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Council Considers Funds, Carbon, Nationalism

By Kirk Petersen

Dioceses across the nation may expect financial help later this year from the Church Center, as Executive Council has unanimously supported finding the best way to provide such help.

Executive Council also voted to support the development of carbon-capture technology as a tool to combat climate change, and urged the Church staff to develop a strategy for counteracting white Christian nationalism, as it concluded a four-day online meeting Jan. 25.

The Rev. Mally Lloyd, head of the finance committee, told the council the plan raises complicated legal and canonical issues that affect even what to call it — a gift, a rebate, a waiver of assessment, a grant.

She stressed that this is separate from the existing waiver process, which is aimed at individual dioceses in financial difficulty for specific reasons. This initiative is intended to benefit all 109 dioceses, recognizing that COVID has caused financial strains everywhere. “The goal here is to get something substantial to each diocese around the church, in a timely way,” she said.

“We want the church to hear that this council is concerned about the church,

and intent on providing relief. We’ve just got to work out the details,” said Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry.

A small committee will begin meeting soon to resolve the questions. Lloyd declined to specify a time frame, but all parties are committed to moving as quickly as feasible. The amount of aid has not been determined, but the discussions centered on a hypothetical pool of \$2.5 million.

Carbon-Capture Technology

After addressing some procedural concerns, the council endorsed research and testing of carbon-capture technologies, with a proviso that using such technologies should not contribute to environmental racism.

“Carbon-capture and storage is one of those technologies that produces waste products, and where are those waste products going to be?” asked the Very Rev. Mark Goodman, a council member from the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

He said the committee was concerned that the location of waste storage and production facilities “not fall disproportionately on poor, minority, and indigenous communities, like so often has happened in the past,” citing nuclear waste disposal as an example.

Carbon capture occurs naturally in

the life of trees and certain ecosystems such as bogs and estuaries, but technological methods of capturing carbon from the air are in development. Carbon capture is distinct from reducing carbon emissions, and the latter is considered by many to be the more important priority.

White Christian Nationalism

The council voted to ask staff to coordinate with ecumenical and interfaith partners to develop a strategy for combating white Christian nationalism, which is fueled by white supremacy movements.

Julia Ayala Harris, a lay council member from Oklahoma, said the measure was prompted in part by the riot at the United States Capitol on Jan. 6. The resolution notes that the event “included sacred Christian symbols, signs, banners, and flags carried by the insurrectionists who declared allegiance to both Jesus and the former president, sometimes conflating the two.”

South Carolina Announces Slate

By Kirk Petersen

The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, which has lacked a full-time bishop diocesan since 2012, has announced a slate of five candidates to become XV Bishop of South Carolina. The winner will inherit a diocese of 30 congregations and a protracted lawsuit over the ownership of half a billion dollars in property.

The candidates are:

- The Rev. Geoffrey M. St. John Hoare, rector of St. Alban’s Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C.
- The Rev. Kevin Allen Johnson, rector of St. Alban’s Episcopal Church in Arlington, Texas
- The Rev. Canon Terence Alexander

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Lee, rector of St. Philip's Episcopal Church, New York

- The Ven. Calhoun Walpole, archdeacon of the Diocese of South Carolina and vicar and subdean, of Grace Church Cathedral, Charleston
- The Rev. Canon Ruth M. Woodliff-Stanley, canon for strategic change in the Dioceses of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Western New York and the Episcopal Church Building Fund's senior vice president for strategic change

Walpole is a priest, despite the archdeacon title. She serves in a role similar to what is known in many dioceses as canon to the ordinary — a title not now in use in the diocese.

A special electing convention is planned for May 1. If pandemic conditions allow, it will be at Grace Church Cathedral in Charleston. "If the Convention is not able to meet in person, the diocese will proceed with a virtual platform," the announcement said.

In 2012, the Rt. Rev. Mark Lawrence, who was then XIV Bishop of South Carolina, led a majority of priests and parishioners out of the Episcopal Church, after the General Convention that year voted to allow priests to bless same-sex unions. The departing group ultimately affiliated with the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), and Lawrence leads what is now the Anglican Diocese of South Carolina, which lists 52 congregations on its website.

The departure touched off years of litigation over the ownership of property with an estimated value of \$500 million — specifically, 29 church buildings and the 314-acre St. Christopher Camp and Conference Center on Seabrook Island. Those properties are now controlled and used by the ACNA diocese. Both dioceses claim ownership.

The South Carolina Supreme Court ruled in 2017 that the property belongs to the Episcopal diocese, and remanded the case to the state circuit court to oversee the transfer. Each of the five justices wrote a separate opinion, and parts of the case were decided by different 3-2 majorities.

After nearly three years of motions to reverse or enforce that ruling, Circuit Court Judge Edgar Dickson ruled in June 2020 that under his reading of

the Supreme Court opinions, the property belongs to the ACNA diocese — essentially overruling the higher court. The Episcopal diocese has asked the state Supreme Court to reconsider, and motions are being traded between the parties.

Since the 2012 split, the Episcopal diocese has been led by two part-time, provisional bishops, Charles G. von Rosenberg, from 2013 to 2016, and Gladstone B. "Skip" Adams III, from 2016 to 2019. In the interim, the Standing Committee is the ecclesiastical authority in the diocese. The winner of the May 1 election this year will become a full-time diocesan bishop.

Bishop Roundup

Idaho

The Rt. Rev. Brian J. Thom, XIII Bishop of Idaho, has called for the election of his successor, which leads to the consecration of the next Bishop of Idaho on June 25, 2022.

The Diocese of Idaho encompasses 26 congregations in southern Idaho, and one in Wyoming, less than a mile from

the border. The diocese operates the High Desert School for Ministry, part of the Iona Collaborative, in conjunction with the Diocese of Eastern Oregon. It also includes the Paradise Point Episcopal Camp, established in 1935.

Springfield

The Rt. Rev. Daniel Martins, XI Bishop of Springfield, will begin a modified sabbatical on Feb. 1, leading to his formal retirement at the end of June.

In a letter to the diocese, Martins said the schedule had been negotiated with the Standing Committee, with which he has been in conflict.

Episcopal News Service reported in June that the Standing Committee had grown dissatisfied with Martins living primarily in Chicago, outside of the diocese, although they previously had granted permission for the unusual arrangement.

Martins told the diocese that his wife, Brenda, was experiencing "a steady downward slide" of her cognitive health, and can no longer be left alone, making it difficult to return to the diocese on some weekends to con-

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duct diocesan business.

“During my sabbatical, the Standing Committee will oversee the routine administrative and financial duties that I would ordinarily handle,” Martins wrote. He will retain authority over ordination, discipline and deployment of clergy.

After he retires at the end of June, the Standing Committee will be the ecclesiastical authority for the diocese until a new bishop takes office. It generally takes about 18 months to install a new bishop. No timeline for the search has been announced.

Atlanta, Southeast Florida

Two bishops have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

The Rt. Rev. Rob Wright, X Bishop of Atlanta, announced on Facebook that he contracted the disease, and is recuperating at home. “By the grace of God and the expertise of the medical community, I expect to return to health in the upcoming days,” said Wright, 56.

The Rt. Rev. Leo Frade, retired III Bishop of Southeast Florida, is hospitalized in Miami with COVID-19, the diocese announced on Facebook. Frade, 77, served as a bishop for 32 years, first as the Bishop of Honduras from 1984 to 2000, then as Bishop of Southeast Florida from 2000 to 2016.

West Virginia

The Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klusmeyer, VII Bishop of West Virginia, has restarted the search for a bishop coadjutor, who

would serve with Klusmeyer for time and become bishop diocesan when he retires. Klusmeyer originally announced the search in October 2019, with an election expected in late 2020, but the pandemic disrupted the timeline.

The new timeline calls for nominations to be accepted beginning in February; announcement of a slate in mid-summer; election at a special convention in September or October; and consecration of the new bishop coadjutor in February to April of 2022.

Klusmeyer, who has not announced a retirement date, has served as bishop since October 2001. The diocese includes 65 congregations throughout the state of West Virginia.

Iowa

The Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe, IX Bishop of Iowa, and the Standing Committee announced a three-month delay in electing a new bishop, in the hope that the pandemic will have abated enough to allow in-person meetings with candidates.

The election, originally scheduled for May 1, has been postponed to July 31, and the consecration from September 18 to December 18. Scarfe has also pushed back the effective date of his retirement until December 18.

PB, Others Resist Christian Nationalism

By Kirk Petersen

“We must counter the negative perversions of Christianity and of our humanity with an affirmative, positive way of being Christian,” said Presiding



Bishop Curry participates in the webinar.

Bishop Michael B. Curry. “Christianity must re-center itself on the teachings, the example, and the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth.”

That was the central message Curry conveyed on Jan. 27 when he participated in a webinar with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton. The webinar was sponsored by Christians Against Christian Nationalism, an ecumenical organization that asserts “government should not prefer one religion over another or religion over nonreligion.”

Three weeks to the day earlier, a mob of a few hundred broke into the United States Capitol on the day Congress was scheduled to certify election results. Outside the building, one of the demonstrators carried a large wooden cross, and another waved a sign reading “Jesus 2020.”

Eaton said that whenever any group claims “we have God on our side, that’s always dangerous, when human beings decide they have God on their side as opposed to us trying to be on the side of God.”

What is Christian nationalism? For a definition, the webinar began with a man who wrote a book about it, Andrew Whitehead, associate professor of sociology at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis, coauthor of *Taking America Back for God: Christian Nationalism in the United States* (Oxford, 2020).

He defined Christian nationalism as “a cultural framework that idealizes and advocates a fusion of Christianity with American civic life,” noting that Christian nationalists tend to think of Christianity as “people like us.”

His research showed that while Christian nationalist tendencies exist in every demographic of American

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society, although it is more common in the South and among less educated people.

“Christian nationalism is different from being a patriot,” Eaton said. “God knows I love my country. But my primary allegiance as a Christian is not to my country, but to God. But we can still be active citizens, participants in the public square.”

