bishop cites ‘the power of love’ in royal wedding sermon

By Matthew Davies and Lynette Wilson  
*Episcopal News Service*

**W**hen millions of people around the world tuned in on May 19 to witness and celebrate the royal wedding of Great Britain’s Prince Harry and American Meghan Markle, they also heard the dynamic preaching of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

Curry, the first African-American presiding bishop of the U.S.-based Episcopal Church, spoke passionately for about 13 minutes about the power of love.

“The late Dr. Martin Luther King once said, and I quote, ‘We must discover the power of love, the redemptive power of love, and when we do that we will make of this old world a new world. For love is the only way.’

“Anyone who has ever fallen in love knows



Photo/video screen shot

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

you don’t believe me, think about a time when you first fell in love. The whole world seemed to center around you and your beloved.

“There’s power in love, not in just its romantic form, but any form, in any shape of love. There’s a certain sense that when you are in love and you know it, when someone cares for you and you know

what I mean. But think about love in any form or experience of it. It actually feels good to be loved and to express love,” Curry said.

“Love, love is the only way. There’s power in love. Don’t underestimate it. Don’t even over-sentimentalize it. There’s power in love. If

it, when you love and you show it, it actually feels right, there’s something right about it. And there’s a reason for it. The reason has to do with the source. We were made by a power of love, and our lives ... are meant to be

*continued on page 3*



## ANGLICAN DIGEST

Anglican Digest is a column of news and features from churches in the Anglican Communion. The following were reported by Anglican Communion News Service.

### Church of Canada elects first female archbishop

Bishop of New Westminster Melissa Skelton was elected archbishop and metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon, one of four provinces in the Anglican Church of Canada. She will continue in her role as bishop of New Westminster while taking on responsibility for the internal province. She is the first woman to be elected an archbishop in Canada.



Skelton

Earlier this year, Bishop Kay Goldsworthy was elected archbishop of Perth in the Anglican Church of Australia. They are not primates, but are archbishops responsible for internal provinces, and are the first two women elected to this office in the Anglican Communion. Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori became the first — and so far only — female primate when she was elected in 2006, a role she held until her term expired in 2015.

Skelton was installed as diocesan bishop in March 2014. In her new role, she will have responsibility for six dioceses. She was elected in the first ballot when 21 of the 24-member Provincial Electoral College gathered for a telephone conference and electronic vote. “This vote was historic not only because the first woman was elected Archbishop it was also the first election held entirely by electronic

means,” a diocesan spokesman said.

She will succeed Archbishop John Privett, who stood down as Metropolitan at the end of April and who was scheduled to complete his ministry as bishop of Kootenay at the end of May.

### Mexico honors advocate

The Mexican government honored the Rev. María Elena Daniel Cristerna with the Ohtli Award at the Mexican Consulate at Eagle Pass, Texas, in May in recognition of her work helping female victims of violence in the United States.



Cristerna

Mexico’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs told ACNS that Cristerna received one of 10 Ohtli Awards given as part of the 156th anniversary of the Battle of Puebla and Cinco de Mayo to “Mexicans and friends of Mexico who have dedicated their lives and professional activities to forging a path for the Mexican community abroad.”

The awards recognize Mexican, Mexican-American or Latino leaders who have dedicated their lives and careers to “blazing a trail” abroad for younger generations of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans as they strive to achieve their dreams. It is one of the highest distinctions given by the Government of Mexico.

A teacher before her ordination, Cristerna was born in Nueva Rosita in the northern Mexico state of Coahuila. She emigrated to the United States in 1970, becoming a U.S. citizen in 1984. She has worked on farms, at making jeans, at selling in stores, and as an administrative assistant, teacher, TV anchor and radio host.

She studied at Sul Ross University in Alpine, Texas, and encouraged people to study, even if they were not young. In 2006, she was elected counselor of the Instituto of the Mexicans Abroad, where she represented the Mexican community in Eagle Pass.

### Prominent South African anti-apartheid bishop dies

The funeral of the former suffragan bishop of Johannesburg, Mfaniseni Sigisbert Ndwandwe, was held May 11 at the diocesan center in Matlosane, South Africa. Sigisbert endured severe oppression from the South African

## Indonesian churches bombed

Funerals have been held for some of the victims of those killed in May 13 suicide bomb attacks on three Christian churches in Surabaya. In one, 12-year-old Vincentius Evan, who was killed instantly when a bomb detonated at the Roman Catholic Church of Immaculate Santa Maria, and his 8-year-old brother Nathanael, who died a short time later in hospital, were laid to rest. Their mother, Wenny Angelina, attended the service on a stretcher, connected to drips and attended to by medical staff. She was seriously injured in the attack and allowed to leave the hospital for the service before returning. The family had just arrived at the church and were getting out of their car when the bomb went off.

One victim has yet to be formally identified but is believed to be 38-year-old Aloysius Bayu Rendra Wardhana. The church youth worker, and father of a 3-month-old child,

tried to prevent the suicide bombers reaching St. Mary’s Church.

A teenager who had been helping his father coordinate car parking near the Pentecostal Church was amongst those killed in the attack there. In to-



Photo/GAI

Floral tributes such as this one at the Roman Catholic Church of Immaculate Santa Maria in Surabaya, sent “with love and prayer from the family of worldwide Anglican Churches and the Anglican Church of Indonesia,” mark the sites of recent church bombings in Indonesia.

tal, 25 people were killed as a result of five separate bombs in Surabaya. That figure includes 13 people who were suicide bombers and their children. ■

authorities because of his participation in the campaign against apartheid. He had been arrested and detained without trial, and his house was firebombed.

Sigisbert originally was ordained in the Roman Catholic Church, and earned a doctorate in canon law before becoming an Anglican. In 1978, he was elected suffragan bishop of Johannesburg. Later, alongside another suffragan bishop in the diocese, Simeon Nkoane, he worked with young anti-apartheid activists in their communities and was subjected to attacks by apartheid forces.

In 1985, they joined the Rt. Rev. Desmond Tutu, recently enthroned as bishop of Johannesburg, and two dozen other priests in an illegal march to John Vorster Square, a police station and detention center in Johannesburg, to protest against the detention of the Rev. Geoff Moselane of Sharpeville.

Father Moselane was later charged alongside 21 other anti-apartheid activists in what became known as the Delmas treason trial. Designed to suppress the United Democratic Front, the trial

was the longest in South African history at the time. Just before the jury delivered its guilty verdicts, seven black people were killed and 15 injured when a white supremacist opened fire on people outside the court. The convictions were later overturned by the Supreme Court.

In April 1986, Sigisbert’s house in Jouberton was fire-bombed. In response, police arrested him on charges of public violence. They released him, only to re-arrest him under the Internal Security Act. He was strip-searched in public and detained without trial for 99 days on a claim that he had conspired to murder policemen.

On the day he was released from prison, he went to St. Peter’s Church in Klerksdorp to preside at a Confirmation service. “We thought it won’t take place,” the parish’s Marie Van Wyk said, “but [the] bishop said ‘the work of the Lord must go on,’ and it did.”

He was later named by the then Archbishop Tutu to a panel of four bishops to promote peace during the conflict of the late 1980s and early 1990s in KwaZulu-Natal. ■

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

For all its glamor, Britain’s latest royal wedding had family touches to which all could relate: the young couple, Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, looking nervous but happy; the great-grandparents, in their 90s, game but getting frail; complex family circumstances necessitating some improvising, as the bride’s father stayed home due to poor health and her father-in-law walked her down the aisle.

On another level, however, this wedding exploded convention and, in doing so, may just have ensured the survival of the British monarchy.

For Episcopalians watching in the

United States and abroad, the glories of Anglican worship were on magnificent display at St. George’s Chapel in Windsor Castle, from the cadences of the Book of Common Prayer to such classic hymns as “Lord of All Hopefulness” and “Guide Me, Oh Thou Great Redeemer.”

According to custom, a senior Church of England cleric delivers the sermon on such occasions. Yet the couple invited Episcopal Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. In his usual passionate, colloquial style, he spoke about love and fire, love of God and Jesus, love between two people.

He cited the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and talked of how black slaves in

America held to the love of Jesus. The Episcopal Church’s first black presiding bishop mentioned slavery with the British monarchy arrayed before him.

He laid out a vision of a better world, changed by the power of love. “When love is the way, we know that God is the source of us all, and we are brothers and sisters.”

The bride’s biracial heritage led to a remarkable black presence at the wedding — a gospel choir, a young prize-winning cellist, even the queen’s chaplain.

To non-white Britons, it was a clear message that the monarchy is there for them, also, and will be relevant in a new age. It was a message of love. ■



## NEWS

WEDDING continued from page 1

lived in that love. That's why we are here.

"Ultimately, the source of love is God himself. Where true love is found, God himself is there. ... There's power in love to help and heal when nothing else can. There's power in love to lift up and liberate when nothing else will, there's power in love to show us the way to live.

"But love is not only about a young couple ... it's not just about a young couple we celebrate and rejoice with."

From there, the presiding bishop referenced what he calls the "Jesus Movement."

"Jesus began the most revolutionary movement in all of human history; a movement grounded in the unconditional love of God and for the world and a movement mandating people to live and love, and, in so doing, to change not only their lives, but the very life of the world itself. I'm talking about power, real power to change the world."

He went on to talk about redemption and unselfish, sacrificial love.

"Jesus sacrificed his life for the good of the other, for the well-being of the world. For us. That's what love is. Love is not selfish or self-centered, love can be sacrificial – and in so doing becomes redemptive. That way of unselfish, sacrificial redemptive love changes lives. And it can change this world. ... Think and imagine a world where love is the way. Imagine our homes and families, where love is the way. Imagine neighborhoods and communities where love is the way. Imagine governments and nations where

love is the way. Imagine business and commerce when love is the way. Imagine this tired old world when love is the way ... unselfish, sacrificial, redemptive.

"Then no child would go to bed hungry in this world ever again. When love is the way we will let justice roll down like a mighty stream and righteousness like an ever-flowing brook."

Meanwhile, an estimated 150,000 well-wishers thronged the streets of Windsor, watching the ceremony broadcast live on their phones and on large screens stationed along the whole procession route. They appeared captivated by Curry's message about Jesus' love for the world and his words of encouragement for the newly married couple, named just before the wedding as the duke and duchess of Sussex.

The service began at noon local time at St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, 21 miles west of London. In many ways, the day's celebrations were a typical royal display of British pageantry, but some elements, including Curry's pivotal role and the choice of wedding cake, departed from tradition.

Preachers at royal weddings usually are senior clergy in the Church of England.

The bride processed to "Eternal Source of Light Divine" by Handel, sung by Welsh soprano Elin Manahan Thomas, and was escorted down the aisle by Prince Harry's father, Prince Charles. The bride's mother Doria Ragland looked on in tears.



Photo/Reuters/Jonathan Brady

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle in St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle during their wedding.

