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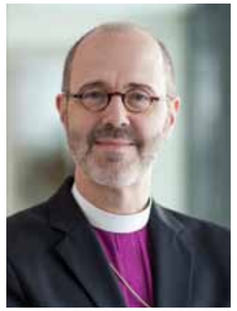
FALL 2014

EPISCOPAL
DIOCESE
OF CHICAGO
MAGAZINE

Savvy priest rebuilds a neighborhood
Practicing reconciliation on Logan Square
A father's faith sparks a movement

Letter from Bishop Lee



"Every Sunday we gather up all our concerns and heartaches, our fears and wounds, our tears and our joys and give thanks over them to the Giver of all life. And in that thanksgiving, we believe we are connected with God."

I'll never forget the wise words of a friend of mine, a monk, who once said during a retreat, "The antidote to anxiety is thanksgiving." While I was on sabbatical earlier this year, I made a conscious effort to practice the kind of prayer, or interior attitude, that I believe he was talking about. I practiced giving thanks to God—on my daily runs, visiting an ancient church, walking through the market. I tried to keep gratitude as the central theme of my conversation with God. I gave thanks for my life, for my family, for each congregation in our diocese and their leaders.

Now, that probably doesn't sound very dramatic. Most people would expect a bishop to give thanks to God. Christians do that, right? Intercession and thanksgiving should be our standard practice. And yet, in a world like this one, it is easy to let our thanksgiving be swallowed up by worry, fear, even despair. The ongoing violence in our neighborhoods and homes, the seemingly endless reports of war and terror beamed onto our screens, the awareness of what often feels like helplessness in the face of hatred and prejudice, economic injustice and even climatic change. I wonder how many people have given up working for a better world or retreated into a realm of private concerns because they simply have been overcome by anxiety.

The antidote to anxiety, to worry, to fear is indeed thanksgiving. In his recent book, "Being Christian," the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams writes this: "And it is at that moment, when he is looking forward most clearly and vividly to his death … that Jesus gives thanks. That is, he connects his experience with the reality of God, because that is what thanksgiving does." That's why the Eucharist is central to Christian identity. Every Sunday we gather up all our concerns and heartaches, our fears and wounds, our tears and our joys, and give thanks over them to the Giver of all life. And in that thanksgiving, we believe we are connected with God. The encounter with God always leads to transformation. It leads to resurrection.

Here's a simple practice I commend to you. When something causes you to worry, or fear, or to feel anxious, first acknowledge that feeling, and then find something in your situation for which you can give thanks to God. Even if there's nothing you can find to be grateful for, just thank God for being God. Give thanks that you *are*. I dream of us as a church known first and foremost by our capacity to give thanks.

Faithfully in Christ,
+Jeffrey

NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LAS AMERICAS PHOTO: VINCENT JOHNSON; BISHOP LEE PHOTO: CHARLIE SIMOKAITIS

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EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF CHICAGO MAGAZINE **FALL 2014**

Warming to the task 03

Nuestra Señora and Church of the Advent are distinctive congregations with a building in common. Recently, they've grown closer by housing the Warming Center, which provides a place for the homeless and marginalized to get out of the weather and get help.

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On our cover

The Rev. Richard Tolliver is rector of St. Edmund's Episcopal Church and president of the St. Edmund's Redevelopment Corporation. Photo: Dot Ward

SAVE THESE DATES

January 21-22
Fierce Conversations Training
St. James Commons Great Hall

February 15
Absalom Jones Day Observance
St. Thomas, Chicago

February 24, March 7
Clergy Quiet Days

March 12-14, April 20-23, May 14-16
Congregational Wellness Advocate Training
The Nicholas Center

April 13-16, September 28 - October 1
Fierce Conversations Training
The Nicholas Center

April 23
Bishop's Associates Luncheon

April 25
Episcopal Church Women Annual Meeting

May 13
Society of Miriam Reception
Kyle's Place at St. James Commons

Richard Tolliver Builds a Legacy

CITY PRIEST REVIVES A NEIGHBORHOOD WITH HOUSING & HOPE

By Jim Naughton

Derek R. B. Douglas of the University of Chicago says that while Tolliver "is doing a lot of housing, he is also focusing on education and security, which are the components that are required to build strong neighborhoods over time."

In a mile wide corridor on the south side of Chicago, the Rev. Richard Tolliver practices the gritty work of reclamation and resurrection, one or two distressed apartment buildings at a time.

Working through the St. Edmund's Redevelopment Corporation (SERC), which is named for the parish where he has been rector since 1989, Tolliver and a team of savvy friends and allies have rehabilitated or constructed 26 buildings, creating 598 affordable apartments in the struggling Washington Park neighborhood.

Over the course of 25 hard-working years, they have won the respect of local and federal officials, the banking community and non-profit foundations whose decisions determine whether organizations like SERC and its partner, Gilead Management, flourish or fail.

"I don't think it is overstating to say much of the progress in Washington Park in the last 20 years is because of him," says Derek R. B. Douglas, vice president for Civic Engagement at the University of Chicago, which abuts Washington Park.

In 2000, the parish reopened its dormant elementary school and converted it into a branch of Chicago International Charter School. The branch now enrolls some 450 students in grades K-8, but the success of the parish's housing and community development programs is such that its thriving education ministry is sometimes overlooked.

Tolliver's achievements have been chronicled in books such as "Inspired to Serve: Today's Faith Activists," in major newspapers including The Washington Post and in television documentaries from the United States to Germany. He is appointed regularly to city agencies and boards, and he enjoys a friendship with a former community organizer who once plied his craft on the city's south side and is now the President of the United States.

"When I was in seminary, one of my professors said, 'Often you will do the same kinds of things that social workers do and other people in other professions do, but what makes the difference between you and them is the Why,' he says. "And the Why is our understanding of what it means to live out the Christian mandate and share the Gospel with all people. It is lived out through these kinds

left: Rev. Richard Tolliver speaks at a news conference in 2013. Photo by AP/M. Spencer Green

> ***"We need more priests who can go to city hall and command their respect, and then do something with that relationship."***
>
> ***— Bishop John Burgess***

"When I think of Father Tolliver's ministry I think immediately of the sheer scope of his work...he stands squarely in the great prophetic tradition of strong Black clergy leadership in the church and the wider community."

of programs."

One day, he was walking through the nave of St. Edmund's with a journalist who asked what motivated him. "I pointed to the altar," Tolliver says. "That is where it all starts for me and for us."

Christians who are active in politics and community development are frequently challenged to explain themselves, to justify their activism and, if they are successful, their influence. Tolliver's activism is rooted in youthful disillusionment with institutions led by white men who were unresponsive to the concerns of the black community; it was galvanized by the writing of the Rev. James Cone, the African American theologian who wrote "The Cross and the Lynching Tree;" and it was nurtured by strong senior clergy, who believed that priests could be called to be civic leaders as well as religious leaders.

"When I think of Father Tolliver's ministry I think immediately of the sheer scope of his work—from community developer whose leadership has led to the remaking of a whole section of the south side of Chicago to his role as a courageous spokesman for marriage equality," says Bishop Jeffrey D. Lee. "In that he stands squarely in the great prophetic tradition of strong Black clergy leadership in the church and the wider community."

The late Bishop John Burgess of Massachusetts, the first black diocesan bishop in the Episcopal Church, was a mentor to Tolliver during his years at Episcopal Divinity School. Burgess directed a medical clinic while he was a parish priest in Ohio. The late Rev. M. Moran Weston, renowned rector of St. Philip's in Harlem, where Tolliver spent his curacy and where Thurgood Marshall served on the vestry, established a bank.

"Bishop Burgess used to write to me, and he was often very blunt," Tolliver recalls. "He said to me once that the church has too many of what he called priest-lets, and not enough priests.

"He said we need more priests who can go to city hall and command their respect, who can go to people in positions of power and command their respect, and then do something with that relationship."

There is little doubt that Tolliver has "done something" with his relationships.

