

Stewardship of Creation

THE EPISCOPAL NEW YORKER

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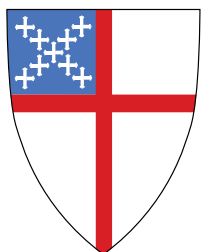
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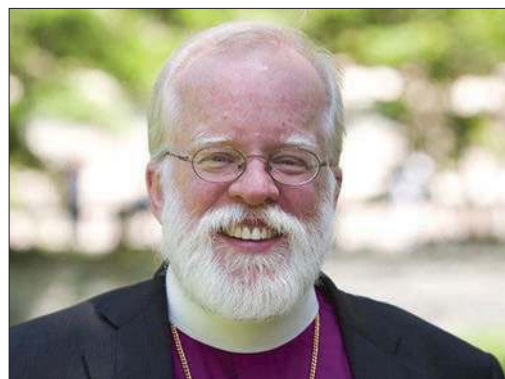
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A Spring Runs Through It

By the Rt. Rev. Andrew M.L. Dietsche



In 2009 Margaret and I bought a cottage on eight acres at the end of a road in a hollow running between two mountains in the western Catskills. It was built at the turn of the last century as a logging camp and is no-frills rustic. The water source for the property is a springhouse on the mountainside up behind the cottage and other structures. We bought the property in the middle of the winter, and the following spring I went up to the springhouse to restart the flow of water, only to discover that the century-old walls of the reservoir were collapsing, and the piping to the cottage was broken up by frost heaves.

So we found a wily old man, native to the region, to re-dig the well and rebuild the stone walls of the reservoir. Of course it took five times longer than expected and cost ten times as much, but in the course of the project I became deeply invested in it, intellectually and emotionally, but as we went along, very much spiritually as well.

One day the backhoe uncovered a horseshoe deep in the ground, left there over one hundred years earlier during the first digging of the well when a horse pulling the plow became mired in the mud and threw a shoe. I thought of Isaac digging out the wells of his father Abraham, plugged up by the Philistines, and wondered if perhaps we are not always re-digging the wells of those who came before us and rebuilding their walls. And I felt a sudden kinship with the past, laboring where others had labored, drinking from the same fountain.

The overflow from our well runs in a channel dug across our meadow and into the woods, down to a brook at the bottom of our property, and that brook tumbles down the mountain and empties into the West Branch of the Delaware River. The West Branch meanders through countryside, farms and towns to the Cannonsville Reservoir, where it is then piped across Delaware, Sullivan, Ulster and Orange Counties to the Croton Reservoir in Westchester. From there the Croton Aqueduct brings the water into New York City and on to our kitchens and bathrooms. More than once I have sipped a glass of ice water in a city restaurant and reflected "I know where you came from; I have seen the hole in the ground where you started out."

In wintertime the snow on the ground records the tracks of the animals who come to drink from our spring overflow. Deer in great number and bears who come mostly by night, but the property is also home to porcupines and foxes and raccoons and skunks and the occasional pack of coyotes. There are a thousand squirrels and chipmunks and ten thousand field mice. Snakes of different kinds in big knots under the kitchen stoop, bats hanging in the eaves, and every sort of birds everywhere. Wild turkeys. Frogs, toads and little orange salamanders. A billion spiders and moths and beetles and insects. Crowds of lady bugs. Pill bugs and daddy-long-legs. Butterflies and hummingbirds. Forests full of trees and shrubs, ferns and vines, and meadows of mixed grasses and wildflowers. Apple trees and wild berries. Moss and lichens on the rocks. Just below our property the brook opens into a wide pond, filled with trout, and whose dam and lodge are managed and maintained by the beavers who built it all. For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies. All of them and us are sustained by the same well.

Early on after we finished the reservoir project I went up to stand by the springhouse and I looked back down over the meadow toward our house and the rolling land on which it sits and the woods behind, and the long hollow in the farther distance. I saw the water begin at my feet and rush and tumble and cascade down through it all, and it occurred to me that in re-digging our spring we had really re-awakened a watershed—a watershed on which so much and so many will depend, and that this would always require care and management and stewardship. I didn't start it. A century before me they dug the first hole and the horse threw a shoe and they began to gather and steward the water. To me had just been given the task of protecting it for a time, keeping it flowing, here now in the day I have been given. And one day others will come after me, and I suppose that they will have to re-dig my well.

I watched the evening darkness settle onto the mountain and it seemed obvious to me that if you are the first to drink from a stream you must never forget those who will drink after you, all the downstream users of this water. All those same plants and animals and birds right here right around me, but also the larger waters into which the stream will empty and all those who live beside the rivers and lakes beyond my sight, and then in the far distance the teeming millions at the other end in the great metropolis. But I cannot forget those who came before either. Who drank before me and now are gone.

I remembered the final words of Norman Maclean's memoir: "Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it. The river was cut by the world's great flood and runs over rocks from the basement of time. On some of the rocks are timeless raindrops. Under the rocks are the words, and some of the words are theirs."

Stewardship of creation roots us in time and place in ways that are thrilling and poignant, that both enlarge and break our hearts at the same time, and which fill us in mind and imagination with thoughts of those who were before us and those yet to come. A great eternal kinship with all living things. In our day so much of the creation is under attack and so much is endangered. But still we are always everywhere in our own watershed and we always have the care of it. And at the heart of that charge is the mystery that in the preservation of the world is forever the preservation of our own souls.

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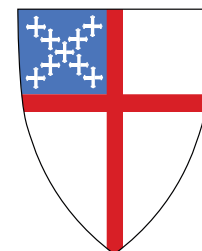
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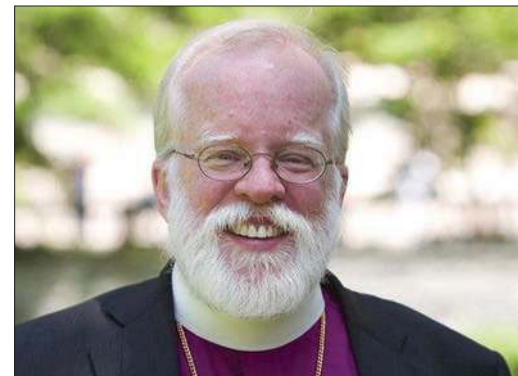
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Un Manantial Corre a Través de Ella

Por el Revdmo. Obispo Andrew M.L. Dietsche



En el 2009 Margaret y yo compramos una casa de campo situada en una propiedad que posee 8 hectáreas, al final del camino en una hondonada ubicada entre dos montañas en el oeste de Catskills. La casa de campo fue construida a finales del siglo pasado como un campamento para la explotación forestal y posee una rusticidad simple. La fuente de agua de la propiedad es una caseta de manantial construida sobre una ladera detrás de la cabaña y otras estructuras. Nosotros compramos la propiedad en pleno invierno, y en la primavera siguiente yo subí a la caseta del manantial y recomencé el flujo de agua, solo para descubrir que las paredes centenarias del embalse se estaban derrumbando, y la tubería de la cabaña había sido averiada por los abultamientos causados por las heladas.

Así que encontramos a un anciano hábil, oriundo de la región, para volver a cavar el pozo y reconstruir las paredes de piedra del embalse. Por supuesto, se demoró cinco veces más tiempo de lo esperado y costó diez veces más, pero en el curso del proyecto adquirí un gran apego por el mismo, intelectualmente y emocionalmente, pero también espiritualmente a medida que avanzábamos.

Un día la retroexcavadora escarbó una herradura que estaba a gran profundidad, dejada allí cien años antes, durante la primera excavación del pozo cuando un caballo halaba el arado y se atascó en el lodo y se le zafó una herradura. Yo pensé en Isaac excavando los pozos de su padre Abraham, tapados por los filisteos, y me preguntaba si quizás nosotros siempre estamos cavando nuevamente los pozos de quienes vinieron antes que nosotros y reconstruyendo sus paredes. Y sentí una afinidad repentina con el pasado, trabajando donde otros trabajaron, bebiendo de la misma fuente.

El vertedero de nuestro pozo corre en un canal excavado en nuestro prado y se adentra al bosque, hasta un arroyo en el fondo de nuestra propiedad, y ese arroyo baja por la montaña y desemboca en la Rivera Occidental del Río Delaware. La Rivera Occidental serpentea a través de la campiña, granjas y pueblos para llegar hasta el embalse de Cannosville, ahí es donde se canaliza el agua a través de los condados Delaware, Sullivan, Ulsters y Orange hasta el embalse de Croton en Westchester. Desde allí, el acueducto de Croton lleva el agua a la ciudad de Nueva York y a nuestras cocinas y baños. En más de una ocasión, yo he bebido un vaso de agua helada en un restaurante de la ciudad, y he reflexionado: “Yo sé de dónde vienes; he visto el agujero en el suelo donde comenzaste”.

En el invierno la nieve que cubre el suelo graba las huellas de los animales que vienen a beber del vertedero de nuestro manantial. Venados en un gran número y osos quienes vienen principalmente por la noche, pero la propiedad es también hábitat para los puercoespines y zorros, mapaches, zorrillos y la ocasional manada de coyotes. Hay mil ardillas y ardillas listadas y diez mil ratones de campo. Serpientes de diferentes tipos hechas grandes nudos debajo de la escalera de entrada a la cocina, murciélagos colgados en el alero, toda clase de aves por doquier. Pavos salvajes. Ranas, sapos y pequeñas salamandras de color naranja. Un billón de arañas y mariposas nocturnas y escarabajos e insectos. Montones de mariquitas. Cochinillas y opiliones. Mariposas y colibríes. El bosque está lleno de árboles y arbustos, helechos y cepas, y prados de

variadas hierbas y flores silvestres. Manzanos y bayas silvestres. Musgos y líquenes en las rocas. Justo debajo de nuestra propiedad el arroyo ha creado una laguna ancha, llena de truchas, y cuya presa y albergue son manejados y mantenidos por los castores quienes construyeron todo. Por la belleza de la tierra, por la belleza de los cielos. Todos ellos y nosotros somos sustentados por el mismo pozo.

Al principio, después que terminamos el proyecto del embalse, subí hasta la caseta del manantial y miré hacia abajo donde está el prado y luego a nuestra casa y la tierra ondulante sobre la cual la casa está situada y los bosques que están detrás, y la extensa hondonada que está a una distancia más lejos. Yo vi el agua brotar en mis pies y correr y caer y caer en cascada hacia abajo en su recorrido, y se me ocurrió que, al volver a excavar nuestro manantial, realmente habíamos reactivado una vertiente de agua— una vertiente de agua de la cual muchos y tantos dependerán, y eso siempre requerirá cuidado y administración y manejo. Yo no lo inicié. Un siglo antes que yo, ellos excavaron el primer orificio y el caballo soltó una herradura y ellos comenzaron a acopiar y administrar el agua. A mí, sólo se me ha ofrecido en el presente la tarea de protegerla por un tiempo, aquí y ahora en el día que se me ha dado. Y un día otros vendrán después de mí, y supongo ellos tendrán que volver a excavar mi pozo.

Yo he observado la penumbra de la noche asentarse en la montaña y me pareció obvio que, si usted es el primero en beber de un arroyo, usted nunca debe olvidar a los que beberán después de usted, todos los consumidores de esta agua de río abajo. Todas esas mismas plantas y animales y aves que están aquí rodeándome, también las aguas caudalosas en las cuales el arroyo desembocará y todos esos quienes viven cerca de los ríos y lagos mas allá del alcance de mi vista, y luego a lo lejos los pululantes millones en el otro lado de la gran metrópolis. Pero tampoco puedo olvidar a los que vinieron antes. Quienes bebieron antes que yo y ahora partieron.

Yo recordé las palabras finales de la autobiografía de Norman Maclean: “A la larga, todas las cosas se convierten en una, y un río las atraviesa. El río fue dividido por el gran diluvio universal y recorre sobre las piedras del cimiento del tiempo. Sobre algunas de las piedras hay gotas de lluvia eternas. Debajo de las rocas hay palabras, y algunas de las palabras son tuyas.”

La mayordomía de la creación nos arraiga en el tiempo y el lugar en formas que son emocionantes y conmovedoras, que ensanchan y rompen nuestros corazones al mismo tiempo, y que llenan nuestra mente e imaginación con pensamientos sobre quienes estuvieron antes que nosotros y quienes todavía están por llegar. Una gran y eterna afinidad con todos los seres vivos. En nuestros días, gran parte de la creación es objeto de ataque y demasiado está en peligro. Aun así, nosotros siempre estamos por doquier en nuestras propias vertientes y siempre tenemos que cuidar de ellas. En el centro de esa obligación se encuentra el misterio de la preservación del mundo, la cual es por siempre la preservación de nuestras propias almas.



Toward a New World of Wholeness and Eco-justice

By the Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin



When I was young in South Korea, my Dad used to take me hiking in the mountains. It was one of my favorite activities. After hours on the trail, to stand atop the mountain and look down and around gave me the greatest feeling of accomplishment and liberation. As the cool wind dried the sweat on my brow and the sunlight washed over me, I felt one with the nature around me and with God's creation—and it was through these experiences that I learned to appreciate the gift of that creation and the need to care for it.

In her book, *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*, Elizabeth Johnson gives theological articulation to this sense of wholeness and union with God's creation as "the paradigm of the community of creation" under which, she says, "humans and other living creatures... form one community woven together by the common thread of having been created by God." This counters the traditional Genesis 1-based understanding of our relationship to the rest of creation that has led us to subdue and dominate creation with increasingly devastating results. The interpretation of "dominion" as a call to responsible stewardship to care for creation has for too long remained a minority interpretation, both among Christians and in the secular culture.

Genesis 1's human superiority and dominion is counter-balanced by Genesis 2's story of Adam's creation, in which God forms a creature (*'adam*) from the dust of the earth (*'adamah*) and breathes the breath of life into its nostrils (Genesis 2:7). Here, humans are creatures, along with all the others in God's creation. Moreover, as Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel observed, humans are the last to be created and so "God's afterthought"—utterly dependent upon the rest of cre-

ation. Thus, as Elizabeth Johnson says, "community becomes the radical context which puts the special role of human dominion best understood as stewardship and responsible care in its rightful place as one among many important exchanges we have with the natural world."

Johnson's understanding of the radical context of community, in which everything is connected by virtue of creation, implies a broader understanding of eco-justice. Meanwhile, asserting in her book *The Body of God* that "nature is the new poor," Sally McFague widens the circle of injustice to include suffering ecosystems and the humans and other species whose existence is thereby under threat. In this interpretation, the cycle of injustice now includes the global ecosystem in which we are all connected.

A third theologian, Ilia Delio, in *Making All Things New: Catholicity, Cosmology, Consciousness*, introduces the concept of "a new catholicity that integrates humankind's religious experience into a new spirituality for a new earth, yearning to breathe new life." Christianity, says Delio, is a religion of evolution, because we believe in the power of God to do new things, symbolized by the risen Christ.

We have the power to create a new world and to destroy this one. How we choose depends on whether we recognize our connectedness to the larger wholeness of creation and our self-perception as servants and not dominators.



Hacia un Nuevo Mundo de Plenitud y Eco-justicia

Por el Revdmo. Obispo Allen K. Shin

Cuando yo era joven y vivía en Corea del Sur, mi padre solía llevarme a escalar en las montañas. Era una de mis actividades favoritas. Después de estar caminando horas por el sendero, pararme en la cima de la montaña y mirar hacia abajo y mis alrededores me brindaba una de las mayores sensaciones de éxito y liberación. Mientras el viento fresco secaba el sudor de mi frente y me bañaban los rayos del sol, me sentí uno con la naturaleza que me rodeaba y con la creación de Dios—y fue a través de esas experiencias que yo aprendí a apreciar el regalo de esa creación y la necesidad de cuidarla.

En su libro, *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*, (Pregúntale a las Bestias: Darwin y el Dios de Amor), Elizabeth Johnson ofrece una articulación teológica a ese sentido de totalidad y unión con la creación de Dios como "el paradigma de la comunidad de la creación" según la cual, ella dice, "los humanos y las otras criaturas vivientes... conforman una comunidad que está entrelazada por un vínculo común de haber sido creada por Dios". Eso rebate Génesis 1 que se fundamenta en el entendimiento de nuestra relación con el resto de la creación, la cual nos llevó a subyugar y dominar la creación con resultados cada vez más devastadores. La interpretación de "dominio" como un llamado al mandato a cuidar de la creación durante demasiado tiempo ha sido una interpretación de la minoría, tanto entre los cristianos como en la cultura secular.

Génesis 1 habla de la superioridad y el dominio humano que es contrarrestado por Génesis 2 con la historia de la creación de Adán, en la cual Dios crea un ser viviente (*'adam*) del polvo de la tierra (*'adamah*) y le sopla vida a través de sus fosas nasales (Génesis 2:7). Ahí, los humanos son criaturas, junto con todas las otras creaciones de Dios. Además, como el Rabino Abraham Joshua Heschel observó, los humanos son los últimos en ser creados y, por lo tanto, "la idea posterior de Dios"—completamente dependiente del resto de la creación. Por

tanto, como Elizabeth Johnson dice, "la comunidad se convierte en el contexto radical que pone el papel especial del dominio humano mejor entendido como mayordomía y el cuidado responsable en el lugar que le corresponde como uno entre muchos intercambios importantes que tenemos con el mundo natural".

El entendimiento de Johnson del contexto radical de la comunidad, en el cual todo está conectado en virtud de la creación, conlleva un entendimiento más amplio de la eco-justicia.

Entretanto, en su libro *The Body of God* (El Cuerpo de Dios), Sally McFague afirma que "la naturaleza es el nuevo pobre", amplía el círculo de la injusticia para incluir los ecosistemas que sufren, los humanos y otras especies cuya existencia está por ende bajo amenaza. En esa interpretación, el ciclo de la injusticia en la actualidad incluye el ecosistema global en el cual todos estamos conectados.

Una tercera teóloga, Ilia Delio, en *Making All Things New: Catholicity, Cosmology, Consciousness* (Haciendo Todas Las Cosas Nuevas: Catolicidad, Cosmología, Conciencia), introduce el concepto de "una nueva catolicidad que integra la experiencia religiosa de la humanidad a una espiritualidad nueva por una tierra nueva, anhelando respirar nueva vida". El cristianismo, dice Delio, es una religión de evolución, porque creemos en el poder de Dios de hacer cosas nuevas, simbolizadas por el Cristo resucitado.

Nosotros tenemos el poder de crear un mundo nuevo y destruir este. La forma en que elijamos depende de si reconocemos nuestra conexión con la totalidad más amplia de la creación y nuestra autopercepción como servidores y no dominadores.



Salvation for All Creatures?

By the Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool

Maybe this is a question simply for those in seminaries and theological schools. Yet I believe it is worth reflecting on as we consider the *stewardship of creation*. And I believe it is helpful to remind ourselves of our role in caring for God's creation—something we may well have learned as children and subsequently forgotten.

The biblical story of Noah's Ark shows the way. You know how it goes. Humankind has become so wicked that God's heart is broken. And God determines to wipe out everything God had created, except ...

God says to Noah "Build an ark." And Noah says "Yes." And Noah goes into the ark he has built. But before he closes the door God says, "Wait a minute, Noah. I want you to take with you your family—the whole family of your humanity." In theological terms God is saying, "Noah, there is no personal salvation without corporate, or socio-political salvation. It cannot be a pietistic, self-salvation—there must be a salvation that includes the whole human family."

And so Noah bows his head, and brings the family on board, and is about to close the door again and God says, "Wait a minute!" And God claps God's hands (anthropomorphically-speaking!), and around the corner they come: two by two. Two by two by two by two. And when they're all in, God says to Noah,

"Now Noah, what I've said to you is that not only is personal salvation not possible without corporate or socio-political salvation; but corporate salvation is impossible without ecological salvation!"

God's covenant is not simply with Noah and his descendants. God's covenant is also with *every living creature ... the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth ... as many as came out of the ark*. (Genesis 9:8-10) In fact, the *fates* of the human and non-human creation are inseparable.

A friend of mine loves to tell the story of the time she took her cat, named Georgia, to a nursing home to visit the people who lived there. Among the residents was a man who had suffered a stroke more than a year earlier, who had not uttered a word since his stroke. My friend approached this man with Georgia in her arms and greeted him. The man did not verbally respond, but he did seem interested in the cat. He reached out his arm and began to stroke Georgia very slowly and gently. My friend stood there for a long time while the man petted Georgia. And then, quite suddenly, the man uttered the first two words he had spoken in over a year. "Pretty kitty," he said.



¿Salvación para Todas las Criaturas?

Por la Revd^{ma}. Obispa Mary D. Glasspool

Tal vez esta es una pregunta simplemente para quienes asisten a los seminarios y escuelas teológicas. Sin embargo, creo que vale la pena reflexionar al considerar el cuidado de la creación.

Y creo que es útil recordarnos de nuestro papel en el cuidado de la creación de Dios— algo que bien podríamos haber aprendido cuando éramos niños y haberlo olvidado posteriormente.

La historia bíblica del Arca de Noé muestra el camino. Usted sabe cómo sigue. La humanidad se había vuelto tan malvada que el Corazón de Dios está roto. Y Dios decide exterminar todo lo que Dios había creado, *excepto...*

Dios le dice a Noé "Construye un arca". Y Noé dice "Sí". Y Noé se mete dentro del arca que ha construido. Pero antes de cerrar la puerta, Dios le dice: "Espera un momento, Noé. "Quiero Yo que lleves contigo a tu familia — toda la familia de tu humanidad". En términos teológicos, Dios está diciendo: "Noé, no hay salvación personal sin la salvación colectiva o sociopolítica. No puede ser una salvación pietista, una salvación personal, debe ser una salvación que incluya a

toda la familia humana".

Y entonces Noé baja su cabeza, y lleva su familia a bordo, y cuando está a punto de cerrar la puerta nuevamente Dios dice, "¡Espera un momento!" y Dios aplaude con las manos (¡antropomórficamente hablando!), y a la vuelta de la esquina vienen: de dos en dos.

Dos en dos, dos en dos. Y cuando ya todos están dentro, Dios le dice a Noé: "¡Ahora, Noé, lo que te he dicho es que la salvación personal no es posible sin la salvación colectiva y sociopolítica; pero la salvación colectiva es imposible sin la salvación ecológica!"

El pacto de Dios no es únicamente con Noé y sus descendientes. El pacto de Dios es también *con todos los seres vivos... las aves, el ganado, y cada una de las bestias de la tierra... tantas como salieron del arca*. (Génesis 9:8-10) De hecho, los destinos de la creación humana y la no humana son inseparables.



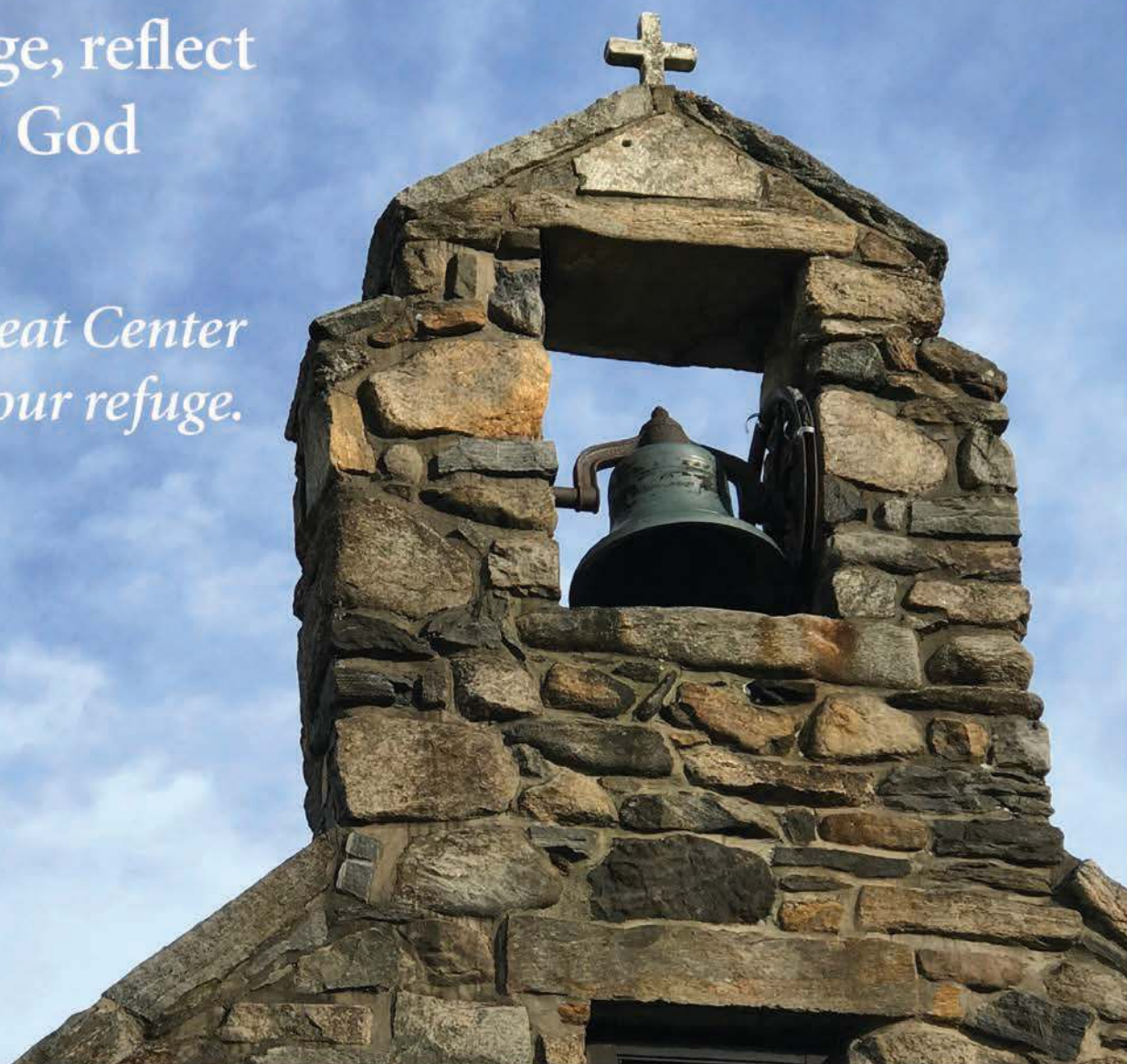
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TRINITYRETREATCT

The Challenge and Call

By the Rev. Canon Jeff Golliher

Sometimes you just have to say it—like Parkland survivor Emma Gonzalez did about guns and public schools, and like thousands of other children in schools across our diocese and the country just this morning, March 14. We already knew what she meant—in the sense of knowing where “know” means either “already know,” or, more likely, the kind of soul knowledge we usually hide from ourselves, being afraid or reluctant to remember. Either way, we knew it in our hearts before Emma said one word. By the grace of God, she helped us remember: hearing the truth pour from the human soul, realizing that any of us could have said exactly the same, and acknowledging that we haven’t said or done enough, not clearly enough.

It’s the same with the climate and with the environmental crisis. We’ve known the truth for a long time. Never mind the public debates, real or manufactured. Even real debates have been sidetracked by a gambler’s hope that the facts might be wrong. So we delay taking enough action as the facts keep pouring in. It seems surreal, waking up in the morning, knowing how seriously serious this is—to be in the midst of a crisis like humankind has never faced.

And after all that, we still think to ourselves, “how much longer do we have before catastrophic climate change comes to New York?” But our sisters and brothers in parts of southern Africa, the Pacific, and south Asia are not asking

that. They desperately want to know, “will help arrive today?”

We can feel the rebirth pangs already, struggling to make sense of it, to adapt and do the right thing, being pulled in too many directions, all at once. In some crucial ways our lives aren’t sustainable, nor are they ethical or just. Think of our greenhouse emissions—and it’s not only that: across the Earth, ecosystems and food and water systems that give us life undergo the same strain and unravel. Two years ago, Amitav Ghosh wrote about this in *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*.¹ He believes that religion will wake us up. For that to happen, we’ll need the leadership of women, men, and youth, all coming together to talk it out and to act—to learn to “be the church” in some new ways for this generation and the next. We don’t have time to gamble.

In our diocese, we have a long history of environmental justice ministry, and we have a new strategic plan that spells out the crucial elements of sustainable, vital congregations. Now it’s time to remember why all the above is so urgent and to put our faith into practice more faithfully than we ever have.

The author is vicar of St. John’s Memorial Church, Ellenville, chair of the diocese’s Committee on the Environment, and environmental representative of the worldwide Anglican Communion to the United Nations.

Climate Action Teams

By Jo Anne Kraus

The Diocesan Committee on the Environment

issues an urgent call for the formation of

Climate Action Teams

in each of the three major regions of our Diocese:

NEW YORK CITY (Manhattan, Bronx and Staten Island)
MID-HUDSON (Orange, Dutchess, Ulster, and Sullivan Counties)
THE COUNTIES of Westchester, Rockland, and Putnam

We are looking for able volunteers who are willing to meet as Climate Action Teams within three regions for the purpose of education, mutual support, and organizing.

If you are interested, please complete the sign-up form at
diocesenyc.org/cat

Often for me the wisdom and the will to act only come together when I see something I can do. Determining to do it follows the vision of what can be done.

So where can one actually make a start with an overwhelming issue like climate change?

Well—start small, but start. I do best when I pick one thing and do that for a while. I’m not ready to put on a solar roof, but I did change my Con Edison source of electricity to an ESCO, an energy service company that buys shares from wind and solar power. I can’t solve the problem of plastic trash, but I have become fastidious about taking my own shopping bags and found easy solutions to the problem of having them handy at all times. I choose recycled paper goods while also recycling my old cotton clothes to make rags so that I can cut down on buying paper towels. I eat less meat and make sure it is organic free-range when I do buy. Each of these may cost a bit more, but I’ve made the choice to spend the extra.

But these are small, individual choices to help address climate change and the health of the planet. What does it mean to “be the church” in addressing these issues?

The call for Climate Action Teams [*Episcopal New Yorker*, Nov 2017] was one attempt to get us together to wrestle with what we can do in the aggregate.

¹University of Chicago Press, 2016. 176pp.

Fourteen of us in this diocese signed on as “interested,” some of us very enthusiastically. Another ten signed on to form a Diocesan Environmental Working Group at the Social Concerns gathering at the Cathedral on a snowy evening a year ago. But so far neither of these efforts has given birth to a collective action. Even getting enough of us together to begin the planning needed to organize as a church has proved hard.

So, let’s start small. Let’s decide congregation by congregation to choose one campaign for ourselves this year, and publish the results of our collective efforts in the Fall Episcopal New Yorker. May I make a suggestion? Right now, the single-use plastics issue is gaining ground in the state of New York around those ubiquitous shopping bags. Or what about single use water bottles? As a congrega-

tion, as a vestry, as a people of God, choose one thing and remind each other to do it. Think of Paul’s words to the Hebrews: “And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (10:24 NRSV).

And just in case you’re wondering, you haven’t heard the last of the Climate Action Teams. We are still in the early stages of forming and we are eager for more of you to sign on. If interested, go to dioceseny.org/cat to complete the sign-up form.

The author is an Earth Ministry member from Christ Church, Riverdale.

