

# thrive!



**SPRING 2017**

EPISCOPAL  
DIOCESE  
OF CHICAGO  
MAGAZINE

Speaking of race to silence guns  
Where Canterbury meets Rome  
Laity lead a fast-changing church



## Letter from Bishop Lee



*"The church depends on lay people who invest themselves deeply and selflessly in their own communities, bringing their abundant gifts to bear on the challenges that confront congregations."*

As people of God, sometimes we, like the ancient Israelites and the first disciples, are called to move. We gather and then go forth, taking the gifts of strength and inspiration we find in community and sharing them with the wider world, especially with those who may be unloved, ignored or in danger. Other times we are called to plant, to cultivate, to tend one very particular garden as though its flourishing were our heart's deepest desire.

This issue is about comings and goings, and comings and stayings. It is about the gifts that our diocese offers to the wider church and the gifts we offer to one another day in and day out. It is about the ways in which our faith calls us to global ministry, and the ways in which it moves us to deepen our commitment to our own communities and communities of faith.

In April, the diocese hosted a powerful conference on the intersection of racism, poverty and gun violence. The "Unholy Trinity" conference (page 2) drew some 175 people to the Lutheran School of Theology in Hyde Park where, over three days, we studied the Bible, listened to stirring and informative speakers and learned how to organize, make allies, lobby, work with the media and to help alleviate the conditions that oppress too many people in our country.

As has become our custom, we participated in a prayerful procession to make a public witness against the violence in our streets. I am mindful of the contribution that CROSSwalk has made to the church's deepening awareness of the role it must play in diminishing the devastation caused by racism, poverty and the proliferation of guns in our communities. And I am thankful to Bishops United Against Gun Violence and the members of my staff who helped make this event a success.

The meetings of the board of the American Friends of the Anglican Centre in Rome in early May was a smaller affair

than the Unholy Trinity conference, but the gathering had global reach. It brought Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi of Burundi, the center's incoming director, to St. James Commons for talks about the center's future and the relationship of the Anglican Communion with the Roman Catholic Church. You can read an interview with Archbishop Ntahoturi on page 12.

Important as the work of national movements and international organizations may be, the church depends on the work of lay people who invest themselves deeply and selflessly in their own communities, bringing their abundant gifts to bear on the challenges that confront congregations during times of transition, periods of decline and episodes of resurrection. Remarkable lay leaders are thick on the ground in our diocese, and you can meet a few of them on page 16.

None of us is born knowing how to enliven a congregation, but fortunately the recently launched College for Congregational Development (page 28) has begun the essential work of offering training and encouragement to clergy and lay leaders who want to emulate some of the generous people you will read about in these pages.

Finally, in this issue of comings and sendings, we say goodbye to a dear friend who is now the bishop of Indianapolis. My sermon at the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, the first black woman to be elected a diocesan bishop in the history of the Episcopal Church, is on page 22. Jennifer was the diocese's director of networking for five years, and we will miss her deeply, but she is well-chosen for her new responsibilities, and I am delighted to see her moving on to do holy work.

In Christ,  
+ Jeffrey

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## *Unholy Trinity* 02

At Unholy Trinity: The Intersection of Racism, Poverty and Gun Violence, participants were challenged and inspired by Bible study, a “three-note” presentation and a public procession. The event, hosted by the diocese, was sponsored by Bishops United Against Gun Violence.

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### On our cover

“Three-note” speakers at the Unholy Trinity conference: the Rev. Julian DeShazier, Natalie Moore, the Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas.  
Photo by Bill Burlingham.

## SAVE THESE DATES

### Fierce Conversations

**September 24-27 & April 22-25, 2018**  
Nicholas Center, \$700, scholarships available

### Breakfast with the Bishop

**October 14**  
St. Andrew's, Downers Grove

### Hispanic Liturgy and Confirmation

**October 21**  
St. James Cathedral

### ECCS Ball

**November 3**  
The Ritz-Carlton Chicago, Water Tower Place

### Conversation with the Bishop

**November 12, 2-4 pm**  
St. John's, Flossmoor

### Diocesan Convention

**November 17-18**  
Westin Lombard Yorktown Center

### College for Congregational Development

**Friday & Saturday weekend intensive format**  
October 6-7, 2017  
December 8-9, 2017  
February 9-10, 2018  
April 20-21, 2018





# UNHOLY TRINITY

Racism and poverty breed gun violence.  
Can the church help stop the cycle?

By Jim Naughton



*“Since the November elections, many of us feel as though the house is on fire and we have only one bucket of water. And we are asking ourselves, where do we pour that bucket?”*

— Bishop Mark Beckwith

**O**n an April evening, a large group of Episcopalians from around the United States gathered in the chapel of a seminary in Hyde Park, and when Bishop Eugene Sutton of Maryland asked them why they had come, they said things like this:

“I am here because I have buried five parishioners in the last 11 months.” — *The Very Rev. Jonathan Clodfelter, who lives in Philadelphia*

“I am here because my heart is breaking for my city and I am convinced there is another way.”  
— *The Rev. Rosalind Hughes, who lives near Cleveland*

“I want to do more than pray for the dead every week.”  
— *The Rev. Amity Carrubba, Grace Church, Chicago*

“I am losing friends every day to gun violence here in Chicago.... I have a sign ‘Black Lives Matter’. I want to do more than just have a sign.” — *Don Williams, St. Benedict’s Church, Bolingbrook*

“I hope to God never to bury one of my campers.”  
— *The Rev. Ed Bird, director of Summer in the City program at St. James Cathedral*

Since the murders at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, in August 2012 and the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, four months later, Bishop Jeff Lee and other Episcopal bishops have worked to build an organization capable of raising their church’s voice in the struggle to reduce gun violence and treat its root causes. On April 20-22 that organization—Bishops United Against Gun Violence—drew some 175 people, 25 of them bishops, to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) for “Unholy Trinity: The Intersection of Racism, Poverty and Gun Violence.”

“Since the November elections, many of us feel as though the house is on fire and we have only one bucket of water,” Bishop Mark Beckwith of the Diocese of Newark, one of the co-conveners of Bishops United, told participants on their first night together. “And we are asking ourselves, where do we pour that bucket?”

“Political energies have tended to focus on places other



than gun violence prevention,” he said, because, with Republicans controlling Congress and the White House, the issue seemed like “a lost legislative cause.” But there is still work worth doing, Beckwith said, and the conference would help the Episcopal Church and its allies identify that work and learn better how to do it.

Over three days, participants took part in Bible studies; heard the testimony of a high school student who had been shot five times; took in edifying and at times electrifying presentations by a panel of black leaders; participated in workshops on working with organizations ranging from youth groups to evangelical Christians; staged an outdoor liturgy that included a procession through Hyde Park’s streets; shared resources and learned how to practice Bishops United’s signature attention-getting outdoor liturgical services.

Chicagoans were heavily represented in the gathering, but participants came from as far away as the Dioceses of Texas and Northern California. In all, 37 dioceses were represented, the largest visiting contingent coming from the Diocese of Massachusetts, which sent not only Bishop Alan Gates and Chancellor Edward Notis-McConarty, but also numerous young people and youthful community organizers from B-PEACE for Jorge the diocese’s anti-violence program that honors Jorge Fuentes, a youth leader who was murdered in 2012 while walking his dog.

The Rev. Liz Steinhauser, priest associate and director of youth programs at St. Stephen’s, knew Jorge, and helped organize the program that bears his name. Bishop Sutton asked her why she had come. “Because the church has something to offer,” she said.

### THE BIBLE FROM THE BOTTOM UP

After introductions, participants plunged into the Bible under the guidance of Dora Mbuwayesango, professor of Old Testament and languages and dean of students at Hood Theological Seminary in Salisbury, North Carolina. Immersing a large room full of activists itching to get to work on the issues of the day in a seldom-read passage from the second book of Kings might have seemed like a misstep, but Mbuwayesango knew from long experience what she was doing.

