

THE APOSTLE



Looking to Latrobe

ACNA Provincial Assembly 2024
Latrobe, Pennsylvania

+ From Sea to Shining Sea

+ Clint's story from Harlem

... and more



ANGLICAN CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA

REACHING NORTH AMERICA WITH THE
TRANSFORMING LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST



from a Shepherd's Heart

When I read through the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, I see men and women of the early church, those first Christians, surrounding all of their lives, their ministry, and their church planting efforts with prayer. Followers of Jesus practiced personal prayer and they met for group and corporate prayer. It was as natural as breathing. It was what fueled the Holy Spirit's power in their midst.

Prayer was not just a necessity for the mission of Jesus; it was normal for the mission of Jesus Christ. Prayer is talking and listening to God. Prayer is communicating with Almighty God. Prayer is accessing the very throne of God through Jesus Christ. Prayer is taking the needs of others (and the need of others to know Christ) to God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

If prayer was so important to the Apostles for their ministry of preaching the Gospel and planting churches, why do we think and live as if we do not need it? If prayer was so important to the Apostles and the spread of the Gospel and for releasing the power of God, isn't it amazing that we do so little of it? If prayer was important for the earthly ministry of Jesus – remember the disciples asking him, "Lord, teach us to pray," – if it was so important to him, why is it not so important to us?

Could it be our arrogance? – "I don't think I really need the Lord." Could it be our self-sufficiency? – "I can do this myself." Could it be our laziness? – "I just don't feel like praying." Could it be our ignorance? – "I just don't realize how important it is to my walk with the Lord."

Whatever it might be, why not take a step at this very moment and lift your heart and mind to the Lord and have a conversation with him. Maybe, begin with saying the Lord's Prayer, or maybe, all you can utter is, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner." Talk to God. Make it a priority. You will find Him a faithful Friend.

To You, O God, every heart stands open, and every will speaks; no secret is hidden from You. Purify my mind, my thoughts and my heart with the gift of Your grace, so that I may love You perfectly and praise You worthily. (From the Cloud of Unknowing)

The Most Rev. Dr. Foley Beach
Archbishop and Primate
Anglican Church in North America

"THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER"

In this season of Lent, I want to encourage you to take a fresh look at your personal prayer life. Nothing is more important in your walk with the Lord than what the Bible calls *prayer*. Nothing is more important to the ministry of a Christian leader than prayer.

Yet for all we hear about it, learn about it, and talk about it, we get distracted, delayed, or disheartened and we do not pray. Our busy lives, smart phones, computers, and television shows all keep us away from prayer. We know that Jesus spent much time in prayer; we read of the early followers of Jesus in the Bible spending their time in prayer; we read the exhortations in the Epistles to pray; and we have a Book of Common "Prayer." And yet, too often prayer gets put on the backburner of our lives and ministries.

Prayer allows us to *tune* in to what God is up to. Prayer enables us to *hear the voice of God* about all the issues we face: how to solve our problems, what God's will is for our lives or in the moment, what decisions to make, how to help others, and what wisdom is needed for the day. In ministry, prayer guides us in what to preach on, who to visit, His vision for my ministry, and how to reach certain people with the Gospel.

Prayer not only invites the power of God into your service of Him, but it gives you the inner strength and encouragement to *keep on keeping on* in the will of God. Without prayer you will not have the inner strength to keep on keeping on, and you won't have the anointing, and spiritual unction to impact the people you encounter. As Oswald Chambers has written, "Prayer *is* the work, not just preparation for the work."



THE APOSTLE

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editors' note:

The Anglican Church in North America will be celebrating 15 years as a Province this June 2024. Reflecting on the early formation of the Province, Archbishop Emeritus Duncan said, "you trust the Lord and you say your prayers. It's amazing how the Lord shows up and shows you a way when you thought there was no way." In this issue, you will recognize this thread across the Province where the Holy Spirit draws people in unexpected ways in two cities named Portland, in unexpected neighborhoods in and around New York City, and through creative songwriting. The theme for this year's Provincial Assembly is, "Rejoice, Pray, Give Thanks" which we will certainly do as we look back in gratitude for Archbishop Beach's leadership and look ahead to the election of a new Archbishop. We can rejoice and trust in the Lord for we know that at just the right time, His time, He will show us the way.

The Rev. Canon Andrew Gross, Editor-in-Chief · **Rachel Thebeau**, Senior Editor · **Ernie Didot**, Managing Editor



Celebrating *** 15 YEARS OF THE ACNA

TRUSTING GOD, MOVING FORWARD

By Ernie Didot

Fifteen years. In the span of fifteen years much can happen: rejoicing in the birth of a child, holding their hand as they take baby steps, letting go of the bicycle as they peddle all alone, and sitting nervously in the passenger seat as they drive home with their new drivers permit. There are some days that seem particularly arduous as children are shuttled from soccer practice to piano lessons and grabbing a quick bite in between as they finish their homework. Other moments in life you want to hold onto and not let go, like when your children snuggle against you on the couch wanting to read their favorite book for the 20th time. Just as we walk through these developmental stages of life, so too we have seen the birth, growth, and maturation of the Anglican Church in North America from its founding in 2009, fifteen years ago.

From birth by faith and conviction, we have followed the call to proclaim Christ and the fullness of His Word. There has been church planting, growth, the grounding of our worship in the Book of Common Prayer 2019, and the strengthening

of discipleship through the catechism. Through it all, God has brought the Anglican Church in North America a long way. This June, in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, we will gather to celebrate what God has done with gratitude and praise, but also to join in prayerful anticipation. A new Archbishop will be elected. We will give thanks for where God has brought us, and we will support one another in our burdens and triumphs, as we put our trust in what God has in store for us.

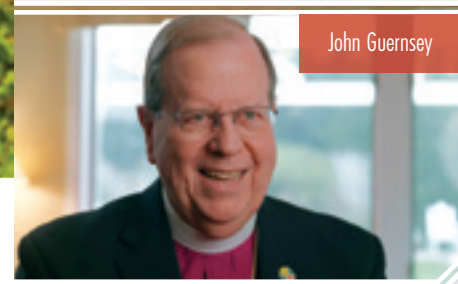
*** BIRTH ***

In June 2009, the inaugural Assembly of the Anglican Church in North America met in Bedford, Texas, where we approved and adopted the Constitution and Canons by which we order our life together. Archbishop Duncan and others remembered the meetings in Bedford, Texas as being hot, “really, really, hot.” However, through the literal hot temperatures and struggle to come to an agreement on how to come together and remain faithful, he reflected, “you trust the Lord and you say your prayers. It’s amazing how the Lord shows up and shows you a way when you thought there was no way.”



Rachel Thebeau

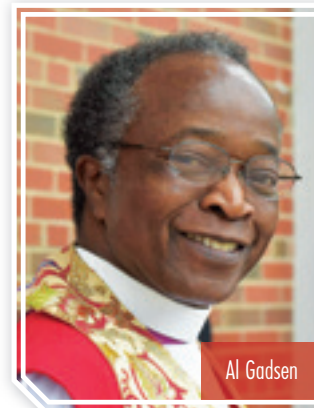
all different areas of Anglicanism, really, some had left [the Episcopal Church] years ago. Others were just leaving – there were a lot of those dynamics, but at least for that week we were all together. We were family. We had this common goal and alignment, and I just remember the cheering and the joy. That was really special to be a part of.”



John Guernsey

our people to endure many sacrifices, losses of property and insurance and positions, and all the rest in order to remain faithful to the scriptures and to the faith once delivered to the Saints.”

Bishop Emeritus, Al Gadsen, of the Diocese of the Southeast Reformed Episcopal Church, explained the sentiment held by many in those days saying, “I had begun to feel like we were isolated and left alone as we watched the world going to hell in a handbag. I kind of had an Elijah experience where I began to feel dejected – like we were the only ones who were fighting the battle. Becoming a part of the Anglican Church in North America really gave me hope. Hope for mankind, realizing that there were more of us in the battle.”