Sustainable Soul

By the Rev. Elizabeth Maxwell

Besides the absolutely essential practice of taking action, what else might help us move forward in the work of climate justice—for our earth, for our brothers and sisters and for generations yet to come? What spiritual practices might help us make our churches more sustainable? We pray for our fellow creatures and ourselves: for courage, hope, and guidance. We meditate, we worship together and ruminate on scripture and other texts. We sing St. Francis’ hymn “All Creatures of our God and King,” and we ponder with the psalmist: “O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (Ps. 104:25). We learn the theology of creation care and the science that undergirds the crisis we already know intuitively. For me, one other thing is essential. I need to remind myself why I love the earth and its creatures. I need to remember where I belong, in particular. That means I need to go outside.

For people in some parts of the Diocese of New York, that may seem both easy and self-evident. But for me in the city, it takes intention and thought—not to go outside, because city dwellers often walk a lot, but to look beyond the buildings and concrete to the natural world that encompasses us. My dog walks me in all seasons. We often go to the park or the great Hudson River. Even in an urban environment, I see birds and squirrels—swooping, busy, curious. I watch the clouds and currents, sunsets and moonrise. I experience weather (sometimes very unexpected weather). We are part of this more-than-human whole, my canine companion and I.

At least once a month, I try to go on a longer walk outside the city, with the dog, a friend, or alone. I feel the earth beneath my feet: well-worn trail, squishy mud, springy moss, sharp rocks. I listen to the wind in the trees, the rush of water, the buzz of insects, the subtler sounds of my own breath and heartbeat. I notice crocuses peering up, trees greening, a hawk in flight. And in the spaciousness, I feel more. Sometimes it’s relief and “the peace of wild things” that Wendell Berry speaks of. Sometimes it’s grief and fear for what we are doing to the natural world, and thus to ourselves, since we are nature too. Sometimes I am full of rage as I wonder how I—how we—can make the changes we need to make, in time.

What I know is that it helps me to bring my grief and rage, my fear and longing, into conversation with the larger community of creation. It helps me to pray as I walk, to wonder and wander and be with my not knowing in the woods or on the river bank, under the sky. It helps me to open my heart, to move my body with my breath, and to remember that I love this earth. I love my dog’s soft fur and full-body wags. I love the late afternoon light and its speckled play on the water. I love watching winter turn to spring, with all its mess and muck and marvelous possibility. I love knowing where my food comes from and being able to taste its freshness. I love the strong trees, and the grace of the boughs in the

wind. I love how my feet feel when they leave pavement for dirt path. I love the sound of the dawn chorus, and I love catching a glimpse of an owl hunting.

I am so grateful for the myriad beings and the way we belong to each other—even now, though the world has been so damaged by human action and indifference. Maybe even more, now, as with a dear friend who has been hurt. Surely this is worth saving. Surely this is worth whatever work each one of us can do, step by step. Surely this precious planet, and its amazing waters, air, plants and animals, are worth a love that may break—and break open—our hearts.

What do you love, in this beautiful, terrible, amazing world? How do the creatures, the earth, the waters, the vast sky and your most familiar patch of ground sustain you? I suspect that for us to live sustainably, we must risk much more love. And we must talk about it and act on it in church, and as church.

The author is rector of the Church of the Ascension, Manhattan, and serves on the diocese’s Committee on the Environment.

Sustainability Alone Is Not the Answer

By David Ward

We often look to the principle of “sustainability” for guidance on how to confront today’s problems of the depletion of resources of energy, land and livable atmosphere. Sustainability is conventionally defined as balancing the use and replacement of resources. But when the concept of sustainability is narrowed to mean the preservation of nature for its intrinsic value of wonder and beauty, or for its instrumental value for human well-being and survival, the ramifications and trade-offs are misunderstood or ignored.

How could anyone shoot a bobcat, so beautiful and wild and free? But bobcats mercilessly kill pretty deer, bloodily ripping their bodies. Beautiful islands are being drowned as sea levels rise. But for eons, volcanoes have formed new islands and earthquakes have made others sink.

One side of nature is violent and brutal, and nature is not in some fixed state, but always changing. When we imagine that we are preserving nature for an ideal of purity and perfection, we are really imposing our own preferences, and preservation of nature for its intrinsic value looks at best like naive romanticism, and a kind of arrogance at worst.

A nation needed fuel, and oil companies helped to solve the problem by exploring for oil and building pipelines in the Mississippi Delta. The economy boomed, and many benefited from the availability of oil and gas. The construction of oil industry access canals destroyed wetlands, and provided avenues for rising sea levels to threaten whole communities.

If the preservation of nature is not for some imagined intrinsic value, can it be for the instrumental value of supporting the well-being and survival of society? The earth provides us with food and shelter, clothing and heat, and also fulfills spiritual, recreational and aesthetic values that are prized highly among many societies. But when man-made interventions are substituted for a natural

balance, the preservation of nature for human consumption appears even more arrogant and self-serving than a detached protection of the wild and natural.

Sustainability means to preserve nature as humans prefer it, or to preserve resources for human consumption. These attitudes are the arrogance of sustainability, which is underscored by the way that humans fail to come to terms with its complexity.

Engineers have tried to mitigate rising seas and storm surges in New Orleans and in the bayou with clever and expensive water barriers; but rearranging dikes and waterways in Louisiana or sand bars on Long Island has never solved problems. Engineering solutions disrupt wildlife habitats, and there is always another unpredicted natural force that undoes the engineers’ work. People have not been able to fathom the complexity of interconnectedness, or to accept that a defining characteristic of nature is change; islands rise and fall, continents drift, and we are powerless to mold the earth into our idea of a “perfect” place forever.

Nature is determined to redeem her own, and now we are all faced with terrible choices. If every community cannot be saved, can one be chosen over another on the basis of economic feasibility? Does this community contribute more to the economy than that one? How else to decide? People who have owned homes for generations choose not to leave in the face of rising seas; their lives are tied to that particular place. So there is another problem: can society refuse to pay for the risks that homeowners choose to take? That would mean discrediting the cultural value of longevity of communities. It would also mean taking on the risk of becoming disadvantaged ourselves. Aren’t Christians supposed to do that? But it is such a roadblock.

Human traits such as intellect, reason and selflessness would seem to make us well-suited to solve problems, manage sustainability, and care for one another. But there are limits. In practice we become arrogant in our belief that we can control nature; but systemic complexity is too much, and it all breaks down due to the difficulties of balancing interconnectedness and accepting that change in nature is normal. We hit a wall when we need to risk disadvantaging ourselves.

The belief that we can understand and control all the contradictions of the world is intellectually and spiritually both arrogant and unimaginative. It would be more courageous to accept that there are layers and layers of meaning that we have yet to penetrate. Robert E. Pollock characterized some of us as “those too impatient to consider their souls.” (*Where in This World is the Human Soul?* Science, Religion and Culture, Columbia University, March 2014).

The arrogance of sustainability points to why we must change our behavior. We have the power to be moral. We are the only beings who can, while trying to help the disadvantaged, accept the risk of becoming disadvantaged ourselves. We are the only beings on the planet that can accept the responsibility for wrestling with the moral dilemmas that seem to have no one right solution. That wrestling is key: we need humility and patience to keep asking the questions and listening for the answers. Our decisions and actions impact all the rest of humanity. In the end, we only have each other, and God.

*For some of the ideas expressed here I am indebted to: Jeremy Butman, *Against ‘Sustainability’* in *The Stone* (The New York Times, August 8, 2016) and Benjamin Hale, *The Wild and the Wicked: On Nature and Human Nature* (MIT Press, 2016).*

The author is a member of Trinity Wall Street and chair of Trinity’s Environmental Justice Group.



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Educate, Advocate, Activate

By Peter Daszak, Ph.D.

London, 1952. A familiar face, Winston Churchill, serves as prime minister, but a brand new monarch, a 26-year-old Queen Elizabeth II, sits on the throne. Finally, far enough removed from the terrors of World War II, Britons are finally beginning to feel a sense of peace. But a new horror, one of their own making, would descend that December, in the form of a great cloud of smog created by burning coal. It blanketed the entire city in darkness; four days later, when the cloud finally dissipated, 12,000 people had lost their lives.

I was born outside Manchester, quite a way from the so-called London fog, quite some time after 1952. We had our own smogs; every few weeks in the winter a “pea souper” would descend—thick fog that blocked everything more than five feet in front of you. It was in Manchester that one of the first proofs of Charles Darwin’s theory of natural selection was observed in peppered oak moths. As their name suggests, they have a sort of speckled appearance: some more white and some more black. As the Industrial Revolution covered everything with a fine coat of soot, the lighter moths became more susceptible to predators and the darker moths began to dominate.

I remember seeing this human-driven evolution with my very own eyes when, in the 1970s, it became my passion to clean my hometown’s environment. I joined every natural history and conservation club I could, spoke at town hall meetings, and pled my case with anyone who’d listen. By the 1980s, we all could see the lighter peppered oak moths gaining evolutionary advantage and, once again, outnumbering the darker ‘industrial’ morph.

Yet it was not for the peppered moths that Manchester cleaned up its act. Nor was it necessarily because of the acid rain which had begun to destroy trees and eat away at the city’s stone buildings. It was because of a public health emergency. A few clever scientists had noticed that every time the smog came, people with asthma turned up at hospital, and those with respiratory infections died at a much higher rate than normal. The government reacted and banned the burning of coal in fireplaces (still common when I was a child). It was this response to a human health threat that ultimately led to a cleaner environment for all wildlife and nature.

This formative experience informs the work that I do even today. At EcoHealth Alliance, an organization for which I serve as president, we preach One Health: the idea that the well-being of all things—humans, animals, and the environment—is connected, inextricably.

Our mission is simple: to prevent pandemics and promote conservation. While it’s simply stated, it’s incredibly complex in action. We’re sampling wildlife in dozens of countries around the globe to monitor and track the potential spillover of pathogens from animals into humans—just like SARS and Ebola did. We’re scouring the planet for undiscovered viruses—of which there are an estimated 1.67 million—to catch them before they create the next pandemic. We’re encouraging the slowing of deforestation, as reduced forest rates have raised disease spread to never-before-heard-of rates. We’re reducing the illegal trade of wild animals. And we’re educating people about ways to interact health-



EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak examines a goose in China to test for the presence of avian flu and other potential pandemic viruses. More than 60% of viruses which infect humans are shared between animals and people. EcoHealth Alliance is working to detect and stop the next pandemic before it spills into humans.

Photo: © Ecohealth Alliance

fully with their environment.

We do it because we are scientists. Some of us are zoologists, some of us are virologists, some of us are epidemiologists, some of us are behavioral scientists. But we also do it because we see the protection of our Earth, of the precious animals living on it, as the most basic of our responsibilities as members of the global community.

When I was in college, I spent some time working with the London Zoo. Though I’d dreamed of working with the so-called “exciting” animals, I found myself working with invertebrates like cockroaches and snails. It was, to my then-naïve mind, not the most thrilling work. One day, though, one of my mentors asked me to help him clean a snail tank; I’ll never forget what he said to me a few minutes later as I stood there with a box of a dozen snails in my hand. “You know, Peter, you’re holding a whole species in your hand.” Those twelve snails represented the difference between existence and extinction. That terrifying power and responsibility has been the guiding principle of my career ever since.

As the stewards of our planet, we hold that same metaphorical box for every single species. Is it not imperative that we do right by them?

As the president of a nonprofit organization, I’m constantly asked some variation of, “What can I do to help?” It is my true belief that people are often overwhelmed by the idea that they alone

could not possibly do enough. Every little bit counts. Remember these three words: educate, advocate, and activate.

Pick an issue which resonates with you and become an expert. Seek out people who know more than you and talk to them. Read everything you can get your hands on. Thanks to the internet, we have more access to information than every generation to come before us combined.

Then, become an advocate. Talk to your friends and family; explain the issue to them. You can take that outside your own circle. Write your representatives, speak out online. Again, the power of the internet is that it can be a megaphone for even the quietest of voices.

Finally, activate that interest. Find an organization which is doing the work and support them. This does not have to be financial; no one knows better than I that there are myriad skills and services which nonprofits would be happy to receive in kind.

Think back on that London fog. Feel the soot filling your lungs, stinging your eyes. Imagine how impossible it must have been in that moment to deny that something unnatural was going on. Now think about the present. No great cloud of smog envelops New York, but something is going on just the same. We’re seeing new diseases erupt at an unprecedented pace. Extinction rates are the highest they’ve been in the human era. If this world was indeed a gift, it was a gift with conditions. We must protect it, we must cherish it, we must make it better.

The author is the president of EcoHealth Alliance, an international network of scientists and educators engaged in work to save endangered species and their habitats from extinction in 20 high-biodiversity countries.

Investing with Values

By John Trammell

While I am deeply involved in several of the diocese's investment committees, this article does not represent diocesan policy or wider church views, but my own thoughts on how to be a concerned citizen, a devoted parishioner, and a good shepherd while acting as an agent for positive change in the world through our investment approach.

While investing for both financial return and positive social and environmental impact ("double bottom line" investing) has gained momentum lately, the concept has been around for centuries. Religious groups like ours, the Methodists and the Quakers regularly invested their endowments in ways that reflected their values. This approach involved simply screening out stocks related to things like coal and oil production, guns and tobacco.

A screen can be a useful way for investors to express their values, but it is a blunt instrument. It does not take into account the nuances and complexity of a company's involvement in the world. What about the company's subsidiaries, suppliers or customers? What about the tradeoffs between disinvesting and job loss at that company? For example, many of us do not think of Google as being of any environmental consequence. Yet Google consumes more electricity daily than the city of San Diego. If Bitcoin is a commodity, then over 80 per cent of its making is electricity; that is more electricity than is used in primary aluminum production. Today, companies are providing increased transparency on issues we all care about, and more analysis is being done by independent third parties on a company's environmental, social and governance practices. This offers us a way to articulate more proactively what we do want for our neighbors, not just what we don't want.

The 2017 decision of our Diocesan Investment Trust to join the Principles for Responsible Investment, an independent international network of investors supported by the United Nations, is a great step in that direction. The overall goal of this network is to create a sustainable financial system; with over 1,700 signatories representing over \$70 trillion in assets, it is a powerful voice for change.

I believe that we are still in the very early stages of our deliberations and discussions about the best strategies and tactics to use to push the agenda for a better environment, more inclusive society, and governance best practices. I would like to go even further in this process of investing in accordance with our values, in a way that makes good business sense. This approach would take advantage of an expanding set of tools and rating systems available to investors, establish a common framework that reflects our values, and identify a process that helps us keep on top of this evolving space. An article elsewhere in this issue by JoAnn Hanson, the president & CEO of the Church Investment Group, mentions the Carbon Disclosure Project with their advanced scoring system for companies. Other firms such as Sustainalytics and the Climate Disclosure Standards Board

initiative are all enabling this effort with better data collection and better reporting.

The investment managers we select may conduct their own research on ESG factors, or use public filings and discussions with management teams, and even offer company-prepared sustainability reports to investors. We could consider third-party research providers to augment the manager's research. We could revisit our investment policy guidelines to request reporting on ESG on a regular basis, and measure our own progress with this approach.

Beyond moving from negative to more positive screening, I would like to begin to think about ways to have a voice at shareholder meetings and advocate there for positive change. We can get a carbon footprint for every security in our portfolio, but beyond that simple measure we need to understand what the root causes of that footprint are, and where or how we can bring pressure for change. I am certain that if all the Diocesan Investment Trusts in the Episcopal Church and independent Episcopal Church investment committees raised their voices at the same time (perhaps in a shareholder meeting) we could get the attention we need to spur more rapid change than we are witnessing today. This advocacy could work not only for environmental issues, but also on diversity and gender equality—not only in the boardroom, but in the wider workforce as well. There are more channels available to us today than at any time in the past to give volume to a collective voice.

In a perfect world, religious institutions would be in the vanguard of socially responsible investing. In reality, it will be a slower process, as we carefully gather information and weight the pros and cons of every investment decision and its attendant tradeoffs. Sometimes seemingly straightforward decisions have unintended consequences that we need to be aware of. For example, hotels became ardent environmentalists when they discovered they could appeal to our good natures and not wash our towels every day: the result for us was damp towels; the result for the service staff was fewer jobs. I'm unclear on the "doing good" balance sheet on this one. Included in that conversation are lost jobs for coal miners and truckers. I thoroughly encourage and enjoy the robust and nuanced discussions we have in our investing committee sessions (though I feel guilty drinking water from a plastic bottle while doing so).

It is an exciting time to be an investor with values, and I believe it will get easier over time execute an investment program that aligns more fully with our mission. It is encouraging to see so many investors looking in the same direction. Harnessing that power to promote broad-scale improvements in the world will ultimately serve our cause.

The author is a member of St. James' Church in Manhattan, serves as president of the Diocesan Investment Trust and of the Trustees of the Estate and Property of the Diocesan Convention of New York, and is a trustee of the diocese.

Solar: Not for Everyone, But Perfect for Us

By the Rev. Anna S. Pearson

I began serving as rector at Grace Church in Hastings-on-Hudson in the autumn of 2008. It wasn't long before the congregation and I realized, as many parish communities do, that we were spending a lot of time and resources on property issues. From asphalt to boilers to structural repairs, the list seemed endless and endlessly familiar.

About four years later, during a vestry retreat day, the topic came up again. As we discussed it, we realized that we were almost always reactive in our approach to stewarding the property. Since we have two tenant organizations using our buildings and we partner with a number of local organizations in our mission work, we started to brainstorm about some of the ways in which we could witness *proactively* with our buildings. We were already spending a lot of time and energy (and money!) on maintenance—wouldn't it be extraordinary to align that work more intentionally with our commitment to God's beautiful creation?

Our first efforts focused on changes we could make right away: stepping up our recycling and reducing paper and plastic use. We replaced our lightbulbs and put outside lights on motion sensors and timers. When we were ready for the next step, we participated in the diocesan environmental audit. This gave us more projects to work on, and more ways to integrate our practices with our faith.

Not long after that, the idea of installing solar panels started to pop up in conversation. At first it seemed like a lot—too large a project for our worshipping community to take on. But slowly, more and more members of our community responded enthusiastically to the idea. Some pointed out that we had a perfect, newly installed parish hall roof. Others added that this same roof faced the old Croton aqueduct, visible to bikers, walkers and joggers passing by. A number of parishioners were investigating solar for their homes, or had taken the plunge already. We were blessed with funds that could be diversified by investing in a project that would offer returns greater than what was paid by the banks.

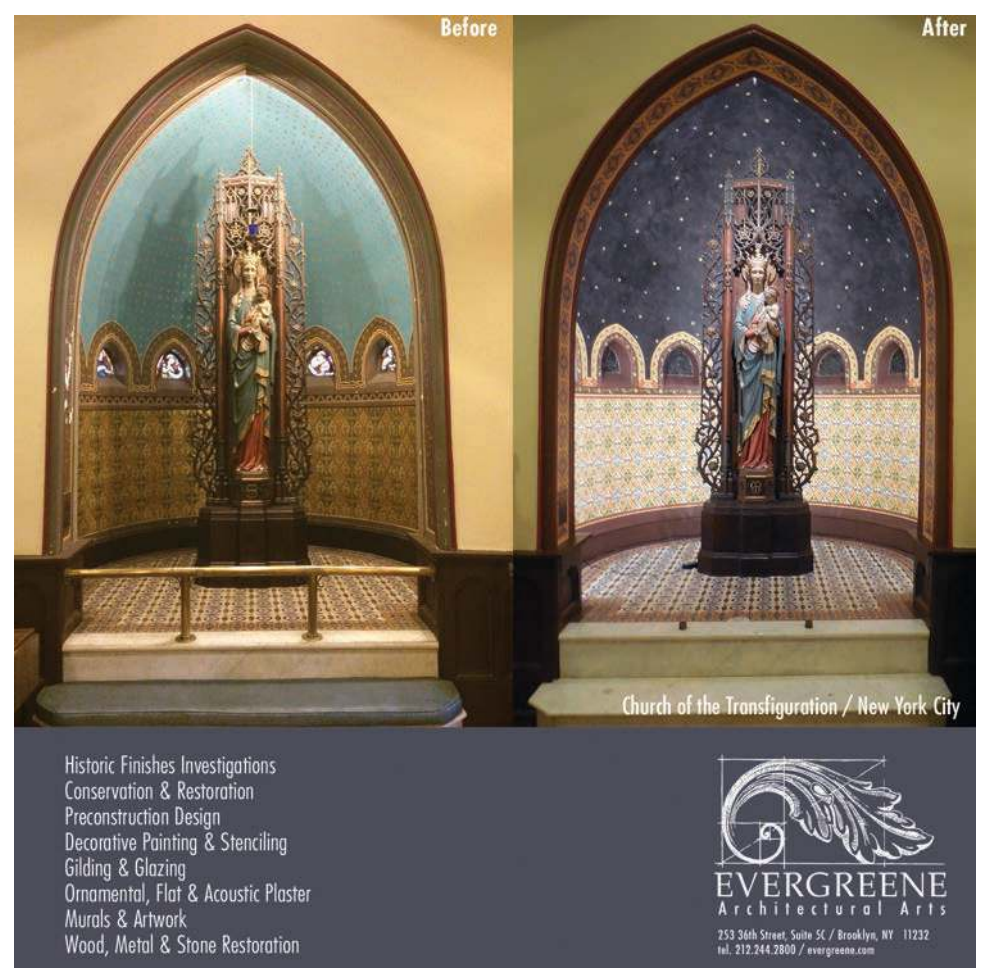
As interest grew, I convened a small committee to look at the possibility of this project in more detail. Members of this group were committed and meticulous in their research. Bit by bit they looked into and addressed all aspects of the immediate and the long-term implications of installing solar panels at Grace. At the same time, I was weaving the energy around the topic of environmental stewardship into sermons, meetings, Bible study and individual conversations.

The process, from first articulating the idea of solar to flipping the switch on the actual panels, was long. It took over two years and involved work with the diocese, the state, the village and the congregation. But commitment from our worshipping community to a project of this size was too important to be rushed. People needed time and space to ask hard questions and pray through any concerns they might have had. By the time our vestry called a special meeting of the congregation to hear a presentation from the solar subcommittee, most people were ready to embrace the initiative.

Immediately after that meeting, the vestry approved the project. Solar panels were installed in the summer of 2016 and were fully operational later that autumn. The electricity that is generated supplies all the power used in the church and in the rectory. We are seeing the savings predicted in our estimates, and those savings are enormously helpful to our bottom line. We know the practical advantages of reducing our carbon footprint, and the resources saved by harnessing the power of the sun. These are all wonderful results, and we are most grateful for them, but ultimately they are not why we decided to go forward.

There are many excellent ways for congregations to commit to stewardship of the environment. Solar is not for everyone, but it was a perfect fit for us. It is a joy to realize that, regardless of the daily headlines or the struggles felt by so many in these chaotic times, those solar panels are doing their job. We are deeply gratified to know that our parish hall roof is an outward and visible sign witnessing to an alternative way of living and to a distinct way to glorify and give thanks to God.

The author is rector of Grace Church, Hastings-on-Hudson.



Renewable Energy for Parishes: Can You/Can't You and Should You/Shouldn't You?

By Paul Curran

Every parish in the diocese worries about its utilities usage and its environmental footprint, and parishes often look to their electricity consumption to improve their environmental and financial budgets. Increasingly, this quest brings them to think about whether they might be able to use renewable energy sources to supply their electricity. And increasingly, there are ways that this can be possible; but it's important to consider how to go about it.

First, every church in the diocese buys its electricity from a utility such as ConEd, Central Hudson or NYSEG. That company buys the power from several power supplies. If the church expresses no preference, that company will find sources of electric power according to its own criteria, including price. The utility blends power from many sources. The table on the right, for example, shows the types of fuel used to generate the electricity supplied to the Bronx and to Dutchess County over the course of a year. If you don't like the way your electricity is made, you need to express a choice, either to your utility or by getting a different supplier. The good news is that you can do this—and your local utility will still deliver the power and send you your bill. The price will vary based on the type of electricity that you designate, and should be looked at carefully. Some municipalities have taken this a step further and made a cleaner choice the default option. If a church is in one of these, it need take no action to benefit.

The most direct way for a church or a home to use renewably generated electric power is to generate it onsite. Grace Church in Hastings-on-Hudson has done this, installing solar panels on the roof of its parish hall, as described in this edition by its rector, the Rev. Anna Pearson. Although straightforward to do, this option requires careful aesthetic consideration and a significant amount of space, with no existing or future shading. For structural or financial reasons, most churches cannot practically pursue this option.

If putting solar panels on the roof of a church seems impractical, it's pos-

sible to contract with a nearby renewable energy plant to buy all of their production through a system called remote net metering. Trinity-Pawling School contracted to buy all of the power from a very large solar energy array built on the surface of a landfill in Putnam County. The school significantly improved its carbon footprint, met long-term sustainability goals, but made no changes in its campus. Trinity-Pawling was a candidate for this type of favorable contract in part because it consumes a large amount of electricity on its campus and was therefore an attractive buyer for the solar energy project.

Recently, New York State introduced a way for individual homes or parishes that are not large energy users to buy into the energy production of a local renewable energy project. Known as "Community Distributed Generation," this system gives a buyer a share of the output of a local solar energy project. A parish, for example, would receive a credit on its utility bill and pay the solar project for the electricity. Typically, these contracts require many years of commitment, but guarantee a savings to the buyer as compared with the default utility supply. The contracts can only be done if the solar project and the buyer are supplied by the same utility.

Finally, it is important to take a step back and examine the larger question of how best to be stewards of the planet. If we choose to utilize solar energy in our parish, we do save some money from the parish budget—and using the

What Fuel Makes Your Electricity

	BRONX	DUTCHESS
Natural Gas	55%	26%
Coal	0%	6%
Oil	2%	1%
Nuclear	42%	31%
Hydro	0%	30%
Wind/Solar	1%	6%

table above, we can calculate how much those panels improve our church's environmental footprint. Nevertheless, our own church may not be the best place to make the investment. Electric power in a developing nation such as Haiti, for example, is not only far more expensive, but also far more carbonaceous than it is here in the U.S., as it is largely generated by diesel fuel. Aware of this, St. Nicholas on the Hudson in New Hamburg recently decided to donate \$12,500 from its capital funds to a school in Darbonne, Haiti towards the installation of solar panels and batteries. Rector Leigh Hall noted that "Clearly, using solar panels is great for the earth, no matter where they are placed. At St Nick's, we realized that the overall benefit is exponentially greater if that same panel is placed in Darbonne as opposed to New York."

The author is senior warden at St. Nicholas on the Hudson in New Hamburg and the founder of BQ Energy, which develops renewable energy projects on landfills and brownfields.



A 1.3MW solar array installed by the author's company, BQ Energy, on a 25 acre municipal landfill site in Patterson, NY.

Photo: BQ Energy.

Putting Money to Work to Stop Climate Change

Are your investments contributing to solutions or still part of the problem?

By JoAnn Hanson

The Episcopal Church has spotlighted climate concerns as part of the Episcopal mission. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has framed the four key values of the Church as evangelism, racial reconciliation, the environment and inclusivity.

In February 2015, Bishop Dietsche joined with 17 other Anglican bishops from all six continents to issue a “Call to Urgent Action for Climate Change” at *The World is Our Host* conference in South Africa¹. The bishops wrote that “the climate change crisis is the most urgent moral issue of our day.” At the groundbreaking COP 21 climate talks in Paris in 2015, Bishop Marc Andrus of the Diocese of California, as part of an eight-person delegation from the Episcopal Church, advocated for the reduction of global emissions, including global government support and funding for initiatives. Bishop Andrus and an Episcopal Church delegation have continued to participate in the subsequent COP meetings.

Implementing environmental, social and governance (ESG) investing provides investors with performance comparable to traditional investment approaches while supporting and encouraging companies to help address climate change from the ground up.

Every company has a carbon footprint, not just energy companies. And companies can sometimes take a longer-term view than governments about the impact of climate change. To manage this increasing risk, companies are making investments in climate change-related resilience planning both in their own operations and in their supply chains. They are motivated to adopt climate change-related policies for reasons that include financial return potential, the values of company leaders, fiduciary duty, and a forward-looking perspective on global investment trends. Companies also recognize that their investors, particularly the upcoming millennial cohort, are asking and requiring that companies focus on these issues.

The non-profit Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), which collects data on companies’ environmental impacts, notes that companies are making an important shift from doing what they think they can easily manage to stepping up to doing what’s needed. In 2017, 89 per cent of the companies in CDP’s data report having emission reduction targets, with the targets covering over 80 per cent of their emissions. More companies are working to future-proof their growth by setting science-based emission reduction targets in line with a 2-degree pathway².

Unilever provides an example of a company with a higher ESG rating (MSCI “A” rating), reflecting its science-based emission targets and commitment to source 100 per cent of its energy from renewables by 2030. Unilever notes that its extensive supply chain, dependence upon agricultural raw materials and enormous customer base with products sold in more than 190 countries to 2.5 billion consumers makes it vulnerable to the physical implications of climate change.

Companies recognize that good environmental policies can impact and improve their profitability. A Blackrock study in 2016 analyzed more than 160 academic studies, which demonstrated that companies with high ratings on ESG factors have a lower cost of capital, while separate research found that greater transparency of public companies in disclosing non-financial (ESG) data results in lower volatility. The University of Oxford’s review of 200 academic studies reached similar conclusions.

What are the steps that the Diocese of New York has taken with its money in response to climate change concerns? In November 2015, the Convention of the Diocese of New York urged the fiduciary bodies of all Episcopal institutions in the diocese to consider adopting or strengthening ethical investment guidelines and divesting from fossil fuel companies, especially coal companies. In response, the Trustees of the diocese adopted an Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Investment policy. The Trustees decided to minimize the diocesan portfolio’s exposure to the equity and fixed-income securities of fossil fuel, tobacco and firearms companies.

Working with the Church Investment Group (CIG), the Diocese of New York structured a portfolio which applies ESG approaches to its equity and fixed income holdings and minimizes exposure to energy companies with significant future energy reserves that they may never be able to develop and which could become stranded assets.

CIG, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving solely Episcopal endowments, has worked with all of its investors to adopt ESG investment approaches across a complete asset allocation. CIG offers two pathways: ESG applied to all industries; and ESG excluding the companies with the largest fossil fuel reserves.

In January 2018, Bishop Dietsche joined the Board of the Church Investment Group to further its mission of encouraging ESG investing so that Episcopal endowments can deploy not only their annual spending rate of 4 to 5 per cent on behalf of Episcopal mission, but also invest the majority of their funds proactively to support companies which have implemented sustainable environmental policies, responsible employment practices, and best corporate governance practices.

Companies’ behavior impacts the real world and companies are a critical component in the solution. ESG investment approaches identify those companies which have proactive strategies relating to climate change, as well as other important social and governance matters. Investors, in turn, can profitably invest with proactive companies and influence the behavior of the corporate world.

So, consider how your monetary assets are invested. Are they contributing to solutions or still part of the problem?

The author is president and chief executive officer of the Church Investment Group.

¹dioceseny.org/ednyfiles/the-world-is-our-host-good-friday-2015-statement-pdf

²To prevent the most severe impacts of climate change, in December 2010, parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreed to commit to a maximum temperature rise of 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and to consider lowering that maximum to 1.5°C in the near future.

Only Connect

By Sr. Catherine Grace, C.H.S.

Many people who have conducted good research agree that our planet is in serious trouble. No one likes hearing this negative information, and the usual reaction is either to debunk and ignore it, or to become sad and hopeless. Either response promotes inaction.