Curry said Christianity has been misused to justify various forms of evil in the past, including slavery, apartheid, and Nazism.

This happens when the Jesus of “the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 25, parable of the sheep and goats, the Good Samaritan — that Jesus of Nazareth gets moved aside and suppressed for a broad, ambiguous Christ figure who can be adapted to any cultural context or adapted to anybody’s whim,” Curry said.

“Christianity has been held hostage” by Christian nationalists, he said. “We must reclaim it. We have to counter the negative with the positive, because the positive is there. We also have to embody it.”

The webinar was moderated by Amanda Tyler, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, one sponsor of Christians Against Christian Nationalism.



Two Montreal Seminaries Unite

By Mark Michael

Montreal Diocesan Theological College, one of the Anglican Church of Canada’s 12 seminaries, announced Jan. 22 that it is entering into a strategic alliance with United Theological College, a seminary of the pan-Protestant United Church of Canada. In the next 18 months, the two colleges will work toward forming a combined college,

based on the campus of the Anglican institution in downtown Montreal.

“Our two colleges share a vision that is rooted in preparing people for leadership roles in the church and world,” said the Rev. Canon Jesse Zink, principal of the Anglican college, commonly known as “Dio.”

Zink, an Episcopal priest who will serve as leader of the combined institution, added, “I am looking forward to building on the strengths of our institutions to serve the whole church in its witness to the world.”

Patricia Evans, chair of the United Theological College board, noted that the college had “prayerfully considered options for a sustainable future” during the last two years. “In Dio, we have found a partner who shares our core values and is excited by our vision for theological education with a French-language component. We are confident we can work effectively together to serve our churches and the wider community,” she said.

During the winter semester, United Theological College will complete the sale of its campus on an adjacent block, and wind down its independent operations. Beginning in September 2021, the college’s students and faculty will form a United Church Studies program within Dio. The partnership is similar to combined Anglican–United Church seminaries in other parts of Canada, especially the Centre for Christian Studies in Winnipeg and the Vancouver School of Theology.

The United Theological College describes itself as “a progressive and radically inclusive college of the United Church of Canada.” It is one of eight seminaries of the nation’s largest Protestant denomination, which merged Canada’s Methodist, Congregationalist, and Presbyterian churches in 1925. The seminary has only three full faculty members and, as the United Church of Canada’s only bilingual seminary, focuses on training ministers to work in Quebec’s Francophone congregations.

Dio has faced similar financial challenges in recent decades, as the Anglican Church of Canada has declined significantly in Quebec, one of North America’s least religious regions [TLC’s Matt Townsend pro-

duced an extensive profile of the Diocese of Quebec in 2018]. Dio sold its extensive Neo Gothic campus to McGill University in 2008, when enrollment was down to 35 students. It rents the north wing and chapel from McGill, and will now share that space with United Theological College.

Prison Ministry Adapts to COVID Challenges

By Neva Rae Fox

Episcopalians in prison ministry are adapting their work during the coronavirus pandemic by relying on distant communication, including cards, clothes, books, and prayers.

For nearly 20 years, the Rev. Deacon Ann Douglas has volunteered at the maximum-security Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in Westchester County, New York. She must follow the strict policies of the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.

Her experiences are similar to those of ministers across the United States. “There have been no congregational gatherings in any prisons since March 15,” said Douglas, based at All Saints Church in Briarcliff Manor, New York: “No service. No group gatherings. Non-employees cannot go into the prison at all. Many programs for Bedford by volunteers and area churches have shut down. ... We got very frustrated. When they shut down, we were just bereft.” Douglas joined a weekly spiritual community to support the women from a distance.

Virginia Slichter, a vestry member at Christ Church in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, has a ministry at SCI Phoenix, a men’s maximum-security prison 30 miles west of Philadelphia. “Because I’m a volunteer I’m not permitted to contact the prisoners,” Slichter said. The prison does not understand the relationship that’s developed during [Education for Ministry].

“What does ministry look like in the time of pandemic? It is prayer. Constant, deep prayer. In their letters to me

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they repeatedly mention that they know that people are holding them tightly in prayer, that the prayerful support is life-giving for them.”

“COVID-19 has changed the way prison ministry has been done,” said the Rev. Canon Richard Snyder, recently retired supervising chaplain for the Nevada Department of Corrections. “A good way to pass the time is to think about what a new system for services would look like. Is working with volunteers on providing DVDs of

“We discovered anew that men’s and women’s release clothing became a most urgent need.”

—The Rev. Kahu Kaleo Patterson

services a possibility? Is arranging for a live feed from local area churches a possibility?”

The Rev. Canon Petero Sabune, priest in charge of Sts. John Paul & Clement in Mount Vernon, New York, was the chaplain at Sing Sing Correctional Facility for more than a decade. Sabune organizes vigils at a cemetery dedicated to inmates who died alone in prison.

Greeting and holiday cards have emerged as a tool for ministry. For eight years, the Rev. Deacon Jeff Roper of the Diocese of Kansas led Morning Prayer at Winfield Correctional Facility, a minimum-security for 550 men. Unable to visit since March, Roper sought other resources.

“What I have continued to do in ministry is to step up efforts during this pandemic to call for drives and donations to acquire unused greeting cards for all occasions,” with the assistance of St. James, Wichita, and Episcopal churches throughout the state, Roper said.

“Inmates, at the direction of the chaplain, sort those cards and make them available for free to the inmates

in the commissary. Each is allowed only two cards per month. Inmates then purchase the stamps to mail those cards. This ministry helps inmates to stay in communication with their friends and families, and provide a line of vital communication around birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays of their family members and friends.”

Douglas agreed. “Pen pals are allowed — written correspondence is okay. Letters are checked for contraband — currency, stamps and anything that is not allowed. But to return mail, they have to earn money for stamps, and that’s difficult.”

Sabune organized Sunday-school children at his church to collect Christmas cards for Sing Sing inmates to send to family and friends. Sabune said the questions from children were inevitable. “Are these bad people?” he asked. “They are children of God. They did bad things, but God loves them too.”

Recognizing the lifeline that cards provide, Tanya Crooks developed Big House Card Co. with inmates in mind. “I started my business this past August,” she said. “Being separated is always rough, and the holiday season for a lot of system-impacted families is extremely tough. I do believe the common feelings have been magnified this year due to not being able to see one another for so long.”

Clothing ministries also became a critical component during the pandemic, said the Rev. Kahu Kaleo Patterson, vicar of St. Stephen’s in Wahiawa, Hawaii.

“We discovered anew that men’s and women’s release clothing became a most urgent need,” Patterson said. “Most releases have little or poor community support and literally come out of the prison doors in shorts, T-shirts, and slippers, referred to as ‘underwear,’ purchased through the vendor commissary as gray and whites used for recreation.”

Patterson added: “During pandemic with mass releases, the correction officers reached out and asked for help. We did a community-wide donation drive, with truckloads of assorted dress clothing, shirts, and slacks, and others. But a few months later we zeroed in on



Deacon Ann Douglas

allsaintsbriarcliff.org photo

purchasing (with support from the diocese and churches) special common sizes, colored T-shirts and shorts. This is a point of re-entry need that we are now developing with the prisons and community education and collaborations.”

Christine Havens, assistant for administration and communication at St. Michael’s in Austin, Texas, is a coordinator with Pen City Writers. Through Pen City, men at the maximum-security John B. Connally Unit southeast of San Antonio may earn a three-year certificate in creative writing.

Havens describes her prison ministry as that of a literary correspondent. “I’m basically a tutor, a conversation partner with a student who’s been assigned to me. Each month, we discuss, via letters, the book(s) he has read. It’s been very thought-provoking and life-giving to read my student’s perspectives.”

She added: “In the beginnings of the pandemic, he and I still were able to correspond, but as the year went on, the logistics have changed, due to a slowdown in the mail, for example.”

The program found a solution: participation in the nationwide Million Book Project. “Pen City Writers is an

example of what creativity and flexibility can mean to prison ministry in this time of pandemic,” Havens said. “It seems that the team found ways, fairly quickly, in which the prisoners could still participate in the program while maintaining physical distancing.”

Forward Movement has built a steady ministry among prisoners across many decades. “We provide tens of thousands of copies of *Forward Day by Day* and other material to incarcerated persons annually, and we correspond with many folks in prison, offering not only material but spiritual counsel and a compassionate response,” said the Rev. Scott Gunn, executive director.

Miriam McKenny, Forward’s director of development and mission engagement, described its work in different states. “We recently started sending *Forward Day by Day* and *Ade-lante Día a Día* to three [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] detention centers in Louisiana,” she said. “The difficulties we face occur with states who have tightened their restrictions on publishers sending materials, like Florida and Pennsylvania. Those restrictions predate COVID-19, but it’s tough to think about all our folks who are not getting their prayer books and daily meditations during the pandemic, where hearing God’s Word would be a blessing for them.”

Prison ministers are eager to visit again when COVID-19 is less threatening to Americans’ health. The Rev. Phil Carr-Jones is rector of Church of the Holy Spirit in Lebanon, New Jersey. His parish is near Edna Mahan Correctional Facility, a women’s prison with minimum-security and maximum-security units, a hospital, and housing for inmates with psychiatric conditions.

“We know from contacts of family members of inmates that they, too, are missing hours together,” he said. “The increased boredom, anxiety, and lack of socialization affecting all of us on the outside of prison is simply hard to comprehend for those within it. The heart aches.”

Douglas agreed. “We’ve cried, we’ve laughed, we’ve done everything together. It’s brutal. But it is worse for them. Anything we can do for them

we need to do, to hold them up.”

“Some degree of normalcy in the providing of religious services will probably have to wait until all inmates and all staff have been vaccinated,” Snyder said. “It appears that will be changes at many institutions around the country in the way that visiting occurs; in the way that religious services are held; in the way that mail is processed. There will likely be much tighter limits on such activities to reduce the possibility of another pandemic.”