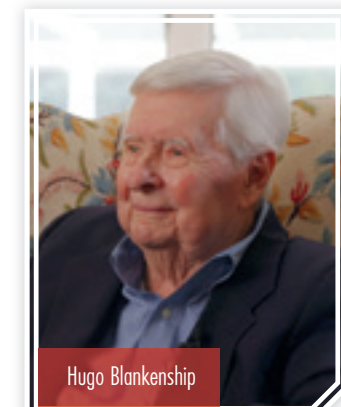
Al Gadsen



Robert W. Duncan

The investiture of Bishop Robert W. Duncan as the first Archbishop of the ACNA was held at Christ Church, Plano, Texas, on June 24th, 2009. There was significance, particularly for Archbishop Duncan, that this day happened to also be on the feast of and nativity of Saint John the Baptist. Archbishop Duncan noted, “John the Baptist was the forerunner of the Messiah, the forerunner of the Christ that it seemed to us was God’s choice for our patron. And so, we sang Benedictus, which is about bringing salvation to the people and forgiveness of sins. The good news of the Lord. You know, that’s a pretty spectacular kind of Bible song for the foundation of the Province.”

Hugo Blankenship, Chancellor of the ACNA at the time, said, “I don’t know how people knew that George Washington was the man that he was, but they just did, and I think Bob Duncan

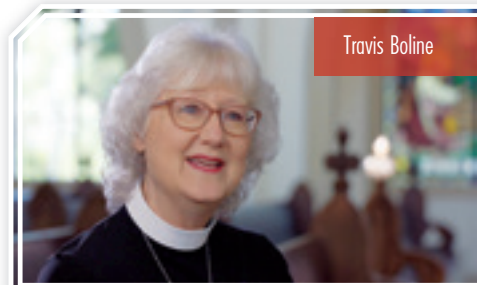


Hugo Blankenship

was well known to be the leader and it didn’t seem to be any question about it. I mean, he was the guy that was going to pull us through this and lead us through what I called ‘deep water’.”

The sound of drums in Christ Church stood out in the mind of the Rev. Dr. Travis Boline as she recalled the service of investiture: “It was an electric moment to realize

that we needed each other, the clergy and the laity needed each other to take this bold step. As we were marching into Christ Church, they had lots and lots of drums being played. The drums kept coming and droning and droning and then it slowly changed into a hymn. I just thought it was remarkable and I didn’t understand the significance of it ‘til afterwards when somebody told me that the theme for that was we were coming out of Africa. We were coming into our own because when we [many parishes] left [the Episcopal church], we had no one to give us the oversight that we needed, and the African bishops were so generous to open their arms and welcome us.”



Travis Boline



*** THE EARLY YEARS ***

Indeed, the House of Bishops in the Church of Uganda led the way by immediately recognizing the ACNA in 2009 and transferred Bishop John Guernsey, 53 churches, and 140 clergy into the new Province. The other Anglican Provinces such as Rwanda, Kenya, Nigeria, and South America, that had provided “lifeboats” for congregations over the years followed suit. Under Archbishop Duncan’s leadership, task forces were formed for a new Book of Common Prayer, a new catechism, holy orders, ecumenical relations, and a Governance Task Force.

For Bishop Guernsey, in fact, one of his major highlights in considering the fifteen years of the ACNA has been the formation and publication of the Book of Common Prayer and Catechism. “It was so evident to me that the Holy Spirit was at work, seeing how the work on the Prayer Book and the Catechism came together, seeing disparate perspectives and viewpoints about fundamental things. To see groups work together in the spirit of, ‘How can we do this so that it works for all of us?’ The Prayer Book and the Catechism was approved unanimously by the College of Bishops. They are being used all over the world in a growing number of languages – clearly the work of the Holy Spirit and a beautiful thing that is going to provide a bedrock, foundation stone for our church.”

*** TRANSITION & GROWTH ***



Assembly 2014

Significant tests for any institution come at transition points. Meeting in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, the College of Bishops met in conclave and unanimously chose Bishop Foley Beach from the Diocese of the South to be the next Archbishop. ACNA Communications Director, Canon Andrew Gross, recounted the moments after Beach’s election: “After each Bishop came



up from the crypt of the basilica at Saint Vincent, we had about one hour to work out the press release as we drove to Church of the Ascension, where it [the election] would become very much public knowledge – whether we got the press release out or not. So we ended up writing the press release from the back of a car as we drove.” Archbishop Beach decided to hold this June’s Assembly at St. Vincent to recall with gratitude God’s faithfulness over the past ten years of his leadership.

Bishop Gadsen has been impressed with Archbishop Beach’s stamina over the course of his leadership and explained, “His motto was, ‘Forward, always forward’ and he led the ACNA in that direction, establishing all kinds of relationships with our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. At some point I envied him because of the stamina, because of his ability to just keep going. He kind of reminds me of the Energizer Bunny. You know, he’s just like, you change a battery and move on. So, his administration has been one, I think, that has built upon the foundation that Bishop Duncan laid, and he took it and he ran with it.”

“Archbishop Beach has a remarkable willingness to delegate,” Bishop Guernsey shared, “to trust the work to others, to draw forth those who are willing to carry responsibility under his leadership. He’s willing to make the hard call, no question about that, but he’s also willing to utilize the gifts of the body of Christ. And so we see that coming forth with the initiatives and many other ways in which he has raised up next generation leaders in tremendous ways.”

It is remarkable to see the growth and development of the ACNA; by the end of 2022 we had grown to 977 churches with a membership of 124,999. As with most growth and transition there are growing pains and the ACNA is no exception, but through these challenges, the ACNA is learning and refining how to best edify, encourage, and love each other in Christ.



*** INTERNATIONAL TIES ***

Another dimension to the growth of the ACNA has been the strengthened global Anglican and ecumenical ties. Nowhere was this more evident than the GAFCON and Global South conferences held in Nairobi (2013), Cairo (2016, 2019, 2021) Jerusalem (2008, 2018), and Rwanda (2023). Each conference was marked by the significant presence of the ACNA delegation with Archbishop Foley being elected as the Chairman of the Gafcon Primates Council in 2018 and to the Global South Steering Committee in 2019. The world appeared just a bit smaller as we deepened fellowship with our brothers and sisters in the global Anglican communion and forged new relationships. The fulfillment of the promise of a new heaven and new earth where every tribe, tongue, and nation will worship together felt a step closer.



Global South Cairo 2016

GAFCON Jerusalem 2008

*** ASSEMBLY 2024 AND BEYOND ***

Indeed, in the span of fifteen years, the ACNA has come a long way with a future only God can imagine. In 2009 a group of Anglican laity, clergy, bishops, archbishops, and international partners took a huge step of faith forward to continue reaching North America with the transforming love of Jesus Christ. “The joy that was there in 2009 is maybe driven a little bit differently now,” said Rachel Thebeau, “but it’s still there. So, when we gather together, the Lord is present and it’s really the joy of the Lord that’s there. But the joy is palpable, and the love is palpable. And I think that’s what’s helped us, as we grow and mature, to stay together.”

“I’ve never been drawn to form the International Church of John,” Bishop John Guernsey said, “I think I need to be under authority. I think I need to be accountable. I think I need my

brothers and sisters. To constantly seek to form smaller and smaller groups that give me the mistaken idea that I’m now secure because I’m only with my own kind, however narrowly defined, I think is a dangerous solution. I think we need each other in the body of Christ...we’ve been a uniting group; a group that brings people together instead of a group that just fragments more and more and more into seemingly ideal, perfect monolithic groups. We’ve come together reversing, frankly, a common Anglican trend to increasingly fragment. But to come together, biblically united, and missionary focused.”

This June we will gather at Assembly with the theme of ‘Rejoice, Pray, Give Thanks’ for we have much reason to do all three. As we give thanks for the leadership of Archbishop Beach, we will look forward in prayer with the newly elected Archbishop, all the while rejoicing in what God has been doing and will continue to do.

Bishop Gadsen summarized well the sentiment for this year’s Assembly: “So the ACNA has come a long way over the last 15 years. When I look back and think about the perception that some had when the ACNA was formed, – that we would not last more than five years, and now we are getting ready to celebrate a 15th year anniversary – it teaches me or has taught me to really trust God, allow him to steer the ship. You know, we just hold the wheel. He steers the ship. And it goes wherever he wills.”

Finally, Gadsden concluded, “My hope for ACNA, is that we will continue to press towards the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus, because that is our objective: to declare the gospel to a dying world. I see ACNA as doing that and I just hope that the ‘Forward, Always Forward’ philosophy will forever be a part of the ACNA. That we will be able to call men from eternal damnation unto eternal life, and as I said earlier, we can do that if we continue to look towards Almighty God – allowing him to lead. For God to direct.”



