**ISSUES
2012**

**WEDNESDAY JULY 11**

OPEN MEETING

of The Consultation

in Meeting Room 144 in the

Convention Center

from 1:15 to 2:15
on Wednesday, July 11

The Consultation extends hearty best wishes and congratulations to Gay Jennings!

**Evangelism Tips from Integrity**

At the Integrity Eucharist on Monday night, Bishop Gene Robinson charged the congregation to “Go out and fish”—to go out and spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. LGBT Episcopalians—indeed, every Episcopalian—who has experienced the love of God should go out and evangelize. Here are some ideas for how to “go out” to the LGBT people in particular. (By the way, these ways of reaching people will pull in not just LGBT people but their friends and families as well.)

*Open your doors!* If you have the blessing of being located in a neighborhood with foot traffic, keep your doors open.People will come in. Have a guestbook and some Forward Movement literature on a table. It doesn’t matter what peoplewrite in the guestbook—read every entry, and some of them will be quite moving. Pray the prayer requests you will find.The first Saturday of every month (in good weather) is a good time to sit outside with a table and fliers, since peoplenew to the neighborhood will generally use that day to explore.

*Theology on Tap*. This is increasingly popular in urban areas, across denominations, as an outreach to 20s/30s. Find afriendly LGBT bar or restaurant that has a relatively quiet area, and schedule a night for a conversation about somethingnot explicitly religious, but values- or spirituality-centered. The presence of a parish cleric in a collar in a place where noone is expecting them, is a powerful witness.

*Website and Facebook***.** If you have a website, keep it up to date. There is nothing that makes a church look moribundmore than a website proudly proclaiming, “Christmas Pageant 2008.” It must have your street address and currentservice times. If necessary, start with a Facebook page. Put a good photo of your church up, and put in a short,welcoming description. Include something like “In the Episcopal Church, all does mean all.” LGBT people are far tooaccustomed to finding out that “all” means “all except you” when they inquire about a church, so specify the welcome.Have an email address that people can write to.

*Local calendars*. Put your service times on sites such as craigslist.org and eventbrite.com. These and other sites allowfree posting for free events, and people who search the web for churches close to them will find your listings.

*Street fairs*. Local fairs often provide a table space for nonprofits, including churches. Get four friendly people to sit, twoat a time, at a table. If you have a banner, bring it and stand it up. (Remember, non-church people don’t often seethem.) Print out fliers with a welcome paragraph (see above about “all means all”) and your service times. Be preparedto talk!

Mary O'Shaughnessy, Integrity

**From a liturgy list-serve**

In his recently published memoirs, Stanley Hauerwas describes his experience of joining an Episcopal church, a parish named ‘Holy Family.’ He writes, “...I wondered about the church because Holy Family is usually the name of a catholic church. But as soon as they called the basement the ‘undercroft,’ I knew they were Episcopalians. After all, Episcopalians are people who refuse to let any pretension go unused...”

**Seeking Jesus at General Convention**

Over the past few days, I’ve noticed a number of people wondering “when we’re going to start talking aboutJesus.”  Now, I don’t know what committees and sessions these folks are attending, but from where I’msitting, the Gospel of Jesus seems central to this General Convention.  So I want to invite those who feel thatJesus is taking a back seat to whatever resolution is annoying them that day to join me in the places whereJesus and His message of reconciliation, justice, love, mercy, and peace are lifted up by faithfulEpiscopalians.

Come to the Evangelism Committee, where we’ve been discussing how to turn our rhetoric on mission intoreality with a radical new project to create Diocesan Mission Enterprise Zones. Where we’ve been discussingthe importance of context and partnership to sharing the Good News of Christ’s sacrificial love, particularly inthose communities who have heard a distorted gospel of exclusion and bigotry.

Come to the National & International Concerns Committee, where indigenous Episcopalians speakpassionately and prophetically of the importance of community involvement in abolishing poverty. Where thetrauma of generations at the hands of the US government (and sometimes the Episcopal Church) isdiscussed in such a way that allows atonement and healing as we move forward together in the newness oflife promised by Christ. Where there is commitment to preaching against the misuse of Holy Scripture topromote gender-based violence, a commitment to reminding our communities of the true peace and justice inthat Holy Scripture.