But how did we get into this mess in the first place? We usually define sin as separation from God; but God never leaves us. We may feel or believe that we have been abandoned, but that is only a thought, not the truth. I think the problem is more human-related. Two beliefs seem to lie at the root of our suffering: that disconnection is real, and that power is good.

If we were connected to “the other” in a meaningful way, it would be impossible to harm them. “The other” might be human, or it might be trees, air, cows, the earth itself. Anything we are not connected with becomes “the other,” and anything we consider “other” becomes fodder to meet our own needs and desires. What we need to (re)learn is that there really is no “other.”

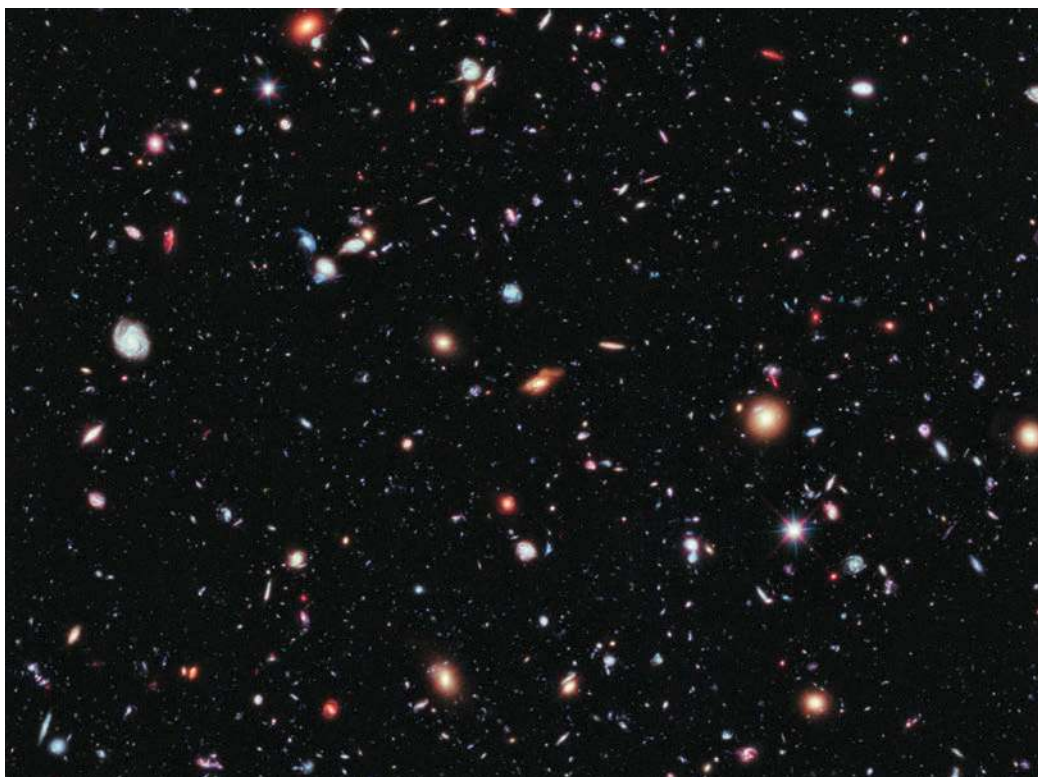
My favorite teaching from Brian Swimme is that everything in the universe is in deep communion, everything in the universe is unique, and everything in the universe has its own valuable interiority. That structure echoes a trinitarian relationship that is deeply woven into the Christian faith, and understanding how that structure is at work every day and everywhere is important.

The deep communion of the universe means that all its apparently limitless modes of expression (stars, planets, galaxies, bacteria, humans, elephants, tarantulas, mountains, sunsets ...) arose from a singularity. It means that absolutely everything—from the tiniest quark to a vast black hole—is related and depends on something else in this universe for its existence. In this deeply related system, each thing is connected with everything else, and absolutely everything, without exception, has its own precious “self”—that spark of God that animates and sustains the entire universe and all that it holds.

Here on earth, many of us act as if we are no longer connected to much more than our technology, which itself is simply a manifestation of human thought. Few of us really know the trees in our neighborhood, which birds arrive in spring, where our water comes from, or the current phase of the moon. Many of us don’t know our neighbors’ names, let alone their sorrows and joys. We don’t understand the daily challenges of, or value the gifts of, people outside our own geographic and economic situations. Wrapped in our busyness, we increasingly live as if we actually can be, and *are*, disconnected.

This loss of connection affects structures as well. One quick example is the medical world, where the bottom line is the bottom line. Corporations are making money (medical practice corporations, pharmaceutical corporations, health insurance corporations); and the patient, who should benefit most from good medical practice, spends more time with those corporations than they do receiving real hands-on care. Doctors no longer spend more than fifteen minutes with a patient, unlike the days when your doctor was practically a member of the family.

The drive for power, which seems to be an unfortunate feature of human potential, certainly plays a leading role in our journey toward self-destruction. This was already recognized in the early writings that became our Garden of Eden story. There are Adam and Eve, happily surrounded by beautiful land, plenty of food, good human companionship, and a loving creator—yet they



"Absolutely everything...is related and depends on something else in this universe for its existence." Hubble Ultra Deep Field image.

Photo: NASA; ESA; G. Illingworth, D. Magee, and P. Oesch, University of California, Santa Cruz; R. Bouwens, Leiden University; and the HUDF09 Team.

soon, with just the tiniest bit of encouragement, fall under the lure of power. Humans have been increasingly driven by the dream of power for a very long time. Most of us no longer recognize that we live surrounded by an amazing natural and precious world, that our bodies require truly good food, easily obtained from the surrounding nature, or that we are spiritual beings in constant and eternal relationship with the divine. We substitute the pursuit of power (and money) for real, meaningful connection.

In an alarming video¹, Guy McPherson presents convincing evidence that Earth is in its last years as a life-supporting planet. It was discouraging, to say the least, but I managed to sit through it. After listening to powerful evidence that the human species is very likely to succumb to the impending transformation of the planet, McPherson surprised me. He said when people ask him what they should do, he tells them “do what you love, and passionately pursue a life of excellence.” What would that mean, in every present moment given to us before we inevitably pass into our own death and transformation?

I have to admit I cringe a little bit when I hear the phrase “stewardship of creation.” I know the intended meaning is good, and I appreciate that. But a steward is a hired employee of someone who wants certain chores to be done for them, and I’m not convinced that points us in a useful direction right now. What I’m looking for are words that call each one of us to loving, doable, engaging, beneficial action. Each of us can only change one person on this planet, and that one is our self. Making decisions that connect us meaningfully is a choice we can each make, right now, every day, every minute.

Perhaps doing what we love and passionately pursuing a life of excellence is a good place to begin.

The author is a member of the Community of the Holy Spirit at Bluestone Farm and Living Arts Center, Brewster.

¹See <https://episnyd.io/eny18a> for McPherson’s YouTube page.

Vegan Theology for Christians

By Eric O'Grey

Does God want us to eat animals? Does He care whether we're kind or cruel to them? Let's look to the Bible for answers.

According to the first book of the Torah and Old Testament, God created animals before humans, and He saw them as good (Genesis 1:24–26). He told the humans to “[r]eign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground” (Genesis 1:27). He then told them to eat plants: “I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food” (Genesis 1:29).

God's first home for humans was Eden, and it was a vegan paradise. He told them, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden” (Genesis 2:15–16). When they disobeyed Him, they were expelled from paradise. Because they continued to disobey, He flooded the Earth, made animals fear humans, and gave Noah permission to eat animals (Genesis 9:2–3). But God never instructed anyone else to eat them, and without any reason offered for giving this permission to Noah, it's reasonable to presume that He did so *out of necessity*, because there may have been no other food available immediately after the flood.

God endowed humans with the ability to eat both meat and plants, but just because we *can* eat something doesn't mean that we *should*. The better question is what would He want us to eat today, given the effect of this choice on our health, our planet, and our fellow creatures?

God created humans from earth (Genesis 2:7), and the essential elements that our bodies require are found in the soil. These nutrients are replenished by the plants that God gave us to consume, which include over 20,000 edible fruits, vegetables, herbs, spices, beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds. As demonstrated by Daniel in the Bible, humans are often healthier when they consume vegetables rather than meat (Daniel 1:8–16)—and modern science has confirmed that plants can provide all humans¹ with healthy, complete nutrition. Achieving optimal health through vegan eating can also enable us to have longer, happier, and healthier lives, attracting others to the Lord through our good example.

God's covenant with Noah also included animals: “I hereby confirm my covenant with you and your descendants, and with all the animals that were on the boat with you—the birds, the livestock, and all the wild animals—every living creature on earth” (Genesis 9:9–10). Other Bible verses show that God cares about all animals—for example, Matthew chapter 6 says, “Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them” (6:26). In Ecclesiastes, God proclaims, “For people and animals share the same fate—both breathe and both must die. So people have no real advantage over the animals” (3:19). He continues, “For who can prove that the human spirit goes up and the spirit of animals goes down into the earth?” (3:21).

Does anything in the Bible tell us that we must eat animals? No. But there are examples in the Bible of people eating meat. Does that mean that we should eat meat today? There are also examples in the Bible of rape (2 Samuel 13:14), incest (Genesis 19:30–36), genocide (1 Samuel 15:3), and slavery (Leviticus 25:44–46), but no rational person would attempt to advocate these practices today simply

because they occur in the Bible.

Jesus called his first disciples away from careers as anglers and recruited them to become fishers of men instead (Matthew 4:18–20). When Jesus multiplied bread and a few fish to feed thousands, the Bible doesn't say that He killed the fish—only that He multiplied already dead ones, *out of necessity*, to feed hungry people (Luke 9:12–17, John 6:1–14, Matthew 15:32–39, and Mark 8:1–9). Jesus did say that humans should be good shepherds: “The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). A good shepherd would not engage in cruelty to animals or modern factory farming practices—in which sentient beings are constrained in unnatural, inhumane conditions and slaughtered far short of their species' natural life expectancy—because *necessity* doesn't require us to eat meat to survive, and healthier plant-derived foods are widely available.

When Jesus was asked to name the most important commandment, He answered that the first is to love God with all your heart but the second is equally important: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:36–40). We cannot practice this teaching if we eat animals when vegan options are abundant, because animal agriculture is harming our planet and neighbors. According to the United Nations², the environmental damage caused by animal agriculture is more harmful to the planet than the effect of all fuel used for transportation worldwide. And 82 percent of the world's starving children live in countries where grain is fed to animals who are killed and shipped to other countries, such as the U.S., for consumption by wealthier people. Given these consequences, would Jesus eat animals and contribute to this harm? No, He would choose to eat food that doesn't harm the planet or any member of God's creation.

The Bible is clear that people will be vegan again in the end times, just as we were in paradise: “In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard will lie down with the baby goat. The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion, and a little child will lead them all. The cow will graze near the bear. The cub and the calf will lie down together. The lion will eat hay like a cow” (Isaiah 11:6–9). And Hosea says, “On that day I will make a covenant with all the wild animals and the birds of the sky and the animals that scurry along the ground so they will not harm you” (2:18). Therefore, in the end times, God will repeal the permission that He gave Noah to consume animals and humans will again live in peace together with animals.

Since we live in fallen times, between paradise and the end times, we should aspire to live according to God's most ideal plan. Just as He has given us His mercy and grace, we should give our mercy to animals.

This article is republished from PETA Prime (<https://prime.peta.org>) with permission. All biblical quotations in it reference the New Living Translation.

The author is an inspirational speaker residing in Boise, Idaho. His book Walking with Peety: The Dog Who Saved My Life was published in October, 2017.

¹See Journal of the American Dietetic Association, July 2009, pp. 1266ff. Online at [http://jandonline.org/article/S0002-8223\(09\)00700-7/pdf](http://jandonline.org/article/S0002-8223(09)00700-7/pdf).

²<http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2006/1000448/index.html>

This Fragile Earth

A Report on the Deacons' Conference.

*By the Rev. Deacons Robin Beveridge, Linda Duval,
Gail S. Ganter-Toback, Teri Crawford Jones, and Ann Conti*

In the first chapter of Genesis, the power of God the Creator transforms a formless void into a world that has day and night, sky and sea, vegetation, sun and moon, and swarms of living creatures. And God saw that it was good.

God then said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness . . . male and female he created them.” And then God stepped back, viewed his finished masterpiece in which each creature is connected and dependent one upon another, and said, “Indeed, it was very good.”

And yet we look around “our island home” as God’s stewards and what do we see? We see that creation is in deep peril and that we, his stewards, have betrayed his trust.

Last October the deacons of our diocese gathered together in community for our annual conference, hosted by the deacons of the Mid-Hudson Region. Our theme was “This Fragile Earth, Our Island Home” —a description drawn from Eucharistic Prayer C.

WHY DID WE CHOOSE THIS THEME?

God’s creation is crying for us to pay attention. We believed it is vital to explore the impact our actions have had upon our air, soil, water, and food—and to explore practical ways for us and for our faith communities to respond.

Our Friday night session focused on the showing of the documentary *Racing Extinction*,¹ which focuses on the massive rate of extinction that is happening around the globe. It highlights the impact that our actions have on wildlife, on vulnerable communities, on carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, on our oceans, and on our food chains. It demonstrates how small changes that each of us can make in our daily lives can have a positive impact today and on future generations.

Several key thoughts that came out of the documentary were:

- “The whole world is singing, but we have stopped listening.”
- “Everything we do emits CO₂—we just can’t see it.”
- “We depend upon the oceans to breathe.”
- “Dream inside a world, not in a box.”
- “Be part of the solution.”

Following the video, a discussion centered on these questions:

- Do you think climate change is a spiritual and/or a moral issue? Have you felt the impacts of climate change?
- Who do you think is most responsible for finding a solution to environmental problems—individual people, corporations, faith communities or the government?
- How does protecting the environment help poor communities and neighbors most at risk from changes in climate?
- What is the relationship between food production and extinction?
- How do different types of food production differ in their impacts on extinction and climate?
- How do human activities result in species extinction and what species have become extinct due to human activities?

Our Saturday morning program included presentations by the Rev. Jeff

Golliher, the chair of the diocesan committee on the environment, and by several of his fellow committee members: Jo Anne Kraus on her work at Christ Church, Riverdale; Felix Okolo on his work with WE ACT (see page 19 for an article about WE ACT) and St. Philips Church, Manhattan; The Rev. Matt Calkins, who gave a presentation on the Food Farm Faith Initiative at Grace Church, Millbrook; and Peter Smith on the Quassaick Creek Watershed Alliance in Newburgh.

From Peter Smith we heard of the shock of discovering that your community does not have control over its drinking water source—as happened in the City of Newburgh where the primary source, which lies outside the city limits in a priority growth area at the intersection of two interstate highways (I-84/I-87), was contaminated by perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) emanating from Stewart Air National Guard Base. We learned that developing local watershed alliances to protect the land and water can, at the same time, provide recreational opportunities for local residents.

From Felix Okolo, we heard of the challenges faced by St. Philip’s Church in Manhattan in the face of neighborhood gentrification. They discovered that engagement is key and have become involved in Energy Democracy, where community members have a voice and are part of the whole process. Awareness of sacrifice zones² that are subjected to water and air pollution is important.

Some closing thoughts:

- The web of life that includes us is falling apart. It is our greatest challenge. Our whole life together is endangered. We are the problem. By strengthening our capacity to be the Church, we strengthen our community of life.
- Instead of the word “environment,” use the words “God’s creation.”
- Consider how the world is different from when you were growing up, and what has caused changes.
- Explore renewable energy resources such as solar power.
- The Church at the local level is a convener, a catalyst and a capacity builder.
- Witness the power of the earth by developing local food movements with sustainable crops. Work with Rural and Migrant Ministry to protect and advocate for the farmworkers who provide the harvest.
- Lift up Rogation Days by creating new relationships between our parish community and our surrounding community. Celebrate through ritual and sacrament the Blessing of Fields Day—fields, seeds, farm owners and farmworkers.
- It is so easy to want to do something; it is harder to do it. The Earth Ministry at Christ Church, Riverdale began by building friendships among parishioners. It is that core group of friends plus persistence that has kept the group moving forward.
- We can widen our understanding by linking our surroundings and our vulnerable neighbors with God’s creation. We can become aware of how our actions impact God’s creation and our vulnerable communities.
- Each of us, as stewards, is called to see each piece of God’s creative fabric as sacred and to work together as a community of faith to respect this fragile balance of life and to witness to its care in word and in action.

¹See racingextinction.com/the-film/. Currently streaming on multiple services.

²Sacrifice zones are geographic zones that have been permanently impaired by environmental damage or economic disinvestment. These zones are commonly found in low-income and minority communities

WE ACT for Environmental Justice

By Athena Motavvef



WE ACT taking action.

Photo: WE ACT.

Studies have shown that people of color and low-income residents live, work, play, and pray closer to sources of pollution than the population at large. Such was the case in late 1980s West Harlem, when community leaders recognized the ugly face of environmental racism as their community dealt not only with poor management at the North River Sewage Treatment Plant (which opened in 1986 on the Hudson River between 137th and 145th Streets, producing noxious odors that affected much of the nearby community), but also with the construction of a bus depot that would inevitably have negative health consequences for those living nearby. In response, the three leaders pushed for community-driven political change through community mobilization and civil disobedience. On Martin Luther King Day 1988, a group known as “The Sewage Seven”—including former West Harlem District Leader and current WE ACT for Environmental Justice executive director Peggy Shepard—were arrested for holding up traffic on the West Side Highway in front of the North River plant, while community residents wore gas masks and carried placards across from the plant on Riverside Drive.

Three months later, three members of The Sewage Seven founded WE ACT for Environmental Justice with the commitment to empower their local community to become a vocal, informed and proactive force that determines and implements its own vision of what its environment can and should be. One of the first environmental organizations in New York State to be run by people of color, and the first environmental justice organization in New York City, WE ACT’s current mission is to build healthy communities by ensuring that people of color and/or low-income residents participate meaningfully in the creation of sound and fair environmental health and protection policies and practices.

Today, the organization has grown to over 16 staff members and 2 locations in New York City and Washington, D.C., and is considered an active and respected participant in the national Environmental Justice Movement, which began in order to call attention to, and organize against, environmental racism—something that is often left out of mainstream, largely white, environmental advocacy agendas. In 1991, a multi-

national group, including WE ACT, attended the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in Washington D.C. At that event, the Principles of Environmental Justice¹ were created and agreed upon, and still stand as a guiding set of principles for the environmental justice movement today.

From our headquarters in West Harlem we provide effective leadership in the development of New York City. Our projects, such as the Northern Manhattan Climate Action Plan², include recommendations for policy changes and informal local actions that are designed to mitigate environmental impacts, while also addressing the systemic inequality that has led to a lack of political power for low-income communities of color as they confront the advancing effects of climate change. WE ACT has launched Solar Uptown Now³, a campaign to bring northern Manhattan community members together to pay as a group for more affordable solar installations. We also offer a worker training and job readiness program, in which we help reduce unemployment among local residents. During monthly meetings, we partner with a local organization to offer food shares to our members in order provide access to fresh produce.

Our second office, in Washington, D.C., is the only environmental justice organization located in the nation’s capital that focuses on federal advocacy and policy. It is also the lead organizer of the Environmental Justice Forum on Climate Change, a national coalition of over 40 environmental justice organizations working together to advance climate justice and impact policy to ensure the protection and promotion of communities of color and low-income communities throughout the United States. Both offices continue to work to ensure that all people have the right to clean air and water, and to live in a safe and healthy community.

The author is communications coordinator at WE ACT for Environmental Justice in Washington, D.C.

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine
Spirit of the City Anniversary Gala
Wednesday, May 23, 2018

Celebrate our Birthday!

This year marks two milestones for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine: the 125th anniversary of the laying of our cornerstone and our official designation as a New York historic landmark—so we’re throwing a party!

6 pm

An exquisite buffet dinner featuring international foods in the chapels.

8 pm

Drinks and dancing featuring The Duke Ellington Legacy Band and the Bowery Boys. (Tickets to this portion of the evening may be purchased separately.)

Please call Marie Miranda at (212) 316-7498 or email at mmiranda@stjohndivine.org for more information.

¹<https://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>. ²<https://www.weact.org/campaigns/nmca/>.

³<https://www.weact.org/campaigns/solaruptownnow/>.

Addressing Agricultural Ignorance

By Jason Detzel

There is nothing more sacred than killing another animal.” The words spilled out of my mouth before I had time to process them, but unlike most of the other unfiltered comments I make, I allowed this one to float across the room, unfettered by apologies or attempts to clarify. Hunting season was upon us once again, and that means time to be careful with your words and your weapons. Our modern society has afforded us many benefits, but along with those benefits flows a stream of ignorance that plagues me in my professional and personal work.

Much of this is directly related to our understanding of the modern food system. We have become increasingly separated from the realities of agriculture, the workings of natural systems, and the interconnectedness of our planet’s integrated food web. This was made very clear to me recently when I was speaking to some college freshmen. None of them had ever hunted; only two of the class had ever cooked a whole chicken; and yet all of them claimed to be interested in food policy and procedure. As Leonardo da Vinci stated, “Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do.” These students understood the concepts of killing, of eating, of being good stewards of the land, and the many facets of sustainability—but they had yet to be afforded the opportunity to do and experience those things in the real world. To be clear, I do not fault them: It is ultimately up to caregivers and society at large to decide what should be integral to our young pupils’ upbringing, and to teach and provide accordingly. The problem is that all sorts of exploitable knowledge deficits have been opened up, either because our society no longer values this type of knowledge and critical thinking, or because we have found our primal needs sufficiently satiated through modern commerce.

So how do we promote true agriculture awareness? Like all things productive, it starts right here at home, with ourselves. Investigate the natural world through reading and experiencing. Better yet, take a book on a long hike and identify ten trees, plants, or birds that you see. Ask a hunter to take you hunting, or ask to participate in the breakdown of the carcass. Visit farms and ask the questions that are important to you. I, like many of my peers, am excited to explain agricultural processes to outsiders. This is my field, this is my life, and explaining the process of training pigs to an electric wire or how to tell if a cow’s rumen is full are among my favorite topics. Without knowledge and understanding, we cannot truly appreciate what something is, was, or will be.

This lack of awareness is at the center of many of today’s divisive issues surrounding agriculture and hunting. Those who know are unwilling to speak because of fear of being chastised. Those that do not know are unwilling to ask because they see the people involved as perpetrators of a broken system. So how are we to teach, if no one is speaking and no one is listening? Like most things, “it don’t come easy.” It requires individual inquiry that is nurtured by a supportive system. That system can be a parent or uncle at home, the farmer down the road, or our schools.

What if public schools offered to teach animal husbandry and each student was given the opportunity to raise, process, and consume animals that they reared themselves? At the very least we would either be faced with far more vegetarians or with better-educated students who understand that killing is not something taken lightly by any producer or hunter. There are as many suggestions and solutions as there are problems, and at this point I am proposing neither. What I am asking is that we challenge ourselves to learn something new about the natural world every day, and in turn teach that to someone else. The more we know about how the world works, the more

empowered we become to make important decisions about the food we eat and the businesses we support.

The issue of increasing agricultural awareness is important to me because I cherish our natural world, whether it has been influenced by the hand of man or the pressures of nature. I look forward to a day when a comment like “there is nothing more sacred than killing an animal” is made to a classroom full of students who, while not required to agree, at least have enough experience to comprehend the weight and reverence such a statement carries.

The author is livestock educator with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County.

Ask the Leaves

By Br. Randy Greve, O.H.C.

Medallions of emerald silk
Photosynthesizing in the summer sun
Veined faces smiling with round contentment
They dance in the breeze and
Wave to the river boaters oblivious to their greeting
Though the troubled waters gently lap the shore’s gray rocks in reply

Thus it has always been
And will never end
this green brilliance
this hum of life

September comes
Cooler, less hum, diminished waves
And one day, at the top of the everlasting greenness,
Not emerald, but ruby and zircon and citrine
Gems of another quarry of time
Not from always and never

October comes
With each passing day -
that dreadful hurdling from moment to memory -
they fall
A silent expectant floating down
The final wave more victory than death
Where the breeze? Where the smile and dance?
The leaves know more than us,
Know both their coming and their going
Thus it has always been, this fall

Into the arms of yesterday and earth
Into their source and grave and home
and ours

The author is a member of the Order of the Holy Cross, resident at Holy Cross Monastery in West Park.

A Farmer Goes to Church

By Isabel Cochran

It was a crisp fall morning, and I was steadily working my way toward the rising sun, harvesting spinach. I filled my hand with cold, wet, crisp leaves, gave a quick flick of the knife to sever the spinach from its roots, and tossed the fresh handful into the case on my left. At this point, spinach harvest was like background noise to the complex problems and decisions that occupied my mental space. This allowed my work, though physical in nature, also to be a time for decision-making and reflection.

In a short hour, the crew and I covered the 200-foot beds of spinach, moving across the field from west to east, greeting the sun as it rose higher over the horizon. We walked back to the cooler with over 100 pounds of food that had been part of our work of stewarding the natural world, and through distribution, would be a tool to nourish people and cultivate community. During the time of harvest our thoughts wandered from the mundane to the extraordinary, a gift of our career, that pulls us away from screens, cubicles, and corner offices and into the trenches of the problems and practicalities of food production. Each week, our customers take a piece of our stewardship to their tables, and our lives are part of the hardships and triumphs of agriculture.

My first foray into farming occurred after two years spent problem solving within the confines of collegiate engineering, chemistry, and biology labs. I needed to head outside: to feel the sun on my back, feel in my body and see with my eyes the work that was accomplished each day, to see problems arise and be solved. The first season was rewarding. As I became stronger and learned more skills, I was rewarded with healthier plants, happier animals, greater ingenuity, and increasing fruits of my labor. I returned to academia ready to stretch my brain—the skills learned problem solving in a chemistry or biology lab are quite applicable to agriculture, and a diversification of my studies at a liberal arts school would expand my ability to engage with the issues confronting the agricultural community. I spent one more summer of college working on a farm, and despite my degree in neuroscience, upon graduation, decided that a farm was where I was being called to work. I hoped to combine the satisfaction that I experienced tackling complex intellectual issues in school with the satisfaction of physical work to create efficient, practical farms that would steward the bodies, minds, and souls of producers and consumers while maintaining reverence for the earth.

As the day-to-day actions of farming have begun to take root in my body, I have moved into tackling the complex management and logistical decisions, and during the rote tasks I have the freedom to wrestle with the practicalities that a career in farming imposes on one's life, and on the injustices—social, economic, and environmental—in our agricultural system. My work gives me a visceral connection to a life-giving necessity for all beings, and a deep understanding of the problems within that system. I feel a strong connection to the nourishment that families take home to their tables; and am recognizing that coming to the altar at church on Sunday provides not only personal relief and perspective on the issues my career presents, but also potential avenues to explore how to engage a large group of people with the issues of the system.

Saturday dawned crisp and beautiful, yesterday's spinach joined a bounty of



"Can we bring the dialogue, reflection, and wisdom found at church to our kitchen tables...?" Josef Israels: Peasant Family at the Table (detail).

Photo: Wikimedia Commons/Google Art Project.

other vegetables harvested for our community. Members arrived at the farm excited for the food, joyful to greet their neighbors, and appreciative of the peace that is offered by the farm's serene setting. Children frolicked across the grass, picking flowers, playing catch, and admiring bugs. Adults caught up with friends new and old, picked flowers, and released a few of their stresses to the fresh air.

I appreciate the serenity of the farm everyday. It provides an antidote to the stresses of my job and life. But most people tackle their stresses without a place of peace and serenity. I also find myself deeply connected to the unique human experience of eating at a table because of my work, and have found deeper connection to this experience through my attendance at church. For some people, church is this place to seek guidance, reflection, and peace, to stop at the altar for nourishment of body and soul.

We are all welcomed to the altar as a community, without judgment of our personal or interpersonal difficulties, to engage for the greater good of ourselves through community. Can we extend the communal welcome given at the door of the church to the door of our kitchen? Can we bring the dialogue, reflection, and wisdom found at church to our kitchen tables and engage eaters across boundaries to solve agricultural issues that impact the earth, our communities, and humans? Can the tables, in our houses become places not for caloric ingestion, but for stewardship of our soul and our communities? I came to church, in part, to find perspective on internal reflections, but found an unexpected avenue that connects my career and my spirituality and that can be used to address issues confronting communities and agriculture. Connections found around the table will be a powerful catalyst for social change.

The author is a member of Grace Church, Millbrook.

Cathedral School Environmental Action

The Cathedral School of St. John the Divine environmental club was founded in 2014 by a group of upper school students who wanted to do more to protect the planet. These 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders brainstormed a name that would reflect the mission of the club, and People's Environmental Action Club of Cathedral Kids, or PEACOCK, was born. Since that time, PEACOCK has become one of the largest and most active clubs at Cathedral. Students meet once every six days and develop plans to green the school as well as tackle local and international environmental problems. At Cathedral, they have eliminated disposable cups school wide, introduced composting, and improved recycling as well as energy efficiency. Beyond the Close, students have supported a citywide campaign to eliminate plastic bags and continue to raise awareness about environmental injustice. Internationally, they are working on ways that the community can combat climate change. The following article, written by members from the 6th grade, summarizes past accomplishments and current initiatives of the club.

Garbage/Recycling/Composting

By Georgia Goettel and Natalia German

PEACOCK has greatly helped our school with composting and recycling. A few years ago, we put in compost bins for our lunchrooms, and today we encourage people to compost at home if they can. We have worked really hard to get to this point in our school. Recently, we held a school assembly where we presented which items go into compost, recycling, and trash bins. It was really fun, and people have definitely been improving where they put each item. Our world needs help, and it's PEACOCK's job as a member of the larger community to make sure the school does its part.

Green Cleaning Products

By Miranda Ewing and Annabelle Gallo

PEACOCK is proud to have made green cleaning products a reality at our school. Last year, PEACOCK met with the Director of Facilities for the Cathedral and

talked about how green-cleaning products could be implemented and which ones to use. In October, the cleaning staff at our school wrapped up a month-long testing period using green cleaning products and determined that they work just as well as the regular ones. To introduce these products to our peers, PEACOCK put together a presentation that demonstrated how they work, proving that green cleaning products are just as good or better than some non-environmentally friendly products. We encouraged everyone to start using the green cleaning products at home. Ever since, our cleaning staff has been using the green cleaning products and doing their part to make a difference in the environment.

Reusable Cups, Unbleached Napkins, and Future Initiatives for Lunch and Food Services

By Elena Zhu and Susannah Zimmerman

In PEACOCK, we have worked so hard to get reusable cups and unbleached napkins. We used to have just paper cups with a plastic lining, which could not be composted. We then got unbleached napkins, which even after they are soiled can be composted. We still have work to do, though. Every now and then, we still get single-use cutlery. Thankfully, the plates are compostable, but the utensils are not. Some items that are not compostable can be recycled. For example, at our school we still have individual boxes of Cheerios that are not compostable but can be recycled. Our goal is to eliminate the single serving portions and put them in a dispenser. We also need to let people know more about recyclables. Sadly, students are not recycling items that could be, like milk cartons, even though we do have recycling bins. This is our time to make a difference so we as a school will make a mark against climate change.

WHY AM I A MEMBER OF PEACOCK?