Havens has clear ideas for what prison ministry during the pandemic should look like: “remaining a presence to the incarcerated through creativity and flexibility, willingness to partner with other prison ministries, good communication with your volunteers to assure them that they are an important part of the ministry, keeping the safety of the prisoners foremost as well as that of those who minister.”

Briefly

When the Rev. **Glenda Curry** was elected as the first woman to be Bishop Alabama, she asked one of her parishioners, Danny Whitsett, if he could make her crozier. Curry said told Ingrid Schnader of the *Homewood Star*

that she chose Whitsett to make the crozier, despite his not knowing what a crozier was, because she knows Whitsett is a great artist who knows her well. “What I most like about it is the careful, meaningful and loving way it was created to represent my ministry and the people who I served,” she said.

The first Anglican mission for Mayan people in Mexico has been created in the jungle by a Mayan convert, who has named it after the Rev. **Florence Li Tim-Oi**, the first woman to be ordained to the priesthood in the Anglican Communion. *Church Times* reports that the new mission is based in a house in José María Morelos, in the state of Quintana Roo, in the diocese of Southeastern Mexico. The mission has been set up by a 26-year-old Mayan from the village, the Rev. Llobet Ivan Cetzal-Martinez.

Virginia Theological Seminary celebrated the beginning of the spring semester with a debut of a hymn commissioned for the seminary’s bicentennial. Marty Wheeler Burnett, associate professor of church music and director of chapel music at VTS, composed the text. The Very Rev. J. Michael A. Wright, dean of Grace Cathedral in Charleston, S.C. set the hymn to the tune “St. Catherine.”

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‘These Are Not Robots’

Virtual assistants help congregations fulfill their ministries.

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald,
Correspondent

One year ago, just before the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, St. Mark’s Church in Alexandria, Virginia, relied on a team of part-time staff, including a parish administrator and a bookkeeper. Sudden belt-tightening meant they all had to be furloughed, and the church had to find new ways to handle administration.

Now St. Mark’s has redistributed its work, and perhaps catapulted into the future. The Rev. Elizabeth Gardner, rector of St. Mark’s, prepares parochial reports that once fell to the administrator. A parishioner volunteer handles bookkeeping. Communications fall to a Georgia contractor shared among St. Mark’s and three other Episcopal congregations within a three-mile radius.

Potomac Episcopal sprang up last spring to share online worship, outreach, and formation among All Saints Sharon Chapel, Church of the Spirit, Olivet Church, and St. Mark’s. As the parishes pooled ministries, they realized they could also share a communications professional, whom they found through Virtual Ministry Assistants (VMA), a division of Tennessee-based Ministry Architects. The parishes found they could be more efficient with the help of a young woman named Evan, a virtual assistant (an off-site administrator with the skills they need). For 10 to 12 hours of virtual administrative assistance per week, Potomac Episcopal pays \$600 a month.

“She is young and conversant in social media and tech language, and forward-thinking,” Gardner said of Evan. “She’s also a believer who grew up in the church — not Episcopal, but another mainline denomination. And she works for another church and shares ideas with me. The parish administrators that I’ve experienced in the past were more friendly faces and generous listeners, but not necessarily

efficient staff members.”

The change is not unique to northern Virginia. VMA and Belay Solutions, a Georgia-based provider of administrative services, say demand for virtual assistants has surged during the pandemic. They are reportedly

of VMA. “What COVID did, with everybody now sitting at home, virtual is no longer outside of their contexts. It has become part of the normal way of operating.”

Nevertheless, navigating the path to tech-driven administration is not as

“There is a culture that must exist in a church in order for virtual to work well. “Sometimes churches can’t make that shift.”

Johnathan Barnes,
executive director
Virtual Ministry Assistants



drawn to measurable advantages: lower costs, faster turnarounds and, at least in some cases, better quality. They generally save 15 to 30 percent on administrative costs by tuning virtual, according to estimates by VMA and Belay. Another reason: in the past year, faith communities have become more comfortable with technology-assisted systems.

“For most churches, the idea of somebody working virtually is just totally out of their contexts,” said Johnathan Barnes, executive director

simple as outsourcing or automating every task. To succeed, tech consultants say, a congregation needs a supportive culture and a discerning approach to preserve relationships and personal touches.

At stake for congregants is more than how quickly or slickly their weekly newsletter is produced. Many have had long, close personal relationships with administrative assistants at the hub of parish life. Often these assistants know who is recovering from surgery, who needs a bulletin sent in

the mail, and the status of roof repairs.

“When I was at Christ Church, Georgetown, people walked in all the time and just checked in with Diana,” who provided administrative support, Gardner said. “Hi, Diana! Here are the cookies that I made. I thought you would like a dozen. Here, this is for the rector [the Rev. Timothy Cole]. I saw this article in *The New York Times*, and I clipped it.’ ... Very old-fashioned church.”

Such personal touches are important in neighborhoods like Georgetown, where many members live nearby and walk past the office regularly. But in settings where people drive to church, turning virtual can be a smoother transition because frequent in-person exchanges are not expected.

Select Tasks

If a church wants to retain an on-site administrative assistant but also needs to trim expenses, automation of select tasks can help, said Shamika Goddard, a Colorado-based technology consultant who works with mainline congregations. Goddard studied technology and ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York, and is a doctoral student at the University of Colorado.

“While there are several opportunities to automate administrative tasks for faith leaders, there is still so much room and space for personalization, interacting and engaging with people synchronously and in real time,” Goddard said.

Among her suggestions:

- Calendly manages schedules. Rather than sending email to an executive assistant to schedule time with a rector, congregants use Calendly to schedule available slots. Calendly is available free, but it also sells monthly subscriptions.
- Breeze and Planning Center help administrative assistants automate donation-tracking and notifications to staff about new developments.
- Gmail templates simplify email.

They help an administrative assistant create a standard response and focus on writing only what is important for a given conversation.

Using virtual assistants can also preserve a personal touch, albeit with some modifications to tradition. Potomac Episcopal celebrates Evan’s work when she offers creative ideas.

That happened when Evan proposed adding seasonal buttons to the website. In addition to sorting content under headings such as Ministries and Worship, Evan started cross-referencing everything related to Advent and Lent under a seasonal button, or category. When parishioners liked that improvement, Gardner gave credit to Evan, although parishioners do not know her.

Now Potomac Episcopal works with Evan to rely more on its website than on social media.

“We know people are looking at [social media], but we want people to participate in it and get excited about it and share it with their friends,” Gardner said. From her home in Georgia, Evan is the key player in making that change

For some churches, a virtual assistant is not a good fit. Barnes said that accountability among parishioners is crucial. If a church’s volunteers or staff miss deadlines, a virtual assistant cannot succeed, Barnes said.

Flexibility is also important. A parish that wants a worker at its beck and call will not like that a virtual assistant cannot always respond immediately as complications arise.

“There is a culture that must exist in a church in order for virtual to work

well,” Barnes said. “Sometimes churches can’t make that shift. They’re not disciplined enough to make that shift, or they just culturally don’t want to make the shift. They want to be able to call Susie at 2 and ask her to do something, instead of having a scheduled meeting to cover all the things that are needed for the week.”

For those that make the shift, new skills emerge. Younger clergy do not believe they need an executive assistant to handle their calendars like older generation of rectors did, said Melissa Tidwell, a church specialist at Belay, which works with 1,100 staff and contractors.

What they likely need instead are assistants with digital skills who can create a PowerPoint presentation to reflect themes during an online sermon. They might use Hootsuite to manage a social media campaign.

“These are not robots,” Tidwell said. “These are ministry-minded, professional executive assistants who really connect to the church, understand the culture of the church, and really help support the ministry team with a variety of tasks.”

Still, it is not easy for parishioners or supervisors to reduce hours or eliminate a position when the employee is someone they appreciate and depend on. For those situations, parishes need to weigh the tradeoffs, what they can afford, and what will best help them fulfill their missions.

“I don’t feel like we can continue to pay somebody to sit in an office and answer the phone, even though people love that,” Gardner said. “I don’t think we have the resources to do that.” □



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Begetting vs. ‘Making’ Children

Christians who are infertile face a tangle of ethical questions.

By Deonna Neal

How should Christians evaluate assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs) that treat infertility? The most traditional ethicists reject ARTs outright. They teach that the biological integrity of marital sexual love is the moral standard: the natural link between sexual union and reproduction should remain indivisible.

This means that if sex without the potential for conception is wrong, then so is conception without sex. This understanding draws heavily on the doctrine of creation, Christology, and theology about the covenant of marriage, which includes beliefs about the moral duties of parenthood.

The most secular and permissive end of the spectrum teaches that any person — regardless of marital status or sexuality — who wishes to become a parent may make any private arrangement and use any legal method to achieve this end. This understanding is most significantly influenced by its emphases on personal autonomy, individual rights, and the rules of contract.

One of the realities of formation today is that Christians have been more influenced by the moral norms of secular society than by the moral norms of distinctively Christian theological commitments. This can be particularly difficult when such theological commitments not only challenge our claims to personal autonomy and the exercise of individual rights, but also teach that certain relationships should not be entered involve contracts. Situations that arise with the use of ARTs illustrate these tensions well.

Consider this imaginary scenario of Pat and Jordan Smith, an infertile heterosexual couple who serve as a composite of options associated with ARTs.

The Smiths cannot conceive through any natural form of sexual intercourse and they have no available gametes. Pat required a hysterectomy years earlier. They do not want to

adopt because they have heard horror stories about the difficulties that adopted children often experience. They want to have two children.

They consider it important to give their children some sense of connection to their genetic heritage. Pat asks her sister, Deborah, who is 30, married, and has one child, for her help.

Deborah agrees to undergo IVF and become a traditional surrogate for both pregnancies as a gift to her sister. Jordan enlists James, his only brother, who is 25 and single, as a sperm donor. Contracts explain the rights and roles of all participants.