Contextual Bible study, she told the gathering, is a method of studying scripture that helps communities find similarities in and support from scripture passages that speak in often overlooked ways to the moral, ethical and political challenges they face in their day-to-day lives. As Gerald West of the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, who led the Bible study program at the 2008 Lambeth Conference, has said, it is a method of studying scripture from the bottom up.

Breaking into ten groups and dispersing to LSTC classrooms, participants read 2 Kings 6:24-7:2, a story about a siege that causes starvation and cannibalism. This catastrophe has happened in part because the king of Israel has failed to heed the prophecy of Elijah. The story



is easily read as a tale of a ruler’s unwillingness to check his personal desires and do what is right. But applied to the situation of violence among the poor, who are disproportionately black, participants began to ask other questions and make other observations. “Why are some mothers’ children eaten while others are not?” one group asked. Another noted that the practice of grieving mothers petitioning rulers for redress and being turned away is as familiar in present day Washington, D.C., as it was in Elijah’s time.

These insights crystallized when, after the groups had reconvened to share notes on their conversation, Shayna Watson of the Diocese



**“It was tearing me apart. But then I started to meet people I never knew who were going through the same thing. The people I met in that group are like brothers today.”**

of Central Pennsylvania asked: “Why are these mothers eating their children? Why aren’t they eating the king?”

#### **THE SOUND OF THE GUN WHEN IT IS YOU BEING SHOT**

Few members of the Diocese of Chicago work harder to heal the suffering of gun violence victims than the Rev. Carol Reese, violence prevention coordinator at John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County. Reese, who was ordained in the hospital’s chapel in 2010, asked conference organizers if she could bring a young gunshot victim

she had met during his recovery to the conference so that participants might understand that the trauma of gun violence doesn’t end when the shooting does.

On Thursday evening, then, the group reconvened to listen to Deamonte Lee, a 17-year-old high school senior who, three years earlier, had been shot five times at a playground in his neighborhood. Deamonte, who spent 17 days in the hospital and was partially paralyzed for a time, said he still remembers hearing the sound of every shot that hit him and wondering when the shooting would stop.

Recovering from multiple gunshot wounds is excruciating both physically and emotionally, he told a rapt audience that leaned forward to hear his soft voice in the expansive chapel. “Being young, I kind of overcame a lot,” he said. “I am more comfortable with myself now, I am more comfortable with my body. I had a lot of surgery done to me. I was ashamed of my own body.”

Stroger sponsors a support group for the survivors of gunshot wounds, and Deamonte said the group helped him to overcome a dangerous tendency toward isolation. “Everything was built up. It was tearing me apart,” he said. “But then I started to meet people I never knew who were going through the same thing. You hear the next person and his story is worse than yours. The people I met in that group are like brothers today.”

Still, his sense that other people are dangerous and will hurt you for no reason has been slow to dissipate. “I forced myself to be around a lot of family,” he said. “When you are around a lot of people you get a lot of love from, you get comfortable being around crowds.”

Despite everything that has happened to him, Deamonte was able to speak perhaps the first truly hopeful words of the conference. In the fall, he told participants, he would be attending Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.

#### **A CONCUBINE SEES WHAT A KING CANNOT**

Friday morning began with a dark reading from 2 Samuel 21 about famine, retributive killing and the attempted desecration of bodies. The story deals primarily with agreements between King David and the leaders of the Gibeonites, who had been persecuted by David’s predecessor Saul, but several of the study groups noted that it was a woman of small social standing, Rizpah, the late Saul’s concubine, whose actions led to a resolution of the famine and conflict. She accomplished this simply by refusing to abandon her dead sons’ bodies to the animals. The movement to curtail gun violence, several groups noted, consists in large measure of the mothers of dead children who refuse to let their sons and daughters be forgotten.

Rizpah’s witness was an example of the power of public lament, said the Rev. Noah Van Niel of St. John’s Church in Hingham, Massachusetts, and of “asking for compassion in the hearts of those we want to stop violence.”









Natalie Moore (black jacket), the Rev. Julian DeShazier (patterned shirt) and the Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas (gray suit) brought a common message to the “three-note” panel: We can’t approach issues like gun violence as though there is something wrong with victimized communities. The roots of the problem are structural and solutions must be, too.



“Given the violent culture of poverty ... what should surprise us most is the number of black persons that in fact survive and thrive with dignity in a situation that intends their death, not the abundant life which God promises us all.”

#### “THE WHITE CHURCH NEEDS TO LOOK INWARD”

Contextual Bible study unfolds in three stages: See. Judge. Act. The conference’s “three-note” address followed a similar arc.

First, Natalie Moore, a reporter for WBEZ, Chicago’s National Public Radio affiliate, spoke about the structural problems that segregation had wrought in Chicago’s poorest neighborhoods, and how those problems fed violence in those neighborhoods.

Then the Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas, author of “Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God,” traced the roots of current day violence to old but durable prejudices: white supremacy and anti-black ideology.

Finally, the Rev. Julian DeShazier, a hip-hop artist who performs as J.Kwest, asked why mainline churches had become so politically timid and suggested ways in which they could become more involved.

“How many of you have heard the phrase Chi-raq?” Moore asked the gathering. Some hands went up. She ticked off the titles of songs by Nicki Minaj and Lil Durk and the movie by Spike Lee. But for all its notoriety in pop culture, in per capita terms, Chicago was not among the 15 most violent cities in the country. Yet, whether it was because it was former president Barack Obama’s hometown, or because it was the third most-populous city in the country, Chicago had become the city politicians pointed to when they wanted to talk about gun violence.

This prominence is not necessarily helpful. “When you talk about cities as war zones,” Moore said, “it is young black men who are

[portrayed as] the enemy.”

Violence in Chicago, she said, grows from distinctively American roots. In her book, “The South Side: A Portrait of Chicago and American Segregation,” she explores the ways in which racial segregation begat poor housing, poor schools, poor public services, a lack of economic opportunity and violence. “If you really want to compare Chicago to the Middle East,” she said, “compare the amount of federal dollars spent in each place.”

Entrenched problems require structural solutions, Moore said. “You aren’t going to mentor your way out of this.” But more comprehensive solutions seemed unlikely to be tried. “Talking about sending in the National Guard is easier than dealing with structural racism,” she said, referring to one of President Donald Trump’s tweets about the city and its problems.

Douglas, who was recently named the dean of Episcopal Divinity School’s program at Union Theological Seminary in New York, found the roots of Chicago’s problem in two interlocking ideologies, anti-blackness and the Anglo-Saxon exceptionalism that evolved into American exceptionalism.

“It is about more than a chauvinistic repulsion to skin color,” she said. “It is a narrative that negates the very humanity of a people; therefore, it is inherently violent. Any ideology or system of thought that objectifies another human being must be understood as violent. Furthermore ... such a system of thought initiates a cycle of violence in which the objectified being, in this instance black bodies, become entrapped.”



Douglas spoke of claims sometimes voiced by critics of gun prevention initiatives and of the Black Lives Matter movement that black-on-black crime is the issue that most needs to be addressed. “This observation often reflects a facile response to what is going on with no awareness that this violence is the violence that violence has created. Indeed, given the violent culture of poverty, which is most properly understood as a culture of death (with its realities of lack of decent jobs, housing, educational and recreational opportunities), a culture in which a disproportionate number of black persons—especially the young—are trapped, we should not be surprised at the high rate of gun violence and hence black-on-black gun homicides. What should surprise us most is the number of black persons that in fact survive and thrive with dignity in a situation that intends their death, not the abundant life which God promises us all.”

DeShazier, senior minister of University Church in Chicago, said the church in recent years has withdrawn from important but divisive political struggles. “Churches have become think tanks and not centers of action,” he said. “Jesus continually chose to confront death. We must risk our privilege to confront death. We like to talk about stuff. We must go from talking about death to confronting it.”

His presentation was punctuated by three hip-hop pieces of his own composition, and included a joking lamentation about his recent album, *Lemonade*, which was released shortly before Beyoncé released her album of the same name, swamping his small boat with a tsunami of publicity.

