

Spring 2019
VOLUME 6, NUMBER 1



Iowa Connections



Listening to the Small Episcopal Church

From the Bishop

One of my wife's efforts to broaden my cultural horizon is to insist on season tickets to the Des Moines Civic Center Broadway series. I have to agree that it does expose me to things that I would not otherwise ever have approached or even knew existed. Of course, I am happy to have the opportunity to see *Les Miserables*, or *Wicked* or *Hamilton*, but *Dear Evan Hansen*—what on earth is that? A musical about teen suicide and mental health? What could there be to sing about? I was the dutiful husband and went with little expectation. I could not have been more wrong or ill-informed.

Thousands of young people filled the Civic Center, along with parents and the standard Civic Center Broadway series lifers. And half way through the first act, the sobbing all around was palpable. Something was connecting. The young woman just behind us was an absolute emotional wreck. It was not because of a sentimental story line. The teen who commits suicide (which we know from a note through his parents, and not in live action) had barely been a character to be identifying with. No, something else was being addressed and it was speaking to many around us.

“Dear Evan Hansen is a heart scorching musical about a teen boy so bound up by anxiety and loneliness that he makes mistakes he can't fix and gets stuck in the quicksand of social media. But eventually he finds a way to leave self-loathing behind. It's also about parents reaching for the kids as they disappear into their phones and laptops. And it's about the struggle to connect in an era when it seems as if we're all awash in emotional hyperbole online and off.” That's the opening paragraph of the reflection in the program by Susanna Schrobsdorff.

She goes on to ask, “How do you learn to raise the first generation for whom the virtual world is just as important as their physical lives? There is no precedent. How do you navigate it as a kid? No one knows how it will work out... We parents will never learn to understand what it's like to grow up with two selves, one that must be constantly tended online and another that might be very different.” She notes that this is a generation that “can seem jaded and desensitized having come of age with access to the entire world's pain and tribulations in the palms of their hand.”

Where are we as Church in all of this? What have we to say? Can we even manage to describe what is going on around us with such insight? Helping the lost find themselves in God is our business, is it not? And yet we may barely notice. At one

point in the intermission, I turned to Donna and sang (softly) “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost but now am found; was blind but now I see.”



Bishop Alan Scarfe

Where has that urgency gone as we anxiously prop up our institutions built in the name of that very Gospel? Dare we lose ourselves in the crowds that are in that struggle to connect, and hear their cry? As with the children of Israel of old in Egypt, God hears, and God turns to the Church and says, “Let My people go.”

Many this Lent are using the Way of Love curriculum to tend to our spiritual lives. How do we add an attentiveness to society around us, to learn the pain which Jesus carried in His own self? We offer our arms stretched out in love like His as a divine embrace. Are we even earning the right to make that embrace? The Church is very much like the parent figures in *Dear Evan Hansen*. “Ask one of the teenagers in the audience,” continues Susanna Schrobsdorff, “if the play seems authentic and they can barely get the words out. They say things like ‘I'm in shock; it's so good.’ And often, right behind them is a parent who's also feeling undone. I lost it in the first act, when the two stellar actors playing mothers of teens sing about feeling totally unqualified for the job of being a parent. ‘Does anyone have a map?’ they cry, ‘Anybody maybe happen to know how the hell to do this?’”

Amazing grace is probably the only hymn most of us can sing without the words in front of us. It is the essence of our faith. I hear a lot of people say that they don't know how to evangelize. Maybe that is because we are unsure how to listen and be present; to engage conversation to the deep levels provoked by an authentic musical. Let authenticity be our Lenten prayer. When people sense that, they might just open up and reveal their wish to be found.

In the peace and love of Christ,

The Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe, Bishop of Iowa



ENGAGING ALL DISCIPLES CALLED, FED, AND SENT DIOCESAN CALENDAR

March

- 2 Bascom Consecration as the 10th bishop of Kansas
- 3 Bishop's visitation, St. Mark's, Anamosa
Southeast Chapter meeting, 2:00 pm, Christ Church, Burlington
- 8-10 Happening #46, St. Luke's, Cedar Falls
- 9 **ENGAGING ALL DISCIPLES**, 3:00-7:00 pm at Trinity
Muscatine with St. Paul's, Durant
Metro Chapter meeting, 9:00 am, St. John's, Ames
- 10 Bishop's visitation, Trinity Church, Muscatine
North Cedar Valley Chapter, 2:00 pm, St. James', Independence
- 16 **ENGAGING ALL DISCIPLES**, 3:00-7:00 pm at St. Stephen's,
Newton with St. Paul's, Grinnell and St. Paul's, Marshalltown
Which Way to Justice? Dismantling Racism as a Spiritual
Practice with the Rev. Dr. Jennifer Harvey, 9:30-3:00 pm,
Old Brick, Iowa City
- 17 Bishop's visitation, St. Stephen's, Newton
- 21 Priests in New Transitional Situations (PINTS), 12:00-4:00 pm,
St. Andrew's, Des Moines
- 23 **ENGAGING ALL DISCIPLES**, 3:00-7:00 pm at St. John's,
Keokuk with Christ Church, Burlington; St. Michael's, Mount
Pleasant; and St. Luke's, Fort Madison
West Chapter meeting, 10:00 am at St. George's, LeMars
- 24 Bishop's visitation, St. John's, Keokuk
Three Rivers Chapter meeting, 2:00 pm, Trinity, Iowa City
- 31 East Chapter meeting, 2:00 pm, St. Mark's, Maquoketa

April

- 5-6 Commission on Ministry, Des Moines
- 6 Board of Directors, 1:00 pm
- 7 Bishop's visitation, Church of the Savior, Orange City
Southwest Chapter meeting, 2:00 pm, St. Paul's, Council Bluffs
- 12-13 New Beginnings #22 Staff Training, St. Luke's, Cedar Falls
- 13 Northwest Quadrant Small Church Summit, Trinity,
Emmetsburg
- 13-14 Underground Railroad Pilgrimage
- 15 Chrism Mass, 11:00 am at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Des
Moines
- 21 EASTER, Bishop at Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Des Moines
- 25-28 New Beginnings #22, St. Luke's, Cedar Falls
- 27 **ENGAGING ALL DISCIPLES**, 3:00-7:00 pm at St. Peter's,
Bettendorf with St. Alban's and Trinity Cathedral, Davenport
North Central Chapter, 10:00 am, St. Mark's, Fort Dodge
- 28 Bishop's visitation, St. Peter's, Bettendorf

Schedule subject to change. Visit iowaepiscopal.org for all of the latest schedule information.

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Iowa Connections

Spring 2019

The Rev. Meg Wagner, Editor

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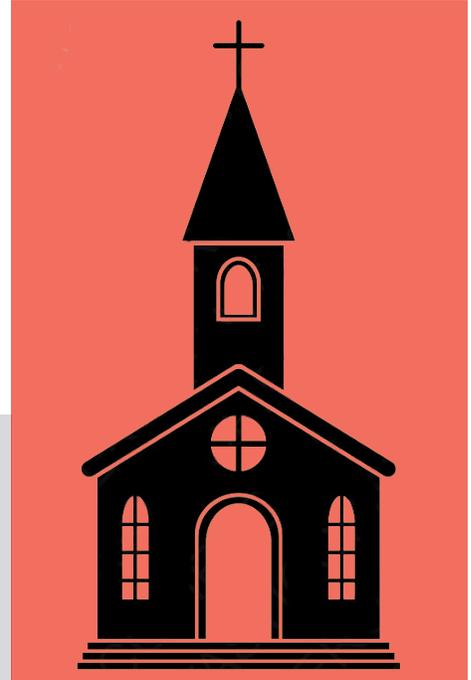
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Listening to the Small Episcopal Church

In 2015, the Rev. Holly Scherff and Kim Gee (St. John's, Shenandoah) received an Alleluia Grant from the Diocese of Iowa to interview and listen to the small churches in Iowa. Small churches were defined as having average Sunday attendance of 25 or fewer. With a total of 59 congregations in the diocese, 29 were identified as small churches and 24 were interviewed. The goal was to listen to each of the small churches and parishioners' stories about dreams and frustrations and their relationship with the rest of the diocese. The initiative was inspired by the Dr. Seuss classic, *Horton Hears a Who*, when all the Whos kept calling, "We are here, we are here, WE ARE HERE." This listening initiative leans in to hear the small churches in Iowa.

As stories were shared, it became clear that Holly and Kim were hearing stories of what contributes to the health of the small church in Iowa. The stories range from St. James', Independence and their Hot Dog Fridays, to St. Andrew's, Waverly and their understanding of the importance of seed planting, to Church of the Savior, Clermont's passion for outreach in their community of Clermont, and St. Michael's, Mt. Pleasant who know that each of us has gifts to give.



Small Churches Included in this listening:

- St. Thomas, Algona
- St. Mark's, Anamosa
- Trinity, Carroll
- St. Andrew's, Chariton
- Grace, Charles City
- Church of the Saviour, Clermont
- Trinity, Denison
- Trinity, Emmetsburg
- St. Luke's, Ft. Madison
- St. John's, Glenwood
- St. Paul's, Harlan
- St. James', Independence
- All Saints, Indianola
- St. Matthew's-by-the-Bridge, Iowa Falls
- St. Mark's, Maquoketa
- St. Paul's, Marshalltown
- St. Michael's, Mt. Pleasant
- Trinity, Ottumwa
- St. Martin's, Perry
- St. John's, Shenandoah
- Calvary, Sioux City
- All Saints', Storm Lake
- St. Andrew's, Waverly

LISTENING TO THE SMALL EPISCOPAL CHURCH



FROM HOLLY AND KIM

The questions that have been consuming our conversations after our journey have been...What makes a healthy small church? What tangible things can we share with the small churches in Iowa? What is it they need to hear both good and bad? What is it the Diocese should hear, as well?

We want to emphasize the awesome things the small churches are doing right now...and that the small church is alive albeit limping at times. They want their community, the diocese and their parishes to know that they have a voice. And we feel that it is our sacred duty to give them this voice.

