Episcopal
JOURNAL

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Standing Rock Sioux Tribe protests pipeline

Episcopalians join action

By Lynette Wilson and David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

A federal judge on Sept. 9 ruled against blocking work on a section of a four-state oil-pipeline project that sparked Native-American protests in North Dakota that have generated national attention and drawn support from Episcopal leaders, among others.

But within hours, three federal agencies said they would stop construction and asked the pipeline builder, Energy Transfer Partners, to "voluntarily pause" work on government land, which tribal officials say contain sacred burial sites and artifacts.

"What [U.S. District Judge James Boasberg] ruled on has become a moot point," said the Rev. John Floberg, canon missioner for the Episcopal Church community on the Standing Rock reservation. "The Department of Justice with the Department of the Interior and the [U.S.] Army Corps of Engineers called for construction to stand down 20 miles to the east and 20 miles to the west of Lake Oahe until all issues have been adjudicated."

The federal agencies said they would stop construction in response to issues raised by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and other tribal nations specifically regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline and generally regarding the "pipeline-related decision-making process."

"The Army will not authorize constructing the Dakota Access pipeline on corps land bordering or under Lake Oahe until it can determine whether it will need to reconsider any of its previous decisions regarding the Lake Oahe site under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) or other federal laws. Therefore, construction of the pipeline on Army Corps land bordering or under Lake Oahe will not go forward at this time," the agencies' statement said

While participating in a clean-water rally

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Photo/Standing Rock Dakota Access Pipeline Opposition via Facebook

Law enforcement officers block protestors who oppose the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Episcopal churches, community partners help educate and register voters

By Pat McCaughan
Episcopal News Service

Registering voters in mid-August at La Iglesia Episcopal San Pablo in Houston was just the start of an Episcopal Diocese of Texas and Mi Familia Vota partnership to help get out the vote.

Increased public awareness and interest, possibly due to a contentious election season, sparked the initiative, said Paulette E. Martin, diocesan communications specialist."People want to be involved. The whole political arena right now is very important to them." "We figured it would be a good way to educate people and to give them tools to register people to vote, and to encourage their families and friends to help make a difference," she said.

Ten people at the event registered to vote. Others were trained and "deputized" to begin canvassing local communities to help more residents make their voices heard in the Nov. 8 general election, she said.

Photo/Paulette E. Martin

Maria Villenas from Mi Familia Vota registers residents to vote at Houston's La Iglesia Episcopal San Pablo.

With an Oct. 11 state voter registration deadline approaching, Carlos Duarte, Mi Familia Vota's Texas state director, said he hoped to reach additional voters who feel marginalized and who may not have engaged in the process previously.

"With Spanish-speaking communities, they are always torn in participating in the political process because they feel that none of the political parties represents their interests 100 percent," Duarte said.

"They feel that one mirrors their position on abortion while the other agrees with their stand on immigration and acceptance and views for diversity. They are always torn between those options and sometimes that leads to paralysis."

Not so this year, he said."This year, particularly, the presidential campaign has been

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ANGLICAN DIGEST

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

WCC, Roman Catholics discuss relations

The relationship between the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Roman Catholic Church was being reviewed in a five-day meeting that began Sept. 13 at the Ecumenical Centre in Switzerland.

The WCC is "a fellowship of 348 member churches who together represent more than half a billion Christians around the world," according to its website. Most Anglican provinces are members of the WCC, as are most of the world's Orthodox churches. Its membership also includes Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, African Instituted, Assyrian and Evangelical churches.

The Roman Catholic Church has never been a member, although it is part of local ecumenical groups of churches in different parts of the world.

In 1965, following what the WCC calls "the ecumenical thaw in relationships . . . encouraged by Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council," a Joint Working Group was established between members of the WCC and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Last year, in a message to mark the group's 50th anniversary, Pope Francis urged it to "become ever more of a 'think tank,' open to all the opportunities and challenges facing the churches today in the mission of accompanying suffering humanity on their path to the kingdom, by imbuing society and culture with gospel truths and values."

A review of the relations between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church is a key focus of the September meeting of the group, co-moderated by Metropolitan Nifon of Târgoviște from the Roma-

nian Orthodox Church and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin, the Roman Catholic Church's primate of Ireland.

"One session in the five-day program aims to address 'co-operation on inter-religious relations, on refugees and migrants, and on justice and peace,'" the WCC said. "There also will be discussions of Pope Francis's exhortations *Evangelii Gaudium* and *Amoris Laetitia*, and of his encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

"Other topics before the group are to include finding doctrinal common ground, world mission and evangelization, marriage and the family, environmental threats to God's creation, the ongoing ecumenical pilgrimage and 'building the agenda of the JWG for the coming years.'"

Women's center opens in South Korea

After 20 years of prayers, hopes and fundraising, a new Women's Mission Center opened in Seoul, South Korea in early September.

Proposed at the Anglican Church of Korea's Women's Forum in 1993, the project launched in 1995 but only now is ready to open.

"The center will serve not only Anglican women but also all women in need by providing various outreaching programs and projects," said the project's chair, Ruth Choi. Programs will include retreats and *lectio divina* sessions for small groups; Bible studies; classes on making the Anglican rosary; marriage, parents, grandparents and language courses; programs for the elderly; youth camp; and a church leadership course for women, she said.

Photo/Anglican Church of Korea

The new Women's Mission Center in Seoul is the fruition of a two-decade-long vision.

"Furthermore, the center aims to be a hub for women in need and expert groups who can help them. From the beginning, the center will begin the meeting of mums who lost their children, which a first-hand experienced individual will lead with specialist help," she said. "This kind of meeting program will be expanded to other areas such as single mums, eating-disorder sufferers, caregivers of people with dementia and so on."

The center also will develop as a referral center, connecting women with needs with appropriate experts for support and assistance. These will include released female prisoners, defectors from North Korea and their children, and victims of violence and discrimination.

— All articles from Anglican Communion News Service

Bombing victims remembered

The bishop of Davao, Philippines, Jonathan Casimina, led a candlelit memorial service at the site of a Sept. 2 terrorist attack at the Roxas Night Market. Some 14 people were killed and around 70 injured when two improvised explosive devices were detonated as people enjoyed the city's vibrant night life. The market is home to street stalls and cafes selling a range of merchandise and food and is a popular destination on the island.

Photo/Diocese of Davao

A candlelit memorial service honors terror attack victims in Davao, Philippines.

A makeshift memorial shrine of flowers and votive candles was built up at the site alongside placards containing messages of condolences for the victims and bereaved families as well as words of hope and encouragement for the city in mourning.

"Amidst the gloomy atmosphere of fear and speculations, rays of hope still shine through the darkness with the continued presence and demonstration of solidarity and resilience among local residents rooted in their faith," Brother Gilbert Martinez from the Diocese of Davao said. "The outpouring of support from all sectors both here and abroad in responding to the plight of the victims continued, and providing support to the city's immediate and valiant efforts to bury the dead with dignity, ease the pain of the survivors, and pursue justice."

The candlelit memorial service — Candles of Hope for Unity, Justice and Peace — was held four days after the bomb attack "to gather all people of goodwill from all walks of life notwithstanding ethnic and religious differences to stand in solidarity with the victims, the bereaved and all who suffered from the deadly bomb blast," Brother Gilbert said.

The diocese sent liturgy outlines to partner churches and dioceses elsewhere in the Anglican Communion so that simultaneous candle-lit memorial services of prayer could be held.

The service in the Roxas night market included a message from Casimina and was built around the Lord's Prayer and the Prayer of St. Francis. ■

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Episcopalians are supporting members of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North Dakota who oppose the construction of an oil pipeline across land belonging to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Sioux say the Dakota Access Pipeline will affect lands covered by treaties with the government and will desecrate sacred sites. A spill, they say, would pollute drinking water that they draw from the Missouri River. Although it's federal land, one could note that the Sioux have been here a lot longer than the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

It's not the first time natural-resource development has clashed with indigenous people. A 2011 article in the Oil, Gas and Energy Law publication noted that, "with increasing market demand, the search for natural resources increasingly impacts indigenous cultures." As a society, we do want to drive our cars, power industry and heat our homes as inexpensively as possible.

So several issues are in tension, but why are church folks involved?

Environmental issues are in the forefront. Christian supporters are responding to Native Americans' deep spiritual connection with the land, aligning with churches' expression of regard for God's creation.

Another issue is reconciliation. Churches played a significant role in destroying native culture. Now "this is an opportunity to stand with the tribe and affirm and follow their leadership in taking one more step toward reconciliation," Shantha Ready Alonso, executive director of Creation Justice Ministries, told Religion News Service.

That said, this situation shouldn't be reduced to stereotypes of white guilt and noble natives. Indigenous people populate the Christian congregations of North Dakota and are our Episcopal brothers and sisters. They also use energy resources. However, acknowledging and supporting their concerns should be of paramount importance. It wasn't always that way. ■

NEWS

Anglican task group meets to 'maintain conversation'

By Adrian Butcher
Anglican Communion News Service

Members of a task group set up after the Primates' Meeting in January to "maintain conversation" has met for the first time and stressed their determination to work together. But they said the process would take time.

The primates asked Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby to appoint the group to restore relationships, rebuild mutual trust, heal the legacy of hurt and explore deep differences. Welby presented the group's mandate to the Anglican Consultative Council's 16th meeting in Lusaka in April, where it was received and affirmed. In September, seven members of the group met at the Anglican Communion Office in London. An eighth joined via video conferencing.

The Episcopal Church's acceptance of same-sex marriage was a source of contention at the Primates' Meeting, where a majority of Anglican Communion church leaders called for temporary sanctions on the church.

"What we are trying to do here is mirror what we desire for the whole communion," said Bishop Linda Nicholls, coadjutor bishop of Huron in the Anglican Church of Canada. "We are trying to practice in our engagement with each other here what we long for in the wider communion."

Archbishop Ian Ernest, from the Province of the Indian Ocean, said exchanges within the group had been frank and open.

"What has come out very clearly is the level of transparency that we have in the group. We have been able to be open and speak openly about our differences," he said. "We also recognize the richness of the communion. And we all love our communion — that is what binds us together."

Bishop Paul Sarker, moderator of the Church of Bangladesh, echoed the same theme. "Our cultures and backgrounds are very different, and we express our spirituality differently, but we are moving forward together," he said.

Finding solutions will take time, said Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

"Quick fixes aren't long-term solutions," he said. "Long-term solutions require long-term work. We are talking about relationships. You don't build or renew or heal relationships overnight. So, we are going to take whatever time it takes — but we are going to do it.

Photo/ACNS

Members of the archbishop of Canterbury's task group gather at the Anglican Communion office in London. Shown in the back row, from left, are Archbishop Philip Freier, Archbishop Ian Ernest and Bishop Paul Sarker. In the front, from left, are Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, Elizabeth Paver, Rosemary Mbogo, Bishop Linda Nicholls and Bishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon.

Asked if he felt there had been progress, Curry said, "Well, we are here and we are doing it."