DeShazier traced the efforts of local community activists, including himself, to get a trauma center built on the south side of Chicago, where most of the city’s traumatic violence occurs. In the process, he said, participants learned the importance of working in solidarity with neighborhood leaders, forming alliances with existing groups, and ministering “with” and not “to” their communities. “Activists value churches’ moral language but despise our patriarchal structures,” he said.

The campaign for the trauma center required everyone involved to take risks. DeShazier himself had to confront an institution that paid him to teach some classes. But in the end the campaigners were successful.

“In 2018, a trauma center will be built three blocks from here. It was risky and costly to fight for it. But it was right.”

After their addresses, the three-noters participated

in a panel moderated by the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the Episcopal Church’s House of Deputies. Moore and DeShazier stressed the importance of churches collaborating with groups already active on the key issues in their communities and behaving “like allies and accomplices, not like saviors.” Douglas urged white Christians to confront the problem of racism within the white church.

“The white church needs to look inward,” she said. “White people who get it need to help other white people who don’t.”

Why, she asked, is it taking the white church so long to “get it” regarding race. “This isn’t a new conversation.”

## HANDS ON

On Friday afternoon, the conference moved from inspiring rhetoric to hands-on instruction with 10 workshops, each offered twice. Offerings included

- a presentation on working with the Black Lives Matters movement by Damon A. Williams, co-chair of Black Youth Project 100’s Chicago chapter and co-founder and co-director of the Let Us Breathe Collective.
- a workshop on working with evangelical Christians, led by the Rev. Rob Schenck and Lucy McBath. Schenck is an evangelical minister who has had a change of heart on gun issues and McBath, faith and outreach leader with Everytown, lost her son Jordan Davis when he was shot to death in Jacksonville, Florida, during an argument over loud music. They are the subject of Abigail E. Disney’s documentary “The Armor of Light.”
- a workshop on working with communities in the aftermath of mass shootings by the Rev. Scott Russell. Now a chaplain at Rutgers University, Russell was chaplain at Virginia Tech in April 2007 when a student took the lives of 28 fellow students and four professors before killing himself.
- a workshop by the B-PEACE for Jorge contingent on working with young people.

Participants interested in the nuts and bolts of legislative advocacy took advantage of a workshop offered by the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. And Canticule Communications offered a workshop on working with the media.

## PRAYING IN YOUR OUTSIDE VOICE

On Friday evening, the group took to the streets of Hyde Park beginning on the steps of the Lutheran



*“The white church needs to look inward. White people who get it need to help other white people who don’t.”*

— the Rev. Canon  
Kelly Brown Douglas

School of Theology, where Bishop Ed Konieczny of Oklahoma spoke about coming of age in a community divided by racial prejudice and called for “a new more inclusive narrative” about who “belongs.” About 75 strong, the group then set off behind a banner carried by five bishops for the Midway Plaisance, a trip of about two-thirds of a mile. Some carried wooden crosses, some sang, and some joined Sutton in an improvised call and response. On the Midway they heard the Rev. Michael Pfleger, the Catholic priest who is perhaps the most visible anti-gun violence activist in the city, urge them to turn the church into a campaign to save young people from the ravages of gun violence.

Back at the LSTC, the Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, the diocese’s former director of networking who would be consecrated on the following weekend as the bishop of Indianapolis, implored the church to give up its privileged place and accept that ending the violence in Chicago neighborhoods was not the responsibility only of those who lived there.

As though to echo her theme, the next morning’s Bible study focused on the story of the Good Samaritan, and although the reading was a familiar one, participants nonetheless found new meanings. In helping the man who had been beaten on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, the Samaritan was risking his physical safety, and that by stopping at the inn where the man was staying on his way home, he was “staying in relationship,” as Beckwith put it. “Is this what anti-gun violence advocates are called to do?” he asked.

Later that morning, Bishop Lee, Dent Davidson, the diocese’s associate for arts and liturgy, and Sandra Montes, a lay musician from the Diocese of Texas, spoke about the importance of taking the church’s liturgy outside of church walls to a country that hungers for ritual but mistrusts institutional religion. The diocese had done so with great success when it helped pioneer Ashes to Go and when it brought thousands into the street to express their rage and concern over gun violence with the two Lenten processions called CROSSwalk.

In scripture and musical repertoire of the church, “you have the gifts you need to make an effective public witness,” Davidson told the gathering.

“Reclaim your nerve around taking liturgy to the street,” Lee said. “Do not be satisfied with letting people hide inside the church.”

When the session was over, the conference closed as it had opened with responses from around the wide chapel.

“I have acquired some courage here that I didn’t have when I got here,” one woman said.

“I have learned that the issues we are facing are deeply, deeply rooted in American life, but that our network is strong,” said the Rev. Edwin Johnson, priest-in-charge at St. Mary’s Church in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

And then, before participants returned to the places where they would resume their work against the unholy trinity, Bishops Ian Douglas of Connecticut and Audrey Scanlan of Central Pennsylvania led them in a prayer “for all who struggle to discern what is right in the face of powerful political forces.” ✠

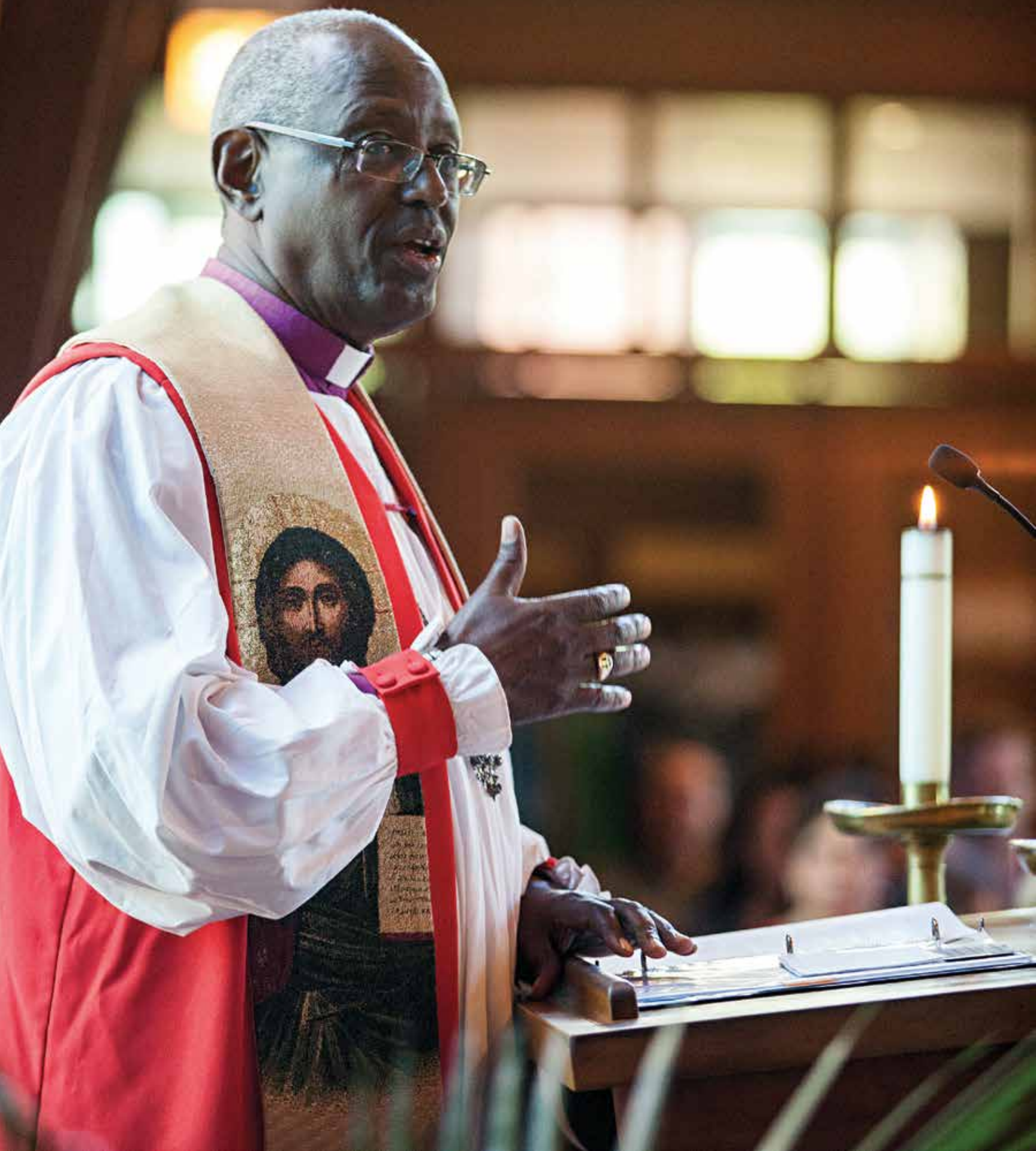






above: Scenes from the march including a blessing by Bishop Eugene Sutton and a prayer led by the Rev. Edwin Johnson. Photos by Bill Burlingham 11