Healthy small churches are looking at ways to open their doors. They have invested in a good face-lift. They market their church. They ask people to join them. They walk with Jesus. To use an overworked phrase...*they do their own thing.*

Conversations amongst the church, the community, and the diocese must be ongoing otherwise isolation sets in. Healthy churches always look outside their walls for the needs of the community and act upon those needs.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HEALTHY SMALL CHURCHES

- Ability to identify and work toward meeting need(s) in wider community
- Ability to plant seeds of faith and nurture them
- Ability to dream
- Respect for the gifts of the Spirit
- Desire to find ways to make sure all know their doors are open
- Realistic view of expectations and limitations
- An attitude of "Let's try it!"
- Ability to be realistic about their size
- Ability to see possibilities and act upon them
- Ability to use the gifts and talents of people in the congregation
- Able to evolve/adapt their physical structure to needs in community
- Ability to be open to changes
- A willingness to stay informed





■ FOR THE LOVE OF THE BUILDING

We found that the sheer love of the building keeps the doors open. So, we think good follow-up questions would be, “If your church building would burn down/blow away/fall in, would you still be a community? Would the people who come into this box still be together? Or is the building the only glue holding you together?”

Having reverence for the building can blind a congregation, or at the very least put blinders on. A few churches have explored the Recasting process from Episcopal Church Building Fund. Some have had success, albeit feeling like they, “had to for survival and to pay the utilities.”

But the Recasting must come from within. The diocese can provide support and ideas (resources, legalities, and direction) but must step back and let the small church bring forth their own ideas and thus their ownership of Recasting for it to be successful.

CHALLENGES FOR THE SMALL CHURCH



The people of the small churches really are seeking answers on how to survive and have great hopes for growth. They also face many common challenges:

- One voice dominates conversations (often a negative one).
- Balloon poppers—those who would find a reason that ideas, visions, or dreams (balloons), would not work without ever trying them.
- Self-reliant mind-set. Relying on the Holy Spirit to engage and lead us can be quite a challenge for the ‘I can do it myself’ conditioning that we have become accustomed to.
- Leaders who see the big picture vs. leaders who have their own agenda.
- Being truly welcoming to visitors while remaining a close-knit group.
- Adjusting from being a large church to a small church without feeling defeated and stuck in the grieving cycle, sometimes through generations.
- Maintaining and using a large facility with a small congregation.
- A bad leadership fit and/or few or no choices of clergy to serve the church’s needs.
- Unable to see a future or dream because of a veil over congregation’s eyes. For those congregations they must be able to identify their unique veil.

49%

49% of the Episcopal Churches in Iowa are considered "small," with 25 or fewer people attending on any given Sunday. 20% of the churches have fewer than 15 people attending on Sunday

20%

WHAT'S NEXT

The small-church study has given the Diocese of Iowa a gift in this listening. The small churches' responses to challenges and, more hopefully, their spirit of being small church in many of our rural communities, is inspiring. The interviewers have compiled some ideas about next steps in this adventure:

- Find ways to ensure that the small church voice is always part of the conversations about life in the diocese.
- Ensure that all know about available resources, including the resources that come from sharing experiences and ways of helping each other even across diocesan borders.
- Recognize when situations may be changing in communities and therefore churches' identities may also be changing; churches may need to explore this new identity in safe and supportive ways.
- Encourage churches to realistically assess their openness to new people and new ideas. Often, we all have blinders that prevent seeing opportunities for new life.
- Encourage and develop leaders who understand the larger picture and keep others thinking beyond themselves.
- Take the opportunity to be in conversation with other dioceses and small church communities, recognizing there may be gifts in the shared experiences.
- Find ways for small churches to feel they are an equal partner with the bishop in the decisions concerning the life of the small church.
- Identify the resources that small churches have access to in order to participate in visioning and planning.



- Congregations with an average Sunday attendance fewer than 10
- Congregations with an average Sunday attendance fewer than 15
- Congregations with an average Sunday attendance fewer than 25

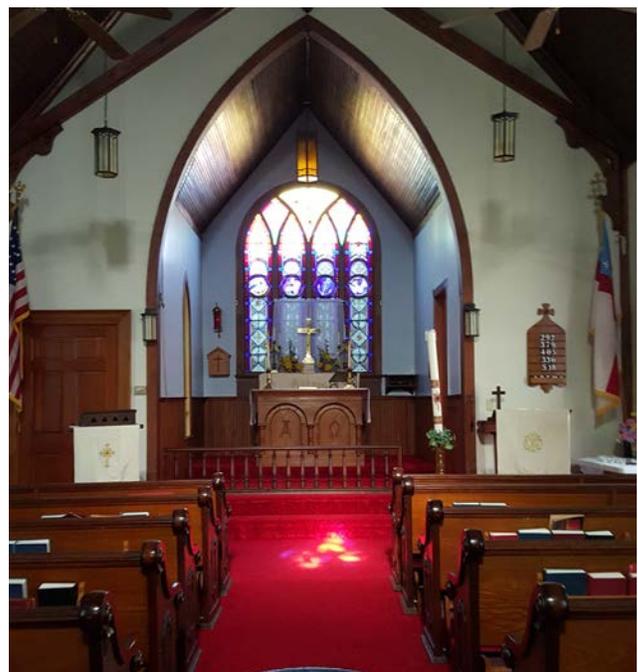
SMALL CHURCH SUMMITS IN 2019

April 13 Northwest Quadrant

June 22 Southwest Quadrant

June 29 Southeast Quadrant

July 6 Northeast Quadrant



Summer Ministry School and Retreat 2019

June 14-16 at Grinnell College



Fun, Learning and Worship for the Whole Family!

For the past 30 years Episcopalians in Iowa have gathered for a weekend in the summer to learn church leadership skills, explore personal spirituality, or just find Sabbath time. Praying The Daily Offices together sets a rhythm and tone for the weekend that culminates in Eucharist on Sunday morning with the Bishop officiating. Almost eight hours are set aside for “track time” to get in-depth study in one track topic of your choice. Morning and evening social time, meals and this year’s “Gathering Session” is time with people that aren’t in your track.

As the event has grown, we’ve expanded to include the entire family...offering chaperoned lock-in programs for youth and FREE childcare in the JRC for kids entering grade 3 and younger.

Grinnell College offers air conditioned dorm living across the field from the JRC building where all meals, social time, track classrooms and worship take place. We even provide golf cart transportation between dorms and the JRC. Meals are all buffet style and are delicious even for picky eaters.

This year’s Co-Coordinators are The Rev. Ruth Ratliff and The Rev. Jeanie Smith. Contact them at smsr@iowaepiscopal.org with questions or to apply for a scholarship. Questions about registration and logistics to Elizabeth Adams: eadams@iowaepiscopal.org or 515-277-6165

**REGISTER BY MAY 10, 2019 TO TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF SPECIAL SAVINGS**

2019 RETREAT SCHEDULE

Friday

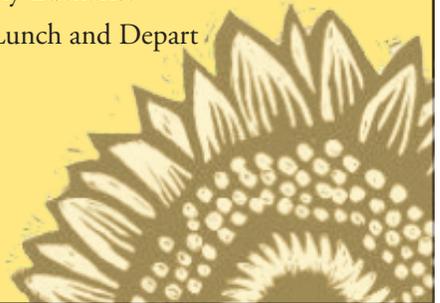
- 1:30-6:45 pm Adult Check in
- 5:00-6:00 pm Youth Check in at St. Paul's
- 5:15 pm Dinner
- 6:15 pm Gathering Session: Civil Discourse— Finding Common Ground for the Common Good with Alan Yarborough, Communication Coordinator for The Episcopal Church's Office of Government Relations
- 9:00 pm Compline

Saturday

- 6:30 am Coffee hour
- 7:30 am Morning Prayer
- 8:00 am Breakfast
- 9:00 am TRACK TIME (2.5)
- 11:30 am Noonday prayer (in tracks)
- 12:00 noon Lunch and Free Time
- 3:15 pm TRACK TIME (2.5)
- 6:00 pm Dinner
- 6:45 pm TRACK TIME (1.25)
- 8:15 pm Evening Prayer
- 9:00 pm Social Time

Sunday

- 6:30 am Coffee Hour
- 7:30 am Morning Prayer
- 8:00 am Breakfast & check out
- 9:00 am TRACK TIME (1.5)
- 10:45 am Holy Eucharist
- 12:00 noon Lunch and Depart



Summer Ministry School and Retreat 2019

Learning Tracks

The “Engaging” Tracks at Summer Ministry School & Retreat

The seven “ENGAGING” tracks at the Summer Ministry School and Retreat are another opportunity to engage the topics most requested by Growing Iowa Leaders consults in 2018. These 7 tracks, working with the diocesan “Engaging All Disciples” emphasis, will give participants the option to continue engaging the topic throughout the next year in a “Cohort.” Even if you do not choose to commit to being in a Cohort, you will find the track time beneficial to your own ministry and interest in that topic.

TRACK 1 ENGAGING Our Stories as Disciples: Evangelism and Discipleship

TRACK 2 ENGAGING New Generations of Faith

TRACK 3 ENGAGING Creative Expressions of Worship

TRACK 4 ENGAGING Our Resources

TRACK 5 ENGAGING the Way of Love and Discipleship

TRACK 6 ENGAGING Our Neighbors and Neighborhoods: Mission

TRACK 7 ENGAGING Justice through Public Policy

TRACK 8 Christ Within

TRACK 9 "Mortal, Can These Bones Live?" Hope in Today's Weary World

TRACK 10 The Parables of Jesus: Exploring New Meanings

TRACK 11: Solo Retreat (Self-Directed)

Read full descriptions of each of the tracks and more information about the Cohorts at iowaepiscopal.org/Ministries/summer-ministry-school-retreat.html

Children and Youth at Summer Ministry School and Retreat

Birth to age 6: Includes 5 FREE meals, and FREE lodging on the floor in a parent’s dorm room, and FREE Professional Childcare only during scheduled track times. Parents must provide oversight for their young children when not in track time.

Age 7 through entering Grade 3: Includes FREE lodging on the floor in a parent’s dorm room and FREE Professional Childcare during scheduled track times. Child’s rate meals are available for purchase as part of the Buffet style meals served to the adults. (Kid-friendly staples are always on hand in that cafeteria)

Entering Grades 4-9: Youth Ministry Development Team (YMDT) Program will be in a self-contained concurrent event at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church just south of the Grinnell Campus. Drop off Friday between 5pm and 6pm, and pick up in time for Sunday’s 10:45am Eucharist with the Ministry School and Retreat. Young people should bring a sleeping bag for lock-in sleeping arrangements. Meals from Friday dinner thru Sunday breakfast for this age group will be prepared and served at St. Paul’s. Use the child rate for the buffet lunch after Eucharist on Sunday if youth would like to eat with parents after church.