Reflecting on the diversity, Canon Rosemary Mbogo, provincial secretary of the Anglican Church of Kenya, said there was no grouping within the Anglican Communion whose views would not be listened to.

"That is really needed if we are talking about healing and walking and working together in a unified communion," she said, adding that she had been pleased at the progress made. "It's gone well. We have covered a lot of ground on understanding each other and the people we represent. We have been coming to know each other by spending time together. There is definitely hope — I am convinced of that."

Ernest agreed. "It has gone beyond my expectations," he said.

Bishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon, Anglican Communion secretary general, said he was grateful to the participants for the sacrifices they had made to attend the meeting.

"I am really encouraged by the depth of trust that is beginning to be seen and also the hope expressed by the participants," he said.

The group stressed the importance of prayer in the work it were doing.

"We have committed to pray for each other," said Archbishop Philip Freier of the Anglican Church of Australia. "There may be a sense that this is just a 'talk-fest.' But this [prayer] is a profound action consistent with the theme."

Prayer is the foundation of the group's work, and it is vital to know the will of God for its direction, Mbogo said

Welby formally welcomed the group and prayed for them before talks began. He also attended the first session, during which he stressed there was no pre-set agenda and that the group was to appoint its own chair.

Idowu-Fearon hosted the group and acted as secretary. The group is scheduled to meet annually with additional meetings held electronically. The date of the next meeting is yet to be confirmed. ■

Australian vote will address same-sex marriage

By Gavin Drake
Anglican Communion News Service

Archbishop Philip Freier, primate of Australia, in early September welcomed a proposed referendum on whether the country should allow same-sex marriages but expressed concern about the "tenor of the debate."

Freier

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull promised a referendum on the issue during his campaign in the country's general election in July. As Turnbull leads the new coalition government, a referendum is expected, but the details have not been announced. Opposition to a plebiscite remains in Parliament — even from supporters of same-sex marriage.

"The proposed plebiscite on same-sex marriage has been one of the more contentious topics in 2016," Freier said. "Individual Anglicans have adopted a variety of positions taken in good conscience based on their Christian understanding of the principles and issues, and this is right and proper.

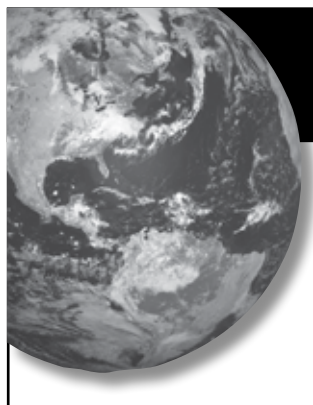
"Personally, I welcome the plebiscite, though with strong reservations that we must guard the tenor of the debate and keep it positive. The government promised a plebiscite in campaigning for the July election, and, having been elected, they have the reasonable expectation of honoring this commitment. Further, those who oppose same-sex marriage will surely find it easier to accept it becoming approved in law if they have been given a vote."

The archbishop said that it would "be important that Christians — and others — vote according to their conscience and their view of what is best for society" and that it was "proper to expect that the Parliament should honor the results."

"Should the vote be in favor of same-sex marriage, as suggested by the opinion polls, the church must accept that this is now part of the landscape. We can still stand for and offer holy matrimony between a man and a woman as a sacred ordinance given by God, while accepting that the state has endorsed a wider view of marriage.

"I do not believe that the Anglican Church in Australia is likely to revise its doctrine of marriage," he said. "But that said, the church also understands the desire of two people to express their commitment of love and self-sacrifice to each other and that Christians have not always shown the respect or perspective they should. I am very concerned that the discussion does not become harsh or vilifying — on either side, for it is not only Christians who have sometimes failed on this score."

This is not "a theoretical issue" for those people where it "directly impinges on their lives," he said. "We understand that sometimes gays, lesbians and others have felt judged and rejected, even ostracized, inside the church, and that we have to be much more pastorally sensitive in future." ■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EPISCOPAL LIVES

Partnership addresses gender-based violence

Episcopal Relief & Development and Islamic Relief USA (IRUSA) have launched a partnership to increase engagement among Christian and Muslim faith leaders to end gender-based violence (GBV) in Liberia. IRUSA's support expands the ongoing GBV program that Episcopal Relief & Development launched in 2015 with a three-year grant from the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. Implemented by the organization's local partner, Episcopal Church of Liberia Relief and Development, this program equips local faith leaders — including youth — to prevent violence and increase support for survivors through utilizing the *Faith Leader GBV Prevention and Response Toolkit* and other strategies.

"It is very important that faith communities work together to support victims of gender-based violence or any other form of violence," said Anwar Khan, CEO of Islamic Relief USA. "Our faith teaches us to respect and care for each other; to respect the rights and dignity of mothers, sisters, wives and daughters. It is very important that women have safe spaces to pursue their aspirations."

In Liberia, 45 percent of women aged 15-49 have experienced violence during their lifetime, and 18 percent have experienced sexual violence. GBV is pervasive throughout Liberia, attributable in part to social and institutional breakdown during the country's 14-year civil war. Christian and Muslim faith leaders through the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia and other groups helped to broker peace during the conflict, and in recent years these leaders have leveraged their influence and credibility to address GBV as well.

"We are working with faith leaders to examine religious texts that have been used to justify violence against women, and instead interpret them to encourage dignity and respect," said Annette Musu Kiawu, the national director for Episcopal Church of Liberia Relief & Development. "Christians and Muslims have worked together for peace and justice for many years, and there is tremendous power in our communities to promote and embody positive change on this issue."

The GBV program trains a diverse group of stakeholders including pastors, imams, lay leaders, village elders, chiefs and youth group leaders on the causes and effects of GBV, how to support survivors and how to effectively and sustainably change attitudes and behavior regarding GBV in their communities. Active in six districts in Grand Cape Mount and River Cess counties, this program is part of a larger campaign of the Liberian Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to end GBV.

— Episcopal Relief & Development

EDS names interim president

The Rev. William C. Nelsen, college administrator, nonprofit executive and Lutheran pastor, will serve as interim president of Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) during the 2016-2017 academic year.

Nelsen

For nearly 18 years, Nelsen was president of Scholarship America, the largest private-sector scholarship organization in the country. Previously, he was president of Augustana University in Sioux Falls, S.D., and vice president, dean and professor at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn. In recent years, he has served in interim positions as vice president of development at North Carolina Wesleyan College, vice president for university relations and development at Tennessee State University and university minister for advancement and church relations and interim president at Midland University, where he also received a bachelor degree in 1963.

"EDS has had a long-standing devotion to excellence in theological education, inclusiveness and social justice. With my experience in both academic and church settings, I am looking forward to working with the people of EDS in forging new and exciting ways to serve both church and society," said Nelsen, who was a volunteer with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1965, when the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was the organization's president.

A former Fulbright scholar, Nelsen has published widely on faculty development, higher-education funding issues and nonprofit management. In 2008, he was ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) after completing coursework at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. He has served as a pastor and director of the Lilly Endowment Project for equipping clergy and laity in the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA.

In July, the EDS board voted to end degree programs in July 2017 in order to conserve the seminary's resources for its future mission. At that meeting, the Very Rev. Frank Fornaro, interim president and dean since 2015, announced his resignation.

Nelsen was chosen unanimously as president from among four candidates by both the trustees' transition committee, which conducted the search, and by the board in a meeting by phone. He will lead a search for an Episcopal chaplain for EDS.

— Canticle Communications

Kanuga appoints president

The Rev. Michael Radford Sullivan is the new president of Kanuga Conferences, a conference, camp and retreat center near Hendersonville, N.C. He succeeds Stanley B. Hubbard Jr., who is retiring, in November.

Sullivan

Sullivan has served as rector of Holy Innocents' Episcopal Parish, Atlanta, since 2009. He brought stability to finances of the 2,500-member parish and has extensive strategic planning and fundraising experience, including guiding a $10 million renovation and expansion of church facilities while also assisting with a $22.5 million capital project for a STEM building at Holy Innocents' School and $5 million for an administrative complex.

Previously, Sullivan was rector at St. John's Episcopal Church, Lynchburg, Va., and canon for mission at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, in Columbia, S.C.

— Kanuga Conferences

New general manager joins Church Insurance

William "Bill" F. Murray has been appointed senior vice president and general manager of the Church Insurance Companies (CIC). He replaces Rod Webster, who is retiring.

Murray will be responsible for the management and oversight of CIC, which provides property and liability coverage for Episcopal Church institutions. He will report directly to CPG's chief operating officer, Frank Armstrong, and will be based in Bennington, Vt.

Murray

Murray served as chief underwriting officer, casualty/public risk, of Houston Casualty Company, a provider of property- and casualty-insurance products and services. Previously, he held senior management positions in several midsize insurance organizations throughout the United States. He also served as a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy and was a lance corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps.

— Church Pension Group

Bishop Spong recovering from stroke

Retired Diocese of Newark Bishop John Shelby Spong, 85, had a stroke Sept. 10 before a speaking engagement in Marquette, Mich., the diocese reported. A few days later, he was transported to a rehabilitation center in Morristown, N.J., not far from his home, Louie Crew Clay, a friend and long-time member of the diocese, reported on Facebook.

Spong

A doctor in Michigan said that Spong would "get at least 80 percent of his movement back," the Rev. Janet Broderick, rector of St. Peter's, Morristown, wrote to her congregation. "Cognitively he is not in any trouble at all (we knew that!)."

Spong and his wife, Christine, attend St. Peter's, where he frequently lectures and where in June he celebrated his 40th anniversary as a bishop.

— Episcopal Journal

Sewanee offers disaster chaplaincy training

Clergy and spiritual caregivers of the Episcopal Church and religious leaders of all faiths can participate in a disaster chaplaincy training in Sewanee, Tenn., on Nov. 15-16. Emergency managers and disaster mental health professionals may also take this course to develop their knowledge of spiritual-care best practices during disasters.

The Beecken Center of the School of Theology at the University of the South in Sewanee is offering the program in partnership with the National Disaster Interfaiths Network. The curriculum prepares chaplains and credentialed religious leaders to provide spiritual and emotional care during deployment to disaster sites as well as within their own communities. The course comprises four four-hour sessions covering disaster operations, disaster spiritual care, disaster mental health and self-care for caregivers.

Participants who complete this certification can volunteer as a chaplain in their own diocese or faith community, or with the network and its national partners. The network also can assist unaffiliated volunteers in finding disaster spiritual-care volunteer opportunities in local communities across the United States.

FEMA's online IS 100 course on the Incident Command System must be completed before this training. To register, visit **http://beeckencenter.sewanee.edu/events/chaplaincy-training-nov-2016.**

— Beeken Center

NEWS

Episcopalians serve in Young Adult Service Corps

Twenty young adults representing 18 Episcopal Church dioceses are serving as missionaries in the Young Adult Service Corps (YASC) for the 2016-2017 term throughout the Anglican Communion. Five of them are continuing their ministries with YASC for a second year.

YASC is a ministry of the Episcopal Church for young adults, ages 21-30, who are interested in exploring their faith in new ways by living and serving in communities around the Anglican Communion.