# Portfolio For Peace



*Ntahoturi seeks to strengthen  
Anglican-Catholic collaboration*



*“When the pope and the archbishop of Canterbury work together, it is a powerful witness for peace and justice.”*

[ ARCHBISHOP BERNARD NTAHOTURI ]

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his April, Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi, the recently retired primate of the Anglican Church of Burundi, was appointed the next director of the Anglican Centre in Rome. He will succeed Archbishop David Moxon of New Zealand in September. The center’s board of directors and the American Friends of the Anglican Centre in Rome met recently at the Nicholas Center, and after the meeting, Archbishop Ntahoturi spoke with Jim Naughton.

**JN:** I am not sure most Episcopalians are familiar with the center. What do you say to people who are curious about its work?

**AN:** The story of the center begins in 1966 when the archbishop of Canterbury, then Michael Ramsey, met the pope, Paul VI, and that was the beginning of the close relationship between these two branches of the Christian church. As our vision says, we are there to promote Christian unity in a divided world in addressing issues of peace and justice and hospitality.

As far as the work of the center, first, we provide a presence. We encourage sharing the challenges that the Christian churches are facing now. Second, we provide education, not only for those who come to Rome, but also for our constituencies within the Anglican Communion. Thirdly, we encourage initiatives and exchange of ideas. This is also facilitated through the two inter-Anglican commissions with the Roman Catholic Church, that is ARCIC (the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission) and IARCUM (the International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission).

ARCIC mainly analyzes and discusses our theological commonalities and differences to see whether there can be any convergence, and IARCUM is really a commission for bishops—Catholic and Anglican—to look at areas of working together so that we have a common witness.

It is important for people to know that the Anglican Centre in Rome is not a department of the Anglican Communion Office. It is an independent charity. We hope that we have friends who will see that this is a channel for Anglicans and Episcopalians to work together, and then also witness to other churches that we can walk and work together as we decided in the last Primates’ Meeting in Canterbury.



**JN:** You come to this work after a long career in Burundi. How do your experiences inform this ecumenical work?

**AN:** Anglicans and Roman Catholics are the two major denominations in Africa. Christianity came with colonialism, yes, but it has also contributed a lot to the transformation of our communities. So if we work together in the conflicted contexts that you read about in African countries, our working together will continue giving hope to our young people and giving hope to our churches. We walk together so that real transformation in our communities may take place, and we can put a face on Africa and our nations that is different than the face that you read in the papers.

When the pope and the archbishop of Canterbury work together, it is a powerful witness for peace and justice. And, coming from Africa, I would say if they can be interested in contributing to peace in my Great Lakes Region of Africa—Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and we also have conflict in Sudan, South Sudan—I feel that would be a strong witness from my religion Christianity, which is a religion of love and peace.

**JN:** Have you found encouragement in any of their previous actions?

**AN:** The statement on human trafficking that was signed by the pope, the archbishop of Canterbury and the other major church leaders two years ago is a sign of their willingness to work together. I think you can build on that. I am encouraged by the attitudes of the two church leaders. The archbishop of Canterbury is very willing to work with all people of good will, and Pope Francis is open to all other initiatives that can bring peace and reconciliation among humanity.

**JN:** What role do you see for the Episcopal Church in the work of the center?

**AN:** I know the Episcopal Church and its strengths and possibilities and capacities. So we would like to see the Episcopal Church get more involved and use the gifts that they have, the gifts of human resources, the gifts of other resources that God has given them, so that the Anglican and Episcopal presence in Rome can really be supported and its mission be effective. We already have the American Friends of the Anglican Centre in Rome, and I hope that that chapter will really grow.

**JN:** Are you concerned that tensions within the Anglican Communion, or tensions with the Roman Catholic Church over issues such as women's ordination might undermine the center's work?

**AN:** Issues will always be there in any organization in any human society. For me, I feel that the only place where we shall not have differences and issues is when we get to heaven. So I believe that those questions within the Anglican Communion between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church and others will continue, but what is important to me is, "Are we ready, are we willing, to sit and discuss and accept that in spite of those issues we can continue witnessing to the world?" When we talk about unity, I don't think we will be talking about an organic unity—that we be under the same umbrella—but the unity that Jesus Christ prayed for, and that I think we should be encouraging now. It is a unity of saying "Can we join hands and then witness to the world in action and also through our faith?"

**JN:** How have you enjoyed your visit in Chicago?

**AN:** This is my first time in Chicago and my first time at the Nicholas Center. It's wonderful. I like the walking and the jogging along the lake.

Bishop Lee was wonderful and welcomed us in a wonderful way. His hospitality was beyond our expectations. Then on Sunday we went to different parishes and the echoes I got from those who went to different parishes, and at the one I went to, was that people would like to know more. People welcomed us, and listened to our talk and our preaching. That's a good sign that they want to continue to explore more of how to help and support the center. So for me, I am leaving Chicago with a positive note, saying yes, America, the Episcopal Church, can contribute effectively and would like to see the circle of friends of the center growing and being more effective and having a place in the decisions and the deliberations of the center.

**JN:** Is there anything I haven't asked about that you would like readers to know?

**AN:** I want to say is that the journey is long, but the journey is enjoyed when you walk together with other people and not necessarily those who think like you and those who work and like and look like you, but those who are different. If you look at the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ, they were really different. So that's how I see the denominations and the different churches. Let's walk together with the mission that God has given us, joining God at work, because we are not the ones initiating but we are really learning what God is doing in the world. And then He calls us to be his partners. ✚





# Part Nurture, Part Necessity

Across the diocese, lay leadership  
is not just allowed, but encouraged

By Lu Stanton León



*"In many ways, going through the Quincy schism experience and eventual reunification with Chicago has been empowering for lay people in our parish."*

— Tobyn Leigh

Sometimes quietly, sometimes reluctantly but most often with great joy, lay leaders are coming to the fore in parishes across the Diocese of Chicago, sharing their gifts for ministry and building the church, not just in times of trouble or transition, but day-in, day-out.

For some—including churches that can't afford a priest and parishes whose clergy left the Episcopal Church—it is a case of lay leadership or no leadership. In churches searching for a new rector, it is the lay leaders who do the strategic planning to chart the congregation's course. In churches that are humming along, it is the mutual ministry of laity and clergy that keep the congregation strong.

Lay leaders in the former Diocese of Quincy faced challenging circumstances after their bishop, most of their priests and about 60 percent of the laity left the Episcopal Church in 2008 over issues including the moral legitimacy of same-sex relationships. The nine remaining congregations reunited with the Diocese of Chicago in 2013. In the turmoil's aftermath, those

loyal Episcopalians found strength and courage they didn't know they had.

"In many ways, going through the Quincy schism experience and eventual reunification with Chicago has been empowering for lay people in our parish," says Tobyn Leigh, vestry member and treasurer of Grace Episcopal Church in Galesburg.