Entering Grades 10-12 up to age 18: Pick one of the numbered adult tracks and join the YMDT chaperones at St. Paul’s for lock-in accommodations. A designated chaperone will escort you to the JRC in time for breakfast in the mornings and escort you to St. Paul’s at approximately 9:30pm after evening worship with the adults. You’ll join the younger youth at the Grinnell Aquatic Center during the Saturday afternoon free time.

Visit iowaepiscopal.org to register today!

Building Discipleship in Congregations

by Lauren Lyon

What is discipleship? It's a word frequently spoken but less often fully "unpacked." Jesus' twelve disciples are described in the gospels as companions on a journey of preaching, teaching, and healing who help with his work and continue it after his public ministry ends. The root of the word for this common endeavor is shared with the word discipline. Hmmm. The words disciple and discipline have very different connotations for many people, but does that really make sense? Disciples learn and practice principles they value. Often that learning and practice have overtones of devotion to a cause or to a way of life that disciples take very seriously. Intense spiritual commitment is risky, sometimes dangerous. It promises to stretch us past the point of comfort.

In the fall of 2017, Trinity Iowa City began a long-planned program of intentional discipleship building. It began with the attendance of a staff member and an interested parishioner at the Discipleship Matters conference offered by Forward Movement. Trinity's representatives at that event brought home ideas for content and implementation and began to develop a network of colleagues from all over the Episcopal Church.

Trinity's approach took us back to basics: Bible reading, prayer and service. The parish took advantage of materials offered through the Episcopal Church and affiliated organizations. The

inaugural Good Book Club reading of Luke and Acts of the Apostles in Lent and Easter of 2018 was a major component of our program last year. More than 100 members of the parish put their names on a giant sign-up sheet and read a short passage each day from these books according to a schedule distributed by Forward Movement. Several of our Sunday adult education hours were devoted to small group discussions of the reading. Entire families read together in their homes the verses appointed for each day.

For the last couple of years, Trinity has put a new spin on the classic Vacation Bible School, turning it into an inter-generational event on three successive weeknights in July and August. Last summer its theme was discipleship. It included a sharing faith dinner, an opportunity for participants to eat dinner together and take part in a structured conversation about their personal journeys of faith. It was a big hit and we will be repeating it this year in May. Our inter-generational VBS has drawn 70 participants annually for the last two years with at least as many adults as children in attendance.

Sacramental milestones and seasons of the church year have provided shape for our discipleship program also. Early in the fall of 2018, Trinity was preparing for the bishop's visitation. A six-week series of small group gatherings on Sunday evenings drew together a group of new members preparing to be

confirmed or received with parishioners who wanted to learn more about the Episcopal Church. Curriculum for the sessions was drawn from the book *Walk In Love*, published by Forward Movement. Participants deepened their knowledge of the church's tradition and practice and made new friends.

Presiding Bishop Curry introduced *The Way of Love* at General Convention last summer. A workshop series released last fall was selected as content for an Advent study group at Trinity. Participants met in the afternoons of the four Sundays of Advent to pray together in spiritual companionship. The small group setting offered inviting space for self-disclosure and support for spiritual growth. On weekdays in Advent, Trinity offered daily morning and evening prayer with officiating responsibilities shared by parish staff and parishioners. We extended the opportunity to take part either in real time or at the participants' convenience by connecting to Facebook live. Each day's prayers were recorded and linked to the parish Facebook page. Participants ranged in age from toddlers to elders. More than once our online attendance doubled the number of persons participating when added to those who were in the church. Trinity's location in Iowa City's downtown business and university district made it possible for persons from the larger community to join us at the beginning or end of the workday.

All of the resources Trinity has used to date are available at no charge. If Trinity's staff can be of help getting a program of discipleship started in your congregation, we welcome your call 319-337-3333.

The Rev. Lauren Lyon serves as the rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Iowa City.



Tackling Food Insecurity, Like a Good Samaritan

by Jane Clare

Many of us are familiar with the parable of the Good Samaritan, in which an unlikely source assists a stranger in need at the side of the road. The parable asks us the well-known question, “Who is my neighbor?” [Lk 10:29]. But it is the question that is not verbalized, “How do I help my neighbor?” that can sometimes be more difficult to answer.

On my college campus, I’ve been meeting with different student organizations and offices to start

conversations about food insecurity. Recent studies have found that at least ten percent of college students face food insecurity at some point in their college career; specialized data suggests that at some campuses, that number may be as high as 40%. Since I attend a college associated with the church, this feels like an incredibly important subject to discuss—food was, after all, at the heart of Jesus’ ministry.

Through this work, I’ve learned a lot about myself and others, as well as developed a more confident and assertive tone. My conversations with others have shown me that many people are eager to help their neighbor, but people struggle in knowing or agreeing on just how to do so. For that, I suggest taking a page out of the parable of the Good Samaritan. In my own conversations, I have been broaching the idea of a “Little Free Pantry” (known to some churches as a “Blessing Box”) on campus. Usually, the organizations I speak with are eager about the idea, but then someone asks the dreaded question which halts conversation:

“How do we keep people who don’t need it from using it?”

It’s a fair question, but where it makes me uncomfortable is in the presumption of power or superiority. Why do we think we have the right to police who gets to take advantage of our proposed food pantry services? Each time I hear the question, I see a scene in my mind of someone standing next to a “you must be this tall to ride” ruler, and someone in a uniform saying, “Sorry, better luck next time.” The question conjures uncomfortable questions about how one measures “true” poverty, and worse—who would be the one deciding those qualifications? It’s a question that



Photo of a Blessing Box (little free pantry) at Grace Episcopal Church in Cedar Rapids.

Photo: Cindy Brown

sets my teeth on edge every time, but it’s a teachable moment.

The simple answer is that one doesn’t regulate a Little Free Pantry or Blessing Box in the way a traditional food pantry is handled. In general, the model for these types of service projects is that a community freely donates foodstuffs to the cupboard or box, and leaves the items in a public place, so they can be accessed 24/7 by anyone who may have need. This model is different than the traditional food pantry, but that’s what makes it beautiful and necessary. The implementation of a Little Free Pantry can serve as a catch-all for those whom a traditional pantry may unintentionally exclude. For instance, working individuals who cannot take time off work during the day to go to a food pantry during operating hours can be greatly benefitted by a cupboard open at all hours of the day and night. Similarly, in some cases, food pantries have caps on how often a consumer can return (once monthly, or once weekly, for example) and may also require certain documentation to prove one’s income

FOOD & HOUSING INSECURITY IN COLLEGE

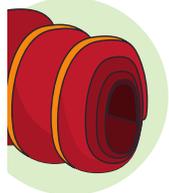


FOOD INSECURE

36% of university students were food insecure in the 30 days preceding the survey. This year’s estimate for community college students is 42%, but our larger study last year found 56%.

HOUSING INSECURE

36% of university students were housing insecure in the last year. Housing insecurity affected 51% of community college students in last year’s study, and 46% in this year’s study.



HOMELESS

9% of university students were homeless in the last year. In comparison, 12% of community college students were homeless in this year’s survey, and 14% in last year’s survey.

MAIN CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- Increases to tuition and ancillary expenses
- Shortfalls in financial aid
- Meal plans unavailable during breaks



SOURCES: “STILL HUNGRY AND HOMELESS IN COLLEGE” BY UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON AND “WHEN STUDENTS ARE HUNGRY” FROM HARVARD UNIVERSITY

continued on p 12

EfM in the Diocese of Iowa

by John Doherty

The Education for Ministry program continues to be a source of education, theology, and individual development for many people in the diocese. Some graduates have continued into ordination paths, but most find their ministry developed and deepened for service within their churches and communities. Each group must have a minimum of 6 students and no more than twelve.

The program is a four year curriculum. Each year is a nine month cycle of study and students enroll for one year at a time. The first two cycles consist of study of the Hebrew Testament and the Greek Testament. In years three and four Church History and Theological Choices are covered. Along with the reading and discussion, theological reflection takes place, and for most, this



becomes the most important part of the session each week. As you learn, you also begin to think theologically and gain valuable small group skills.

During the 2018-19 EfM year, there are 5 groups meeting in the diocese, with 8 mentors and co-mentors. In addition to the face-to-face groups, we have mentors who lead online groups. Online Education for Ministry was developed and first used by a Wyoming mentor, and that is a growing part of the EfM program. When the church or community is too small to support

a group, or when there are persons who must travel during the week but don't want to miss being a part of their EfM group, the online format works well.

Consider sharing this program at your church. Join us in the ministry of all the baptized as a mentor or a student for the 2019-2020 year. More information may be found at <http://efm.sewanee.edu/about-efm/about-efm>. I would be pleased to answer any questions or speak at your church about this program. The only mentor training in Iowa is scheduled for August 1-3. You must be trained and certified to mentor a group.

John S. Doherty is Diocesan Coordinator of Education for Ministry jdoherby@iowaepiscopal.org

Tackling Food Insecurity, *continued*

or nationality. While the traditional food pantry is important, it can in some ways exclude certain populations. In the sphere I'm working with, I've learned that college students can be at a specific disadvantage, as the requirement for a meal plan on campus can make a student ineligible for federal SNAP benefits, which can make the longer breaks during the school year (when food services on campuses typically have limited hours) particularly problematic.

So why do I promote the idea of a Little Free Pantry for schools and churches? Because it exhibits the type of assistance offered in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Unlike traditional food pantries, which may be formidable for a first-time visitor or accidentally let certain groups of vulnerable people fall through the cracks, the Little Free Pantry model offers agency to the

individual using it. Instead of trying to sort out who the "deserving" versus the "undeserving" poor are—as if there is such a thing—the Little Free Pantry offers sustenance for everyone, no matter how great or small their need.