Each YASC missionary maintains a blog, detailing his or her service, reflections and adventures. Blogs enable the young adults to serve as evangelists both in their host dioceses and at home, said Elizabeth Boe, Episcopal Church global networking officer and a former YASC missionary in Tanzania. The 15 new missionaries, their home dioceses and host dioceses, are:

• Adrienne Davis, Diocese of Southern Virginia, serving with Helpers for Domestic Helpers at St. John's Cathedral in the Diocese of Hong Kong Island.

• Lexy Fields, Diocese of Florida, teaching at Hogar Escuela in the Diocese of Costa Rica.

• Alexa Henault, Diocese of Rhode Island, teaching at Hogar Escuela in the Diocese of Costa Rica.

• Mitch Honan, Diocese of Connecticut, teaching at the St. Barnabas Agricultural Center in the Diocese of Haiti.

• Zach Jeffers, Diocese of Upper South Carolina, serving with Mission to Seafarers in the Diocese of Western Kowloon, Hong Kong.

• Kate Jewett-Williams, Diocese of Dallas and Diocese of Oklahoma, serving with Tsedaqah Community Ministry in the Diocese of Liverpool.

• Jourdan Johnson, Diocese of Connecticut, working with social services outreach in the Diocese of Southwestern Brazil.

• Jack Karn, Diocese of Vermont, working with Jerusalem Peace Builders in the Diocese of Jerusalem.

• Emily Kirk, Diocese of East Tennessee, serving with Tsedaqah Community Ministry in the Diocese of Liverpool.

• Elijah Lewis, Diocese of Upper South Carolina, implementing projects at the St. Barnabas Agricultural Center in the Diocese of Haiti.

• Kellan Lyman, Diocese of Atlanta, working with the ECARE Foundation in the Diocese of Northern Philippines.

• Wil Merchant, Episcopal Church in South Carolina, serving with the Asian Rural Institute in the Anglican Church in Japan.

• Charles Merchant, Episcopal Church in South Carolina, serving with the Holy Cross School in the Diocese of Grahamstown, South Africa.

• Brooklyn Payne, Diocese of Missouri, serving with the Bella Vista Girls Home in the Diocese of Panama.

• Tristan Tucker, Diocese of Springfield, teaching at All Saints' School in the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines.

The five missionaries serving a second year are: Naomi Cunningham and Tristan Holmberg, Diocese of Kansas; Rachel McDaniel, Diocese of West Tennessee; James Rose, Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, Diocese of Georgia; Bryan Vélez García, Diocese of Puerto Rico. ■

Speakers, workshops announced for evangelism conference

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will be the keynote speaker for Evangelism Matters, a churchwide evangelism conference on Nov. 18-19 in Dallas. Other speakers will include the Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, Episcopal Church canon for evangelism and reconciliation.

Evangelism Matters is designed for anyone who would like to learn more about evangelism and available resources.

The main panel presentation, What Is Evangelism?, will feature a group of Episcopal evangelists, including the Rev. Alberto Cutié, Diocese of Southeast Florida; Carrie Boren Headington, missioner for evangelism in the Diocese of Dallas; the Rev. Marcus Halley, Diocese of West Missouri; and Mary Parmer, creator of the Invite *Welcome* Connect program in the Diocese of Texas. The panel will be moderated by the Rev. Canon Scott Gunn, executive director of Forward Movement, which is co-sponsoring the conference with the Presiding Bishop's Office.

Workshops have been designed for those who are new to sharing their faith as well as for confident evangelists looking for fresh resources. Among the workshops and the presenters will be:

• Compassionate Evangelism: A Non-Judgmental Approach to Sharing Your Faith: the Rev. Canon Dr. Fred Vergara, Episcopal Church Missioner for Asiamerican and Pacific Islanders ministries.

• How to Contextualize the Message of Jesus in U.S. Hispanic Cultures: the Rev. Luis Andrade, rector of St. Helena's, Burr Ridge, Ill. Our Stories Speak of God: the Rev. Hershey Mallette Stephens, Trinity Wall Street, New York.

• Social Media, Evangelism and Connecting with Emerging Cultures: the Rev. Canon Anthony Guillén, Episcopal Church missioner for Latino/Hispanic Ministries.

Key portions of Evangelism Matters will be live webcast.

The event is hosted by the Diocese of Dallas and Church of the Transfiguration, Dallas, where the activities will be held. Spanish translation will be provided for all plenaries, worship and several workshops.

The schedule, registration and workshops are listed at **www.evangelismmatters.org**. Registration costs $125 per person; deadline is Oct. 15.

Registration does not include lodging or transportation. Lodging options are listed for attendees to make their own arrangements.

For more information, contact Alyssa Finke at 800-543-1813 or afinke@forwardmovement.org, Spellers at sspellers@episcopalchurch.org or Gunn at sgunn@forwardmovement.org. ■

United Thank Offering grants available

Applications are being accepted for the 2017 United Thank Offering (UTO) grants focused on evangelism and reconciliation: 10 grants of $2,500 for young adults (ages 19-30) and 10 grants of $2,500 to seminarians (no age limit).

A ministry to promote thankfulness and mission in the Episcopal Church, UTO awards grants for projects that address human needs and help alleviate poverty.

Young adults should submit their applications to their dioceses for screening and selection. The bishop will select one application per diocese. A bishop's signature is required on the application.

Seminarian grant applications are intended for start-up costs of new ministries. Seminarians must hail from one of the accredited seminaries of the Episcopal Church or from the Commission for Theological education for Latin American and the Caribbean. Seminarians should submit their applications to their deans for screening and selection. Each dean will select two applications per seminary. The dean's signature is required on the application.

Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. EST Nov. 4 to utoapps@episcopalchurch.org. Applicants will be notified of their application status after January's Executive Council meeting. For more information, visit **www.episcopalchurch.org**. ■

NEWS

North Dakota churches set sights on energy sustainability

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

Protests over an oil pipeline in North Dakota have thrust the Standing Rock Sioux Nation, and many of its members who are Episcopalians, into the national spotlight. But for the several Episcopal congregations on Native-American reservations in North Dakota, the focus on energy issues and the environment is nothing new.

Long before protesters in August initially succeeded in halting work on part of the pipeline, the Diocese of North Dakota began work on an energy-sustainability project in its seven native ministries and congregations. That project got a big boost this year when the United Thank Offering (UTO) awarded it a $50,000 grant, combined with an additional $45,000 from a sustainability initiative funded through the General Convention budget.

Shifting to renewable energy sources — solar, wind and water — assists congregations by saving money and fits indigenous peoples' spiritual calling to protect the earth and the natural resources that are part of God's creation, church leaders say.

The first step is an audit of the parish buildings on four reservations in North Dakota to identify ways of making them more energy efficient. Then most of the money will fund building upgrades and, at one of the churches, a solar power project.

Church leaders also see the project as a way of expanding their capacity for outreach: If they can make it cost-effective to open churches and parish halls at hours other than Sunday worship services, new ministries can take shape, especially those that cater to young people.

This energy-sustainability effort at the congregational level aligns with church members' opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline, said the Rev. John Floberg, canon missioner for the Episcopal Church community on the Standing Rock Reservation.

The reservation draws its drinking water from the Missouri River. The tribe is concerned that the pipeline could contaminate the water. But fossil fuels, such as the oil carried by the pipeline, heat and power most of the buildings there.

"If we never see our use of these things as on our shoulders as well, and try to find ways to mitigate that, then shame on us," Floberg said.

From vision to action

Floberg is pastor of the three Episcopal congregations on the North Dakota side of the Standing Rock Reservation, though he oversees the sustainability project for all of the diocese's Native-American congregations, including those on Turtle Mountain Reservation, Spirit Lake Reservation and Fort Berthold Reservation.

The scope of this project is comprehensive, with all church buildings under review. It is similar to an effort made three years ago at one of the churches, St. James' Church in Cannon Ball. After a fire had destroyed its former building, the St. James congregation received a UTO grant to include a geothermal heating and cooling system when rebuilding.

Photo/St. James' Church via Facebook

St. James' Church in Cannon Ball, N.D. rebuilt a more energy-efficient church after a 2012 fire.

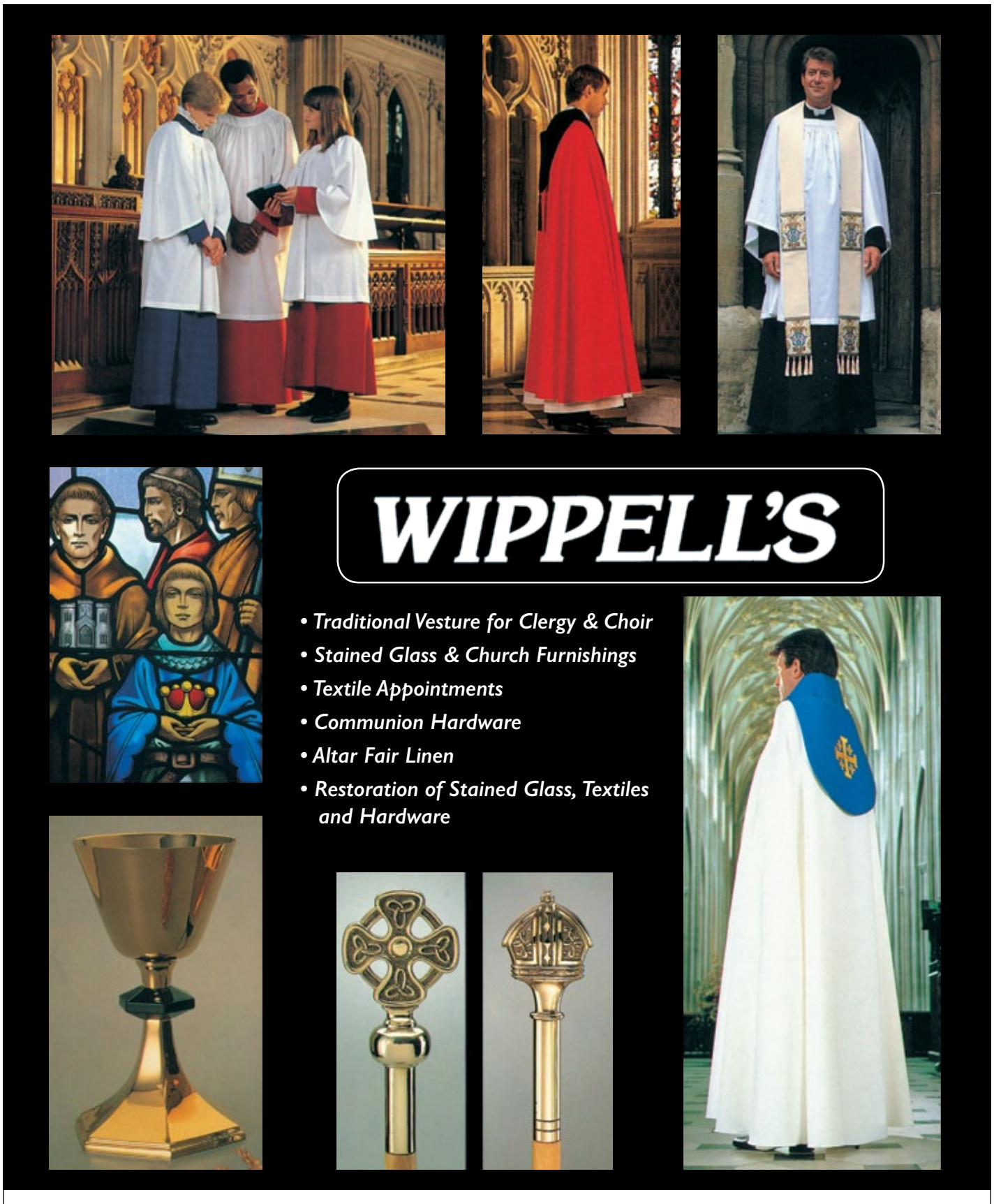
To heat the building for use beyond Sunday mornings and to keep the pipes from freezing costs between $1,500 and $3,000 per month in the coldest part of winter. With the energy-efficient system, the church spends about $250 a month on utilities, Floberg said.