"Discovering that lay ministry is an actual real thing available to us all, finding that the laity has a recognized voice within the Episcopal Church—not just 'allowed' but encouraged—that's really life-changing. Much of the development, the rising up if you will, of lay leadership in our parish has come out of, first, necessity, and then the fully committed nurturing from the Diocese of Chicago."

Leigh was attending St. George's Episcopal Church in Macomb when the schism occurred. When her husband got a job at a college in Galesburg, she felt she was needed at Grace. She was a member of the standing committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Quincy from 2009 until it reunified with the Diocese of Chicago in 2013.



“People tend to put our energy into endeavors where our voice is heard and we can make an impact, where we are called to challenge ourselves to be shepherds instead of sheep.”

“In talking to people who now make up Grace, several of them have remarked that they never thought of themselves as lay leaders,” Leigh says. “They would go and worship and do their thing and come home and weren’t really active in leadership. Part of that was the powers-that-be wanted people in power who wouldn’t raise any voices of dissent.”

As is the case with many parishes, Grace Episcopal has no full-time clergy. The congregation also has no church building. From the summer of 2009 until this Easter, the congregation met in the Central Congregational Church on the square in Galesburg. In April, the parish signed a lease on a suite at the Bondi Building on Main Street, which is the new church home to the nearly 20 congregants.

Leigh says everyone considers themselves lay leaders at Grace, where members of four families lead all music ministry and lay worship services. They also serve as lay Eucharistic ministers, provide legal, administrative and fiduciary services, head the altar guild and other liturgical planning, and head outreach ministries.

“It’s really just six adults who are consistent,” Leigh says. “We are the church, we are the congregation, and we do it all.”

Grace currently operates as a vestry-of-the-whole, meaning that all parish members have voice and vote at vestry meetings, while four serve as elected officers.

“We learned that lay people could do morning prayer,” Leigh says. “There are a lot of things we can do on our own. It was empowering. The people began, as they learned what they could do, to rise up. In the beginning there was a lot of, ‘We’re afraid we’re going to do

something wrong.’ I remember the first time I ever served on the altar guild, there was this woman who would follow me around and move everything I touched a quarter of an inch. When you have a mom and pop church, you get that sort of thing.

“But when that’s all you’ve known, that there’s only one right way, and if you don’t do it, you’re in some kind of spiritual danger, that’s what happens. People had to get over that. When I got to go to General Convention and to CREDO, I saw that there are all kinds of ways to do things in the rubric of the Book of Common Prayer. There are any number of enriching, cool things that you can do.”

Two years ago the people of Grace found the clerical presence they wanted in the Rev. Dr. Joyce Beaulieu, who has family land not far from Galesburg.

“She said she would be supply if we needed her,” Leigh says. “It had become clear to us that, in order to grow, we had to have consistent clergy presence as well as a place to meet. We knew there were things we needed that we couldn’t provide ourselves. We needed some clerical pastoring. We needed someone who was actually licensed to do a Eucharist. We needed a more consistent presence.”

As Grace’s part-time interim rector, Beaulieu travels 50 miles from her farm in Henderson County most Sundays and for special services and occasions.

“She loves small congregational development, which is perfect for us,” Leigh says. “We feel really blessed and fortunate that she is part of our congregational family.”

+ + +



Kathleen Leson, a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Peoria, also has witnessed firsthand the strength and critical importance of lay leadership in her parish following the break with the former Diocese of Quincy.

"While my parish had the skills for lay leadership before the schism, I would say those skills were latent," Leson says. "The former diocese was top-down, clergy-driven. There were definitely some laity in leadership positions, but many, like me, did not lend our skills until it was necessary for survival. People tend to put our energy into endeavors where our voice is heard and we can make an impact, where we are called to challenge ourselves to be shepherds instead of sheep.

"I witnessed many individuals who, like myself, were reluctant leaders, finding their voices and standing up to speak out. This was not an easy thing to do when they were speaking out against their bishop and many priests."

Leson has learned and grown from the experience.

"I have witnessed people's amazing commitment to support and work for a cause that speaks to their heart," she says. "As I look back, I am reminded of something my father told my family at the time of my mother's death after suffering from cancer. He said; 'I would not wish the suffering on anyone. But I would not have missed the experience of the outpouring of support from family and friends for anything.'

"If I were to write a list of life accomplishments that I take pride in," Leson says, "stepping up to leadership during this successful transition is at the top of the list."

One of the insights gained from her experience as a lay leader is the importance of "the ask."

"When we voted to merge with the Diocese of Chicago, our bishops—Bishop (John) Buchanan and Bishop (Jeff) Lee—asked several of us who were involved in the transition to get involved in the new diocese. It was an important 'ask' to merge us in mind and spirit. The 'ask' is something I have learned leaders must not hesitate to do. We all must feel needed. In recent years after the merger, I have observed new outreach projects being started as the parish found new life. I organized one myself and discovered that people with a personal connection to a project readily took leadership roles. Part of their willingness was the personal passion, but I think many also were energized to join in opening our doors to the greater community, which was part of the healing phase after loss and isolation."

Lay leadership has continued to be a source of strength at St. Paul's, which called the Revs. Jenny Replogle and Jonathan Thomas, a married couple, as co-rectors in 2015.

"The Chicago diocesan staff offered resources to guide my parish through a new transition two years ago when the priest who led us through the schism and reunification retired," Leson says. "Lay leadership played an even stronger role during this transition."

Replogle and Thomas are in their 30s. "Both youth in senior clergy and a spousal work team were new paths that our parish had never traveled," Leson says. "I believe we developed strength for the journey through our traumatic transition that allowed us to take new risks and move forward with more flexibility.

"My parish is growing under our new clergy leadership with a revitalized music program and new members, including younger families, who see a parish that offers them outreach and leadership opportunities that are not evident in other churches they have visited. The new life here is an inspiration for me to continue in church leadership, despite obstacles. I am personally more resilient than I used to be and more willing to take risks with God's and my community's help."

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At Trinity Episcopal Church, Wheaton, senior warden Alison Bettisworth witnessed the empowerment of lay leadership when, during its search for a new rector, the parish deliberately sought to move from being priest-centric to being ministry-centric with lay leadership in the forefront. The congregation had come to understand itself as priest-centric based on the results of the Church Assessment Tool (CAT) survey done to prepare a parish profile as part of the search process.

"When it's priest-centric, people don't think they can come forward with ideas," Bettisworth says. "There's always that fear of being rejected. In a lot of places, it's a perception not a reality. It's about empowerment. People would come up with ideas and want to do something, but the priest would want to be able to approve what was going on. Not that the priest shouldn't have oversight, but I think people shied away from taking the initiative. When there is more lay leadership, people feel empowered to move forward and do things that are appropriate."

The search for a new rector demanded leadership from the laity.

"Going through a transition interim process requires the congregation and lay leaders to change into a mode where they are more self-sufficient," Bettisworth says. "The interim priest is there to help facilitate the change and to ensure that the interim period goes smoothly, but it is up to the wardens and vestry to be visible and have a united front and a non-anxious presence when it comes to messaging to the parish.

"As the search committee was formed and the vestry was considering how we were going to move forward, it was recognized that we were a priest-centric parish, and ... we talked about growth and what that would look like. It was evident whether growth was to be in numbers attending services or in the programs and services that we supported, that this could not be accomplished if we continued to be a priest-centric parish. We had to grow lay leaders, and this meant a focused effort on mentoring and coaching.

"We started by putting together a plan where we had vestry members greet at each of the services. It provided them with visibility and allowed them to ask how things were going as people were coming in for the service. They also stayed in the sanctuary after the service in case anyone wanted to talk with them in more detail. It seems like a small thing, but being deliberate about how things were approached and having consistent answers during each phase of the search process showed the parish the strength of the leadership and also that things were changing, but there was still good continuity."

Two years ago, the Rev. Kevin Caruso was called as Trinity's rector,

and “he brought with him an energy of youth and excitement,” Bettisworth says. “He had some definite ideas for helping Trinity become a parish that had strong lay leadership.”