The IVF procedure creates five embryos. The Smiths rely on Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis (PGD) to assure that their children are free of any serious genetic defects. They learn that the embryos are three girls and two boys. Genetic screening determines that one of the girls has Down syndrome. Pat and Jordan, as

the “intended parents” — in the language of the contracts — exercise their right to destroy that embryo, but Deborah and James object.

To secure the best chance of having a healthy baby, they choose an elective Single Embryo Transfer of a male embryo. Deborah has a very difficult pregnancy, but delivers a healthy baby boy. She experiences severe post-partum depression and decides not to be a surrogate for a second baby.

The Smiths then decide to find a young healthy college student, Susan, age 18 — who needs money to pay for her tuition — as a surrogate. Pat and Jordan agree to pay her the average base fee of \$25,000 and to cover medical expenses. This time they transfer two female embryos, hoping that only one will implant.

When Susan’s health exam reveals that both embryos implanted, Pat and Jordan choose a “selective reduction” of one embryo, as stipulated in the surrogate’s contract, because they do not want twins. When the baby girl is born,



Nynne Schroder photo via Unsplash

they discover that she has a genetic disease that should have been detected by PGD. The Smiths file a “wrongful birth” lawsuit against the fertility clinic.

The Smiths divorce each other 15 years later. A custody battle ensues for the remaining frozen male embryo.

To what extent are these kinds of decisions related to ARTs consistent with the Christian requirement to pattern one’s life and household after the teaching of Christ? From the normative requirements of a secular framework — autonomy, individual rights, and the rules of contract — nothing in this scenario would pose moral problems. Within Christian ethics, couples would likely make different judgments.

To what extent should understanding marriage as a covenant and the natural link between sexual intercourse and procreation shape our thinking? What about the doctrine of Creation? Eschatology? What duties do parents have toward their children? Should Deborah and Jordan have agreed to be donors for their siblings? Is paid surrogacy similar to prostitution? What is the difference between begetting and “making” children? Does that moral distinction matter? For us as adopted sons and daughters of Christ, how might that shape our views on adoption versus wanting “our own” children?

These are but a few questions to consider. Perhaps one of the most important questions is how the Church forms Christians who can make theologically informed decisions that relate to their marriage, family, and reproductive lives. How do we address our greater disagreement about the normative role Christian theological commitments should play in our lives?

The Rev. Dr. Deonna D. Neal is an associate rector of St. John’s Episcopal Church in Montgomery, Alabama, and former chair of the Department of Leadership, Ethics, and the Profession of Arms at Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Her research interests include the ethics of emerging technologies, moral injury, and issues that reside at the intersection of church, state, and military service.

An Insult to Reformed Theology

By Steve Schlossberg

This essay was first published on Covenant, the weblog of The Living Church, on January 27.

One of the things I learned in seminary is that Reformed theology and Catholic liturgy are incompatible. I happened to learn that at an ardently Anglo-Catholic seminary, but I’m fairly sure that I would have learned the same thing at an ardently Reformed seminary. One thing we can all agree on is that liturgy conveys theology, and for an ardently Reformed believer, the Mass gets practically everything exactly wrong — the nature of ministry, the nature of the sacraments and, probably above all else, human nature.

A better student of theology could explain this better than I, but I suppose that somewhere near the bottom of this lies the doctrine of total depravity. Reformed

theology insists that we have nothing more to offer God than filthy rags, and Catholic worship is basically human beings making a big production of our offering God our finest linens.

A possible exception to the rule, possibly proving the rule, is the Reformed Episcopal Church. Formed in the 19th century in reaction to the growing proliferation of chasubles, candlesticks, and other Romish corruptions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, the REC at some point in the 20th century suddenly became flagrantly, fabulously Catholic in ceremony while compromising none of its theological austerity.

I never learned the reason for the liturgical flip-flop, but I saw it for myself a few years ago when I visited an REC church one Sunday in snake-belly-Low Virginia.



Portrait of John Calvin (1509–1564)
Anonymous, public domain, Wikimedia Commons

The church wasn’t quite nose-bleed High — a small congregation meeting in a makeshift space, plenty of candlesticks, but no bells or smells — but it was certainly Catholic in its piety, and the sermon, delivered by a man in a chasuble, was flagrantly Reformed. The text of the sermon was the Parable of the Good Samaritan; the substance of the sermon was that we can do nothing for anyone, least of all ourselves.

I thought the sermon completely failed to exposit the text — the sermon practically denounced the text — but I could not help but admire the preacher, who otherwise demonstrated himself an ardent biblicist, and who in the face of a dominical teaching refused to yield a theological inch. Remembering what I had learned about this in seminary, I tried to identify how exactly the sermon contradicted the chasuble, but I failed. A chasuble is meant to represent charity, of course; but then, in my experience at least, chasubles tend to go hand in hand with bad preaching.

The astounding sermon, however, called to mind an equally astounding preaching conference I had attended a few years before. The keynote speaker, an ardently Reformed preacher, spent the first half of his address insisting that the primary discipline of preaching is responsible exegesis and the second half of his address insisting that the controlling text of every sermon, regardless of the lections,

(Continued on next page)

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must be Romans chapter 7.

I don't know if the keynote speaker was speaking for most Reformed preachers; I don't know that the Virginia church gave a fair representation of the REC; but I'm fairly sure that what I learned in seminary about Reformed theology was no better than a caricature of it, because I'm fairly sure that what I learned in seminary was not what was actually taught in my seminary. Like many seminarians, I suppose, and like most human beings, I am most eager to learn, or at least most willing to hear, what I already believe. And the truth is that I was never interested in learning enough about Reformed theology to understand it. Knowing just barely enough about it to know that it insists on double predestination, I summarily dismissed it. Rather than plow through *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I gave the pencil sketch of John Calvin's face on the book jacket a quick study and, surmising that it was the portrait of a man who never cracked a smile in his life, concluded that his theology must lack charity.

That, of course, was a total failure of charity on my part. But fortifying my prejudices in this regard was my experience of a small handful of converts to Reformed theology, who like all converts to anything were polemicists (i.e., not necessarily the best representatives of the faith to which they'd been converted), who were constantly insisting on the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, and who actually seemed to be constantly insisting on the doctrine of salvation by correct doctrine.

"The only problem with these Reformed guys," a friend from seminary once said, "is they take the doctrine of total depravity as prescriptive instead of descriptive."

I know my friend would be the first to say that that's an unfair generalization, which he probably didn't even mean as a generalization at all, but only as a complaint against a couple of notoriously Reformed friends who enjoy being notorious, and who glory in post-mortem glorification to the total neglect of pre-mortem sanctification. But then, my friend and I have plenty of Catholic friends of whom the same

might be said, and I'm sure that I am not the first to say that I am one of them. But as I am a sucker for funny remarks, the unfair generalization was good enough for me at the time.

All of which is to say nothing about Reformed theology, but only to demonstrate several depraved things about me; all of which I say as a preface to paying a word of homage to a theological tradition to which I remain an ignorant stranger.

For the past several months, my poor wife, who every Sunday must sit through a scratchy, scolding, semi-Pelagian sermon from me, has been spending her lunch hours listening to online sermons of Reformed preachers at Calvary-St. George, New York.

"It's refreshing," she told me a few weeks ago. "There's something about good, old-fashioned Reformed preaching I've needed to hear."

And that's not just because she's had too much of me lately. It's because of everything we've all had too much of lately — not just the ongoing trial of the pandemic, but the trauma of serial injustices in our society and our apparently intractable political hostilities, to say nothing of the many, various, and daily challenges of ordinary discipleship — all of which, and every one of which, over and over again sets before Christians the question, "What should we be doing?"

What should we be doing when it comes to the liturgy, the sacraments, and pastoral care in light of the pandemic? What should we be doing to prepare for life after the pandemic? What should we be doing to save the Church from further decline, our people from further detachment, and our society from further dissolution? What should we be doing to give a witness, what should we be doing to make a difference, and what should we be doing to materialize the kingdom of heaven on earth?

Every blog, podcast, and diocesan missive is writing prescriptions for us, and my wife, a very faithful person, takes them all in, takes them each to heart and tries to translate them into practice. A very faithful spouse, she periodically translates them into prescriptions for me, which is only just.

And then, on top of all that, she is a member of a Bible study that has been reading through the book of Proverbs. It has been a very rewarding study, she says, but of course the constant refrain in the book of Proverbs is, "Here's another thing you must not fail to do."

The sum of all that for her, and to a lesser extent for me, is a steadily accumulating and increasingly crushing weight of responsibility. No doubt most if not all of those responsibilities are truly God-given; no doubt we find them overwhelming now only because we've been neglecting them too long. Quietism is certainly not the cure for what ails us. But in some of us, quietly at work somewhere near the bottom of all that, is the ongoing conceit that it's up to us to materialize the kingdom of God, and the immemorial tug of Pelagianism.

In light of all that, the dogged and liberating clarity of Reformed theology breathes fresh air into my wife's crowded thoughts and lightens her heavy heart, and to a slightly lesser extent mine too: God is sovereign, we are saved by grace alone, and there is nothing we can do to add to what God has done through Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to himself.

To say that, I realize, is an insult to Reformed theology — to treat its body of thought, reflection, and exposition as no more than ameliorative, a dash of which we can add to our Catholicism or our (semi)-Pelagianism or whatever other error we favor by a matter of temperament, or a handful of leaven to lighten the crushing weight of Christian responsibility. That is certainly not what Reformed theology is for Reformed believers. For them, it is the very bread of life. But speaking merely as an exhausted Anglo-Catholic, that is the debt I feel today. If it sounds patronizing, then that is a testimony to my own vanities and the vanities of my own tradition, not to the tradition I find so off-putting. And for a season at least, with my wife, I can finally feel my debt to it.

And God willing, I won't let my scratchy, exegetically responsible sermons deprive my people of Romans chapter 7.

The Rev. Steve Schlossberg is rector of St. Matthew's Church, Richmond, Virginia.