On a recent morning he, a few staff members and an architect working with SERC appeared before the Design Review Committee of the City of Chicago's Department and Planning to present SERC's plan to construct a new building to be called St. Edmund's Oasis. Another project, St. Edmund's Tower-Annex, a senior housing complex, was also in the works. SERC's portfolio is not only expansive, it displays a sophisticated understanding of how to finance real estate transactions and how to work with the financial and government organizations that provide funding for neighborhood renewal efforts.

The Oasis project, for instance, would be accomplished through an intricately structured deal involving three successive mortgages, while the Tower Annex would be paid for almost entirely by grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Federal Home Loan Bank, and the State of Illinois.

While Tolliver has a PhD in political science from Howard University, has served as a country director for the Peace Corp in Mauritania and worked extensively in large urban parishes, he didn't arrive in Chicago with all of the knowledge and relationships necessary to become a community development expert.

"The diocese had a commission on affordable housing, and Ron Gatton of St. Paul & the Redeemer was the chair," Tolliver says. "Ron went around to a variety of churches and spoke to them about this issue, but he said ours was the only one that got excited enough to follow through and develop the capacity to do something."

If the world of housing development and the practice of government grant seeking are strange to most churches, the process by which St. Edmund's identified and solidified its commitment to rebuilding its neighborhood is not.

"When I came to St Edmund's in 1989, one of the things we did was have a series of strategic planning sessions to envision who we are, and over a period of time we developed mission statements. And then to operationalize our mission statements, we had a set of value statements," Tolliver says.

"One of the six is: 'We believe in justice, equality and socioeconomic diversity. Therefore, we will promote programs that will create clean, affordable housing, access to quality education for everyone, outreach to the community and our commitment to the African Diaspora and its expression in our church.'"

Supervising a parish committed to six value statements and a community development corporation presents significant managerial and pastoral challenges, but Howard L. Ward, a lawyer who is St. Edmund's senior warden, says Tolliver and his parishioners carry it off together.

"He has the ability to do a balancing act between all of these ministries," says Ward, who praises Tolliver's preaching and his service to sick and shut-in parishioners. "And we have the structure and the people in place to do the work that is necessary. The parishioners chose guilds to join, and the guilds perform the day-to-day work throughout the year.

"Father Tolliver is able to allocate his time to touch every base and accomplish what needs to be done."

Tolliver has also enjoyed excellent support in his community development endeavors. Working with Gatton, formerly a regional director in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the 1970s and now a principal at Redevelopment Services Corporation, SERC began to make its mark in Washington Park, a neighborhood with a familiar list of urban opportunities, challenges and frustrations. Later, SERC joined with Gatton's wife, Leslie Pilot-Gatton of Cornado Management, to form Gilead Management, the firm that now administers SERC's properties.

"Chicago is one of those unique cities in which the mayoral administrations see the church as a valuable asset to be involved, not just in crisis, but in bringing empowerment to the neighborhoods," Tolliver says. "I am not so sure that every community feels that, but on the other hand, it is up to the priest to develop those kinds of relationships.

"I remember once in Mayor Daley's administration, the head of one of the agencies told me: 'The other clergy come in here and they say, 'The

above: Tolliver has been building and rebuilding in Washington Park since 1989. Photo by Brian Kersey.

"He made me see that being an Episcopal priest was more than just being a liturgist. It meant being an integral part of the community..."

— the Rev. Dr. Fulton Porter

The Rev. Dr. Fulton Porter was a young medical student, a son of the deep South trying to find a place to go to church in Chicago when he met Tolliver at a meeting of the fraternity to which they both belonged.

Lord has called me to do this.' But they don't bring the right team with them, and they aren't ready to do business. You have the right team. You come in with knowledge. You come in as someone we can believe in.'"

Douglas says the quality of Tolliver's team is one of the pillars of his success, and a distinctive approach is another. "He is doing comprehensive community development," says Douglas, who served on the White House Domestic Policy Council as special assistant to President Barack Obama before moving to Chicago. "So while he is doing a lot of housing, he is also focusing on education and security, which are the components that are required to build strong neighborhoods over time. A lot of people focus on housing and give no regard to schools and no regard to safety, and they wonder why people won't live in their housing.

"And then success breeds success. The government gives to people who it knows can deliver. It has allowed him to get access to capital sources that others don't have."

✣ ✣ ✣

Tolliver was beginning his work on the south side when he met Obama, then an up-and-coming community organizer. Over the course of a few years, the two men came to know one another in the way that people do when they are working on similar issues in the same neighborhoods. The relationship endured and matured, as Obama became a state senator, U.S. Senator and then the President.

"He knew me and what I did," Tolliver says, matter-of-factly. "And I had been a pastor to members of his staff."

When the two meet now, as they sometimes do when Obama visits Chicago, there is "no change," Tolliver says. "We are just two human beings talking."

His relationship with the President has only enhanced Tolliver's reputation as a man who can get things done. As he told The Washington Post in 2012, SERC has been the only community development corporation in Chicago to receive three separate sources of federal funding from the Obama administration for housing construction.

It is one of the ironies of Tolliver's career that he may be better known to politicians and political reporters than to his clergy colleagues and the leaders of the Episcopal Church. Not that the church has ignored Tolliver—he has his own page on the Episcopal Archives website in the section dealing with the civil rights movement. But in a church in which "mission" and "transformation" are buzzwords, Tolliver, who has actually transformed decaying buildings into affordable housing, has only a handful of imitators and disciples among clergy scattered around the country.

These young priests see a different side of Tolliver than those who experience him primarily as a can-do executive. The Rev. Dr. Fulton Porter was a young medical student, a son of the deep South trying to find a place to go to church in Chicago when he met Tolliver at a meeting of the fraternity to which they both belonged.

"He kind of took me under his wing a little bit," Porter remembers. "At this point, I don't think he knew I was thinking about at some point becoming a priest. He was just making sure I was in church, doing okay being away from home, introducing me to people who could be helpful on my journey, making sure I was acclimated to Chicago, all sorts of things.

"In the midst of all this, I was looking at the work that he was doing and it fascinated me. I began to see possibilities that were outside the normal box. Because I knew

that if I were going to be a priest and a doctor, I was going to be outside the normal box. He made me see that being an Episcopal priest was more than just being a liturgist. It meant being an integral part of the community, and the liturgy being the place where it all came together."

More than 20 years later, Porter is a bi-vocational priest, serving as both rector of St. Thomas Church on the South Side and medical director of Hospital Medicine at The Community Hospital in Munster, Indiana. His parish's community development corporation is supporting efforts to build a $309 million Chicago Sports Village on the South Side.

"You might think, as we've gotten into a different era, that the needs would be different, but they really aren't."

Nurturing younger clergy is important to Tolliver, who benefitted not only from the attention of Burgess and Weston but also worked closely with Bishop John T. Walker of the Diocese of Washington in the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa. He is concerned, however, that the church may no longer be willing or able to support vocations like his.

"Many of the African-American clergy who are interested in this kind of work struggle in resource-poor places," he says. "I am not just talking about poor, inner-city congregations. Most of the congregations are middle class, but they don't have the critical numbers to do anything. And if you are a half-time priest there is not a whole lot you can do; I spend a lot of my time on maintaining relationships."

Tolliver's interest in raising a new generation of leaders should not be construed as evidence that he plans on slowing down any time soon. This summer he traveled to South Africa as a member of the board of Shared Interest, a foundation that guarantees South African bank loans to businesses and financial institutions and low-income communities. Upon his return, he and the SERC architect met with the Design Review Committee to discuss their plans for St. Edmund's Oasis.

While SERC's architect was presenting the designs, he pointed to a map of the neighborhood displaying all of the corporation's work in Washington Park. Then, directing the group's attention to the proposed project, he said, "This would complete the area." At that point, Tolliver interrupted.

"I immediately spoke up and said this would *not* complete the area and that we are already working on our next project," he said.