The diocese then sought to improve energy use in all church buildings on North Dakota reservations and applied for another UTO grant.

These congregations serve some of the poorest communities in the country. "Without greater efficiency or replacement of higher-costing energy sources, the simple answer for our congregations is to turn down or turn off the heat to their buildings for a week or in some cases for months at a time," the grant application said.

The purpose for the grant money, then, is not only to catch up on deferred maintenance at the churches but also a "long-term reduction in the use of fossil fuel." ■

David Paulsen is a freelance writer based in Milwaukee and a member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Wauwatosa, Wisc.



NEWS

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in the capital, Floberg spoke by phone about the agencies' decision. "This is extremely great news. The speakers here at the rally in Bismarck have declared that a victory," he said. "The judge's ruling would have allowed for the corps to move it ahead, but the corps is not obligated to give the permit."

The judge's decision was in response to the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's lawsuit objecting to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approval of the Dakota Access Pipeline. The Sioux argue the pipeline would cross treaty lands, disturb sacred sites and threaten drinking water for 8,000 members who live on the tribe's nearly 2.3 million-acre reservation, located just south of where the pipeline crosses under the Missouri River.

The company behind the pipeline project, Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners, counters that the pipeline is safe, economical and necessary to transport North Dakota oil to markets and refineries across the country. On July 26, federal regulators issued permits allowing the $3.8 billion pipeline to cross four states: North Dakota, South Dakota, Illinois and Iowa.

Emotional day

"The federal judge's rejection of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe's request for an injunction to halt the construction of the Dakota Access pipeline, followed closely by a joint statement of the Departments of Justice, the Army and the Interior doing just that for the time being, have provided for those of us who are standing in solidarity with Standing Rock a roller coaster day of emotions," said North Dakota Bishop Michael Smith. "I am mindful of Standing Rock Chairman Dave Archambault's words of a few days ago that 'this is the beginning of a long legal process.' We in the Diocese of North Dakota are grateful for the support we have received in this struggle from across the Episcopal Church and are aware it will need to continue. We will continue to work and pray for a just and peaceful resolution to this difficult situation."

Standing Rock Episcopalians have been present at the protests since the beginning. On Sept. 8, Heidi J. Kim, the Episcopal Church's missioner for racial reconciliation, and the Rev. Charles A. Wynder Jr., a deacon and the Episcopal Church's missioner for social justice and advocacy engagement, joined in solidarity with Episcopalians, the Sioux tribe and thousands of other indigenous, justice and environmental advocates at the protest site near Standing Rock. Kim and Wynder joined Floberg at the rally in Bismarck.

Photo/Courtesy of John Floberg via Facebook

The Rev. John Floberg, who has ministered on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation for 25 years, and Carmine Goodhouse, a member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Fort Yates, N.D., stand near an Episcopal Church flag that was added to the protest against the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Floberg expressed thanks for the support of the Episcopal Church, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ, all of which have supported protesters. (The Episcopal Advocacy Guide to the Dakota Access Pipeline is available at **www.episcopalchurch.org**.)

"It continues to be a legal fight. Protests of protection will continue," said Floberg, adding that 200-plus indigenous nations also have signed on in support of the Standing Rock tribe. "Our unity will continue, and our determination to protect the water and the treaty rights of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe remain firm."

The federal agencies' action on the heels of the judge's decision shows that God works in mysterious ways, said the Rev. Brandon Mauai, an Episcopal deacon on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation.

"This is an ongoing fight," he said. The federal agencies' action "shows that prayers are being answered, in the most unexpected way."

The federal agencies also said in the statement that the Standing Rock case highlighted the need for serious discussion regarding reform aimed toward incorporating tribes' views on "these types of infrastructure projects," including better ways to include tribes' input regarding land protection, resources and treaty rights into decisions.

The rallies and protests go beyond North Dakota. Clean-water advocates, allies of indigenous peoples and supporters of the No North Dakota Access Pipeline movement, hashtag #NoDAPL, have staged rallies nationwide.

In anticipation of the Sept. 9 ruling, North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple activated the National Guard to assist local law-enforcement officials as needed near the Standing Rock protest site.

Earlier, the situation had turned violent when protestors clashed with private security guards hired by Energy Transfer Partners. The guards used dogs and pepper spray against protesters who had assembled to halt construction on a sacred tribal burial ground. Four private security guards and two guard dogs also were injured.

On Sept. 6, Boasberg granted the tribe's request for a temporary halt to construction on the section of the pipeline crossing the Missouri River, but he allowed it to progress on the segment that includes the burial site.

Some members of nearby Episcopal congregations joined the front lines of the protests or offered their support for the hundreds — and at times thousands — of people camped near where the pipeline company had intended to begin construction.

Photo/Indigenous Environmental Network via Facebook

People protesting the Dakota Access Pipeline stand at sunset in the Camp of Sacred Stones near a sign reading "mni wiconi," Lakota for "water is life."

The cause has resonated with Episcopalians who have stood with the Dakota people since their exile from Minnesota during the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862. There are nine Episcopal churches on the Standing Rock reservation. On Sept. 5, the churches issued a letter expressing their solidarity with the Sioux Nation.

"We are called to be a witness. We are called to be faithful among the people that we serve," the letter said. "We are called to be guardians of the soul. In the midst of this trouble, we pray and work for reconciliation."

The Diocese of North Dakota issued a statement in August expressing support for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry followed with a supportive statement, calling the protest action "one that joins the fight for racial justice and reconciliation with climate justice and caring for God's creation as a matter of stewardship." ■

Lynette Wilson is an editor and reporter for Episcopal News Service. David Paulsen is a freelance writer based in Milwaukee.

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EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE OF THE DEAF
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so polarized, it's made them want to get involved."

Mi Familia Vota is a national nonprofit organization with field offices in Arizona, Nevada, California, Colorado, Florida and Texas that "seeks to unite the Latino community and its allies to promote social and economic justice through increased civic participation," Duarte said.

The partnership of Mi Familia Vota and the Episcopal Diocese of Texas represents the first time "in five years of doing this, that a church actually approached me to partner with them," said Duarte, who was planning a subsequent voter registration event with the diocese."We do a lot of work with churches, but usually we have to go and convince them to get involved, and it's always very difficult."

Churches are somewhat skittish about political involvement because, as nonprofit organizations, they must adhere to certain guidelines regarding political campaigns or risk losing their Internal Revenue Service nonprofit status, Martin said.

But the Episcopal Public Policy Network's Election Engagement Toolkit "was just one more reason we thought organizing this effort would be a good idea, because we're not telling people how to vote, we're just giving them the tools to vote and educating them about it," she said.

The network is "calling upon congregations to engage in conversation on public- policy issues, to develop voter registration and issue education campaigns and to advocate for protection of voting rights."

The toolkit, available online, contains guidelines and resources for church political involvement and cites the church's position that "voting is an act of Christian stewardship." The website also invites Episcopalians to sign a pledge that they will vote in the Nov. 8 election.

"There are a lot of productive and good things that churches could do in the political process that doesn't get them afoul of their nonprofit status," said Julie Anderson, auditor for Pierce County, Wash.

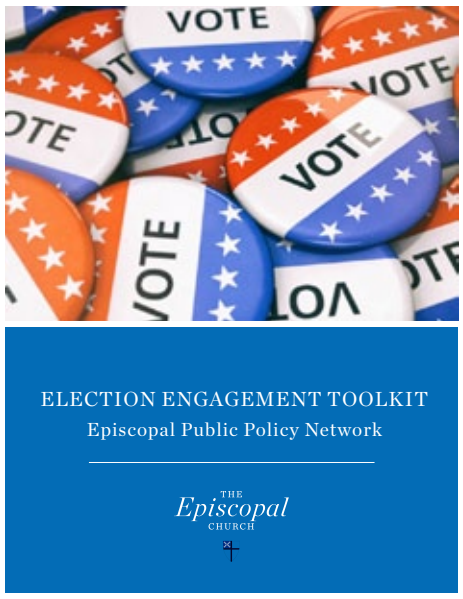
Earlier this year Anderson assisted in a training and voter-registration event at the Holy Family of Jesus Episcopal Church in Tacoma, Wash.

Some 70 Cambodian senior citizens registered to vote. Anderson has been working with the Korean Women's Association and its Indochinese Cultural Service Center, housed on the church's campus, to help educate voters."Through [the association], I visited just about every one of their senior meal sites and did voter registration."

Churches are especially poised to assist in such efforts because they "are community centers," Anderson said. "They are places that people gather and many churches are already actively engaged in using their resources and facilities to reach marginalized populations."

Such civic engagement could include hosting candidate forums "as long as they're well-balanced, that all the candidates have an opportunity to participate but [the events are] not skewed in any way," she said.

Other faith-based groups also are forging voter-initiative partnerships, such as the PICO National Network's "Together We Vote," multifaith, multiracial voter education and get-out-the-vote program. "We believe every person of faith should exercise their right to vote as an act of faith in co-creating the beloved community we all desire here on earth," PICO's political director, Bishop Dwayne Royster, said in a news release.



"We're going to train 15,000 volunteers and leaders within our federations and allied organizations to go and do the work of knocking on doors and having phone conversations" to make sure people vote.

The national- and state-based effort includes representatives from churches and other organizations, including the United Church of Christ, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC), the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Bread for the World and Sojourners.

RAC Associate Director Barbara Weinstein, in the release, also cited concern about the attempted marginalization of voters through the "systematic silencing of individuals and communal voices at the ballot box in the form of closed polling stations, limitation on early voting and onerous voter ID laws."

At least 10 states representing collectively more than 80 million people have attempted to put into place restrictive voting laws ranging from "new hurdles to registration to cutbacks on early voting to stricter voter-identification requirements," according to the American Civil Liberties Union's website.

The Rev. Joseph Pae, rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Great Neck, N.Y., said he hoped to reprise a voter registration drive held before the April 19 primary election.

The Korean American Civic Empowerment association sponsored the drive and registered about 10 first-time voters, he said.