Trinity enrolled in the diocesan Thrive program, a congregational development initiative that ran from 2012-2016, which encouraged parishioners to examine what their call may be within the parish.

“The program provided us with some tools and ideas to light some of the dampened fires that were smoldering,” Bettisworth says. “As with many parishes, we had a number of people in leadership roles who were becoming burned out or were just ready to retire from their ministry role. As we embarked on Thrive, people who felt they had nothing more to give found themselves drawn with new energy to work in ministry.”

Parishioners found their passions and vocations, Bettisworth says. Some went to work examining ways to make the church buildings more welcoming and easier to navigate. Others took part in a pilot of the College for Congregational Development, a new diocesan program (see page 28). One parishioner spearheaded a Kids Club and night out for parents, while another started a prayer group and another a series of presentations opened to the community under the umbrella of Conversations that Matter. One parishioner showed an interest in being more involved in Sunday worship but was not sure what role he could play. After discussions with the deacon and priest, he found himself drawn to giving sermons, so on occasional Sundays he shares his thoughts on the day’s readings.

“With each of these ideas, Rev. Caruso listened, counseled, attended, shared some thoughts, but in his words, he ‘gets out of the way,’ allowing lay leaders to lead with counsel, not direction. He empowers them to take ownership.”

Like Leson, Bettisworth emphasizes the importance of ‘the ask,’ saying one of the first steps to broadening the base of lay leadership is simply asking people to participate. But it is just as important, she says, to allow people to say no but ask if they could be approached again for another opportunity.

“There are people who want to worship, and they want to be there with the congregation family, but they are at a point in their life and faith journey where they’re not ready to step into a leadership role, and that’s okay,” Bettisworth says. “But it is important to invite them to participate. You plant the seed and they can think about it and consider where God may be calling them to serve.”

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If part of lay leadership is acting as God’s partner to increase love and justice in the world, Toni Daniels, a member at St. Paul & the Redeemer in Chicago, has been a lay leader for most of her life.

Born in Mississippi some 63 years ago, she contracted polio at the age of three and spent time in and out of hospitals.

“Health care for African Americans wasn’t that great in Mississippi at the time,” Daniels says. Her father died soon after she was diagnosed, and she, her brother and her mother moved to Los Angeles.

“I spent so much time at the orthopedic hospital that I really got to



know the staff,” Daniels recalls. “When there was a new kid coming in or facing surgery, they’d say, ‘Toni, they’re scared. Go down and talk to them.’ And I would. I didn’t think much about it.”

But the people who met her thought a lot about the visits from this little girl. So much so that her visits became the subject of a chapter, “Angels Never Say Hello,” in “A Second Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul,” a book published in 1994.

“It was a natural thing for me to do,” she says of her visits to help other children. “My original plan was to be a doctor. I worked really hard to get to medical school. It just wasn’t working out. I’ve had a lot of big disappointments in my life, but the thing that I’ve learned is that God loves me so much that God always had a better plan for me, and I just have to be open to the plan. I just have to know that it’s not going to be my way, it’s going to be a better way.”

She began volunteering at the hospital when she was 12 and was the recipient of an award for more than 1,000 hours of volunteer service at the UCLA Medical Center. As a teenager, she was a volunteer member of the speakers bureau for the March of Dimes.

Daniels’s work history as a lay leader in the church is long and varied. She has worked as director of youth ministries for the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, as diocesan youth coordinator for the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey, as youth coordinator for Province II of the Episcopal Church, and in numerous positions at General Theological Seminary, including director of admissions and executive director of enrollment and management. In New York City she also worked as director of leadership and learning programs for the Episcopal Church





“Wherever your skills lie, compare them with the gifts of the spirit to see where you can best serve God’s community. It will keep being a gift to you and a gift to your community.”

Foundation and at the Episcopal Church Center as director of the partnership center and co-director of the mission department.

In Chicago, Daniels has worked as director for operations of the global missions unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She is a member of the Diocesan Commission on Ministry, is on the diaconal leadership team and does Bishop Anderson House training for volunteer spiritual visitors.

She is nearing completion of her first semester of a master’s degree program in pastoral care, and she sings in the choir at St. Paul & the Redeemer.

When she moved to Chicago, Daniels found that she knew most of the clergy at the church from her work at General Seminary. It seemed preordained. “I had interviewed the rector (Peter C. Lane) and Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, who was there at the time, and another priest. And the director of music had been in one of my youth groups. I love to sing, and the choir loft was wheelchair accessible. And it was racially mixed and open to various family structures.”

While Daniels says her role at the parish doesn’t have “a name attached to it,” among her many contributions to the congregation, she and another parishioner were instrumental in starting a healing ministry at the church.

“We say to people, you and your talents are what are going to make a difference,” Daniels says. “We pass everything by Peter, but we don’t expect Peter to do everything. What I’ve learned is if I go to Peter with something, he says, ‘Do you have some thoughts about how that will work or what that looks like?’”

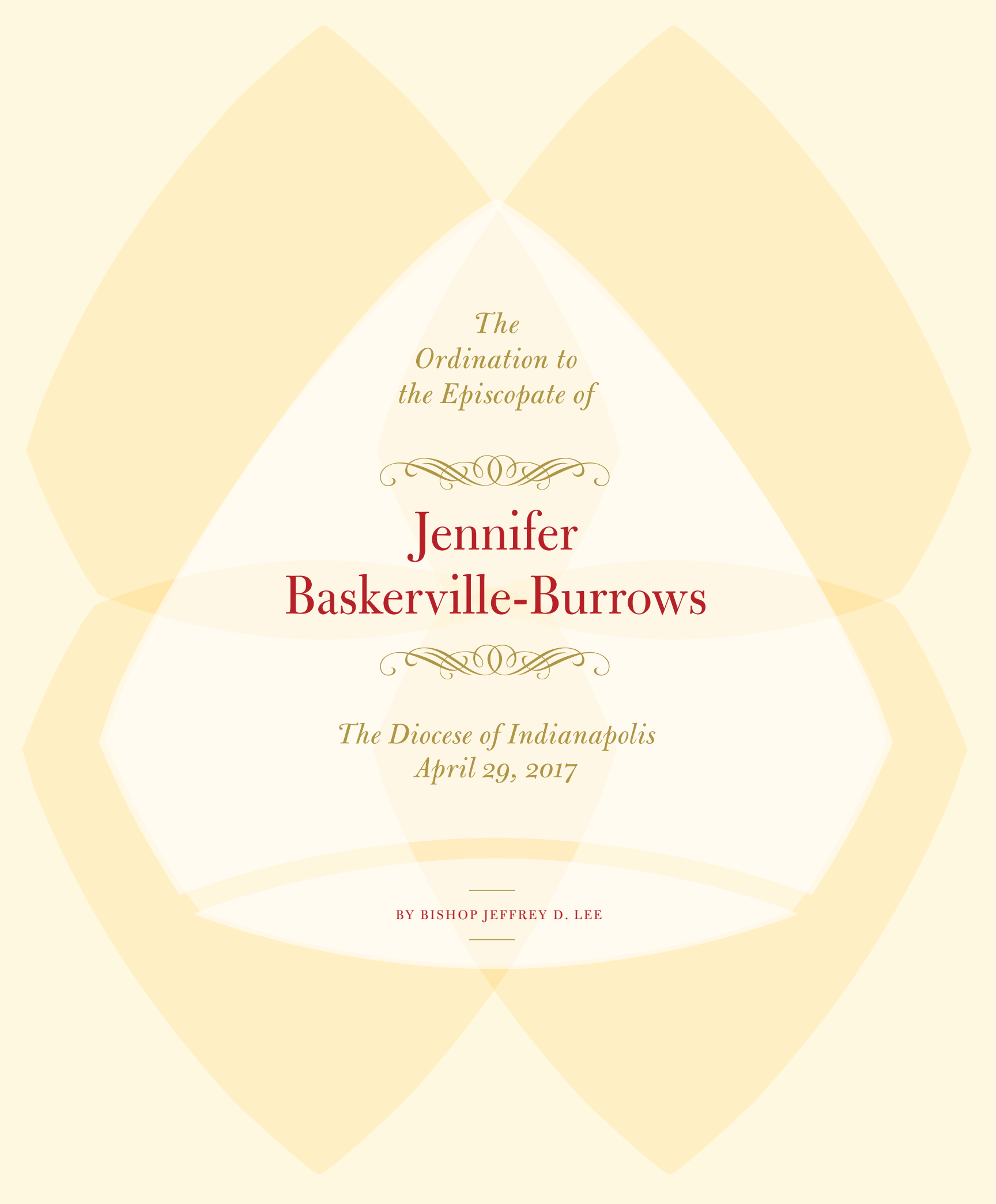
Daniels says she has found not all rectors are supportive of a strong laity.