"The point is that we are always dreaming." ✣

above: A Sunday morning at St. Edmund's shows another side of Tolliver's ministry. Photo by Dot Ward

Growing Closer

Two congregations learn how to move forward

By Rebecca Wilson

The Rev. Liz Muñoz, vicar of Nuestra Senora, says her "scrappy little congregation" is working to include "New Generation Latinos" and create "the place that all of our generations can call home."

Restructuring begins at home, said one church leader about the latest movement to overhaul the Episcopal Church for the 21st century. If that's the path, then the Rev. Liz Muñoz and the Rev. Peter Siwek are the leaders to follow.

The two are vicars of companion congregations in Chicago's Logan Square, a rapidly gentrifying area on the city's northwest side. Nuestra Señora de las Americas, where Muñoz became half-time vicar in April, is the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago's oldest Latino congregation. "Our scrappy little congregation," as Muñoz calls it, was founded in 1978 as a ministry of the English-speaking parish at Church of the Advent, which dates to 1901.

Nuestra Señora's congregation of 70 is made up mostly of matriarchs and patriarchs, as Muñoz calls them, and their multi-generational Latino families, many with roots in Mexico, Guatemala, Puerto Rico and Colombia.

Church of the Advent, today a congregation of 60, includes both long-time members and young adults from what Siwek, its quarter-time vicar, calls the "developing, hipster, culturally diverse" Logan Square neighborhood. About a dozen are native Spanish speakers who are completely bilingual, he says, so while Nuestra Señora worships primarily in Spanish at 1 pm, Church of the Advent has experimented with worship that includes English and Spanish at its 10 am service.

"We started with the understanding that prayer is most natural in our native language," said Siwek. "We initially tried to make worship as even-steven as possible," Siwek said. "Over time, that became cumbersome, so our worship has evolved with us. Today, to a lesser degree, we incorporate Spanish and English in worship, being careful that people don't get bored or confused. That's one of the things I'm really

left: The Rev. Peter Siwek leads Church of the Advent, Logan Square. Photos by Vincent Johnson

proud of—shaping worship so that at any point a newcomer can figure out what's going on and engage."

The two congregations share a building and the costs of its utilities and maintenance but have their own leaders and priorities. Nuestra Señora has a vision of becoming even more family-oriented, says Muñoz, welcoming second- and third-generation Latinos who consider themselves bicultural and whose language is English. "Now we have children, called New Generation Latinos, who have grown up in the tradition, who love the liturgy and music but their language and issues are different," she says. "We are working to make Nuestra Señora the place that all of our generations can call home."

Church of the Advent, in contrast, has come to attract many young adults who are attracted to the congregation's mission but have little church experience. "We're really clear that we're here for the people who want to experience community with Jesus," says Siwek. "Embracing the story of Jesus and realizing that we need to help other people. That's it."

Recently, the two congregations found fertile ground for collaboration in their shared desire for outreach. Last year, they began housing the Warming Center, a ministry of New Community Covenant Church. The program provides a place for people who are homeless and marginalized to get out of the weather and get help, including clothing, toiletries, and referrals to community services.

"It was good to have the Warming Center come in so our congregations could figure out how to be partners together in community," says Muñoz, who cites a holiday party for homeless guests as a turning point in the relationship. "Sometimes in those moments, we are our better selves rather than worrying about who left what undone in the church building."

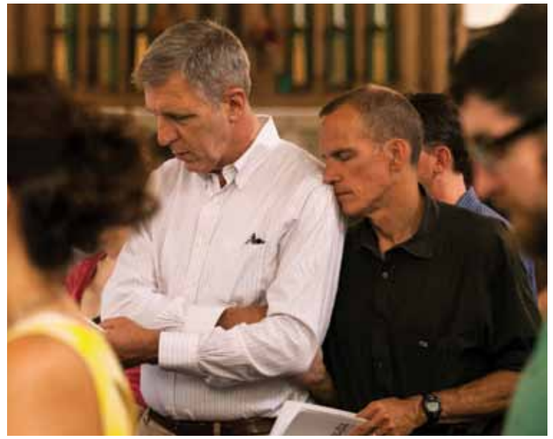
"In the last couple of years, we've had an amazing, flourishing development of our ministry to the homeless," says Siwek. "We've become a congregation that gets out there."

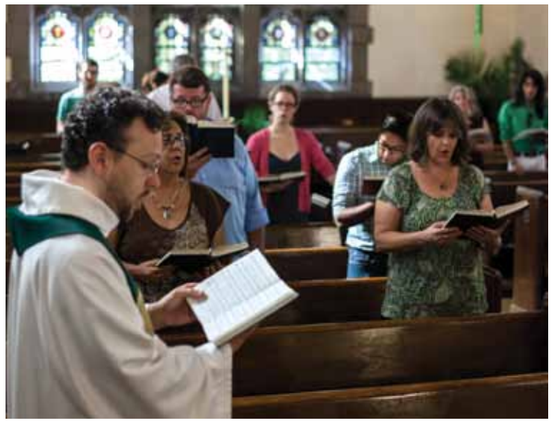
Muñoz, who was a veteran elementary school teacher before attending seminary in Texas, has galvanized the congregations' involvement in their community. She is a leader in Arise Chicago, an interfaith clergy coalition that supports living wages and economic justice, and the Logan Square Ecumenical Alliance, a group of clergy who advocate for supportive and affordable housing.

"I have a strong commitment to social justice work on immigration issues and unjust wages, both of which affect members of the congregation and the Logan Square community—especially those who are being pushed out by gentrification," she says.

The Warming Center program takes place during the week, but on Saturdays, many of its guests return to the shared church building for a hot lunch program that grew out of a ministry begun in the late 1970s by Dolores and Zoila Rivera, immigrants from Puerto Rico who were among the founders of Nuestra Señora.

"When they started, it was just first-generation immigrants," says Yesenia Acosta, a granddaughter of the Riveras who is Nuestra Señora's parish secretary. "There were just a handful of people who could speak both languages and navigate the public system. They gave whatever assistance they could provide with getting documents in order, handling immigration papers, and filling out other applications."





Dolores Rivera, a U.S. Army veteran and Chicago Public Schools primary school teacher, "was always serving his country, his church, his community," says Acosta. "It doesn't surprise me that they saw this need for food and wanted to help."

She credits the program's longevity to the compassion of Nuestra Señora's members. "Many of our folks are barely employed and are working two or three jobs. The thought of not having food is something that our people are very sensitive about. Because they know what it's like to be hungry, they can't help but give back when they can, even from the little they have."

While volunteers from Church of the Advent have been involved in the feeding program since 1996, only recently has it become a true partnership, says Idida Perez, who coordinated the program for many years.

> "Not only do we serve homeless men, but we also have women who come with children. Sometimes it's an extra meal because food stamps run out."

"Not only do we serve homeless men, but we also have women who come with children," says Perez. "Sometimes it's an extra meal because food stamps run out, or it's just people looking for an opportunity to feel among friends for a meal because we have been blessed with awesome cooks."

Later this year, joint volunteer teams from Church of the Advent and Nuestra Señora will begin to host the meal together on fifth Saturdays. St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Park Ridge also helps by providing a chili lunch once each month.

The successful outreach collaboration has encouraged the two congregations to work together in other ways. In August, they co-hosted a block party for their neighbors, with Nuestra Señora getting the permits and the hot dogs, and Church of the Advent providing baked goods. The proceeds went toward building repairs, "which was a good chance to show the diocese and ourselves that we could work together," said Muñoz.

The relationship between the two congregations hasn't always been easy. Nuestra Señora was the diocese's first Latino mission, and the structure of the relationship between the mission and Church of the Advent was initially undefined. "There was always this owner-renter relationship," said Perez of the early days when the Latino congregation paid rent to its sponsor. "Then a new rector came in and taught a little leadership development, and Nuestra Señora started growing."

Eventually, in 2010, a struggling Church of the Advent also became a diocesan mission, relinquishing the title to its building to an elected diocesan body called Bishop and Trustees. "Then we were two missions sharing the same building," remembers Perez, "and suddenly we had to share everything: utilities, maintenance, right down to half of all the cleaning supplies and toiletries."