Celebrity guests included Elton John, David and Victoria Beckham, George and Amal Clooney, Serena Williams and Alexis Ohanian, and Carey Mulligan and Marcus Mumford. The bride wore a dress designed by Clare Waight Keller for Givenchy. Instead of the traditional fruitcake expected at a royal wedding, the couple selected American pastry chef Claire Ptak to create a lemon elderflower cake, covered with buttercream and decorated with fresh flowers.

Following the service, Curry and his wife, Sharon, joined the couple and 600 other guests at St. George's Hall in Windsor Castle for a reception hosted by Queen Elizabeth II.

St. George's Chapel has hosted royal weddings for centuries. The chapel is known as a "royal peculiar," a place of worship that falls directly under the jurisdiction of the British monarch, rather than a bishop.

Bishop David Conner, chapel dean, conducted the service according to a 1966 version of the liturgy of matrimony from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, while Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, as head of the Church of

England, presided over the royal wedding and solemnized the marriage.

Markle was baptized by Welby and then confirmed in a private ceremony in March.

The queen is the supreme governor of the Church of England, which is part of the Anglican Communion, and members of the royal family are expected to be active members in the church.

Choral music at the service was performed by the choir of St. George's Chapel, under the direction of James Vivian, the organist and master of the choristers.

Other musicians included 19-year-old cellist Sheku Kanneh-

Mason and the Kingdom Choir, a Christian gospel group conducted by Karen Gibson. Christopher Warren-Green conducted the orchestra, which included musicians from the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the English Chamber Orchestra and the Philharmonia Orchestra.

Soprano Elin Manahan Thomas, trumpeter David Blackadder and organist Luke Bond joined the orchestra. State trumpeters drawn from all ranks of the Band of the Household Cavalry provided ceremonial support.

Voices and trumpets ushered in the bride to C. Hubert Parry's anthem, "I Was Glad," composed for the coronation of Edward VII, Prince Harry's great-great-great-grandfather. Hymns sung during the service included "Lord of All Hopefulness" and "Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer."

Following the ceremony, the couple left Windsor Castle in an Ascot Landau carriage for a procession through the streets of Windsor.

As the streets came alive with celebrations, the royal wedding festivities stretched far beyond Windsor Castle and its surrounding areas. ■

## Episcopalians rise early to see Curry preach at royal wedding

### Episcopal News Service

Congregations across the United States planned viewing parties to see Presiding Bishop Michael Curry preach at the wedding of Britain's Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

It's hard to deny "this huge opportunity for evangelism that just landed in all our laps," said Katie Sherrod, Diocese of Fort Worth communications director, speaking before the wedding.

"It is a wedding, so we know he's going to be talking about love," Sherrod said. "I just can't imagine him not going to. 'We are all beloved children of God,' a message that the world is desperate to hear."

She worked with congregations to ensure their websites were updated and informative for people who might be interested in learning more about the Episcopal Church after hearing Curry speak.

"This is an opportunity to reach people who are hungry for the message Michael Curry is bound to deliver to them," she said.

The doors of the Episcopal Church of the Advocate in Chapel Hill, N.C., opened at 6:30 a.m. Eastern time, a half-hour before the noon wedding began in

England. As soon as the news of Curry's address went public, the church's senior warden said, "We have to have a party," said the Rev. Lisa G. Fischbeck, vicar.

"There's this really funny blend of dread at getting up that early on a Saturday and excitement," she said. Women were invited to wear hats and men ascots, and tea and coffee and scones and strawberries were to be served.

Grace Cathedral in San Francisco hosted a short carillon concert at noon local time (after the wedding) to celebrate the couple. This was no ordinary wedding, especially for members of her congregation, said the Rev. Ellen Clark-King.

"I would say the interest has definitely gone up since we knew about Bishop Michael's involvement in the proceedings," said Clark-King, the cathedral's executive pastor and canon for social justice. "A lot of people who would not be particularly interested in a royal wedding want to know what he has to say."

St. Bart's Episcopal Church in New York held a "Royal Wedding Brunch" for those who didn't want to wake up early to watch Curry's sermon live. A recording of the wedding was shown at 1 p.m. accompanied by sandwiches, cookies and tea.

"Hats welcome!" the invitation said. ■

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## AROUND THE CHURCH

### Three dioceses elect bishops

#### Western Kansas

The Diocese of Western Kansas elected **the Rev. Mark Cowell** on May 5 to be its sixth bishop.

Cowell, a lawyer who once prosecuted gang members in Dodge City, Kansas, is the vicar of St. Mary and St. Martha of Bethany in Larned and Holy Nativity, Kinsley. He still works part time as Dodge City's municipal prosecutor and recently was elected to his second term as the Hodgeman County attorney.

Cowell's wife, Julie, is a district magistrate judge, and they are parents to three children. The Cowell family moved to Larned in 1996 after gang members shot out his car windows in Dodge City.

Cowell was trained locally for ordination and became a priest in June 2004.

While helping oversee the process that resulted in the election of current Bishop Michael P. Milliken, Cowell met with then-President Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori to discuss the idea of a dual-role episcopacy in which a person serves as both bishop and a congregational priest. Milliken lived that model, the first in the Episcopal Church in the past 150 years, until the end of 2014 when he resigned as rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Hutchinson to served full time as bishop, according to the diocese.

Cowell has said he would continue serving both parishes if elected bishop.

Upon receiving the required consents, Cowell will be ordained bishop Dec. 1.



Cowell



Hunn

#### Rio Grande

**The Rev. Michael Buerkel Hunn**, canon to Presiding Bishop Michael Curry for ministry within the Episcopal Church, was elected May 5 to become the next bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

After receiving the required consents, he will be ordained bishop Nov. 3.

Hunn grew up in New Mexico and Texas and has served as a parish priest, school chaplain, college chaplain and canon to Curry when the latter was bishop of the Diocese North Carolina. Currently, he supports Curry's ministry, serves as director of communications and oversees other key departments. He led the transition team as Curry became presiding bishop and led a staff-wide restructure and culture-transformation process, according to his biography on the Rio Grande website.

While canon to the ordinary in North Carolina, he designed and led diocesan systems in the areas of congregational support and development, youth ministry, pastoral response, transition ministry, clergy discipline, misconduct prevention training, priestly ordination process and conflict transformation.

Hunn is also a lecturer, keynote speaker and preacher on subjects such as public speaking, nonviolent communication, canon law, stewardship and nonviolent approaches to conversations about race.

Ordained in 1996, Hunn first served The Kent School in Connecticut as chaplain, head baseball coach and chair of the theology department. He later

served as senior associate rector of the Church of the Holy Comforter in Kenilworth, Ill., and as Episcopal chaplain to Davidson College and associate rector of St. Alban's, Davidson, N.C. He and his wife, the Rev. Meg Buerkel Hunn, assistant rector at Christ Church in Raleigh, N.C., have three children.

The Diocese of the Rio Grande encompasses 154,000 square miles, including the state of New Mexico and far West Texas from the Pecos River to the border with Mexico along the Rio Grande River.

— Episcopal News Service

#### Newark

**The Rev. Carlye J. Hughes** was elected 11<sup>th</sup> bishop of the Diocese of Newark on the first ballot from among three nominees during a special convention on May 19.

The first woman and first African American to be elected bishop in the diocese, Hughes, 59, is rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Fort Worth, Texas. She was ordained a priest in 2005 after graduating from Virginia Theological Seminary, and she has served as rector of Trinity in the continuing Diocese of Fort Worth since 2012. No stranger to the northeast, her first call was to St. James' Church on Manhattan's Upper East Side in New York. Before ordination, she worked as a corporate trainer. She is married to David Smedley.

Pending required consents, Hughes will be ordained and consecrated Sept. 22 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will preside.

— Diocese of Newark



Hughes

### Missouri bishop to retire



Smith

Diocese of Missouri Bishop Wayne Smith has announced he plans to retire in 2020. The diocese's 11<sup>th</sup> bishop will be elected at the November 2019 diocesan convention and ordained in the spring of 2020, Smith wrote to the diocese.

"I am young and healthy, and I am not at all certain that my active ministry will come to an end with my retirement," he said. "It is clear to me, nonetheless, that it is time for a transition in episcopal ministry in this venue. ... I write this letter with some sadness and some relief — but most of all with deep gratitude for the privilege of serving as your bishop these past 16 years — with a couple more yet to come."

— Diocese of Missouri

### Kansas cathedral installs dean



Hodges

The Very Rev. David Hodges was installed as the 18th dean of Christ Cathedral in Salina, Kansas, on April 26. Before his Jan. 1 appointment to dean, he served for 10 months as provost of Christ Cathedral.

Hodges is also president of The Saint Francis Foundation and chief development officer for Saint Francis Community Services. The foundation supports the mission of Saint Francis Community Services, which works to provide healing and hope to children and families.

— The Saint Francis Foundation

## OBITUARIES

### Loren Mead

Loren Benjamin Mead died at his home in Falls Church, Va., on May 5.

Mead was born in Florence, S.C., in 1930. An Episcopal priest, Mead was an educator, consultant and author who worked to strengthen religious institutions, especially local congregations. A pioneer in congregational studies, Mead brought together the methods of organization-development consultation and applied research for working with congregations.

Mead published four best-selling books on the church's future: "The Once and Future Church," "Transforming Congregations for the Future," "Five Challenges for the Once and Future Church" and "Financial Meltdown in the Mainline?"

Mead developed a number of resources still widely used: The role and work of the interim pastor, the use of conflict management, work on clergy stress and burnout, concepts of change and development in congregations and their judicatory systems, and training methods for executives and bishops. He was concerned about the personal,

professional and spiritual development of lay and clergy leaders, and especially the creative possibilities for churches and leaders at moments of transition in role. Mead worked with local, regional and national groups, seminaries, and church agencies in several dozen denominations in the United States, Canada, England, Scotland, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Namibia and South Africa.

Mead served as rector of churches in North and South Carolina as well as visiting rector of Esher in the United Kingdom. In 1974, he founded the Alban Institute, developing its national, multid denominational network of research, publishing, education and consulting. He stepped down from its presidency in 1994.

Born and raised in the segregated South, Mead worked for racial justice and reconciliation throughout his career. Besides marching with a white pastors in support of Martin Luther King after the death of Medgar Evers, he played a leading role in the desegregation of Chapel Hill. At the end of his life, he was working on the manuscript of a book about an ex-Confederate Civil War chaplain who left the Episcopal Church to minister to African-American congregations in post-Reconstruction South Carolina.

— Episcopal News Service



Mead

### Ann Fontaine

The Rev. Ann Kristin Haldors Fontaine, 76, died in her home in Oregon on April 18.

Born in Portland, she moved to Lander, Wyo., in 1972 and became an active lay leader in the Episcopal Church.

"She fought tirelessly for the equality of women, LGBTQ people and people of color within and outside the church, working to ensure that all could live without fear and serve where they were called," said her obituary at **County10com**. "Ann was instrumental in growing and developing the Education for Ministry (EfM) program ... She trained hundreds of EfM trainers around the world and, always a digital innovator, brought EfM to the world of e-learning."

Later, Fontaine used her digital skills to become one of the first regular contributors to Episcopal Café.

