**ISSUES
2012**

**TUESDAY JULY 10**

**Why does ministry in Appalachia matter?**

The Appalachian region is the 205,000-square-mile region that follows the spine of the AppalachianMountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. There are 22 dioceses that have counties in theAppalachians and Appalachia continues to have some of the highest rates of poverty of any region of thecountry. Currently there are 96 counties in the Appalachian region that are economically distressed and 90counties that are at-risk. As a region, the poverty rate is near 16% as compared to a national average of 13%.Many parts of the region have poverty rates at 20% up to even 54%. Illiteracy, drug-addiction, limited accessto healthcare and safe housing needs are still overwhelmingly present in Appalachia. In some counties 90%of the children in public schools are on subsidized lunch programs. Needless to say, Appalachia is at theheart of the domestic poverty issue. Appalachia also continues to be affected by issues related to coal miningand mineral extraction and all that goes with those issues: environmentally, socially and economically.

Episcopal Appalachian Ministries (EAM) has been responding to the needs of Appalachia since the 1960’swhen the Church recognized the need to address the unique cultural needs and extreme poverty of theAppalachian region. Formerly known as “APSO” (Appalachian People’s Service Organization), EAM hasevolved into a network of grass-roots, hands-on ministries working directly with Appalachian people living inpoverty.

Appalachia does matter if we are going to be faithful to our desire to respond to human need in loving serviceand also to seek to transform the unjust structures of society (two of the five Marks of Mission.) For thisGeneral Convention, please advocate to keep funding for Appalachian ministries in place.

L Gordon Brewer, EAM, Executive Coordinator

OPEN MEETING

of The Consultation

in Meeting Room 144 in the

**Convention Center
from 1:15 to 2:15 pm
on Wednesday, July 11**

**FOR SALE! LAST CHANCE!**

Come buy the Consultation's IKEA furniture and accessories. Go to their exhibits and make an offer by 1:30 pm. The Exhibit Hall closes at 2 pm.

Mary Miller, The Consultation

“**The Water’s Fine”: Holy Baptism & Lifelong Christian Formation and Education**

When I asked about the most recent adult confirmation in my parish, I was told, “We wanted him to be our delegate to Diocesan Council, so we needed to get him ‘done.’” This necessity of “emergency” confirmation in order to make an otherwise qualified individual eligible able to serve in leadership points at once to two realities.

*One:* It is right that those who minister in Christ’s name should be properly formed for ministry.
*Two:* The imposition of additional requirements as prerequisites for the baptized is inappropriate.

What is wanted is the suitable formation of persons in their ministries as baptized Christians, for service in the church and in the world.  And this is indeed right and appropriate.

This is the substance behind Resolutions A042, A043 and A044, which ask the Church to remember its own teaching on Holy Baptism, that it is “full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ’s Body, the Church.” (BCP 298)  Nothing else is required for full membership.

What may be lacking is education and formation.  This is addressed in Resolution A041, which asks two things: that all Episcopal congregations provide instruction and formation in the history, structure and governance of the Church and opportunities for lifelong Christian formation, and that persons serving in any office of this Church shall receive instruction in the history, structure and governance of the Church and in the duties and responsibilities of the office they undertake.

In support of these requests, Resolutions A046 and A047 call for the continuing development of trained “Christian formation leaders, facilitators and teachers” to serve the Church, and for the development of an Electronic Learning Community as a resource for such formation.

The importance of this legislation is a matter of canonical consistency: to remember throughout our rules of governance that it is by Holy Baptism that we come into the Body of Christ.  At our baptism we are empowered and commissioned for ministry.  Formation in the work of being Christ’s Body in the world is ongoing, drawing us onward throughout our lives.  As cultures and contexts around us increasingly enact and demonstrate values foreign to those of Christ’s household, the Church’s responsibility for this formation becomes ever more essential.

Through the Church's history, many meanings and interpretations have gathered around confirmation. And the subjective experience of the rite will vary with the individual. But what the rite of confirmation cannot do, in and of itself, is bestow lifelong formation in the values, customs and teachings of this Church. That formation (and the content it ought to include) is precisely what the proposed canonical changes seek to articulate and require, particularly for persons who wish to exercise leadership in the church. The proposals do not diminish confirmation, but nor do they ask it to accomplish something it cannot, as the current canons attempt to do.

Jason Haddox, APLM

**Bullying and LGBT Rights**Integrity joined the National Association of Episcopal Schools to present *Bullied* on Sunday night in Integrity’s Convention Center space. Nearly 100 people watched the story of Jamie Nabozny’s suffering the abuse of bullies and his efforts to obtain support and redress from the school district. Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, a stalwart of LGBT legal rights organizations, represented Jamie in his fight.

Ann Mellow, Associate Director of NAES, joined director Bill Brummel in leading a compelling discussion after the screening. A large number of youth from the diocese of Iowa and other areas contributed much to the depth of the conversation.

The film and accompanying study guide is made available to schools, free of charge.