Sharing costs equally changed the relationship. "Nuestra Señora wanted equal respect for its equal responsibility," says Perez, a member of Nuestra Señora who has belonged to both congregations at different times in the past two decades, "but it was hard for Church of the Advent to give up that control."

In 2009, she sought advice from members of the diocese's anti-racism commission, on which she now serves. That meeting resulted in a workshop with Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training, a Chicago-based organization with which the commission frequently partners. About a month later, the two congregations undertook a dialogue with the Rev. Eric Law, an Episcopal priest and founder of the Kaleidoscope Institute.

"He helped us hear and understand each other," said Perez. "He helped us see that Church of the Advent felt like our parent and didn't want us to fall. But we said, 'We need you to let go and trust that if we fall, you can let us fall and learn for ourselves.' Things started getting better after that."

Last year, the congregations took a further step in rebuilding their relationship when they participated together in the Chicago Regional Organizing for AntiRacism's workshop called "Critical Cultural Competency."

"It is one of the best workshops I've ever sat in," says Perez. "It helped us understand how different the two of us are—how we think and how we do things. There were a lot of ah-ha moments, and Rev. Liz and Rev. Peter were awesome. They were true leaders in speaking up or agreeing to do something differently. That really got things started, and ever since then, there's been a big difference."

"Now we're a family in one building," says Acosta. "I can't say that everything was hashed out in that day, but it began a movement. It's easier to walk into a room now and talk about things. It opened up the air."

Perez had already grown to trust Siwek when he said that he intended to help reconcile the two congregations. Early in his tenure, when he set about transforming Church of the Advent's worship space,

left: The two churches worship separately, collaborate in ministry and share a devotion to Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. Photos by Vincent Johnson

“My hope is that our relationship continues to grow as we are out in the world evangelizing and learning from each other,” says Muñoz. “We are a much better vision of the kingdom of God when we come together.”

he insisted that a large image of Our Lady of Guadalupe needed to be moved from a dark corner where it was tucked away to hang over the altar in the chapel.

“That was, I think, the first time that we felt there was, not so much true acceptance, but that Rev. Peter really wanted to make things work,” said Perez. “That was when I fell in love with him. It was so meaningful, and I don’t think he realized how meaningful. Here our name is Nuestra Señora—Our Lady—and Our Lady was pushed behind the door in the dark. When she was moved to hang above the altar in the chapel, that was a real turning point.

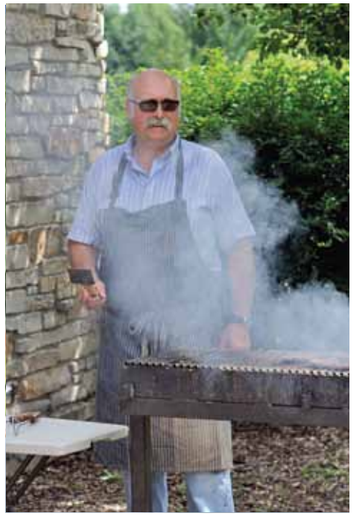
“I’ve been here more than 20 years,” she says. “I thank the Lord that we reached out to our diocese and they provided the help we needed to accept changes and see the good again.”

Acosta agrees that the partnership between the two congregations is finally strong. “We have new relationship courage to stand up and make change. Serving the community is one of the driving factors for us to get it done and work together. Our mutual love of outreach is how we’re getting this done.”

“My hope is that our relationship continues to grow as we are out in the world evangelizing and learning from each other,” says Muñoz. “We are a much better vision of the kingdom of God when we come together.” ✣

FUN RAISING

Three legged races, live music and lots of good food. Who knew a capital campaign was so much fun?



In 2014, over 100 congregations committed to *Places of Grace and Gladness: A Campaign for the Diocese of Chicago*. Across the diocese, people have held auctions, put on picnics, made music, and found ways to make fun in support of our common mission. This third phase of the capital campaign, which began in 2011, is devoted to replenishing the resources that enable vitality grants for dozens of ministries and congregations across northern and west central Illinois.

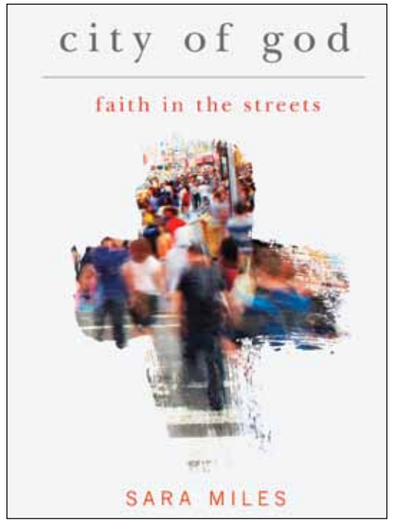
To learn more, please talk with Ruth Cobb, associate for development and major gifts, at 312-751-3576 or rscobb@episcopalchicago.org.

Photos courtesy of Christ Church Winnetka's Deanery Block Party; Emmanuel Rockford; St. Andrew's Grayslake; St. Mark's Glen Ellyn (Peter Vagt); St. Paul's, DeKalb (James Stubblefield)

Evangelism: First, you listen

Sara Miles tells a story that starts like this: "One early, cloudy morning when I was forty-six, I walked into a church, ate a piece of bread, took a sip of wine. A routine Sunday activity for tens of millions of Americans—except that up until that moment I'd led a thoroughly secular life, at best indifferent to religion, more often appalled by its fundamentalist crusades. This was my first communion. It changed everything."

COURTESY OF THE SEMINARY OF THE SOUTHWEST



"You have to be willing to hear what God is doing among the whole people. And you can't listen fully if you assume you already know exactly what the story is. The story is alive."

"Eating Jesus, as I did that day to my great astonishment, led me against all my expectations to a faith I'd scorned and work I'd never imagined."

The story is her own, culled from "Take This Bread: A Radical Conversion," her 2007 memoir about how she, a resolutely secular, lesbian journalist who had once made a living covering insurgencies and counter insurgencies in Central America, became an Episcopalian.

Miles is the founder and director of The Food Pantry at St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church in San Francisco, where she serves as director of ministry. She is also the author of "Jesus Freak: Feeding Healing Raising the Dead," and, most recently, "City of God: Faith in the Streets." Since the publication of "Take This Bread," she has become one of the most sought-after progressive Christian speakers in the United States.

Earlier this year, she toured the United States and appeared at Greenbelt, the extremely popular arts and faith festival held in the United Kingdom each August, with the Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber. Bolz-Weber, a Lutheran minister and author of "Pastrix," is one of the leading voices in the emerging church movement.

Jim Naughton spoke with Miles about storytelling and its role in evangelism in anticipation of her November 21 appearance as the keynote speaker at the Diocese of Chicago's annual convention.

JN: You've been speaking recently about the importance of evangelism and the church's tendency to approach it backwards.

SM: I think one of the assumptions about evangelism is that we know what the story is, so we are going to have our speeches prepared, and we'll go away from our usual places and deliver the speech to others. And we assume that, somehow, is the process of evangelism.

But the whole point of the gospel is that it changes you. Once you put your foot in that water, once you step into the living story that the gospel is, you have to be willing to be swept away: and being swept away means listening to other people among whom the spirit is also moving. You have to be willing to hear what God is doing among the *whole* people. And you can't listen fully if you assume you already know exactly what the story is. The story is alive.

JN: If evangelism begins with listening, what comes next?

SM: I think it's a process of doing midrash on your own life. The way a story becomes more than simply an anecdote, or a moral, or a news report, is that people engage in reflection together on what they heard and what it means. And through that process we find something out. The church needs to say, "Here is what we hear. What does this mean? What does it mean in the light of what we already think we know? What does it show us about what we don't know? What's next?" As we reflect on scripture together and we reflect on our own pasts together and we reflect on what is currently happening among ourselves and strangers, we ask how this adds to our understanding of the old story, and we ask how this new version of the story might change us.