Fontaine was ordained in 1996 and served as interim priest at churches in Wyoming and Oregon. She retired in 2006 and moved to Cannon Beach, Ore., in 2012, returning to interim work at churches in Astoria and Nehalem. "She remained an active member of the global online community and continued to advocate for social justice and equality until the end of her life," County10 said.



Fontaine

### Mitties McDonald DeChamplain

The Rev. Dr. Mitties McDonald DeChamplain, who for many years was professor of homiletics at General Theological Seminary (GTS) in New York, died May 8.

Born in 1948 in Pasadena, Calif., she was ordained a priest in 1996 and taught homiletics at Fuller Theological Seminary, an evangelical seminary in Pasadena. She then taught at GTS from 1998 through commencement in 2016. Throughout her academic career there, she also served congregations in New York.

"She is perhaps best known for her ministry at St. Clement's in the Theater District of Manhattan, a Spirit-led setting for her since she was an avid enthusiast of Broadway musicals," Diocese of New York Bishop Andrew Dietsche wrote to the diocese. "Nevertheless, other congregations knew her well and cherished her ministry, including most recently the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, also in the Theater District, and Trinity Church in the Morrisania neighborhood of the Bronx, where Mitties had been a regular supply priest."

— Diocese of New York



DeChamplain



## AROUND THE CHURCH

## Celebrating 'gifts' of Pentecost and Shavuot

By Kimberly Winston  
Religion News Service

The May 19-20 weekend marked the observance of Pentecost and Shavuot, holy days to Christians and Jews respectively. And both involve certain "gifts" that don't come with wrapping and bows.

#### What is Pentecost?

Pentecost Sunday (May 20 this year) marks the day most Christians believe the Holy Spirit descended on the followers of Jesus after his death, resurrection and ascension. The story comes from the Book of Acts: "Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." Jesus' followers were amazed — they could speak languages they never knew before. The Apostle Peter stood up and preached his first sermon — so many Christians think of this holiday as the "birthday" of the church.

#### What does that have to do with Shavuot?

A lot! Shavuot is called the "Festival of Weeks" because it is held seven weeks

(and one day) after the second night of Passover. Originally tied to an ancient grain festival, it eventually became the holiday that marks God's giving of the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai.

The link between the two holidays lies in their names. "Pentecost" comes from the Greek word "pentekostos," which means 50. Pentecost comes 50 days after Easter, when Christians believe Jesus rose from the dead. And 50 days also represents the gap between Passover's second day and Shavuot. Some scholars believe Pentecost owes its name to Jesus' Jewish followers, who were gathered together to observe the festival of Shavuot.

#### What do these two holidays mean to contemporary Christians and Jews?

This is where the idea of "gifts" comes in. On Shavuot, which started this year on the evening of May 19, Jews mark not just the giving of the Torah by God but also their acceptance of the Torah. Some Jewish writers have compared the exchange to a marriage or other sacred covenant. One way the holiday is observed is through the reading of the



A depiction of Pentecost in the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Jerusalem.

Book of Ruth, the story of a woman who converts to Judaism and accepts the Torah.

The gifts of the first Pentecost have different meanings to different Christians. Some interpret them as the spiritual benefits of accepting Jesus that bring a more meaningful earthly life. Others — especially those Christians known as Pentecostals — believe the first Pentecost gave all followers of Jesus "the gifts of the Spirit" — speaking in and interpreting tongues, the ability to prophesy, the power to heal by touch, the ability

to discern spirits. Pentecostals believe those things are available to all Christians and that only those who accept them are able to fulfill the work and destiny that God has laid out for them.

#### I like gifts. What did you get me for Pentecost and Shavuot?

Sorry, neither Christians nor Jews exchange presents on Pentecost or Shavuot. Nor do they eat cake. Some Jews mark Shavuot by decorating their homes with spring flowers; others stay up during the first night of the festival — this year from sundown on Saturday to sundown on Monday — to read the Torah. They go to synagogue, where the Ten Commandments — the foundational laws they believe were given to Moses on Sinai — are read aloud. Christians generally mark Pentecost by a reading from Acts, often in multiple languages. Some wear all white or all red. In medieval Britain, Pentecost was sometimes called "White Sunday" — or Whitsunday — for the custom of wearing white. ■

## Roanridge Trust Award Grants announced

Twelve projects in 10 dioceses and two provinces, totaling \$211,210, have received Roanridge Trust Award Grants for 2018.

The grants are provided annually for creative models of leadership development, training and ministries in small towns and rural communities across the Episcopal Church.

The recipients are:

Diocese of Oklahoma, ELCA Joint Oklahoma Small Church Leadership Summit: \$5,000

Diocese of Long Island, Rural & Migrant Ministry's CASA: \$20,000

Diocese of North Carolina, Lee County Literacy Council/Augustine Literacy Project: \$10,000

Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, Dismantling Racism in Southwestern Virginia: \$9,210

Diocese of Virginia, Lay Pastoral Leader Training Program: \$8,000

Province IX, The Episcopal Asset Map for Spanish-Speaking, Non-U.S. Dioceses: \$12,400

Diocese of Western North Carolina: Stewardship of the Entirety of Our Lives in a Rural Setting: \$10,000

Province 1 (Dioceses of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire,

Rhode Island, Vermont and Western Massachusetts), Models of Ministry in Small Vital Congregations: \$7,000

Diocese of Northern Indiana, Becoming Beloved Community: \$74,600

Diocese of Western Michigan, Center for Christian Spirituality: \$15,000

Episcopal Church in South Carolina, SmashGlass: \$15,000

Navajoland, Online Gratitude Formation Program — UTO University: \$25,000

Dioceses, congregations and Episcopal-related organizations and institutions were invited to apply for the grants. Although previous recipients were eligible to apply, priority was given to new applications.

The Roanridge Trust was established by the Cochel family, who originally gave a working farm in Missouri called Roanridge to the Episcopal Church. Income from the trust generates the grant funds. The trust's purpose is to train town and country clergy and rural Christian workers of the nine provinces of the Episcopal Church.

Questions about the Roanridge Trust can be addressed to Ann Hercules, associate for ministry beyond the Episcopal Church and grants, at [ahercules@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:ahercules@episcopalchurch.org).

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## FEATURE

# King's 'Poor People's Campaign' lives again in 40 days of activism

By Yonat Shimron  
Religion News Service

Under sweltering 94-degree heat in Raleigh, N.C., before the General Assembly (state legislature) building, a hardy group of progressive activists gathered to revive the 40-day Poor People's Campaign, the civil-disobedience movement founded 50 years ago by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The original campaign foundered after King's assassination in 1968. The relaunch on May 14 outside some 35 statehouses across the nation aimed to draw attention to the ways organizers say that government bodies have neglected their moral obligation to the country's poor.

In Raleigh, more than 200 activists led by the Rev. Nancy Petty of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, the city's pre-eminent social justice church, made a list of demands. They pushed for a repeal of the tax law passed last year that primarily benefits the wealthy, as well as issues including equal pay for women, paid maternity leave, an end to job discrimination against LGBTQ people and better access to quality education for poor children.

"Somebody is hurting our people, and it's gone on far too long," was the refrain shouted by a dozen speakers. Those speakers focused on four groups: women, children, LGBTQ people and disabled people.

"We want to build sufficient power to bend the moral arc of this nation out of this poverty rut into the land of plenty," said the Rev. Nelson Johnson of Greensboro. "We are the huddled masses, and

we are still yearning to be free."

At the conclusion of the hour-long protest, some 50 people linked hands in the middle of Jones Street singing "We shall not be moved." Most were cited by police for impeding traffic by standing in the street.

In North Carolina, this is a familiar rite.

Beginning in 2013, the Moral Monday movement, led by the Rev. William J. Barber II, forged the blueprint for weekly demon-

**“We are the huddled masses, and we are still yearning to be free.”**

— The Rev. Nelson Johnson

strations followed by civil disobedience. Those protests opposed the Republican-dominated legislature's agenda, its cuts in unemployment benefits, its opposition to expanding Medicaid and its restrictive voting-rights laws. The Moral Monday movement is credited, in part,



Photo/RNS/Yonat Shimron

Derick Smith, a political education coordinator for the Poor People's Campaign, speaks to the crowd in Raleigh, N.C., in front of the state legislature building. Coordinated events occurred at many state capitols across the country.

with helping defeat Republican Gov. Pat McCrory, who was succeeded by Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper in the 2016 election.

This time, Barber has teamed up with the Rev. Liz Theoharis, a Presbyterian minister and co-director of the Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice at Union Theological Seminary in New York, to take the protests national.

On May 14, Barber, the former president of the state's NAACP chapter and the pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church in Goldsboro, was in Washington, D.C., leading a similar protest in front of Congress. Barber and Theoharis were taken into custody outside the U.S. Capitol.

The campaign intends to create a network of people and organizations willing to nonviolently confront government

and its policies regarding the poor. Over 40 days, in cities across the nation, protesters will conduct teach-ins, knock on tens of thousands of doors to mobilize voters, and lead various forms of civil disobedience.

At issue are several policies participants call heartless, if not cruel, to poor people. They want to see a massive overhaul of the nation's voting-rights laws, new programs to lift up Americans living in poverty, immediate attention to ecological devastation and

measures to curb militarism and what they call the war economy.

Barber and Theoharis take their inspiration from the biblical prophets who admonished leaders for policies that harmed the poor at the expense of the wealthy. The 40-day duration echoes a typical biblical period of preparation, such as Jesus' 40 days of fasting in the wilderness before his ministry began.

The alliance formed by Barber and Theoharis is made up of Christians, Jews, Muslims, nonbelievers and a broad cross section of African-Americans, Hispanics, LGBT people feminists, environmentalists and others.

At its heart, it is made up of clergy — mostly on the liberal left.

The 40-day campaign will end on June 23. ■

## Episcopalian, Muslims join to break Ramadan fasts at iftar dinners

By David Paulsen  
Episcopal News Service

The Muslim holy month of Ramadan started the third week of May, and Episcopal congregations across the country were encouraged to participate in an interfaith outpouring of support, including by hosting or joining the dinners at which Muslims break their daily fast.

The meals, called iftars, are served every evening after sundown during Ramadan, which started this year on May 16. Iftars often are festive community gatherings, sometimes held in homes, sometimes in mosques — and sometimes in Christian churches, in an

effort to bridge divides across faith traditions.

Ramadan is considered the holiest month of the year for Muslims, who abstain from food and drink during daytime hours as they heighten their fo-



Photo/St. James, via Facebook

Muslims join Episcopalians in June 2017 for an iftar meal hosted by St. James Episcopal Church in Columbus, Ohio. The church's 15th annual iftar was scheduled for May 31.

cus on spiritual rejuvenation. The iftar, which means "breaking the fast," commences at sunset.

"Inviting guests to break the fast or going to someone's house for iftar is very common in Ramadan," the Islamic Networks Group, or ING, says on its website. "Many mosques also host open houses for their friends and neighbors of other faiths to join them for their fast-breaking dinner or iftar at the end of the fasting day."