Provincial Council, Falls Church 2022



THE ACNA 15 YEARS *** of Highlights

15TH ANNIVERSARY PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY

REJOICE, PRAY, GIVE THANKS

LATROBE, PA
JUNE 25-28, 2024



SPEAKERS:



Foley Beach



Sally Breedlove



Sue Currie



Ali Buba Lamido



Laurent Mbanda



Rennis Ponniah



Vaughan Roberts



John Stonestreet

*** 2009 ***

The Inaugural Assembly of the Anglican Church in North America meets in June in Bedford, Texas, and votes to approve and adopt the Constitution and Canons. During the meeting, on June 24, the Assembly held the Investiture of Bishop Robert W. Duncan as the first Archbishop of the ACNA at Christ Church, Plano, Texas.



Bishop Duncan calls for task forces:

- 1) Liturgy for a new prayer book
- 2) Catechesis for a new catechism
- 3) Holy Orders
- 4) Ecumenical Relations
- 5) Governance Task Force



The Reformed Episcopal Church (REC) became a founding member of the ACNA.



Rev. William Ilgenfritz becomes the first bishop consecrated in the ACNA.



*** 2012 ***

Provincial Assembly Ridgecrest, North Carolina.



*** 2014 ***

Five-year assembly held in St. Vincent's College in Latrobe, PA concluding Archbishop Duncan's term. A conclave of the College of Bishops elected the Rt. Rev. Foley Beach, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of the South, as the new Archbishop.



*** 2017 ***

The ACNA consecrated the Rev. Andy Lines as Missionary Bishop to England, Scotland, and Europe.



The Diocese of South Carolina led by Bishop Mark Lawrence joined the ACNA



*** 2018 ***

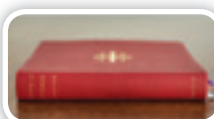
Archbishop Foley Beach elected chairman of the Gafcon Primates in Jerusalem.



*** 2019 ***

Archbishop Foley Beach elected to the Global South Steering Committee

The Book of Common Prayer 2019 released by the Liturgy Task Force.



Provincial Assembly held in Plano, TX. The College of Bishops elects Archbishop Beach to serve a second term.



*** 2020 ***

The catechism, *To Be a Christian*, released by the Catechesis Task Force.



*** 2024 ***

Provincial Assembly to be held in St. Vincent's College, PA concluding Archbishop Foley Beach's term.





PORTLAND
MAINE

PORTLAND
OREGON

FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA

ANGLICAN CHURCHES GIVEN BUILDINGS IN PORTLAND, MAINE & PORTLAND, OREGON

By Ernie Didot

Katherine Lee Bates' poem, "America The Beautiful," is best known for being set to music and popularly performed at public sporting events in the United States. In it, she celebrates the grandeur of American geography and resources: "And crown thy good with brotherhood / From sea to shining sea."

Two church parishes in the Anglican Church in North America, located in port cities on opposite coasts, richly blessed with the bounty of natural resources like salmon and lobster, have received unexpected blessings this past year in the form of church buildings and property.

Anglican churches in Portland, Oregon and Portland, Maine, 3200 miles apart on each coast of the United States, have both received, in the same year, church buildings and property of significant value! Of course, the physical properties God has

blessed these two parishes with are the fruits of God at work in unexpected ways in their respective communities.

Driving through New England towns and countryside, it is hard not to miss the sad reality that many church buildings are increasingly either closed or converted to coffeehouses, art galleries, and even Airbnbs. Indeed, Portland, Maine, and Portland, Oregon, made Barna Group's 2017 list of the Top 20 Most Dechurched Cities in America. Barna defines "dechurched" as those who "were formerly either very, somewhat or minimally active churchgoers, but have not attended a church service in the past six months." Portland, Maine, ranks #4, and Portland, Oregon, ranks #13. [<https://www.barna.com/research/church-attendance-trends-around-country/>]

Immediately there to welcome you to the heart of Portland, Maine, is a mid-sized, all brick, traditionally steepled church building housing Rise Church, an Anglican congregation of the Diocese of New England. The transition to Rise Church has been recent. The sign in front of the church and on Google maps still shows "Church of the Holy Spirit," the original parish under the Charismatic Episcopal Church.

Parishioner Jude Hanneman has memories of Church of the Holy Spirit reaching back 38 years: "...my husband and

another gentleman had gone to the bishop and asked if we could start a church. At that time there were many people who had come to the Lord through the Jesus movement and they were alienated from traditional parishes and churches, so we started in my living room." Recently, the congregation was waning in attendance and the rector, The Rev. Jim King, was considering retirement.

At the same time, the Rev. Dan Wolf, his wife, Carrie, and a church planting team began getting to know the various churches around Portland. Church of the Holy Spirit's Fr. King began partnering with Fr. Wolf's team in some activities, like Alpha Courses (an evangelistic outreach program). Through that collaboration, King, as he was looking to retirement, thought perhaps Wolf would be interested in being his successor at Church of the Holy Spirit. After praying about it, the Wolfs felt that God was really calling them to plant a church as part of the Diocese of New England. But as both sets of leaders continued to pray, they found that God was making it clear they should join with Church of the Holy Spirit recommissioning under the Diocese of New England with Fr. Wolf as the rector.

The church building and property at a key location in Portland was unexpectedly gifted outright to Rise Church. Dan

reflected, "It's not the story that we would have written, but we were trusting God...we never thought that three years in we would be gifted with this beautiful building and this beautiful congregation right in the heart of the city."

On a mid-July, rainy morning, the congregation was a healthy mix of young and old people of all kinds. Sprinkled throughout the congregation, t-shirts could be seen with the New England region's idiom printed on the back, "Wicked good" (i.e. "very cool" or "awesome"). The sanctuary and balcony were mostly full; over an estimated 100 people in a church with 125-person capacity seating. Fr. Wolf patiently introduced and explained liturgical practices throughout the service. He was clearly aware that many in attendance had not grown up in the Anglican tradition.

After the service, in an interview with Fr. Dan and Carrie, they shared a story which was illustrative of the type of people they are ministering to in the community. "We were looking for people who God had opened the door of their hearts," he explained. His neighbor, Ryan, asked him over to his house for a beer one day. After Dan explained that he was a pastor, Ryan said, "I have this old Bible that I bought at an antique store, but it was like, really big and the language is confusing." Dan responded, "That's really cool. Have you ever read the



MAINE



Bible before?” Ryan shared that his grandparents had gone to church, and he knew that some people were Christians in his family history, but he had never really gone to church. Dan asked if he’d be interested in getting together with a bunch of other guys and reading the Bible for discussion. Fr. Dan and Ryan began meeting around a backyard bonfire and in a simple way built a relationship with Ryan.

“Over time, he just kept growing and God kept showing up in his life and throughout the process he took steps of faith. I asked him, ‘Are you ready to follow Jesus?’ and he said, ‘Yeah, I’m ready.’ And so we baptized him. I loved it and so the idea here is of numerous generations not growing up in the faith, rediscovering who Jesus is. I think it’s a real opportunity for the Gospel. And now he’s one of our leaders and he hosts our Bible study. He got married and he’s bringing his wife along and she’s learning about Jesus as well.”

A key factor in the story of Rise Church are families like Kaitlyn and Matthew Whittemore who joined the Wolfs’ church planting team. Matthew had grown up in New Hampshire and had experienced feeling alone—like he was the only Christian while at school. He and Kaitlyn had married and established themselves in Church of the Advent, an Anglican church in Washington, D.C.. They began considering moving to New England as they returned for vacations and visiting family, but as missionaries of a sort. However, the idea of a return for Matthew left him with mixed feelings having struggled with the isolation of being a Christian in such a secular culture, particularly when considering immersing their children into the environment Matthew had grown up in. When they found out about Fr. Dan and Carrie’s plans for a church plant, this provided them with the anchor and purpose they were hoping for before they even arrived.