Georgia Goettel: I have been a member of PEACOCK for almost two years now. Since I was a small child, I have always loved learning about biology and how our world works. I have taken a special liking to endangered animals and other plant species. I wanted to take a part in fighting for what is right, so I joined the environmental club of our school. I would love to encourage people to do the right thing as much as they can. Trust me, the little things count!

Beverly Darrow: For almost two years, I have been a proud member of PEACOCK. Every six days, I spend my lunch working on how to improve our environment, and I am not the least bit bothered by that. I choose to do this because we only have one planet, one chance at surviving, and I think we all need to do at least a little to fix the mess we have made. What really bothers me is how some people refuse to believe what we have done, but the sooner we accept our mistakes, the sooner we can fix them. That is why I am a member of PEACOCK.

Annabelle Gallo: For a very long time, I have heard in the news that that animals are dying, the air is being polluted and trash is building up in the ocean. It is really sad that almost no one is doing anything to help change this. If everyone were to work together to help the environment, we could really make a change in the world. Every small action counts, as long as you are doing your best to help. These are the reasons I joined PEACOCK. It is not hard to spend one of every six days trying to help your planet. It feels good to know that I am doing my best to improve our environment.

With grateful thanks to faculty advisors Hannah Stebbins, Jenny Gellhorn, and Shawna Altdorf.



Club members raising money selling hot chocolate (compostable cups) and reusable water bottles and hot/cold beverage containers. Photo: The Cathedral School.

The Poor Pay the Price

By the Rev. Canon Petero A.N. Sabune

Without water, there is no life, without water there is no baptism,” Bishop Dinis Sengulane, of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa, reminded those present at the CPSA Synod in Swaziland in 1992. He warned those in attendance that the well-being of the earth is connected to our very identity as baptized persons, children of God and followers of Jesus. Mozambique had just gone through a protracted civil war, which had done severe damage to the animals, the trees, and the rivers.

We are made in the image of God the Creator, but creation had to come first. We were the last kid on the block, and our being depended on creation. The dirt, of which we are made, the breath, breathed into us to become living, breathing beings were here before us. If we destroy creation, we destroy our very being. We were given the impression of the divine, to be caretakers and share the air, the stars and the moon, the sun, the birds of the air, and the trees of the rain forest.

The 2004 Nobel Peace laureate, Dr. Wangari Maathai, who planted 60 million trees across the African continent, called the Amazon and the Congo rain forest, the two lungs of our planet. Before starting the Green Belt Movement, she made the connection between poverty and climate change. It is the poor who pay the price for contaminated water and polluted air. Cutting down trees for charcoal to cook will cause soil erosion which will in turn contribute to deforestation.

When she visited New York, in 2010, a year before her death, Dr. Maathai was asked why she planted trees and organized women’s educational and economic co-operatives. Her answer was that she was a Christian. “A follower of Jesus!” she would say. In her book *The Challenge for Africa*, Dr. Maathai makes a direct link between the lack of safe, drinkable water in the stream of her childhood in Kenya and the undrinkable, contaminated water of her adult life. It was her faith which sustained her struggle to protect the rain forest.

One of the highlights of my career was baptizing men at Sing Sing. Our altar was a bathtub on wheels with a wooden cover. We would remove the cover and

hook up a water hose, which needed 12 hours to be filled. On Easter morning they would say their names and answer the questions, “What is your name?” “Do you want to be baptized?” We then would dunk them in the altar/ baptismal font, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Yes—without water, there is no life; without water, there is no baptism.

Scientists estimate that the cutting down of trees in the Congo Basin has led to an average 5 to 15 per cent drop in the amount of rain that falls in the Great Lakes region of the United States, reaching a peak of 35 percent each February. At the same time, rainfall has been reduced by as much as a quarter immediately north of the Black Sea. Winds from the Gulf of Guinea will cause severe storms in Central and South America. The water we drink and the air we breathe is all connected to our faith.

From the incarnation to the resurrection, creation is ever present. From the wood of the creche to the wood of the cross, we are connected. From the grape which becomes wine to the grain which becomes bread, we are called to the great thanksgiving, the Eucharist; but first give thanks for the grain and the grape. As followers of the one born in the manger and who died on the tree, we have no choice but to cherish the wood. Dr. Maathai would often close her presentations with her favorite Swahili song.

Hakuna Mungu Kama Wewe

Mungu Wangu

(There is no God like you)

(My God)

Our God is the Lord of creation and we are part of creation.

Thanks be to God.

Amen.

The author is a priest in the diocese.

The Greatest April Fools’ of Them All

By Douglass Hatcher

This year Easter fell on April 1st – also known as April Fools’ Day. How fitting is that?

Death, it’s true, you have the final word: April Fools’.

Hate, it’s true, you win out over Love: April Fools’.

Despair, you’re right, we’re a hopeless lot, unable to distinguish between the darkness and the light, April Fools’.

Selfishness, you’re right, we cannot be our brother’s keeper, April Fools’.

April Fools’ Day especially for school children is a day where we relish the chance to get somebody gullible to believe something unbelievable.

May we all be gullible enough to believe in something as outrageous as the power of love and the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Happy Easter! And Happy April Fools’ Day.

The author is a member and serves on the vestry of St. James the Less, Scarsdale.

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We Must Be Servants, Not Exploiters

By Helen Goodkin

*And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east;
and there he put the man whom he had formed.
Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree
that is pleasant to the sight and good for food...*
Genesis 2:8-9.

Genesis begins with two different stories of creation. Chapter 1 outlines the famous seven days, while chapters 2 and 3 discuss the Garden of Eden, the first humans, and their fatal disobedience. On the surface, the stories appear very different, but reading them in light of our current concern for the environment of “our island home,” as the Prayer Book says, there are significant similarities in how we are to view our relationship with the earth.

I recently gave a talk on these texts to a group of women from many different backgrounds. In looking for illustrations, I found the picture shown immediately below of the Garden by Jan Brueghel the Elder. Here the garden is resplendent with beautiful plants and exotic animals; quite small in the upper back corner are two tiny naked people, Adam and Eve. Humanity is only a minute part of God’s creation.



Jan Brueghel the Elder: The Garden of Eden.

Interestingly, when the story in Genesis 2 begins, we are told that there were no plants or herbs on the earth because God had not yet caused it to rain, *and* because there was no human, no earth creature, to till the soil. The earth creature’s job is designated even before it is created; God has need of someone to *take care of* the earth.

In the next verse, steam or water bubbles up from the ground to allow for fertility and cultivation. Only then does God form the earth creature from the dust of the ground, as one forms a clay pot. There is a pun in the Hebrew words for human and soil, such that Professor Phyllis Tribble refers to the first creature, as the human from humous. Then God acts as only God can by breathing life into the clay body so that it may become “a living being.”

Then GOD plants a garden in Eden and puts the earthling in it, with the commandment to till it and keep it, to assume the role of nurturer and guard or protector, of God’s creation. Interestingly, the Hebrew verb for “to till” also means

to serve. All human activity stands in service to the earth. The garden provides safety, aesthetic pleasure, physical nourishment, and fulfilling work. The human and the humous are one. Those involved with sounding the alarm about the ecological crisis need to look no further than this story to find a rationale for their arguments.

Genesis 1 concerns itself with the entire cosmos and begins “with a wind from God sweeping over the waters.” Everett Fox translates this as “the wind hovering.” The only other time we find this verb is in Deuteronomy 32:11, where an eagle parent hovers over and tends to its young. The God of Genesis 1 may be all powerful, moving the sun, the moon, and the planets around, but he or she hovers like a parent over the creation that has been made.

During days 5 and 6, God says let the earth and the waters bring forth fish, birds, and animals, including the great sea monsters and the creeping things that crawl on the ground. God and the earth cooperate in populating.

In verse 26, God initiates the creation of humankind, according to the likeness of God. The text says, “in the image of God created he it.” God also grants this earth creature dominion over the animals and the right to subdue the earth. These are two very strong words.

Anyone who has ever tended a garden understands subduing in terms of weeds and critters that destroy the plants. I see subdue as the human nurture that plants need to grow and prosper, our responsibility towards the earth and our environment. Interestingly, according to Genesis 1, the diet for humanity is strictly vegetarian.

As far as dominion is concerned, in Hebrew, it means sovereignty, often referring to the absolute power of rulers. But, I take comfort in Psalm 72 which speaks of how a king’s dominion must reflect goodness and mercy, having pity on the poor and the weak. As humans, our role is to tend to creation in the image of God. We are to be the care givers, the servants of the planet, not exploitative, to be a blessing, not a curse.

In 1967, Professor Lynn White wrote an article in the magazine *Science* in which he argued that since the Industrial Revolution, humanity had ceased to be stewards of the earth and become users and abusers. The roots of this he traced to this word dominion in Genesis 1.

Yet, both texts speak to the symbiosis between humanity and the created environment. In chapter 1, our role is to be a caretaker and nurturer, in the image of God, hovering over creation. We must use our resources with wisdom and concern for the generations that result from our own fertility.

Chapter 2-3 places humanity in a resplendent garden created just for it with a responsibility to till it and to keep it. Our initial disobedience caused us to be sent away from the garden. Yet we must continue to labor to bring forth food, toiling in “the thorns and thistles” of the earth outside the garden. (3:17-19)

At the conclusion of the Eden story, God clothes his naughty children in skins so that they have protection in the outside world. God has continued through the centuries to offer humanity, with all our foibles, continuous protection in many ways. It is time that we, recognizing God’s continuous concern for us, show our concern and determination, mightily, bravely, and convincingly, to maintain a global garden that that is fruitful, sustainable, equitable, and beautiful. We are, as the Brueghel painting suggests, just a very small part of the whole, but we are also the part that has the capacity to do the most good...or the most evil.

The author is a member of the Church of the Epiphany in Manhattan and a regular presenter in churches on Biblical topics.

Women and Climate

By the Rev. Canon Terrie Robinson

In Barbara Kingsolver's novel *Poisonwood Bible*, a missionary travels overseas and settles in a village in 1950s Belgian Congo. To provide for his family's subsistence, the missionary creates a garden and begins planting seeds. A village woman observes him planting in flat beds of earth, and advises him to raise the soil in mounds. The missionary dismisses her advice.

Overnight, the village woman reshapes the garden, creating long piles of earth with channels separating them. The missionary responds by levelling the mounds of soil and replanting the seeds in flat ground. The seeds sprout and begin to grow, and are promptly washed away when the heavy rains come.

Dismissing the woman's indigenous wisdom was an arrogance and a mistake. It is certainly a mistake in these days of our climate crisis, to dismiss women's local and hard-earned experience, knowledge, and the competencies they have acquired out of necessity for mitigation and adaptation. It is also a serious omission when the specific needs of women and girls are not factored into national and international responses—and the churches' responses—to climate change.

The environmental impacts of climate change are not gender neutral. A growing body of evidence shows that women are disproportionately affected by climate change. To a great extent, this is because women make up the majority of the world's economically poor. In some areas, they do most of the agricultural work. Women often bear more responsibility for household food security, and carry the greater part of the burden for harvesting water and fuel for day to day survival. And more time spent on securing basic resources means less time to secure an education or earn an income.

The lack of assets that is characteristic of so many women globally puts them at a particular disadvantage. Following severe weather events and related disasters, they are usually at higher risk of being placed in unsafe, overcrowded shelters.¹ And bearing in mind the estimate that by 2050 there will be 250 million environmental refugees, it is likely that women will find it difficult to make the move and re-establish themselves and their families elsewhere. When changes in environmental conditions cause displacement or simply increase hardship, more girls than boys drop out of school to help with domestic chores or to save money, or may be forced into early marriage in order to transfer the "economic burden" they represent.²

UN Women Watch has pointed out that "[i]n the context of cyclones, floods and other disasters that require mobility, cultural constraints on women's movements may hinder their timely escape, access to shelter or access to health care."³ It is estimated, for example, that 90 per cent of the 138,000 people killed in the 1991 cyclone that hit Bangladesh were women and children.⁴ In some areas of India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, up to 80 per cent of those killed by the 2004 tsunami were women.⁵

But women aren't just victims of climate change; they are also powerful agents of change. It is, therefore, gratifying to see that in its *"Agreed Conclusions,"* the recent session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women urges governments at all levels, and invites civil society—including faith-based organizations—to "develop and adopt gender-responsive strategies on mitigation and adaptation to climate change to support the resilience and adaptive capacities of women and girls to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change, through, inter alia, the promotion of their health and well-being, as well as access to sustainable livelihoods, and the provision of adequate resources to ensure women's full participation in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies and policies related to the adverse impacts of climate change, and ensuring the integration of their specific needs into humanitarian responses to natural disasters, into the planning, delivery and monitoring of disaster risk reduction policies and into sustainable natural resources management."⁶

The great mistake of our kind has been to see our own flourishing as something separate from the flourishing of the planet we inhabit, with all its ecosystems, creatures and plants. Yet God's handiwork is a tapestry of interwoven complexity. And that complexity means that every person, every woman and man, has something of great value to gain and to contribute as we respond to our ever more urgent calling to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The author is the Anglican Communion's director for Women in Church and Society.

¹UN Women Watch, 'Fact Sheet: Women, Gender Equality and Climate Change', 2009, <http://bit.ly/2pG4orK>

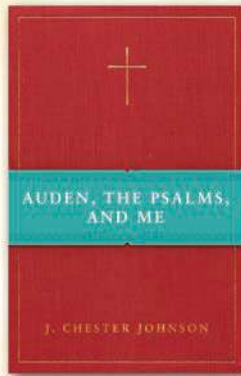
²Ian Davis et al, 'Tsunami, Gender and Recovery', 2005, <http://www.gdnonline.org/resources/tsunami%20-genderandrecovery.pdf>

³UN Women Watch, 2009

⁴Hanna Schmuck, Report from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2002

⁵Oxfam Briefing Note, 'The tsunami's impact on women', March 2005

⁶<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw62-2018>




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The Anglican Communion Environmental Network, Climate Change, and the Current Drought in Southern Africa

By the Rt. Rev. Ellinah Wamukoya

Environmental issues are a worldwide concern to the people of the Anglican Communion. The fifth of the five marks of mission, laid out at Anglican Consultative Council 6 (ACC-6) in 1984, was “To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the earth”—and in 2002 the Anglican Communion Environmental Network (ACEN), which I currently chair, received recognition at ACC-12 in Hong Kong.

With the effects of climate change and human-induced environmental degradation continuing to accelerate around the world, ACEN plays an important advocacy role for responsible environmental stewardship, provides support and leadership to local initiatives, and seeks to educate Anglicans as individuals and as communities to become better stewards of creation.

One of the most important environmental and developmental issues is climate change. The scientific consensus is that this is a result of human activities that cause greenhouse emissions. Its effects include global warming and climate variability, increased land and sea surface temperatures, rises in sea level, changes in rainfall patterns, increased incidence of flooding, increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather, deforestation and loss of traditional lands, extreme fire activity, and—probably the biggest single threat—drought.

These changes in climate will significantly affect all components of the natural environment, various sectors of the economy such as agriculture, fishing, and tourism, and human health, to mention just a few.

Faced with these challenges, the Anglican Communion Environmental Network encourages all Anglicans to

- support sustainable environmental practices as individuals in the life of their communities
- support local initiatives by providing information about ideas and best practices developed around the Anglican Communion
- share information about resources and initiatives that may be of value to Anglicans elsewhere (which has indeed been happening, both through formal networks and informally via electronic media).

The present ACEN team, representing different parts of the Anglican Communion, consists (in no order of priority) of Bishop Ellinah Wamukoya (Swaziland -current chairperson); the Rev. Canon Jeffrey Golliher (Anglican Communion Office at the UN/New York and chair of the Diocese of New York's Committee on the Environment); the Very Rev. Ken Gray (Canada); Dr. Matthew Koshy Punnackadu (Church of South India); The Rev. Canon Terrie Robinson (Anglican Communion Office/London); The Rev. Dr. Rachel Mash (Southern Africa); Dr. Andrew Leake (Northern Argentina); the Rt. Rev. Bertin Subi (Congo); The Rev. Melanie Mullen (The Episcopal Church).

Among other things, this team has been responsible for encouraging groups around the Communion to take an active part in pursuing the environmental agenda and is also committed to taking the environmental agenda beyond the Anglican community, including to evangelicals who have different views on climate change



A field in Siphofaneni in the Lubombo Region of Swaziland.

Photo: World Vision Swaziland.

from ours.

ACEN is, of course, not the only Anglican organization concerned with climate change. Another is the International Anglican Women Network, with which ACEN has sought to discuss areas of synergy. People from different countries—including “Eco-bishops”—come together at ACEN regional meetings, where the voices of the most affected are heard—namely those of women and young people. Part of our team's commitment has been to see to the production and use of the *Season of Creation*¹ including a children's manual—“Ryan the Rhino”—by Anglicans and our partners. In Swaziland we even experimented with pre-school use of Ryan the Rhino!

With climate change-induced drought on the horizon in Southern Africa or already with us, we

have an urgent need for climate change plans. Temperatures in this region are expected to rise by 1.5 to 3 degrees Celsius by the year 2050², resulting in fluctuations in weather patterns and severe weather events such as droughts and floods. Economies dependent on agriculture are already feeling the impact.

Some countries in the region, including Swaziland, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, have already had to declare national drought disasters, while Mozambique and 8 of the 9 provinces of South Africa have declared partial drought disasters. In the 2016 harvesting season, these countries experienced massive crop failures that led to a deficit of 9.3 million tons in cereal crop harvests, while about 634,000 cattle died because of the drought. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) estimated that a total of 41 million people were severely affected³.

Successive droughts have also hit the southern part of Angola, affecting agricultural production and access to safe drinking water, with an associated increase in malaria, diarrhea, cholera and malnutrition in children. And, of course, the drought effects in South Africa have also been dire, with two consecutive below average rainfall seasons since 2015. Cape Town has been the worst hit: According to Kevin Winter, a lecturer in Environmental and Geographical Sciences at the University of Cape Town, the current water crisis in the city is due to human-caused warming and should not be viewed as a temporary phenomenon, but as a long-term one that will need government intervention.

I conclude by asking readers of the *Episcopal New Yorker* to consider what the role of Episcopalians and of the wider Anglican Communion should be with regard to climate change and other environmental issues in order make the world a better place for us now and for generations to come—including those being born today in Cape Town in hospitals with dry taps.

The author is chair of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network (ACEN) and is Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Swaziland (Anglican Church of Southern Africa). She was the first Anglican woman bishop in Africa.

For more information on the Anglican Communion Environmental Network, please visit acen.anglicancommunion.org.

¹See <https://seasonofcreation.org/>.

²Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on the Regional Impact of Climate Change, <http://www.ipcc.ch/ipccreports/sres/regional/index.php>.

³https://www.sadc.int/files/4814/6840/2479/SADC_Regional_Humanitarian_Appeal_June_20160713.pdf.

Caring for the Earth in Southern Africa

By the Rev. Rachel Mash

God placed human beings in the garden of Eden and gave us the very first commandment, to “till it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15 NRSV). In other words, we were given both permission to work the soil *and* the responsibility to take care of it.

Given that commandment, and given that Africa is such a highly Christian continent, the state of God’s garden here is appalling. Forests have been cut down, the soil is eroded, the waters polluted, and the air filled with toxic chemicals.

Part of the reason for this is that the type of Christianity that came to Africa with the colonial powers was based on a theology of domination supported by a partial reading of Genesis 1:28. Where God said in that verse *Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth* (KJV), the colonial belief system focused on the “dominion” and “subdue,” and ignored the “replenish” part of it.

So for us as Anglicans in Southern Africa, the first challenge is to de-colonize our theology and look at the Bible with African eyes. There is great joy for us in re-examining our theology, and in heeding the call to renew and replenish the earth, as expressed in the fifth of the Anglican Communion’s Five Marks of Mission: *To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth*. We are indeed glad to embrace again the sacredness of the earth!

In doing this, the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) Environmental Network (known as “Green Anglicans”)¹ works on three levels: spirituality, local action and advocacy.

SPIRITUALITY

It’s important to start with spirituality, because otherwise you end up with the same old Church—just with a recycling bin outside. Most of all, we need to understand that the good news of the Bible does not refer only to human beings: it is significant that when John says “God so loved the world” (3: 16), he uses the Greek word *kosmos*. Yes! John is telling us that God so loved the cosmos—the whole of creation—that he sent his son. “All creatures that on earth do dwell” means just that!

One important change in this direction for us in Southern Africa has been the incorporation into our liturgical calendar of the *Season of Creation*². For the last seven years during the month of September, we have focused on land, on water, on climate change, and on biodiversity in our preaching, praying and actions—and while not all dioceses or parishes embrace it, the Season of Creation has become part of the DNA of several of them. A key factor in this success has been the translation of the Eucharistic prayer and some of the other liturgical materials into our 13 official languages. This has been a huge challenge—but in the words of Nelson Mandela, “when you speak in a language I understand, you speak to my head, when you speak in my mother tongue, you speak to my heart.” Liturgical language is heart

language. Another challenge has been the sourcing of music; in this we are often influenced by the American or Australian pentecostalist Hillsong type of praise and worship, which focuses very much on an individual relationship with God, and the challenge has been to find music which is more inclusive of the whole of creation.

Another important shift has been to encourage churches to hold services outside. We grew up only knowing the Book of God as words written on paper, and forgetting that the early Church fathers – including St Augustine of Hippo (in North Africa) – taught us about the Book of God written in nature. As the psalmist puts it,

*The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.* Psalm 19:1-4 (NIV)

As well as outside services, we are encouraging churches to have other outdoor events such as eco-retreats and “holy hikes”—in other words, to do *Church in Creation* and listen to God speaking to us through nature. Some highlights have been “Eucharist on Table Mountain,” “Church by the Ocean,” and “Church

in the Wetlands.” A couple of weeks ago we were invited to run a half-day eco-retreat for the synod of Bishops. We also circulate liturgical materials for World Environment Day, World Water Day, and other environmental days.

LOCAL ACTION

Churches in Southern Africa are responding to the spiritual call to be caretakers of Creation in many different practical ways. For our urban churches, this typically means mitigation—reducing electricity, paper, and fuel use; rural churches, meanwhile, focus more on adaptation, tree planting, and organic farming. But for all churches, wherever they are, environmental clean-ups are key.

The Young Green Anglicans movement, headed by young people who are “catching the vision,” has been a vital element in the drive for local action. While the older generation has failed in its duty to be stewards of creation, our young people are enthusiastically taking up the call to be healers of the earth.

We have also during the last three years embraced the concept of the “Carbon Fast for Lent” – in which the faster commits to taking 40 daily actions to reduce her or his impact on the planet. We cannot change the whole world in 40 days, but we can change ourselves, and thus inspire others to change as well. We have now partnered with the (continued on page 43)



Sunday School Children planting “little seeds of God” in Maputo Mozambique.

Photo: Diocese of Lebombo.

¹<http://www.greenanglicans.org/> ²<https://seasonofcreation.org>

Climate Change in the Pacific Island Nations

By the Rt. Rev. Apimeleki Qiliho

I am very glad to be invited to write down my experience on the challenge I am facing with regards to climate change. Before taking you further along my path of experience, I'd like to say three things: first, as a baptized Christian, I blame myself on this issue of climate change. Secondly, as I write this in Passion week, it is important for me to confess this as my shortcoming to God. And thirdly, as a Christian, the only way forward is to find sustainable solutions to the challenge that is now facing all God's creation.

SOUTH PACIFIC ISLAND STATES

All our South Pacific Island States are facing this same challenge. There's no longer a need to wait for further explanation. The introduction to a World Health Organization report on climate change and its impact on health on small island developing states confirms the seriousness of the situation: "The future will assess us, not just on what we did, but also on what we failed to do. One area where we must be judged by what we did well is in the protection, in particular health protection of people in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Small Islands are fragile ecosystems, populated by resilient people who have been able to cope with environmental threats over millennia. But the challenges that climate change brings today are unprecedented, and small islands are the places where the physical and social impacts of climate change are becoming most evident. Climate change is expected to pose an existential threat to SIDS."

The more we wait, the worse the problem becomes.

We are thankful that our various Pacific Island nations, as little as we are, have partnership with, and are closely working together with, the global community in our search for sustainable solutions. A lot more training and identifying other areas of working together are going on. Our Pacific Island people do not have money, but we do have the passion to be resilient amid all that is happening around us. Resettlement has been a particularly great challenge for us; there will be a consequent loss of our humanity and identity. At this very moment, as I write this on the Monday in Holy Week, the whole of Fiji is experiencing one of the heaviest rainfalls. This is a simple turnaround from the nice dry weather we had yesterday, our Palm Sunday—when my parish church of St. Luke had a beautiful procession at 8.15 in the morning. We walked and sang—and now, today, there's so much water around. Our low-income and poor people cannot face this because their houses are very poorly built. Water comes through and floods their private spaces. Many built around muddy areas. It's so sad to witness this, when we know that around the world the rich and well-to-do enjoy dry spaces.

The village I come from is no longer a joyful and peaceful place when high tide or "king tide" comes. Its seawall has been damaged, and when high tide comes, part of the village is flooded with seawater. It is the same with many of our Pacific islands. Another challenge we are facing is the change in the areas of the sea where we get our seafood—which is no longer on the surface, but buried under silt washed down by heavy rain and river water. Watching the documentaries on this issue from around the Pacific saddens me in some ways. Some of our Island leaders are now saying that resettlement is probably the only option because other measures—mitigation for example—take too much time. But resettlement, as we all know, has its own obstacles.

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Faith-based organizations are encouraged to work closely together with governments and various national bodies and global organizations. Church leaders are in the forefront in this issue and they speak in various forums in the Pacific and around the world. The Church also, through the General Synod, continues to discuss the different ways they can help to find sustainable solutions. Some dioceses in the province have policies on how to carry this through, and parishes are also carrying out their own individual missions.

Finally, we are witnessing our people in some Fijian islands undertaking coral replanting projects. Recently, for example, people in the Island of Maturiki spent days in the sea doing this. This is good in the long run.

The author is the Bishop of Vanua Levu and Taveuni (Fiji) in the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia.



Cleanup following flooding, Fiji, 2012.

Photo: AusAID.

The Western Canadian Experience

By the Very Rev. Ken Gray

With increasing force and urgency, the global climate and environmental crisis is upon us. Here in the interior of British Columbia (BC), which is Canada's most western province, the effects are increasing in both scope and intensity. Most interior residents attest to unprecedented changes in the physical environment, and to a pattern of intensifying weather events bringing extremes on the one hand of water scarcity, and on the other of uncontrollable and unpredictable flooding. Witnesses tell of higher temperatures for longer periods of time; they describe drier wetlands and, most importantly, in a province which is no stranger to wildfires as part of a natural cycle of forest regeneration, a devastating and most unnaturally destructive wildfire season, on a par with recent fires in California.

During the summer and fall of 2017, wildfires in BC covered the largest area in our history. At one point, almost the entire interior of the province was on fire. The BC Wildfire Service said that a total of 1,026 wildfires razed nearly 8,950 square kilometers, surpassing the old record of 8,560 square kilometres set in 1958. Most of the activity has occurred in the province's Cariboo region, where fires destroyed more than 6,700 square kilometres. Air quality, in some cases thick as soup, challenged health and wellness for many humans let alone wildlife. Headaches, nausea and physical weakness were frequent symptoms of the healthy, let alone the danger posed to those with cardiac and respiratory problems.

Numerous communities were threatened or evacuated. First Nations were particularly affected. Burial grounds, community centres, residential neighbourhoods and important pasture and ranch land was devastated. In all areas of the interior the economy is now threatened in new and unpredictable ways. Many describe the 2017 fire season as a *perfect storm*. Climate change, el Niño cycles, poor forest management practices, the effects of pernicious insects on timber, and water scarcity all combined to create disastrous conditions.

The costs for fighting the 2017 fires is calculated to exceed \$550,000¹. The costs to communities is much higher. Loss in both the forestry and ranching sector, the impact on small business associated with tourism and outdoor recreation, and the strain on public infrastructure such as roads, bridges and communications, have all contributed to a general feeling of anxiety and under-confidence in any kind of stable future. *Hopeless* is not too strong an emotion for some.

At a recent *world café* style community de-brief, participants shared successes and frustrations with community response. They identified ways in which communities could develop better response and preventative practices, policies relating to forest/community interface, water use, engagement of local wisdom, disaster response and critical social support. Some quotes from the dialogue include:

"Unprecedented. Not unexpected. Not over."

"We need to be learning from the practices of First Nations, but not just learning, beginning to reimplement them and also respecting nature."

"We're not going to stop growing as a population, we need a deeper affection for the land we live on."

"As devastating as it was to see the land my boots had trampled mere weeks before being consumed by fire, my heart swells at the thought of new life and regeneration of the local ecosystem. Though the fire and smoke left me separated from the world outdoors, I'm reminded that nature is resilient and will once more be lush with new growth."

For Christians, the quotes above easily connects with and embodies notions of death and resurrection. Such imagery also joins easily with an apocalyptic and anx-



Wildfire in British Columbia, 2017.

Photo: ©Chris Harris

ious experience—and some of that anxiety has inevitably affected our churches. We are a small territory, populated by small congregations with a loyal though tired lay and ordained leadership. Many are discouraged, confused and disheartened. In places where the civic community experiences stress, this same stress manifests itself in congregations. Conflict, mis-understanding and a heightened state of emotion have in some places led to bad decisions and a poor experience of community. When people who live close to the land find the land ravaged, their core life and faith values are tested. In other ways in recent decades, our people and congregations have exhibited tremendous resilience, and this is our current prayer. Presently however, the way forward is daunting and full of challenges.

Finally, the experience of wild fires is told amidst a fierce national and intra-provincial conversation about pipelines, coastal degradation and the influence of fossil fuel extraction, processing and transmission. Most British Columbians are primarily concerned with potential pollution arising from the spillage of thick bitumen. An increasing number of residents make a clear connection between the practice of extracting and burning fossil fuels with atmospheric changes, ocean acidification, and changes in the agricultural and hydrological cycle. For many, global climate change directly and immediately impacts life here in British Columbia, popularly termed *Cascadia*.

Concurrent with this conversation is the nature of "free prior and informed consent" experienced by First Nation Peoples through whose land pipelines travel, and on the coast where high-carbon product is transferred for shipping overseas. Many key cases are presently before the courts and more are in process of advancement.

Additionally, those whose lives are inextricably linked to the extractive resource industry are nervous, given an increasingly uncertain occupational future. Tensions and emotions run high in civil society, and only very recently has the Canadian Anglican Church begun to reflect on what truly responsible investment looks like and what is required for transition to a lower carbon economy.

The author is dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, Kamloops, British Columbia and secretary of the global Anglican Communion Environmental Network (ACEN).

¹<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/wildfire-statistics/wildfire-season-summary> ²The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples requires states to consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them (article 19).

Towards a Greener and More Pleasant Future

By David Shreeve

When I tell people that I cover environmental issues for the Church of England (CofE) some people show surprise and ask “*What has the environment to do with the Church?*”

The easiest way to answer that is to explain that there are over 16,000 church buildings, 42 cathedrals, 10,000 churchyards, 5,200 schools, not to mention offices, clergy housing and three palaces. Add together all those churchyards and you have a large national park teeming with biodiversity. The Church also has significant investments and land; these bring major responsibilities which it takes extremely seriously.

The Church of England has a presence in every community in the country. In addition to worship, churches host everything from creches to post offices to mobile phone infrastructure. All this involves a huge amount of energy use, but also means they represent an enviable network through which to engage.