ING, an organization whose mission is to build interfaith alliances and dispel stereotypes about Muslims, is one of the supporting partners, along with the Episcopal Church, behind a campaign during Ramadan to connect people of different faiths around the iftar.

The campaign, The United States of Love Over Hate, is led by the ecumenical organization Shoulder to Shoulder, of which the Episcopal Church is a member.

"The primary goal of this effort is to identify, support and connect people to iftars open to interfaith guests across the United States, in order to help facilitate local relationship building among Muslim and non-Muslim communities," Shoulder to Shoulder says on its website. "Additionally, houses of worship are invited to display 'Love — Your Neighbors' signs outside their buildings during the month of Ramadan to show their commitment to standing with and getting to know their neighbors."

That mission was taken up by the Episcopal Church's Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations and is being carried out by congregations like St. James Episcopal Church in Colum-

continued on page 16



## GENERAL CONVENTION

# Interactive website aims to help navigate clergy discipline procedures



By Mary Frances Schjonberg  
Episcopal News Service

The Episcopal Church's decades-long process of refining its clergy discipline process will take a big logistical step forward this summer when an interactive website debuts. The site was developed with the hope of bringing a common understanding of the rules and helping clergy avoid getting into trouble and injuring others in the first place.

The website is in the beta testing phase, and members of Executive Council have been invited to join that process. It is scheduled to debut during General Convention in July. The site is designed to help Episcopalians navigate the church's Title IV clergy disciplinary process.

The website is the result of nearly two years of work by a subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons, council member Polly Getz, who has long-time experience as a chancellor at various levels of the church, explained to her colleagues April 21.

The project drew praise from three of the church's leaders after it was presented to the council.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry noted during an April 23 news conference that the invitation to the council to give feedback on the website occurred during the same meeting in which he briefed the members on the report of the Commission on Impairment and Leadership.

Both the website and the report and its recommendations address what happens when "people are hurt or wounded," he said. Each represents "this church's commitment to be a place where every human child of God is safe, is respected as a child of God made in God's image, and where we can be as sure of that as we can. That's this church saying to #MeToo: We're taking that seriously. It is worth putting all this time and energy into this because we're serious about this."

House of Deputies President the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings said, "This has become a project of the heart, mind and soul" for Getz and Diocese of Utah Communications Director Craig Wirth, with whom Getz worked.

The website project will "deepen our ability to respond to unfortunate situations in ways that are constructive, positive and help all parties move ahead," Jennings said.

The Episcopal Church has been a leader in addressing and trying to prevent clergy misconduct, said the Rev. Michael Barlowe, executive officer of General Convention. The current effort is "a continu-

ing unfolding of the Episcopal Church's historic emphasis on making our church the safe church that we want to be."

Barlowe also pointed to the work of the General Convention Task Force to Update Sexual Misconduct Policies. The group recently released updated safe-church policies.

A model policy for the protection of children and youth is available, as well as one for the protection of vulnerable adults. A frequently asked questions document is available.

"This is yet another example of how the Episcopal Church is trying to walk its talk," Barlowe said.

Getz told Episcopal News Service after the council concluded its meeting that, despite the best efforts of those who have had a hand in rewriting the clergy discipline rules and trying to streamline them, those rules have gotten more complicated. "The more important reason for wanting to do the website is that we had folks across the church doing [Title

members in their life in Christ and seek to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected."

Getz said chancellors always discuss how Title IV is being used across the church. "The conclusion has been, for the last 15 years, that, no matter how much we study and talk about it, we still end up with folks interpreting it differently in one place versus another," she said. The project aims to rectify those situations and help the church develop a common understanding of the process and its goals.

The work that resulted in the website came in response to General Convention's call in 2015 for the development and implementation of Title IV training materials for the church.

The subcommittee joined with Wirth and Utah Diocesan Communications Assistant Halee Oliver to develop the website, which Getz said came in under budget.

One part of the new website, titled General Education and Best Practices, has about 250 videos on various topics involved in clergy discipline. Each video runs about 2:30 minutes and features Episcopalians who have had experience with implementing the Title IV canons.

"We wanted the broadest possible spectrum of leaders in the church to talk about their experiences, to talk about what they have found to be best practices, flowing from the nitty-gritty of the canons," Getz said.

The other part of the website is more technical, she explained. It outlines the roles of what she called various "stakeholders" in the disciplinary process. The section offers a method for each participant to understand his or her responsibilities and to see alternatives and possible outcomes at each step of the process, as well as to observe the big picture, according to the page's explanation.

While information in that section is "derived from the canons after considerable research and reflects each step as determined by a committee of

those who are recognized authorities of Title IV, it is not intended to be the sole source of canonical law for use in the Title IV proceedings," the explanation says.

The site also will offer a frequently asked questions page, a glossary and a library of templates for the many forms used in the Title IV process. The site is designed to be responsive on all devices, from desktop computers to mobile phones.

Episcopal Church canons have expressed concern about clergy behavior since General Convention in 1789 made it wrong for clergy — except "for their honest necessities" — to "resort to tav-



Photo/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS

**Executive Council member Polly Getz of San Diego briefs her colleagues on the construction of an interactive website to help Episcopalians learn about the church's clergy discipline rules, known as Title IV.**

erns, or other places most liable to be abused to licentiousness."

That original Canon 13 also warned that clergy who "[gave] themselves to base or servile labor, or to drinking or riot, or to spending their time idly" would face a range of disciplinary actions.

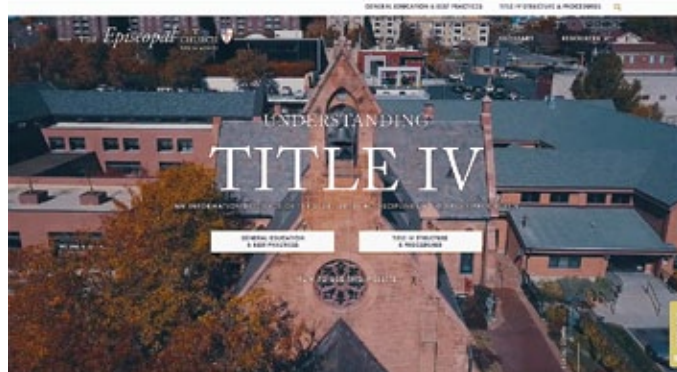
The church ever since has been refining its answer to the question of how best to discipline errant clergy. The tradition continued at the 77th meeting of General Convention in 2012 when bishops and deputies tweaked the then-current version of the Title IV disciplinary canons that had been in use for just more than a year.

In 2015, bishops and deputies approved several Title IV revisions, including adding sanctions for those who may attempt to delay or disrupt the disciplinary process, and allocating money for training materials to help streamline proceedings. As the subcommittee began to do its work, it realized that perhaps it needed to "break out of the mold of how the wider church gets its projects done," Getz said.

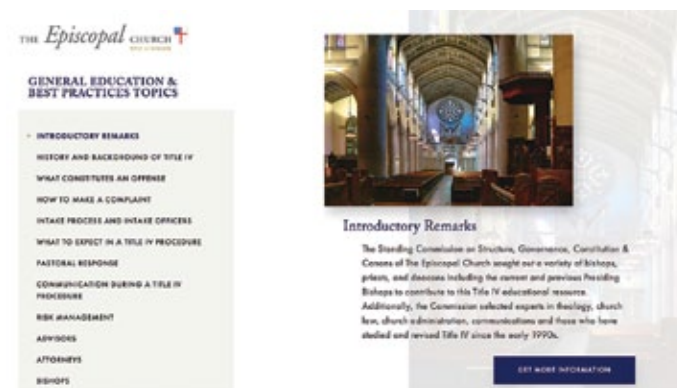
Diocese of Utah Chancellor Steve Hutchinson, who has been deeply involved in Title IV revisions, suggested that the subcommittee work with Wirth. Getz said Wirth brought fresh eyes to the project and helped the group see that there might be a better way to present the training materials than how the people she called the "linear lawyers" always have done it. They look at the discipline process and potential training materials through a timeline approach, she said.

"People have tried for several years to create flow charts of how Title IV works; I have yet to see one that you could logically follow," Getz said.

Wirth told ENS that his work in integrative marketing communications and broadcast news always had been driven by providing material in a way that served the audience. In the case of the clergy discipline process, multiple audiences ranged from clergy to people who feel they have been mistreated to lawyers



**A nearly two-year effort to develop an interactive website to help Episcopalians navigate the church's Title IV clergy disciplinary process came in under budget and will debut this July during the 79th meeting of General Convention.**



**One part of the site, titled General Education and Best Practices, has about 250 short videos. Website planners sought a variety of bishops, priests and deacons, including the current and previous presiding bishops, to contribute to the section.**

IV] training, and they were not necessarily interpreting what they were reading in the same way," Getz said. Those differences led to inconsistencies in how the canons were being interpreted, she said.

Plus, Getz said, the website pays more attention to Title IV's theological underpinnings than previous training efforts. This includes the importance of grounding clergy discipline in the principles stated in the preamble to the rules. "By virtue of baptism, all members of the church are called to holiness of life and accountability to one another," that canon says. "The church and each diocese shall support their



## GENERAL CONVENTION

COUNCIL continued from page 1

leaves with “high hopes and very, very high expectations of this body. I challenge you, I challenge you, to remember the faces of God who are not here and who depend on you to continue to make space for them and their voices in the beloved community. I implore you, and I love you.”

She returned to her seat amid a standing ovation.

### Here are some of the actions that the council took on the last day of its three-day meeting:

- The members agreed to provide financial assistance to 13 dioceses and one area mission that have said they need help covering the costs of attending General Convention. All of the entities already receive block grants from the churchwide budget. Bishop of Honduras Lloyd Allen, a council member, called the assistance “a dream come true. We have cried, we have asked, we have begged.”

Although each entity will receive \$1,200, which another council member noted amounts to about \$150 per deputy, Allen said the biggest concern had been about help in covering the registration cost, “which has prevented our delegation from being complete at General Convention.”

Each bishop, deputy and alternate deputy must pay a \$600 registration fee, in addition to lodging and transportation costs.

The Rev. Nathaniel Pierce, outgoing council member, noted that the council

had passed a similar resolution, albeit for a smaller amount, early in 2015 to help cover such costs for the last General Convention. The council needs to consider “the systemic issues” that will continue to prompt this stop-gap funding, he said. “I, for one, am ashamed that folks have to beg for this money.”

The Rev. Jabriel Ballentine, continuing Executive Council member, said that block-grant recipients do great work with that money, “and so to say that we should force people who are doing great ministry to decide between using those limited resources to do ministry or holding onto those resources in order to come to the table [General Convention] is a false dichotomy.”

Outgoing council member Nancy Koonce said that the Joint Standing Committee on Finances for Mission (FFM) had urged its successors to consider this dilemma.

Barlowe agreed that, while those entities have been “gracious” in asking for this money, “we shouldn’t constantly have to rely on their graciousness.” The issue, he said, goes to the root of the church’s polity about broad participation in policymaking bodies. He said the council’s executive committee would consider the issue between the end of the upcoming General Convention and the beginning of the council’s next meeting in October.