“I think some rectors are afraid of lay leadership,” she says. “If you are a professional finance person, they love you. If you are a professional marketing person, they love you. If you’re on the business end, they are pretty excited. Where they are not excited is if you try to do anything Jesus-related. It makes them a little bit nervous. At our church, that’s not the case at all. We have all kinds of people leading Bible studies and all kinds of things. I think our church is exceptionally open to lay leadership.”

Daniels says St. Paul & the Redeemer has a history of strong lay leadership. When parishioners think about what gifts they might share with the church, Daniels advises, “Go with what sounds crazy. Because one thing I know about being a Christian is that it is all radical and all countercultural. The crazier it sounds to me, the more I think, ‘Oh, that must be from God!’”

And there’s a lot, she says, that every person can do.

“Praying with people is huge, huge, huge,” Daniels says, “or maybe your gift is hospitality. Wherever your skills lie, compare them with the gifts of the spirit to see where you can best serve God’s community. It will keep being a gift to you and a gift to your community. All you have to do is be open to options. Sometimes people come to church wanting to rest and be restored, and there’s nothing wrong with that. You let them rest.” ✝



*The  
Ordination to  
the Episcopate of*



**Jennifer  
Baskerville-Burrows**



*The Diocese of Indianapolis  
April 29, 2017*

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BY BISHOP JEFFREY D. LEE

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# *She Will Lead with Grace*

**I**n the Fall of 1990 my family and I moved to Fishers, Indiana—is Holy Family in the house? We invited a dozen or so people to join us in our living room and we started a church together. We outgrew the living room pretty quickly and started moving around in that fast-growing suburb. There weren't a lot of appropriate meeting places to choose from—a community room in a bank branch, the gymnasium of the middle school and then a partially built-out commercial space in a new strip mall. Over the years I have delighted in watching from a distance Holy Family Church grow and thrive into the parish community it is today. About a year into its young life I had a conversation with a woman who was serving as one of the wardens of the baby church, a conversation I have not forgotten. She and her family were some of the first pioneers to join in planting Holy Family. She and I were meeting once, as we did often, to strategize about growing the church, plan an event, follow up with folks who had expressed interest in becoming part of the community—the work of building up that new church was exciting and rewarding and exhausting. Right in the middle of our strategy session I remember my warden putting down her manila file folder, filled with papers, she looked at me and she said, “You know something? I get it. This evangelism thing is about 80% Emily Post. It's mostly about hospitality. Just practice the way you'd want to invite and welcome guests into your home.”

I think she was right. Hospitality is a precious word to me. When Jennifer was in the first stages of discernment with the People of God in this diocese, I said to her, “Be prepared. Hoosier hospitality is a real thing.” Often with potato chips on top —Hoosier hospitality is a real thing—that it is. And while the practical details of good hospitality may be a matter of plain old common sense, when hospitality is exercised in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, it takes on a profound significance. I believe it becomes a kind of sacrament itself.

Now with apologies to those of you who are not Episcopalians, I ask your indulgence for a minute. There are surely enough Episcopalians in this room to help me with the definition of a sacrament. Let's go: **a sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.** We may not be able to quote chapters and verses of bible passages, but by golly we know our catechism.

Sacraments are effective signs. They effect, they cause to be by signifying and in fact participating in the realities to which they point. Washing in water in the name of the Trinity makes us living limbs and members of the dying and rising Body of Christ. The bread and wine of the Eucharist remake us into that body again and again and again. As one theologian I know puts it: sacraments do not make true, sacraments make real. We do not baptize little babies (or anyone else for that matter) so that God will love them. God already loves them. We wash them to bring them into a community that begins to make God's infinite love real in their lives—touchable, tastable, experienceable. God's incomprehensible love and acceptance of us in Christ. The Divine Hospitality.

This is really the heart of Jesus' prayer we've heard in

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*Bishop Jeffrey Lee delivered this sermon at the ordination and consecration of the Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows as bishop of Indianapolis on April 29 at Clowes Hall on the campus of Butler University.*



the gospel today. It's sometimes called the High Priestly Prayer. Jesus prays for his friends at table, at the end of the Last Supper. He prays that they, that we will be nourished with eternal life, real life so that we might become such food for the world, for those who do not yet know God's love and mercy, for those who cannot imagine such a thing could be true for them. Jesus prays all this so that we might be one, one living bread, one body, just as Jesus and the Father are one, and this for the sake of the world. And today what could be more urgent than an effective sign of unity in this divided, suicidal world? What could we possibly need more than a church which can deal with its own divisions, its cherished theological arguments, its racism, its classism, its homophobia, its mistrustfulness—a church that can tell the truth about all of those things and practice laying them all aside and begin to make real what is already true in the heart of God. We need a church that can be a fierce and tender

sacrament of God's profligate love. That's the gospel, isn't it?

The Christian life, I believe, is one long process of wanting to live like 'this,' [open hands] not like 'this' [closed hands]. God, this is the way the world does it—to live like this knowing full well that someone might come along and nail us to the cross too, but living out of the conviction that this is the only way to real life.

That God will not be satisfied until everyone, everyone, every man, woman and child who lives or dies has an honored place at the table of God's delight and knows it. There is a place in God's heart with your name on it and mine that no one else can fill.

Your new bishop is well equipped to be a sacramental sign herself of all this for the church. She knows a thing or two about setting the table for a feast. We can certainly check that one off on the list in First Timothy: above reproach, gentle, well-ordered family, temperate,



*“Indianapolis, you have called a strong, loving and wise pastor to be your bishop. She will love you, challenge you, tell you the truth as she sees it and invite you to tell it as you do.”*

sensible, an apt teacher, respectful child, hospitable. Bingo. You have discovered, haven't you, that Jennifer is a foodie? Of the first order let me add. She knows her artisanal, wood-oven-baked, 30-year-old-sourdough-cultured bread from her grass-fed, cow's-milk, natural-rennet, washed-rind cheese. I happen to know this from experience. Over more than a couple of lunch times in Chicago we liked to head over to our nearby Italian food megastore, Eataly—I gotta tell you, you haven't lived until you've been in the cheese department with Jennifer. She just gets all gaga.

Yep, Jennifer is a mature practitioner of wonderful hospitality. And not just when it comes to beautifully prepared food. She sets a welcome table wherever she goes. In meetings with committees and vestries, when she engages issues of justice and reconciliation, in one-on-ones with clergy and lay leaders, in front of the press, with major donors and folks on the margins. I've watched it again and again, this woman of God is an agent of God's own hospitality—in her presence you get an experience of lavish welcome, generously hospitable space to be who you are and more than you might imagine that you are. It's the old line—God loves us just the way we are and loves us way too much to leave us that way.

She exudes hospitality—she can't help herself. (Sort of the way she can't help letting her thoughts play all across her face—seriously, do not let your new bishop play poker. It's just not going to work.)

Indianapolis, you have called a strong, loving and wise pastor to be your bishop. She will love you, challenge you, tell you the truth as she sees it and invite you to tell it as you do. She will pray with you at the drop of a hat and care for you in ways that will not diminish your own agency. She will empower you. She will lead. Count on it.