"In the past, the Korean community has not been active or registered to vote. We have been trying to raise more voter awareness," Pae said. The gathering involved neutral conversations, voter education and assistance in completing the voter-registration forms.

"Some people were hesitating before, but they appreciated being able to attend a forum at the church," he said.

In California, where almost 650,000 new voters registered in the six weeks before the state's May 23 primary-election deadline, All Saints Church makes voter registration available every Sunday during the election season.

"We invite the League of Women Voters to host a table after our church services and take registrations as needed," said Peace and Justice Director Juliana Serrano.

The 3,000-member Pasadena church came under IRS scrutiny in 2004 after its former rector, the Rev. George Regas, preached a sermon two days before the 2004 election in which he imagined Jesus participating in a political debate with then-presidential candidates George W. Bush and John F. Kerry.

Regas told the congregation that "good people of profound faith" could endorse either candidate but criticized the Iraq War and said Jesus would have told Bush that his preemptive war strategy in Iraq "has led to disaster."

Eventually, the IRS dropped its investigation of the church. ■

Voter registration on faith groups' to-do lists

By Adelle M. Banks
Religion News Service

Religious groups ranging from black Protestants to Latino evangelicals to Reform Jews are gearing up for massive voter-registration activities to boost turnout on Election Day.

PICO National Network, a faith-based organizing network, in early August announced its "Together We Vote" plan to work with allies to seek new voters who are especially concerned about racial justice.

"We're going to be talking to over a million voters in conversations with people who have regularly been bypassed by conventions and parties and candidates," Denise Collazo, leader of the initiative and PICO's chief of staff, said at a news conference in early August at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

The campaign will focus particularly on issues such as police brutality, improved wages and keeping immigrant families together.

"We will work to withhold federal dollars from cities and states that refuse to hold police accountable for how they are treating black and brown bodies in this country," said Bishop Dwayne Royster, PICO's political director.

The Rev. Jose Arce of the National Latino Evangelical Coalition said many of the children of deported immigrants were now citizens with voting power.

"They're coming of age, and they're ready to vote," he said. "And we're ready to register them."

Activists say they also hope their efforts will counter so-called voter suppression laws they believe have reduced voting opportunities in many states. Appellate courts across the country recently have invalidated many of those restrictive voting laws.

Even as this umbrella group makes plans for coordinated efforts, especially in battleground states, individual denominations, including historically African-American churches, are making additional plans.

The Freedom Sunday Coalition has been organizing several black denominations with conference calls, talking points and social-media tips.

The Progressive National Baptist Convention held training for its church members during its Annual Session in early August in New Orleans.

"What we want is every church to be involved in registering new people, and we don't want them to feel like they have to wait for a certain day to do it," said the Rev. James C. Perkins, PNBC president. "We want them to do it every Sunday."

The African Methodist Episcopal Church held voter-education training during its quadrennial General Conference in July in Philadelphia. And it has joined other voter education activities in states across the country as well as the "Together We Vote" campaign.

"No matter what our faith is, all have some of the same concerns," said AME Bishop Adam Richardson Jr., who is working on voter registration in Florida. "One of the things that we all are striving for is to do something to ameliorate voter apathy, 'cause voter apathy is, in my opinion, worse than voter suppression. … So we have to make sure that people are mobilized to go vote." ■

NEWS

Louisiana dioceses prepare long-term response to catastrophic flooding

By Beth Colvin
Episcopal News Service

Recovery is moving forward in south Louisiana, where heavy August rains caused disastrous flooding that left 140,000 homes uninhabitable.

"The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana has entered the long-term recovery phase much quicker after this flood than we have after other disasters," said the Rev. Elaine Clements, a deacon and the diocese's disaster and preparedness coordinator. "We are engaged with Episcopal Relief & Development to formulate a long-term response. The clergy of the diocese are determining the needs and appropriate projects in the communities served by their [congregations]."

The record rain Aug. 12-14 mostly affected East Baton Rouge, Ascension, Livingston and St. Helena parishes, just northwest of New Orleans. Thirteen people died. More than 60,000 homes were destroyed along with 100,000 vehicles. Total damages are estimated at more than $8.7 billion.

"Over the last month, local churches throughout the dioceses of Louisiana and Western Louisiana have been responding to immediate needs, but this work has only just begun. The long-term recovery is going to take years," Katie Mears, director of Episcopal Relief & Development's U.S. Disaster Program, said in September. "Needs now will pivot from shelters, distribution of goods and emergency meals to longer-term solutions like helping people find temporary housing, apply for insurance and other benefits and begin to repair their homes."

The Diocese of Louisiana is leading a gutting-and-rebuilding program that will use volunteers, she said. "Churches across the affected area will continue to use their local volunteers, connections and facilities to reach out to their most-vulnerable neighbors and accompany them through the recovery process."

Episcopal Relief & Development provided emergency-response grants to the Diocese of Louisiana, which covers Baton Rouge, New Orleans and surrounding parishes, and the Diocese of Western Louisiana, which covers the western two-thirds of the state. A large portion of the Western Louisiana diocese was included in a federal disaster declaration.

"We are all aware that this process will be a long one, and we realize that there will be additional efforts in the future," said the Rev. Lois Maberry, a deacon and the Diocese of Western Louisiana's disaster and preparedness coordinator. "The cooperative efforts with the Diocese of Louisiana and Episcopal Relief & Development have been essential in this recovery."

Photo/Karen Mackey/Diocese of Louisiana

The Rev. Tommy Dillon II of St. Margaret's in Baton Rouge, La., offers Communion at the first service after the flood for St. Francis Episcopal Church in Denham Springs.

All 99 U.S.-based dioceses of the Episcopal Church are engaged in some way with preparedness work through the relief agency's U.S. Disaster Program, making response times faster. The floods in Louisiana were the largest natural disaster in the United States since Superstorm Sandy hit the Northeast in late October 2012.

The 2016 flooding also hit Lafayette and the area west of it, affecting five parishes. Members of the community immediately began "mucking out" houses and clearing debris. Within three to five days, the churches in and around Lafayette began distributing cleaning supplies, water, diapers and food for people affected by the storm, said Maberry.

"The generosity of people always impresses me," said Louisiana Bishop Morris K. Thompson. "People stopping their daily life to go help someone else. It should not amaze me, but it does. Just the goodness of people."

In Baton Rouge, when more than 2 feet of rain inundated the area, the diocese responded immediately.

Despite criticism of the national media for its lack of storm coverage, donations and relief came from across the Episcopal Church and the country.

Unlike Sandy and Hurricane Katrina in 2005, this tropical storm didn't have a name. And that, Thompson says, may have made it hard to catch anyone's attention.

"If you think about it, a storm didn't hit us," he said. "It was rain and rain and rain. It just didn't register with people."

The Rev. Tommy Dillon II agreed. "The presidential campaign and the Olympics were the main things on television."

Dillon, a Baton Rouge native who's back in his hometown after 10 years on the West Coast, first realized what south Louisiana was in for as he drove home from Houston on Aug. 12. He stopped in Lafayette, about an hour away, to seek shelter from the heavy rain. When the new priest-in-charge at St. Margaret's in Baton Rouge arrived the next day, he spotted a high-water sign near his apartment.

By Sunday, his phone was ringing.

"Sunday morning, I got a call from my cousin and her partner, and they asked if they could come to my house with all of their animals because the water was about to come in their house. All of my sisters and other relatives called me to say all of them had to evacuate," he said. "I ended up picking up my sister after she escaped by boat from her house. When I picked her up, she broke down in tears due to the trauma she had just experienced."

"When we talk about the mission of the church, it is to help the downtrodden and to be the hands of Christ in the world. This is where faith is put into practice," Dillon said. "The church is a community for those who have lost their homes … to have a place to go to receive prayers and support from others and to offer prayers and healing for the road ahead for recovery."

Most of the churches in the Diocese of Louisiana escaped damage. St. Patrick's in Zachary, just north of Baton Rouge, incurred damage to its subfloor. The Episcopal school in Baton Rouge took on water in a couple of its buildings.

The worst damage by far was at St. Francis in Denham Springs, east of Baton Rouge, where the Amite River jumped its banks and submerged most of the town. Several feet of water came into the church, Thompson said.

"As south Louisianans pick up the pieces of their lives, it's critical that the help continue. People here already have a deep faith in God, and that's already helping them deal with the immensity of the disaster and the recovery," said Thompson. "Many people in the flooded area — up to an estimated two-thirds — didn't have flood insurance. And federal aid, which isn't designed to make people whole, will take some time in arriving and, when it does, will only go so far."

"While the water has gone away," he said, the disruption in people's life continues. "The church needs to be prepared to handle that kind of anxiety and the weariness that people will experience."

Still, he said, "south Louisiana is full of resilient people who will recover." ■

Beth Colvin is a Baton Rouge-based freelance writer.

FEATURE

Iowa's Breaking Bread Ministry blends sacred with secular

By Luke Blount

At this summer's Iowa State Fair, not far from the corn dogs, carnival games and Ferris wheel, the Rev. Lydia Bucklin baptized her two young children underneath a tree as some passersby joined in and others looked on in wonder. The event was the latest in a series of monthly gatherings of the Breaking Bread Ministry, a group that began in October 2015 at a bar outside of Des Moines.

Bucklin, the young adult missioner for the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa, started the group with Lizzie Gilman and Zebulun Treloar-Reid after a conversation at a retreat. Gilman had a friend starting a brewery, and they all thought it would be a good way to get young adults to "experience the Eucharist out in the world," as Bucklin described it.

With permission from Iowa Bishop Alan Scarfe, Bucklin began to develop a liturgy for a sacred service in the secular world. Eventually, she developed a portable program, which resembles a regular Eucharist with a few exceptions: no traditional sermon, recitation of the Nicene Creed or confession of sin. Two readings come from a variety of sources such as poems, meditations or passages from books.

Photo/Courtesy of Breaking Bread

Greg Mazunik plays guitar at a Breaking Bread gathering in a pizzeria.

When people arrive for Breaking Bread, each receives a bulletin with a highlighted portion of the liturgy to read. Sometimes a volunteer brings a guitar to lead music; other services feature more organic hymn singing.

"There is not much that I do other than presiding over the table," Bucklin said. "It helps promote the idea that we are all called to do God's work. We are all a part of it."

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the service is what Bucklin calls the "powerful question." Sitting in a circle, the preferred arrangement for the service, someone will read a pre-determined question on a general spiritual topic, followed by intentional listening as people share their personal stories.

"I still basically follow the Book of Common Prayer," Bucklin said. "We may not do the Nicene Creed or the confession of sins, but we might have conversations about sin or about the important aspects of our faith and what the nonnegotiables are. Or we may talk about what we struggle with."

Bucklin says that the environment invites people to open up. Some attendees have discussed depression, substance abuse and arrests.

After a Eucharist where each person serves Communion to the next in a circle, the service concludes with a practice from Eric Law's Kaleidoscope Institute in which everyone completes the phrase: "Today I ask God for [blank] and today I thank God for [blank]." Then the group continues its conversations over food and beverages.