- Council members heard that a small group of people who have been involved in the church’s triennial budgeting process will convene before the start of General Convention to consider how to improve that process. A goal, according



Photos/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS



*Diocese of Texas Bishop Andy Doyle tells members of Executive Council and the churchwide staff that the diocese is looking forward to hosting General Convention in Austin this July.*

to outgoing FFM Chair Tess Judge, would be to establish a process “that allows early involvement by PB&F [the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance], as well as more time for FFM to deal with other matters related to the financial status of the church.”

The church’s Standing Commission on Governance, Structure, Constitution and Canons called in its Blue Book report for a task force to reshape the budget process. “The church is mired in a budget process that does not make enough time available for input by the church at large prior to General Convention,” the commission said.

However, when FFM met April 22 with the council’s Joint Standing Committee on Governance and Administration for Mission, the members agreed that it made more sense to address the issues involved immediately.

- The council heard good news about the work of its Assessment Review Committee. The committee has been talking to about 18 dioceses that currently do not pay the full amount of the assessment or who anticipate asking for a partial or full waiver in 2019.

The council’s draft budget, which forms the basis for PB&F’s work at General Convention to craft the 2019-2021 budget, includes a line item reserving \$5.9 million for such waivers. Thus, an anticipated reduction in the requested waivers’ dollar amounts would mean that unused money from that reserve could be available to help fund other budget line items.

The council established the committee in early 2015 ahead of General Convention that summer. It made mandatory the current voluntary diocesan budgetary asking system for the 2019-2021 budget cycle. Each year’s annual diocesan giving in the three-year budget had been based on a diocese’s income two years earlier, minus \$150,000. Any diocese that cannot or will not pay the soon-to-be-required percentage of its annual income must ask for a partial or full waiver to avoid any penalty, such as not



*Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, right, and House of Deputies President the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings preside at a dinner during which continuing members of Executive Council honored the service of colleagues completing their terms.*

being eligible for churchwide grants.

- Council members approved a policy on alcohol use by Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society employees (DFMS is the name under which the Episcopal Church is incorporated). Rooted in General Convention Resolution 2015-A158, which called for such policies, the council agreed to the employee policy that puts “appropriate limits on the serving and consumption of alcohol” at DFMS work, gatherings, “activities and celebratory events.”

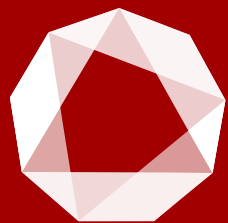
“Excessive alcohol consumption may endanger the health and safety of DFMS employees and others around them and tarnish the DFMS’ reputation,” the policy says. It adds that those who choose to drink alcoholic beverages in such settings “are expected to behave respectfully, professionally, within legal limits and in accordance with all DFMS policies.”

The policy includes details about availability and consumption of alcohol.

The council’s action came at the end of a meeting during which the members heard Curry summarize the Commission on Impairment and Leadership’s findings and recommendations.

- Council member Polly Getz and Diocese of Utah Communications Director Craig Wirth invited the council to help them beta test a new website designed to help educate the church on its Title IV clergy-disciplinary process. The site will debut to the public during General Convention.

Summaries of all the resolutions council passed at this meeting are at [www.episcopalnewsservice.org](http://www.episcopalnewsservice.org). ■



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GENERAL CONVENTION



# Bishops invite reflections on #MeToo and the church

## Responses will help inform General Convention listening session

By Mary Frances Schjonberg  
Episcopal News Service

The House of Bishops is inviting Episcopalians to “share reflections on sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation” ahead of a planned General Convention listening session titled “Pastoral Response to #MeToo.”

A selection of the reflections, with no names attached, will be read as part of the liturgy included in the sessions, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves of El Camino Real, vice president of the House of Bishops, said in a May 4 letter to the church.

The #MeToo movement has meant that “the curtain of silence has been drawn back to reveal the pervasive misuse of power, cutting across all races, socio-economic strata, ages and locations, including our own context,” they wrote. “In the Episcopal Church, our practices have not always reflected the values we say we hold. We do not always practice the reconciliation we proclaim.”

The House of Bishops’ Pastoral Response “will focus on listening, liturgy and steps for healing,” according to the press release issued with the letter. It will take place July 4 from 5:15 to 7 p.m. CDT. Those not attending the General Convention in Austin, Texas, will be able to participate remotely via a live webcast.

Reflections may be submitted confidentially “by anyone in our church for sharing anonymously in this liturgical setting of repentance, prayer and worship, pledging a way forward for healing,

reconciliation and transformation of ourselves and our church,” the bishops said. A member of the reading team will contact people when their reflections have been read and reviewed.

Confidential reflections can be sent to [pastoralresponse@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:pastoralresponse@episcopalchurch.org) or House of Bishops’ Pastoral Response, 815 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017.

“We imagine a variety of responses: reflections that speak to the culture of harassment, abuse and exploitation, including insensitive comments, micro-aggressions and other insensitivities,”

Curry and Gray-Reeves wrote.

Their letter notes that the session is a “liturgical and pastoral offering,” not a clergy discipline, or Title IV, hearing. “During the balance of General Convention, there will be resources available for individual pastoral care and Title IV consultations in separate spaces of the Convention Center as people may find the need and desire for continued support and assistance,” the bishops said.

The letter also says that some submitted reflections “might raise the possibility of a Title IV action” and that Bishop Todd Ousley of the presiding bishop’s Office of Pastoral Development will communicate with the author directly in those cases.

The roots of the session are in a Jan. 22 letter to the church from Curry and the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, calling on Episcopalians to spend Lent and beyond examining the church’s history and its handling or mishandling of cases of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse.

Curry and Jennings said in the letter that they wanted General Convention to discuss these issues because they wanted

“to hear the voice of the wider church as we determine how to proceed in both atoning for the church’s past and shaping a more just future.”

They called for an Ash Wednesday Day of Prayer on Feb. 14, during which Episcopalians should meditate on how the church had “failed to stand with women and other victims of abuse and harassment.”

Jennings went on to organize a Lenten series of reflections, essays and meditations, some of them explicit in their de-

scriptions, about sexual harassment and exploitation in the church that were posted on the House of Deputies website. In early March, she also appointed a special House of Deputies committee on resolutions regarding sexual harassment and exploitation. The committee is drafting General Convention resolutions on inclusive theology and language; disparities in pay, hiring, leave and pensions; changes to the Title IV disciplinary process and training; truth and reconciliation; and systemic social justice beyond the church. ■

#ME TOO



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## Card has Curry watchers shouting ‘bingo’

By Sharon Sheridan

In the days leading up to Presiding Bishop Michael Curry’s sermon at Britain’s royal wedding, the Diocese of Fort Worth released a bingo card featuring some of the top words and phrases listeners might hear him say.

Curry “is known throughout the Episcopal Church as an energetic, charismatic, inspiring preacher,” the diocesan website said. “Will Curry share themes that are familiar to us in the Diocese of Fort Worth and to others who’ve heard him preach?”

The bingo card (available at <https://episcopaldiocesefortworth.org/assets/michael-curry-print-bingo-com.pdf>) includes squares for phrases ranging from “Balm in Gilead” to “If it’s not about love, it’s not about God!” and “I’m not going to be up here long.”

While created for the wedding, the bingo card should have staying power as long as Curry keeps preaching. Per-

haps they’ll even inspire worship-time bingo parties at General Convention this summer. That would be in keeping with a lighthearted tradition dating from General Convention 2012, when youth members created an online game called “Bonnie ball” in honor of then-House of Deputies President Bonnie Anderson. Those addressing the house earned points for such behavior as trying to speak to the same issue more than once (2 points), wearing something strange on their heads while speaking (5 points) or mentioning “Bonnie ball” while addressing the chair (15 points). ■

B	I	N	G	O
Beloved child/children of God	Jesus Movement	Bonded in Christ	Working to end suffering	Beloved
The Spirit	God love you, God bless you, & _____	Called to follow Jesus	I’m not going to be up here long.	One more thing and then I’m going to sit down.
If it’s not about love, it’s not about God!	Good News	*	A new way	Jesus of Nazareth
Crazy Christians	Following in the footsteps of Jesus	If you’re breathing, God’s calling!	We have a God! And that God raised Jesus from the dead.	Kingdom come
God didn’t put _____	Let my people	Loving, liberating,		There is balm in Gilead



## FEATURE

# Police officer-turned-antiques dealer discovers heart for prison ministry

By Sharon Sheridan  
Episcopal News Service

For 20 years, Jon Felz helped send people to prison as a New York police officer. Today, he's volunteering his time to help those behind bars as a member of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark's Prison Ministry.

"I have over 1,200 felony arrests," he said. "But when you lock somebody up, you spend three hours with them processing them, and then you rarely see them again unless the case goes to trial. Ninety percent of the cases don't go to trial. You don't get to focus on them as human beings."

But Felz's faith journey has lent him new perspective and purpose. Now an antiques dealer and certified appraiser, Felz led an "Antiques Roadshow"-style event on April 21 at the Episcopal Church of St. James in Upper Montclair, N.J., to raise money for the diocese's programs for inmates and their families. Looking ahead, he hopes to join ministry members in leading Bible studies for inmates.

"When God opens your heart, you really take this stuff to heart," he said.

Felz, 60, began his New York police

**'I saw that even [with] the toughest ex-con ... there is a bond.'**

— Jon Felz

career during the "drug wars" of the 1980s. At age 22, he was assigned to the Manhattan neighborhood of Washington Heights, which set a precinct record with 137 homicides in 1984. During his career, he survived three gun battles and engaged in New York-to-New Jersey car chases to arrest suspected drug dealers.

"As I got older, I started to study the Bible — first from a historical point of view, because I love history," said Felz, the son of an antiques dealer. His retirement from police work to enter the antiques business in 2001 gave him more time to reflect. "The years went by; my faith started to get stronger."

A lifelong member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Montvale, N.J., Felz began bringing donated pastries each Sunday to the men's shelter located at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Paterson.



Photo/Sharon Sheridan

*Antiques dealer Jon Felz, center, appraises an icon for Joanne and Sal Torrisi during an April 21 fundraiser for Diocese of Newark Prison Ministry programs, held at St. James Episcopal Church in Upper Montclair, N.J.*

Then he began bringing men's clothing and toiletries from estate sales he ran and donations from members of his church. He started to get to know the shelter's men, some of them just out of prison.

"I saw that even [with] the toughest ex-con ... there is a bond," Felz said. "When I go there Sunday, they know my name."

He began thinking about the circumstances that led people to commit crimes. "I'm not making excuses for them," he said, but "I look at them as victims."

Reflecting on the people he'd helped lock up, he said, "I felt that I didn't help anyone. These are human beings. They're not just numbers."

And when he heard about the diocesan prison ministry, he thought: "Maybe I could go in and give hope."

He wants to join diocese members who lead Bible studies in the state prison in Newark and in jails in Hudson and Essex counties. First, however, he will need to complete the institutions' required paperwork and background checks.