Instead of asserting dominance and stooping down to help the person on the side of the road, the Good Samaritan places the traveler above him, on his animal, while they travel to the inn [Lk 10:34]. Once there, the Samaritan leaves money at the inn for the traveler's welfare to cover the cost of whatever else he may need [Lk 10:35]. This is the type of service I think we are called toward in tackling food insecurity as a community—not bending down, but lifting up our fellow travelers, even if it means we have to walk on the dirt path ourselves a while. The Good Samaritan exhibits great generosity

and trust when he leaves the money at the inn; there is no fact-checking or allotment according to need. The Good Samaritan simply assists in giving the vulnerable individual agency, lifting a fellow traveler up, much like a Little Free Pantry can.

For more information on starting a Little Free Pantry, you can visit www.littlefreepantry.org. For information regarding liability, I suggest becoming familiar with the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act of 1996, which protects non-profits that distribute food in good faith.

Ms. Jane Clare is a student at Luther College in Decorah and a member of St. James', Independence.

Safeguarding for Church Leaders

by Amy Mellies

Safeguarding God's People training to prevent sexual harassment and exploitation in congregations is required of any person who engages in, supervises or makes decisions involving pastoral relationships including, but not limited to, Diocesan Standing Committee, Board of Directors, Commission on Ministry and congregational vestry members; clergy; anyone providing counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction or guidance, ministration of any sacrament; licensed ministers such as pastoral leaders, worship leaders, preachers, Eucharistic visitors and catechists; persons in the ordination process and all paid employees.

Safeguarding God's Children training to prevent child abuse is required for all who regularly work with or around children or youth. All vestry members and clergy must be trained as well.

Online training for both *Safeguarding God's Children* and *Safeguarding God's People* is available. Contact the administrator in your congregation for a personal user name and password. If your congregation does not have an administrator, the person in charge of your congregation should select someone to serve in that role, and then contact amellies@iowaepiscopal.org.

Diocesan staff members are unable to set up user names and passwords



for individual parishioners in congregations.

Ms. Amy Mellies is the Missioner for Children and Youth in the Diocese of Iowa.

Upcoming Diocesan Youth Events



HAPPENING #46

March 8-10 St. Luke's, Cedar Falls

Happening is a Christian experience for grades 9-12 presented by teenagers, for teenagers with the help of clergy and lay adult leadership. The program begins Friday at 7pm and ends on Sunday with a closing worship service at 2pm.

Songs, games short talks and small group time provide the opportunity to learn and share together.

NEW BEGINNINGS #22

April 26-28 St. Luke's, Cedar Falls

An opportunity for grades 6-9 to "retreat" from their hectic world to consider some of the important relationships in their lives—with parents, siblings, peers and God through skits, games, song and small group time. The program begins Friday at 7pm and ends on Sunday at 2pm.

Youth and adult leaders guide the group through the entire weekend journey.

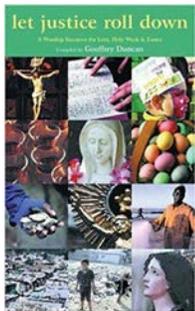
Register today at iowaepiscopal.org/Ministries/children-youth.html

Suddenly Lent Has Come Again

by Sharon Strohmaier

In our rapidly accelerating world, suddenly Lent has come again. Now we wonder how to make Lent 2019 meaningful and unique. People ask: “Do we need a special Lenten study?” “Will people take the time to reflect on this very sacred part of the Christian year?” “Where can we turn to get just the right thing that will inspire and stimulate thought and spiritual discussion within our church?”

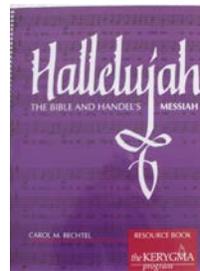
The answer, of course, is Iowa Religious Media Services. IRMS can provide you with the best resources for both Lent and Easter. In our collection, we have DVD-based Bible studies and book studies for groups of all ages and studies for that individual who really wants to explore the meaning of Lent, the mysteries of Holy Week and the glory of Easter. We have engaging picture books to deepen the experience of children’s church. We have craft books to provide creative ideas for hands-on activities, and we even have a small number of dramas for those wanting to stage a Sunday school Easter production. And don’t forget we also have our 36-foot hand-painted indoor-only canvas labyrinth. All of these building-block resources are available to you for that very special program for this sacred time of year. We have included just a few of the resources we would love to share with you. For more ideas, please go to our on-line catalog at www.irms.org and search by Lent or Easter in the subject line, or you may call us (515-277-2920) for a personal consultation.



let justice roll down—A worship resource for Lent, Holy Week & Easter (BK1143) is an adult-focused collection of new prayers, readings, and liturgies that take readers from Shrove Tuesday (the day before Ash Wednesday) to Easter Sunday. With source materials from around the world, this book offers a wide variety of prayers and reflections, as well as liturgies of repentance for Ash

Wednesday and dramatic representations of some of the events of Holy Week and Easter. (adult)

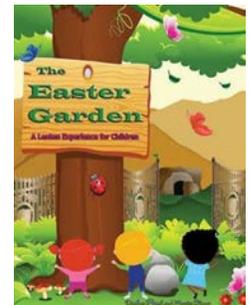
From Calvary to Victory: Lenten Reflections for Individuals and Groups (BK163) is a book designed to lead readers on a personal journey to Calvary, following the well-worn path beyond the point of simply “giving up” something for Lent. This seven-week study by Susan K. Williams-Smith explores anger and jealousy, fear and anxiety, healing and forgiveness, guiding persons of faith to examine themselves and their beliefs in new ways. There are study questions at the end of each chapter. (adult)



Hallelujah: The Bible and Handel's Messiah (KT85) is based on this beloved musical classic. With a two-CD recording of this masterwork performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the musical commentary includes six sessions on Lenten texts as well as four sessions on Advent texts. This unique resource appeals to many senses and offers a fresh way to explore the meaning of the season. (Young Adult-Adult)

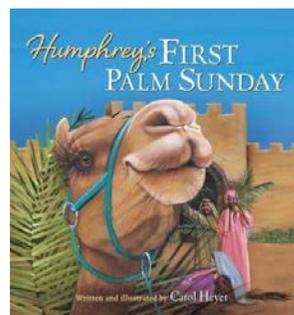
Things to Make and Do for Lent and Easter (BK423) offers easy-to-understand instructions for a variety of crafts designed to entertain and teach children. The crafts are indexed by age group and by name of activity. Martha Bettis Gee created the activities and crafts in this book to help put children in touch with the Easter story and express their own unique creativity. (Pre-K-Upper Elementary)

The Easter Garden, A Lenten Experience for Children (BK1835) is a how-to book to prepare a Lenten event for children to hear the stories of Holy Week, create a garden, make banners for worship, prepare table decorations, and help serve a meal to their parents and/or congregation. The children may also participate in an inter-generational worship service.



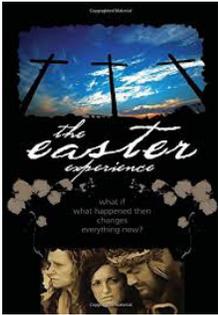
The event could be used over seven weeks, as a large one-day event or on a Saturday evening/Sunday morning. (lower elementary-adult)

Humphrey's First Palm Sunday (BK1861) is a beautiful picture book starring the delightful camel from the creator of *Humphrey's First Christmas* (BK1858). Unhappy to be at the back of the pack, Humphrey makes a plan to become lead camel in his caravan. Despite his antics on the journey into Jerusalem, Humphrey manages to witness



Jesus entering the city on a colt. Humphrey realizes this man was the child to whom he gave his blanket on that special night long ago in Bethlehem. (Pre-K-upper elementary)

Suddenly Lent, *continued*

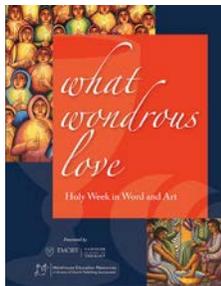


The Easter Experience (DV846) is a six-episode, DVD-driven small group Bible study, centered on the passion and resurrection of Christ. This is a journey that will deepen viewers' relationship with Jesus while strengthening their relationships with their small groups. It's also a chance to invite those who don't yet know Christ to discover that Easter is about

far more than candy eggs—it's an experience that changes everything. Paint yourself into the story and transform Easter into a truly life-changing experience. (young adult-adult)

24 Hours the Changed the World (DV838) is a seven-session study that will help participants better understand the events that occurred during the last twenty-four hours of Jesus' life. Presenter Adam Hamilton takes us to the Holy Land to explore the theological significance of Christ's suffering and death, while reflecting on the meanings of these events in our lives today. The DVD also includes a bonus session: What If Judas Had Lived? (senior high-adult)

What Wondrous Love: Holy Week in Words and Art (DV1109) uses the artwork of John August Swanson and video commentaries by academic scholars to explore the stories of Holy Week and Easter as presented in the four gospels. Commentators from the Candler School of Theology at Emory University share an intensely theological approach to Holy Week that is accessible both to those with a strong theological background as well as those who want to learn. The participant's book includes

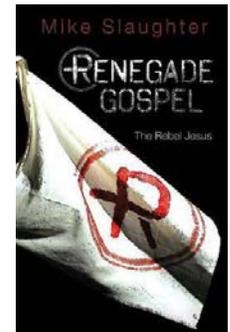


opportunities for reflection on the pieces of the art and questions to start discussions about the Holy Week/Easter scriptures. (senior high-adult)

The Passion by Joe Castillo (DV1220) follows sand artist Joe Castillo as he draws with sand to create a nine-minute live art performance of the Passion of the Christ set to the music from Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (DV63). Castillo's mesmerizing artistry is a great fit for devotions, worship, and retreats. (Lower Elementary-Adult)

What Christians Believe and Why (DV1498) ties the needs of our changing culture to the historic faith of the church in this easy-to-understand six-session study. Broadly outlining the theological issues found in the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, Adam Hamilton explores not only what Christians believe, but why it matters. (Young Adult-Adult)

The Renegade Gospel-The Rebel Jesus (DV1304) explains that Jesus didn't come to start a religion. Instead, the rebel Jesus came with a renegade gospel to start a revolution, and you are invited to be a part of it. Mike Slaughter presents Jesus and his challenging message to inspire us during Lent, Easter, and throughout the year. In addition to the six-week small group adult study, this family of resources also includes study guides for youth (BK1870) and children (BK1871). (Upper Elementary-Adult)



Ms. Sharon Strohmaier serves as the Executive Director of Iowa Religious Media Services in Des Moines. questions@irms.org

My Tithe

by Mark Holmer

One chilly January day I was sitting in my office at church when a less-than-active member walked hastily into the outer office and laid something on the secretary's desk. She spotted me and said, "Hi pastor. I don't get to church very often so I thought I'd stop by and drop off my tithe for the year." I said, "thanks very much." I was the only one in the office that morning, so I went and picked up the check to put it in a safe place. I could not help but take notice of her tithe. It was for \$100. I thought to myself, it appears that her annual income is \$1,000. Well, that

is a tithe, right? How could she live on so few funds? I knew better. Her job paid her significantly more than that amount. It appears that some givers refer to their contributions as a tithe.