Jesus is present at General Convention.  I have seen Him here.  Sometimes we have to look for Him as theinspiration behind Walter Rauschenbush’s call for kingdom building, instead of individual salvation seeking.Sometimes we have to remember that it is He who calls us to preach good news to the poor, and not our UNpartners (however much they challenge and encourage us on).  But He is here. Come find Him with me.

Jordan Haynie, EPF Young Adult Initiative

**The Jewish Voice for Peace**

While we still await a final decision on two compromise resolutions seeking a just peace in theIsraeli/Palestinian conflict, the resolution proposed by Episcopal Peace Fellowship’s Palestine Israel Networkand passed by ten dioceses was given strong support this past Friday before the National and InternationalConcerns Committee. Michael Berg , Hedy Epstein, and Sandra Tamari of the St. Louis Palestine SolidarityCommittee, Mark Braverman, author of ‘Fatal Embrace,’ and Michael Davis, cantor at Lakeside Synagogue,Highland Park, Illinois, honored us with their witness. Look for their testimonies soon on the EpiscopalPF/PIN website.

But listen now to some of what Michael Davis had to say: “Shalom Aleichem. Peace to you from theRabbinical Council of Jewish Voice for Peace. To be a rabbinic Jew -- to be a Jew -- is to embrace the pathof peace in our communities here in the U.S. as in the Holy Land. I speak as an Israeli. I did military service inthe Israeli army. I was stationed on a military base on the West Bank outside the Palestinian village of Anataand the Jewish settlement of Anatot. I guarded convoys in the Gaza Strip. I was a settler. I grew up withinwalking distance of Jesus’s birthplace in Bethlehem.

As an Israeli soldier and as a settler, I know the occupation from within. I know as you know that it is evil. It isracist. It is not Jewish. And I call on you to proclaim today that it is not Christian. At the request of ArchbishopTheodosius of Jerusalem I translated Kairos Palestine document into Hebrew. I urge you to study thisChristian message of peace and justice that unifies Palestinian Christians. I urge you as leaders of theEpiscopal Church to join with Israelis and American Jews in standing in solidarity with Palestinians --Christians and Muslims -- in their quest for justice and peace.”

Cotton Fite, EPF-Palestine Israel Network

**Dismantling the School to Prison Pipelin**e

The Union of Black Episcopalians support The Office of Black Ministries’ Episcopal Church missioner, The Reverend Angela Ifill regarding her request for Episcopal communities to become more involved in “Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline”. The initiative is designed to provide support and resources to youth of color who are often at-risk and disproportionately incarcerated.

We are calling attention to resolution D080 – Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline. It addresses disciplinary practices in schools especially drawing attention to the alarming statistics that reveal Black students are suspended and expelled at higher rates than other students for the exact same and/or similar behavior as well as how these practices continue to impact students of color throughout their lives.

The explanation for the D080 states, “The children of our Black communities are introduced into the criminal justice system at an early age. According to the American Civil Liberties Union June, 2008 article on the subject, "The school-to-prison is one of the most important civil rights challenges facing our nation today."

Further text from the Resolution includes:

“This resolution reflects the further implementation of development initiation emerging from the visions andvoices of local communities as concurred in the 2009 General Convention resolution A155.1t encourageslocal community development and is consistent with the strategic plan for establishing domestic developmentprograms as recommended in the Jubilee Advisory Committee Blue Book Report.

This resolution reflects the further implementation of four of the Five Marks of Mission as concurred in the2009 General Convention resolution D027. The pipelines it advocates are Spiritual (proclaiming the GoodNews of the Kingdom), Educational (transform unjust structures of society), Organizational (Respond tohuman need by loving service), and Formational (Teach, baptize and nurture new believers).”

Support for Dismantling the Prison to School Pipeline is a ministry that can occur in Episcopal Communitiesregardless of the outcome at General Convention. The Office of Black Ministries is an excellent resource forinformation on how to become involved in what UBE agrees is one of the most important civil rightschallenges facing our nation.

We continue to recommend the book, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by MichelleAlexander.