For more than three decades, the diocese also has supported children and their incarcerated parents through the PATCH (Parents and Their Children) program. PATCH transports children for monthly visits with their parents at the Essex County Correctional Facility in Newark and provides camp scholarships, school supplies and annual Christmas parties for the children. PATCH previously included a mentoring component for children, which the diocesan

prison ministry would like to restart.

Other programs include a pen-pal program and a holiday choir that leads a carol service at a county jail.

The ministry makes PATCH a priority because "our children are an at-risk population for prison, mental health issues, dropping out of school," said the Rev. Pamela Bakal, prison ministry president and rector of Grace Episcopal Church, Nutley. The program costs more than \$22,000 annually because of transportation, insurance and other costs — a funding need that prompted Felz to donate his antique-appraisal skills for the April 21 event.

His police days showed him the impoverished circumstances that led some into lives of crime.

"When these young guys are in the street ... if you're getting high

every day or drunk ... you're not thinking straight, and you're going to do stupid things," he said. "The sad thing is, a lot of these guys do such stupid things, their life is over. If someone could tell them that their life isn't over, that there is a God ... that loves them, that cares about them."

"It has nothing to do with liberal or conservative," he adds. "Some poor kids have nothing. ... It's not a political issue. It's a human being issue. Now it becomes our job to show them the love that they never had." ■

*Sharon Sheridan is a postulant in the Diocese of Newark and a member of the Diocese of Newark Prison Ministry.*

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## FEATURE

# Navajoland envisions new uses for old hospital

By David Paulsen  
Episcopal News Service

The Navajoland Area Mission is committed to fixing up one of its historic buildings in Farmington, N.M. It would be easier and cheaper simply to demolish the 1922 structure, but this is no ordinary building.

It served as an Episcopal hospital catering to the Navajo until it closed about 50 years ago. The hospital's chapel remained in use until about a decade ago, when it, too, was closed out of safety concerns.

Because of the building's deteriorating condition, saving it is a herculean task. But through Episcopal Church grants, additional fundraising efforts and the dedication of Navajoland officials, a two-year restoration project advanced enough to reopen the chapel in time for it to be reconsecrated and blessed during Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's visit to Navajoland in late April.

"We put things on hyper-overdrive to get the chapel ready for the presiding bishop's visit," said the Rev. Chan Osborn de Anaya, canon to the ordinary



During a visit to the Episcopal Church in Navajoland, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, left, visits John Wayne's cabin, located at Goulding's Lodge in Monument Valley, where Wayne made several movies. With him is Bishop David Bailey of Navajoland.

for Navajoland Bishop Dave Bailey. Osborn de Anaya called Hozho Chapel "the heart of the body of Christ in that old hospital."

"The rest of the building will be finished, hopefully, in the fall," she said. The chapel will share the second floor with a new women's wellness center, while the ground floor will become the home of Cheii's Web Development, a startup enterprise created by Navajoland to teach young people coding skills and create jobs in web design.

"I'm very excited," said G.J. Gordy, manager and web developer with Cheii's. "We're going to start teaching web development and basic computer skills, and teaching has been a passion of mine, es-



Photos/Dick Snyder

The Rev. Michael Hunn, left, canon for the presiding bishop, and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry listen to a presentation about Navajo culture from the Rev. Cathy Plummer. They are inside a hogan located on the grounds of St. Mary's in the Moonlight in Monument Valley, Utah. Plummer is the widow of Bishop Steven Plummer, the first Navajo elected bishop of Navajoland.

pecially helping Navajo children."

A lot of work remains, however, before the former hospital can become a fully functioning space again.

The building, about 6,000 square feet, had been mostly abandoned until Navajoland launched its restoration project in 2016 with Osborn de Anaya as project manager, drawing on her past experience as a real estate broker. Navajoland received \$325,000 for the project from the Episcopal Church that year through a grant to support indigenous ministries.

But when contractors began their work, they discovered that much of the plumbing and wiring needed to be replaced. At some point, a load-bearing wall had been removed, so new supports had to be installed. Those and other needed upgrades added about \$150,000 to the cost of the project.

"Every day, I go in and it's a new challenge, and somehow my spirit is holding," Osborn de Anaya said.

The Episcopal Church's ministry on the 27,000-square-mile Navajo reservation dates back more than a century to medical missions established in Fort Defiance, Ariz.; Farmington, N.M.; and Bluff, Utah. In 1978, the Episcopal Church carved out sections of the dioceses of Rio Grande, Arizona and Utah to create the Navajoland Area Mission. Since Bailey was assigned to Navajoland in 2010, he has emphasized the goals of financial sustainability and raising up Native church leaders.

Despite the extensive repairs needed, Navajoland leaders wouldn't think of tearing down the old hospital building. Many people in the local white community may not be aware of its significance, Osborn de Anaya said, but the hospital still holds treasured memories for many of the native residents.

To ensure the building will be preserved, Navajoland is seeking financial support from local businesses and institutions, in addition to casting a wider net with the help of the Episcopal

Church's Office of Development. One potential partner is New York's Trinity Church Wall Street, which is sending a delegation to visit the restoration project as it considers ways it can offer support. A GoFundMe campaign also has been launched.

"This is going to take the whole village, and it's so worthy," Osborn de Anaya said.

Navajoland also has long received support from the United Thank Offering, including a \$29,000 grant in 2017 to pay for the utility upgrades and the technology needed to move the Cheii's web developers into the former hospital. Until then, the two full-time developers and additional part-time developers are working nearby in spare space shared

with other Navajoland offices.

Bailey welcomed Curry on the presiding bishop's visit to Navajoland, from April 25 to 29. Curry's delegation included the Rev. Michael Hunn, canon for ministry within the church; the Rev. Bradley Hauff, missionary for indigenous ministries; and Cecilia Malm, an Episcopal Church development officer.

The old hospital was one of Curry's first stops when on April 25 he joined a small gathering in the chapel for a rededication and blessing.

A Farmington resident who attended, Katherine Sells, told the Farmington Daily Times that she was born in the hospital in 1945 and remembered playing on its steps as a child while she was there for medical treatment. She was pleased to see it rededicated.

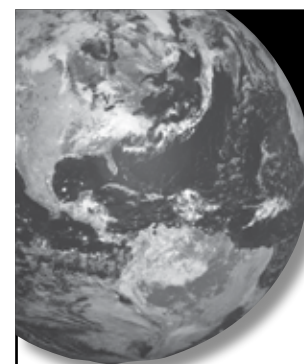
"It made me emotional because my dad would say that my mom would go in that chapel. I guess she prayed [there]," Sells said.

Bailey told the Daily Times the building's poor condition had raised concerns that it would be torn down, but he supported native residents' desire to preserve it.

"They wanted to bring it back so that it was a place of healing again," he said.

Curry alluded to the Navajo's strong belief in tradition during his sermon April 29 at Good Shepherd Mission in Fort Defiance.

"The closer we draw to our traditions and live with those traditions and find our God in the midst of those, we'll find life," Curry said. "That is one of the great gifts you give to the church. ... You have found a way to bring together the traditions of the Navajo and faith in Jesus." ■



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## FAITH AND THE ARTS

# Pop music's Beyoncé inspires Eucharist at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco

*Organizers say music of 'Queen Bey' opens discussion of marginalized people, especially black women*

By Amy Sowder  
Episcopal News Service

**T**hey liked it, so they created a Eucharist based on it.

Sometimes controversial, often empowering, pop culture icon Beyoncé Knowles-Carter's music, lyrics and life inspired faith leaders to organize an alternative church service April 25 at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco.

At Beyoncé Mass, churchgoers could learn about the formation of the idea that this celebrated singer's lyrics could be tied to biblical messages.

Contemporary worship group The Vine created the Wednesday-evening service for faith seekers and fans to sing their Beyoncé favorites and "discover how her art opens a window into the lives of the marginalized and forgotten, particularly black women," a cathedral event announcement said. Launched in March 2017, The Vine is both a service and an offer of community for city folks and spiritual seekers through worship with music on Wednesday nights, or small "Grace Groups" throughout the city, according to its website.

The idea for this Eucharist came from the "Beyoncé and the Hebrew Bible" class taught by the Rev.

Yolanda Norton, a Presbyterian minister and assistant professor of Old Testament at San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Norton planned to preach at the Beyoncé Mass at Grace Cathedral's ecumenical service. She's a Disciples of Christ minister whose scholarly work specializes in women in Scripture, liberation and people of color. Norton was in high school when Beyoncé first came on the scene as part of the Destiny's Child singing group.

"I mentor young black women watching [Beyoncé] come into her own, which has helped them come into their own. To me, to have these conversations allows women to examine how they fit in society," Norton told Episcopal News Service two days before the Mass.

"It's a way of saying to dominant culture, 'We're here.' Nobody's ignoring Beyoncé, and, because of that, you can't

ignore black women and our contribution to the church and to society," she said. "This is our reality: being called the angry black woman or being called too sexual or too black. All these issues are embodied in one figure."

But is Beyoncé Mass a gimmick? Some Episcopal naysayers on social media worried that this kind of themed service was a form of idolatry. They also say that Beyoncé should not be held up as a Christian example.



Photo/San Francisco Theological Seminary  
*The Rev. Yolanda Norton is assistant professor at San Francisco Theological Seminary, where she teaches a class called "Beyoncé and the Hebrew Bible."*



Photo/Wikimedia Commons

*Beyoncé Knowles-Carter is a multiplatinum-selling, Grammy Award-winning recording artist and trendsetter. Her music, lyrics and life inspired the theme of a Eucharist at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco.*

"You may have heard criticisms from our fundamentalist brothers and sisters that Grace Cathedral worships Beyoncé rather than our Lord Jesus," said the Very Rev. Malcolm Clemens Young, dean of Grace Cathedral, in a message to his congregation.

"As supporters of the cathedral, you know how important it is for us to be involved in the public life of our city and the world. A longing for justice lies at the heart of our identity. We have a tradition of engaging popular culture on issues of social justice that stretches back long before our controversial Duke Ellington Jazz Service in the mid-1960s," Young said.

This service is by no means one of the first pop-themed Eucharist or Episcopal services, said the Rev. Scott Gunn, executive director of Forward Movement, who followed the Beyoncé Mass discussion on social media. His April 20 post on Twitter started: "Theme Masses are all the rage!"

For example, Gunn said, Episcopal and Anglican churches have hosted U2 Eucharist services with glow sticks and streamers across the United States since at least 2006. There was once a Dr. Seuss-charist in Canada; churches have held rave dance party Masses and pirate Eucharists; and St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral in San Diego has hosted a Zydeco Mass on Shrove Tuesday every year since the late 1990s.

"St. Paul said that Jesus talked about being all things to all people, that we have to preach the gospel in the way that people can hear it," Gunn told ENS. "If a themed Eucharist reaches more people, that's fine. My concern is that the themed Eucharist should always be most focused on Jesus."

Beyoncé Mass was held on the third week in The Vine's teaching series, "Speaking Truth: The Power of Story in Community."