JN: Your latest book, "City of God," describes your experiences in taking ashes to people in the streets on Ash Wednesday 2012. The Diocese of Chicago has played an important role in spreading this practice. What are your thoughts on "Ashes to Go"?

SM: The challenge of doing ashes in the streets is allowing ourselves to become listeners to the good news. It is allowing ourselves to be evangelized by the people whom we encounter. We don't know what is going to happen. It isn't so much about us taking church into the streets as it is about keeping our eyes open to what the spirit is doing in the world.

There are all kinds of reasonable objections to taking ashes into the streets, and I certainly don't think everybody needs to do this. But there's also the anxiety I think Episcopalians have about being seen as evangelicals. Some of that is class anxiety—we're not *that* kind of Christian—some might be rejection of an imperial missionary tradition, some is just timidity. I do think we need to engage much more, in all kinds of ways, with what it means to be evangelical in our faith.

JN: On your recent speaking tours, you've had an opportunity to listen to people from all over the country talk about their spiritual lives. What did you hear?

SM: I hear people wanting more God in their lives. They are hungry to have experiences of God. By which I don't mean talking *about* God. I mean experiencing God.

I talk with people, for example, in their 20s and 30s—a lot of them are former evangelicals—who are deeply, deeply interested in the sacraments—and not because they find the sacraments weird and old fashioned, like vintage clothing. They are really hungry for, they need, that immediacy. Then I also go to tiny little churches in the Midwest—churches that are closing down, with maybe 25 old ladies on a Sunday—– and somebody comes up to me tearfully and says, "Well, thank you so much, because we don't hear people talk about Jesus anymore in church."

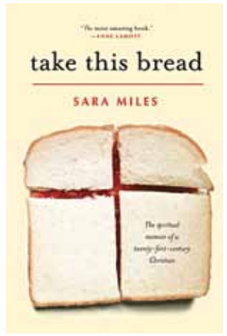
I'm not interested in just talking about Jesus, though. I wanted "City of God" to say: "Go out there. Do this, and see what happens. Be willing to be changed."

JN: Would the approach you outline require changes in the structure of the church?

SM: I think this approach decentralizes the presumption that any single one of us has figured out a perfect answer to how to do church. I'm not trying to knock down the way church works. I'd like to see us add, not subtract. Of course there's a role for preaching, for scriptural exegesis, for theologians to tackle things, for familiar indoor church rituals. But I want to say, as well, "Pay attention outside of the building, too. Pay attention to what's on the edges."

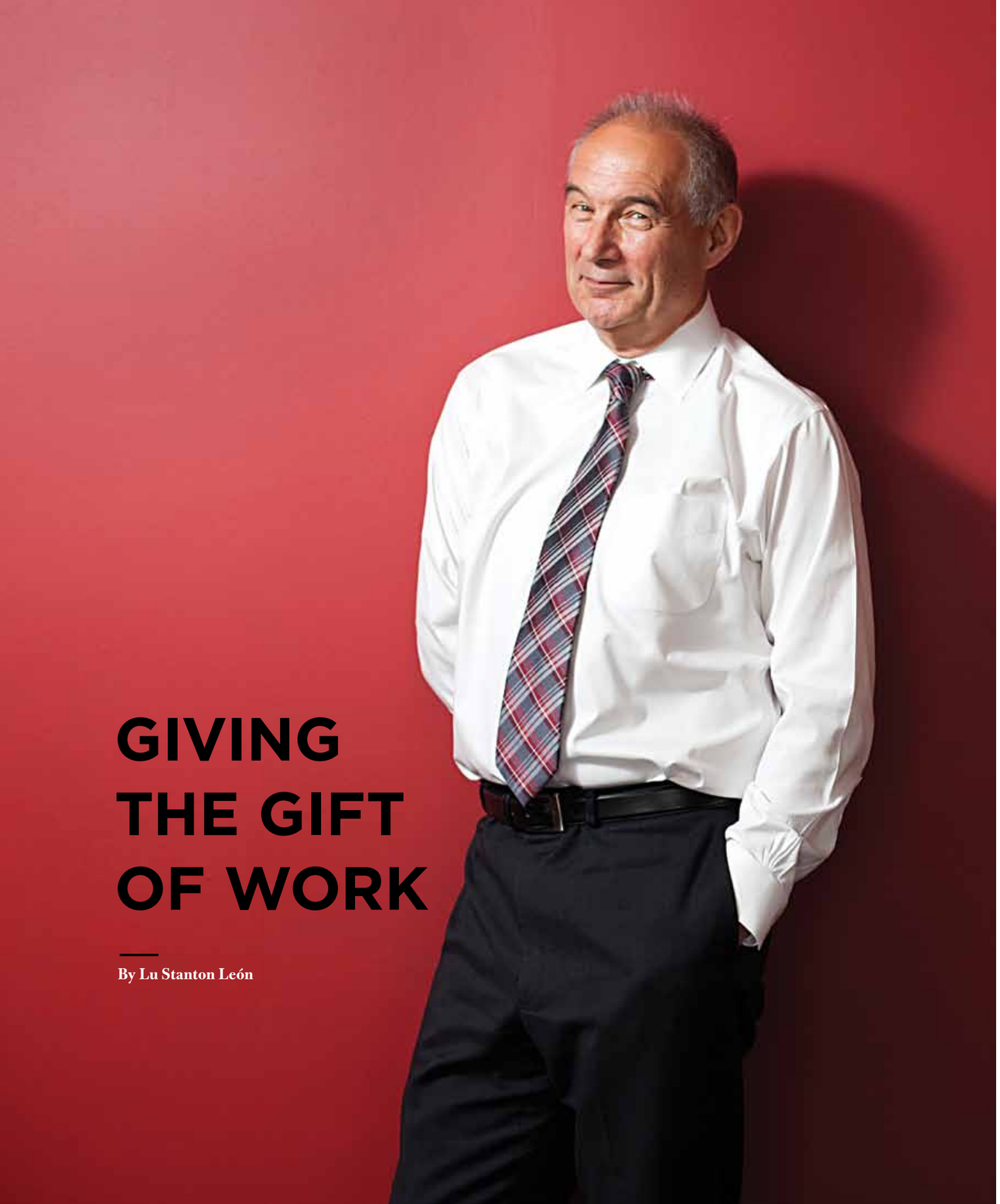
JN: What might we discover on the edges?

SM: On the edges, the question of authority doesn't come down to mere governance, but to faith that we have been breathed upon and given the power of the spirit. ✣



"I talk with people, for example, in their 20s and 30s—a lot of them are former evangelicals—who are deeply, deeply interested in the sacraments—and not because they find the sacraments weird and old fashioned, like vintage clothing."

left: Photo courtesy of Sara Miles



GIVING THE GIFT OF WORK

By Lu Stanton León

Randy Lewis isn't preachy, pious, or especially political, but he is opinionated and totally passionate about his commitment to full employment for people with disabilities.

His passion is personal—his 26-year-old son Austin was born with autism—and it has changed the lives of thousands of people with and without disabilities. Before retiring in 2013 as a senior vice president at Walgreens, Lewis led that company's logistics division for 16 years. His time in the job was marked by tremendous growth and innovation that included restructuring the technology that operates Walgreens distribution centers.

That restructuring opened the door for Lewis to pioneer a disability employment model. He started with a new distribution center in Anderson, South Carolina, where, as a result of his program, 40 percent of the employees hired have either a physical or cognitive disability. Its success, measured both in performance and positive impact on team culture, led to its adoption across all Walgreens centers, where now ten percent of the workforce—more than 1200 people—are people with disabilities. In these workplaces, people with and without disabilities all work as equals, doing the same jobs with the same pay and opportunities for advancement and job mobility. Lewis's initiative, which initially met with skepticism, has served as a model for other large employers, including Procter & Gamble, Lowe's, UPS and Safeway.

What gave him the courage even to attempt such a feat?