In my understanding of a tithe, it is 10%. My Funk and Wagnalls *Standard Dictionary* has this definition: "a tenth part of the yearly proceeds from personal industry for the support of the clergy and the church." Most of us clergy, when

continued on p 16

My Tithe, *continued*

talking about personal stewardship, refer to tithes and offerings. Few are the tithers. My wife Linnea and I are one. I read recently that the denomination with the highest giving percentage is the Christian Reformed Church at 6.1%. Most other denominations are near 2.5% including Catholics, Episcopalians and Lutherans. It comes out to be \$817 per year per family.

When I do premarital counseling, part of one session with the couple is about money and finances. I urge them to consider a budget of 10, 10, 80. Ten percent is given away, off the top, to causes they consider worthy: church, charities, support of local outreach to the hungry, poor, transient, underemployed, and so forth. The next 10% goes into a savings plan. Put these dollars aside and over the course of their marriage they can own their own home, and in the long run have a secure future and retirement. Guess what? The final 80% covers taxes and spending money for all the necessary things and a splurge or two. Turn these things around, spend first and guess what? Not much left for savings, charity and the church.

My family always puts God first in our lives and in our giving. Take a look at the check or cash you place in the offering plate. Hopefully you can or will say "I give a tithe to the work of the Lord." If you are not there yet, raise it one percentage point a year. After a few years you too will be a tither.

The Rev. Dr. Mark E. Holmer serves as the pastor at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Algona.

2018 Stewardship Share January-December 2018

City	Church	Stewardship			(Over)
		Share	Pledge	Received	Under
Algona	St. Thomas	\$ 2,943	3,600	3,600	-
Ames	St. John's	53,918	53,918	53,918	-
Anamosa	St. Mark's	500	1,500	1,500	-
Ankeny	St Anne's	14,988	6,505	6,507	(1)
Bettendorf	St Peter's	17,384	17,384	17,384	-
Boone	Grace	550	550	611	(61)
Burlington	Christ	20,408	20,408	20,408	-
Carroll	Trinity	500	1,000	1,000	-
Cedar Falls	St. Luke's	35,993	35,993	35,993	-
Cedar Rapids	Christ	51,772	51,772	51,772	-
Cedar Rapids	Grace	7,434	7,434	7,434	-
Chariton	St Andrew's	3,392	3,392	3,392	-
Charles City	Grace	2,171	2,171	2,171	-
Clermont	Saviour	1,792		149	(149)
Clinton	Christ	788	788	788	-
Coralville	New Song	21,067	21,067	21,067	-
Council Bluffs	St Paul's	3,689	3,690	4,314	(624)
Davenport	St Alban's	7,201	6,743	6,743	-
Davenport	Trinity	111,133	88,906	88,906	-
Decorah	Grace	6,765	6,765	6,765	-
Denison	Trinity	550	550	458	92
Des Moines	St. Andrew's	32,586	32,586	32,586	-
Des Moines	St Luke's	30,913	14,448	14,448	-
Des Moines	St. Mark's	5,423	3,500	3,500	-
Des Moines	St. Paul's	67,466	67,466	61,844	5,622
Dubuque	St John's	10,117	10,117	9,947	170
Durant	St Paul's	5,795	5,795	5,795	-
Emmetsburg	Trinity	2,490	2,490	2,490	-
Fort Dodge	St. Mark's	27,919	27,919	27,919	-
Fort Madison	St Luke's	4,400	4,800	4,800	-
Glenwood	St John's	709	709	709	-
Grinnell	St. Paul's	4,686	4,686	4,686	-
Harlan	St Paul's	550	300	300	-
Independence	St James	2,693	2,500	2,500	-
Indianola	All Saints'	1,970	1,970	1,970	-
Iowa City	Trinity	91,935	63,700	76,200	(12,500)
Iowa Falls	St. Matthew's	3,795	3,795	3,795	-
Keokuk	St. John's	11,432	6,600	6,600	-
LeMars	St George's	500		200	(200)
Maquoketa	St Mark's	2,916	1,200	1,200	-
Marshalltown	St Paul's	12,565	12,565	12,522	43
Mason City	St John's	17,251	17,251	17,251	-
Mount Pleasant	St Michael's	5,126	4,200	4,200	-
Muscatine	Trinity	16,429	16,429	16,429	-
Newton	St Stephen's	6,149	7,590	7,329	261
Orange City	Savior	1,187	600	600	-
Oskaloosa	St James'	9,909	9,909	9,909	-
Ottumwa	Trinity	10,751	5,000	4,993	7
Perry	St. Martin's	8,081	5,500	5,500	-
Shenandoah	St John's	550	550	550	-
Sioux City	Calvary	1,904	1,920	1,920	-
Sioux City	St Paul's	2,842	2,584	2,584	-
Sioux City	St Thomas'	18,145	9,740	9,727	13
Spirit Lake	St Alban's	8,525	8,525	8,525	-
Storm Lake	All Saints'	2,288	2,288	2,288	-
Waterloo	Trinity	13,164	13,164	13,164	-
Waverly	St Andrew's	5,532	2,800	2,800	-
Webster City	Good Shepherd	7,660	7,660	7,660	-
West Des Moines	St Timothy's	55,779	48,000	48,000	-
TOTAL		\$ 877,070	764,992	772,320	(7,327)

Episcopal JOURNAL

QUARTERLY EDITION SPRING 2019

Pittsburgh priest revives the parish that raised him

By Michelle Hiskey
Episcopal News Service

When the Rev. Kris Opat returned to St. David's Episcopal Church in suburban Pittsburgh in 2012, only 20 people were there to start over as a congregation. The sanctuary, which seats 300, made the group look even smaller. The building's previous occupants, part of the Anglican Church in North America, had just decamped.

Ordained for only three years at that point, Opat had never been a priest-in-charge.

Today, St. David's is a parish with almost 300 members — mostly busy young families who have no previous Episcopal ties. Opat, now 38, is a trained engineer with dreadlocks who grew up in the congregation.

Opat's entire career as a priest has unfolded amid the rancor and litigation in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, and weathering that conflict has influenced his welcom-



Photo/courtesy of St. David's

Welcoming children to participate in St. David's services has helped spark the congregation's rebirth after all but 20 members decamped. The Rev. Kris Opat, center, attended St. David's as a teenager.

ing, no-nonsense approach to ministry.

"The split in 2008 was terrible, but since then some wonderful things have happened," said the Rev. Lou Hays, a retired priest who served in the diocese and mentored Opat. "St. David's is the top of the list."

'What is going on?'

About six months into the revival

of St. David's, Opat got a phone call from a curious neighbor: "Did something change at that church?" The question was posed so often that St. David's posted a brief history on its website, acknowledging the off-putting nature of the confusing changes the church had gone through since October 2008 when the diocesan convention agreed to follow then-Bishop Robert Duncan in his attempt to take the diocese out of the Episcopal Church but retain all the assets that were held by the diocese.

As the wrangling continued, the sign out front of St. David's went from saying "Episcopal" to "Anglican," and even the name of the church had changed at one point from St. David's to Church of the Redeemer as about 90 percent of the congregation tried to dissolve St. David's and form a new parish in what became the Anglican Church in North America,

continued on page B



Photo/Elena Tayem via Wikimedia Commons

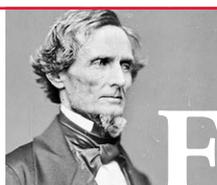
Ash Wednesday outdoors

The Rev. Andrew Sherman, right, and the Rev. Craig Burlington of St. Gregory's Episcopal Church in Boca Raton, Fla., distribute "ashes to go" in Mizner Park on Ash Wednesday 2017. Many churches offer ashes at train stations, on sidewalks and in other locations outside the church as well as in traditional worship services on Ash Wednesday, which in 2019 falls on March 6.



NEWS

Texas church greets neighbors with coffee



NEWS

Alabama memorial to Confederate leader is removed



ARTS

Book explores Lenten focus on the senses

PITTSBURGH continued from page A

or ACNA. On May 27, 2012, Pentecost Sunday, Episcopal worship returned to St. David's and the parish resumed the use of its legal name, St. David's Episcopal Church.

Opat was very familiar with how the neighbors thought. His parents still live in his childhood home, seven minutes away. His mother was one of the faithful remnants of St. David's, along with a half-dozen other relatives.

As a middle schooler, Opat had felt at home at St. David's, "which was evangelical then, almost Pentecostal," he said. "Our youth group would play games and go to the pizza shop. In that evangelical model, I gave my life to the Lord then, which I have a broader view of now."

Opat needed a broad view as a priest facing a broken congregation of St. David's size that also had a burdensome mortgage.

A turnaround starts

"I felt hopeless," recalled Jen Yoon, perhaps the most invested remaining member at St. David's. She directed its preschool (St. David's Christian Early Learning Center) and its children's ministries. "We had so few people, and it was going to take so much."

She was apprehensive about Opat and the direction he was heading theologically.

"I had heard a lot of stories about Episcopalians from the Anglican [ACNA] church — one side of the story — and I was praying about my commitment to a church family where people had acted terribly and decided they couldn't be together," Yoon said. "What came to me through nights of painful prayer was to let go of any and all labels or thoughts of Anglicans versus Episcopalians and get back to what this is really about: telling people about the love of Christ."

"I spoke with Kris because I wanted to know: Does he believe in one God and Father, salvation in Jesus Christ and the continued work of the Holy Spirit? We had a frank conversation around those three questions, and our beliefs very much aligned with each other. Kris was clear that we would become a place of community."

Others stayed at St. David's despite or because of family concerns.