Hopefully this helps to bring a degree of understanding that, quite apart from the theological imperative to care for creation, the Church of England has a considerable responsibility for its own environmental footprint and ability to influence the lifestyle of others. To help it carry out these responsibilities, it has established an environmental working group chaired by a diocesan bishop with a seat in the House of Lords. There are two more bishops in the group, as well as a number of external experts. There is also an environmental bishops group, while around the country there are diocesan environment officers, mainly volunteers, who work to promote action locally.

The Environmental Working Group manages the CofE’s environment program. This involves a wide range of initiatives aimed at enabling the whole Church to address—in faith, practice and mission—the issue of climate change. It does this through projects and partnerships developed at national level and applied locally to support individuals, parishes and dioceses wanting to respond to this crucial challenge.

The focus of the Environment Program is on articulating a response to the “*Fifth Mark of Mission*”—one of the priorities set by the worldwide Anglican Communion—to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

So far over 3,000 of our churches have made the “Big Switch” to renewable energy, and the number of installations such as solar panels continues to climb, with 704 now recorded on cathedrals, churches, schools and clergy homes.

Our 2017 Green Awards program in partnership with the *Church Times*¹ proved a great encouragement, helping raise the profile of caring for the environment as a Christian responsibility, and showing what local churches can do. A new award this year will highlight how space around churches can be used to provide gardening opportunities to help people with mental health issues.

The Environmental Working Group responds to topical issues. Having its lead bishop in the House of Lords means that it can be represented in that legislative

chamber’s debates and committees, while other members can represent it in a range of activities both in churches and elsewhere.

Reports of the Church’s environmental initiatives regularly feature in the media. Examples of this include conservation work involving the bats living in some churches, and the encouragement of bees and other pollinators to use churchyards as pathways through urban areas. Most recently there was considerable media coverage—including a report in *The New York Times*²—for this year’s Lent Plastic Campaign³.

With regard to investment, the Church of England has taken a different path from those who have divested from fossil fuel companies. Our Ethical Investment

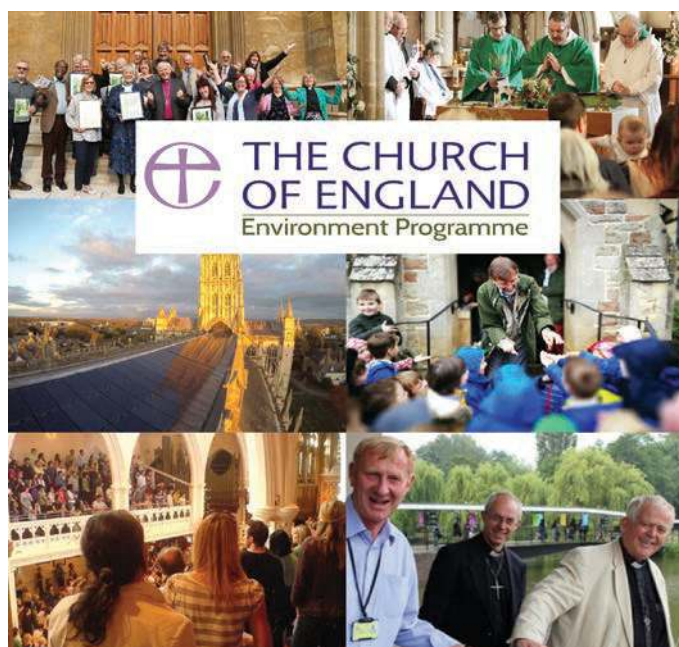
Advisory Group has developed a mix of divestment from the most polluting, (thermal coal and tar sands); engagement with a view to moving to a low carbon future in keeping with the Paris Agreement; and investment in renewables and forestry. Major progress has been made in engagement through creating, with partners, the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI)³ through which a powerful alliance of investors with over \$6.5 trillion assets under management assesses how companies are preparing for the low-carbon economy. A combination of the TPI and shareholder resolutions has produced serious responses from major companies.

The program also works closely with Lambeth Palace. The archbishop of Canterbury receives numerous enquiries and has included environmental issues in his latest book—*Reimagining Britain: Foundations for Hope*. In the

chapter *For Those As Yet Unborn*, Archbishop Justin writes: “The issue of climate change is in many ways the most important challenge we face. Care for creation as having an intrinsic value is deeply rooted in Scripture, yet the abuse of the environment has been deeply rooted in our historic value systems, driven in Christian parts of the globe by a cultural or religious commitment to an exploitative understanding of creation set out in the apparent meaning of the command in Genesis to ‘subdue’ the earth. However, human activity, which has contributed significantly to current problems, is out of step with modern faith-based understandings of responsibility for the planet and needs to change. We have an economic interest in helping to lead the development of a ‘greener’ economic system, and a moral responsibility to address our stewardship of the planet.”

In preparation for the Lambeth Conference in 2020, Archbishop Justin has asked fellow primates to write “Letters for Creation” in response to two questions: *What does the care of God’s creation mean in your Province?* and *What do you want to say to the Anglican Communion about the care for our common home?* Some exceptionally interesting letters have been received, which we look forward to sharing later this year.

The author is environmental adviser to the Archbishops’ Council of the Church of England.



¹<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/green-church> ²<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/15/world/europe/lent-plastic-church-of-england.html>

³<http://www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/tpi/>

Indigenous Land Rights and Creation Care in Northern Argentina

By Andrew Leake

If size matters, the Anglican Diocese of Northern Argentina, with a membership of 16,000, may well be considered insignificant. In a country of 40 million people, where 77 per cent still identify as Catholic—more than most other countries in Latin America—it is hard to imagine Anglicans having much, if any, influence in the region.

Reality, though, speaks a different story, for this is no ordinary diocese. Roughly the size of France, it has a diverse geography, ranging from the snow-peaked mountains of the Andes to the west, stretching eastwards across the vast arid and flat lowlands of the Gran Chaco to the banks of the continent's second longest river, the Parana. Northwards, it borders with Bolivia and Paraguay, while to the south, it merges with the pampas.

Argentina likes to project its European descent. The country's president, Mauricio Macri, recently argued for closer ties to Europe, saying that “in South America we are all descended from Europeans.” This did not go down well with the country's million or so indigenous people. This attitude, though, is pervasive among the population at large. It is not unusual to find people, especially in Buenos Aires, who ignore the fact that the country has an indigenous population. They are often surprised to learn Argentina has more indigenous people than Brazil.

A large part of the country's native peoples live within the Diocese of Northern Argentina, including several hunter-gatherer tribes, namely the Wichi, Toba,



Bulldozer clearing tropical dry forests in the Argentine Chaco.

Photo: Greenpeace Argentina.

DR. ANDREW LEAKE, a third-generation missionary kid, serves with the Diocese of Northern Argentina supporting rural communities in their fight against the large-scale deforestation that affects large parts of the diocese. His grandfather was among the first missionaries to work with indigenous people in northern Argentina. His father was born in a Toba Indian village, grew up amongst the Indians, and eventually went on to become diocesan bishop. Andrew explained this notion of adapting mission to changing needs with reference to his own family's experience.

“My grandfather served with the Anglican Church among hunter-gatherer tribes of northern Argentina. When he arrived in 1926, the country's native forests covered an area equivalent to France and Spain (one million square kilometers). Ministry focused on Bible translation, evangelism, and the provision of healthcare and schooling within their communities. There was no apparent need at that time to protect the seemingly endless forests.

My father followed my grandfather's footsteps in 1963. By then, some forests were being lost to lumber and tannin extraction, agriculture, and cattle. Because there was so much forest, this process initially had little effect on the indigenous peoples. They faced other problems, derived from the fact that they were not recognized as citizens. Much of my father's ministry was, therefore, given over to advocacy work, helping people to get out of problems with the police, obtain documents, and receive proper attention from government authorities.

I joined the Anglican Church's work in 1999, by which time Argentina's agricultural and cattle ranching frontier was rapidly expanding into the traditional indigenous territories. In a bid to prevent the eviction of indigenous communities, the diocese engaged in supporting them with technical and legal assistance to lay legal claim to their historic territories. At the same time, technical assistance was given to help communities put a stop to large-scale deforestation. For indigenous people, the destruction of the forests was akin to present-day urban dwellers having their entire neighborhoods, supermarkets and shops completely destroyed. It also meant moving to insalubrious townships, with a consequent loss of traditional cultural and family values.”

Chorote and Nivacle. These are the people the Anglican church first came to evangelize back in the late 1800s. Today, there are more than 150 indigenous congregations, led by over 200 native clergy and lay-readers and three suffragan indigenous bishops.

Like most of South America's native people, those in Argentina suffered terrible discrimination and violence during colonial times. Even today, the country's 100 peso bank note portrays the military campaign to subjugate or eliminate indigenous people during the early 19th century in the province of Buenos Aires. Likewise, the tribes located in the diocese suffered a protracted series of military campaigns right up to 1917, just a few years after the first Anglican missionaries arrived. Today they are among the poorest and most marginalized people in Argentine society.

Since its earliest days, the Anglican Church accompanied spiritual mission with social action, a combination that allowed it to make an impact far above its weight (in numbers). A key factor in the relevance of its social ministry has been its ability to adapt its approach and focus to changing needs over time. Through its social work, the diocese has contributed to a scenario in which a state that historically marginalized and ignored its indigenous people has been obliged to give them more formal recognitions. The situation is still far from perfect, and there is still a long way to go. Even now, the inter-American court of Human Rights is intervening in Argentina on a matter related to indigenous land claims within the diocese. This is truly a milestone in the indigenous history of Argentina, and stems from initial actions taken by the church in support of indigenous land claims back in the 1960s. The case is now emblematic for other communities across the country. The work done to curb deforestation has also contributed to a significant slowing of the process, including the changes in legislation concerning land-use in rural areas.

The future holds many unknowns, including the increasingly devastating effects of climate change. The church must be ready to adapt and respond to these new challenges. To that effect, the diocese is capitalizing on its broad experience, providing training for new and national leaders.

Currently, Trinity Church, Wall Street is assisting the Diocese of Northern Argentina in revamping its retreat center—an old and dilapidated farmhouse on a 5-acre estate outside the city of Salta—with the aim of transforming it into a center for church leadership training with a particular focus on creation care.

The author is a member of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network and environmental consultant to the Diocese of Northern Argentina, Anglican Church of South America, on initiatives aimed at empowering indigenous groups to protect their forest from being destroyed to make way for agriculture and cattle.

Meeting God on the Mountain Top – Strengthening the Bonds Between the Episcopal Church in Puerto Rico and New York

By the Rev. Carla E. Roland Guzmán



“Quinta Tranquila,” Maricao, Puerto Rico.

Photo: The author.

In front of the Church of the Transfiguration in the mountain-top municipality of Maricao, Puerto Rico, there is an incredible view of the southern valleys of Yauco, Sabana Grande, and Lajas, as well as the Caribbean Sea to the south and the Mona Channel to the west. On clearer days, you can see toward Rincón and Aguadilla to the north-west, closer to the Atlantic Ocean. It is a breathtaking and God-filled view. About 100 yards away, across the road, is the Bishop Colmore Retreat Center, also known as “Quinta Tranquila.”

On March 6, a group of individuals from the dioceses of New York and Long Island, including the Rev. Yamily Bass-Choate and the author, visited the mountain-top towns of Maricao and Lares, four congregations (Holy Cross, Saint Bartholomew, Epiphany, and Transfiguration) and the retreat center (Quinta Tranquila). The visit was to see work already underway that is helping equip the churches to be centers of hospitality, relief, and development for the communities around them, as they fill a void that was magnified after hurricanes Irma and Maria.

Meeting God on the Mountain Top is currently working on equipping these churches with solar panels and water-storage systems, so that, as needed, they may function off-the-grid and keep running in times of need. On the day of our visit, three out of the four churches had somewhat regular electricity; Epiphany is now past the six-month mark without electricity.

In addition to getting to know the specific congregations, communities, and clergy, the trip afforded the opportunity to begin envisioning, with them and along with the diocese, opportunities for sustainable development (micro-business/eco-tourism), and discerning the immense possibilities for the retreat center.

Imagine for a moment that we could collaborate with the Episcopal Church in Puerto Rico in rehabilitating and expanding a retreat center that will provide a space and opportunities to encounter God. It would offer the wider and local Episcopal communities spiritual renewal and growth, while all the while promoting hope and the sustainable development of these mountain-top and coffee-growing communities. (Note: It will take three years for the coffee harvest to yield a usable crop.)

This is the work that the Diocese of New York can be involved in; the work that will impact generations to come. Imagine not only our shared Episcopal renewal—but the revitalization of communities. We can share in the vision that people can remain in their homes and not have as the only option to emigrate either to urban areas of the island or to the mainland United States.

Meeting God on the Mountain Top is about long-term and lasting transformation. The problems of Puerto Rico, which were magnified by the hurricanes, will not be solved overnight. Yet, we can join with the Episcopal Church of Puerto Rico, the Diocese of Hope, to ensure that we and they build up the kingdom by living into our baptismal covenant. Let us go to the mountain top and come back renewed, all the while letting the caretakers of the mountain top have the opportunity, dignity, and agency to choose to stay.

In this season of nor’easters, I am acutely aware of the way extreme weather systems are interrelated. And, since they are all interrelated, we have a responsibility toward each other to engage in projects and relationships that care for our shared planet. During our visit, as the northeast of the continental U.S. was being battered by two major storms, the already fragile coast of Puerto Rico was being battered by the largest waves ever recorded as an effect of those same storms.

Please consider giving generously to this initiative through the Caribbean Relief Fund of the Diocese of New York (you may do so online at diocesenyny.org/caribbean-recovery-donation). Also, if you’d like to go to Puerto Rico and help, we will be coordinating some trips soon, and can connect you with the diocese in Puerto Rico. Please contact the Rev. Yamily Bass-Choate (ybass-choate@diocesenyny.org), liaison for global mission on the Bishop’s staff, to express interest.

The author is rector of the Church of Saint Matthew and Saint Timothy in Manhattan.

Conociendo a Dios en la Montaña – Fortaleciendo los Lazos Entre la Iglesia Episcopal en Puerto Rico y en Nueva York

Por la Rvda. Carla E. Roland Guzmán

A l frente de la Iglesia de la Transfiguración, en el municipio de Maricao, en la cordillera central de Puerto Rico, hay una vista maravillosa de los valles sureños de Yauco, Sabana Grande, y Lajas, al igual que el Mar Caribe (al sur) y el Canal de la Mona (al oeste). En días mas claros se ve hacia Rincón y Aguadilla (al noroeste), más cerca del Océano

Atlántico. Es una vista impresionante y llena de Dios. Como a 100 metros de distancia, al cruzar la carretera, está el Centro de Retiro Obispo Colmore, conocido como “Quinta Tranquila.”

El 6 de marzo, un grupo de personas de las diócesis de Nueva York y Long Island, incluyendo a la Rvda. Yamily Bass-Choate y la Rvda. Carla E. Roland

Guzmán, visitaron la región montañosa y los municipios de Maricao y Lares, y cuatro congregaciones (Santa Cruz, San Bartolomé, La Epifanía, y La Transfiguración) y el centro de retiro (Quinta Tranquila). La visita fue para ver trabajo que ya esta en proceso, que busca equipar a estas congregaciones como centros de hospitalidad, alivio, y desarrollo para las comunidades adyacentes, al ellas responder a un vacío que se magnificó tras los huracanes Irma y María.

Conociendo a Dios en la Montaña está trabajando actualmente en proveer paneles solares y cisternas a las iglesias, para que, cuando necesario, estas puedan funcionar independiente de la red de agua o electricidad. En el día que visitamos, tres de las cuatro congregaciones tenían electricidad (más o menos regularmente). Al momento de escribir este artículo, La Epifanía ha pasado mas de seis meses sin electricidad.

Además de conocer más a las congregaciones, sus comunidades, y clero, el viaje proveyó la oportunidad de empezar a soñar, con el pueblo y la diócesis, oportunidades de desarrollo sostenible (micro-empresas/eco-turismo), y comenzar a discernir las inmensas posibilidades para Quinta Tranquila.

Imagínese por un momento que pudiéramos colaborar con la Iglesia Episcopal en Puerto Rico en rehabilitar y expandir el centro de retiro para que provea un espacio y oportunidades de encuentro con Dios. Mientras se ofrece a la comunidad episcopal local y global, renovación y crecimiento espiritual, al igual que, promover la esperanza y el desarrollo sostenible en estas comunidades de tierra fértil de café en las montañas. (Nota: tomará tres años para que la cosecha del café se recupere.)

Este es el trabajo en que se puede envolver la Diócesis de Nueva York; trabajo que impactará generaciones por venir. Imagine no sólo nuestra renovación Episcopal compartida—pero también la rehabilitación de las comunidades. Podemos compartir en la visión que la gente puede quedarse en sus

hogares y no tener como la única opción emigrar a las zonas urbanas de la isla o a los Estados Unidos continentales.

Conociendo a Dios en la Montaña es sobre transformación duradera y a largo plazo. Los problemas de largo plazo en Puerto Rico que fueron magnificados por los huracanes no se resolverán de un día para otro. Sin embargo, podemos unirnos a la Iglesia Episcopal en Puerto Rico, la Diócesis de la Esperanza, para asegurarnos que nosotros y nosotras con ellos y ellas construyamos el reino al vivir nuestro pacto bautismal. Vayamos a la montaña y regresemos renovados y renovadas, al mismo tiempo que las personas que cuidan de la montaña tengan la oportunidad, dignidad, y agencia en decidir quedarse.

Una nota final; en esta época de tormentas (nor'easters) estoy muy consciente de la manera en que los sistemas meteorológicos extremos están interrelacionados. Y, dado que están todos interrelacionados, tenemos la responsabilidad para con otras personas en embarcar en proyectos y compañerismos que cuidan de nuestro planeta compartido. Durante nuestra visita, mientras el noreste de los Estados Unidos estaba siendo azotado por las primeras dos tormentas, la ya frágil costa de Puerto Rico era abatida por los oleajes más grandes en los récords, un efecto de las mismas tormentas.

Considere contribuir generosamente a esta iniciativa a través del Fondo de Alivio Caribeño de la Diócesis de Nueva York (puede hacerlo en línea en diocesenyn.org/caribbean-recovery-donation). También, si desea ir a Puerto Rico, estamos coordinando unos viajes pronto, y podemos ponerles en contacto con la diócesis en Puerto Rico. En la Diócesis de Nueva York el punto de contacto es la Reverenda Yamily Bass-Choate (ybasschoate@diocesenyn.org).

La autora es la rectora de la Iglesia de San Mateo y San Timoteo en Manhattan.

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM CONGREGATIONS IN GOOD STANDING,
SCHOOLS, AND MISSION NETWORKS WITHIN
THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEW YORK FOR
2018 Sustainable Development Goal Fund Grants
FOR PROJECTS THAT DIRECTLY ADDRESS ONE OR MORE
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Applications are due June 1st, 2018
All applicants will be informed of decisions
September 24th, 2018
Awards will be given at the
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www.diocesenyn.org/sdg-grant-application/

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Church of South India Adopts 12-Point Green Protocol for “Green Discipleship”



Inauguration of a solar project in the village of Othara in Kerala, India.

Photo: Church of South India

Earlier this year, the Department of Ecological Concerns of the Synod of the Church of South India (CSI)—India’s second-largest denomination, and the only Church in India to mention ecology as a mission in its Constitution and its Mission statement—published a comprehensive set of guidelines for its churches and members. These guidelines are intended to emphasize the message that Christians have a duty to protect God’s creation and to promote sustainable development practices and build power for change.

The CSI is committed to protect the integrity of the creation, and believes that the Church should respond prophetically or “lament like Jeremiah when people exploit natural resources and by doing so crucify God’s creation.” Accordingly, *#GPGD 12 Points: Green Protocol for Green Discipleship - A Guideline of 12 Points for the CSI Dioceses to develop Green Congregations*, which has already been circulated among the CSI’s 24 dioceses and 16,000 parishes, calls for the adoption of practices that involve the conservation of energy and minimal use of natural resources.

#GPGD 12 Points: Green Protocol for Green Discipleship - A Guideline of 12 Points for the CSI Dioceses to develop Green Congregations

#GPGD 1: Development according to the Church of South India

The CSI supports any development that fulfils the requirement of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. The CSI does believe that the present development paradigm promoted by the “developed” countries is responsible for the global ecological crisis, and thus “Climate Injustice.” We demand the “developed” countries to change their present development paradigm which exploit the fossil fuels resulting in the Climate change.

#GPGD 2: Energy Conservation

- Reduce using electric lamps in churches during day time when there is enough light from the Sun
- Use LED light system in Church and in its buildings
- Use Solar energy, in the churches and all the institutions owned by the Church
- Use biogas wherever possible.
- Encourage people to depend on energy conservation methods like solar system and biogas plant

#GPGD 3: Water Conservation

- Harvest the rain water from roof top of all the churches and the buildings of the CSI
- Encourage people to harvest rain water from their roof tops and make rain pits on the land, for water recharge.
- Avoid leakage of the water taps.
- Propagate and plant Vetiver which will enhance ground water recharge and avoid soil erosion.

#GPGD 4: Do not throw away Plastic

- Make our churches plastic-free. Avoid throwing away polythene bags and other plastic material completely during the activities in the day-to-day life of church.
- Use steel tumblers and steel plates for church functions. Serve food on banana leaves or oil papers over the steel plates which will reduce the use of water and soap during cleaning it. Encourage the participants to clean their own plates after use.
- Arrange discussions at local level on how to reduce the use of plastic in your locality.
- Always carry a paper bag or a cloth bag, while going to buy provisions from a shop or a supermarket.

#GPGD 5: Planting

- Plant a sapling in the Church Campus during important functions. Also plant a sapling commemorating the visit of important personalities.
- After Wedding Services, the newly wedded couple shall be encouraged to plant together a sapling. Saplings could also be planted in memory of a member who died.
- Encourage planting of fruit bearing plants in public places which will be used by other creatures of that area. The CSI has been promoting biodiversity. Our slogan is “Plant fruit bearing plants outside your boundaries and nurture it”, highlighting our spirituality of caring for all.
- Ensure that the saplings planted are watered and manured well.

#GPGD 6: Constructions

- Use materials which are made in a sustainable way. Use locally-made goods wherever possible. Also take into account the lifetime costs of materials while repairing, altering or rebuilding premises.
- Utilise opportunities to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment, promote and encourage eco-friendly constructions.
- Construct churches with the right motive to worship God and not to show our glory. The size of the church should be proportional to the average Sunday worshippers. Maintenance will become a big problem in future, like the churches in the west selling their churches as they cannot maintain the big structure. We have to avoid the depletion of natural resources as far as possible. The CSI is against the construction of huge luxurious church buildings. Construct simple, environment-friendly churches to accommodate the maximum expected number of people. Use minimum quantity of non-renewable resources.
- Sharing of church buildings with other denominations is a good example, not only for the sake of ecumenism but also for the sake of ecology, since that promotes effective and efficient utilization of resources.
- Conduct necessary discussions before commencing any construction projects. Make sure that the construction is done in an eco-friendly manner.

#GPGD 7: Fellowship Lunch, Dinner & Tea

- Try to arrange lunch, dinner & tea by pooling the resources from the members instead of handing over to caterers. This will facilitate Christian value of sharing and a small initiative to counter the trends in globalisation.
- Good Practices

i. Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP), an NGO in (continued on page 49)

God's City on Earth: An Incarnational Approach to Urban Stewardship

By Sarah Raven

A few years ago, a fellow Christian remarked online that I was trying to *redefine* “stewardship.” One might hear a sermon about being a “good steward of God’s creation,” and the theme of said sermon could be about environmental protection, loving one another, or perhaps more often, tithing. Simply put, to be a steward means to take care of what has been entrusted to us. As humans across the globe are increasingly flocking to urban centers, urban stewardship is on the hearts and minds of many. But how do we Christians who live in cities connect our story to a text filled with agrarian and pastoral images? What does it mean to take care of creation in an urban environment?

Before seminary, I worked at a K-5 public school in the South Bronx in the early 2000s. My school was two blocks away from a community garden, one of the many reclaimed spaces that was being used to offset the effects of nearby power plants. I found out that one of my second graders spent his time after school and on the weekends helping to tend the garden. Community members were given vegetables and herbs for free in exchange for an hour or two of tending the green space. I became actively involved with a group that wanted to protect these spaces; after all, they were operating on land still owned by the city, in some cases without permission. As a part of a biology unit I created, my class toured the garden and we had discussions about seeds and plant growth. Mayor Bloomberg demanded that the garden be vacated, but the community was trying to resist the order from City Hall. One day, my second grader came to school sad and despondent. When I asked him what was wrong, he explained to me that in the middle of the night men came with a bulldozer, destroyed the garden, and locked up the property. I rushed over to the garden after school, and sure enough there were signs all along a newly erected fence that declared the property belonged to the City of New York and would be used for parking. Joni Mitchell’s song *Big Yellow Taxi* immediately came to mind: “They paved paradise and put up a parking lot.”

I try to walk around the city as much as possible, to avoid being stuck underground or in traffic. On one of these wayfaring voyages, I stopped by a trash can on the sidewalk and noticed a bright-copper contraption sitting on the very top of the bin. I picked it up by the hook on its apex and immediately was drawn to this odd double-helix shaped piece of metal. When I looked at this rescued item, I did not see a piece of garbage; I saw a world of possibilities. I walked to work having hooked my shiny discovery on the outside of my coat pocket. Before long, I generated inquisitive stares and even shouts from people I passed.

“Nice earring!”

“What are you going to do with that?”

I was both amused and confused about why my simple act of municipal waste defiance was causing such a stir. By the time I arrived at work I had made the decision to give my found treasure away to the administrative assistant.

“This is awesome!” she proclaimed. “It goes perfectly with my new lamp!”

This simple act of recycling that brightened my co-worker’s day helped to solidify my determination that if we can upcycle/recycle waste, we can also enfranchise the disinherited and reclaim members of our society that we have set aside—in jails, detention centers, and shelters.

Just as we are inclined to place a value on space and things, our society has an economy of worth that is too often applied to human beings. How much a person can contribute to society is counted, measured, and categorized. Every once in a while a “rags to riches” story catches our imagination, in which an individual in economic distress reveals some undiscovered talent and becomes “valuable” overnight. *We* know that these children of God were always valuable, always precious in God’s sight; priceless, in fact, because each one of us bears the *imago dei* and reflects God’s very image wherever we go.

The Holy Trinity is arguably the God of renewal, redemption, and recycling. The Nicene Creed states that the Holy Spirit is the “giver of life.” Indeed, the Spirit gave life to Jesus who became incarnate not just for a spiritual revival, but also to walk the earth and teach us how to be caretakers of what we have been given, and of each other. The parable Jesus taught in Matthew and Luke of the Talents/Ten Minas can be read through the lens of honoring our call to be good stewards of all creation so that one day God may say to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant...” In our urban communities we are thus cautioned not to hide our resources, and to move beyond simply retaining what we have been given. The lesson of the Talents is that we are entrusted by God to improve our relationship generation after generation with everything that composes our cities; our waste, the land, animals, and each other.

The author is an educator and writer who works in New York City.

You are invited to

A Liturgy of Lamentation

Thursday, May 17, at 7 p.m.

At the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine

Performances by

Paul Winter
Alicia Waller
Theresa Thompson
Reggie Wilson
Tonika Custalow

and

The Diocesan Festival Choir*
with Jeannine Otis,
directed by
William E. Randolph.

Speakers

The Very Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas
The Rt. Rev. Andrew ML Dietsche
“Richard Jenkins” (former slave)

May 17 was chosen for this special liturgy because it was 58 years ago that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. preached his sermon, “The Death of Evil upon the Seashore” at a special service of prayer and thanksgiving. The service also commemorates the anniversary of his death 50 years ago.

More information: diocesanrepcommittee@gmail.com

*There will be a rehearsal for the Festival Choir at the Church of The Intercession, Broadway and 155th Street, from 12 noon to 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 12. For more information please email brmusicintercession@gmail.com.

Dealing with Facts

By Steven Duffy

A few years ago, I retired to the New York area, settling in Sullivan County, after about a dozen years in Nashville, Tennessee. After trying out some other Christian denominations in the South, I had returned to the Episcopal Church, the denomination I was confirmed in.

I owned a design firm specializing in retail interiors and museum exhibits, and for years had proposed to different municipalities, to no avail, the creation of an educational museum dedicated to creating a sustainable planet. Last spring, sitting in the pews, I listened to my pastor, Jeff Golliher, who coincidentally is the environmental representative of the Anglican Community to the United Nations, deliver a sermon on the first part of Genesis where God gives humankind “dominion” and “stewardship” over the land and its creatures. These are, of course, translated words within a document that precedes the establishment of Christianity by perhaps a thousand years, but their implications on environmental policy in the United States today cannot be overstated. We live in a partisan moment and a substantial portion of Americans do not believe that there is any action required to create a sustainable planet.

Words have fluid meanings and can be defined differently for political ends. What do the words “dominion” and “stewardship” actually mean? Are they the same or opposing? To me, they both mean “responsible governing,” but to others their meanings imply that whatever happens is God’s will and God wants us to be prosperous. One needn’t be a believer in whatever can be defined as “God” or to have any personal religion to feel a spiritual connection to concerns that are beyond immediate personal survival. What else makes us human?

The dire predictions of immediate global catastrophe are so frightening, and the solutions to global problems so complicated by political realities and world-wide poverty, that I wondered after Jeff’s sermon what I, or anybody, could do to help. Despair is an easy excuse to do nothing that would require change—and who doesn’t hate change?

Who also isn’t reluctant to spend personal time and money on something that does not come with immediate personal benefit? An “inconvenient truth” is that it is very easy to help “Save the Planet.” There are countless commendable organizations that need financial support and volunteers. Inspired by my pastor, I created a website called *The Center for a Sustainable Planet*, www.sustainableplanetcenter.com. It lists many of these organizations plus guidance on creating new ones. The smallest projects, the most local endeavors, can make a difference; every effort informs others.

The website also provides general information about crucial climate change issues and links to websites and organizations that are making a difference. The Center’s motto is “A Sustainable Planet Begins with Knowledge” and promotes the formula $PCR=S$ —Population + Consumption + Resources Equals Sustainability.

Many of us, and the people who surround us, may feel thoroughly informed about climate change issues and have fixed opinions. What we consider “facts” may actually be opinions shared by our immediate social groups. I spent years living outside the New York area and can state unequivocally that fine and intelligent people in other regions have strong opinions, including “facts,” that are different from mine and that the only way to address that is with “conflict”—which is something that we may want to avoid. Conflict and action are required to address climate change issues, and we cannot assume that we are always right. Many accepted environmentalist positions conflict with issues

over private versus public ownership and few want to see their taxes go up to support another group of people. The best approach, in my opinion, is to seek knowledge with an open mind and be prepared to defend your position when required.