Sharing Burdens, Building a Wall

By Neva Rae Fox, Correspondent

St. Michael's in Trenton and Trinity in Princeton are a mere eight miles away from each other in New Jersey. St. Michael's, founded in 1703, and Trinity in 1833, have both made indelible marks on Episcopal, New Jersey, diocesan, and national history.

Across centuries, their differences multiplied to more than geography: today, St. Michael's is an inner-city urban church facing issues unlike those of Trinity, located in an affluent suburb. Nonetheless, the two churches have forged a strong partnership.

Recognizing that Trenton was more affected by COVID-19 than Princeton, Trinity proposed working together on a prayer wall dedicated to pandemic victims. What Trinity discovered changed some thinking and moved the parishes to a deeper focus.

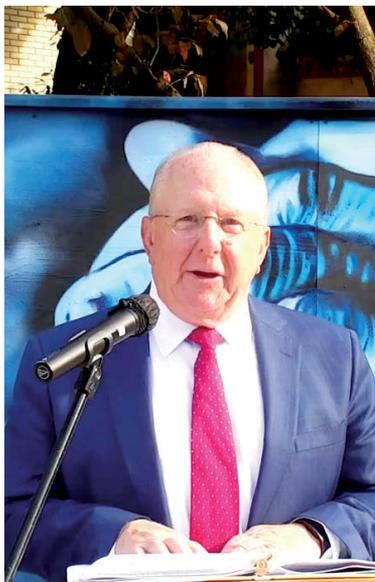
"At Trinity, we started talking about how there had not been a public memorial for COVID victims," said the Rev. Joanne Epply-Schmidt, the church's assistant rector. "We looked to work with St. Michael's because Trenton was hit harder than Princeton."

In response, St. Michael's parishioners said gun violence was a graver issue than COVID in Trenton.

"St. Michaels has been devoted to those who have died from gun violence and racism," said senior warden Fred Vereen Jr. "Last year there was a record of 31 homicides. All but a few were due to gun violence. St. Michael's started having community meetings on gun violence in 2016."

After the two churches connected, the result was a prayer wall dedicated to a "season of loss to highlight gun violence," Vereen said. "It wasn't just about COVID-19."

The wall was constructed in front of St. Michael's on busy Warren Street, not far from the State House Annex, and dedicated on October 18. Pinned to the wall are remembrances, prayers, "hopes, needs, thanksgivings, and a



At the dedication of the wall, from top left: Brian Bennet, chairman of the board of St. Francis Medical Center; Dr. Trineice Robinson-Martin of Turning Point United Methodist Church offers a song, with the crosses behind her bearing the names of victims of gun violence; a group of first responders.

QR Code for [places] where you can help victims, Epply-Schmidt said. "We came together to create a place of ongoing solace."

The prayer wall opened the door to a deeper partnership that includes sharing lay readers, a prayer vigil the day before Election Day, and Advent candle-lighting.

"For Trinity, this is real grassroots ministry," Epply-Schmidt said. "Our first job was to listen. Mutual trust and respect developed, so we can genuinely talk to each other."

"Going forward it is our hope to be able to worship in person together, with Trinity clergy serving at St.

Michael's," Epply-Schmidt said. "And we of Trinity look to St. Michael's to keep our feet on the ground ... and on-task with meaningful justice ministry."

"I'm really glad of this partnership that we have developed — we need one another. We need support in every aspect of ministry," Vereen said.

"Our first project together was a lot of work and a real success. It brought us together as a church family and, with blessings of God, has strengthened our courage as we continue to move on. I like to see suburban churches get as comfortable coming to cities like Trenton as they do sending to countries like Haiti." □

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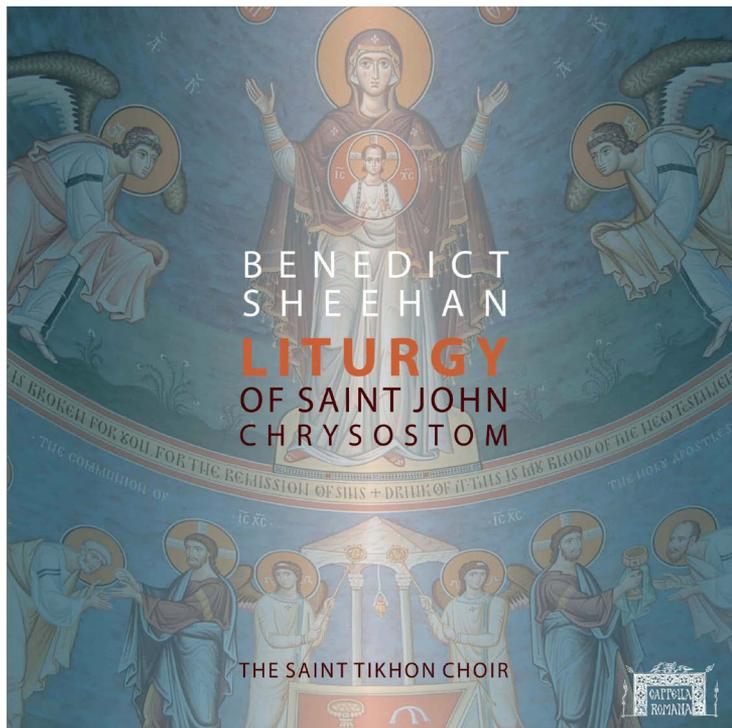
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— The Rev. Dr. Kristine Blaess
St. Paul's Episcopal Church,
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Vibrant New Choral Music for the Church's Eastern Lung

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
The Saint Tikhon Choir and Benedict Sheehan
Cappella Records, \$29.99

Review by Geoffrey Williams

Benedict Sheehan is director of music at St. Tikhon's Seminary and Monastery in Pennsylvania, artistic director of the Saint Tikhon Choir, and CEO and co-founder of the Artefact Institute, a collective of culture creators. He and his wife, Talia Maria Sheehan, are among the most sought-after clinicians in Orthodox sacred music in America.

Sheehan and his fine singers have brought to life a new piece that bridges the gap both between the centuries and between the traditions of East and West. The choir is a blend of seminarians and professional choral artists from across the country. This blend is apparent in the cohesive singing, but also in the clear, shared intent of inter-

pretation, a credit to the composer as conductor.

The *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* is dedicated to the composer's late father, Donald, who is credited with the translations of the Psalms included in the sequence. While a personal expression of faith by the composer, his devotion to God as the first listener is not lost.

The Orthodox choral catalogue is not short on pretty but thoughtless recordings. In contrast, this performance sets a new standard for excellence in the American choral landscape. Listeners with an interest in recordings of liturgical reconstructions will appreciate this sequence that sets the texts of the Divine Liturgy, which the Western Church would call the Holy Eucharist or the Mass.

The Divine Liturgy carries with it much more repetition of text than the Western rite, and this performance expresses text with a fresh clarity of intention from movement to move-

ment. A delightful surprise is the Third *Antiphon*, which sets the words of the Beatitudes from the Gospel of Matthew. Sheehan has set this text in an earlier composition (2012) and repeats his compositional tool of antiphonal singing from upper to lower voices.

One might imagine the words of the Sermon passing down the mountain, from one huddled mass to the next, hearing and relaying the words of Christ. For those looking for a nod to or rehashing of the beloved works of Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky, the closest resemblance is in the *Cherubic Hymn*. Something like an Offertory Anthem in our Western tradition, the text prepares the listener (and singers too) for the grace of the Blessed Sacrament: "let us now lay aside all earthly cares / that we may receive the King of all."

Sheehan's compositional voice follows in the footsteps of the 20th and 21st century phenomena Arvo Pärt, John Tavener, and Ivan Moody, taking a uniquely American approach and color when paired with the influence of ancient chant. This approach is remarkably unsentimental, which reflects a real sense of compositional maturity.

That is not to say that this recording lacks emotional gravitas. The *Litany of Supplication* and subsequent *Anaphora* are compositionally reminiscent of Tavener's *Mass of the Immaculate Conception* (2006), with a better sense of contemporary idiom as the choir drones under the chanting of the celebrant. The sequence concludes with *Blessed Be the Name of the Lord*, which seems as much an homage to Mendelssohn's motets as to the Eastern tradition and brings with it a heartwarming and robust ending to this vibrant contribution to the choral repertoire both in and outside of the Lord's temple.

Geoffrey Williams is founder and artistic director of the Grammy-nominated classical vocal quartet New York Polyphony and assistant professor of church music and director of chapel at Nashotah House Theological Seminary in Wisconsin.

Responding to Classic Skeptics

By Matt Boulter

One of the most embarrassing questions I hear from parishioners runs something like this: “So, Father Boulter, are you going to pursue *another* PhD?” This kind of suggestion could give a person nightmares. Yet that is precisely what Nancey Murphy, senior professor of Christian philosophy at Fuller Seminary, did: first at the University of California–Berkeley in the philosophy of

Murphy lays out
several crises
confronting the
Christian tradition
in the modern age.

science, then at Graduate Theological Union in theology.

Such extensive training, together with decades of teaching and research, has paid fruitful dividends in Murphy’s recent *A Philosophy of the Christian Religion*. This book is essential for any Christian concerned with a theological response to challenges such as capitalist, consumeristic hedonism; Nietzsche-inspired identity politics enshrining the will to power; the false humility of theological liberalism; biblically foundationalist epistemologies; and naturalistic reductionisms appealing to the neuroscience of the human brain (to name a few).

The book is organized in two parts. The first, “A Brief History of Reason,” begins with Homeric epic heroism and

pre-Socratic philosophy, moves through Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Augustine, progresses to early modern thought (Descartes through Hume), and culminates with the 20-century achievements of Ludwig Wittgenstein, Karl Popper, Willard Quine, and others.