Kaitlyn had been working in international development in Washington, D.C. and had felt that God was calling them one day to serve overseas – like missionaries. Due to different factors, like a growing family, they found themselves staying rooted in the U.S. but learning and preparing spiritually to be missionaries in Maine. “I still had this longing to live as a missionary. But I think coming here and being on this journey in Portland and with Rise Church, I was like, ‘Okay, God was actually forming me to be a missionary this whole time, but it was just not in the way that I was imagining it.’”

As the Wolfs were sharing their story in the church office, a growing rumble of people and instruments could be heard in the fellowship hall and sanctuary. It was 2 p.m. on Sunday but it was obvious that another service was warming up to begin, except the music was more electric and dynamic in sound. Fr. Dan shared that for the past couple of years, a Sudanese Anglican church which is part of the ACNA had been meeting in the afternoon and that both congregations had been partnering and praying together. Tragically, on the inaugural Sunday of Rise Church in the newly gifted building, the Sudanese pastor, the Rev. Solomon Marsal, unexpectedly passed away. The Sudanese were still in mourning over Fr. Solomon’s death on this Sunday, but even in their state of grief, their leaders continually turned to Christ in hope, as evidenced by the passionate and strong worship in song. Dan shared their sense of hope, “We really believe God planted a seed in the ground and amongst his people in this Church for unity, for the sake of the gospel, both here in the city and throughout New England. And so, we’re excited to partner with them and take this tragedy and turn it for the sake of God’s glory.”

Crossing the continent to Saint Matthew’s Anglican Church in Portland, Oregon, some parallels can be found with the story of Rise Church and the common thread of God’s unexpected blessings. In 2004, the Rev. David L. Humphrey became the rector of the Episcopal church, St. Matthew’s. After a long process of discernment, St. Matthew’s left the Episcopal Church and building and joined the Anglican Church in North America. After a few years renting space in a Seventh Day Adventist church, they found themselves one block away from their original location in the Park Rose neighborhood at Faithful Savior Lutheran Church.

The Lutherans owned the A-frame, bending-arched, brick building with a 300-person seating capacity, plus a children’s play area and a big parking lot. A Russian and Ukrainian school met there during the week. However, the Lutheran congregation was getting older and smaller. The church board began to consider what to do moving forward since they wanted to see a theologically grounded and orthodox ministry continue but they were unable to sustain it given the size of their congregation.

In early 2023, the board listened to presentations from the two tenants, St. Matthew’s and the school and considered who would take over the property with the understanding that whoever did receive it would welcome the other who did not. It was unclear what type of arrangement the board would pursue. Then, in the middle of the night while in Rwanda at the GAFCON Conference in April 2023, Fr. Humphrey received a text saying that the board had voted unanimously to give the church and the grounds to St. Matthew’s! The property is valued at approximately \$2.5 million. “I didn’t know they gave churches away,” said Humphrey, “but it sure is nice now to have our own home.”

On May 21st, 2023, the Rt. Rev. Kevin Allen, Bishop of the Diocese of Cascadia, rededicated the building with the expectation that God would continue working in the Park Rose neighborhood alongside the Children’s Valley Academy to whom the space is now rented during the week. In a brief summation of the story called “A Divine Gift”, Humphrey wrote, “...by God’s grace, it will continue to be a place where the Bible is taught, the gospel is preached, the sacraments are duly ministered, the triune God is worshiped, and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is exalted!”

In a lesser-known verse from Bates’ poem, she wrote a prayer-like plea that the ideals of the United States of America would live up to the natural wonders bestowed: “May God thy gold refine / Till all success be nobleness / And every gain divine.” Amidst a culture and strong tide that is pulling people away from the Church, lighthouses of hope are being revived in these urban centers that are drawing people to Christ in unexpected ways. It is clear from the heart of the leadership in both churches that their desire is that the gift of these churches would be used to the glory of God in proclaiming his boundless grace in their neighborhoods, towns, and beyond.



OREGON



GROWING UP NOT OUTGROWING

Every Tribe & Nation Initiative

- **Revelation 7:9 (ESV): 9** After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,
- **9** Después de esto miré, y he aquí una gran multitud, la cual nadie podía contar, de todas naciones y tribus y pueblos y lenguas, que estaban delante del trono y en la presencia del Cordero, vestidos de ropas blancas, y con palmas en las manos;
- **9** Baada ya hayo nikaona, na tazama, mkutano mkubwa sana ambao hapana mtu awezaye kuuhesabu, watu wa kila taifa, na kabila, na jamaa, na lugha, wamesimama mbele ya kile kiti cha enzi, na mbele za Mwana-Kondoo, wamevikwa mavazi meupe, wana matawi ya mitende mikononi mwao;
- **9** 此後，我觀看，見有許多的人，沒有人能數過來，是從各國、各族、各民、各方來的，站在寶座和羔羊面前，身穿白衣，手拿棕樹枝，

There are more than 350 languages currently spoken in the United States, a living vision of Revelation 7:9. It is more important than ever, that each Diocese work to reach every tribe language and tongue, making a space for them to celebrate who God made them to be, creating a global movement of the spirit in our backyards. To this end, we need ETNI representatives in each diocese who have a desire to see the vision of

Revelation 7:9 made a reality in our churches here and now. We have the opportunity to reach international students, first generation citizens, refugees and asylum seekers. We have an opportunity to gather in those who have lived here for generations and preserve their language and culture. Our heritage in the Anglican Communion is rich and varied, and that heritage is here. This is the future of our church, every tribe, nation, people, and tongue, worshipping and serving our Lord together.

To do this, we are gathering resources in as many languages as are currently available. We are working with Always Forward to create resources for church plants that are reaching every tribe and nation that is here in North America. The Anglican International Student Ministry Network (AISMN) is offering resources through World at your Door and Full Spectrum. Our goal is to have a representative in each diocese to champion this work, as works best in each Diocesan context, while connecting everyone together to share resources, ideas, and encouragement.

The ETNI vision is flourishing in so many places. Several dioceses have a ministry focus on this vision. Several churches are already living in a multi-tribal context, and it is beautiful. Join us at Provincial Assembly to learn more of what is happening and how you can participate.

Come and see that the Lord is good, and he is doing good things!

In his love,

Cn Leah Turner

THE UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO CHURCH PLANTING IN THE ACNA

By the Rev. Alastair Sterne

After his resurrection, Jesus found his apostles gripped by fear, hiding away in a room. He drew close, offered peace, and breathed on them saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” This moment was then amplified on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit descended and empowered the church to become witnesses of the gospel. The church was enabled to step back outside with courage. Through Spirit-filled proclamation and evangelism, the church reached the lost, cared for the marginalized, and made disciples of all nations. The growth of the early church was characterized by continually reaching people and commissioning missionaries to establish churches in un-reached areas. Throughout history, the movement of Jesus has depended on the principle of churches planting churches.

The ACNA has wholeheartedly embraced this core principle. It is integral to our identity and mission. The commitment to reach North America with the transformative love of Jesus is inseparable from the work of planting churches. Archbishop Bob Duncan’s original call to plant one thousand churches has been persevered and flourished under the guidance of Archbishop Foley Beach and the ongoing efforts of Always Forward. This past year, I joined the Always Forward team, and I’ve had the privilege of seeing this core principle in action as we work alongside our dedicated church planters. Our efforts involve assessing, equipping, commissioning, and coaching people for this significant work. Together, we rely on the Spirit and prayer to establish gospel-centered, sacramental, and missional churches – and we’re encouraged by the stories

of people finding and following the way of Jesus through our church plants.

When I encountered Jesus in my early twenties, the first church I joined was a plant. Though it no longer exists, its legacy lives on in the lives of past members, including mine. Church planting was embedded in my spiritual DNA. Years later, I planted St. Peter’s Fireside (ANIC), and this church has also raised up leaders and sent out laborers to plant more churches. My life was transformed because a church planted a church, which in turn sowed seeds that bloomed years later into more church planting.

Whether short-lived or enduring, a church plant’s humble efforts are never in vain. Because the gospel is freshly proclaimed, God’s wisdom is made manifest, and lives are eternally changed. As we celebrate 15 years as a province, on behalf of the Always Forward team, I want to express our gratitude for the faithful work of planting churches. We invite you to pray with us for the Spirit to empower the church to be witnesses of the gospel, and for the Spirit to prevent us from shrinking back in fear from our mission. Although the ACNA continues to grow up, we can never outgrow church planting – it is central to our identity and our mission. May planting churches always remain infused in our DNA as we work to reach people with the transforming love of Jesus.