Sam White had been baptized, raised

and confirmed at St. David's. He worshipped in the ACNA congregation and decided "to see if The Episcopal Church seemed a little more aligned with the attitudes I remembered learning at church during my youth." That choice put him at odds with his parents, with whom he was living at the time; they left with the ACNA parish. White is now senior warden of St. David's.

Logistics made member Jamie Sticha decide to stay. "I did consider leaving, and it was a difficult time," she said. "With four young kids, I felt it would be more difficult to make it to church because we'd have to be ready a half hour earlier."

To fan the small ember that was his parish, Opat worked alongside Hays the first 18 months before being appointed priest-in-charge. With no altar guild and



Photo/courtesy of St. David's

St. David's Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Pittsburgh is a growing parish with almost 300 members who have no previous Episcopal ties.

no readers, Opat did whatever was needed Sunday mornings, even playing guitar with the band.

"They were traumatized, shell-shocked, so we didn't ask the laypeople to do more. They needed to engage in healing," Hays said. "Kris was extremely active in recruiting a vestry and focusing on Sunday morning. But number one, he loved the people. He was demonstrating to them through faithfulness to the Scripture, and just that sense of warmth and connecting that he has, that they could be comfortable with us. He was what we call the non-anxious presence that reassures people that it's going to be okay."

By end of first year, about 75 people were coming to the big church that everyone passes on a main thoroughfare. Some families attend after first experiencing the community through the preschool. About a dozen returned from the ACNA congregation. "We are open about anyone coming back," Opat said.

St. David's discovered what it could — and could not — be about. These lessons brought the parish out of the ashes and bucked the trend of Episcopal churches losing visitors and members. Here are some of those positive steps taken by the congregation:

- Welcoming children to the table. The last Sunday service each month is a Godly Play sermon, and Opat invites children to the table to help break the bread and learn the responses to the Eucharistic prayer.

- Emphasizing love in small actions. Instead of "please be," Opat uses "invite." This makes the service "feel more like an act of worship rather than an obligation," said White, the senior warden.

- Accepting less programming. "Our culture is not about doing a lot of stuff," said Yoon, who now directs children's

ministries. "Our families are busy, and they don't have extra time for weekday commitments."

- Welcoming community groups (which also helps pay the mortgage on the new building erected in 2001). St. David's is also home to tutoring, music lessons and exercise classes. An evangelical Presbyterian church meets there, too.

- Using extra land to feed local people. Opat and an Eagle Scout built a community garden that produces peppers, green beans, zucchini and more — all of which goes to a local food bank.

- Hosting a weekly farmer's market. With a group of moms from St. David's and others who live nearby, Opat organized local growers and makers to set up in St. David's parking lot. Today his mom runs it, and hundreds of shoppers take part weekly. ■

Michelle Hiskey is an Atlanta-based freelance writer.

Texas church serves ‘Coffee on the Corner’

By Mary Frances Schjonberg
Episcopal News Service

When you look out the window of your church and see kids and their parents walking past every morning on their way to neighborhood schools and a school bus stop, what comes to mind?

“We figured that there might be needs that we might be able to plug into,” said the Rev. Karen Calafat, rector of St. Luke’s in the Meadow Episcopal Church in Fort Worth, Texas. She and some parishioners had some ideas, but they didn’t know whether those ideas would be helpful. “We were just looking for a way to connect, find out what their needs are and see if there was any way we could partner with them,” Calafat said.

That’s when their discovery that middle school students needed college logo T-shirts led to the Friday morning Coffee on the Corner, a six-week experiment that began in September and has continued ever since.

Calafat and St. Luke’s member Donnell Guynn recently explained that trajectory one chilly Friday while serving coffee, cocoa, sausage biscuits and other treats. At a meeting with counselors at nearby Middlebrook Middle School, parishioners learned that the students needed the shirts for those days when they came to school out of uniform or on special days when they can wear such logo shirts.

That finding coincided with the church’s yard sale, so volunteers culled all the college logo T-shirts from the donations and gave them to the middle school. “It just started the conversation,” Calafat said.

At the same time, the parish was hosting another kind of dialogue, sponsored by Living Room Conversations, a non-profit organization that helps people who disagree find ways to work together and respect each other. Last July, the monthly gathering at St. Luke’s discussed refugee families and the Trump administration’s zero-tolerance immigration policy.

Eight “brave women” were present, Calafat said, and they decided that, while they knew little about refugees, they knew there were immigrants in their



Photo/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS

Donnell Guynn, a member of St. Luke’s in the Meadow Episcopal Church in Fort Worth, Texas, offers hot sausage biscuits to a mother and her children during a recent Coffee on the Corner morning.

neighborhood. The women wanted to find a way to tell their neighbors that St. Luke’s “was not on the bandwagon” with the administration’s policies.

Three of the women got together to talk more, but “we realized we didn’t even know what the neighborhood needs,” Calafat said. “We can’t plan some big program because what if it’s not needed? So, we just honed it down to: Let’s stand

on the corner and get to know the neighbors, give them a cup of coffee and just visit.”

St. Luke’s has a strategic corner in the neighborhood. The area elementary school is across from the front of the church, and the middle school is down a side street. That side street is also where high school students wait for buses. The vestry is considering building a bus shelter.

As the Fridays went by, the volunteers learned a lot. For instance, an early thought about offering English-as-a-second-language classes became a reality, but in reverse. The St. Luke’s women began asking the Spanish-speaking parents the

Spanish names of some of the food they were handing out, such as bananas and oranges. The parents would quiz the volunteers in subsequent weeks to see if they remembered their translations.

One mother later suggested that the parents and parishioners continue trying to learn each other’s languages, and now the morning chats are becoming increasingly bilingual.

continued on page E



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San Diego Episcopalians continue aiding asylum seekers

By Lynette Wilson
Episcopal News Service

When U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement last fall alerted the San Diego Rapid Response Network it would begin releasing asylum seekers — including families with children — onto the streets, the county's interfaith and social and human rights organizations responded by setting up temporary shelters.

"A rapid-response team here in San Diego brings asylum seekers who've been released by border officials to a shelter, provides food and medical attention, and assists the asylum seekers in arranging transportation to family members or others who will host them while their cases are adjudicated," said San Diego Assisting Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, adding that the adjudication process sometimes takes years.

Good Samaritan Episcopal Church was one of many churches that stepped up to identify immediate needs such as food, clothing, diapers and cash assistance. The church began accepting clothing and other donations in late October. It has continued to receive donations daily; once a week, an average 10-12 interfaith volunteers sort them by size and wearability.

"We felt it was the right thing to do," said Carol Hamilton, Good Samaritan's outreach chair. "One of the most beautiful things for us is that it has drawn in other faith communities."

In the three years that the Rev. Janine Schenone has served as rector, she's encouraged the congregation to get more involved in social justice and outreach, said Hamilton.

At first, said Schenone, some congregants worried that the church was helping undocumented immigrants. But when it became clear that they were assisting people seeking legal entry into the United States through the asylum process, they got behind it, she said.

Good Samaritan has assisted some 6,000 asylum seekers

since October, when ICE began releasing large numbers into communities without a support system. That was when Good Samaritan and other partners in the San Diego Rapid Response Network mobilized.

Shelters offer asylum seekers a place to find food, rest, a shower and clothing before boarding buses and airplanes to unite with family across the country, said Schenone, who has used her discretionary fund to provide cash to families traveling to other parts of the country.

"You can't just stick people on the bus without food, diapers, money," she said. "The real heroes are the [volunteers] who were showing up at the bus station."

From the time of initial need, the interfaith community advocated for a crisis declaration, hoping the government would assist the way it did in 2016 when a surge of Haitian asylum seekers crossed the border, said Kevin Malone, executive director of the San Diego Organizing Project, a nonpartisan, multi-faith network of 28 congregations in San Diego County.

"[Former California] Gov. [Jerry] Brown opened up the armory to process a lot of people really fast. But it's a completely different crisis; they are not moving thousands across in a short period ... It's been 50 to 70 a day for a long time, and in a way that leaves them on the street."

"Without us, they would have added to the homeless population — people were coming across with no

money — and that would have been awful," said Malone.

After the network's temporary shelter was forced to move four times because of safety concerns, on Jan. 29 the San Diego Board of Supervisors voted to lease an old courthouse to the response network to operate a shelter for asylum seekers through 2019.

Until late January, U.S. Customs and Border Protection processed up to 100 asylum seekers a day; the Trump administration reduced that number to 20 on Jan. 25.

On Feb. 11, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed an order to withdraw two-thirds of the state's National Guard troops from the border, disputing claims of an "illegal immigration crisis" and calling it nothing but "political theater," Reuters reported.

On Feb. 15, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency to build a border wall, citing an "invasion" at the southern border.

The number of people apprehended while crossing the border illegally fell to some 396,000 in 2018, down from a peak of 1 million in 2006.

The rights of persecuted people to seek asylum and undocumented immigration often become conflated in political arguments.

"Frequent public misunderstanding of the distinction between 'asylum seeker'

continued on page K



Photo/Lynette Wilson/ENS

Good Samaritan Senior Warden Penny Powell and the Rev. Janine Schenone, rector, sort through clothing donations.

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Photo/Mary Frances Schjonberg/ENS

The Rev. Karen Calafat, rector of St. Luke's in the Meadow, chats with a mother during the weekly Coffee on the Corner.

TEXAS continued from page C

On a recent day, some Spanish-speaking students brought a newly arrived Asian friend with them. Then, two Rwandan sisters who walk their younger sister to the elementary school came by. The sisters, who speak five languages, according to Calafat and Guynn, often hang out around Coffee on the Corner before they go to school.

It's not all about coffee and goodies. Prominent on a corner of the rolling treat cart is a brightly colored mug with squares of paper asking, "How can we pray for you?/Cómo podemos orar por usted?" The mug is the invitation; the volunteers never push anyone.

Calafat said she takes any filled-in cards that are left on the cart to her desk. "I just kind of keep them in front of me and lift them up in prayer, and when they come back the next week, we ask them how things are going," she said.

One morning a woman visited, saying she had seen Coffee on the Corner but had never stopped. That day, she said, she needed prayers for her marriage. Three or four weeks later, she returned to say she and her husband had a good week. "It's just about keeping track of people," Calafat said.

Melissa Subject, the college and career readiness coach at Meadowbrook Middle School, stops by nearly every Friday when she drops off her daughter for pre-K classes. She likes to greet some of her students as they take their younger siblings to the elementary school.