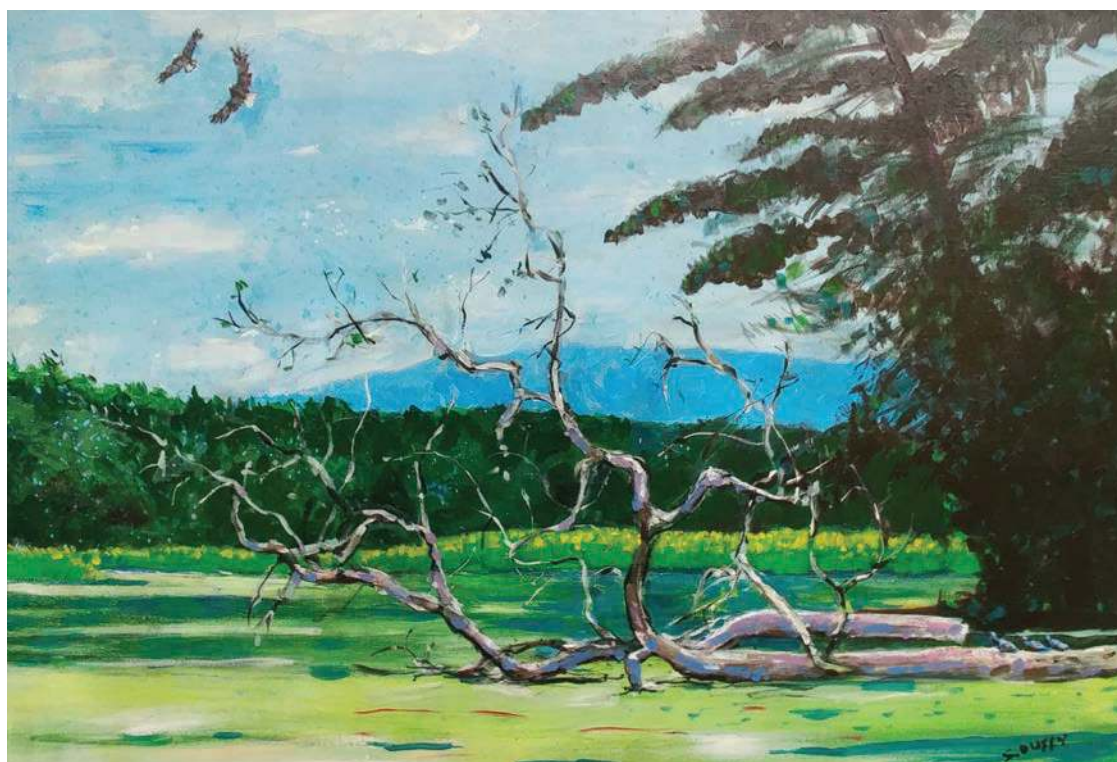
Knowledge of the complexities may lead to uncomfortable realizations. Actions to prevent a disaster may require sacrifice. Many of the effects of climate change are already upon us, and our best efforts may be spent on mitigation, not reversal. Human population growth combined with the desire to lift all the world’s populace out of poverty inevitably increases carbon-dioxide emissions. The “American Lifestyle” requires a carbon footprint five times the world average, with even a homeless American having a carbon footprint twice the world average. Deteriorating environmental conditions are expected to create a billion climate refugees over the next 50 years, who will likely be searching for better, more energy-required, lifestyles.

Political conflicts about immigration exist at the same time that some environmentalists propose that advanced countries have zero population growth and become vegetarian. No matter what American and European nations can achieve in addressing climate change may, however, be inconsequential in face of Chinese and developing countries’ behavior, and no solution may be more beneficial than expanded women’s rights in sub-Saharan Africa, where most of the world’s population growth is occurring.

Our epoch is now being referred to by some as the “Anthropocene,” when world-wide changes to life on earth are occurring not due to cataclysmic events like meteor strikes, but to human activity. That infers that we can have a positive effect, too. The good news is that the world-wide poverty rate is decreasing, world-wide health is improving, and progress is being made in reducing coal-fired power plants; but human population growth, although slowing, is still a huge challenge.

It’s complicated, but there is no better place to start than with Episcopal Climate Action Teams (see page 8 for more on those).

The author is a member of St. John’s Memorial Church, Ellenville.



Dead Tree in the Bashkill Preserve, Sullivan County, by Steve Duffy.

Is It Too Late?

By Kathryn M. Parker

A conservationist from the womb, I grew up on the outskirts of the village of Walden, in the Diocese of New York, where the woods behind our house led down to the banks of the Wallkill River, and our side yard opened into meadows with an apple orchard beyond. (Yes, I did help myself to a free apple now and then.) My friends and I built huts, gave the birds names such as “black-winged red bird” (scarlet tanager) and ate our summer lunches in a field of timothy or a grove of pines. I remember the beauty of the delicate wild flowers which, when transplanted to our yard, never survived the day. We watched minnows and pollywogs in the spring water of the river, and turtles sunning themselves on logs in the summer. We did not know then that the Wallkill was polluted. There were no deer ticks, no reason to keep children indoors. (The wisdom of letting children play along the banks of a river without adult supervision is material for another article.)

As a young adult, I lived in Fair Oaks where my husband and I owned 11 acres, nine of which were landlocked behind our home. The property came complete with a small pond and the woods were deep, ancient, and untouched. I remember the silence that closed in around me as I entered the woods, the earthy fragrance of the spongy humus under my feet, the lilting flute-like song of the wood thrush. Spring peepers called from the area of the pond. The road was so unpopulated that I could sit on the front porch in my nightclothes on warm summer mornings to drink my tea; so silent that I could hear a car as it turned into our road long before it got to the house. Again, delicate wildflowers thrilled me with their colors. At this home, I gardened to my heart’s content using compost from our compost pile, made elderberry jam from our own wild elderberries, grew much of our summer food. I tended flowers and started evergreens and pachysandra from cuttings. We recycled conscientiously, a new concept then, and took our recyclables to the landfill and placed them in the proper bins. (Later we learned that the landfill folks, unable to sell the recyclables, plowed them into the earth with the trash.) In the winter, when there was a light snow on the ground and everything was frozen, I would put on my hiking boots and walk all the way around the property, enjoying the silence and the beauty of areas that I could not get to when the ground was soft and wet, following my own footsteps home. Once my husband found a rock with the perfect imprint of a fern in it, something I still treasure.

I am now nearly three-quarters of a century old. I live in a senior building in Middletown, on the top floor. The country girl is still a country girl, living in a city. The view from my windows includes the uptown area, where the lovely tall steeple of Grace Church, my church home, towers over the city. From my front windows, I can see all the way to the Ramapo Mountains, and I never take the view for granted as I sit at the table for meals. Outdoor gardening has given way to houseplants; when they get too big for my small

apartment, I give them away and start over. Silence has been replaced by sound; songbirds by crows. Woods and orchards have been cleared for homes, stores, medical centers and, most recently, an ugly power plant that spewed diesel fumes into our neighborhoods upon start-up, and that will ultimately be fed by a fracked gas pipeline from Pennsylvania, where my child and grandchildren live. Disregard for the beauty and sacredness of our earth is rampant, and if you don’t like it, too bad. They will simply put up a fence to hide the raping of our landscape so you can’t see. The gas pipeline work continues, unlawfully close to an active bald eagle nest. Effluent continues to pour into my beloved Wallkill River.

These days, trees are purchased, but never watered, or else they are smothered in mulch volcanoes. When they die, I grieve. I hear the rattle of a plastic bag caught in a tree. The habitat of tanagers and thrushes is diminishing by the day. From my window, I see deer resting in back yards, trying to survive in the city. My heart aches for what was, and for all of the things I knew as a child that my own child has not experienced, that my grandchildren will never know.

There is a Turkish proverb: *No matter how far you have gone down the wrong road, turn back.* Is it too late for us as caring Christians in America? I don’t know the answer. A friend once said that all we can do is take good care of our own little corner of the world. All I know is that I am grateful that I am not a child trying to grow up in the world today.

The author is a member of Grace Church, Middletown, an avid recycler, an “activist with keyboard,” and an advocate for green energy.



The CPV Valley Energy Center, currently under construction on a green field site in Wawayanda, near Middletown, NY.

Photo: Lynn Campos.

Recommended Reading and Resources

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION MATERIALS

Cynthia Coe, *Earth Our Garden Home: Creation Care Lessons for Children*. Sycamore Cove Creations, 2016

Joseph Cornell, *Sharing Nature with Children* [A Classic Nature Awareness Guide for Parents and Teachers]. Dawn Publications, 1998.

Anne Kitch, “*Water of Baptism, Water for Life: An Activity Book.*” Church Publishing Incorporated, 2012.

Gardening with Children, Brooklyn Botanic Garden All-Regions Guides, 2007.

The Kid’s Guide to Exploring Nature, Brooklyn Botanic Garden All-Regions Guides, 2014.

Ryan the Rhino, The Story of Creation: A Sunday School Resource on Caring for Creation, Green Anglicans, The Anglican Church of Southern Africa.
<http://www.greenanglicans.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/CARING-FOR-CREATION-RYAN-THE-RHINO.pdf>

For other youth and adult materials from Southern Africa, including *Season of Creation*, go to <http://www.greenanglicans.org/resources/liturgy>.

ADULT READING:

VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

Maude Barlow, *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water*. Caravan, 2007.

Thomas Berry (ed. Mary Evelyn Tucker), *The Sacred Universe: Earth, Spirituality and Religion in the 21st Century*, Columbia University Press 2009.

Lester Brown, *Full Planet, Empty Plates: The New Geopolitics of Food Scarcity*. W.W. Norton, 2012.

Eric Doyle, *St. Francis and the Song of Brotherhood and Sisterhood*. Franciscan Institute Publications, 1997.

Charlotte Du Cann, et.al., *Walking on Lava: Selected Words for Uncivilized Times*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2017.

Tim Flannery, *Atmosphere of Hope: Searching for Solutions to the Climate Crisis*. Atlantic Monthly Press, 2015.

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home*. The Word Among Us Press, 2015.

Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. University of Chicago Press, 2017.

Jeff Goodell, *The Water Will Come: Rising Seas, Sinking Cities, and the Remaking of the Civilized World*. Little, Brown, and Co., 2017.

Robert Gottlieb and Anupama Joshi, *Food Justice*. The MIT Press, 2010.

Paul Hawken, editor, *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*. Penguin Books, 2011.

Willis Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology*. Oxford University Press, 2008.

Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything*. Simon and Schuster, 2014

Elizabeth Kolbert, *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*. Henry Holt and Co., 2014.

Belden C. Lane, *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Mountain and Desert Spirituality*, Oxford, 1998.

Anna Lappe, *Diet for a Hot Planet*. Bloomsbury, 2010.

Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology*, Fortress, 1993.

Sallie McFague, *Blessed Are the Consumers: Climate Change and the Practice of Restraint*. Fortress Press, 2013.

Seamus McGraw, *Betting the Farm on a Drought: Stories from the Frontlines of Climate Change*. University of Texas, 2015.

Bill McKibben (editor), *The Global Warming Reader*, Or Books/Penguin, 2011.

Larry Rasmussen, *Earth-Honoring Faith: Religious Ethics in a New Key*, Oxford, 2012

Jeffrey Rothfeller, *Every Drop for Sale: Our Desperate Battle Over Water in a World About to Run Out*. Tarcher Penguin, 2001.

Carl Safina, *Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel*. Henry Holt and Company, 2015.

Vandana Shiva (editor), *Seed Sovereignty and Food Security*. North Atlantic Books, 2016.

Laurence Smith, *The New North: The World in 2050*. Profile Books, 2012.

Edward O. Wilson, *Half-Earth: Our Planet’s Fight for Life*. Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2016.

Mary Christina Wood, *Nature’s Trust: Environmental Law for an New Ecological Age*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.

SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued from page 27)

Global Catholic Climate movement on the Carbon Fast as well as on the Season of Creation.

Another exciting development has been partnering with the renewable energy company Gigawatt Global and the Interfaith Centre for Sustainable Development³ to place industrial-size solar farms on church land. This will feed green energy into the grid as well as provide rental income for dioceses. We are currently negotiating with seven dioceses to do this.

ADVOCACY

It can be hard for churches to join the dots between individual and local parish actions and the need for advocacy, but some encouraging activities have taken place.

- We are working with Young Evangelicals for Climate Action⁴ and the Evangelical Environmental Network⁵ to use their networks to reach US evangelicals with our stories of the impact of climate change.
- One of our youth from Mozambique has been selected to share about climate change in his country with the Young Commonwealth gathering in London in April.
- We hope to spread stories of the reality of climate change as well as best practice models through our social media – our facebook Green Anglicans⁶ has 25,000 followers from 42 countries.
- We supported the Southern Africa Faith Communities Environmental Institute⁷ in their court case against a corrupt nuclear deal that the former president Zuma was working on with a Russian company..
- The Church in South Africa is backing a campaign to ban plastic bags.
- The Green Church Movement in Zimbabwe successfully campaigned with other partners to ban Styrofoam.
- We are planning an Eco-bishops Southern Africa, Central Africa, and East Africa meeting to share best practice models and work on advocacy.

The author is a member of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network steering committee and Environmental Coordinator at the Anglican Church of Southern Africa⁸.

³<http://www.interfaithsustain.com/> ⁴<https://www.yecaction.org/>

⁵<https://www.creationcare.org/> ⁶<https://www.facebook.com/GreenAnglicans/>

⁷<http://safcei.org> ⁸<https://anglicanchurchsa.org/>

Contemplating the Natural World

By Kathy Bozzuti-Jones

This visual reflection explores the intersection of photography and stewardship of creation in the spiritual practice known as *contemplative photography*. As I walk through my days seeking God and glimpses of God's nature in the natural world, I am reminded of the interconnectedness of all life. I find myself contemplating the good, the true, and the beautiful, centering myself prayerfully in the moment, and responding to God's grace in new ways as I practice "sacred seeing." To the contemplative eye, the earth offers powerful metaphors to express emotions. Natural objects can speak volumes about mystery that words cannot. If you are someone who recognizes the hand of God in the natural world, or who has witnessed the changing face of God in a slant of light or shadow or seasonal rhythm, then *contemplative photography* may give you a medium in which to receive and record these moments for reflection. For city-dwellers, this conversation between God and you, sparked by the imagery that calls your attention, can be especially life-giving and healing, requiring only a smartphone or camera to begin. The photographic reflection that follows here illustrates a way in which a mindful approach, a sense of the world as sacred, and an openness to how God is speaking through natural imagery, combine creatively to draw me closer to God—and closer to my identity as a steward of God's creation. *What are you drawn to photograph outside? What does the quietude of observation in nature have to do with your stewardship of creation?*

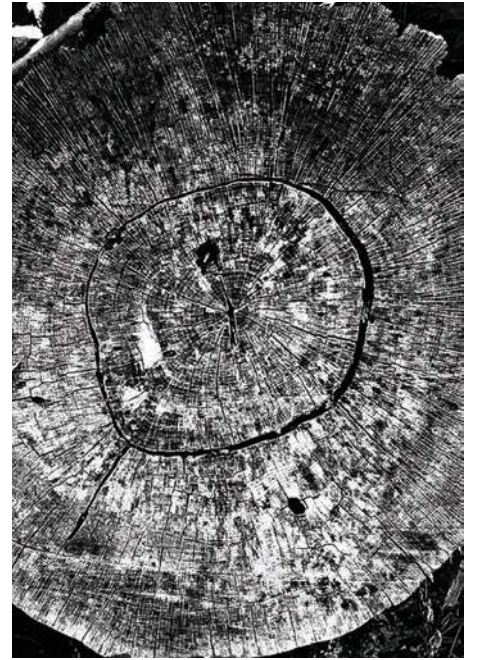
The author is associate director of faith formation and education at Trinity Wall Street.



For me, the juxtaposition of elements in a frame can call to mind the complexity of the ecological crisis and its multiple causes. Here, a weed springing up on a concrete ledge, an evergreen, and a discarded coffee cup made of paper and plastic, make me wonder what combination of solutions will stem what is happening to our common home in this throwaway culture. *Creator God, grant me persistence and wisdom as I wrestle with my own complacency and carelessness.*



Glassy beads of water, like tiny mirrors of the sun hugging each leaf, disappeared soon after this photo was taken. I know that for the world's poor, water sources in many places are disappearing and that the quality of water available is a serious problem, causing great suffering. I believe that the fruits of the earth are meant to be shared for the benefit of all. When I see rain upon a leaf, I will take it as a reminder that the natural environment is a collective good. *Creator God, show me how you would have me intervene with others, to affect social dynamics capable of moving us toward shared responsibility for one another and the world.*



I came across the cross-section of a fallen tree in the Hudson River Valley. I could see, there, the concentric rings from the tree's many growing seasons. A record of a whole life, tree rings hold a history of environmental conditions like droughts, rainy seasons, insect infestations, even fires. My spiritual life has had many growing seasons as well. A cross-section might reveal years with more or less attention to prayer, more or less attunement to suffering and injustice, more or less constancy in my vow to walk open-hearted in the world. *Creator God, I offer you each and every era of my journey toward you.*



What I love about this photo, taken in Wagner Park in lower Manhattan, is the crazy scale. From this perspective, puffy purple flowers almost dwarf the human beings enjoying a summer's day. The altered perspective reminds me of our disordered relationship to the earth, often marked by dominion and careless usage rather than stewardship. And we have tolerated some people considering themselves more human, more deserving than others, even as the poor bear the brunt of the earth's fragility. *Loving God, change my heart. Help me to see myself and my consumption in proper perspective. Help me to choose a lifestyle aligned with your will.*



Until this day, I had never seen such a mushroom and have not seen one since. I still don't know what it is, exactly, but what I do know is that it appeared on a cool, rainy morning on the campus at General Seminary, then vanished by nightfall. Of this I'm sure: Every creature, even a wet and short-lived fungus, is a manifestation of God and source of wonder and awe. *Creator God, help me to receive your creation, in its endless diversity, as a reflection of you and the entirety of your plan.*



A skyline such as this just sings of God's handiwork and presence. To me, it suggests our great potential for healthy human relationship with creation, despite the damage already done. At the end of the day, how I see myself relative to all of creation reflects my interior life; it reflects my readiness to discover God's call to action for me, as one humble steward of creation, longing to address the human and social dimensions as well. On the horizon is a glimpse of a statue, viewed from Battery Park; it stands for freedom. *Creator God, free me from fear and indifference. Make me serenely attentive to reality, so that I may learn to live freely, in communion with all.*

Loving Your Pet Honors Creation

By Abigail A. Beal

One night when I was watching a decorating show on TV, one of the judges, critiquing a contestant's entry, said "Well, you can't make interior decorating decisions based on the cat."

Mom and I both looked at each other and in unison said "Of course you can!"

Treating our pets like members of the family is more important than having a great cream-colored sofa. Right now, for example, our cat seems to prefer minimalism. When one of us puts a magazine on a table, he'll look at us, as if to ask, "Why is this here?" Then with one swift paw off it goes, skating onto the floor.

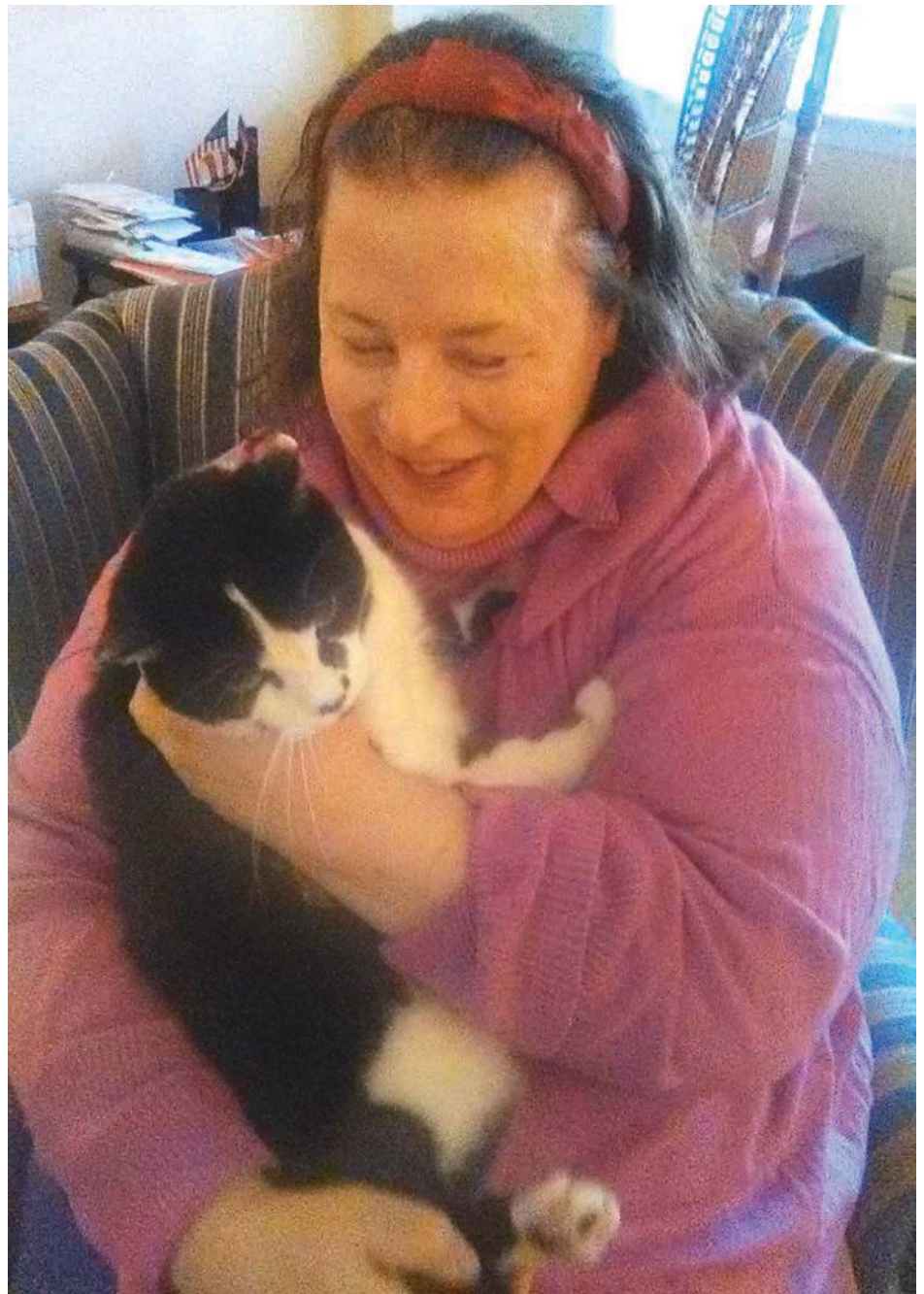
Our latest cat, Penguin, is 100 per cent an indoor cat. His world only extends as far as the apartment walls. He has never met his arch nemesis, the puggle who visits our downstairs neighbor. No matter how much Penguin sniffs the door and paces frantically in front of it, this dog is a complete mystery. Penguin does not know how juicy spring actually is, even though he faithfully watches it bloom. His paws have never run through freshly cut grass. No, his world is the living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom and our 2 bedrooms. But he has truly created a place that fills him with wonder and delight. In part, this is because we try to notice if he likes something, and work to change the environment a bit to please him more.

I'm not alone in sharing my world with a cat or pet. The New York City Economic Development Corporation states that 1.1 million pet owners live in the New York City area, with 500,000 cats and 600,000 dogs. The American Veterinary Medical Association tells us that 30.4 per cent of US homes have cats and 36.5 per cent have dogs, with the average home quite often having more than one pet. For many of us these are not mere domestic animals, but beloved companions: a 2017 UK study reported that 70 per cent of people with a dog celebrated its birthday. On social media, you can find recipes to make pet-sized birthday cakes out of a treat they would actually enjoy—tuna or salmon, rather than chocolate or strawberry.

Working from home has allowed me to observe Penguin's world in more detail. His self-created routine comes to mind when I think of how the concept of "stewardship of creation" relates to pets. As Penguin is the first indoor cat I've had, I was quite concerned that he would become bored—that he would explore every inch of the apartment in about a month. It amazes me to see that, in fact, he has never-ending curiosity, and that for him there seems always to be something new. He also has a regular daily routine, with tasks that he does at specific times of each day. After breakfast he always watches out the front window; in the afternoon, he takes his longest nap, under my bed; at the very end of the day, when I'm shutting out the lights, Penguin gets a great burst of nocturnal energy and races all over the apartment. So while our cat has adapted to our schedules, we have also made room for his. Work, church and volunteering are important to us humans. Well, Penguin has duties that are just as critical to his daily life. No one here walks through the apartment at the end of the evening, so Penguin can enjoy racing zig-zag style at top speed!

Part of being a Christian is extending kindness to others, as well as respecting the world that God has created for us. Pets and animals are something that makes this world very special. When a pet is adopted, it becomes part of a family and a new place. To me, making your pet feel that your home is 100 per cent its home too is one of the reasons you adopt it: you want it to share your life. Each time I see Penguin comfortably settle himself down for a cozy nap or come running up to sit with me and Mom while we watch TV, I know that he truly feels like he is part of the family in every way. He is safe, happy and loved.

A friend once told me, "We don't choose our pets, they choose us." With



The author with her pet cat, Penguin.

Photo: Abigail A. Beal.

Penguin, this was quite true. I had seen his photo on the local Humane Society's website. Mom had encouraged me to look at other cats—said that just looking at a picture was not enough. When I arrived at the shelter four years ago on a snowy evening in December, the attendant told me which room Penguin was in and I started there first. There were about 20 cats there, mostly sleeping or grooming themselves. It was the end of the day. I stood by the door of the room and something came flying at me like a flash across the room—it was Penguin! He stopped right in front of my feet and started playing with the strings on my jacket. Even when other people walked in the room, he stayed by my side, as if he was mine already.

Mahatma Gandhi once said "The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated." No matter where you live and what nationality you have, pets and animals deserve dignity, respect and kindness.

The author is studying to be a mental health counselor and is a life-long animal lover. She has a website PurrfectCatNames.com.

Sources: <https://www.nycedc.com/blog-entry/new-york-city-s-pet-population>, accessed February 22nd 2018;

<https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Statistics/Pages/Market-research-statistics-US-pet-ownership.aspx>, accessed February 22nd 2018

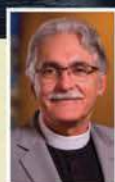


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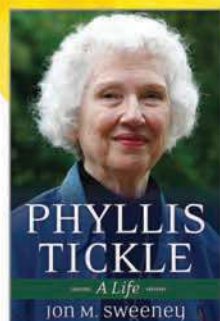
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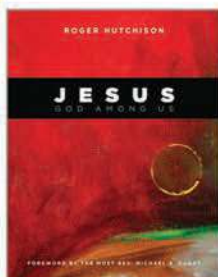
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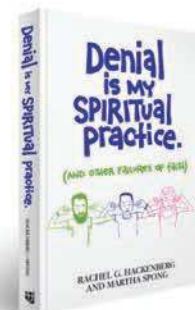
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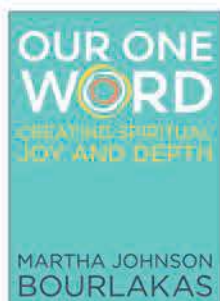
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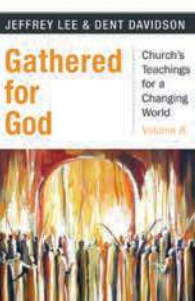
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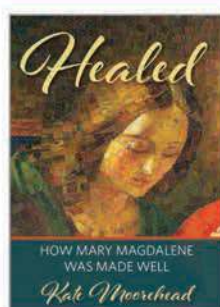
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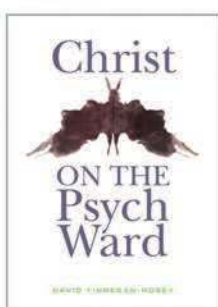
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The New York City African Burial Ground

By A.J. Williams-Myers



The African Burial Ground National Monument at Duane and Elk Streets in Manhattan.

Photo: Beyond My Ken, Wikimedia Commons.

Give me your tired, your abused, your weak, your diseased, your overworked, your mother and newborn and those who resisted human bondage.”

“Give me the young female shot in the back, with the ball still lodged in her rib cage. Lower her gently and be careful of her fractured cheek, broken earlier in a violent encounter with her owner. Give me as well the one they called ‘Caesar,’ hanged and left to rot in the sun for pilfering the wine of Geneva.”

“Give me your mariner who manned the sloops and brigs, the carpenter and mason who built the wall and city buildings, the blacksmith who smelted and forged the iron, and the dairywoman who cared for the cows that fatten white babies. Lay to rest within my embrace your cooper, miller and shoemaker, your stevedore, coachman and domestic.”

“Bring me the children malnourished and deformed because the efforts of the dairywoman was not for their loins. Careful how you lay to rest your crippled, blind, mute and maimed; their vertebrae and limbs were crushed in leveling Manhattan. Bring me your freedmen and freedwomen who eked out an existence on land stretching from the Fresh Water Pond (The Collect) west to what is Greenwich Village and Herald Square. Theirs was a formidable challenge in a world divided between black and white. Lay gently within my embrace as well those with an admixture of African, Native American and European – Give me your African American.”

“Oh, and please don’t forget the merry ones who annually celebrated Pinkster and gave expression to their African traditions preserved and syncretized in that

European institution. Dress them in their colorful garb and lower them gently into my embrace.”

“Let me comfort those in this eternal sleep who were denied such comfort as they labored to build New York. Dress them in clothing that gives them respect, and place with the little ones pendants to comfort them on their journey. Shroud them in linen pinned to perfection. Decorate their coffins with the message of Sankofa for the future must avoid this pain, sorrow, and untimely deaths of those interred in my depths, all evidence of a rabid inhumanity.”

“Give me those whose African beginnings showed signs of a healthy life but whose American endings showed signs of an unhealthy and physically traumatized, exhausting life. Lay gently within my embrace those whose teeth were filed as signs of tribal affiliation or personal beauty, those with colorful beads around their waist, and those with cowrie shells for their spiritual journey home. Place coins upon their eyes and face them East toward the rising sun.”

“Take the ashes from the pyre of those who dared to challenge the institution of slavery in 1712 and 1741, and scatter them above me to the wind so that they may be borne back to the Motherland. Lay to rest within my depths the other defenders of a freedom denied. Lay them gently side by side while whispering ‘never, never more!’”

The author is a member of Christ Church, Poughkeepsie, and professor emeritus in the Department of Black Studies, State University of New York, New Paltz.



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Cuba Sí! A resolution to Reconcile and Reunite with the Episcopal Church of Cuba

By Patricia Cage

Once a rallying cry for the Cuban revolution, *Cuba Sí!* is now a slogan to build awareness and support for a resolution being proposed at the July 2018 General Convention in Austin TX.

During the 78th General Convention in 2015, the Episcopal Church of Cuba (ECC) officially requested to be reunited as a diocese of The Episcopal Church. The Rev. Dr. Luis León was subsequently appointed to lead a special task force to evaluate the issue. That task force is now proposing a resolution for the two churches to reconcile and reunite.

The ECC has a long and rich history in Cuba. Originally established as a missionary province of the Episcopal Church, the church grew to great strength under the leadership of American Bishop Hugo Blankingship. During his 30-year tenure as Bishop of Cuba, the church grew to 46 parishes, and Episcopal schools were developed and built. Everything was thriving, and the ECC community was well over 10,000 people strong.