Since the first meeting nearly a year ago, the group has developed a core following of about six to eight people in addition to another 10 to 15 who may show up at each unique location and time. Besides at the brewery and the state fair, services have been held in a park, a pizzeria and in Breaking Bread co-founder Lizzie Gilman's home.

Gilman is a stay-at-home mother of two young girls and knows all too well how difficult it sometimes is to get young families to church on a Sunday morning.

"Times have changed, where Sunday mornings are not doable for some families and single people. Whether people had sporting events or they had young kids or maybe they just wanted to sleep in — whatever it was — Sunday mornings didn't seem to be working for young adults," Gilman said. "So we were thinking: What do people do? Well, they go out after work. It is easy to turn down a Sunday morning, but when someone is offering to feed you dinner and buy you a beer, you might want to try it out."

For Gilman, bringing the ministry of the church to the people is the most inspirational aspect of Breaking Bread. "I think it is important that the church sees how wonderful the spirit is when we are meeting beyond the church walls," she said. "We may be meeting on a different day or a different place, but we are celebrating the same Eucharist. Just to feel that sacredness, wherever you go, is a powerful feeling. It is like going to a great dinner party where you don't know anybody, and you just trust that the Holy Spirit is going to give you an awesome time."

Added Bucklin, "There have been many people who have come that would never enter a church building. Some of them have told us that." Once, a groundskeeper for a church admitted he never attended the service inside because he knew he didn't have enough money to put in the collection plate. When he discovered they were meeting in a park, he attended the service because he felt more comfortable, she said.

Bucklin emphasizes in each service that there is no expectation of joining or being a member. Because there are few overhead costs to host a service, they don't seek donations.

"We don't need a fancy building or a ton of supplies," she said. "I carry a simple tote bag with chalice, paten and a couple cloths. Other people bring the wine and bread. When we had it at the state fair, we had to use the bottom bun of a pork sandwich."

That combination of a laid-back environment with an intentional Eucharistic service allows for unique interactions.

One of Bucklin's most memorable moments came at an Ash Wednesday service at the local pizza place. Gilman invited the kitchen staff and waitstaff to participate, and three people came out with tears in their eyes to participate. After Bucklin imposed ashes on a heavily tattooed waitress named Angel, Bucklin's daughter called out: "Mommy, I don't want to be dust." Angel immediately replied, "But honey, don't you know that the most beautiful stars are made of dust, just like you and me? You are a bright and shining star."

"It was one of those moments when you realize this is why we are doing what we are doing," Bucklin said.

For recent seminary graduate and Breaking Bread co-founder Treloar-Reid, one of the most important aspects of the ministry is that it is broader than one congregation.

"This is more focused on bringing together people from the metro area rather than one specific congregation," he said. "This is all about bringing the sacred into secular spaces so that we can start blurring those lines between the sacred and secular."

Treloar-Reid, a 27-year-old transgender man, said he also appreciated that the group is open and affirming to the LGBTQ community. As such, Bucklin has made an effort to create a liturgy free from gendered language, for example by eliminating references to God with masculine pronouns or as a father.

"I've never personally had an issue with using male pronouns for God because I've never really thought of God as physically male," Treloar-Reid said. "But I think it is important to remind people that God isn't part of the patriarchy. I think if we use male language too much, then we can start glorifying the male person too much, and I think that is dangerous.

"I appreciate having spaces where we talk about God in a broader perspective because ultimately God is genderless."

Rachael Essing, a 22-year-old Episcopal Service Corps volunteer, agreed. "The words in the liturgy that we use are not binary, nor is it all masculine, which, as a young female, I really appreciate."

"I like tradition, so I like to have some things that I can focus on and know where they come from," Essing added. "But I also like pulling in new sources because there is a lot of material out there for us, and maybe that fits better with someone else. It opens us up to the world where they can connect."

The Breaking Bread format is beginning to spread as neighboring dioceses have started to test out the format.

"It's a formula that is easy to take and make your own and do it anywhere," said Bucklin. "The idea was to have it in lots of different places to express that the sacred is all around us. We can find the divine in ordinary things and ordinary people." ■

Luke Blount is a freelance writer based in Durham, N.C.

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NEWS

Services mark 15th anniversary of 9/11 terror attacks

By Gavin Drake
Anglican Communion News Service

The 15th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, was remembered in special services and events in New York. Some 2,996 people were killed when terrorists flew hijacked planes into New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington. A fourth plane crashed in Shanksville, Pa., as passengers tried to regain control of the plane from the hijackers.

A number of events took place at St. Paul's Churchyard — part of the parish of Trinity Church, Wall Street. The chapel at St. Paul's was used as a relief center for recovery workers for almost a year after the attacks.

Although the church is closed for refurbishment, memorial events were held in its courtyard, beginning with an 8 a.m. Eucharist service that concluded with the ringing of the Bell of Hope at 8:46 a.m., marking the moment the first plane flew into the North Tower.

The bell, a gift from the City of London to the people of New York, was presented by London's mayor on the first anniversary of the attacks. It since has been rung every year on the anniversary of the attacks and to mark terrorist events elsewhere in the world. The bell tolled in a pattern of five strikes, repeated four times — the traditional method used by U.S. firefighters to remember fallen colleagues.

At Trinity Wall Street, the West Point Band and the Cadet Glee Club from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., gave a concert that included the first public performance of 15 one-minute pieces created by composers on the theme of "service" and what it means to different groups, including the military and first responders.

A "Calling of the Names" ceremony was held in St. Paul's churchyard honoring the responders, volunteers and rescue and recovery workers. "We will call the names of those who came to help after the attacks and who have since died," Trinity Wall Street said in a statement before the ceremony.

In the evening, a program of words and music was held in the churchyard in remembrance of those who died in the 9/11 attack and as a result of mass violence worldwide.

The day's events concluded with a candlelit Compline service inside Trinity Church. "These are the church's bedtime prayers, and they mark that transition from day into night," said Trinity's priest for liturgy and pilgrimage, the Rev. Daniel Simons. "We pray Compline on Sunday evening as a transition before the beginning of the week, as a way to reflect, renew and refresh."

Other services and events marking the anniversary were held around the country and around the world, including in Sydney, where former Prime Minister John Howard joined the U.S. ambassador to Australia, John Berry, and other diplomats for a memorial service in St. Andrew's Cathedral.

"9/11 was a catastrophic event on American soil, but it has affected the whole international community," Archbishop Glenn Davies of Sydney said. "Sixty-two countries lost people in this devastating attack. The ramifications have been global and put the world on alert for a new form of destructive, annihilistic terrorism which has sprouted groups like Boko Haram, ISIS and Al Shabaab.

"This service provides us with an opportunity to ponder the gravity of so many deaths where the forces of evil appear triumphant. It also enables us to renew our hope, knowing that God is in control and, through Jesus, offers true peace for a broken and divided world."

Davies preached at the Sunday service. Howard, who witnessed the 2001 attack on the Pentagon, read from the New Testament. A cathedral bell tolled 15 times to mark the anniversary. ■

The Bell of Hope is a gift from London to New York, in commemoration of 9/11.

Photo/http://traveltalesoflife.com

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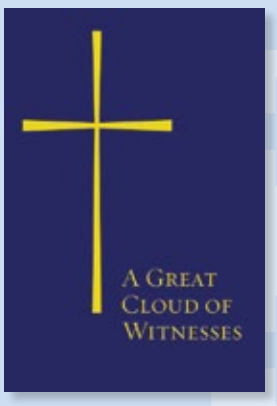

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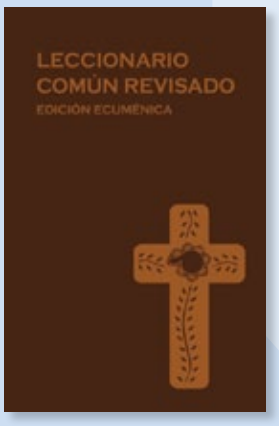

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FAITH AND THE ARTS

New Smithsonian museum features stories of African-American faith

By Adelle M. Banks
Religion News Service

Long before the grand opening neared for the Smithsonian's new museum in Washington, D.C., devoted to African-American history, Amirah Muhammad had a difficult decision to make.

Should she donate the platinum-and-diamond necklace that Elijah Muhammad, her grandfather and onetime leader of the Nation of Islam, gave to her grandmother after designing it with the word "Allah" above their family name?

Museum curators hoped she would contribute an artifact related to the black nationalist movement that had grown to some 500,000 members when her grandfather died in 1975.

"It was for the greater good," she said of her reluctant donation, which came after "much prayer and thought."

"I actually felt my grandmother, kind of her spirit, say, 'It's OK, tell our story.'"

The National Museum of African American History and Culture, which opened Sept. 24, tells many stories of African Americans of diverse faiths who shaped U.S. history. Close to 10 percent of the 2,586 artifacts in its inaugural exhibitions are related to faith and religious history.

Rex Ellis, associate director for curatorial affairs, said the museum essentially was an intersection of uplift, spirituality and resilience.

"There is no way you can discuss, talk about or understand the African-American journey without understanding the very real role faith played in its history," said Ellis, an ordained Baptist minister.

Photo/John Sonderman/Creative Commons

The National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. displays artifacts of faith and history.

Some of that journey, from 15th-century slavery to the 21st-century presidential election, is shown in tangible objects — from the piano bench of Thomas Dorsey, the "father of gospel," to a red-and-gold prayer rug used by a Sunni imam in Baltimore — and expressed through the intangible stories that accompany them.

In the museum's underground-history galleries, for example, one hallway is buttressed by examples of the faith of key leaders who rebelled against slavery.

"On one side is Nat Turner's Bible and on the other side is Harriet Tubman's hymnal, and we talk about them as a way of suggesting that the Bible and faith was not just a sort of comforting word from on high," Ellis said. "It was a way of activating one's desire to do more than what was ever expected of them to do."

Turner led a failed 1831 slave rebellion that resulted in dozens of deaths, and Tubman rescued scores of people from slavery.

While the artifacts of those famous rebels were unveiled on opening day, Clara Muhammad's necklace was already in view.

It sits across the street at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, where a gallery space will continue to exhibit a sampling of the new museum's collection, now totaling more than 36,000 objects.

Tucked in the back corner of that gallery is a space decorated as a brush arbor — the secret hideaway where slaves could worship freely. The necklace is featured in a display case on African-American Muslims, including a uniform and headdress of the Nation of Islam.

Another case displays a kneeling altar from First African Methodist Episcopal Church of Los Angeles and a Catholic choir chair from New Orleans. A third features artifacts about African-American Jews.

Rabbi Capers Funnye donated several items to the museum — including a tallit, or prayer shawl, a Torah scroll and a shofar, or musical horn made from a ram's horn — objects used by his Beth Shalom B'nai Zaken Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation in Chicago, which dates to 1918.

"We've been a part of the religious landscape for a very long time," Funnye said of Hebrew Israelites. "And to see that being acknowledged and to see that being written about and made a part of permanent exhibits of institutions like the museum of the Smithsonian is very important."