Subject praised both the parish's initial effort to give college T-shirts to the middle school and the coffee stand. "I think this church is pretty remarkable," she said. "This is one of the highlights of my Fridays. It starts you off in a good mood." ■

SAN DIEGO continued from page D

and 'undocumented immigrant' adds to the confusion. Asylum seekers do so legally, whether they are met by officials at the border or after entering the United States," said Jefferts Schori. "It is vital to recognize that seeking asylum is a legal right. Even if a person crosses the border without official permission, international law requires that the request for asylum be heard."

The Episcopal Church, through General Convention and Executive Council resolutions, has a long history of supporting refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. During General Convention last July in Austin, Texas, Episcopalians gathered outside a detention center housing migrant women to protest the Trump administration's immigration policies separating families.

Since then, Episcopalians have joined interfaith efforts across the Southwest to respond to and shed light on the humanitarian crisis at the border in places like El Paso, Texas, which borders Ciudad Juarez, and in San Diego.

The San Ysidro port of entry connecting Tijuana and San Diego is the busiest border crossing in the United States, both in terms of economics and people. People and students cross the border daily for work and to attend school.

For 20 years, a slatted border fence has separated San Diego from Tijuana. U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents patrol the United States side, where a state

park and a protected estuary form a buffer between the border and the nearest residential beach community. On the Tijuana side, people live close to the fence, which extends into the Pacific Ocean.

The existing border fence, however, has not deterred migrant "caravans" and asylees' arrivals at the border. (In 2014, an unprecedented number of unaccompanied minors fleeing violence in Central America was detained crossing the border.)

Hundreds of Central American migrants began arriving Nov. 14, 2018, in Tijuana and other ports of entry. The caravans have been politicized in United States and in their Central American countries of origin (Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras), where one of the main drivers of migration — forced displacement by violence — is often denied.

In the United States, Trump has called economic migrants and asylum-seekers an "assault on our country." Last November, he deployed National Guard troops to the border. Trump has threatened to cut aid to Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras over the caravans.

"The current border crisis is centered on aiding asylum seekers as they leave the border to wait for their cases to be adjudicated. The level of violence in Central America has caused thousands of people to flee for their lives, and many are seeking asylum in the United States," said Jefferts Schori. "Those seeking asylum are women with small children, families, unaccompanied minors and single individuals of working age." ■

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Alabama church removes pew, plaque dedicated to Confederate president

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

The pew had been an unmistakable fixture for decades at St. John's Episcopal Church in Montgomery, Ala. Online photos show the pew — a cross-shaped poppy head carved in its wooden finial — sticking out among the rows and rows of newer, plainer-looking pews that filled the rest of the church's sanctuary.

One other detail made this pew stand out: It was known as the Jefferson Davis pew and had an accompanying plaque touting its history: a tribute to the Confederate president who attended St. John's for three months in 1861 before the capital of the Confederacy moved from Montgomery to Richmond, Va.

Today, that pew is in storage. The congregation recently removed it and its plaque and moved a newer pew from the back of the sanctuary to take its place.

"To continue to allow the pew to be in our worship space would be troublesome," the Rev. Robert Wisnewski, rector at St. John's, said this week in a message to the congregation.

At a time when Episcopal churches and institutions across the country are reckoning with their historical ties to slavery, the Confederacy and Jim Crow segregation, Wisnewski and vestry members decided to remove the Jefferson Davis pew because its ties to Davis were false and its dedication ceremony 89 years ago was a political act steeped in racism, which runs counter to Christianity, Wisnewski said.

"Davis was a political figure, not a church figure, nor even a member of the parish," Wisnewski said. "Acting to remove the pew and plaque is the correction of a political act and hopefully will help us all to focus more completely on the love of Christ for all people."

In an e-mail to Episcopal News Service, Wisnewski explained why the church began scrutinizing the history of the pew and plaque.

"In teaching a Sunday school class this past fall, I became aware of the pew's dedication not occurring until 1925," said Wisnewski, who has served at St. John's since 1995. That pew wasn't an original, he said. The congregation had replaced its old pews with new ones in the early 1900s. By the 1930s, a pew from Davis' era had been re-installed and labeled, but its ties to the Confederate figure were uncertain at best.

The plaque called Davis "a communicant," but Davis was not yet a confirmed Episcopalian when he attended services at St. John's, he added.

Montgomery's roots

The timing of the 1925 dedication, with racism and segregation on the rise, coincided with the "Lost Cause" campaign across the South, which sought to



Photo/David Berenguer

Above, a pew known as the Jefferson Davis pew is seen among newer pews at St. John's Episcopal Church in Montgomery, Ala.

rehabilitate the image of the Confederacy and its leaders by denying the South fought the Civil War to protect slavery.

In the 1950s, Montgomery became a pivotal battleground in the civil rights movement, with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., as pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, joining others in leading the successful Montgomery bus boycott. But a century earlier, Alabama's capital city was known as a commerce hub in the slave-powered cotton empire of the antebellum South.

St. John's is Montgomery's oldest Episcopal parish. It formed in 1834, and in 1837 the congregation completed construction of its 48-pew brick church. When membership topped 100, the congregation built a new church in 1855, and slaves were given use of the old brick church, according to a guidebook published by the Civil Heritage Trail.

Montgomery "was the exhilarated, thronging capital of the Confederate States of America" in the first months of 1861, the guidebook says, and Davis was inaugurated the Confederacy's president in the city on Feb. 18.

Davis was raised a Baptist and began attending Episcopal services in Montgomery at the urging of his second wife, Varina.

"We have no way of knowing how many times he or his family attended, perhaps only a few times or perhaps as many as a dozen times," Wisnewski said in his message to the congregation about the Davis pew. "Since Davis was not confirmed, it is probable that he never received

continued on page J

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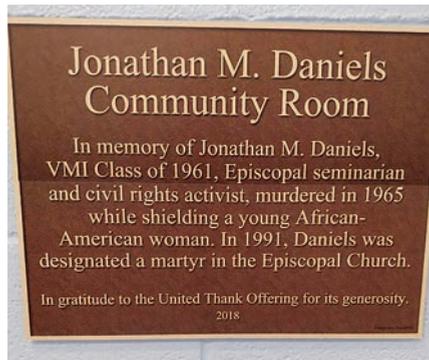
Church dedicates new ‘home base’ for racial healing

By David Paulsen
Episcopal News Service

A year after changing its name from the R.E. Lee Memorial Church to its original Grace Episcopal Church, a congregation in Lexington, Va., is moving forward with a new emphasis on racial reconciliation.

For more than 100 years, the congregation’s name had paid tribute to the Confederate general who served as a senior warden there after the Civil War. Facing pressure from Southwestern Virginia Bishop Mark Bourlakas and from like-minded parishioners, the congregation’s vestry narrowly voted in September 2017 to change the name back to Grace, though that move left a wound that is still healing.

“We lost a lot of people,” said the Rev. James Hubbard, interim rector. “A good number of the folks who left have come back slowly. Some have not. I’m sure some will never come back, but it was for all sorts of reasons.”



Photo/Grace Episcopal, via Facebook

The Jonathan M. Daniels Community Room is part of the renovated undercroft at Grace Episcopal Church in Lexington, Va.

A year and a half later, the congregation is charting a way forward by emphasizing racial reconciliation. On Feb. 3, parishioners were in a festive mood for the dedication of three newly renovated gathering spaces in the church’s undercroft, including a community room created as a “home base” for the congregation’s racial-healing efforts through the

Episcopal Church’s Becoming Beloved Community framework.

The dedication ceremony, held between the congregation’s two Sunday-morning services, featured a psalm and a prayer: “Lord God almighty ... look with favor on your servants who will gather in this clean and simple space. Enable them to communicate truth, to foster love, to uphold justice and right, and to provide enjoyment. Let them promote and support that peace between peoples.”

Grace Episcopal Church’s community room, backed by a \$47,000 grant from the United Thank Offering (UTO), is named after Jonathan Myrick Daniels, a white Episcopal seminarian killed in 1965 while shielding a black girl in Alabama from a shotgun blast. Daniels attended the church in Lexington while he was a cadet at the Virginia Military Institute, and the Episcopal Church honors him as a martyr on Aug. 14.

The UTO grant application noted that the congregation in Lexington

continued on page 1

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Book suggests exploring Lent through the senses

Review by Neva Rae Fox

I was taught the significance and a deep appreciation of Lent as a young girl attending Catholic elementary school. Ever since, I annually approach Lent with the commitment and respect that bespeaks of the 40 days of penance and reflection.

For many years, I, like thousands of others, gave up something for Lent, ranging from sweets to smoking to a memorable Lent as a teen when I gave up Cheese Doodles (that was a sacrifice!). My observances for Lent modified over the years, and for the past two decades I have taken on self-improvement reading, ranging from an examination of St. Paul and Islam to books by Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Thomas Merton. Of late, I have been searching for a new way to observe the 40 days of penance, and

I am delighted to have discovered it in a compact book, "Sense and Sensibility." "Sense and Sensibility" provides an approach to observe Lent in a fresh, albeit penitential way through daily prayers focusing on our five senses.

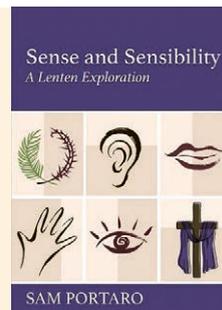
Author Sam Portaro explains that his approach relies on our physical senses, not on denying ourselves. "Lent is often a season given to denial of physical pleasure and sensation," he begins. "Yet a cultural atmosphere saturated with visual images, noise and air pollution, violence and processed foods has dulled the senses."

Portaro is a former university Episcopal chaplain who has authored numerous books on vocations and Christian life. In "Sense and Sensibility," he offers a new distinct way to observe a holy Lent through spiritual penance while observing, and not denying, the world surrounding us.

Most daily offerings start with a

Sense and Sensibility: A Lenten Exploration

By Sam Portaro
Church Publishing
130 pages,
\$12.95



Scripture reading or a collect, followed by a reflection that is not long, but is spiritually based and thought-provoking.

Chapters are aptly titled Touch, Sight, Smell, Sound and Taste, corresponding to the weeks in Lent. The first chapter begins with Ash Wednesday and the days following; the last chapter is Holy Week, concluding on Easter.