"Some 350,000 parents each year get a diagnosis that their child will require some kind of special services," said Lewis, who is a member of the vestry at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Barrington, Illinois. "People ask me how was I so brave, putting my career on the line. It wasn't a question of courage. It was wondering what it would be like when I looked back one day knowing that I had the opportunity but did nothing because I was afraid."

Lewis won't hesitate to tell you that he grew up knowing he had a duty to give back to his community. He won't necessarily quote Luke 12:48, but he believes that to whom much is given, much is required. That belief is part of why, before earning a BA in economics in 1974 and an MBA in 1975 from the University of Texas at Austin—an education he helped finance by working as an Arthur Murray dance instructor—he worked for the Peace Corps in Peru for two years. That belief, that desire to give back, is also what fed into his passion to make good jobs available to people with disabilities and to share the lessons he learned with other businesses and industries.

He has spread his story across the United States and abroad, demonstrating how servant leadership can both improve performance and benefit the community. In 2008, he received South Carolina's highest award to non-citizens, the Order of the Silver Crescent, for his leadership and contribution to the well-being of its citizenry. In 2011, he was recognized by the Human Resources Management Association of Chicago as Leader of the Year for his service and accomplishments in the field of human resources and business.

> "This is a book about the transforming power of love—[how it]can flow well beyond the bonds of kinship to effect transformation in entire structures in business and the wider society. Randy Lewis shows us how faith and love can be put into practice to make this world a more just and compassionate place . . . and be good business, to boot."
>
> — **JEFFREY D. LEE**, BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF CHICAGO

April of this year marked the release of Lewis's book, "No Greatness without Goodness: How a Father's Love Changed a Company and Sparked a Movement." It was named in Fast Company's list of "10 New Books You Need to Read This Year."

In one of many accolades, Jim Wallis, president and founder of Sojourners, writes: "Randy Lewis's story of life with his son and the disability hiring initiative at Walgreens is a must-read for anyone who is looking to understand what it means to take Jesus' words seriously." The book, Wallis writes, is not only interesting and inspirational but is "one that I hope will move others to consider what their own faith looks like in action."

About the book, Lewis said, "It is always astounding when someone will read it and write to me. This book is like putting a letter in a bottle. At one level you hope, not to get famous or to get rich, but that it will serve as a way to pass this on—that was the whole hope. It needed to be written down so people could come along and use it to do something even better. We all need to be reminded that we don't have to profess one set of values in our private lives and live another at work."

THE RIGHT PLACE, THE RIGHT TIME, THE RIGHT PERSON

Lewis's determination to help people with disabilities find good-paying jobs was fed by his son Austin's age and employment disappointments.

left: Photo courtesy of Randy Lewis

"As I've gotten older I'm drawn to a lot less dogma and a lot more truth, a lot more joy. I'm more worried about what I become than what I believe. My ideal is to become a radicalized follower of Jesus."

By seeing the world through Austin's eyes, Lewis learned that, without a new paradigm, people with disabilities would always be defined by their disability, not by their many abilities.

Lewis writes about Austin's high school work-study internship at a local pizza parlor where he learned to make pizza dough. He loved making pizza dough, he was good at it, and his coworkers and customers liked him. Yet when his internship was over, the pizza parlor manager refused to let him work there, under any circumstances. Even if he worked for no pay and had a job coach with him, which meant two employees for no cost.

Lewis said the incident brought him to the realization that neither a sense of duty nor compassion is enough to help people with disabilities looking for justice, not charity.

"As long as managers hire people with disabilities as an act of charity, they will never see past the stereotypes that are holding people with disabilities back," Lewis writes. "Those stereotypes—that individuals with disabilities can't do the work as well, cost more, cause legal suits, have accidents, raise insurance rates, and fail to fit in with the rest of the workforce or the customers—are a wall that no amount of charity will ever overcome."

Instead, Lewis led an initiative to redesign Walgreens distribution centers jobs so that they could be performed by people with disabilities. After the first center's revamping was complete, he discovered that the task was not about implementing technology or redesigning jobs; it was about giving people who can't get through the invisible walls in traditional recruiting and hiring practices a chance to perform.

"There is a whole world of people who are only six inches under water, but they are drowning," Lewis once told a reporter for the Ernst & Young alumni magazine, where Lewis worked before joining Walgreens. "They can never get to the top of the applicant list because of others' misconceptions."

He writes in "No Greatness without Goodness" that not only did the disability hiring initiative in Walgreens' Anderson, South Carolina, distribution center exceed its disability hiring goals, it also maintained performance standards. But a more fundamental shift occurred. "As we began to see people with disabilities as equals, it changed the way we worked. It changed our culture. It changed our work environment. It changed the way we looked at the world."

HAVING FAITH

That faith is an undercurrent throughout Lewis's 230-page book would come as no surprise to members of St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Barrington, where Lewis is a vestry member and his wife, Kay, is active. Austin also is a member. The Lewis's two grown daughters, Sarah and Allison, live in Atlanta and Cape Cod.

"When we came to the Chicago area 28 years ago, I had changed jobs and all of our friends had been from work, and we decided we were never going to do that again. We were going to center our life around church and community. That became a way for us to come into a new community and find community," Lewis said.

Lewis, who was raised in Texas in the Church of Christ, and his wife, who was raised Baptist, shopped around and decided on St. Michael's. His faith, he said, continues to grow and to shape his life.

"The stories of my childhood Jesus take on new meaning as my life experiences unfold," Lewis said. "I keep seeing the inclusiveness of Jesus in all that he does. In the stories, I see him go out of his way to use the outcast to make his points: the good Samaritan versus the priest and the Levite, the brazenness of talking to a Samaritan woman at the well, not being intimidated by the religious or Roman authorities. Taking Jesus' words seriously have shaped my views around inclusion, helping each other, non-violence, peace, justice, duty.

"Jesus reminds me that I am infinitely important. And so is everyone else. Everyone. Then why shouldn't each be important to me too?"

"Being an Episcopalian," he said, "has challenged me. There are no easy answers. It has made me question what is creedal—that which is essential to my faith—and what is opinion. As I've gotten older I'm drawn to a lot less dogma and a lot more truth, a lot more joy. I'm more worried about what I become than what I believe.

"My ideal is to become a radicalized follower of Jesus, which I fall way short of."

The congregation at St. Michael's has provided his family with tremendous support. In "No Greatness without Goodness," Lewis writes about a time he "told our priest that I constantly worried about Austin and wondered if I was up to the task that had been laid out before me. I half expected that he'd tell me to trust in God—a sort of priestly pat on the head—and send me on my way. Instead, he said, 'That's what we're here for. When your strength wanes, lean on others to hold you up.'"

In his book Lewis notes that his wife "is the spiritual ballast of our family" who can cite Bible stories "without sounding the least bit preachy or self-righteous." So can Lewis, who said he's very intentional about that.

"Religion is a movement of attraction, not coercion," he said.

Lewis sums up his faith this way. "For me Jesus didn't come down to earth to give us a ticket to heaven based on what we believe or not. Instead, I think he came down to set us free so that we can help bring heaven about on this earth. Powerful stuff! Faith is the lens through which to view and live this life with all its pain and joys. What awaits afterwards will be icing on the cake."

THE NEXT CHALLENGE

Since retiring, Lewis has been hard at work on his next initiative, which has kept him busy meeting with Washington and state officials, businesses, experts and other players in disability employment.

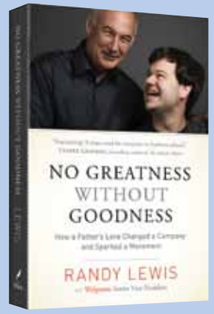
"This first year we're looking for six to 10 large businesses to dream big and be willing to 'go big' with a disability hiring initiative at a pilot site. If so, we will bring the entire 'ecosystem'—state and federal resources, technical expert, business peers who have launched their own initiatives—to them to help make them successful. That success will be like a benevolent virus that will spread throughout the company, which will in turn serve as a model for other companies and communities. Sorta like 'We help you and then you help others'. We'll even train VISTA volunteers and place them in the community with the employer to help align the resources they need to hire people with disabilities, to help local schools align special education for employment, and to work with parents to change the system around the expectation of employment, not welfare."