However, in 1961, following the revolution, diplomatic ties between the US and Cuba were severed. Bishop Blankingship and his family were forced to flee Cuba. Things went from bad to worse when, in 1962, Fidel Castro was excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Church. He subsequently outlawed Christmas and declared Cuba an atheist state. Life was difficult for clergy and religious lay people alike. Believers were jailed, and church schools were confiscated by the government. To make matters even worse, in 1966 the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church voted to grant independence to / disengage from the Diocese of Cuba. The result of all this was that decades of progress were lost, and three generations were lost to the church.

Following the collapse of the Cuban economy in the 1990s, Castro eased up on religious limitations and Christians were allowed to join the Communist Party. The real turning point for the church, however, came in 1998 with the visit of Pope John Paul II. Later that year, Castro officially reinstated Christmas as a state holiday.

Throughout this dark period, the Episcopal spirit prevailed. The church was kept alive primarily by the women of the rural towns and villages. These women swept the floors of the crumbling church buildings, secretly baptized their children and grandchildren and taught them the Lord's Prayer. When the veil of atheism was lifted, these women were there to fan the embers of Christianity in their communities and transform them into flames. It seems very fitting that today the ECC is led by a humble, strong and visionary woman, Bishop Griselda Delgado del Carpio, named ordained Bishop of Cuba in 2010 by the Metropolitan Council of Cuba, consisting of the US presiding bishop, the bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada, ACC and the bishop of the West Indies.

Because of the extreme austerity of the Cuban situation, the ECC has had to be creative and imaginative in serving the Cuban people. Bishop Griselda has created a church that truly follows in the image of Jesus, one that serves all the needs

of its people. In over half of the churches today, the ECC has installed purified water systems to provide the community with the only source of safe water for miles around. In many communities, the churches have transformed their gardens into fields, growing fresh fruits and vegetables to help nourish the village. Several churches are providing day care so that women can work and support their families, and in others, they are providing laundry services, so the elderly can live with dignity. The Missionary Development Program developed by the ECC is a model micro-loan program that trains and funds lay leaders on how to start and run a small business. As noted by former Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, "They are a great example to Episcopal Church congregations of what asset-based community development looks like—valuing all the gifts God has provided in this place, listening to the needs of the wider community, and collaborating for mission and ministry."

So how has the ECC managed? While a base level of financial support for the ECC has come from the Anglican Church of Canada and The Episcopal Church, much of the support for the ECC has been via the grass-roots support of US and Canadian parishes which have shared fellowship and resources with their Cuban brothers and sisters. This began with a powerful companion relationship with the Diocese of Florida, and more recently has expanded to include parishes in Texas, Wyoming, North Carolina, Virginia, Minnesota, Connecticut, New York and beyond. In 2017, a non-profit organization called the Friends of the Episcopal Church of Cuba was formed with the mission of harnessing US connections to improve Cuban lives.

We have so much to learn from the Episcopal Church of Cuba. Despite a severe lack of financial resources, government opposition, and isolation, the Cuban church is rich in mission and ministry, strong in developing lay leadership, innovative, generous, faithful, resilient, inclusive, and humble. Every week, more and more children appear in the churches, searching for something, whether it be hope, community, love or support? The first three or four pews now are typically reserved for children who come to church without their parents. So, at a time when attendance in the US is declining, the ECC is growing!

We believe that now is the time for The Episcopal Church to demonstrate leadership through reconciliation, to reunite with the Episcopal Church of Cuba, and to embrace *Cuba Sí!*

There will be challenges to overcome and details to work through. But as the ECC have clearly declared, "the US Episcopal Church is our Mother, and we want to come home."

For more information on the resolution, all the wonderful work underway in Cuba, and how you and your parish can help, please visit us at www.friendsofec-cuba.org.

The author is executive director of the Friends of the Episcopal Church in Cuba.



The Cathedral at 125

By Isadora Wilkenfeld

The Cathedral of Saint John the Divine celebrates its 125th anniversary this year, with a full slate of programs, exhibitions, and events recognizing more than a century of achievements and in anticipation of our community's continued flourishing.

A casual visitor to the cathedral—perhaps one of the many thousands who enter this sacred space each month—may be unaware of the many decades of hope and planning that passed prior to the laying of the cathedral's cornerstone, 125 years ago this past December 27. The bishops of New York, beginning with the Rt. Rev. John Henry Hobart in 1828, had been advocating for the establishment of the cathedral for over half a century. In the intervening years, their dreams began to come to fruition, first with the granting of the cathedral charter, followed by the acquisition of the site on which the future cathedral would be built, and finally leading to the laying of the cornerstone in 1892 by the Rt. Rev. Henry Codman Potter.

For most of us, the year 1892 seems very far away, and yet there is nothing in our lives that does not depend on the struggles, values, and dreams of earlier generations. The dream of a place where all are welcome, where great minds from around the nation would share their wisdom, where working people would worship alongside those of greater means has been realized. And another aspect of the role of a cathedral that we don't often think of

today was celebrated by Bishop Potter, "...the place and office of the cathedral: God's house, but with no parish list, no inquisitive interrogation, no parochial employment, but just space and silence, the majesty of worship—and absolute freedom to come and go!"

Throughout this year, as we continue to mark this important anniversary, we invite you to make your own mark on cathedral history. We invite you to explore *Treasures from the Crypt*, an exhibition of rarely-seen ecclesiastical objects and artifacts from our collection; to attend our Great Music in a Great Space performances and to join with us at worship services, the profoundest expression of our Anglican heritage.

Your participation in our community is what makes this cathedral truly special: you are the people for which this house of prayer was so passionately sought. As we look ahead to this year's Spirit of the City celebration, honoring our past 125 years, we're liable to wonder with amazement at just what might await us another 125 years from today.

The author is manager, Cathedral Programming and External Relations.

SPIRIT OF THE CITY: SAVE THE DATE!

This year marks a milestone for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine: the 125th anniversary of the laying of our cornerstone and now, thanks to the Landmarks Preservation Commission, a designated historic landmark – so we're throwing a party! This year's Spirit of the City gala, scheduled for Wednesday, May 23, 2018, will celebrate 125 years serving the Diocese of New York and all pilgrims seeking a place of worship and inspiration. We'll be paying special tribute to José V. Torres, who for 45 years led the Cathedral's Adults and Children in Trust program, a vital resource for families throughout the city.

The evening begins with cocktails and a buffet dinner in the Cathedral's seven chapels. This year, we'll open up the Cathedral after dinner for drinks and dancing in the Nave for all who want to celebrate our 125th year with us. Individual dinner tickets are \$500 and \$1,000 per person, with the dance party-only option at \$125 before April 30th.

Also new this year, in celebration of our anniversary, event sponsors who contribute \$12,500 or more will join our new 125th Society, members of whom will be acknowledged on a permanent plaque inside the Cathedral. Please contact Priscilla Bayley at (212) 316-7570 or pbayley@stjohndivine.org for more information about sponsorship.



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Faces of Courage: Queens Artist Gives Immigrants High Profile on Canvas

By Pamela A. Lewis

Anger” is not the word that comes to mind when looking at Betsy Ashton’s portraits, which include those of high-placed and celebrated figures, such as actor Hal Holbrook and Philip Lader, former U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom. And the walls of her sunlit, Long Island City studio are lined with paintings from which serene and pensive faces meet the viewer’s gaze. Yet Ashton asserts that anger inspired her to paint what will eventually become 18 life-sized portraits of immigrants comprising the series “Portraits of Immigrants: Unknown Faces, Untold Stories,” which she has been working on since shortly after the 2016 Presidential election. Ashton explains, “I was so angered by the maligning of immigrants and refugees that took place during the 2016 presidential election, and which continues to this day, that I felt compelled to seek out immigrants, paint them and tell their stories. They are not a threat to America, but an asset; they need to be seen and heard.”

Once completed, the portraits will represent a cross-section of documented and non-documented immigrants of different ages, from various countries and cultures, who presently live and work in New York City. Regardless of their status, all made a choice, often at considerable personal risk and sacrifice, to leave their homelands to make a new life in this country. Undaunted, Ashton has stepped “behind the headlines,” and entered into the fraught arena of the immigration debate to tell the stories, using paint and brushes, of America’s latest arrivals.

Betsy Ashton’s personal and professional journeys have been almost as circuitous as those of the immigrant men and women whose likenesses she has immortalized on canvas. Born in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and reared in central New Jersey, from childhood Ashton always “made up stories and drew pictures.” Her interests in history, languages, and current affairs led her to study art in college, and although three credits short of a Master of Fine Arts in painting from American University in Washington, D.C., she gained valuable experience as an illustrator and as an art teacher for three years in a toney school district in Fairfax, Va. However, “I wanted to do my own art,” explains the artist. “But I soon became aware that the art world (of the late 1960s and early ‘70s) didn’t like what I liked. It was interested in non-figurative art, such as by Jean Davis (known for his masking tape-created stripes). That didn’t speak to me; I’m a story teller.”

Nicholas Freeman, the Federal Communications Commission chairman at the time, suggested that Ashton put together art-related projects that could be aired on television, and, à la Julia Child, who had brought French cuisine to American television, she created a program for the show “Panorama,” teaching art once a week for \$50 a time. She was later tapped to do radio reports on the burgeoning women’s movement, for which she interviewed her subjects about equal pay for equal work (a shocking idea at the time) and the use of an emerging—and revolutionary—honorific: “Ms.” Ashton then moved to reporting and anchoring radio and television news, first in Washington, D.C., and later at CBS News in New York City. In 1977, she returned to Washington and was assigned to cover the courts for WJLA-TV, earning her the distinction as the only TV reporter to draw her own courtroom sketches (aired daily on TV) while covering trials.

Despite accolades as a reporter and anchor, 12 years ago, at the encouragement of renowned painter Everett Raymond Kinstler, Betsy resumed painting and became Kinstler’s mentee, studying as well with Sharon Sprung and Mary Beth McKenzie at the National Academy School. Says Ashton, “They didn’t care about my age, and they gave me a full scholarship for four sessions.” After two years of studying full

time, she opened a studio and began doing commission work, painting portraits of the wealthy and accomplished.

An Episcopalian, Ashton also points to her faith as kindling the idea for this project, and she has no doubt that God suggested she paint the portraits of these immigrants who can’t afford to commission them. This is her way, she says, to “counter negativity and divisive thought.” A longtime supporter of public television, and often seen now in spots on WNET and PBS stations nationwide, she insists, “I am not motivated by money, but have been willing to give up the income to do something right. I lived in wealth but am happier now,” adds Ashton, whose studio is five blocks from the loft she shares with her husband, composer James Stepleton, and their Australian terrier Banjo. “I went to church but was not really ‘there.’ I was interested in the next big story. But I’ve gone back to the Lord.”

Ashton has asked friends, fellow parishioners, and immigrant aid groups to help find those willing to pose, although some declined out of fear of deportation. “I’ve changed names and omitted details that could cause harm to the undocumented, and have offered to paint them in shadow,” she explains. Sitters have told the artist that they love the time, attention, and treatment generally reserved for the privileged and powerful.

After sketching and taking photos of her subject, Ashton sets to painting. Her style is deeply inspired by and reflective of her favorite artists, “the brushy realists,” such as John Singer Sargent, Diego Velázquez, and Anthony van Dyck. “Their deep beauty and humanity speak to me, because I want a human connection.”

Proudly cradling a magnificent loaf of bread, Edilson “Eddie” Rigo smiles warmly from the canvas. Violent robberies forced Eddie and his Italian parents from their native São Paulo, Brazil, and eventually, needing better employment, from the country itself. Following a series of successes and failures, Eddie opened his espresso bar in a customer’s building, where he makes—in the opinion of many, including Ashton—the best coffee, soups, salads and sandwiches in Long Island City. For Eddie, “America is the best place in the world!” There is safety, and he loves its vibrant cultural life.

(continued on page 54)



Betsy Ashton with her portrait of Porez Luxama.

Photo: Pamela Lewis.

CRUCIBLE OF FAITH: THE ANCIENT REVOLUTION THAT MADE OUR MODERN RELIGIOUS WORLD

BY PHILIP JENKINS: BASIC BOOKS, 2017

Reviewed by Helen F. Goodkin

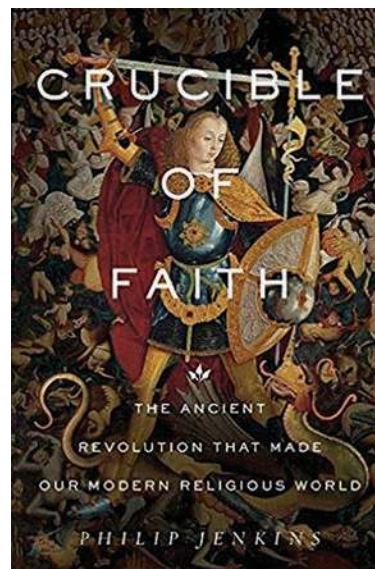
Following the division of the Greek empire after the death of Alexander the Great, Jerusalem sat at the crossroads of Greek culture, strategically located between the Ptolemys in Egypt and the Seleucids to the east. The religious life of the Jewish people was torn between keeping the old traditions of the Temple and the new Greek culture and learning, and their political life was fragmented between those who sought to accommodate their overlords and those who chose to rebel and fight for freedom and independence, such as Judas Maccabeus.

It was this time of dissidence and upheaval between roughly 250 and 50 BCE that gave birth to the rise of apocalyptic thinking. A vast literature, known as the Pseudepigrapha, testifies to the swirling intellectual activity of the period. Pseudepigrapha simply means “falsely attributed,” because most authors chose to sign their work with the name of an older important Biblical figure, such

as Noah, Abraham, and even Adam and Eve.

Most of this literature remains outside the canon, though works such as the Old Testament Book of Daniel and the later section of Zechariah and the New Testament Book of Revelation speak in a similar voice. Philp Jenkins, Professor of Religion at Baylor University, calls this period the *Crucible of Faith*, the time in which many of the ideas that strongly influenced Christianity were forged—heaven and hell, good angels and Satan, the notion of a final judgment, and the resurrection of the body. In a masterful way, he has brought historical context and serious textual study together to create a much needed book on the period after the Old Testament Canon closes and the time of Jesus begins. During this period, there was a “fundamental shift in assumptions that affect most or all of the belief systems” that influence us today.

Of importance, according to Jenkins, is the apocalypse 1 Enoch, probably written originally in Hebrew or Aramaic, (Aramaic fragments were found at



Qumran), but now only available because the Ethiopian Church has preserved it in Ge'ez as part of its Bible. 1 Enoch speaks of a messianic Son of Man who will sit on a throne in judgement; it reflects the concerns of an oppressed people trying to reconcile their understanding of divine justice and goodness with the evil perpetrated on them and their religion by pagan regimes. Enoch and others in this genre speak of a final tribulation in which the suffering of the righteous will be redressed and the evil will be punished. As my professor in seminary said, apocalypses are not written by happy people.

This book is an excellent introduction to the period, but it is a serious read. Those who take it on will, however, be richly rewarded with new understanding of the world to which Jesus came and the ideas that he preached.

The author is a member of the Church of the Epiphany Manhattan and a regular presenter in churches on Biblical topics.

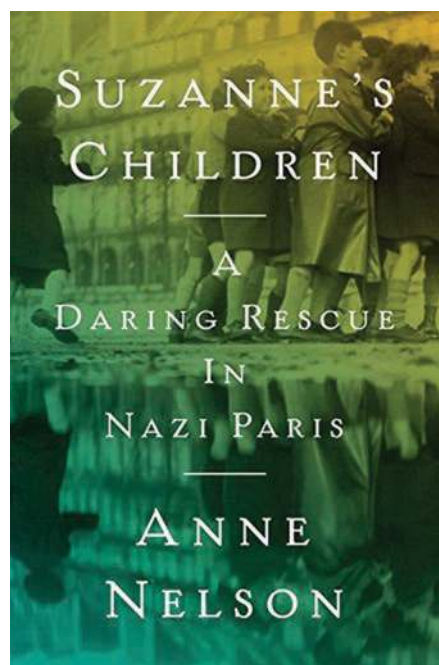
SUZANNE'S CHILDREN: A DARING RESCUE IN NAZI PARIS

BY ANNE NELSON: SIMON & SCHUSTER, 2017

Reviewed by Rick Hamlin

Suzanne Spaak would seem to have unlikely makings for a saint. A rich Belgian heiress living in occupied Paris during World War II in a sumptuous Palais Royale apartment (right above the writer Colette), the place filled with paintings by her friend the surrealist Magritte, Spaak raised her son and teenaged daughter—the latter a possible inspiration for Colette's *Gigi*—with little financial help from her bounder of a husband, as all the while she was rescuing hundreds of Jewish children from the Nazis.

Reading about Spaak's heroism in Ann Nelson's magisterial *Suzanne's Children*, you wonder, “Why didn't I ever know about this woman before?” Some of Spaak's obscurity was surely due to her own humility, not to mention the fluidity of her aristocratic social position, allowing her to do her dangerous work in full view and yet undercover. “She was always an outlier,” Nelson writes, “a Belgian amid the French, an atheist amid the believers, an independent among the militant.”



In the last months of her life when caught and imprisoned by the Germans, she filled the walls of her cell with quotations that hint at her rich inner life. She didn't have any books to refer to, only her memory. Nevertheless, she could quote Socrates (“My enemies can kill me. But they cannot harm me”), Shakespeare (“Melodious nightingale, sing a song to close my eyes”), Kipling (“Where the mothers are, the children should be, so they can watch over them”) and Piaf (“I regret nothing”).

As the extent of the crisis grew and the awareness of what would happen to the children when in the Nazis' clutches became clear, the dangers only increased. One of the most poignant moments in Nelson's book comes when Spaak realizes she needs to find a safe place—quickly—for dozens of children in the Jewish orphanages. She reaches out to the nearby Protestant church, the Oratoire du Louvre, and the pastor readily agrees that they can find temporary shelter in the church's soup kitchen.

“God created man in his own image,” he preached to his congregation that Sunday. The best way to serve God, he argued, was to help one's fellow man, starting with persecuted Jews.

Finding the Parisian women who could take the children out for “their weekly walk” while spiriting them away to safety would

have seemed a daunting task for any other woman, but Spaak took to it as though she was arranging a benefit for her favorite charity. She also put much of her inherited money into the cause—to her husband's disgruntlement—providing funds for the French families that took in the children. As she made clear to her daughter, money was nothing unless it was used for good.

Nelson does a wonderful job of filling in the background that led to this moment in history. Paris was not Berlin, and she helps us understand what tradeoffs the French had to make while living in an occupied country. Colette, for instance, was often accused of being a collaborator or at least alarmingly passive, but all the while she was supporting Spaak's work and desperately hiding her Jewish husband in the attic of the Palais Royale.

Nelson's interviews with the survivors as well as with Spaak's children provide vivid details. Their last communication from their mother was a letter she wrote from prison. She commented on the New Testament, one of the few books she was allowed to read. She told her daughter, “I would like you to read a few verses from time to time, my darling, and reflect on them well. Even if you don't believe in God you can try to exercise Christian morality, which seems admirable from every point of view.” Sometimes it is so-called atheists who best exemplify that morality.

The author is a member of St. Michael's Church in Manhattan and serves on the Episcopal New Yorker editorial advisory board.

New Basic Human Needs and Program Investment Grants

By Sunny Lawrence

In February, Episcopal Charities announced the grant recipients for our latest Basic Human Needs (BHN) grant cycle. BHN grants are available to soup kitchens and food pantries, as well as programs providing health and wellness services or skills-building resources to adults. Basic Human Needs grants currently fund fifty-nine programs—from brown bag lunches to ESL classes—in all regions of the diocese. This year we are pleased to be funding several programs



Episcopal Charities currently funds fifty-nine programs in our Basic Human Needs grant cycle. Forty-eight of these are soup kitchens or food pantries.

Photo: Community Center of Northern Westchester.

for the first time, including two food pantries: Atonement Food Pantry, a brand-new food pantry at the Church of the Atonement in the Bronx; and Fred's Pantry, a longstanding ministry of St. Peter's, Peekskill. We are also newly funding the Putnam/Northern Westchester Women's Resource Center, which provides support and advocacy for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, an outreach

partner of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Granite Springs.

We are also pleased to announce several new Program Investment Grants. These are one-time grants which help to kickstart new outreach ministries, or to fund capacity-building projects at existing ones. The New York Common Pantry, in collaboration with the Church of the Heavenly Rest, received a grant to assist with the opening of a brand-new food pantry in collaboration with the Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association in the Bronx. Another food pantry, the Rondout Valley Food Pantry at Christ the King, Stone Ridge, received a grant to assist with a kitchen renovation project, which will allow them to partner with local growers and expand the church's feeding ministry. Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison, an outreach partner of Christ's Church,



A guest is served a meal at the New York Common Pantry, a ministry of the Church of the Heavenly Rest, Manhattan.

Photo: New York Common Pantry

February Basic Human Needs Grants

All Angels' Church, Manhattan	Pathways Drop-In Program
All Saints' Church, Manhattan	Community Meal
Church of the Ascension, Manhattan	Ascension Food Pantry
Church of the Atonement, Bronx	Atonement Food Pantry
Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, Manhattan	Cathedral Community Cares
Christ the King Church, Stone Ridge	Rondout Valley Food Pantry
Christ Church, New Brighton	Community Feeding Programs
Christ Church of Ramapo, Suffern	Feeding Ministries
Christ's Church, Rye	Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison
Christ & St. Stephen's Church, Manhattan	Brown Bag Program
Christ & St. Stephen's Church, Manhattan	West Side Campaign Against Hunger Chef Training Program
Church of the Epiphany, Manhattan	Wednesday Night Homeless Feeding Program
Church of the Good Shepherd, Granite Springs	Community Center of Northern Westchester Food Pantry
Church of the Good Shepherd, Granite Springs	Putnam/Northern Westchester Women's Resource Center
Church of the Good Shepherd, Newburgh	Shepherd's Kitchen
Grace Church, Bronx	Our Lord's Soup Kitchen
Grace Church, Middletown	Guild of St. Margaret Soup Kitchen
Grace Church, Millbrook	Latino Outreach for Northeast Dutchess County
Grace Church, Nyack	Nyack Center Family Connections Program
Grace Church, Nyack	Grace's Kitchen
Grace Church, Port Jervis	Fed By Grace Food Pantry
Grace Church, White Plains	Lifting Up Westchester: Grace's Kitchen
Church of the Heavenly Rest, Manhattan	New York Common Pantry
Church of the Holy Apostles, Manhattan	Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen
Church of the Holy Trinity, Manhattan	Neighborhood Center
Holyrood Church, Washington Heights	Friday Food Fest
Iglesia Memorial de San Andrés, Yonkers	Food Pantry
St. Andrew's Church, New Paltz	The Pantry at SUNY Ulster
St. Andrew's Church, Brewster and St. James' Church, North Salem	Brewster Community Food Pantry

St. Ann's Church, Bronx	Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen
St. Bartholomew's Church, Manhattan	Crossroads Community Services
St. Edmund's Church, Bronx	Food Pantry
St. George's Church, Newburgh	Food Pantry
St. Ignatius of Antioch Church, Manhattan	Soup Kitchen
St. John's Church, Kingston	Angel Food East
St. John's Church, Monticello	Caring Hands Food Pantry
The Church of Sts. John, Paul & Clement, Mt. Vernon	Emergency Food Pantry
St. Margaret's Church, Bronx	Feeding Ministry
St. Mark's Church, Mt. Kisco	Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry
St. Mary's Church, Castleton	Community Meal and Food Pantry
St. Mary's Church, Manhattanville	Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen
St. Mary's Church, Manhattanville	RDJ Memorial Shelter
St. Mary's Church, Mohegan Lake	Community Food Pantry
St. Mary's Church, Tuxedo Park	Helping Hands of Rockland County
St. Mary's Church, Tuxedo Park	Sloatsburg Food Pantry
St. Mary's Ghanaian Anglican/Episcopal Church, Bronx	English as a Second Language
St. Matthew's Church, Bedford	Emergency Shelter Partnership
St. Matthew's Church, Bedford	A-Home: The Next Step
Church of St. Matthew and St. Timothy, Manhattan	Sunday Meals Program
St. Michael's Church, Manhattan	Saturday Kitchen and Pilgrim Resource Center
St. Paul's Church, Poughkeepsie	Food Pantry
St. Peter's Church, Bronx	Love Kitchen and Love Pantry
St. Peter's Church, Chelsea	Food Pantry
St. Peter's Church, Peekskill	Fred's Pantry
St. Peter's Church, Port Chester	Neighborhood Dinner & Mobile Food Pantry
St. Philip's Church, Harlem	Hospitality for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals
St. Thomas' Church, Amenia Union	Food of Life/Comida de Vida Pantry
St. Thomas' Church, Mamaroneck	Brown Bag Lunch and Food Pantry
Zion Church, Wappingers Falls	Food Pantry



A student hard at work at Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison, a ministry of Christ's Church, Rye.
Photo: Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison.

Rye, will be using their grant to establish a new computer lab for students at the Shawangunk Correctional Facility. And the Washington Heights Choir School, a ministry of Holyrood Church, will be receiving funding to create a staff position for an experienced program director to increase program sustainability.

Episcopal Charities funds outreach programs sponsored by Episcopal parishes in the Diocese of New York. To learn more about our grants, eligibility requirements, and granting process, please visit our website at episcopalcharities-newyork.org/apply-for-a-grant.

The author is program fellow with Episcopal Charities.



Volunteers at the Rondout Valley Food Pantry pose in the kitchen of Christ the King, Stone Ridge.
Photo: Rondout Valley Food Pantry

GREEN DISCIPLESHIP (continued from page 34)

Kerala organise District and area level programmes by collecting lunch packets from the public. The volunteers visit the houses and tell the people residing near the venue of the meeting to give one or two vegetarian lunch packets for giving to their delegates. The volunteers visit the houses around 11am and collect all the lunch packets.

- ii. The CSI Church, Omalloor arranged a district level conference. The vicar collected 60 lunch packets from the parish members and distributed to 60 delegates who attended the programme. The Vicar invited locally available experts. The vicar conducted an area level programme without spending any money of the Church. Everybody appreciated the programme.

#GPGD 8: Waste Management

- a. Our slogan is "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse". Therefore,
 - i. Reduce the waste as far as possible.
 - ii. Reuse waste by composting.
 - iii. Refuse waste coming from corporate lobbies.
 - iv. Do not receive second hand equipments coming from developed countries or corporate lobbies.
- b. Electronic waste is a serious problem as it contains fatal ingredients; hence throwing it on land and in water will eventually reach our human body. There are recycling and processing unit in some areas, whose facilities could be used, with the help of government agencies.
- c. Do not burn plastic materials which produce carcinogenic material called dioxin that can cause cancer and other serious health problems. Further, do not throw them on the land, water and forests, since that would cause environmental problems. Reduce the use. Do not mix it with other wastes.

#GPGD 9: Functions

- a. Burial Services
 - i. Encourage people to plant saplings in connection with memorial services.
 - ii. Reduce the number of wreaths as far as possible. One wreath, representing all organisations, is sufficient.
- b. Wedding
 - i. Instead of giving plastic water bottles to individuals, make arrangements to serve water in glasses.
 - ii. Encourage the newly wedded couple to jointly plant a sapling along with / instead of lighting the lamp. Make necessary arrangements to place it in a suitable place and nurture it.
- c. Conventions & Meetings

- i. Use box type amplifiers to avoid noise pollutions
- ii. Never use flex and minimize decorations.
- iii. Welcome the guests not with bouquet or shawls, but with a sapling

#GPGD 10: Farming

- a. Do not use any kind of Chemical Pesticides in the church campus
- b. Make use of the government policies that encourage agriculture. For example, avail insurances that are granted for agricultural crops. Promote farmers to save seeds from their own farms for the coming year.
- c. Encourage churches to set apart a Sunday to honour local farmers; Services giving importance to agriculture. Extend financial help to poor farmers during Christmas season.
- d. Encourage people to make vegetable gardens and give awareness about the farming methods using grow bags and also on the land.
- e. Kindly note that our wrong agricultural practices are responsible for many diseases, malnutrition, poverty etc. The CSI promotes organic cultivation and is against the cultivation of Genetically Modified Crops. (The CSI Synod supports the Gadgil committee report in protecting the Western Ghats and has taken a stand against the GM Crops in Agriculture.)
- f. Promote bee-keeping in the farms for facilitating better cross pollination and also a source of income.

#GPGD 11: Transportation

- a. Encourage the people to use public transportation for going to church, at least once in a month. Whenever possible, encourage people to accommodate another family in their private vehicles so as to reduce the use of private vehicles.
- b. During travel, we have to make every effort to reduce air pollution and energy consumption.
- c. Support the expansion of good quality public transport, the provision of improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians

#GPGD 12: Printing

- a. Publish the church newsletter once in two months, rather than on all months.
- b. Reuse the plain side of printed notices and other papers.
- c. Encourage the use of reusable postal covers.
- d. Use cloth banners
- e. Digital media than print media to share news

Published by CSI Synod Department of Ecological Concerns, CSI Synod Centre, Chennai.

12 Transitional Deacons Ordained March 10 at the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine



Back row left to right: The Rev. William Michael Baker, The Rev. Eleanor Norton Prior, The Rev. Deacon George Diaz, The Rev. Matthew Paul Buccheri, The Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin, The Rev. Deacon Geraldine A. Swanson, The Rev. Steven Yong Lee, and The Rt. Rev. Clifton (Dan) Daniel. Front row left to right: The Rev. Canon Charles W. Simmons, The Rev. Brandon Cole Ashcraft, The Rev. Michael Townes Watson, The Rev. Julia Macy Offinger, The Rev. Michael Benjamin Evington Kurth, The Rev. Margaret Evalyn McGhee, The Rev. Steven Wendell Schunk, and The Rev. Anne Marie Witchger.

Photo: Alito Orsini

Bishop Dietsche Joins Church Investment Group Board of Trustees

Bishop Dietsche earlier this year joined the Board of Directors of the Church Investment Group “to help further its mission of encouraging environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investing so that Episcopal organizations can join together in shared faith and values while realizing the benefits of scale in investing.” Speaking about the diocese’s, as well as his own, commitment to taking action related to climate change, Bishop Dietsche said, “We are confident that if we don’t take active steps in this area, the time will arrive when young people seeking to come to know God and to know God more fully will no longer see our churches as sacred spaces. We are equally adamant that they must and are to that end determined to make our churches places that are unmistakable marks of our commitment to rejoining the world in a more sustainable way.”

Bishop Dietsche was one of the 17 Anglican bishops from across the world who issued a “Call to Urgent Action for Climate Change” at *The World is Our Host* conference in South Africa in 2015. The bishops wrote that “the climate change crisis is the most urgent moral issue of our day.” That November, our diocesan Convention passed a resolution urging the fiduciary bodies of all Episcopal institutions in the diocese to consider adopting or strengthening ethical investment guidelines and divesting from fossil fuel companies, especially coal companies.

Bishops Write on Gun Violence, Sexual Harassment

Following the publication by the House of Bishops of the statements “Advocacy to End Gun Violence” and “Sexual Harassment and Gender Bias,” Bishops Dietsche, Shin and Glasspool jointly wrote two letters on March 13 and March 16 to the people of the diocese, including those statements and expanding on them.

In their March 16 letter on Sexual Harassment, Abuse, and Violence, Bishop Dietsche announced plans, including specific measures, to “revisit the practices of our own Diocese of New York to guarantee, as we are able, that the church will be a place of safety and of integrity for all people, and that in all we do we renew our commitment to ‘respect the dignity of every human being’.”