Zena Link, UBE

**The C060a Minority Report**

While we do not oppose adoption of C-060a some members of Committee 09-National and International Concerns wishto express disappointment that the 77th General Convention has not gone far enough in considering measures thatwould increase awareness and advocacy toward ending the Occupation of Palestine. We are disappointed in the failureto recommend the Episcopal version of *Steadfast Hope* or the *Kairos Palestine* statement as resources to aid diocesesand congregations in studying varying narratives regarding Middle East peace issues. These resources are writtenunapologetically from Palestinian perspectives, to hear their voices, which are rarely heard in our nation’s discourse.Mark Braverman, an American Jew, said at the hearing on Middle East resolutions: “The reluctance to hear thesevoices and to advocate for even a hearing on the question of boycotts and divestment is not because of any questionabout the facts of the situation. It arises from fear about the impact on Christian Jewish relations on both institutionaland personal levels…. This cause has nothing to do with the Christian project to reconcile with the Jewish people. … Itis, rather, about being faithful Christians….It is the elephant in the room.” We agree that this is not about Interfaithdialogue. It is about making a faithful witness to end the Occupation.

*Kairos Palestine* is a cry to be heard from 2,797 Palestinian Christians living under Occupation. We show enormousdisrespect by refusing to acknowledge what they have said. It is an opportunity missed for our Church to have affirmedthat grassroots Episcopalians in the U.S. are in solidarity with grassroots Episcopalians in the diocese of Jerusalem.Nonetheless, we join with members across the Church who will continue to walk with our sister and brother Christians inthe Holy Land. We also stand with all other Palestinians living under Occupation working for peace and justice and anend to their suffering.

We note that the patriarchs and heads of Churches in the Holy Land, including the Episcopal Bishop of Jerusalem,responded to this cry in 2009, when they issued a statement acknowledging the Kairos document in 2009, (copy ofwhich can be found in the Kairos document itself) and have not publicly repudiated it. The witness to justice forPalestinians is not simply the work of prelates and patriarchs, it is the work of all the baptized. We are all part of theBody of Christ. As we did in the Civil Rights era and during Apartheid, our witness for justice for the Palestinian peoplewill continue. Signed by  Newland Smith, Brenda Hamilton, William Stokes and Sarah Lawton

Donna Hicks, EPF-PIN

**Immigrants, Refugees and Sojourners Litany**

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High,\*

**abides under the shadow of the Almighty.**

He shall say to the Lord, “You are my stronghold,\*

**my God in whom I put my trust.”**

He shall deliver you from the snare of the hunter\*

**and from the deadly pestilence.**

He shall cover you with his pinions,

and you shall find refuge under his wings;\*

**his faithfulness shall be a shield and buckler.**

In the beginning, God moved over the chaos of the Earth. We, created in the image of God are also on the move and charged to care for Creation.

Bless those who come to plant, harvest and feed the human race.

***God in your love, hear our prayer.***

From Eden, all have traveled to the lands of the Earth. God protected us on the way with clothing for our journey. Give those who travel now what they need for their journey, food, water, shelter, safety.

***God in your love, hear our prayer.***

The Holy Mothers and Fathers of our faiths fled from natural disasters of floods and famines.

God of Noah, Abraham and Sarah and Hagar, open our hearts to refugees around us.

***God of love, hear our prayer.***

In strangers, Yahweh appeared to Abraham and Sarah. In their example we shall offer hospitality to strangers in our midst.

***God of hospitality sustain your people.***

Remember Joseph, sold into slavery, First Nations Peoples forced from their lands, Africans captured, separated and sold for profit.

***God of mercy reconcile us.***

Moses, rescued from the river in the face of danger, was cared for in an adopted land

***God of mercy, hear our prayer.***

As sojourners, our communities, like the Hebrews travel with God around us, above us, under us and before us.

***God of the roads traveled by your children, hear our prayer.***

God who commanded the Hebrew community to love the stranger, for they were strangers in the land of Egypt continues a mandate of justice and hospitality.

***God, who welcomes all, hear our prayer.***

In the name of God, let us welcome strangers and treat each one as a citizen among us. God of Justice, guide us as a nation in our own practices.

***God, hear our prayer.***

Protect all families, remembering Jesus the refugee who with Mary and Joseph sought sanctuary in Egypt. God of mercy, protect families today who flee from war, famine and economic oppression.

***God of love, hear our prayer.***

Take heart in the words of Malachi: “I will be swift to bear witness against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien and do not fear me” God of our ancestors and of our present.

***In your justice, hear our prayer.***

As Jesus stood with the workers in the vineyards calling for just wages, God calls us to stand with workers today, calling for living wages and just working conditions.

***God of Justice, hear our prayer.***

In the words of Jesus: “I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in”

**AMEN.**

Dianne Aid, ENEJ