For now, Lewis is calling it the Disability Hiring Alliance. "I wanted to call it 'Red' but Bono beat me to it."

Lewis said, "The expectation is not welfare, but employment opportunities. We were the first to hire large numbers in distribution centers when many said it couldn't be done. It will work in other industries, too, and we need leaders to step forward. This is an idea whose time has come."

Does his enthusiasm and optimism ever wane? Not yet.

"Are you familiar with Frederick Buechner?" Lewis asks. "He says, 'The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.' That's where I am." ✣



BOOK REVIEW

Publishers Weekly 's review of "No Greatness without Goodness" by Randy Lewis:

"No Greatness without Goodness" is the powerful story of a corporate executive who, after watching the world through the eyes of his own child with autism, Austin, realized that we all have a greater responsibility to make the world a better place for everyone, including those with disabilities. …. "No Greatness without Goodness" offers a firsthand account of what it takes to lead with courage in order to change people's lives for the better. …. In this book, you'll learn how to start working for good no matter where you are or how much power you hold.

left: : Photos courtesy of Randy Lewis (top) and Walgreens

After a festive dedication, the center at St. James Commons is brimming with activity

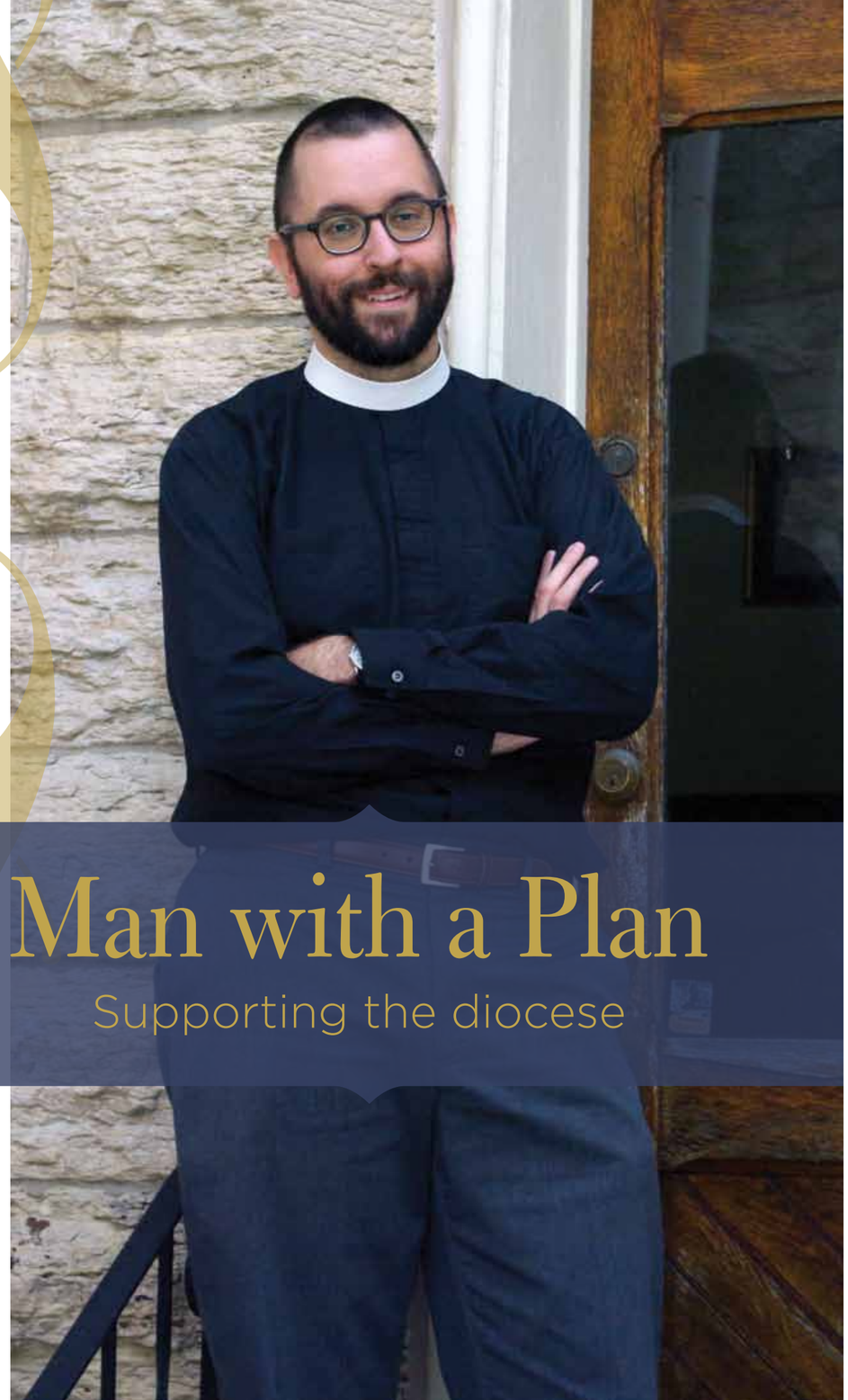
Nicholas Center Gets down to business

PHOTOS BY VINCENT JOHNSON

"We hope that Bishop Lee and Scott Stoner can help revitalize the Episcopal Church through their efforts in church wellness. They are outstanding priests and leaders, and we're confident that their enthusiasm for the Episcopal Church will provide a spark and help propel it forward. This is a chance for the Episcopal Church to participate in and learn from their lessons. It gives me a lot of hope, that through the Nicholas Center, we can help a lot of people."

AB NICHOLAS

On October 7, Ab and Nancy Nicholas visited the Nicholas Center for a reception with Bishop Lee, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, and the Rev. Scott Stoner, founder of Living Compass and director of the Nicholas Center. Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas, who made the new facility possible with a 2013 gift, were accompanied by their daughter, Susan Nicholas Fasciano (second from right in center photo.) In its first few months of operation, the Nicholas Center has welcomed leaders from across the Episcopal Church and beyond.



Man with a Plan

Supporting the diocese

By Lu Stanton León

The Rev. Dave Hedges is 39 years old. He and his wife, Carly Flagg, are still paying off college loans and they have a 10-year-old daughter, Zoe. Yet they were among the first to become members of the Diocese of Chicago's Society of Miriam by making a planned gift in their wills.

"Most of us think of estate planning as something for old, rich people," said Hedges, rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Sycamore. "I'm not old and I'm not rich, but anybody can make a plan."

His estate planning came in the wake of a health crisis his wife faced in January. That event led them to reexamine their lives and plan for the future. Or as Hedges puts it, to devote time for "making space in our lives for attending to what is most important."

As a result, the family made profound personal changes. Hedges said. His wife left her position as a teacher at Columbia College in Chicago, thereby ridding herself of a one-and-a-half hour commute each way. Hedges had been going through a wave of renewal in his prayer life, and he is cutting back on commitments outside the parish. And as a couple, they examined their estate planning.

"We've experienced a growing sense of closeness," he said of his family. "We were exploring our future and the close call we had, and we decided to live up to what the Prayer Book calls us to do, to remember the church in our plans, if possible. I take stewardship very seriously, and when I have the chance, I always take the opportunity to teach people about that."

The planned gift is only one of the many ways Hedges devotes his time, talent and treasure to his parish and to the Diocese of Chicago. Since 2009, he has served on the board of directors of Grace Place Campus Ministry and its predecessor, United Campus Ministries, including two terms as board president. From 2010-2013 he served as the clergy representative for the Rockford Deanery to the Diocesan Council. Beginning in 2011, he served as a member of the Bishop and Trustees of the Diocese. And at last year's Diocesan Convention, he was elected to serve as one of the Diocese of Chicago's deputies to the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, which will meet in Salt Lake City in July 2015.