Worship

SONGWRITING WORKSHOP

By Ernie Didot

“CREATIVITY IS ALWAYS A LEAP OF FAITH. YOU’RE FACED WITH A BLANK PAGE, BLANK EASEL, OR AN EMPTY STAGE.” – Julia Cameron

A common challenge recounted by people who write, compose, or create visual art, is the terror of the blank page, blank score sheet, or blank easel. Where do you begin? What direction do you hope to take the creative endeavor? No matter how successful the last piece of creative work may have been, to begin a new creative work is to start from scratch. The purpose of the June 2023 Worship Songwriting Workshop held at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania, was to revitalize creativity and equip songwriters and wordsmiths in the creative process for worship in music.

Songwriter, performer, and music producer Andy Piercy formed the workshop, entitling it, “Expanding Your Creative Thinking” because his hope was to “open windows.” In his British accent, he explains, “I try and hold them up and say, ‘Have you seen out of this window? See?’ And I want people to say, ‘Oh, oh, look out there, let me include that in my perspective.’”

The workshop description states, “All of us occasionally hit limitations and roadblocks in our songwriting, which can result in predictability and discouragement.” But as Andy expounds, the purpose is beyond encouraging creativity, “What I want to try and help people do is understand how to write songs into their own church setting. Songs that serve their own congregation. To raise up the creative elements of what is happening at a local congregational level. I really want songs to be written that serve the church.”

To help people see out of windows differently over the course of the workshop, Andy did not limit the sessions to contributing songwriters but also to painters, storyteller philosophers, and performers. Painter Bruce Herman, for example, brought his exploration of beauty, brokenness, and resurrection into his paintings. Bruce’s paintings have been displayed in several ACNA churches, most recently, Church of the Incarnation



in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Bruce described a creative process that holds loosely to actively building and breaking, losing and finding the art amidst ruined layers; much as Christ has redeemed us amidst the wreckage of our lives. As songwriters, the “risk” of composing leaves one open to criticism but knowing how God can take us at our weakest and most vulnerable can motivate songwriters to create, anticipating how God will renew. Bruce refers to the following passage as evidence of the renewal narrative in Scripture.

*They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.
- Isaiah 61:4*

Singer/songwriter and self-described storyteller Caroline Cobb made the trip from Texas to encourage songwriters – to help open windows--and perform in a special evening concert. “I think that one of my favorite things to do is to tell other songwriters that what they’re doing does matter, even though it may not be your typical ministry role or you might not be able to see all the ways that God is bearing fruit through your work.” Caroline describes her lifework as telling the story of scripture through music: “Like any good story, the Bible demands to be read and retold again and again. It’s a deep well, beckoning us to come further up and further in. So, I keep writing from Scripture, looking at this same story from new angles, just as you’d turn a diamond to let each slant and gradient shine some new light.”

Through the liturgy of the Daily Office she has been trusting God to shape her through the Word in devotions and, as a consequence, influencing the songs she ends up writing. Her latest album, *Psalms: The Poetry of Prayer*, is the fifth in an anthology of five “story-telling” projects. Many of the songs began to be composed during her devotional times as she prayed the Psalms back to God.

Psalms took a prominent place throughout the workshop as evidenced by the songwriting prompt led by singer/songwriter Rachel Wilhelm. Rachel began her section of the workshop by singing Psalm 37:4, “Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give the desires of your heart.” The tune is catchy enough that the 20 or so participants quickly accompanied her, singing the tune back to her. Then Rachel continued to lightly play the chords to the song on her guitar as one of the participants read Psalm 37:1-6 out loud:

*Fret not yourself because of evildoers;
be not envious of wrongdoers!
For they will soon fade like the grass
and wither like the green herb.
Trust in the LORD, and do good;
dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.
Delight yourself in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him, and he will act.
He will bring forth your righteousness as the light,
and your justice as the noonday.*





Rachel's guitar swelled in crescendo and everyone joined in song again with the Psalm 37:4 refrain. This dance between song and recitation goes back and forth between the reader and the group so that by the end, the verse and song has become the most pleasant of earworms in everyone's mind – and heart. (An "earworm" is a tune that becomes sticky or memorable, such that it continues to occupy a person's mind even after it is played.)

Often, in Anglican churches, Psalms are read responsively or in unison. Rachel shared, "I thought, well, gosh, Psalms are meant to be sung so why don't we use all we have rather than, you know, not use it? So, I love to connect the heart with the reading and music is a really powerful way that the Lord has provided for us. So why not add beauty? But I think it takes an imagination to find creative ways to bring beauty to and illuminate scripture."

Rachel introduces the song element to the Psalms in a light-hearted manner by suggesting that the process would be like a game: she would sing to them first and then they were going to sing the same refrain back. She finds that congregations are receptive and quickly learn to sing the refrain from the Psalm.

"It's really formative for me, spiritually to work on these...I'm looking through that Psalm of the day and I'm looking for that nugget idea – the nugget idea that I want the congregation to sing back. I want that to stick in their brain throughout the week and minister to them and form them spiritually. It's a lovely thing because the truth of scripture can burrow deep into the congregant's heart, plant, take root, and grow."

Rachel is also the Vice-President of United Adoration, a ministry within the Anglican Church in North America, and "on a mission to revitalize the creativity of the local church by empowering artists to create in their own language, culture, and context." As song worship has become more commercialized, some churches are recognizing their artists and musicians within the local church can be tapped to create sacred space. She finds that this mission resonates well within the Anglican church because of the focus on beauty, particularly in the liturgy. "You've already got the structure, you've got beautiful language,

and a well-rounded service from start to finish with scripture and communion...the Anglican tradition encourages the intake of all facets of the senses so it is natural that the arts are a part of that." She further explains, "Like the lines of a coloring book, that then allows you to step into and then with the flourishes of the local community parish, and color that in."

One of the participants in the workshop and a United Kingdom Team Leader for United Adoration, Elise Massa, says that the goal of these types of songwriting workshops is to "help artists step out of the isolative nature of their craft and into community...because artists within community flourish. United Adoration really does seek to help cultivate the heart of the artist connecting first and foremost with the Lord, and then, as God does work in us, most creatives can't help but testify to that work through their art."

Elise is clearly gifted musically as she adeptly throws a configuration of guitar chords and then piano melodies together in an improvisation that sounds like it has been practiced long before the workshop began. But when creative prompts, like Rachel's challenge to compose a refrain from a Psalm, are given to Elise and a random workshop partner, there is a synergy at work that seemingly emerges from thin air in a beautiful marriage of scripture, melody, and rhythm. The refrain is easily recalled and as Rachel explains, "...something really mystical happens because the mind and the heart are now connected."

After Rachel's prompts were given, participants spread out around the campus of Trinity. This meant that around every corner, one would stumble on an intense session of song composition: the echoes of a duet in a stairwell, strumming guitars on a picnic table in the humid summer air, or the deep, soulful wail of a cello in the carpeted chapel. In the basement of the chapel building, Sindhu Giedd, Director of Music at Holy Cross Cathedral in Loganville, Georgia, is working through a song on the guitar with another participant. They are quickly scratching down chords, dynamic markers, and lyric adjustments as they are being called back to the main hall to share their song. Before they play the song to the group, there is not a lot of explanation and preamble; they try and let the music speak for itself. The song soars. Both sound like they have

recorded an album or two together before, but they have only had thirty minutes of time to create and practice. After they play, the group responds to this and each performance with hearty encouragement and authentic commentary. There is a concerted effort to avoid a sense of competition, but rather, foster an invitational, creative flow.

Sindhu strongly affirmed Caroline and Rachel's advocacy for worship leaders to write more songs specifically for their people: "I often have a sense of maybe something God might be doing in our congregation or specifically in the lectionary that I know my pastor is going to be trying to hone in on. But I might not be able to actually find a good song because there aren't any. Yes, there are a lot of great songs, but there are certain passages, for instance, John 11, I could not find a song for it. So, I thought, ok, well, I guess I'm writing a song on John 11 for our people to sing because it is such a meaningful passage."