The full texts of these letters, in both English and Spanish, are available at diocesenyny.org/bp-harassment-2018 and diocesenyny.org/bp-guns-2018.

Bishop Dietsche Writes on the Danner Verdict

Following the Feb. 15 acquittal of a New York City police officer charged with the 2016 shooting death of long-time Episcopalian Deborah Danner, 66, Bishop Dietsche wrote to the people of the diocese to express his concern at “how our city and its institutions engage the mentally ill” and at the fact that the police officer concerned, along with many other officers, had not received the Critical Intervention Training that is now standard in the NYPD, but which the entire department will not have undergone until sometime in the next decade. “We hope,” Bishop Dietsche said, “that Sergeant Barry’s acquittal is not understood as a vindication of his actions in Deborah’s apartment that night, nor that those actions represented appropriate police work. Again, and with urgency, we ask that every officer be trained and ready to engage the mentally ill with compassion, patience and understanding when our police engage our most troubled people in the highly charged moments of a police call. The mentally ill cannot be expected to act in reasonable or rational ways in those conflicted encounters, so the police must be.”

For the full text of the Bishop’s message, please go to dioceseny.org/ad-danner.

St. Peter’s Church in Manhattan Awarded \$25,000 Landmarks Conservancy Grant

The 1838 St. Peter’s Church on West 20th Street in Manhattan recently received the pledge of a Landmarks Conservancy Sacred Sites Challenge Grant of \$25,000 that, once matched by other donors, will help kick off a \$1 million structural and exterior masonry restoration project. St. Peter’s has received a number of Sacred Sites grants since the program began in 1986. “It’s one of the most architecturally and historically significant religious buildings in the city,” said Ann-Isabel Friedman, the director of the Conservancy’s Sacred Sites program. “It has incredible stained glass and murals and original woodwork, it’s one of the country’s earliest Gothic Revival churches, and it’s significant for its role in the history of Chelsea and its connections with [Clement Clarke] Moore.” Moore (1779-1863), the wealthy author of “A Visit from St. Nicholas” (otherwise known as “Twas the Night Before Christmas”), owned a country estate in what is now the Chelsea neighborhood, and donated the land both for the General Seminary nearby, and for St. Peter’s Church itself—for the construction of which he largely paid, and where he served as warden and in multiple other capacities.

A grant of \$6,000 was also pledged to St. John’s Church, Monticello, for the development of a master plan.



Scarsdale Nursery School Celebrates 50 Years



St. James the Less Nursery School students 50 years ago (top) and today (bottom).

Photo: Church of St. James the Less.

When a nursery school sparks children’s interests and nurtures their natural curiosity, time flies. In the case of the St. James the Less Nursery School in Scarsdale, the time has flown by for fifty years of caring and educating children.

Begun in 1968, the St. James the Less Nursery School has offered two-, three- and four-year olds a chance to explore and experiment with art, cooking, dramatic play, math, music, science, yoga, and fine- and large-motor play. In other words, the children’s days are full *and* fun.

Janet Darlington, the founding director, feels confident as the school turns fifty. “Cheryl Smith (the current director and a parishioner) carries on in our tradition of knowing that play is the work of young children and that the most important ingredient of all is to surround children with love and encouragement!”

Chapel is held once a week for the three- and four-year olds. Children of all cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds are welcome, and currently the nursery school has a number of children from different faith traditions. Parents of different faiths visit and share their traditions and beliefs. In chapel the children sing, pray, and explore various themes: each of us is special, God gave us a beautiful world, God wants us to be kind, and Bible stories.

And what do the children like about the St. James the Less Nursery School? It seems as if they like everything: “I like morning meeting, talking about the weather and calendar,” says Ben. Adelaide adds, “Circle Time when we sing and dance is my favorite thing.” Finally, Marin and Emily say, “Our loft is fun. We made it a boat, a haunted house, a gingerbread house, and a library.”

Walking with the Immigrant

By the Rev. Adolfo Moronta



Roman soldiers with Simon of Cyrene holding the Cross.

Photo: Michael Heffner.

Lent is a time of reflection for ourselves individually and as members of a faith community. As a way of coming together, four Latino congregations this year conducted a joint Lenten program focused on walking the Stations of the Cross in each of the participating parishes—Grace/ La Gracia; White Plains, St Peter's, Port Chester; Christ Church- San Marcos, Tarrytown; and San Andrés, Yonkers. The slogan this year was “Walking with the Immigrant/Caminando con el Inmigrante.”

Each Friday in Lent, the faithful walked three Stations of the Cross in one of the congregations so that at the end of four weeks all 14 Stations of the Cross would be completed. The first to host was Misión Parroquial San Marcos/Christ Church (Feb. 23), then followed St. Peter's (March 9), San Andrés (March 16), and the closing was done in Grace/La Gracia on March 23. After the presentations of the Stations in each congregation, the parishioners joined together to share dinner and to take the opportunity to get to know one another.

The Rev. Susan Copley of Christ Church/San Marcos noted: “The experience of participating in the Stations of the Cross has been a most powerful one for me. This year we have experienced the stations as Jesus comes into our very present experience and walks with us. Jesus walks with the immigrant because he was also an immigrant to this world leaving his home in ‘the heavens’ to come and live with us.” This activity brought together both lay and clergy with the common goal to be united as one. As written in John 17:21: “that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you...”



Alba Juárez as Mary in the scene where Jesus meets his mother.

Photo: Michael Heffner.



Juan Martínez as Jesus at the 4th Station of the Cross.

Photo: Michael Heffner.

Caminando con el Inmigrante

Por el Rdo. Adolfo Moronta

La Cuaresma es un tiempo de reflexión para cada persona como creyente y como miembro de la gran comunidad de fe. Cuatro congregaciones latinas llevaron a cabo un programa en conjunto de Cuaresma enfocado en recorrer el Viacrucis en cada una de las congregaciones participantes. Estas congregaciones incluyen Grace / La Gracia (White Plains), St Peter's (Port Chester), Christ Church-San Marcos (Tarrytown) y San Andres (Yonkers). El lema de este año fue “Caminando con el Inmigrante”.

Cada viernes en Cuaresma, los fieles caminaron tres Estaciones de la Cruz en una de las congregaciones para que al final de las cuatro semanas se completaran las 14 Estaciones. La primera en ser la anfitriona fue Misión Parroquial San Marcos / Iglesia de Cristo (23 de febrero), luego siguió a San Pedro (9 de marzo), San Andrés (16 de marzo) y el cierre se realizó en Grace / La Gracia el 23 de marzo. Después de las presentaciones de las estaciones en cada congregación, los feligreses se reunían para compartir la cena y aprovechar la oportunidad para conocerse.

La Reverenda Susan Copley de Christ Church / San Marcos señaló: “La experiencia de este año de participar en las Estaciones de la Cruz ha sido una muy poderosa para mí. Este año hemos experimentado las estaciones como Jesús, que entra en nuestra experiencia presente y camina con nosotros. Jesús camina con el inmigrante porque también era un inmigrante en este mundo porque dejaba su hogar en ‘los cielos’ para venir y vivir con nosotros. “Esta actividad unió a laicos y al clero con el objetivo común de unirse. Como está escrito en el Evangelio de Juan 17:21: “Te pido que todos ellos estén unidos; que como tú, Padre, estás en mí y yo en ti, también ellos estén en nosotros, para que el mundo crea que tú me enviaste.”

The author is priest associate at Grace Church/La Gracia, White Plains/El autor es sacerdote asociado en Grace Church/La Gracia, White Plains.

2018 Year of Lamentations: *The Diocese Laments its Role in Slavery*

January

Theatrical Presentation Christ Church, Staten Island
A New York Lamentation A play exploring the history of slavery within the Episcopal Church. 01/21 3-5pm

February

Film and Discussion Church of St. Barnabas, Irvington
Strong Island (2017) Join us as we view Strong Island and discuss the thematic elements together. 02/04 7pm

Blessed Absalom Jones Liturgy Cathedral of St. John the Divine

A liturgical celebration of the first African American Priest ordained in the Episcopal Church. 02/10 10:30am

Film and Discussion Donegan Hall, Cathedral Close
Birth of a Nation (2016) Join us as we view *Birth of a Nation* and discuss the thematic elements together. 02/22 7pm

March

Theatrical Presentation Christ Church, Poughkeepsie
A New York Lamentation A play exploring the history of slavery within the Episcopal Church. 03/04 3-5pm

Book Discussion Donegan Hall, Cathedral Close
Deep Denial, David Billings Join the discussion on the narrative elements of Billings' book. 03/14 6-9pm

April

Film and Discussion Church of the Ascension, Manhattan

Agents of Change (2016) Watch Agents of Change with us and engage in a discussion afterwards. 04/22 2pm

May

A Liturgy of Lamentation Cathedral of St. John the Divine

Celebrate with us through prayer, dance, song, and theater. 05/17 7pm

Sacred Walking Tour Part 1 Manhattan

Sacred walks to honor and explore sites that mark early African presence in New York. Saturdays in May

June

Film and Discussion Christ Church, Staten Island
Strong Island (2017) Watch and discuss Strong Island with us as we delve into the topics of race, culture, and family. 06/10

July

A Pilgrimage of Lamentations Upstate New York
A three-day pilgrimage visiting historic sites that broaden our knowledge and understanding of African American history in New York State. End of July

August

Jonathan Daniels Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage offering an opportunity for high school students to visit historic sights across Georgia and Alabama and understand civil rights activist, St. Jonathan Daniels and the historic events surrounding his life and death.

Details to come. Early August

September

Theatrical Presentation St. Paul Community Baptist Church, Brooklyn

The MAAFA Suite... A Healing Journey Come see the theatrical presentation depicting the stories and events that have shaped the African American experience. Please sign up ahead of time tickets are limited.

End of September

Book Discussion St. James the Less, Scarsdale NY
We Were Eight Years in Power, Ta-Nehisi

Coates Join the discussion! Let's review and discuss this amazing book together. 09/16 2-4pm

Theatrical Presentation St. Philip's Church, Harlem
A New York Lamentation (See January for details.) 09/23 3-5pm

Film and Discussion Grace Church, Nyack

Film Festival for Youth Come view a series of short films introducing youth to the Civil Rights Movement and its implications. 09/30 2pm

October

Book Discussion St. George's, Newburgh

We Were Eight Years in Power, Ta-Nehisi Coates (See September for details.) 10/21 2-4pm

Theatrical Presentation St Bartholomew's, White Plains

A New York Lamentation (See January for details.) 10/14 2-4pm

Concert The Church of the Heavenly Rest

Vibrations for a New Movement A concert celebrating the empowerment of music! 10/27 4pm

A Diocesan Conversation

A forum discussing and reflecting upon the Year of Lamentations. 10/28

Connect with us!

Prayer Blog ednyreparationsblog.wordpress.com | **Website** bit.ly/ednyrep

Facebook @Ednyreparationscommittee | **Email us** diocesanrepcommittee@gmail.com

Newsletter bit.ly/ednysignup

BISHOPS' VISITATION SCHEDULE

APRIL 22 (4 EASTER)
Bishop Dietsche:
Holy Trinity, Inwood (a.m.);
Trinity, Ossining (p.m.)
Bishop Shin: St. John's, Kingston
Bishop Glasspool:
St. John's, Wilmot, New Rochelle

APRIL 28 (SATURDAY)
Bishop Glasspool:
St. James', Callicoon

APRIL 29 (5 EASTER)
Bishop Dietsche:
All Angels', Manhattan
Bishop Shin:
Heavenly Rest, Manhattan

MAY 6 (6 EASTER)
Bishop Shin:
Christ Church, Bronxville
Bishop Glasspool:
Christ's Church, Rye (a.m.);
Christ Church, Pelham (p.m.)

MAY 10 (ASCENSION DAY)
Bishop Shin: Resurrection, Manhattan

MAY 13 (7 EASTER)
Bishop Dietsche:
St. James', Manhattan
Bishop Glasspool:
St. Thomas, Manhattan

MAY 20 (DAY OF PENTECOST)
Bishop Dietsche:
Trinity Wall Street, Manhattan
Bishop Shin: St. John's, Monticello
Bishop Glasspool:
St. Bartholomew's, Manhattan

MAY 27 (TRINITY SUNDAY)
Bishop Dietsche:
Grace Church, West Farms
Bishop Shin:
Christ Church, Marlboro
Bishop Glasspool:
St. Mary the Virgin, Chappaqua

JUNE 3 (2 PENTECOST)
Bishop Dietsche:
St. Thomas', Amenia Union
Bishop Shin:
Grace Church, Manhattan
Bishop Glasspool:
St. Matthew's, Bedford

JUNE 10 (3 PENTECOST)
Bishop Dietsche:
Grace Church, Nyack
Bishop Shin: St. Barnabas', Irvington
Bishop Glasspool:
Holy Communion, Mahopac

JUNE 17 (4 PENTECOST)
Bishop Shin: St. Luke's, Katonah
Bishop Glasspool:
St. Peter's, Port Chester

JUNE 24 (5 PENTECOST)
Bishop Dietsche:
Good Shepherd, Granite Springs

JULY 1 (6 PENTECOST)
Bishop Dietsche: Trinity, Fishkill

FACES OF COURAGE *(continued from page 46)*

Maria Salomé's erect bearing belies her harrowing story of leaving Guatemala after her husband abandoned her and their five children, ages three to sixteen. She had only two choices: prostitution or hiring a "coyote" to sneak her into the U.S. Unwilling to do "indecent work," Maria made a "very scary journey" through Mexico until a bus picked up her group and brought them to New York City, where, soon after, she was hired as a housekeeper. Her children faced certain starvation without the money Maria sent home, which she did for 24 years before finally obtaining a green card. She could now fly back to Guatemala to visit them. Says Maria, "I have a good life here. This is a good country. This is my home."

Having just graduated high school, and speaking only Creole and French, Porez Luxama came here with his mother and siblings following a coup d'état in their native Haiti. He now teaches math and science in a New York City junior high school, and runs the Life of Hope Center in Brooklyn, which helps new immigrants learn language, literacy, job and leadership skills.

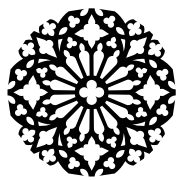
The 18 portraits (which Diego Salazar, himself an immigrant from a poor family in Bogotá, Colombia, and one of Ashton's sitters, has been framing) will be on exhibition at Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York City, from January 19 through February 16, 2019, and other churches and secular venues have expressed interest in the series. Says Ashton, "I want people who see these portraits to empathize with the sitters and to appreciate how hard they work and how grateful they are. I believe that viewers will discover "kindred spirits who are, in many ways, as 'American' as they are."

The author is a member of St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, in Manhattan.

CLERGY CHANGES			
	FROM	TO	DATE
The Rev. Karen E. J. Henry	Priest-in-Charge, St. John's, New City	Retirement	November 12, 2017
The Rev. Rigoberto Avila-Nativí	Long Term Supply, Buen Pastor, Newburgh	Priest-in-Charge, Buen Pastor, Newburgh	November 15, 2017
The Rev. Ryan Kuratko	Interim Pastor, St. Gregory the Great, Athens, GA	Campus & Young Adult Missioner for Northern New York City	January 1, 2018
The Rev. Dr. Richard Sloan	Chaplain, Columbia Campus Ministry	Consultant, Diocese of NY	January 1, 2018
The Rev. Claire Lofgren	Priest-in-Charge, St. Joseph of Arimathea, Elmsford	Priest-in-Charge, St. Anne's, Washingtonville	January 2, 2018
The Rev. Jennifer McG. Barrows	Christ Church, Marlboro, and Ascension & Holy Trinity, West Park	Retirement	January 5, 2018
The Rev. George W. Taylor	Assisting Priest, Mount Vernon Episcopal Ministry	Priest-in-Charge, Ascension, Mount Vernon	February 1, 2018
The Rev. Deacon Ian Betts	Deacon, Transfiguration, Manhattan		February 4, 2018
The Rev. Joseph D. Greene	Rector, St. John's (Fountain Square), Larchmont	Diocese of Atlanta	February 15, 2018
The Rev. Gwyneth M. Murphy	Interim Pastor, St. John's in the Village, Manhattan	Interim Pastor, St. John's (Fountain Square), Larchmont	February 21, 2018
The Rev. Glenn B. Chalmers	Retirement	Rector, St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Chapala, Mexico	March 1, 2018
The Rev. Katherine M. Malin	Rector, St. Anne's in-the-Fields, Lincoln, MA	Rector, Christ's Church, Rye	March 4, 2018
The Rev. Robert Flanagan	Interim Pastor, Christ's Church, Rye	Long Term Supply, St. Mark's, Mount Kisco	March 25, 2018
The Rev. Br. Randy R. Greve, O.H.C.	Supply, Diocese of NY	Priest-in-Charge, Christ Church, Red Hook	May 1, 2018
The Rev. William A. Doubleday	Rector, St. Mark's, Mount Kisco	Retirement	June 1, 2018
The Rev. Anna S. Pearson	Rector, Grace Church, Hastings-on-Hudson	Rector, Holy Apostles, Manhattan	June 1, 2018

Cathedral Calendar

APRIL-JUNE 2018



The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine

**1047 Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street
New York, NY 10025 (212) 316-7540**

**For details of ongoing programs, tours and workshops at
the Cathedral please visit www.stjohndivine.org.**

TICKETS AND RESERVATIONS

Unless otherwise noted events do not require tickets or reservations. Tickets for all performances other than free or "suggested contribution" events may be purchased directly from the Cathedral's website, stjohndivine.org, or by calling (866) 811-4111.

Please visit the Cathedral's website, stjohndivine.org, or call the Visitor Center (212) 316-7540 for updates and additional event and tour information.

Don't forget to become a fan of the Cathedral on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!

ONGOING PROGRAMS, TOURS, WORKSHOPS

The Great Organ: Midday Monday

Cathedral organists provide a 30-minute break for mind, body and spirit at 1:00 p.m. with an entertaining and informative demonstration of the Cathedral's unparalleled Great Organ.

The Great Organ: It's Sunday

The Great Organ: It's Sunday invites established and emerging organists from across the U.S. and around the world to take their turn at the Great Organ and present a free 5:15 p.m. concert.

PUBLIC EDUCATION & VISITOR SERVICES

ONGOING TOURS & EVENTS

HIGHLIGHTS TOURS

Mondays, 11 a.m. – Noon & 2 – 3 p.m.

Tuesdays – Saturdays, 11 a.m. – Noon & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Select Sundays, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Explore the many highlights of the Cathedral's history, architecture, and artwork, from the Great Bronze Doors to the seven Chapels of the Tongues. Learn about the Cathedral's services, events, and programs that welcome and inspire visitors from around the world. \$14 per person, \$12 per student/senior. No prior reservation necessary. Meet at Visitor Center.

VERTICAL TOURS

Wednesdays & Fridays, Noon – 1p.m.;

Saturdays, Noon – 1 p.m. & 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

On this adventurous, "behind-the-scenes" tour, climb more than 124 feet through spiral staircases to the top of the world's largest cathedral. Learn stories through stained glass windows and sculpture and study the grand architecture of the Cathedral while standing on a buttress. The tour culminates on the roof with a wonderful view of Manhattan. \$20 per person, \$18 per student/senior. All participants must be 12 years of age and older and reservations are recommended. For reservations visit the Cathedral website or call (866) 811-4111. Bring a flashlight and bottle of water. Meet at Visitor Center.

NIGHTWATCH

The Nightwatch series offers two exciting and innovative programs: Nightwatch Crossroads and Nightwatch Dusk & Dawn. For more information visit stjohndivine.org or contact: (212) 316-5819/ nightwatch@stjohndivine.org.

ADULTS AND CHILDREN IN TRUST (A.C.T.)

To learn about the many nurturing year-round

programs for young people offered by A.C.T., please call (212) 316-7530 or visit www.actprograms.org.

CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY CARES (CCC)

All programs meet in the CCC office, the Sunday Soup Kitchen or the Cathedral A.C.T. gym unless otherwise specified. Please visit stjohndivine.org for more information on CCC programs.

PASTORAL EVENTS

2018 BAPTISM DATE

May 20, 2018 – Pentecost

If you or a family member are interested in baptism, and you are new to the Cathedral community, we encourage you to attend church regularly to get to know us better. Then, if you wish to make the Cathedral your spiritual home, we will schedule a baptism date. In the weeks leading up to the baptism, there will be baptism preparation classes, as well as a baptism rehearsal. Please contact the Pastoral Care office at (212) 316-7483.

SELECTED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

APRIL

I LOVE NY: SPOTLIGHT ON THE CITY

Saturday, April 14, 10 a.m.

Celebrate New York City and its indomitable spirit with a special tour of the Cathedral. Learn how the Cathedral and City serve as places of diversity, tolerance, and human achievement. Hear stories of New York's immigrants, inventors, and artists who have helped shape the City and the world. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide John Simko. Tickets are \$18 per adult and \$15 for students and seniors.

SECRETS OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE:

SPOTLIGHT ON HIDDEN IMAGES

Saturday, April 14, 12:30 p.m.

What are a stripper and the signs of the zodiac doing in our stained glass windows? Find out on this tour that puts the spotlight on surprising images in glass and stone. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide Tom Fedorek. Tickets are \$18 per adult and \$15 for students and seniors.

THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT: SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

Sunday, April 15, 1 p.m.
The Cathedral spurred the growth of Morningside Heights into becoming one of Manhattan's most unique neighborhoods. Go back in time on an illustrated walking tour of the neighborhood and its historic architecture and institutions, and learn about its development into the "Acropolis of Manhattan." The tour begins at the Cathedral and ends at Riverside Church. Led by Cathedral Guide Bill Schneberger. \$25 per person, \$20 per student/senior. All participants must be 12 years of age or older and reservations are recommended. This tour requires extensive outdoor walking and use of stairs.

JUILLIARD ORGAN RECITAL

Thursday, April 19, 7:30 p.m.

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine is pleased to host the organ department of The Juilliard School on the Great Organ at the Cathedral for a free public recital. The event is open to the

SUNDAY SERVICES

8 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Eucharist

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

11 a.m. Choral Eucharist

4 p.m. Choral Evensong

DAILY SERVICES

Monday–Saturday

8 a.m. Morning Prayer

8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Tuesday & Thursday only)

12:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist

5 p.m. Evening Prayer

public and admission is free. Visit juilliard.edu for more information.

NIGHTWATCH CROSSROADS: INTERSPIRITUAL

Friday, April 20, 6:30 p.m.

Nightwatch Crossroads is a Friday evening and overnight spiritual retreat for middle and high school age students, youth groups and their adult chaperones. The Interspiritual program explores music, spiritual disciplines, stories and wisdom from a variety of the world's religious traditions, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity. Visit stjohndivine.org for more information and to register.

THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT:

SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

Saturday, April 21, 1 p.m.

Please see details for April 15.

GREAT ORGAN: RAYMOND NAGEM

Thursday, April 26, 7:30 p.m.

Marcel Dupré's set of preludes and fugues struck the musical world like a jolt of electricity when they were published in 1920. Jazzy, exuberant, atmospheric, and notoriously difficult to play, they have been audience favorites ever since. Joining them on this program is Sigfrid Karg-Elert's Symphony in F# minor. This mammoth piece was written in 1930, but lay undiscovered in a publisher's archive until 1984. Come hear Karg-Elert's little-known masterpiece, one of the summits of the organ repertoire, in a dramatic and passionate performance by the Cathedral's Associate Director of Music, Raymond Nagem.

WITH ANGELS AND ARCHANGELS: SPOTLIGHT ON ANGELIC IMAGES

Saturday, April 28, 10:30 a.m.

Discover images of angels in the Cathedral's glass and stone. Learn about the role of angels in the Hebrew, Christian and Islamic scriptures, the angelic hierarchy and how to identify angels by their field marks. The tour concludes with an ascent to the triforium for a birds-eye view of the breathtaking Archangels Window. Participants must be 12 years of age and older for the ascent. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide Tom Fedorek. Tickets are \$18 per adult and \$15 for students and seniors.

THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT:

SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

Sunday, April 29, 1 p.m.

Please see details for April 15.

MAY

NIGHTWATCH CROSSROADS: CHRISTIAN

Friday, May 4, 6:30 p.m.

Please see details for April 6.

BLESSING OF THE BICYCLES

Saturday, May 5, 9 a.m.

A Cathedral tradition, this special blessing ceremony, open to all, celebrates the lives of bike riders and cycling in its many forms.

THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT:

SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

Saturday, May 5, 12 p.m.

Please see details for April 15.

NIGHTWATCH CROSSROADS: CHRISTIAN

Friday, May 11, 6:30 p.m.

Please see details for April 6.

ORDINATION OF PERMANENT DEACONS

Saturday, May 12, 10:30 a.m.

Please visit dioceseny.org for more information.

WITHIN THE WALLS:

EXPLORING HIDDEN SPACES

Saturday, May 19, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

& Noon – 1:30 p.m.

This extended vertical tour features "behind-the-scenes" climbs in both the eastern and western ends of St. John the Divine. In the east, descend into the unfinished crypt and then ascend Rafael Guastavino's beautiful spiral staircase to incredible views high above the altar. The western climb presents an amazing view down the entire length of the world's largest cathedral. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide John Simko. Tickets are \$25 per person, \$20 per student/senior. Must be 12 years of age or older. Flashlight and bottle of water recommended. Participants are responsible for carrying all belongings throughout the tour. Photography is welcome, though tripod use during the tour is prohibited. If you have concerns regarding claustrophobia, vertigo, or a medical condition, please call (212) 932-7347 before purchasing tickets.

GATEWAY TO THE NEW JERUSALEM: SPOTLIGHT ON THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE WEST FRONT

Saturday, May 19, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

The Cathedral's western façade provokes much comment and curiosity as well as the occasional conspiracy theory. This stimulating one-hour tour decodes the thematic programs underlying its art and architecture. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide Tom Fedorek. Tickets are \$18 per adult and \$15 for students and seniors.

THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT: SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

Sunday, May 20, 1 p.m.

Please see details for April 15.

CATHEDRAL CHORISTER ALUMNI EVENSONG

Sunday, May 20, 4 p.m.

Alumni from the Cathedral Chorister program will join the choir at Evensong to show us they've still got the chops! Come hear music of Vaughn Williams, Dyson, and Jennings.

THE LAST CRUSADE: WORLD WAR I AND THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

Saturday, May 26, 10:30 a.m.

Please see details for March 17.

THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT: SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

Sunday, May 27, 1 p.m.

Please see details for April 15.

MEMORIAL DAY CONCERT

Monday, May 28, 8 p.m.

The New York Philharmonic presents the first in their series of free summer concerts at the Cathedral, one of our most cherished signature events. Tickets for seating are provided on a first-come, first-served basis on the day of the performance. The audio of the performance will also be broadcast onto the adjacent Pulpit Green, weather permitting.

JUNE

NIGHTWATCH CROSSROADS: INTERSPIRITUAL

Friday, June 1, 6:30 p.m.

Please see details for April 20.

DIOCESAN CONFIRMATIONS

Saturday, June 2, 10:30 a.m.

Please visit dioceseny.org for more information.

NEW YORK CHORAL CONSORTIUM BIG SING

Monday, June 11, 7:30 p.m.

The Big Sing is an annual free massed singing event inaugurated in 2011 by the New York Choral Consortium as an opportunity for New York choral singers to sing together, and to celebrate the beginning of the summer. All are welcome! Visit newyorkchoralconsortium.com for more information.

PAUL WINTER SUMMER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

Saturday, June 16, 4:30 a.m.

This sunrise concert is a unique musical journey, beginning in total darkness, with the light gradually joining the sounds, to usher in the dawning of the summer. The concert will be followed by a free tea and coffee reception in the nave of the Cathedral. For tickets and more information, visit stjohndivine.org.

Praise Him All Creatures Here Below: Liturgy and Creation Care

By David A. Larrabee

The worship and praise of God is something that is not unique to human beings. In the scriptures, all of God's creation worships and praises God.

"All the earth worships you; they sing praises to you, sing praises to your name" (Ps 66:4)

*Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!
Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!
Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!
Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
Young men and women alike, old and young together!
Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is
above earth and heaven. (Ps 148:7-13)*

*Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the
sea, and all that is in them, singing, "To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" And the four living
creatures said, "Amen!" And the elders fell down and worshiped. (Rev 5:13-14)*

Is this quaint anthropomorphism, or is there a deeper lesson to be learned about our relationship with creation? Creation participates in our liturgy. The altar candles are often made with a mixture of beeswax and vegetable wax. Paper for hymnals, Bibles and bulletins are made from wood. Altar linen and vestments can be made from animal fur or plants. All these have their origin within the biosphere, whose health has been deteriorating, largely due to human activity. Nature has become something we feel free to exploit for our own benefit, even when it damages God's creation.

Genesis 1-9 tells of humans' increasing estrangement from God, the rise of human violence, and the estrangement from creation itself. Cain, a farmer, was told that the ground would no longer yield its strength to him (Gen 4:12). In Genesis 9, we became estranged from the animals (Gen 9:2). Today the process is complete; we view ourselves as above the rest of creation, in denial of our status as part of nature. The ground mourns (Joel 1:10) as well as the earth (Jeremiah 4:28). Romans 8:18-27 tells of the groaning of creation. Creation suffers because of our estrangement. The hymn in Colossians 1:15-20 ends with "and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross." To affirm this is to seek reconciliation with all of creation.

No lasting solution to environmental problems is possible without a reorientation of our attitude towards it.

How should the Episcopal Church start to deal with stewardship in relationship to God's creation? The process of acknowledging our need to reorient ourselves—to God, to other human beings, and to creation—starts in prayer and liturgy. If our liturgy does not reflect a concern for creation, do we really take our estrangement from it seriously?

Being bound together by the Book of Common Prayer provides both opportunity and limitations. When appropriate, the parts of the liturgy that can be used to address our alienation from creation include:

- The prayers of the people, where we can confess our sins against God by our abuse of God's creation
- The choice of Doxology
- The choice of hymns
- The choice of scripture readings
- Within the sermon itself.

Until concerns are addressed from the pulpit, they remain secondary issues. Preaching about our alienation from creation does not mean we stop preaching from the Bible. The Bible is clear on this—biblically, the land suffers on account of human sin. Perhaps we have become blind and deaf to the voice of creation

within the scriptures. How often, when such passages are within the liturgical text for the day, does that voice find a place in the pulpit?

Symbolism matters, and the symbolism in our liturgy could reflect our commitment. Symbolism can be a positive or a negative reflection on our relationship to creation. But symbolism only matters if it is consciously expressed. A beeswax candle can be a positive symbol of creation's role in liturgy. There are countless opportunities to examine the objects we use in the liturgy and look for positive symbolism and make that symbolism explicit. Likewise there are opportunities to look for the negative, and do something about it. Lighting a paraffin candle, a product made from fossil fuels, could represent a negative symbolic act. This is an ongoing process, but like all processes, it needs a beginning.

Liturgical expressions of a concern for creation have been explored. Resources are available on the Episcopal Ecological Network (eenonline.org left hand side under liturgies) as well as the website <https://seasonofcreation.com/>. Another resource is the book by Norma C. Habel, David Rhoads, and H. Paul Santmire, *The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary* (© 2011 Fortress Press.)

The author is a member of All Angels' Church in Manhattan.



"A beeswax candle can be a positive symbol..."

Photo: Jonathunder, Wikimedia Commons.