Why has he been so committed to the diocese? Hedges said it is out of a profound gratitude for all the diocese has done for him. In a letter to his congregation this fall, Hedges said, "This diocese is where I studied for ordination at Seabury-Western Seminary. The diocese's Making Excellent Disciples program gave me the opportunity to serve for two years as curate at Saint Mary's in Crystal Lake, where I learned the ropes and grew into my priesthood so that I might serve more effectively.

"It is because of the Making Excellent Disciples program that I was eligible to apply to come to St. Peter's as your priest-in-charge. For the first two years of my time here I continued to benefit from the Fresh Start program, also offered by the diocesan staff. Out of gratitude for these opportunities, and for the pathway they have afforded me to serve at St. Peter's, I have chosen to give back to the diocese which has given me so much."

Although he is cutting back on diocesan commitments, he will continue to serve on the board of Grace Place until his term ends in January 2016, and he will serve as a deputy to the General Convention next summer.

St. Peter's, a small congregation located 60-plus miles from St. James Commons, has also benefited from participating in the life of the diocese.

"We've worked closely with members of the Bishop's staff, including Jim Steen, Vicki Garvey and others. They've helped our vestry and other leaders to strengthen the parish's approach to leadership and make good on the parish's desire to minister with children more fully and effectively."

Hedges said St. Peter's, which was founded in 1855, has undergone some self-examination and is now experiencing increased vibrancy.

"St. Peter's has a self-identity that used to be rooted in the idea that it was very traditional," he said. "In the past few years we've come to the realization that we are a little more middle of the road than we thought we were. We're a little more open than we thought we were. This year we're working on being more intentional about stewardship."

Intentional stewardship, both corporately and personally, compels one to look ahead, not behind.

"St. Peter's has gotten less anxious and more focused on growth and change rather than maintenance." Hedges said. "We've gotten proactive rather than re-active. We're future oriented." ✣

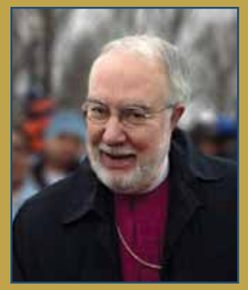
Society of Miriam

The Diocese of Chicago is blessed with many people who have included Episcopal churches and institutions in their estate plans. In 2012, we formed the Society of Miriam, inspired by noted Chicago philanthropist Miriam Hoover, to celebrate the generosity of these individuals and families.

Bishop Lee will host a Society of Miriam reception on Wednesday, May 13, 2015, from 5-7 pm at Kyle's Place at St. James Commons. The event is open to all and will include a special photo exhibition in honor of Episcopal Relief & Development's 75th anniversary.

The Society of Miriam welcomes all members of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Chicago who have made a planned gift to any institution affiliated with the Episcopal Church. To learn more about making a planned gift or to discuss your estate plans, please talk with Ruth Cobb, associate for development and major gifts, at 312.751.3576 or rscobb@episcopalchicago.org.

left: Photo courtesy of Catherine Carroll



Reading the Bible in a (Post) Modern World

by C. Christopher Epting

In the last couple of years, I followed the discipline of reading the entire Bible over the course of one year. The practice of reading straight through helped me appreciate each book's own unique voice and not avoid the "uncomfortable" passages. I concluded that it would be very hard to be a fundamentalist if you have actually read the Bible!

The God often depicted in both the Old and New Testaments is a vengeful and wrathful tyrant who delights in requiring slavish worship from "His" people and in wreaking havoc on their enemies at the slightest provocation. No wonder people give up on reading the Bible, or even stop coming to church, if that is the God they think we serve.

Surely God inspired the authors of Scripture. But serious, mature Bible study can help us sort out what is all-too-human in the Bible from what God may actually be trying to teach us.

Reading Scripture in context helps us understand that the Bible is not just one book. It is a library of books that includes history and law, poetry and song, myth and fiction. Christians must read the Bible through the lens of Jesus and weigh any depiction of God against the fuller picture Jesus came to paint for us. We should also understand "progressive revelation"—the idea that the Holy Spirit still leads us further into truth, just as Jesus promised.

Our knowledge of God unfolds, sometimes unevenly, throughout the Bible. The tribal god of the ancient Israelites gives way to the God of the prophets who stands with people in their suffering and whose ultimate aim is the salvation of the whole world.

Likewise, in the Gospels, Jesus is remembered as a proponent of nonviolence and inclusion. Paul came to believe that God has opened the gates of eternal life to all people, Gentiles as well as to Jews. And the New Testament ends with the great vision in Revelation of "a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb…" (6:9)

Serious Bible readers will want to have a good, modern translation of the text with footnotes and introductions to each book that explain what kind of literature it is, how it came to be written, and how it fits into the overall biblical record. Perhaps the best translation we have of the Bible today is "The New Revised Standard Version," with notes and explanations right alongside the text.

As you read the Bible using these tools of modern scholarship, remember that in church, we often end the reading of scripture by saying "The Word of the Lord…Thanks be to God." We don't say "the words of the Lord" as though we believe the Bible was dictated to mindless scribes or lowered from heaven on a golden cord. As the Catechism says, "We call [the Holy Scriptures] the Word of God because God inspired their human authors and because God still speaks to us through the Bible." (BCP 853). ✣

Bishop's Appeal Benefits Teens

"I got a lot out of the job, like saving money, helping others, learning how to be respectful to people I work with, and getting to see the big city."

"Nothing stops a bullet like a job," says the Rev. Bonnie A. Perry, rector of All Saints' Episcopal Church in Chicago, where the diocese's CROSSwalk initiative to prevent gun violence in Chicago was founded in 2011. After hundreds of people participated in moving processions through the streets of Chicago in 2012 and 2013, CROSSwalk galvanized their energy and commitment to launch CROSSwalk to Work, a summer jobs program.

With support from the Bishop's Appeal, this summer CROSSwalk to Work helped pair 13 work-ready teens with summer jobs. The youth, all veterans of employment readiness training provided by Chicago's Youth Guidance agency, worked in places ranging from an executive search firm to a seminary library and from a café that implements restorative justice practices to a local, parish-based preschool.

Dr. Lucy Chung, director of the United Library and assistant professor of pastoral theology at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, worked with two of this summer's interns. "It has been a great pleasure to work with two high school student interns," she said. "They both are pleasant, diligent, attentive, hardworking, and eager to learn whatever jobs are presented to them. ... I feel blessed to be part of this mutually beneficial program and look forward to continuing to participate in the CROSSwalk to Work program."

In September, ten of the summer interns and their supervisors gathered at St. James Commons to celebrate the success of the program's first year. The students, all juniors and seniors from Roberto Clemente Community Academy, reflected on their varied job experiences.

"I got a lot out of the job, like saving money, helping others, learning how to be respectful to people I work with, and getting to see the big city," said Jorge Cruz, who served as an intern for the Diocese of Chicago. "I also got to have a lot of fun at work! I didn't expect it to be as fun or as challenging. Sometimes I was tired or down and it was hard, but I learned a lot and felt confident because of the feedback I got from the staff. It made me more mature, and it made me think about what my jobs will be like in the future."

"For youth living in communities with high rates of poverty, unemployment or frequent gun violence, meaningful summer jobs can create a sense of pride and hope for the future," said the Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, director of networking for the diocese. "The initiative also creates space for relationships and reconciliation in the ordinary context of the workplace, between people from different races, classes, and age groups."

Many CROSSwalk to Work interns earned wages paid by their employers or donated by Episcopalians in the diocese, but the program is only possible thanks to Bishop's Appeal funds that provide CROSSwalk's program coordination and recruitment efforts. "Contributions to the Bishop's Appeal make possible essential initiatives like CROSSwalk to Work—initiatives that allow good and dedicated people to innovate, grow and do the work that the Holy Spirit is calling us to do," said Bishop Lee.

CROSSwalk and its signature initiative, CROSSwalk to Work, aim to serve more youth in 2015. The Bishop's Appeal supports this critical work and many other programs that support healthy leaders, build vitality in congregations and work for justice in our communities. Donate online at episcopalchicago.org. ✣

above: Jorge Cruz. Photo by Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows

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