The workshop took a refreshing turn when Nate Glasper, Jr., a resource development specialist and choir director from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, talked about how to make songs that choirs can easily grab and sing. Much of what is currently being written is oriented to worship teams, but a choir can be more multi-generational and a multi-ethnic expression of the congregation. Nate grew up in a black church, Pentecostal environment singing gospel music with a lot of call and response structure. However, he teaches in a cultural environment that likes to sing hymns or songs with dense lyrics. "I've been trying to utilize those songs but also bridge a simple refrain or melody that even the younger group can adapt to as well. Like *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* and then adding a refrain and call and response at the end that we can all engage in, but reflecting on what we just sang." He sees his job as a bridge; songwriting that remains true to the Word but can be adapted and particular in style to the community.

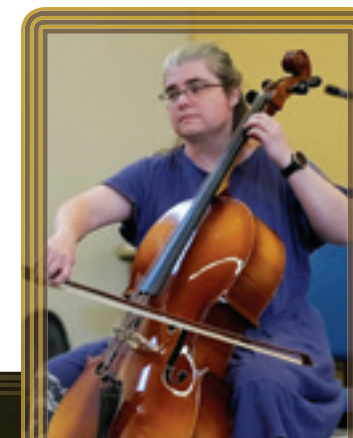
"The ideal is when the congregation feels they're owning the worship – they're not an audience but they're owning the worship. That's quite important," says Andy. "They can have a tendency to veer into becoming an audience, which is the hardest thing for a leader or minister. When the congregation is owning it, I think it feels very special when that happens. I try and foster that within what we do with the writing so that people can understand and be nourished, not just entertained."

Andy has deep roots and a history with Anglicans in North America, having been asked by Archbishop Bob Duncan to work with worship leaders back in the day when the Anglican Church in North America was just getting started. As he continues to travel around the country meeting with worship leaders, one of the things he often hears from them is their desire to incorporate the Psalms in the contemporary music setting. For this reason, he found the Psalm refrain exercise that Rachel introduced as a win-win; it was a means for incorporating Psalms but with a fresh, energizing sound that a congregation could embrace.

At the time of the workshop, Rachel was finishing an album based on the book of Jeremiah, the lamenting prophet (the album, "Jeremiah" has since been released and can be found on Apple Music, Spotify, etc). "I really love lament because lament brings you close to the Lord and lament already has a hope built in," she says. Rachel strongly identifies with Jeremiah as he is asking the Lord to meet him through pain, sorrow, and grief, trusting already that he's going to do something.

Creating can be an act of faith. A faith that sometimes reflects the wrestling and striving with God that happens through life's experiences. Through the exercises like Rachel's, the challenging, iron-on-iron musical collaborations, and through Scripture shaping minds and hearts, the net result of the workshop appeared to have its intended effect in feeding the faith and creativity of the participants.

Sindhu nicely summarized the workshop when she was asked about her big takeaway saying, "God really cares about beauty and aesthetic, not in a way to manipulate people to feel something, but to create spaces where you are connecting with the Holy Spirit in a way that makes us even more human...more of what we are made to be – we're made to feel, we're made to connect, we're made to think deeply. And so tools like poetry and the tools we have in music theory are actually gifts from God to be thought through well to create something beautiful – to make people feel, with the purpose of connecting with the Trinity."





NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE
Raising up the next generation of leaders for the next generation of the ACNA



WE ARE YOUR PARTNER

How do you connect with your youngest disciples? How do you welcome those of differing abilities into full faith expressions? How do you receive ideas and insights from the margins? How do you welcome each voice in your church to share the gospel?

How will we discover and develop our next leaders?

The Next Generation Leadership Initiative is your partner for all of these questions. With 5 unique monthly gatherings, over \$20,000 in grants given in 2030, 4 transformative leadership cohorts annually, 2 in-person retreats and gatherings, and a growing catalog of ready to use resources, NGLI is ready to come alongside your ministry, parish, and diocese to raise the next generation of leaders.

For NGLI all of 2024 is focused on becoming your partner in leadership discover, development, and deployment. Partnership, true partnership, is always mutual, always supportive, and always there for you.

NGLI already supports over 300 churches across the province. We want to be a better, more comprehensive partner to you. Here is what we mean by partnership with a church:

It starts with a Person: A real, local, relational connection. Churches will receive an NGLI contact person to connect with your church champion for all things NGLI. We advocate for you, and your local leader advocates for leadership vitality within the church.

Continues through Presence: Through your champion, staff and clergy, and other leaders, stay connected to NGLI through

monthly network video gatherings, network specific communications, and joining in-person gatherings. NGLI will honor you as a partner through our prayer meetings, and website. And you are welcome to invite a NGLI team member to speak, coach, or otherwise support your church directly.

Sustained by Prayer: Each Ember Day (4 times a year) NGLI will pray for your church at our prayer meetings and be prayed for by our NGLI team each month. We ask that our partner churches pray for leaders in the ACNA and for NGLI in their Prayers of the People once a month.

Provided for generously: Provision is mutual, as well. We have grants to support your work and ask that churches financially support the work of NGLI. Start with \$100 each month and see how the fruit of generosity is experienced! Beyond financial provision, use NGLI's resources and tools for free.

To see a Plan achieved: We hope to see your church thriving, making disciples, shaping your community, while expressing and experiencing the goodness of Jesus. Each church partner will work with NGLI to craft or clarify plans to make disciples and raise leaders through a free annual coaching session.

Church partnership with NGLI starts with a **person**, continues through **presence**, sustained by **prayer**, **provided** for generously and sees **plans** achieved.

The Next Generation Leadership Initiative is here to partner with you. Our family of Leadership Networks is ready to support you and your leadership. To become a church partner, go to nextgenanglican.com.



The Anglican Relief and Development Fund®



POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS
—
TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD

"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now."

Philippians 1:3-5

WILL YOU JOIN US?

ARDF Monthly Proven Partners support and transform our world through the local church.

Learn More About Becoming A Proven Partner





How do middle-class single mothers and human trafficking overlap?

Did you know that our churches, even small ones, can have exponential impact on at-risk youth preventing them from addiction, entering the criminal system, mental health crises, becoming home and food insecure? These church-based stories are current.

A mom in Colorado, a schoolteacher, lives near the school, but her daughter cannot ride the bus. This mother isn't able to get her to school, which puts her young teenage girl at risk.

When a child's father chooses not to provide child support for a month or ever, how does a single mom, who has a college degree, be a present loving parent when what is needed is a full-time job with benefits? But part-time jobs often mean lost wages when a child gets sick or a special school event is scheduled. The income margin is too fragile.

The stove burners went out. A mother needed to call an appliance maintenance service. A hard rain created a large leak, and another mother had to call a home repair contractor. Both mothers were solicited for "favors" in exchange for work. Not only did they feel violated by sexual advances, but they also felt fear for their children as the contractors knew their circumstances.

The examples are endless of the vulnerabilities that single moms, and their kids face. A Matthew25i Grant recipient, Not Alone Ministries, is a ministry out of Colorado Springs that partners with churches to create communities for single moms.

For the single mother teacher: Not Alone created a safe carpool plan.

For the mom, where the father pays little to no child support, Not Alone helps provide creative ways to address needs beyond merely writing checks: a foodie small group signed up for anonymous meals, and medical health parishioners offer an hour or two of help.

To avoid exploitation by contractors, this M25i ministry vets service providers, finds trustworthy workers and coordinates retired parishioners with experience. Simple solutions mitigate potentially tragic circumstances.

Single mothers are often unseen by the church, don't find churches welcoming because of stigma, and can't fulfill traditional church social expectations. They would rather stay away, take care of their kids, and survive. Single moms either live right-at or below the poverty line. M25i ministries like Not Alone, ensure that they are seen, supported, and offer extra sets of eyes creating a greater safety fabric.

These women are in many ways our modern-day biblical widows. If we care for the mothers, we also rescue the at-risk kids vulnerable to being preyed upon and trafficked, who struggle with mental health and skirt the edges of the law. Imagine the M25i ministries that would become less needful if we cared well for vulnerable women and their kids all at once. How would our churches be energized with these formerly-distant-to-church as new parishioners and leaders?

