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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Episcopal Church Foundation Welcomes 4 New Fellows to the Fellowship Partners Program

June 1, 2011, New York, NY – The Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF) is very pleased to announce the 2011 recipients of its Fellowship Partners Program grants: the Rev. James Brian McVey (Brian), Sr. Greta Roningén, the Rev. Sam Dessórdi Peres Leite, and Andrew Thompson.

For nearly 50 ECF's Fellowship Partners Program has identified and helped to raise up dynamic and transformational lay and ordained church leaders by providing financial support to individuals engaged in academic study and transformational ministries that address important areas of need in the Episcopal Church. ECF Fellows have emerged as important leaders, teachers, and scholars at all levels of the Church.

"ECF is extremely proud of all our Fellows," said Donald V. Romanik, President of the Episcopal Church Foundation. "They are leading the way on important issues and helping to define the future of the Episcopal Church."

"I'm excited that ECF can partner with these talented individuals in our church," remarked Anne Ditzler, ECF Senior Program Director. Their areas of study and ministry speak to a wide range of needs – from addressing ethical responses to contemporary social issues to renewing hearts and spirits. We look forward to learning alongside them and sharing their expertise with the wider church."

ECF Fellowship Partners Program 2011 Fellows:

The Rev. Sam Dessórdi Peres Leite



Sam is a priest from the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil and is working on his doctoral degree at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. His focus is on issues in Latino Ministries for the Episcopal Church of the United States. His current research is designed to identify ways to empower Latino Ministries that will help the Church engage in a true dialogue with the Latin American population. Sam has been very active on the provincial level with the church in Brazil, particularly in Christian formation, youth ministry, and liturgy. He is the Custodian of the Brazilian Book of Common Prayer and is Assistant Dean of Holy Trinity National Cathedral, Porto Alegre. Sam also served as Chairman of the National Worship Committee of the 9th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 2005-2006. Currently Sam is a volunteer consultant for the Diocese of California Latino Ministry Committee and is participating in the Latino Strategic Vision for the diocese.

The Rev. James Brian McVey (Brian)



Brian is rector of St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Davenport, Iowa, where he is leading his congregation and local community in addressing the issue of human trafficking, one of the fastest growing criminal enterprises in the world. Brian began with a "ministry of presence" at a truck stop on I-80, one of the top sites in the U.S. for transporting, buying, and selling women, children, and men for all forms of forced labor. This ministry "is a multifaceted effort designed to remind both slavers and those enslaved of the dignity with which we were all created," notes Brian, "and it also serves to remind those participating in it of the glorious inheritance which I believe we are encouraged to claim as our own in Scripture."

The ministry is evolving into a network of people and institutions addressing the problem, including congregations and diocesan leaders, local law enforcement and government employees, FBI agents, businesses, social service providers, and politicians. Brian hopes that from their "successes and failures, others can plant similar ministries at other trafficking sites in the U.S. or elsewhere in the Anglican Communion." Brian formerly worked in financial services and also studied classical philosophy. He is a graduate of Trinity School for Ministry.

Sr. Greta Roningen



Greta has created and will lead The Good Seed Project, a series of spiritual formation and faith building classes for young girls in juvenile detention in Los Angeles. These girls lives are in crisis; the choices they make will mean the difference between a life of danger and incarceration, or lives of value and purpose. These girls have a great need to be heard and to feel a sense of value. These classes will provide tools to help them cope with their feelings, support to heal from abuse and neglect, and practices to build a deeper relationship with God. The goal of this program is to help these girls grow in self-esteem and treat themselves and each other with respect and dignity; to re-imagine themselves as beloved children of God. Greta will use her background in yoga and meditation to teach the girls how to access inner peace in their challenging lives. Greta has been a chaplain for PRISM Restorative Justice, a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese

of Los Angeles, for over three years. She is attending Claremont School of Theology pursuing a master's degree in Spiritual Formation. Greta lives in San Gabriel California and is a founding member of The Community of Divine Love, a religious order in the Benedictine tradition.

Andrew Thompson



Andy is a doctoral candidate in Christian ethics at Yale University, where his research focuses on the ethics of the church and its relationship to different cultural contexts. Andy believes that "in its public life the Church should seek to discern the actions of the Creator in the world around it and to respond to that creative action." With his work Andy hopes to support this process of discernment in the church. His dissertation will reflect on these themes with respect to a particular ethical problem: mountaintop removal mining in his home state of West Virginia. As a member of the Episcopal Young Adult Service Corps, Andy served as a missionary and community development worker in the Episcopal Church of El Salvador, where he and his wife established a primary school. He is currently working on a book project on mission with other young leaders from

the Anglican Communion.

Renewal Fellowships were awarded to Paul Clever, the Rev. Kathryn Reinhard, the Rev. Edward E. Thompson, Liza Anderson, the Rev. Rosa Lindahl Mallow, and the Rev. Altagracia Perez.

The deadline for 2012 Fellowships will be March 15, 2012. Complete information about the Fellowship Partners Program can be found on ECF's website at www.EpiscopalFoundation.org or by calling 800-697-2858.