RNS photo/Adelle M. Banks

A platinum and diamond necklace that Elijah Muhammad, onetime leader of the Nation of Islam, gave his wife is on display at the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Funnye, a first cousin once removed of first lady Michelle Obama, is also the chief rabbi of African-American congregations in New York, including one known as the "Commandment Keepers," and several others in Pennsylvania, Georgia, Barbados and Nigeria.

Compared with the 83 percent of African Americans who identify as Christians, 1 percent of U.S. blacks identify as Muslims and an even smaller number say they are Jews.

But the museum considered it important to represent them, along with practitioners of African religions, and their beliefs.

"They viewed Christianity as the religion of the slave master," said museum specialist Deborah Tulani Salahu-Din. "So they embraced this radical departure from Christianity in search of a new way of thinking, of being, and a new way of forging a path of progress."

Beyond references to individual religious groups, the museum addresses the role African Americans have played in U.S. culture — from music to the military to sports.

Musical artifacts in the museum's exhibits range from Tubman's "Gospel Hymns No. 2" to a Grammy and a lime-green jacket from the Dixie Hummingbirds, a group that Ellis described as "the standard-bearers of gospel singing" for more than seven decades.

Sports figures highlighted include two-time Olympian Gabby Douglas, whose 2012 book, "Grace, Gold & Glory: My Leap of Faith," has been in the American History gallery, and boxing great Muhammad Ali.

"We look at his conversion to Islam as a form of activism," said Salahu-Din about Ali being featured in the "Making a Way Out of No Way" gallery.

Five chaplains are featured in the military history gallery, along with the Bibles of service members, one from a soldier in the segregated military of the 1930s and another from a female West Point graduate who was killed in Iraq in 2006.

In the segregation gallery are the crucifix and chalice of Louis Beasley, a World War II chaplain who received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart after saving the lives of two soldiers.

Aaron Bryant, a curator specializing in visual arts, said the museum's collected artwork and literature also reflect religious concepts, with both author Countee Cullen and painter David Driskell "looking at the Crucifixion as it relates to the death of African Americans and, more particularly, black men," especially Emmett Till.

Till, whose original casket is featured in the new museum, was a black teen who was murdered in 1955 after being

continued on page 16

Episcopal pioneer Absalom Jones honored

Episcopalians who visit the new National Museum of African American History and Culture that opened Sept. 24 on the Mall in Washington, D.C., should take time to pause before a vast slate gray wall on the museum's bottom level.

In the exhibit "Slavery and Freedom," they will read famous freedom-oriented texts. Sandwiched between the Declaration of Independence and a stanza from the spiritual hymn "Steal Away to Jesus" is Absalom Jones's "Thanksgiving Sermon of 1808."

Jones, an abolitionist born into slavery in Sussex County, Del., was the first African American to be ordained an Episcopal priest, an event that occurred a decade after he founded a black congregation in 1794. Listed on the Episcopal calendar of saints, he is remembered each year on the anniversary of his death, Feb. 13, 1818.

Famous for his oratory, Jones helped establish the tradition of anti-slavery sermons on New Year's Day and, as rector of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas in Philadelphia, he preached the "Thanksgiving Sermon" on Jan. 1, 1808, the date on which the U.S. Constitution mandated the end of the African slave trade. After his 3,000-word sermon was published as a pamphlet, it became famous.

Jones based his sermon on the third chapter of Exodus (vs.7-8) and gave an account of the circumstances preceding the deliverance of the children of Israel from their captivity and bondage in Egypt.

"The history of the world shows us that the deliverance of the children of Israel from their bondage is not the only instance in which it has pleased God to appear in behalf of oppressed and distressed nations, as the deliverer of the innocent and of those who call upon his name. He is as unchangeable in his nature and character as he is in his wisdom and power. The great and blessed event, which we have this day met to celebrate, is a striking proof that the God of heaven and earth is the same, yesterday and today and forever," he preached. ■

FAITH AND THE ARTS

Peace-building art exhibition seeks to unite East and West

By *Episcopal Journal*

A contemporary art exhibition built on the theme of the ancient Egyptian symbol of the ankh opened in New York on Sept. 21, the United Nations International Day of Peace.

The exhibition, titled "The Key," showcases the work of 40 Egyptian, Middle-Eastern and Western contemporary artists using a modern 3D fiberglass portrayal of the ankh, the hieroglyph known as the "key of life," as a means of engendering unity among people of different cultural heritages and faith backgrounds.

"It's the canvas for a contemporary message of hope for a harmonious, peaceful and tolerant world," said the Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler, an Episcopal priest who is founder and president of CARAVAN, an organization that employs the arts as a peacebuilder among the creeds and cultures of East and West. "The Key," already seen by thousands in Cairo and most recently in London at St. James, Piccadilly, will remain at New York's historic Riverside Church, a stronghold of peace activism over the decades, until Nov. 6.

"The world we live in today is fast-paced and one where stereotypes and media hype can overshadow fundamental truths that stand regardless of background or faith," said Chandler. "For generations the Middle East has been a place of turmoil, and now more than ever it is vital that the growing Western misconceptions and apprehensions about the region be addressed."

"In the ever-widening divide that exists between the Middle East and West, we have found that art is a vehicle for understanding and imagination," he said. It enables people of different cultural backgrounds the opportunity to gain an insight into the world and values of "the other," he said.

The blending of the old with the new — an ancient symbol created in fiberglass and painted by contemporary artists — stimulates contemplation of values over time, how peaceful coexistence once was possible and, despite current misunderstandings, can be again, he said. "This cultural endeavor with the ankh at its heart is a powerful means to unite people of different backgrounds."

The unpainted 3-foot 9-inch fiberglass sculpture of the "key" that was used by each artist was designed and sculpted by the Egyptian artist Reda Abdel Rahman.

The exhibition is augmented with additional programs that include music, workshops, talks and panel discussion. An educational component offers tours for students and downloadable resources for teachers.

Images/ courtesy of CARAVAN

The contemporary art exhibit "The Key," on display in New York until Nov. 6, showcases the work of 40 Egyptian, Middle Eastern and Western artists.

Riverside Church's senior minister, the Rev. Amy Butler said: "As a community committed to peace and reconciliation, we are delighted to host CARAVAN, an inspiring art installation promoting the dream of peace for the world. This installation calls us to embrace the dream of peace for all people."

Co-partnering with CARAVAN, Ambassador Ahmed Farouk, consul general in New York of the Arab Republic of Egypt, called the arts one of the most powerful languages of peacemaking among peoples of different religions. "This exhibition speaks this language eloquently," he said.

Past exhibitions sponsored by CARAVAN have included "Amen: A Prayer for the World" at Washington National Cathedral in 2014 and "In Peace and with Compassion," featuring 50 life-size painted fiberglass donkeys, at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine in 2013. ■

To read more about the artists and the exhibition organizers, visit ***www.oncaravan.org****.*

Former opera singer, now priest, leads children to Narnia

By Mark Klaas

Church, theater and music can work together to make a difference in people's lives. The Rev. Joyce Parry-Moore understands the relationship and brings its power to her congregation.

A performer beyond the pulpit, the rector at St. James Episcopal Church in Kent., Wash., about 20 miles south of Seattle, also sings, acts and directs. Lately, she spurred church members to put on a show — a multi-generational production of "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," based on C. S. Lewis' fantasy novel for children.

Photo/Mark Klaas/Kent Reporter

The Rev. Joyce Parry-Moore works with Phillip Soran during a rehearsal of "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe."

The Narnia adventure comes at an appropriate time and place, Parry-Moore said. The church has a historical connection to the arts, and the community has a need for social justice. Lewis was a British novelist, poet and academic, medievalist and literary critic, but also one of the foremost Anglican theologians, and English literature has long embraced the Anglican church and theology, she said.

"When C.S. Lewis wrote this book, it was, in a way, about these children who are making sense of the turmoil in their lives during World War II, and they are doing it through an imaginary place," she said. "Children today live in a very uncertain time. They live in a time when there is warfare around the world. They live in a time when they see a lot of anger and division on media and adults acting very, very poorly.

"It's a time when, as a church, we have the opportunity through theater to tell a story about a place in a way where creatures of many kinds actually came together on what they believed was right."

The cast was about 15 deep, a mix of young and old, beginners and experienced thespians, supported by an eight-member, all-volunteer crew.

"The play is simply written, but some of the technical parts of the play were challenging," said Brandon Fisher, stage manager for the 90-minute production. "It's been really fun to put it on."

For Parry-Moore, the play brought together family. Her husband, Patrick, an actor and teacher whom she met doing community theater in Alaska, played the lion Aslan, the rightful king of Narnia and other magical countries. He also served as a one-on-one acting coach. Daughter Ariana, a student at Kentridge High School, joined the cast and worked on costumes.

The play tapped into Parry-Moore's experience, skill and faith. A classically trained lyric soprano, she brings acting, dancing and writing skills to her ministry. She received a graduate degree in opera performance from the Boston Conservatory of Music after a college major in theater and voice. She acted, sang and directed productions in Boston, New York, Alaska and California before returning to Washington, her native state, and St. James last December.

While she enjoys the stage, her true calling, she said, always has been with the church. A published author, Parry-Moore earned a master's degree in divinity from the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley in 2009 and was ordained to the priesthood in 2011.

Kent is her latest destination, a place to work, a chance to inspire a community and even deliver a message from stage by connecting church to the arts.

"I feel the sanctuary, the church setting is an appropriate place for the play," she said. ■

Mark Klaas is regional editor for the Kent Reporter, where this story first appeared. It is used with permission. The production of "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" followed a five-day summer camp for children ages 4 to 12, where they learned biblical concepts alongside children's literature and read stories, sang songs and created art. The play by Joseph Robinette is available from ***dramaticpublishing.com****.*

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BOOK REVIEW

Tracing the saint who inspires 'animal blessings'

Reviews by Peggy Shaw

St. Francis: from real friar to folklore

I once attended an outdoor Blessing of the Animals service in Colonial Williamsburg, Va., that included the usual menagerie of dogs, cats and teddy bears, as well as some horses and sheep. Most of us have attended such services in the fall, but perhaps few of us have wondered how a 13th-century friar, whose feast day is celebrated Oct. 4, became so popular.

That's what author Patricia Appelbaum asked herself before penning her newest book, "St. Francis of America: How a Thirteenth-Century Friar Became America's Most Popular Saint."

St. Francis of America: How a Thirteenth-Century Friar Became America's Most Popular Saint

By Patricia Appelbaum

The University of North Carolina Press, 270 pages

"Spiritual people recognize him, people in other denominations believe in him, and children love him," writes Appelbaum. "You can buy a statute of him in a garden center, see a movie about him or download songs about him … How did this happen?"

As it turns out, St. Francis (Francesco Bernardone), born in Italy in about 1181, was not always so widely revered. He was discovered by Protestants in the mid-19th century, partially because of a surge of Americans traveling abroad and learning more about art and architecture. Then his popularity grew, undiminished.