Look for a Parish-based Toolkit for outreach care to single mothers. **Request more information at anglicanjusticeandmercy.org**



GLOBAL MISSION INITIATIVE

FULLFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION TOGETHER

BY JENNY NOYES, GMI LEADER



Archbishop Foley Beach's 2024 World Mission Sunday letter stated, "We in the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) are the indirect beneficiaries of the 19th and early 20th-century Anglican missionaries who left their families and homelands, crossed cultures, made disciples, and planted churches in the Global South. When we needed rescue from the revisionist leadership of the Episcopal Church, it was the spiritual great-grandchildren of Anglican missionaries who threw us a lifeline."

Much of our global mission work continues to be interconnected with these on-going relationships with our friends in the Global South, as well as the network of the Anglican Global Mission Partners, and the Global Mission Initiative (GMI) Advocates team made up of representatives from every ACNA diocese.

The GMI grows stronger every year as GMI Advocates serve as connectors to both relationships and resources among our vast global community, centered on fulfilling the Great Commission.

Connect with an
AGMP partner at
newwineskins.org/agmp



This year, the energy around World Mission Sunday during the season of Epiphany has resulted in new mission training curricula. Anglican Frontier Missions has recently published a 4-week global mission course for adults and one for teens focused on the least-reached peoples of the earth. In addition, new children's mission curricula have been curated for the youngest among us. Links to all of these courses and more can be found at newwineskins.org/worldmissionsunday. The GMI is also excited to announce that a new 6-week curriculum called Anglican Introduction to Missions (AIM) will be launched at ACNA's Assembly this June in time for fall program planning.

Another major development is an opportunity for young adults to explore a missionary call by participating in a 9-month international apprenticeship called Role Call. Apprentices would come together for training in August, serve with one of our global partners overseas for 9-months with cohort and coaching support, and then come back together for debriefing stateside. This new program is a collaborative initiative of the AGMP and anyone interested in applying can contact agmp@newwineskins.org for more information.

We serve a global God with a boundless heart for each of the 17,000 people groups on the globe. Through awareness, networking, training and resources, the Global Mission Initiative is here to help you find your place in God's global mission until all have heard!

Find your GMI
Advocate at
newwineskins.org/gmi

**"If Anglicans don't support
Anglican missions,
who will?"**
— Jenny Noyes

Find mission curricula,
prayer litanies and more at
newwineskins.org/worldmissionsunday





Clint's STORY

only one who could figure out how to run it. It was a huge success, and they began to host tournaments throughout the city over the following summers. Some of the leaders had connections with Wall Street professionals who helped fund the tournaments, and the name evolved into “Street” guys connecting with the “Street”—“Street2Street.” By 2016 it became an independent organization.

Also in 2005, Clint was living in a Christian community house they called, “The Harlem House.” He met his future wife while living there and their family now lives in the same neighborhood, less than a block away from Harlem House. Clint followed his wife to a small Anglican church in Union Square and worked in an internship program there along with the Street2Street ministry.

But as Street2Street grew, they were increasingly confronted by the challenge of connecting the kids into the community churches. The churches reached out to the ministry leaders, asking them if they had resources and training for how to study the Bible with the kids. Increasingly, Clint felt the personal need for more training and decided to attend Regent Seminary in Vancouver, British Columbia.

While he was there, Clint was fortunate enough to study under the renowned Anglican theologian, Dr. J.I. Packer. He and a few students would meet regularly with Dr. Packer for one hour. The running joke was to see who could get the most questions asked in

that amount of time; apparently Dr. Packer was known for being “Master of the Preface” and this significantly limited the number of questions that could be asked during that timeframe. His fondest memory of Dr. Packer was encountering him on the bus as he was traveling home from campus. Clint happened to be listening to a definitive hip-hop album on his headphones as the two of them struck up a normal, “How is your day, and how are your studies?” type of conversation. The whole scene struck Clint as surreal, “the kind of absurdity of being on a bus, talking to J.I. Packer, while listening to hip-hop.”

Clint ended up doing a seminar on St. Gregory of Nyssa (335-394), which led him to focus on Gregory and slavery for his Anglican Studies project. “Gregory was one of the dissenting voices in the early church and was vehemently anti-slavery,” said Clint. On the heels of this study and his return to New York City, Clint learned more about his family background. He discovered that on his mother’s side, they were indentured servants/slaves brought from India to work on the islands. He began to learn about generational trauma and its effects on him. The confluence of his studies and readings opened a window into his family history that he did not know, “. . .but also into myself and a lot of my own spiritual struggles; a lot of the quirks about me that I was wrestling with that I didn’t really know.”

A quote from Jim Houston, founder of Regent College, impacted Clint: “God leads us into the deserts of our own addiction, and if we stay there long enough, it will become a well of living water.” Clint explained, “What he was getting at was that following God will lead you into these desert spaces, the places you don’t really want to go, and the places that are not comfortable. They’re dry places. But if you stay there long enough, that’s how God heals you.” Clint now sees how God worked in him through the processing and pain of his family’s history to

prepare him for ministry in Harlem and New York City. There are a lot of Caribbean communities around the city who share a similar heritage to Clint so he found that this time of wrestling has helped him to better empathize with them.

After Regent, Clint returned to New York City – though not Harlem – becoming a deacon at Emanuel Anglican. But then he had an encounter in which he was brought through a place of pain, and unexpectedly, a confirmation of his ministry.

On a beautiful spring day, Clint walked through an area he considered one of the safest neighborhoods in Harlem. He was scouting out a few basketball courts for future tournaments. He walked by what he characterized as a group of “kids” and the next thing he knew they jumped him from behind, hit him, and knocked him to the ground. “They were trying to get my wallet and I instinctively fought back and yelled enough to scare them away from me.” He had been beaten up enough that when his wife found him, they called an ambulance. He had been concussed.

The next day he processed the whole assault with a good friend who had worked with him through his recent trials. As he replayed the whole incident and then prayed through it, he recounts, “I was overwhelmed with a sense of compassion or pity, I don’t know really. . .it was like, wow, what are these kids up to that this is what they are doing? There was this sense of, ‘How do we reach these kids if this is the kind of thing they are doing at 3:00 in the afternoon?’” As he relived the assault, he recalled that, “It was probably the most powerful experience of the presence of God, in the midst of being assaulted – this sense of Jesus speaking to me that He’s with me no matter what. But there was a sense of a calling back to the neighborhood, calling us back to Harlem. So, I know it sounds really weird. It sounds counterintuitive, God calling us back to this neighborhood.” After the incident they decided to move back to Harlem because they thought, “. . .God’s preparing us for what’s next, and he’s going to be with us no matter what.”

The next unexpected turn for Clint and the world was COVID – while still dealing with post-concussion symptoms. The Street2Street ministry and the entire city was frozen. His wife’s teaching, his daughter’s learning, and his management of the program and church all took place in an already-cramped, 4th floor apartment in Harlem. Street2Street ended up working with kids in online video basketball game tournaments to stay connected, but the

By Ernie Didot

For some, when they hear the name “Harlem,” a neighborhood in Upper Manhattan, New York City, it is synonymous with basketball. After all, the world-famous exhibition basketball team “The Harlem Globetrotters” incorporated the neighborhood as its namesake. Harlem’s Rucker Park basketball court has been called the Mecca of basketball, where street legends squared off against NBA stars like Wilt Chamberlain, Julius Erving, and Kobe Bryant. One would assume then, that while sitting in a shaded park in Harlem, listening to a local man’s story and work in basketball youth ministry, that you would hear that basketball is his favorite sport. Instead, the Rev. Clint Werezak explained, “I’m not like a super athletic guy. . .but I like hockey.” This would not be the only quirky and ironic facet in Clint’s story.

On the streets of New York City, where wildly diverse ethnic and religious groups rub shoulders, one could be forgiven for mistakenly thinking Clint, with his foot long, thin, black and grey beard, is a part of a Hasidic Jewish group or an Eastern Orthodox church. But he is a priest and church administrator at Emanuel Anglican Church (Diocese of the Living Word) and the NYC Program Manager for Street2Street, an organization that serves high-risk youth in the New York/New Jersey area. He was raised in Canada, his mother is Trinidadian/Tobagan of Indian descent, and his father is Slovakian/Ukrainian.

In the early 2000’s, Clint visited New York City with a mission group and fell in love with the city. In 2005 he connected with a group that was working in an after-school and outreach ministry there. The leaders had the idea of running a basketball tournament in Brooklyn and in their first attempt 126 kids showed up. Clint ended up being the registration guy because he was the





effects of COVID's forced stoppage and his own physical and mental processing of the assault led him to reimagine the ministry of Street2Street.