Mary Magdalene was the theme of a previous Wednesday night service. This independent, strong disciple of Christ was wrongly depicted as a reformed prostitute in religious art and interpretations for centuries, said Sam Lundquist, a seminarian taking Norton's class. He's interning at The Vine and helped the cathedral partner with the seminary to translate a 25-minute seminary chapel service into the hour-long Beyoncé Mass that included liturgical dance.

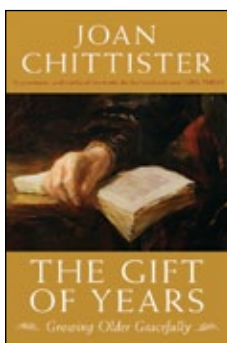
"The church is in so much need of connecting people to the amazing Christian story in new and exciting ways," Lundquist said. "We've done that well for so many hundreds and hundreds of years and this is no different. This is connecting people using something in culture. And this is just as spiritual as anything else." The class uses Beyoncé as a central figure for what black women face in society and in church; black motherhood and womanhood; the ways their bodies are judged or policed; and respectability politics, Norton said.

"We use her career and music to have those conversations to examine biblical text. It's important to me as a biblical scholar and a minister to say to these students, 'I want you to begin thinking what this means for the church, for your faith,'" she said.

One of the service's central theme songs was Beyoncé's "Flaws and All." She might've written it for husband and rapper Jay-Z or for their children, but it easily translates to something intended for God, Norton said.

"She talks about being a 'train wreck' and [that] 'when I need attention, I tend to nag.' 'I neglect you when I'm working ... and you see past all that.' The chorus of that is, 'I don't know why you love me, and that's why I love you.' It's an intimate conversation we can have with God," Norton said. "God sees us, flaws and all, and loves us anyway." ■

## JOAN CHITTISTER



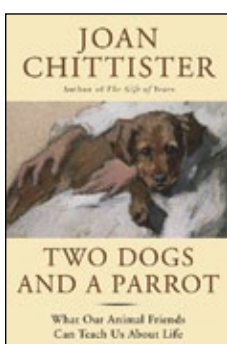
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FAITH AND THE ARTS

# 'HEAVENLY BODIES'

## *Vestments inspire designers*

Reviewed by Pamela A. Lewis

“Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination,” currently on view at New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, features the work of 55 renowned and predominantly European designers. Inspired by the Roman Catholic Church’s sumptuous vestments and ecclesiastical accessories, they have created imaginative high-fashion regalia displayed in more than 150 ensembles. Included in the show are exceptional loans of vestments from the Vatican’s sacristy, some of which have never before left Rome. The largest exhibit in the history of the museum’s Costume Institute, “Heavenly Bodies” is on view in various galleries, as well as at the Met Cloisters, a separate museum that specializes in medieval art.

“Heavenly Bodies” sets out to explain how deeply the “Catholic imagination,” as writer and scholar Andrew Greeley called it, is embedded in ecclesiastical and (in this show) secular dress. Most, if not all, of the featured designers (such as Versace, Balenciaga and Dolce & Gabbana) are — or were — raised Roman Catholic. Yet, while their relationship to Catholicism has changed, the church’s sartorial language remains an indelible presence in these designers’ work.

The exhibition is spread over the main museum’s lower hall up to the Byzantine and medieval galleries and into the varied art of the Lehman Wing, continuing at the Cloisters. These deliberate placements establish a conversation between the sewn creations and artwork in the galleries, crossing boundaries of era and style.

For example, there is a solemn-faced female mannequin attired in Demna Gvasalia’s (House of Balenciaga) jet-black wool ensemble (called “Il Pretiro” or “The Little Priest”) inspired by the cassock known as a “soutane.” Dior’s John Galliano evokes the bishop’s grandeur in his silk-and-crystals-studded “Evening Ensemble” (complete with mitre). An enormous and bejeweled pectoral cross adorns the totally black “Gold-Gotha Ensemble” by Christian Lacroix.

Years in the making, “Heavenly Bodies” combines faith and fashion but without compromising or nullifying either one. Some outfits are daring, but never disrespectful of their inspirational source. In all instances, the designer works motivate visitors to take a closer look at the Met’s splendid collection. A lot of imagination went into this show, and you don’t have to be Roman Catholic to appreciate it. ■

*“Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination” is at the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Met Cloisters through Oct. 8.*

*Pamela A. Lewis, who is based in New York, writes on topics of faith.*



*Wedding ensemble, Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana for Dolce & Gabbana. Courtesy of Dolce & Gabbana.*

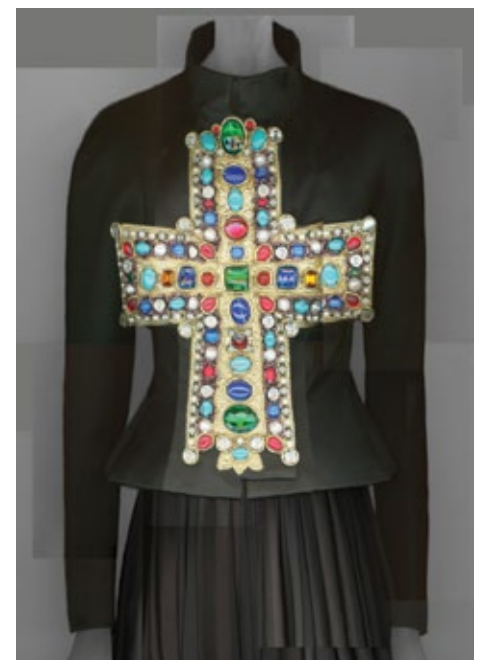


Photos/Metropolitan Museum of Art

*Evening ensemble, John Galliano for House of Dior. Courtesy of Dior Heritage Collection, Paris.*



*Chasuble from the Vatican, Henri Matisse.*



*“Gold-Gotha” ensemble, Christian Lacroix. Courtesy of Maison Christian Lacroix, Paris.*



*Designers for ensembles inspired by the soutane, or cassock, from left, are: Raf Simons; Dolce & Gabbana; Jean-Paul Gaultier; Sorelle, Zoe, Micol and Giovanna Fontana; Stefano Pilati for Yves Saint Laurent; A.F. Vandevorst, An Vandevorst and Filip Arickx; and Demna Gvasalia for House of Balenciaga.*

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BOOK REVIEW

# New book highlights lives of a Kansas woman and her slave mother

By Melodie Woerman

When Jim Beck began to research a former member of St. Paul's, Clay Center, Kansas, he quickly knew he had quite a story. But before too long, he realized he actually had a book.

That book, which Beck self-published, is titled "Have You Seen My Spirit?" It describes the lives of Mai DeKonza, an African-American woman who was a member of St. Paul's from 1900 until her death in 1959, and her mother, Elizabeth Lawton, who was a slave in Missouri, freed during the Civil War and survived Quantrill's Raid in Lawrence.

Beck's work on DeKonza, which highlighted how she was ostracized by the church because of her race to the point of keeping a separate chalice for her use in receiving Communion, spurred the church to hold a service of repentance in September 2015 for its racist treatment of her.

But Beck's curiosity took him beyond his original research on DeKonza. He learned she had been an author, speaker and musician, so he started to look for more details about her works.

"That's when the information just exploded," Beck said. "It became substantially more than just about a little church in Clay Center."

### An expanded look at DeKonza

After Beck wrote his original 19-page report about DeKonza and her connection to St. Paul's, he knew there was more information to be found. He already had uncovered 19 letters in the diocesan archives from DeKonza to Bishop James Wise, who held office from 1916 to 1939.



Beck

He said he went looking for letters from the bishop, because he expected to find admonitions from him to St. Paul's clergy for the church's treatment of its only African-American member. Instead he found DeKonza's letters to

him. One of those letters said she had written to Henry Ford, so research in the Ford Library turned up 100 pages of new information. Beck also learned she had written to W.E.B. Du Bois, and he found that in the online archives of the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

DeKonza also told Wise that she had written 100 pages of letters to President Franklin Roosevelt, but extensive search-

es through multiple libraries and archives failed to uncover them.

### A former slave

Beck's interest in Lawton came from reading DeKonza's obituary, which mentioned that she had been a slave.

"That sparked my curiosity," he said. "I explored, and her story tumbled out." He said it was like he had opened a wrapper and having information burst out.

With a degree in history and a hobby of genealogy, Beck knew that a reference to Lawton as a Civil War widow meant he likely would find records in the files of the old Civil War Widows' Pension Office. He didn't expect to find 215 pages that detailed her life and that of her daughter, who lived with her. "The record was her biography, but unintentionally," he said.

Lawton (then known as Sarah Taylor) had been a slave in western Missouri, and she and others in her family made their way to Kansas in 1861 under the protection of Brigadier General and U.S. Senator John Lane as a "contraband of war," a concept used to take slaves from states in the Confederacy, or sympathetic to it, to skirt laws that required that slaves be returned to their owners.

**Have You Seen My Spirit The Story of Mai DeKonza and her Slave Mother**

By Jim Beck

CreateSpace  
262 pages, \$19.95



The family ended up in Lawrence, where she survived the massacre of men and boys in that town by William Quantrill on Aug. 21, 1863. According to her account, she had overheard men talking about the impending raid the night before and tried to warn others. In retaliation, the guerillas shot her in the arm, causing lifelong damage and contradicting their claim that they had spared all women and only attacked men and boys, murdering more than 160 of them.

But Lawton's life included a lie that haunted her and hurt her financially. In her filings with the Pension Office, she had claimed to have been married before she met George Lawton, the Civil War veteran, perhaps as a way to explain her

continued on page 15

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## COMMENTARY

## James Cone, the cross and the lynching memorial

By Jemar Tisby  
Religion News Service

On April 26, America received its first-ever memorial dedicated to the more than 4,000 victims of lynching in this country. Two days later, James Cone, the acclaimed author of “The Cross and the Lynching Tree,” died.

The opening of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala., and the passing of a theological legend coincide in ways that provoke thoughts about the spiritual implications of American racism. How do

the cross and the lynching tree represent both injustice and redemption? How do we confront the dark truths of our past to create a future that is brighter for all people?

At the lynching memorial, rusted iron columns hang suspended from the ceiling. Each column, numbering about 800 in total, represents a county where a lynching occurred. Many feature multiple names as the number of human beings killed for their color stacks up to create the crushing weight of an undeniable, yet underrepresented, history.

Visitors to the lynching memorial



A bronze statue called “Raise Up” is part of the display at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala., that honors thousands of people killed in racist lynchings.

learn that racial terrorists designed lynching as a public spectacle to intimidate black people.

“Racial terror was characterized by extreme violence: Victims were tortured for hours before their brutalized bodies were left out on display to traumatize other black people,” one placard reads. It goes on to explain that members of the mob often posed for photographs next to the mutilated corpses of their victims. These horrific displays served as “the primary tool to enforce racial hierarchy” in America.

The memorial reminds visitors that

would be able to create stories to fill in the information gaps about Lawton and DeKonza. For instance, he wishes he knew if Lawton had any church connections in her life.