Jamie's website is www.jamienabozny.com

Mary O'Shaughnessy, Integrity

**The Office of Diversity, Social and Environmental Ministries**

One of the incredibly rich experiences of General Convention is the ability to witness and gain additional enlightenmentof the diverse ways in which Episcopalians live out ministry and give voice to their beliefs.

The diversity in theological practice continues to make The Episcopal Church one of the most inclusive. If you haven’talready, please take an opportunity to visit The Diversity, Social and Environmental (DSE) Ministries booth in theExhibit Hall.

The DSE has a dual mission to bring about congregational vitality and strengthen the advocacy of the Church, withresponsibility to develop programs that respond meaningfully to the context of ethnic, marginalized and oppressedcommunities. Some of the events that are sponsored by DSE at General Convention include: SOUL Conference;Historically Black Colleges and Universities; Breaking the School to Prison Pipeline sponsored by the Offices of BlackMinistries, Social and Economic Justice Lifelong Christian Formation; Lunchtime Conversations with the Episcopal AsiaAmerica Ministries Office; The Church, the Environment and You sponsored by the Office of Economic andEnvironmental Affairs and Episcopal Ecological Network; New Community Festival hosted by the DSE Team;Celebration of the First Anniversary of the Independence of South Sudan; Doctrine of Discovery Lament sponsored bythe Office of Indigenous Ministry, the Office of Lifelong Christian Formation, and the Office of Social and EconomicJustice; Lunchtime Conversation – New Generation Latinos (NGL): The Present and Future of the Episcopal Church;and New Visions Initiative for Congregational Renewal and Vitality hosted by the Office of Black Ministries and theOffice of Church Planting and Redevelopment.

Although some of these events have already occurred, several have not. Please note that the organizations are stillhere and time remains for you to obtain valuable information to share with your Diocese and parishes that honors thediversity of expressions and ministry.

UBE strongly encourages individuals to take time to acquire information from The Office of Diversity, Social andEnvironmental Ministries. This can be accomplished by visiting the booth or scheduling time to attend one of theevents.

Zena Link, UBE

**The EPF's Speaker's Corner**

Tuesday, July 10 1:00 EPF Young Adult Initiative.

This is the third year for the EPF program to create space and direction for young adult leaders who are passionate about Peace and Justice Issues. This year’s YAI leaders (Jessie Vedanti and Megan Anderson) and YAI participants will share their reflection of GC 2012

**Joy comes in the morning**

The best parts of General Convention have been moments where we’ve laughed together:

* Secretary Straub declining to read an amendment unless President Anderson treats him more nicelythan she did the Parliamentarian.
* Bishops giggling as the Presiding Bishop tells them never to call a Nevada woman “madam.”
* The roar as +Michael Curry described his vision of Harriet Beecher Stowe, wrapped in a shawl, knittingdemurely (when all the while she is hiding escaped slaves in her basement).

And so your EPF Young Adults have decided to introduce more laughter by poking fun at ourselves and atGeneral Convention culture by debuting *The Conventionion*, a parody newspaper in the model of The Onion.Poking fun, even at one’s own folk, is a dangerous game – there’s always someone who could takesomething the wrong way. But as we giggled and chuckled and chortled and guffawed this morning at ourinability to look up from our smartphones, our longing for the Starbucks that EPF is boycotting (for very goodreasons; ask your local EPF member why!), at Robert’s Rules of Order, at 30 minute long debates aboutwhether or not to introduce time limits on debates, we found ourselves filled with joy.  Yes, poking fun can bea dangerous thing, and we who are privileged in many ways often do it at our peril. But we can honestly saythat all our jokes come from the place of lighthearted fun, and we are working hard to erase any trace ofmean-spiritedness from our publication. We hope that our laughter will be well received.  We hope we can alllaugh at ourselves.  We hope that though snark may last for a night, joy will come in the morning as we renewour spirits in laughter, humility, and togetherness as we go forth where Jesus has been, to continue His workin the world.

Episcopal Peace Fellowship Young Adult Initiative

**A Matter of Perspective**

The thoughts of some Episcopal Church Hispanics/Latinos at this General Convention:

1. “*Me encanta.*” I love the Episcopal Church. I attend San Mateo Church in Houston. It is a Spanishlanguage church. It has welcomed me and my family. I have found a spiritual home there. There aretimes, however, when there is a lack of representation.” - Luz Cabrera
2. “The Episcopal Church presents us with a contradiction. I see it as a very logical Church for us becauseof its history and liturgy and yet although it advertises itself as a church in which everyone is welcomed,yet when we enter we are asked to leave our music, culture and identity as Latinos at the door. Ratherwe are asked to ‘become one of us.’ Racism is still very much alive in our Church. It is a church inwhich Latino clergy are required to be ‘beyond outstanding’ if we are to survive and/or succeed. This isespecially true for Latino women clergy. There are times when our church does not treat us with thejustice and respect it proclaims to believe in. The amount of Hispanic/Latino leaders in decision makingpositions at diocesan, provincial, or national levels do not reflect the reality of the demographics in oursociety.” - The Rev. Floyd (Butch) Gamarra
3. “We are part of the Episcopal Church – *somos parte de la iglesia.*We are a people of unity that isalways conscientious of the needs of the marginalized. *Somos un pueblo de integridad* – we are apeople of integrity whose greatest challenge is lack of resources in the midst of enormous growth.” *-Sra. Holguin*
4. “The most positive thing in the Episcopal Church at this time is the enormous growth in Province 9 andthe growth in the US church of people who come here from Latin America. *Si los Obispos no abren losojos –*if the Bishops in this country do not open their eyes as well as the church’s door to the Latinoswe will lose the best opportunity God is presenting to this Church at this time in history. The Latinos arebringing a new spirit – *un Nuevo espíritu* – *una nueva fuerza espiritual y un nuevo avivamiento -*a newspiritual strength and life. We are the hope that the Episcopal Church seems to be seeking.” - The Rt.Rev. Francisco Duque

Perhaps the challenge to us is to allow ourselves to receive the vision of abundance that Christ has promisedwhich is being shown to us through the many Latinos who are looking for a spiritual home in our Church.
The Rev. Carmen Guerrero, CEL

**Changing Attitude, England at GC 2012**

The links between Changing Attitude, England and TransEpiscopal go back about five years. In 2008, Cameron Partridge joined me and others to participate in a Transgender seminar I organised for the fringe programme at the Lambeth Conference. In 2009 I followed the debate online - blogging with bated breath - the progress of the trans non-discrimination resolutions which failed at the last to achieve the desired formulation.

Knowing that the resolutions would be coming back at the 2012 General Convention, I had to be here to lend my support. As I write all three resolutions (the third being part of an anti-bullying resolution) have been passed by the House of Bishops and await a decision by the House of Deputies. It’s wonderful to have witnessed this historic development, which sends a strong message of inclusion to the rest of the Anglican Communion, including my own church, the Church of England.

As I said at Speakers Corner earlier in the week, the situation there is very similar to here – for example, at least seven clergy have transitioned in the Church of England, the same number as in the Episcopal Church. Indeed, so carried away was I by describing the UK setting that I forgot to say how much I longed to see these three resolutions pass this week!

One of the valuable developments in England has been the collaboration of the LGBT Christian groups – the Lesbian & Gay Christian Movement, Changing Attitude, Inclusive Church, Sibyls (Christian spirituality for Trans people), the Evangelical Lesbian & Gay Fellowship, Accepting Evangelicals, & Courage – in the recently formed LGB&T Anglican Coalition. The equality accorded to Trans people within the Coalition is evident from the fact that three members of Sibyls are currently co-chairing the Coalition.

Here at General Convention the collaboration and cross-fertilization in the Consultation area of the Exhibition Hall is much broader than LGBT: Tim Yeager’s stirring defence of workers’ rights inspired two of my TransEpiscopal colleagues to join the march on Wednesday. Powerful stuff!

Christina Beardsley

**The Doctrine of Discovery**

Many of us learned neither the term “Doctrine of Discovery” (DOD), nor the events to which it refers in school. The “Doctrine of Discovery” is an umbrella term used in international law referring to a rather wide range of papal bulls, royal charters, laws, decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court, and policies which justified, made legal, and blessed the Crusades, the exploration, “discovery” and attempted “conquest” of the “New World” by the “Old World.” It provided the rationale for invasion, genocide, and slavery in the Americas and elsewhere, all cloaked in the legal and sacred language of Church and State.

Although many of us know that there were “some problems of injustice, violence, and greed” associated with the settlement of the Americas, few of us have knowledge of the sources and extent of this injustice and violence, nor the ways in which they were carried out in the name of Jesus Christ as manifestations of the will of God. Many who live in the Americas, including some indigenous peoples, have come to understand the origins of our nations in ways that completely ignore the tragic reality of the past. Although nothing that we do today can undo or remove the past, there is a great deal to be gained from a thoughtful, faithful, prayerful study of our history. Even a modest understanding of the reasons used to justify the injustice, violence and greed, will serve to transform the way we who live in the Americas today see ourselves and each other.

As even a brief study of the qualities associated with Doctrine of Discovery -- arrogance, ignorance, short-sightedness, dishonesty, privilege, deception, blindness, and failure in human relationships on the part of the invader/ settlers -- will help us to see that the thinking used to justify this horrific past was an abuse of the Good News of Jesus Christ, *yet notrecognized as such at the time.*

Today, we have the gift and opportunity to become moved by grief and compassion for this past, so that we do not continue it, and so that we may find ways to be God’s people, all of us together, listening, honoring and working together for the reign of God here and now.

Kathryn A. Rickert, Ph. D.

For more resources please see:

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/doctrine-discovery-resources>

<http://kathrynrickert.com/2012/06/25/resources-for-responding-to-the-doctrine-of-discovery/>