The introduction to each chapter sets the stage for the

continued on page 1

Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday to be observed on March 10

By Episcopal Journal

Looking toward the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday, March 6, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has invited Episcopalians to observe Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday on March 10.

"As we follow in the footsteps of Jesus this Lent, we know that living out God's love for the world is our ultimate goal," said Curry. "I invite all congregations to devote a Sunday in Lent to reflect on the life-giving work of Episcopal Relief & Development and to demonstrate

God's love by giving meaningfully to this vital ministry."

The 2009 General Convention designated Lent as a time for dioceses, congregations, and individuals to remember and support the work of Episcopal Relief & Development. Although the first Sunday in Lent is the official day of observance, churches may hold a special service on any Sunday. For additional information and to download a planning guide, visit www.episcopalrelief.org/Sunday.

This year, Episcopal Relief & Development celebrates 15 years of Lenten Meditations with selections from previous years. These booklets and other resources including hope chests, pew envelopes, bulletin inserts and prayers are available at www.episcopalrelief.org/Lent. Supporters may sign up for daily e-mail meditations in English and Spanish.

"There is no greater sup-



port for the work of Episcopal Relief & Development than when faithful people remember our partners, program participants and staff in their prayers," said Episcopal Relief & Development President & CEO Rob Radtke. "We are thankful for all the congregations and individuals who choose to join us in observing Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday."

For more than 75 years, Episcopal Relief & Development has worked with supporters and partners for lasting change around the world. Each year, the organization responds to the needs of more than 3 million people struggling with hunger, poverty, disaster and disease. It currently focuses its programs on three areas: women, children and climate. ■

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physical sense being explored:

- “Touch is essential to an encounter with the spirited God.”
- “Seeing is believing, we say. Comprehension is signified in the expression ‘I see.’ But in our modern culture we’re bombarded with images.”
- “Scent attracts and repels ... Our noses help us to identify friends and mates, and warn us of people and produce that may be a tad ‘off.’”
- “Speech, hearing and listening represent the most tangible communion between God and us.”
- “The central liturgies of many religions are meals, rituals tidbits and sips ... We are a people of the table.”

“Sense and Sensibility” is ideal for a busy lifestyle — and who doesn’t have a busy lifestyle? — to pause, to pray, to reflect and to observe Lent in a spiritual manner. ■

Neva Rae Fox is the principal of The Fox Group, a communications consulting firm whose clients include religious organizations and nonprofits.

GRACE continued from page G

“nearly came apart” in 2017 after two years of tense debate over its name. The process of congregational soul-searching began in the wake of the 2015 massacre at a black church in Charleston, S.C., by a white gunman with a fondness for Confederate symbols.

“I think the general feeling in the parish is that we have come through a very bad time but are now on the other side of it — wiser and more sober-minded, I think, for having gone through it,” Anne Hansen, a former vestry member, told ENS by e-mail.

Hubbard expressed hope that the congregation had begun moving past the bitter conflict over its identity and history. “I don’t think conflicts get wholly smoothed over,” he said, but “it’s a much happier place.”

The congregation took a big step forward in May when it invited monks from Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, N.Y., to lead parishioners in a healing-and-reconciliation workshop, Hubbard said. Church members who had taken opposing positions during the de-



The congregation in 2017 changed its name to Grace Episcopal Church from R.E. Lee Memorial Church.

bate over the old name faced each other across the aisle of the church and asked for forgiveness.

“There were people with tears running right down their faces,” Hubbard said.

The congregation is working to add Beloved Community events to its schedule of activities in the community room. Even before the room’s dedication, the church had begun hosting events aimed at racial healing, such as a hymn sing that was joined by a half-dozen churches, black and white, in Lexington.

Grace Episcopal “is really solidly behind” the work of racial reconciliation, Hubbard said. ■

“Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you.”
- JEREMIAH 29:12

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DAVIS continued from page F

Holy Communion here and technically was not a communicant.”

After leaving Montgomery, Davis was confirmed in 1862 at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Richmond, once known as the Cathedral of the Confederacy. Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee also worshipped at St. Paul’s.

Pew plaques and stained glass windows at St. Paul’s had long touted the Richmond church’s historical ties to those two prominent Confederate figures when, in 2015, St. Paul’s launched its History and Reconciliation Initiative to re-examine that history and consider whether changes were warranted.

The catalyst

On June 17, 2015, Dylann Roof opened fire at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., killing nine black worshippers. When photos surfaced of Roof posing with a Confederate flag, it fueled a nationwide debate over the racist legacy of such imagery and its embrace by white supremacists.

At St. Paul’s, the congregation decided

to remove all representations of Confederate battle flags but to keep family memorials to fallen Confederate soldiers. The congregation left untouched its plaques marking the pews where Davis and Lee once sat.

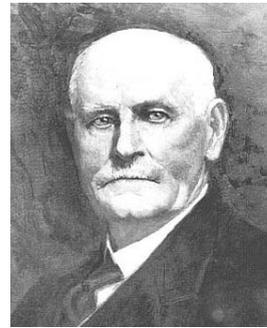
In 2017, a violent clash between white supremacists and counterprotesters in Charlottesville, Va., over the fate of the city’s Confederate statues led to a new round of national debates and amplified calls to remove such symbols from public display, including at Episcopal institutions.

Racist pedigree

Vestry members made their decision after Wisnewski brought his research on the pew to their attention, including the evidence that the pew was not in place for the 1925 dedication, Wisnewski said.

“The lore that the pew had been in place since the beginning of the Civil War and always known as the Jefferson Davis pew is not true,” Wisnewski said.

The rector also discovered details of the 1925 dedication ceremony, which



Source/Tennessee State Library and Archives

John Trotwood Moore, known as an “apologist for the Old South,” spoke at the dedication of the Jefferson Davis pew in 1925.

featured a speech by writer and historian John Trotwood Moore, known as “an apologist for the Old South” who espoused virulent white-supremacist rhetoric and defended lynching.

A 1999 article in the Tennessee Historical Quarterly provides a description of Moore’s speech at the dedication of the Jefferson Davis pew, based on contemporary newspaper reports. Alabama’s governor and

other civic leaders attended the event.

Besides hailing Davis as a “pure-blooded Anglo-Saxon,” Moore made a case that racial purity and white superiority were part of Davis’ legacy.

“We are the children not of our father and mother but of our race,” Moore said. “It is well to teach our children that they are well-bred, descendants of heroes. Only the pure breed ever reaches the stars.”

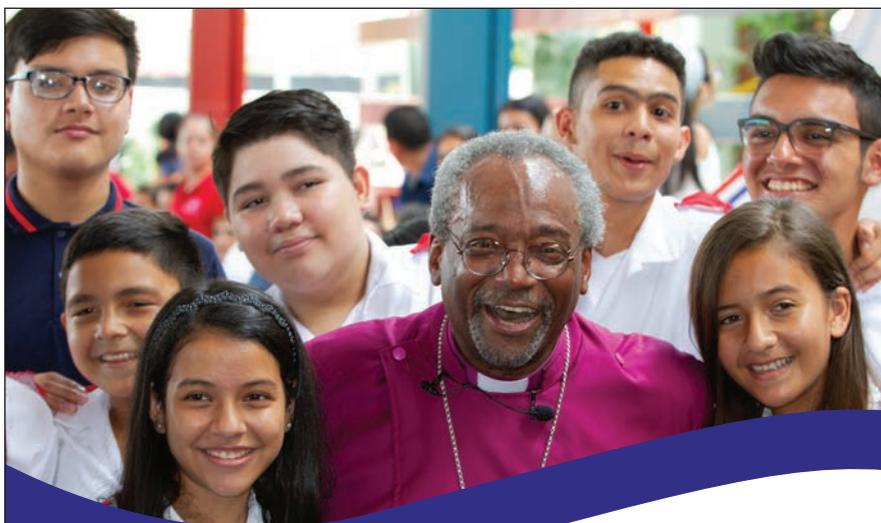
Moore’s role in the dedication of the pew gave little doubt about its racist pedigree, Wisnewski said. “Confederate monuments and symbols have increasingly been used by groups that promote white supremacy and are now, to many people of all races, seen to represent insensitivity, hatred and even evil.”

“The mission of our parish is diametrically opposed to what these symbols have come to mean,” he said. “Even if the actions which brought about the Jefferson Davis pew in 1925 were only to memorialize an historical fact, and that appears improbable, the continuance of its presence presents a political statement.”

The vestry voted to remove the pew and place it and the plaque honoring Davis in the church’s archives.

“This was not done to rewrite our history or to dishonor our forebears,” Wisnewski wrote in his message to the congregation. The current vestry would not vote to add such a pew honoring Davis, so it would be “troublesome” to let the existing pew remain, he said.

“St. John’s prides itself in being a spiritual home for all people and a place where politics takes a back seat to the nurture of our souls,” Wisnewski said. ■



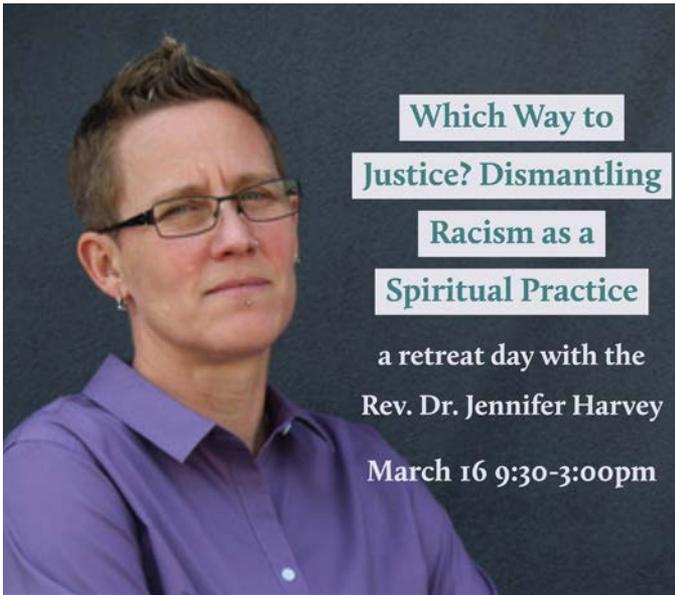
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