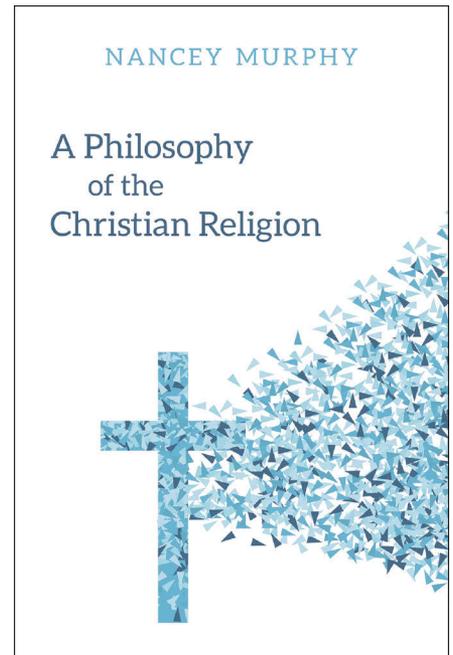
The second part, “Crises in Modern Christianity,” impressively applies Alasdair MacIntyre’s theory of intellectual traditions. Here Murphy lays out several crises confronting the Christian tradition in the modern age, assessing its success or failure in responding to these challenges, originating from without and within.

The prime examples include biblical foundationalism, the historical-critical method, and religious pluralism (ch. 5); “the problem of divine, special action” (ch. 6); the problem of evil, particularly in its modern guise (ch. 7); modern natural science (ch. 8); an assessment of contemporary neuroscience (ch. 9). Chapter 10, the final (and lengthiest) of the book, amounts to a focused MacIntyre-inspired analysis of the Naturalistic Tradition, including its interaction with the incommensurate rival tradition of Christianity.

While Murphy’s strengths far outweigh her weaknesses, I will start with the latter (of which I find three). First, in her narration of Alexandrian Neoplatonism (Plotinus), she fails to see it was likely influenced by Christian theology (since his mentor, Ammonius Saccas, probably had a Christian parent); in the relationship between Christian theology and ancient Neoplatonism, the influence runs in *both* directions.

Second, this time on *Christian* Neoplatonism, at several points Murphy conflates divine illumination (the natural light of reason) with faith (often described, in Latin culture, as the *intellectus fidei*).

Last, while Murphy is rightly critical of René Descartes, she overlooks his one deeply sound insight: the *reflexive*



A Philosophy of the Christian Religion

By Nancey Murphy

Westminster John Knox, pp. 350, \$40

character of his thought, such that the mind recursively reflects on itself. Here, he follows Aristotle (whose deity is “thought thinking itself”) and Hegel (with his subjectively monistic *Geist*).

Murphy makes several helpful breakthroughs.

First, there is what one might think of as “ways modern thought is rooted in premodern thought.” Here one encounters a sustained focus on (and a helpful articulation of) the ways mathematics informs *both* ancient and modern physics; a helpful explanation of how and why, in the demise of Aristotle’s “hylomorphic” metaphysics, atomism emerges again to take center stage in the Western imagination; a compelling account of late medieval nominalism (anticipating late modernity in so many ways) as rooted in prior assumptions about the primacy of the will, or divine freedom, and *not* simply a matter of how language (or “naming”) works.

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Opening the Encyclicals

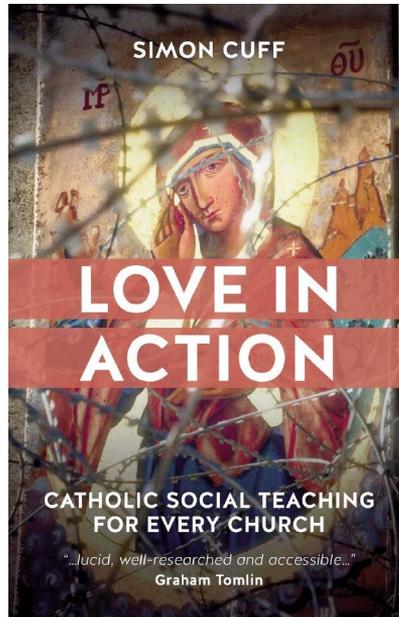
Love in Action
Catholic Social Teaching
for Every Church
By **Simon Cuff**
SCM Press, pp. 215, \$21.95

Review by Elisabeth Rain Kincaid

In this book, Simon Cuff provides an easily accessible primer on the key themes of Catholic Social Teaching. One of that tradition's greatest strengths is its clearly defined corpus of self-referential and self-reflective papal encyclicals, but this canonical structure often makes accessing the tradition challenging to outsiders.

Cuff demolishes these barriers to open the canon and sketch links to the Anglican tradition. Cuff also does an excellent job highlighting key points of conflict within the tradition. He explains the rationale for conflicts without leaving non-specialists in the theological weeds.

As the subtitle describes, the main focus of this work is introducing the practices of Catholic Social Teaching within every ecclesial setting rather than advancing historical or high-level theological engagement with



the tradition. Through this broad and basic focus, Cuff provides a helpful explanation of how the morally challenging demands of Catholic Social Teaching form the social and political questions Christians should ask today.

Dr. Elisabeth Kincaid is assistant professor of ethics and moral theology at Nashotah House Theological Seminary.

What Henry Mansel Offers Today's Church

Review by Mark Chapman

In this bold and ambitious expansion of his doctoral thesis at Wycliffe College in Toronto, Dane Neufeld seeks to rehabilitate the Very Rev. Henry Mansel, who served as dean of St Paul's Cathedral from 1868 until his death three years later. Mansel, now largely forgotten, was an Oxford philosopher and one of the most significant theologians of the 19th century.

Mansel's stature came principally from his Bampton Lectures in 1858 and his skepticism about rational knowledge of God. Such skepticism, Neufeld argues, allowed for prayer and supernatural knowledge about God established through revelation in Scripture.

Neufeld explores a forest of sources to prove that Mansel was not a Kantian philosopher or agnostic but one who offered the modern world potential resolution of problems raised by historical-critical readings of Scripture.

This gives the book a fast-paced and somewhat scattergun approach as Neufeld discusses the influence of works from the 19th-century and earlier. Throughout, Neufeld interrogates past theology, sometimes at great length, as a resource for today.

Neufeld draws on a great many authors who influenced Mansel and in turn those were influenced by him or responded critically to his thinking. Overall, the book is clear and accurate, although there are errors, including a misspelling of Michael Ramsey (possibly a mortal sin for Anglicans) and an incorrect dating of the Church of Eng-

A Philosophy of the Christian Religion

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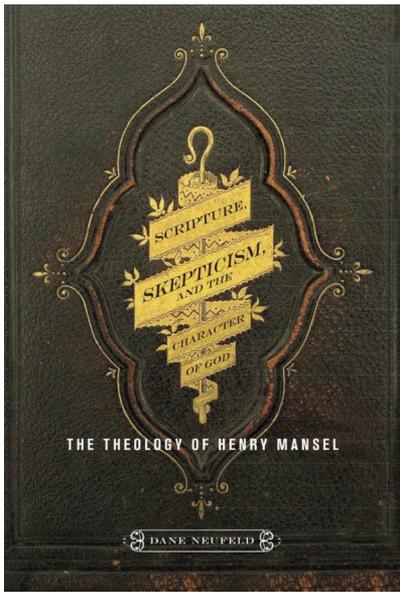
Next, Murphy is impeccable in her grasp of the dynamics of secular modernity. She offers a lucid account of the cataclysmic shift that takes place from Descartes to Immanuel Kant (with John Locke and David Hume playing intermediate roles). She gives an excellent explanation of how Friedrich Schleiermacher, the father of liberal Protestantism, is utterly determined by Kant's demolition of metaphysics and the resulting anti-realism (here theology is limited to morality and aesthetic feelings of the sublime). Murphy's helpful articulation of what

Wittgenstein means by *grammar* rounds out the high points in her account of modern thought.

A final area of strength is her argument for how Christian theology might not be bound to an Aristotelian-Neoplatonist metaphysics, but may be amenable to post-Newtonian developments in quantum theory.

This book is not easy reading. Yet for those struggling to make sense of their faith in these challenging intellectual and cultural times, it is quite helpful.

The Rev. Matt Boulter is associate rector of Christ Church in Tyler, Texas.



Scripture, Skepticism, and the Character of God

The Theology of Henry Mansel

By Dane Neufeld

McGill-Queen's University Press,
pp. 312, \$110 or \$55 (ebook)

land's doctrine report in 1938).

Sometimes there are long digressions, such as a section on the book *Lux Mundi* (1889) and idealism, that are sometimes only tangentially related to Mansel. Neufeld sometimes includes long extracts, including a whole page (on 171).

But then he returns to an underlying thesis that Mansel offered a scriptural worldview as a solution to skepticism. It also offers a solution to today's Church: the Bible "graciously reflects and describes reality in a manner that is adjusted to the endless difficulties and complexity of the world."

This leads to an attack on metaphysics in a manner not similar to earlier thinkers, including such monumental figures as Karl Barth.

A final chapter discusses Mansel's influence on modern interpreters, including the non-realist Don Cupitt. While these thinkers may share some aspects of skepticism, their solutions were quite different. Mansel allowed

Mansel allowed for a solid dose of biblical supernaturalism that had no space in the historicist or moralist's universe.

for a solid dose of biblical supernaturalism that had no space in the historicist or moralist's universe. Unlike Cupitt, Mansel had a regulative theory of the truth of "the one indivisible whole" of Scripture that did not allow it to be divided and that alone would supply the needs of the "life of man."

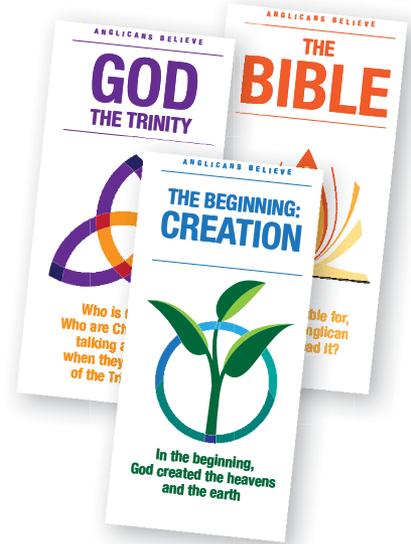
Neufeld concludes by criticising theologies that regard the universe as a spiritual whole at the expense of the biblical narrative, which could shape Anglicanism into a "scriptural community that is moulded by and lives within the language and narrative of scripture."