And she will lead with grace—will she ever lead with grace—in this diocese, this particular local church. With courageous grace. I am keenly aware of the significance of Jennifer's election to be the bishop of this diocese—the first woman to succeed another as diocesan bishop, the first black woman to be elected diocesan bishop. As

a friend exclaimed to Jennifer, this election happened in Indiana. This election happened here at the crossroads of the country. It happened here where the polluted soil of racism in this country allowed the Klan's hideous fruit to flourish. It happened here where the perception has been all too often that this is a place of reactive conservatism—as a sociologist I heard once in a lecture at IU said, “Indiana was the place during the westward ho where you stopped and got the canning in if you weren't ready to take this thing too far.” Well friends, that appears to have changed in the Diocese of Indianapolis! The election of this woman to be a bishop in the Episcopal Church happened here. In the heartland.

And thank God. Oh thank God. This is a sign of hope for the whole church. It is a wise, wise choice. Jennifer is not perfect, despite all her stunning gifts, she is as human, as flawed—well, maybe not quite as flawed, but I'm sure they're in there somewhere—as sinful as any of us. She is one of us. Please don't ever forget that the bishop—together with all those ordained to serve the church—the bishop is first and always a member of the laity, in its original sense, the whole and holy people of God. Ordination doesn't take that away. The job of the bishop begins with the conviction that she is first and foremost a member of the assembly of those who have been baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus. Her task is to call us home, again and again to remind us who we are. She leads from the center, from the font and the holy table where all our differences, all our distinctive marks of identity are made one, not obliterated, not obscured, but fulfilled, brought together into the one Body, the one Bread, given for the life of this world. She will lead us from the center and then she will lead us out into the desperate need of this hungry, hungry world.

Jennifer, with all my heart I entrust you and the people you serve to the God whose table is eternal life. ✚

*Clockwise left: Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, the Rev. Canon Michael Hunn and Bishop Jeff Lee; Courtney Reid, director of operations, presents Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows with the episcopal ring, purchased by people of the Diocese of Chicago; bishops from around the church gather around the new bishop; Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows with Bishop Barbara Harris.*

# Worthy Wager

*A new approach to congregational vitality begins to bear fruit across the diocese*

By Rebecca Wilson

Last year, the Diocese of Chicago made a bet that an investment in developing leaders across the diocese would pay big dividends for congregations. Eighteen months later, that bet is beginning to pay off.

The College for Congregational Development (CCD), which aims to educate and empower lay and ordained congregational leaders, originated in the Diocese of Olympia. One of its hallmarks is its embrace of expertise that comes from outside the church, including the fields of leadership development and nonprofit management.

"We don't have exclusive license on how God is at work in the world of creativity," Bishop Jeff Lee says. "We are looking at the horizon to see what tools are out there that we can make use of, that we can marinate in scripture and prayer. Gregory the Great said, 'Go and see what you find, and baptize what you can.' That's what we are doing."

CCD takes a "train the trainers" approach to spreading its program. Twenty-two lay and clergy leaders were trained as CCD trainers in early 2016, and the program accepted its first congregations last summer. This year, a July training week is already full, and registrations are being accepted for a series of intensive weekend sessions that begin in October.

When the Rev. Kevin Caruso, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Wheaton since 2015, wanted to talk about making some worship changes that the congregation had been experimenting with, he turned to the parish's CCD-trained lay leaders to facilitate a conversation using techniques they had learned in the program.

"We focused on why it matters to talk about worship life," says Caruso, who wanted to include more silence at the beginning of worship, a soft space for young children, and monthly healing prayer. "Not just about what you like, but what will help us grow as a community. People really appreciated the way the process worked. There was a lot of agreement, but it was not universal. The process surfaced tension between worship and silence, and helped us figure out a way to do something different that would allow both to co-exist."

Caruso, who also participated in the diocese's previous congregational development program called Thrive, says that CCD is its logical extension. "CCD gave us tools to help put the conceptual work of Thrive

"The thing I love about CCD is that it's the best example I've ever seen about putting our theology about the ministry of all the baptized into action."

into practice," he says. "CCD is a lot more practical and concrete."

The Rev. Jenny Replogle also values CCD's practical orientation. Replogle, co-rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Peoria since 2015, was one of the CCD trainers trained last summer. She's now helping put CCD practices into place at St. Paul's as well as teaching other leaders in the Peoria deanery.

"The thing I love about CCD is that it's the best example I've ever seen about putting our theology about the ministry of all the baptized into action," Replogle says. "People have bought into that theology, but doing it can be a different story. At St. Paul's, our number one vision and priority is making this a reality."

CCD has been particularly helpful to her, she says, because it provides training that isn't included in most seminary curricula. "What I do most of the day is run an organization, but I've had no organization development training," she says. "CCD training provides models for congregational development and organization development to help an organization become the body of Christ in a particular place."

"Community is something we have to care for too," Replogle says. "The work that we do to build up this community that is the body of Christ is a special thing." ✚



# “Old-World” Missions



LUIS GARCIA JUAREZ

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“I understand that the model of Protestant self-sufficiency is rooted in our theological and ecclesial tradition, but it limits us.”

A little over a year ago, the Rev. John David Van Doren, my former rector at Church of the Atonement, told me that I should have a cup of coffee with the Rev. Kara Wagner Sherer, who was then the chair of the Congregations Commission. Today, I find myself co-chair of that commission, and while I am sure that there is a joke to be made about what Kara put in my coffee, the work excites and inspires me, and it has given me an opportunity to reflect on what it means to support and sustain the church.

I’ve given a lot of thought to what the Book of Common Prayer says about the vocation of the laity, and I am struck by the language indicating that we are to bear witness to Christ *according to the gifts given us*. I’ve been fortunate to grow up in Chicago, and as someone of both Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage, to be part of a few Latino cultural communities.

Another gift I’ve been given was the opportunity to be part of the mission congregation of Church of the Advent/Nuestra Señora. Since I’ve joined the Congregations Commission I have worked with two such congregations, Nuestra Señora in Waukegan and Cristo Rey on West Devon Avenue in Chicago. I have a tenderness in my heart for those expressions of the church.

The primary challenge confronting most mission congregations is financial. This is especially true in the Latino community. Many of the Latino congregations we work with face very difficult economic circumstances. They must also deal with the political and legal challenges of migratory status. And in some congregations, members are transient due to the nature of their work.

Some of our traditional approaches to stewardship and growth or fundraising don’t translate easily or well to communities facing these issues. But I have been impressed by the creative ways that many of our Latino congregations honor the in-kind service that their members can offer to the church.

At Cristo Rey, the Rev. Alvaro Araica, the diocese’s associate for Hispanic ministries, who is also vicar of that congregation, makes the building

available to people whenever they can offer their services. If someone needs to get in in the middle of the day or the middle of the night to clean bathrooms, or to sweep a hallway, or maintain the sanctuary, they can do that. These are the ways that people can bring their gifts to bear on the life and substance of the congregation.

Through my work with mission congregations, I have been impressed with people’s devotion to the church. But I have also come to believe that the work with the Latino congregations has to be missionary in the very old-world sense. There was a time when we supported missions in foreign places and there was an understanding that it was a long-term venture that required the investment of time, money and energy. Our current approach to supporting mission congregations—whether they are Latino, rural or historically African-American congregations—does not allow for this.

I understand that the model of Protestant self-sufficiency is rooted in our theological and ecclesial tradition, but it limits us. We need to develop local leaders—lay and ordained—in a more responsive and culturally sensitive way. We need to realize that our models of congregational self-sufficiency will always be out of reach in some communities. And we need to see our work in small and struggling communities as common mission, and not as a give-away or a drain on the diocesan budget.

I am grateful for the opportunity to work on these challenges with the Congregations Commission, and deeply impressed by how faithfully and how well the members of the commission represent the voices that are under their care. It reminds me that there is an absolute faithfulness that characterizes our diocese. As we deal with difficult issues, God is being honored and the gospel is being proclaimed and people are being loved and served. And that is a good and holy thing. ✠

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