And how did DeKonza come to pick the Episcopal Church? Where was she baptized, by whom and why? His research hasn’t provided any clues to those mysteries.

Beck said he was surprised and encouraged by the way Clay Center residents embraced Mai DeKonza’s story. “The community is very aware of her,” he said. “The community owns this story as much as St. Paul’s.” He said the increased awareness of her was “very rewarding.”

“I want to give her a voice,” he said. “Typically, people who live undistinguished lives are rarely understood.”

He recently learned that a music-arrangement class at Kansas State University will be working on some of the scores DeKonza wrote, which he hopes will bring her story to even more people.

“The stories of Mai and Elizabeth relate to us today,” he said, noting that racism and dismissal of marginalized people occur all around us. “We do this in our own lives; we just haven’t examined it.”

He hopes his book will prompt people to wonder: “Who are the other Mai DeKonzas of our society?” ■

Melodie Woerman is director of communications for the Diocese of Kansas.

lynching victims are real people, not simply anonymous figures from history. They have heart-wrenching stories such as that of Luther Holbert, who was forced to watch as a white mob burned his wife, Mary, alive before they killed him. Others lynched Elizabeth Lawrence for telling white children not to throw rocks at black children. Lynchers killed Mary Turner, eight months pregnant, for protesting the lynching of her own husband, Hazel Turner. The voyeuristic and violent deaths of these individuals plus thousands more represent the heinous apotheosis of

American racism.

The systematic terrorization of black people created indescribable grief in the past and has contributed to the generational trauma of racism today. Against this backdrop of unremitting suffering, black people looked to religion for answers.

Often, however, they found not comfort but affliction. Christianity as practiced by white racists and segregationists merely compromised with the status quo. But James Cone refused to assign any authenticity to a religion that claimed to be Christian but did not address the liberation of black people from white supremacy. Cone wrote “The Cross and the Lynching Tree” as a theological response to the extrajudicial murders of black people due to racism.

A father of black liberation theology, Cone helped pioneer a field that dealt with the racism at the core of much of American Christianity. His journey into black theology began with the social upheavals of the mid-1960s. Malcolm X, in particular, had a pivotal effect on him. The more he listened to the most well-known prophet of the Nation of Islam, the more disturbed he became by the Eurocentric form of Christianity he and other black people practiced.

“For me, the burning theological question was, how can I reconcile Christianity and Black Power, Martin Luther King, Jr.’s idea of nonviolence and Malcolm X’s ‘by any means necessary’ philosophy?” he asked in the book “Black Theology & Black Power,” published in 1969. Cone’s book became his initial public attempt to answer those questions.

Decades later, in 2011, Cone wrote “The Cross and the Lynching Tree,” and it quickly became one of his seminal works. In the book, he traces the paral-

els between Christ’s crucifixion and the persecution of black people in America. For Cone, the lynching tree is a visual and historic representation of white racist tyranny. Juxtaposed with the cross of Jesus Christ, lynching becomes a kind of crucifixion for black people.

Just as the religious and political leaders of his day lifted Jesus up on a cross to remove his threat to an oppressive hegemony, white supremacists lifted up black people in brutal lynchings designed to preserve the racial hierarchy.

“Both Jesus and blacks were ‘strange fruit,’” Cone explains. “Theologically speaking, Jesus was the ‘first lynchee,’ who foreshadowed all the lynched black bodies on American soil.”

Cone showed that black people could understand Christ’s suffering by recalling their own sorrow related to the lynching tree. At the same time, the cross provided comfort because black people could know for certain that, in his life and death, Christ identified with the oppressed.

“The cross helped me to deal with the brutal legacy of the lynching tree, and the lynching tree helped me to understand the tragic meaning of the cross,” Cone writes.

Yet Jesus did not remain on the cross. The Resurrection represents hope out of despair and life out of death. “It is the cross that points in the direction of hope, the confidence that there is a dimension to life beyond the reach of the oppressor,” Cone writes. It is to the cross — as the triumph of liberty over

lynching — that black people must cling in order to make sense of their plight in America.

Both the cross and the lynching memorial invite people into solidarity with the oppressed. Both stand as signs of lethal injustice while also illustrating the possibility of change and growth. They send a message that hope is not meant for some far-off tomorrow; Christians have a responsibility to act today.

Cone believed in the power of the cross because “I have seen with my own eyes how that symbol empowered black people to stand up and become agents of change for their freedom.”

James Cone has laid down his cross to take up his eternal rest. The lynching memorial in Montgomery challenges a new generation to take up the cross of justice today and continue with the struggle for black liberation. ■

Jemar Tisby is the president of *The Witness: A Black Christian Collective*. He is a Ph.D. student in history at the University of Mississippi. His book, “*The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church’s Complicity in Racism*,” is forthcoming from Zondervan.

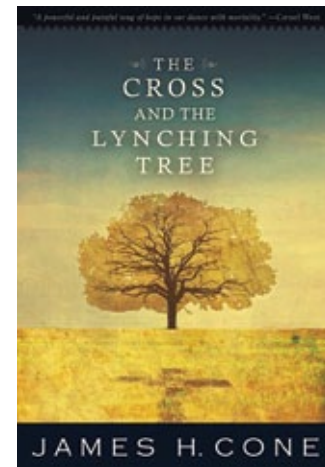


Image courtesy of Orbis Books  
“The Cross and the Lynching Tree” by James H. Cone.

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frequent name changes. But that lie, and her inability to back up parts of her story with facts, kept her from receiving a full widow’s pension, leaving her and her daughter in poverty for most of her life.

#### A story of two women

As he pored over Lawton’s files, Beck said, he soon realized he had enough material for a book about the two women. He was drawn in by the compelling stories of both mother and daughter and the way they influenced each other. “If I’d featured only one, it would have been a partial picture,” he said.

Beck previously had self-published books about other relatively unknown women, so he wasn’t fazed by the prospect of turning his reams of information into a book. His daughter told him about a new platform through Amazon that provides templates into which authors drop their material, and it automatically designs the pages, creates an index and table of contents, and formats the footnotes.

The book features a back-cover recommendation from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, who has championed the work Beck and St. Paul’s did in uncovering its treatment of DeKonza and repenting of it.

#### Going forward

If he was a novelist, Beck said, he



## NEWS

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bus, Ohio, and St. John's Episcopal Church in Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y. Iftars previously have been hosted at Episcopal churches across the nation, including in Miami and Houston.

The iftar at St. James was started in response to episodes of Islamophobia after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, Bailey said. Part of the goal was to educate parishioners about the Muslim faith, though the congregation also wanted to promote a spirit of welcome.

"It's probably more to let them know here are Christians that are welcoming them to basically our church home and to show that we are no different than them, as far as our likes, our goals in life and wanting to live peacefully," Bailey said.

The church's first iftar drew a few dozen guests, and it has grown steadily each year. Most of those attending are Muslim, though the iftars also draw members of St. James and two other Episcopal churches in the area.

The meals at St. James have become so popular that the church has to take reservations and cap attendance at 150. Lead organizer Janet Bailey called the meal the church's gift to its Muslim neighbors, "to let them know that we care and that we're not afraid and that this is a safe environment for them."

On May 31 at sundown, around 9 p.m., guests planned to gather in the downstairs of the St. James parish hall to break the fast with dates and water. They next would go upstairs, where prayer rugs were laid out, to participate in prayers led by an imam. Then they would return downstairs for a potluck meal prepared according to Muslim halal guidelines.

Given the popularity of the iftars, St. James has worked with All Saints Episcopal Church in New Albany, Ohio, and St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in

Westerville to host their own iftars later in Ramadan, Bailey said.

This year, St. John's gathered a group of parishioners to attend a community iftar hosted by a local Muslim organization. Teens specifically were invited as part of a broader interfaith response to an incident last year involving hate speech at a local high school.

"Very few of our parishioners or our teens have ever been to a mosque or an Islamic center," said the Rev. Gideon L.K. Pollach, rector. "This is part of a larger effort in our region to work together on issues of common cause."

Pollach said he never been to an iftar, though he worked as a seminarian in the Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations under Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold.

"In general, learning more about people of different faiths and cultures adds context and depth to our understanding of our own culture," he said.

Christians, Muslims and Jews in his community on Long Island have been working together in recent years to tackle shared challenges, most notably the opioid epidemic. Their work gained an added sense of urgency in August when swastikas and hate speech were found spray-painted on walls at Syosset High School. Five students were arrested in connection with the graffiti.

Teens and worshipers of all faiths were invited to the iftar on May 22 at the Islamic Center of Long Island in Westbury, and Pollach planned to bring a group of eight to 10 members of his church.

"I'm just looking forward to it," he said. "The ecumenical community has been working really hard to develop a greater depth of understanding across the communities ... to try and build relationships, not just around religious things but also around social and cultural issues." ■

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to every Episcopalian to those outside the church who watch how it handles these issues. He proposed a website built, in part, around the stakeholders in the process so each could learn about their roles and see how they interacted with the roles of others.

An interactive website made sense, Wirth said, because "online learning is not the future; it's the present."

Thus, the subcommittee developed a different way to look at the process. Users can click on one stakeholder category, see the squares on the webpage's grid light up if they relate to that person, and follow those responsibilities for that stakeholder. However, that person also can look at the roles of other participants and how they fit together.

The site's other goal of presenting best practices and teaching about clergy discipline issues is perhaps even more important than the process side, Wirth said. A major success for the website, he said, would be "preventing Title IV incidents" in the future.

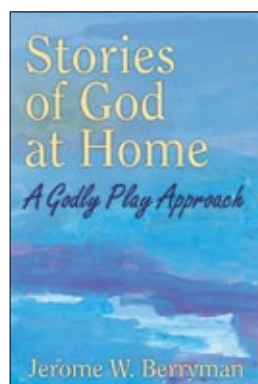
As such, the best-practices section includes people offering what Wirth called "very frank discussions" about the pressures, stresses and obligations that come with living an ordained life. Clergy promise in their ordination vows to do their best to live their lives "in accordance with the teachings of Christ," so that they "may be a wholesome example to all people."

Getz and Wirth said they hoped seminaries and local clergy formation programs especially would use those videos so that more and more new clergy would be schooled in the process and become aware of how to protect the people they are meant to shepherd. Getz said she saw the website as offering a flexible way for formation programs to provide students with uniform knowledge about the rules and their intentions. ■

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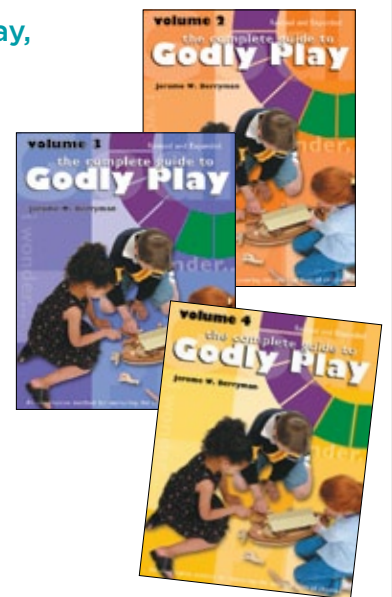
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