But — here one might take issue with Neufeld and possibly Mansel too — this does not make interpreting Scripture any easier. Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation, but it does so through faith in Jesus Christ, which compels an interpreter to unify Scripture. That requires the work of reason to help us make decisions about how Scripture bears witness to the God of Jesus Christ.

For some interpreters it may mean that, after they weigh the story of Jesus Christ and absorb Scripture's narrative, they consider it incoherent and the tensions of the witnesses not unified.

Such interpreters must decide based on our understanding of a canon within the canon, as so many have done before. Neufeld presents his case with verve and vigour, but I do not believe he reaches a satisfactory solution.

The Rev. Canon Mark D. Chapman is professor of the history of modern theology at the University of Oxford.



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The Rev. **Kevin Johnson** is priest in charge of St. Alban's, Arlington, Texas

The Rev. Dn. **Elizabeth Kinsey** is parish deacon at St. John's, Sturgis, Mich.

The Rev. **Kevin Kinsey** is rector of Good Shepherd, Houlton, Maine.

The Rev. **Robert Leopold** is interim rector of St. Andrew's, Colchester, Vt.

The Rev. **Will Levanway** is priest in charge of Christ Church, Chattanooga, Tenn.

The Rev. **Rebecca Liberty** is transition priest

in charge of St. John's, Bangor, Maine.

The Rev. **David Madison** is executive director of the National Association of Episcopal Schools.

The Rev. **Kerry Mansir** is rector of Christ Church, Gardiner, Maine.

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The Rev. **Michael Rau** is rector of St. Mark's, South Venice, Fla.

The Rev. **Spencer Reece** is priest in charge of St. Mark's, Jackson Heights, N.Y.

Ms. **Mildred Briones Reyes** is missionary for Latino/Hispanic ministry and diocesan initiatives of the Diocese of Washington.

The Rev. **James Rhodenheiser** is rector of St. Peter's, Litchfield Park, Ariz.

The Rev. Dn. **Ed Richards** is parish deacon at Christ the King, Santa Rosa Beach, Fla.

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The Rev. **Ben Rodenbeck** is vicar of Trinity, Kingman, Ariz.

The Rev. **Laurie Rofinot** is interim priest of Holy Spirit, South Weymouth, Mass.

The Rev. **Frank Russ** is priest in charge of St. Andrew's, Goldsboro, N.C.

The Rev. **Lee Shafer** is rector of Calvary, Louisville, Ky.

The Rev. **Jason Shank** is missionary for congregational vitality and transition minister of the Dioceses of Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania.

The Rev. **Karen Sherrill** is rector of Grace, Whitestone, N.Y.

The Rev. **Serena Sides** is associate rector of St. Bartholomew's, Nashville, Tenn.

The Rev. **Michael Singer** is priest in charge of St. James, Wilmington, N.C.

The Rev. **Christopher Slane** is extended supply priest at St. Andrew's, Cincinnati.

The Rev. **Amy Slater** is rector of St. Mary's, Green Cove Springs, Fla.

The Rev. **Channing Smith** is rector of Good Shepherd, Austin, Texas.

The Rev. **Robert Smith** is interim rector of St. Luke's & the Epiphany, Philadelphia.

The Rev. **Twila Smith** is canon for mission development of the Dioceses of Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania.

The Rev. **David Snyder** is priest in charge of St. Stephen's, Beverly N.J.

The Rev. **Merrill Wade** is interim priest at St. George's, Austin, Texas.

The Rev. Canon **Auburn Watersong** is canon the ordinary for transition ministry of the Diocese of Vermont.

The Rev. **Anne Weatherholt** is interim rector of Trinity, Martinsburg, W.V.

The Very Rev. Dr. **Amy Welin** is ecumenical and interfaith officer of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania.

The Rev. **Kate Wesch** is rector of St. John's, Essex, Conn.

The Rev. Dr. **Dorothy White** is interim vicar of St. Peter's, Richmond, Va.

The Rev. Canon **Joanna White** is canon for pastoral services of the Diocese of Maryland.

The Rev. **Duane Wiggin-Nettles** is rector of Grace & Holy Trinity, Richmond, Va.

The Rev. **Christopher Wilkins** is priest in charge of St. Mark's, Fairland, Silver Spring, Md.

The Rev. **Jim Wilkinson** is priest in charge of Ascension, Bardstown, Ky.

The Rev. **Jill Williams** is priest in charge of St. Paul's, Montvale, Ore.

The Rev. **Robert Williams** is interim priest at Resurrection, Eugene, Ore.

The Rev. **Susan Anslow Williams** is interim rector of St. Paul's Brighton, Mich.

Ordinations

Priesthood

New Jersey (for Chicago): **Kyle Rader** (priest in charge, St. Barnabas, Monmouth Junction, N.J.)

Newark: **Raul Ausa** (priest in charge, Trinity, Allendale, N.J.)

North Carolina: **Matthew Addington** (assistant rector, St. Francis, Greensboro, N.C.), **Paul Daniels** (assistant clergy, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York), **Joseph Sroka** (curate, Good Shepherd, Asheboro, N.C., missionary, Community of the Franciscan Way, Siler City, N.C.)

North Carolina (for Arkansas): **Jonathan Pucik** (director, Friendship Table, High Point, N.C.)

North Carolina (for Virginia): **Amanda Bourne** (curate, Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, N.C.)

Northern California: **Grace Flint** (assistant rector, St. John's, Chico, Calif.), **Portia Hopkins** (assistant rector, All Saints, Sacramento, Calif.), **Libby Vincent** (assistant, Trinity, Folsom, Calif.)

Northern Indiana: **Bernadette Marie Hart-sough** (priest in charge, St. Thomas/Santo Tomas, Plymouth, Ind.), **Erika Lynn Jackson-Essiem** (assistant rector, Trinity, Folsom, Calif.), **Nicole Marie Lambelet** (associate rector of family ministry and outreach, Epiphany, Atlanta), **Cynthia Hanna Moore** (vicar, Calumet Episcopal Ministry Partnership, Griffith, Ind.), **Nathaniel Adam Warne** (priest in

charge, St. Paul's, Mishawaka, Ind.)

Northern Michigan: **Maureen Louise Martin** (priest in charge, St. James', West Bend, Wis.)

Northwestern Pennsylvania: **Rebecca Harris** (vicar, St. John's, Kane, Pa.), **Patricia Lavery** (vicar, Epiphany, Grove City, Pa.)

Northwestern Pennsylvania (for Vermont): **Kathleen Moore** (associate of St. Mark's and Cathedral of St. Paul, Erie, Pa.)

Ohio: **Brian Matthew Bechtel** (curate, St. Paul's, Cleveland Heights, Ohio)

Oklahoma: **Lance Schmitz** (associate priest for youth and families, St. Augustine's, Oklahoma City, Okla.)

Oregon: **Ryan Baker-Fones** (chaplain, Episcopal Campus Ministry, Eugene, Ore.), **Everett Charters IV** (assistant, St. Gabriel's, Portland, Ore.), **Dawn Reynolds** (assistant, St. Thomas, Dallas, Ore.)

Pennsylvania: **Yesenia Alejandro** (priest in charge, St. John's, Norristown, Pa.), **Darrell Tiller** (curate, Good Shepherd, Rosemont, Pa.)

Pennsylvania (for Southern Virginia): **Emily Zimbrick-Rogers** (assistant rector, St. David's, Wayne, Pa.)

Pittsburgh (for New Jersey): **Luke Zerra** (youth minister, St. Paul's Church, Mt. Lebanon, Pa.)

Rio Grande: **Michael Coburn** (assistant, Holy Cross, Edgewood, N.M.)

Rochester: **Keisha Marie Stokes** (pastoral leader, Zion, Palmyra, N.Y. and pastoral associate, St. John's, Canandaigua)

South Carolina: **Laura Rezac** (associate rector for children and youth formation at St. Stephen's, Charleston, S.C.)

Southwestern Virginia: **John Church** (pastoral leader, All Saints', Norton, Va.)

Spokane: **David Bruce Walker** (assistant, Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Spokane, Wash.)

Vermont: **Thom Rock** (rector, Good Shepherd, Rangeley, Maine)

Virginia: **Will Dickinson** (curate, St. George's, Fredericksburg, Va.)

Virginia (for West Tennessee): **Mary Margaret Winn** (assistant rector, St. Matthew's, Sterling, Va.)

West Texas: **John Blackburn** (parish priest, St. Christopher's by the Sea, Portland, Texas), **Mikel Brightman** (assistant, St. Philip's, San Antonio, Texas), **Bryn Skelton Caddell** (vicar, St. Michael and All Angels, Blanco, Texas), **Dexter Lesieur** (priest in charge, St. Matthias, Devine, Texas) **Gerald Phelps** (priest in charge, St. Andrew's, Corpus Christi, Texas), **Arnoldo Romero** (rector, St. James', Del Rio, Texas)

West Texas (for Alabama): **Lucy Stradlund** (curate, St. John's, New Braunfels, Texas)

Western Kansas (for Oregon): **Catherine Rodman Reid Cox** (curate, Christ Cathedral, Salina, Kan.)

Western North Carolina: **William Smith Bryant** (assistant for youth and community engagement, Cathedral of All Souls, Asheville), **C. Murdock Jones** (curate, Good Shepherd, Cashiers, N.C.)

Retirements

The Rev. **Bob Henderson** as rector of Trinity, Wetumpka, Ala.

The Rev. **Dale Hutjens** as deacon at St. Anne's, De Pere, Wis.