Clint noted Zechariah 8:5 as their touchstone, "The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there." He saw this as an image of peace, of what it looks like when God's people are dwelling in the new heaven and the new earth where they are no longer worried about violence or going hungry. As Christians, Clint felt we should bear witness to that coming reality in the streets of Harlem, Brooklyn, and New Jersey. He began to build more community relationships and presence by joining his precinct's Clergy Council and drawing in more churches and organizations for big events. In New Jersey, they now have a weekly presence with a basketball league, tutoring, and after school programs. He sees Street2Street as a beachhead in the community so that the young people can begin to flourish. As a priest, he found those opportunities were not necessarily open to him, but he found that through Street2Street he is better able to connect with the community, understand their needs, and how to best help them thrive.

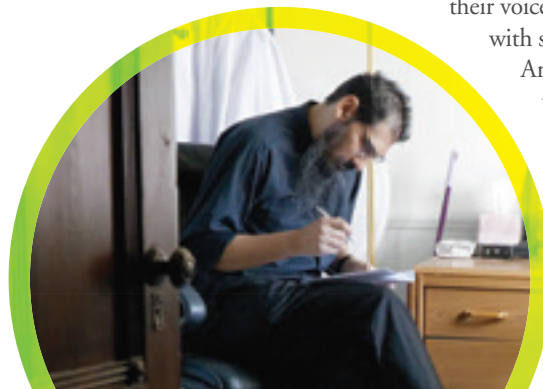
He recalls an experience in one tournament where a team registered as "RIP Jason", which he thought was odd. As the tournament progressed, he got to talking with the players, who were from the Bronx which is across the river from Harlem, and they shared with him the reason behind the name. They had named it in honor of their friend Jason who had been stabbed and killed two nights before the tournament registration. They were playing for him. The guys went on to run the table and win the tournament, so they followed Street2Street around to play in the rest of the tournaments that summer. Through the tournaments, Street2Street leadership was able to connect with the players and build relationships with them. Through these relationships, the leaders can help connect the young men to churches in their communities so that they can be discipled.

When asked about how his physical appearance and ethnic background have affected his ability to connect with New York City young people, Clint answered by first expounding on the nature of Harlem's story and ethnic makeup. Harlem, he notes, was originally settled by the Dutch, named after Haarlem in the Netherlands. Many ethnic groups, including Jewish, Italian, Irish, and German, populated it early on. Then it became an African-American hub, a community which still exists there. Now, it's hugely diverse with also a lot of Dominicans (Dominican

Republic origin) and Puerto Ricans on his block. "You can walk down the street and hear six different languages and all kinds of people, but gentrification has been creeping up into Harlem and so there's tensions with white people living here. For myself, being a multi-ethnic person, I can walk between different cultures, yet in some ways never fully be at home in any one culture. So, as I am walking in a place like Harlem, different people will respond to me in different ways. I've just learned to be awkward. It's going to be awkward, but it doesn't really matter who I'm with, there's going to be ways to connect with different people."

However, since Clint has been working through his ancestry, he has also worked through the reality of finding his identity in Christ. "As I have been able to be anchored more robustly in Christ, I have also been able to be freed to value my ethnic background. It allows me to connect with people from different cultures." He works with a lot of kids for whom New York City is a second culture. He has found he is able to identify with them in the struggles they face, including racism, as they adapt to their present culture while retaining the part of them that comes from somewhere else.

After COVID and the concussion trauma, Clint has experienced a bit of a springtime in life and ministry. He has been ordained and has witnessed the joy of seeing Emanuel Anglican in the West Village become somewhat of a magnet church drawing people from all over the city. At Emanuel, they are ministering to people from everywhere, both internationally and from different parts of the New York City area. It appears that God has uniquely equipped Clint to work through the awkwardness that sometimes accompanies this mix of cultures and interactions. "There's real growth when you can wade into those spaces and kind of push to deal with these things [differences], or we need to at least say the things that nobody really wants to talk about." This has moved Clint and others to start discerning what a church plant would look like in places like Harlem. For now, though, Clint waits expectantly, perhaps even awkwardly, for the unexpected from God in this unique place and time in New York City.



STREET2STREET in Brooklyn

It's a steamy, July morning in Brooklyn and a van wrapped dynamically with Street2Street graphics is parked by a basketball court; volunteers are pulling tables, tents, and paraphernalia out of it to set up for the basketball tournament. Clint and the Street2Street program director, Andre Rousseau, are assigning tasks to volunteers. In high school, Andre wanted to be an NBA player, which did not work out, but his backup plan was to work in basketball, work with students, and be able to share the gospel. "Those were always my three things," he said. After volunteering and coaching in Patterson, NJ in basketball, he felt God calling him to work in mentorship opportunities that Street2Street provides. "One of the best things about today is I have one of my ex-students and ex-players who's helping and volunteering here today. The fact that they go on to get an education, that's great. The fact that they're good basketball players, that is great. But the fact that they're better people and they know the Lord, that's the best part."

When asked about working with Clint, Andre chuckles and gives a broad grin, "Clint is the funniest guy in the world. He wouldn't call himself a basketball guy, but he has a heart for kids and he's been around longer than any other staff member." Andre also thinks of Clint as one of the more humble guys he knows but he recalled how at a Street2Street Staten Island event back in the early days, Clint rose to the occasion in front of a surprisingly large crowd of 250 kids. The assertive, loud side of Clint came out. "I saw a side of Clint I've never seen before, he wasn't angry, but he was here and was getting the kids ready. It was encouraging to see the outgoing and loud version of Clint. He's like an onion, you keep peeling back the layers...but he has a lot of depth to him."

President and founder of Street2Street, Woody Woodfin, was pushing a broom on the courts much of the morning to get them cleaned up for the tournament. Woody talked about the early days with Clint when the ministry got started, "Older people may get this reference, but we looked like Starsky and Hutch walking around neighborhoods. We looked like a couple of cops walking around. No one wanted to talk to us." Woody, a white southerner from Chattanooga, Tennessee, and bearded Clint from Canada were simply connecting with kids through the medium of basketball. In the early days, in the neighborhoods that Woody and Clint were working in, there were no programs connecting with kids. The secret sauce in Street2Street's ministry, as Woody tells it, has been the staff and volunteers who joined the team who lived in the neighborhoods or were from them.

In addition to the summer heat in Brooklyn, the pulsing hip-hop music was getting heated up as kids were having to raise their voice to share their registration information with staff and volunteers, like Rebecca and Chino Arborleda. Both grew up in the neighborhood where the tournament was being hosted. "I'm a baseball guy but basketball is the language of the street. Through the sport

of basketball I came back to serve my community and just help kids understand that, you know, that Jesus is for them and they can find so much love and kindness just right here on the basketball court."

The music was briefly turned down as the Street2Street team gathered all of the roughly 125 participants to explain how the tournament would work, the rules of the court, and to introduce the referees. The scene was a mix of ethnicities ranging from teenagers with Asian and Puerto Rican backgrounds to African-Americans. Then, Chino introduced a friend who smoothly transitioned to sharing the gospel in a natural manner that appeared to be well received by the players. Heads bowed and the offer of repentance and following Jesus was given as they prayed together—a holy moment as the sweltering humidity and city noise all took a backseat.

A table by the courts was filled with impressive trophies for the winners of the different age groups; one of the trophies was even a "character award" given to the player with the best sportsmanship. One of the younger participants was circling the table, eyeing the trophies and asked, "If a team wins their age group, do all the players get a trophy? I mean, like, all of us on the team?" Of course, the answer was yes, but the Street2Street program appears to be bringing trophies of eternal significance to these NYC kids. One of the staff members, Alison Woodfin explained, "These kids were born and raised here in the middle of NYC and yet many have not had access to the gospel. One Muslim boy recently asked me, 'So this Jesus, what do you think about forgiveness? Do you really believe that?'" Alison was able to openly share the gospel with this boy in response to his excellent question. These are the opportunities of open questions and relationships which lead to discipleship and the gospel taking root in neighborhoods across New York City and the surrounding area, a taste of Clint and Zechariah's vision where people are dwelling in the new heaven and the new earth in peace.





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