"The non-Catholic appropriation of Francis was and is an international phenomenon," says Appelbaum, who has traced Francis' popularity, in part, through the rise and fall of interest in books and periodicals.

Francis long has been the subject of historical reimaginings that reflect the times — a spiritual figure envisioned as a poet, activist, environmentalist and even a kind of 1960s hippie, Appelbaum writes. His story also indicates just how much Americans borrow, lend and share elements of their religious lives.

Appelbaum does not offer a classic biography of St. Francis. But she does explore the ways in which Francis' popular images differ from historical accounts, and she offers glimpses of the real man.

And then there is the "Prayer of St. Francis," which expresses the acts of selflessness, love and peacemaking for which Francis is known. ("Lord make me an instrument of Thy peace…") The prayer is widely quoted, but, alas, is not authentic to Francis but dates, Appelbaum says, from the early 20th century.

The gentle friar, who once sought approval from the pope for a simple rule of life, seems surrounded by complexity. But Appelbaum, in this entertaining read, helps us separate the real figure from folklore — Francis the popular icon from Francis the man. Of course, the reality is that we never truly will know who St. Francis was. "The historical Francis, like the historical Jesus, can be drawn in outline but remains elusive in detail."

St. Francis of Assisi comes to life in art

Good art and fine writing can transport us to other places. And when the two are paired, you have a little gem of a book like this one by renowned art historian Timothy Verdon.

This lovely little book, not coffee table-sized but perfect for displaying on a bookshelf or sending as a gift, describes the extraordinary life of St. Francis of Assisi, in story and art. Specifically, Verdon explores the cycle (grouping) of 28 stunning frescoes in the Basilica di San Francesco in Assisi that depict memorable episodes in Francis' life — frescoes such as "Preaching to the Birds," "Francis Gives His Cloak to a Poor Man" and "The Saint Receives the Stigmata on La Verna."

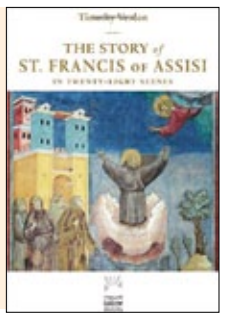
Those 13th-century frescoes were inspired by "The Life of St. Francis," an early biography written by the Franciscan Bonaventure di Bagnoreggio. So scenes in the frescoes not only portray Francis' life but also illustrate Bonaventure's narrative.

The frescoes themselves are traditionally attributed to artist Giotto di Bondone, considered by many to be the best-known naturalistic painter of his period, though a diversity of style indicates that more than one artist was probably at work, says Verdon.

The Story of St. Francis of Assisi: In Twenty-Eight Scenes

By Timothy Verdon

Paraclete Press, 86 pages



Publisher Paraclete Press has reproduced these remarkable frescoes in full color for the book, a 6-by-9-inch hardcover with foiled dust jacket. E each is accompanied by Verdon's illuminating text, giving readers the experience of not only visiting the Basilica but also having a personally guided tour.

Along with each fresco image, Verdon offers historical information and commentary. These include dates related to these incidents in Francis' life, some interpretation of the artworks and context for each scene.

Readers learn, for example, that 27 of the frescoes have beneath them legible "captions" taken from relevant passages in Bonaventure's text and that symbolism in the frescoes abounds.

In "The Confirmation of the Rule," for example, in which Francis and 11 lay brothers kneel to the pope, the collective number 12

continued on page 15

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BOOK REVIEW

ST FRANCIS continued from page 14

references the 12 tribes of Israel. "Here for the first time we sense the strength of the collective identity of the Order," observes Verdon. "The kneeling friars behind Francis are visibly animated by a single spirit, a single purpose … Giotto puts them all in an attitude of prayer, so that the obvious difference between them and the high prelates surrounding the pope does not communicate threat or challenge, but reverence."

In "The Claretians Mourning Over the Saint's Remains at San Damiano," the number of friars depicted again is significant. "Let us note that the brothers who accompany the body are fewer in number," says Verdon. "Rather, in addition to the sisters, Giotto emphasizes the massive presence of layfolk, as if to indicate that Francis now belongs to everyone, not only to the Order."

In the mid-19th century, the city of Assisi was thought of as a sanctuary of early Italian art. By 1905, however, it was being touted as the city of St. Francis, notes writer Patricia Appelbaum in her recent book "St. Francis of America."

The 28 frescoes presented here so vividly, and Verdon's inspiring analyses, give readers an idea why. ■

Peggy J. Shaw is a former senior book editor and currently director of public relations for Holy Innocents' Episcopal School in Atlanta.

Monk's tale explores reading from the heart

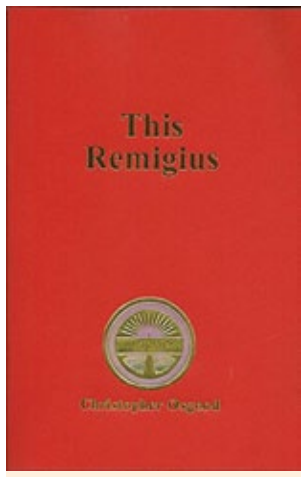
By Pamela A. Lewis

Brother Remigius, a Benedictine monk and the anti-hero in Christopher Osgood's 2010 novel, bears the name of the beloved saint, but he is far from saintly. He struggles to control his temper, spars with his prior over biblical interpretation and might be getting a little too friendly with a young homeless woman.

If that weren't enough, Remigius ("Remi" to his friends and fellow monks), who resides in the Incarnate Word Priory, also has a crippling fear of public speaking — not the sort of problem to have if one has been invited to speak before a convention of top-tier Bible scholars. How Remigius will overcome this, as well as his other challenges, is what readers will have to unpack in Osgood's involving and theologically provocative story.

More than with his temper and temptations, Remigius also must wrestle with his amazing (and enviable) ability to "read" the Scriptures, a gift, in the words of a fellow monk, like "a fresh spiritual wind" that "can lift the divine spirit from the page."

Not everyone shares that appraisal, however. As a member of an order dedicated to the illuminating interpretation of the Scriptures, Remigius' approach to this work inspires his superiors and members of the academic community, like a horde of pharisaic naysayers, to wrestle with him. Bernard, Incarnate's pugnacious prior, dismisses his monk's interpretation as "invention."



This Remigius

By Christopher Osgood

Maverick Publications, 250 pages

Remigius abhors "stupid scholarship," the kind that leads believers astray from God's greatest commandment, which is to love. "What he asks is simple in the extreme. You must try to keep your responses simple in the extreme, in a world which beckons you everywhere to do otherwise," Remigius tells a group of end-of-term seminary graduates. From the heart is where we must always begin in reading the Scriptures.

It is no less than the "pericope adulterae," the pericope (extract) of the adulteress, that is the focus of Remigius' power of interpretation. The Gospel of John's account of the woman taken in adultery and, specifically, the question about what exactly Jesus might have written in the dirt in that famous story constitute the novel's dramatic core.

Osgood, who holds graduate degrees in theology from Jesuit and Episcopal seminaries, has written a novel whose academic and monastic contexts and characters reflect his background, and his eyes and ears are attentive to the manners, rituals and speech that define these worlds. There is humor and enmity, agape and eros. And there are surprises.

While the author's narrative style ranges from the fragmentary to the eloquent, and there is strong and convincing dialogue, the text contains a surprising number of misspellings that more attentive editing could have banished.

But the reader can forgive these slips and still be enthralled by this Remigius, who is monk, man and perhaps something more. "Read with the soul God gave you," he instructs.

That is how it has been written. ■

Pamela A. Lewis is a New York-based writer who covers topics of faith.

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FEATURE

Marking the formal approval of women's ordination

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

Forty years ago, on Sept. 16, 1976, General Convention officially opened the Episcopal Church's ranks of priests and bishops to women.

When the House of Bishops was reminded of the anniversary at the opening of its Sept. 16 session in Detroit, the bishops responded with a sustained standing ovation.

An interactive timeline of the history of women's ordination in the Anglican Communion can be accessed at **www.episcopaldigitalnetwork.com**.

Meeting in Minneapolis, the 1976 convention added a new section to the church's ordination canons that read: "The provisions of these canons for the admission of candidates, and for the ordination to the three orders: bishops, priests and deacons, shall be equally applicable to men and women." (Women had been eligible to become deaconesses since 1889 and deacons since 1970.)

Five days later, the House of Bishops said that the 15 women who had been "irregularly" ordained in the two years before the 1976 action did not have to be re-ordained. Eleven women were ordained at Church of the Advocate Philadelphia on June 14, 1974, and four women were ordained Sept. 7, 1975, at St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C.

Photo/Wide World Photos via Episcopal Archives

The Rev. Jacqueline Means, the first woman to become a priest in the Episcopal Church under the provisions of a new canon adopted by the General Convention in September 1976, is congratulated by Bishop Donald J. Davis of Erie after the ceremony on Jan. 1, 1977, at All Saints Episcopal Church in Indianapolis.

On the last day of the 1976 convention, the church reported that the bishops and deputies had dealt with "the most controversial and potentially explosive issues to come before the supreme legislative body of the church since the very first such meeting in 1785." The issues included not only women's ordination but also a complete revision of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer into the version used today.

At this year's House of Bishops meeting, the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, told the bishops that she remembered "sitting in the bleachers in the House of Deputies, holding my breath and waiting for President John Coburn to announce the results of the vote by orders" on the resolution. Bishops had approved the canonical change the day before.

"I was in my final year of seminary when that historic vote took place, and the way it has changed the church is really quite incredible in the last four decades, and it also has shaped me and my ministry," she told the bishops, who gave her a standing ovation when Presiding Bishop Michael Curry introduced her.

"I believe that the Episcopal Church's commitment to gender equality is essential to our ministry in the public square, and I think those of us who are committed to that goal need to be sure we are focused clearly on the church as it is today, not the church as it was on Sept. 16, 1976," she said.

As the first ordained woman to be elected president of the House of Deputies Jennings said she had a sense of the institutional barriers in the way of ordained women. But she cautioned that "when women are elected or chosen, the work has only just begun." ■

MUSEUM continued from page 12

accused of whistling at a white woman.

The museum features African tribal and folk religious objects such as a voodoo doll and a bottle tree, which is believed to capture evil spirits.

Vanderbilt Divinity School Dean Emilie Townes said she viewed the museum's display of the bottle tree as "a very good sign" of its inclusiveness. She hopes the museum will help people understand religious traditions that may be unfamiliar or unclear to Americans, some of whom use bottle trees as "just ornaments" in their yards, she said.

Black religious institutions have tended to contribute artifacts rather than cash to the museum, but it did receive $1 million from Alfred Street Baptist Church, a historic congregation in nearby Alexandria, Va.

Beyond the exhibits, the museum houses the Center for the Study of African American Religion, funded with $10 million from the Lilly Endowment.

Some universities, such as Columbia and Rice, have had African-American centers focusing on religion and race, but also on a specific subject — such as sexuality or urban life. The museum's center has a broader focus.

"We see ourselves as, at least initially, focusing on the diversity of African-American faith," Ellis said. "I think that, as a culture and as a community, we don't know enough about each other." ■