The Rev. Dn. **Alyce Jefferson** as parish deacon at Trinity, New Orleans

The Rev. **Scott Jones** as vicar of Resurrection, Gilbert, Ariz.

The Rev. **Ruth LaMonte** as priest in charge of St. Michael's, Chickasaw, Ala.

The Rev. **Jackie Matisse** as rector of St. Patrick's, Lebanon, Ohio

The Rev. **Preston Mitchell** as deacon at All Saints, Norton, Va.

The Rev. **Patricia Oglesby** as director of the department of pastoral care of the American Oncologic Hospital, Philadelphia.

The Rev. **Daniel Olsen** as rector of St. Paul's, Oaks, Pa.

The Rev. **Susan Pinkerton** as rector of St. John's, West Hartford, Conn.

The Rev. Dn. **Pam Rhea** as parish deacon at St. John's, Aberdeen and Good Shepherd, Columbus, Miss.

The Rev. **Phil Shaw** as Resurrection, Kingman, Ariz.

The Rev. **Stephen Smith** as rector of St. Patrick's, Dublin, Ohio.

Mr. **Sean Swift** as executive director of The Bishop's Ranch, Healdsburg, Calif.

The Rev. **Eileen Weglarz** as priest in charge of Christ Church, Hudson, N.Y.

The Rev. **Albert Zug** as middle school chaplain of Episcopal Academy, Media, Pa.

Secularizations

Good Shepherd, East Chicago, Ind.

Deaths

The Rev. Deacon **Susan C. Burman**, a leader in the Diocese of Fond du Lac, died Jan. 10 at 82.

A native of Kenosha, Wisconsin, Burman's career was as a nurse. She served as parish nurse at St. Paul's Cathedral in Fond du Lac, as well as manager of the Parish Press, which was based there. After her ordination in 1998, she was the cathedral's deacon until 2002, when she was assigned to Holy Trinity, Waupun.

She helped coordinate diocesan mission trips to Honduras and New Orleans and served as nurse at the diocese's summer camp. She served on the diocese's executive council and abuse prevention committee, and participated in many diocesan services. She especially loved carrying a flying-dove banner in processions.

Burman is survived by her husband, Harv, four children, and numerous grandchildren.

The Rev. Canon **Stephen C. Casey**, an Englishman who served as a priest of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania for 26 years, died Jan. 19 of complications of COVID-19, at 74.

He grew up in Hull, in Yorkshire, and developed a lifelong fascination with airplanes. As a young man, he apprenticed as a house and sign painter before entering the airline industry, eventually becoming a station manager for Dann Air.

He and Raelynn were married in 1982, and they moved to the United States three years later. Responding to a call to the priesthood, he

began college studies in his mid-40s, graduating from Gettysburg College and then Virginia Theological Seminary.

He was ordained to the priesthood in 1996 and served for three years at St. Paul's Church in Lock Haven. Three years later, he became rector of the Church of St. Edward the Confessor in Lancaster, which he served until his retirement in 2018.

Casey served on several diocesan committees, including as president of the standing committee. He was head of examining chaplains and taught in the diocese's Stevenson School for Ministry, sharing his passion for Anglo-Saxon spirituality and the poetry of John Donne. Casey represented the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania twice at General Convention and cherished his fellowship with St. Gregory's Abbey in Three Rivers, Michigan.

He is survived by his wife of 37 years, daughters Emily and Elizabeth, and two grandchildren.

The Very Rev. **Van H. Gardner**, longtime dean of Baltimore's Cathedral of the Incarnation who showed a commitment to justice, died Jan. 11 at his home in the city, at 74.

Gardner grew up in Baltimore's Hampden neighborhood, and trained as a history teacher. After several years in the classroom at a vocational high school, he answered a call to ministry. He studied at Virginia Seminary and was ordained to the priesthood in 1979. He served at Church of the Messiah in Baltimore's Hamilton neighborhood before becoming rector of St. Mark's Church in nearby Pikesville.

He was called as dean of the cathedral in 1987, at a low point in the congregation's life, and he bolstered the congregation's ministry to youth. Through a partnership with Sandtown Habitat for Humanity, cathedral members built and restored 15 homes in an economically challenged West Baltimore neighborhood.

During a time of increased violence, Gardner began lighting a candle on an altar in the cathedral to mark the death of each child killed in the city. That symbolic action sparked a commitment to justice and peace for Baltimore's children led to the founding of the Children's Peace Center and construction of a Children's Peace Memorial on the grounds of the cathedral.

He was involved in pastoral care to people with AIDS at the Don Miller House and founded the Episcopal Refugee and Immigrant Center Alliance to support immigrants in the community.

He retired from his ministry as dean in 2008 and went on to serve as chaplain of St. Timothy's School in Stevensville, and as the vicar of St. Luke's, Carey Street, where he helped found a youth center in the predominantly Black neighborhood. More recently, he assisted at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Ruxton.

The avid Orioles and Ravens fan "loved nothing more than to sit with a good Irish whiskey and a book, or to go fishing," family members said. Gardner is survived by his wife of 52 years, Kathleen, three children, and six grandchildren.

Two Consoling Messages

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“**A**nd the Spirit immediately drove him into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him” (Mark 1:12-13). We too are “assaulted by many temptations” (Collect). We survive this testing by resisting the devil, steadfast in faith, and we survive even when we fall because Christ died for sinners, and we survive because there are ministering angels in the wilderness of our lives.

Angels are *messengers*, and there are two consoling messages in the appointed lessons that we do well to hear and claim.

The first concerns an opened heaven. “In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him” (Mark 1:9-10). This stands as a reversal of an ancient curse, when Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden, when God “placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life” (Gen. 3:24). Although they were shut out of the garden, God came again and again to the help of his people, and yet a pall of guilt and shame remained over them. In Christ, heaven, the paradise of God and humanity, is opened again.

Heaven’s door will not be closed, for Jesus Christ our Lord is the one “in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him” (Eph. 3:12). Jesus is our great high priest, through whom we “approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

How human it is to experience a time of need. We are sometimes afflicted, perplexed, persecuted, forsaken, struck down, and we always bear in our bodies the death of Jesus (2

Cor. 4:8-10). Our human predicament is a cross to bear, yet we who have died with Christ have also risen with him, and our prayers and cries, our lamentations and exaltations, rise up through an open heaven. Meditate on this angelic message: “he saw the heavens opened.”

The second message concerns the power of Christ to break open the gates of hell. “For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous,” bring us to God” (1 Pet. 3:18).

The dear are among those brought to God. “He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the *spirits in prison*, who in former times did not obey” (1 Pet. 3:18-20).

Here we see Adam and Eve, symbols of all humans, trapped in a murky wasteland of the dead. In Christ, they are locked up no more. An ancient homily imagines the event: “Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve, he who is both God and the son of Eve. ... He took him [Adam] the hand and raised him up, saying: ‘Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.’ ... I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be held a prisoner in hell.” (*An Ancient Homily on the Lord’s Descent into Hell*).

Heaven is open. The gates of hell are broken. All is full of love and victory.

Look It Up

Read Philippians 3:14.

Think About It

Hear the upward call of God.

Leave Everything

Leave everything for God. "Now the LORD said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great ... and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' So Abram went" (Gen. 12:1-4).

The calling became a covenant: "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ... [Sarah] shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her" (Gen. 17:4, 16).

When Jesus called his disciples, they left everything. "As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea — for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him" (Mark 1:16-18). The pattern is repeated in the calling of James and John, though with more emotional weight because they "left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him" (Mark 1:20).

The call to leave everything has a certain heroic appeal. Rather than go along with inherited customs and values and a self that is created mainly by the surrounding culture, one ventures out upon a new life of discovery in Christ. Christianity's establishment as the religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century gave rise to a great migration of men and women to the deserts of Egypt, Palestine, and Arabia, where many lived as hermits.

Having left the world, they sought Christ in absolute and solitary devotion, repentance and purgation, simple trust and hope. They did not reject the world entirely. In some ways, they remained connected to nearby cities, willingly submitted to ecclesiastical authority, and shared community life through counsel and encouragement. Still, their witness was radical, a wit-

ness that has never departed from the life of the Church.

Of course, some souls were broken by excessive severity and, less seriously, a life of radical discipleship sometimes seemed foolish or funny. Celtic saints setting sail on the ocean in small wooden boats searching for a promised land sometimes met a watery death.

A young Teresa of Ávila, at only 7, tried to run off with her brother to the country of the Moors, hoping to be beheaded for Christ. Apprehended by their uncle, they returned home. Undeterred, the young radicals "decided to become hermits."

"We used to build hermitages, as well as we could, in the orchard which we had at home. We would make heaps of small stones, but they at once fell down again, so we found no way of accomplishing our desires," she wrote. Amid even strange and childish tales, a kernel of truth remains. The call of God in Christ is an exodus from this world.

Suppose we do not leave the world. Suppose our thoughts and feelings are mostly a reiteration of what we have seen or heard in our social media culture. Suppose we drift and are formed unknowingly into a mirror image of the culture we inhabit. Suppose our convictions are only reactions reinforced by constant stimuli. In such a world, we may love our parents and family and friends, but we do not have a self of depth and reality.

Jesus unmakes the false self and creates a new being. A new humanity sings a new song, lives a new life, loves rightly and properly.

Look It Up

"So clothe us in your Spirit that we ... may bring [others] to the knowledge and love of you" (BCP, p. 101).

Think About It

Jesus is a consuming fire to the Old Adam and a beautiful brilliance to the New Being.

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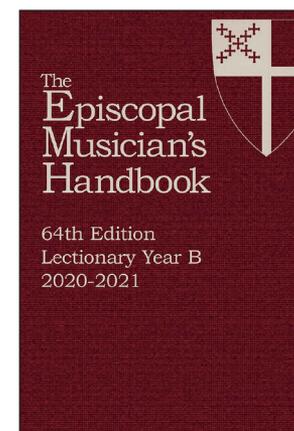
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