

# THE HISTORIOGRAPHER



OF THE NATIONAL EPISCOPAL HISTORIANS AND ARCHIVISTS  
AND THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
AND THE EPISCOPAL WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

Published to promote the preserving of church records  
and the writing of parochial and diocesan history

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## Canal project stopped by theology of ecology

California's bishop and planning council prevailed in efforts to block a water diversion scheme and preserve the Sacramento/San Joaquin delta

by John Rawlinson

The Futures Planning Council (1967 to 1978) of the Diocese of California was a bold church-sponsored venture anticipating and commenting on the future of the world and humanity. It was based on the belief that God can speak through people and professions outside traditional

church circles. It explored issues such as population explosion, ecology, violence, energy policy, water policy, and economics. Some 120 voluntary participants were drawn from major institutions in education, government, specialized laboratories, and businesses throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

From the early 20th century in southern California it was becoming clear that the local watershed could not provide for the needs of the burgeoning population. In 1919 an official of the U.S. Geological Survey proposed moving water from the Sacramento River through the Central Valley, and pumping it over the Tehachapi Mountains to the Los Angeles Basin. His proposal resulted in an extended study and report which came to be called the "State Water Plan." In 1965 a new proposal contained specifics, including constructing a canal around the periphery of a river delta.

The foray of the Futures Planning Council into the peripheral canal controversy began with an information booklet titled *The Theology of the Environment*. An excerpt of Bishop C. Kilmer Myers' address to the Diocesan Convention in October, 1969 was included in which he said baptism is a "sign of the new creation" and leads people to two different perspectives. One view is that in baptism one is "tied to the past only." The other, he said, causes people to "see the Church



source: California Dept. of Water Resources

The California Delta, formed by the confluence of five rivers, the two principal ones being the Sacramento and San Joaquin, is the water source for two-thirds of the state's 39 million population, and supports irrigation of over 400,000 acres of farmland which is over half the Delta's area. Along with the San Francisco, San Pablo and Suisun bays, it forms the largest estuary on the Pacific Coast, home to 750 plant and animal species.

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## THE HISTORIOGRAPHER

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The National Episcopal Historians and Archivists were founded in 1961 to encourage every diocese, congregation, and organization in the Episcopal Church to collect, preserve, and organize its records and to share its history.

[episcopalhistorians.org](http://episcopalhistorians.org)

The Historical Society of the Episcopal Church was founded in 1910 to promote the preservation of the particular heritage of the Episcopal Church and its antecedents, publish and distribute a scholarly historical journal and to cooperate with other societies concerned with the history of the Episcopal Church and the other churches of the Anglican Communion.

[hsec.us](http://hsec.us)

Begun on faith and the proverbial shoestring, The Episcopal Women's History Project was organized in 1980 by a handful of dedicated Episcopal Churchwomen in New York City. Formed to raise the consciousness and conscience of the Episcopal Church to the historic contributions of its women, EWHP began, and has continued to gather the life stories of Episcopal Churchwomen who have served God faithfully and selflessly.

[ewhp.org](http://ewhp.org)

The *Historiographical Newsletter* was established in 1961 shortly after the founding of the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists (NEHA). It was later renamed *The Historiographer*, and in 1999 it became a joint publication of NEHA and the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church (HSEC). In 2018 the Episcopal Women's History Project (EWHP) became a joint publisher. Back issues are posted online two years after the original publication at <https://issuu.com/thehistoriographer>

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## CORRECTIONS

The article on North Carolina's Bishop Thomas Atkinson in the Winter 2019 issue misspelled his predecessor's name. The correct spelling is Levi Silliman Ives, not Benjamin Silliman Ives.

The front page feature of our Spring 2019 issue on the Rev. Philip Reading had the wrong byline. The actual author was Bruce Bendler of the University of Delaware, not the Rev. John Rawlinson.

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Editor's commentary returns in  
the Autumn 2019 issue

## Historiographer deadlines

**Autumn 2019: September 15**

**Winter 2020: December 15**

**Spring 2020: April 15**

**Summer 2020: July 15**

## IN BRIEF

### Cuban church celebrates its final year as an autonomous Episcopal diocese

The Episcopal Church of Cuba celebrated its 110-year history during its final synod as an autonomous diocese in anticipation of official reintegration with the U.S.-based Episcopal Church in 2020.

"For 50 years the Episcopal Church has been isolated," said Cuba Bishop Griselda Delgado del Carpio, at the close of the Feb. 28-March 3 General Synod in Havana. Reintegration, she said, "is a way to be part of a big family."

Delgado's strong leadership drove the reintegration, said Archbishop Fred Hiltz of the Anglican Church of Canada, who serves as chair of the Metropolitan Council of Cuba. The council has overseen the Cuban church since its separation from The Episcopal Church in the late 1960s.

The Diocese of Cuba is set to join Province II, which includes dioceses from New York and New Jersey in the United States, the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, Haiti and the Virgin Islands. The House of Bishops on July 10, 2018, voted unanimously to readmit the Cuban church as a diocese.

*reported by Episcopal News Service*

### Historiographer wins commentary award

*The Historiographer* was honored at the Episcopal Communicators annual conference in Denver this past April. David Skidmore, editor of *The Historiographer*, received the Communicators' Award of Excellence for editorial and commentary for his commentary, "Are We Better Than This?," published in the autumn 2018 issue. The column addressed the increasing level of intolerance and hate in American society, and the nation's track record over the centuries in dealing with bigotry and xenophobia; and pointed to efforts at improving the level of civil discourse in our country. Noting the long inventory of hate crimes in U.S. history, Skidmore pointed to calls for resurrecting civil discourse as a reason for hope. "We may not be as good or as exceptional as we imagine, but perhaps we are on the road to getting better," he said. "We just need to start talking with and listening to our fellow travelers."

In their comments, the judges said "This nicely argued reminder that our current predicament has precedents and that we can do better is timely and effective."

# *In memoriam:* Susan Ann Johnson

by Robin Woods Sumners

Susan Ann Johnson, secretary for the Episcopal Women's History Project, died July 4 after four weeks battling serious health issues.

Johnson majored in English, history and philosophy when she graduated from college in the late 1990's. Going to college before that was just a dream for her, but in her fifties, she studied the things she wanted to master, and she did it. When Susan first attended school, her father, who was in the service, was stationed in France, and Susan's native language as a child was French. Her family returned to Texas when Susan was middle school age. She didn't know English — she was in fluent French — and the school system couldn't know what to do with Susan. She eventually landed in the fifth grade, and from there she began being an American kid.

For Susan, the Episcopal Church offered everything she loved—the services were in English, the Episcopal Church was full of history, and the theology fed her love for philosophy. Susan was born in Del Rio, Texas, but most of her adult life she lived in Harlingen, Texas. At St. Albans Episcopal Church, a parish that has been active in that community for more than 100 years, Susan was a member of the Episcopal Church Women. She attended her first Women's Gathering at Camp Capers, and soon she became active in the ECW of the Diocese of West Texas.

Susan desired to grow spiritually and to give more through that growth. She made a retreat to the Order of Julian of Norwich in Wisconsin. She embraced the love and the goals of St. Julian and ultimately became an oblate. She then joined the Order of The Daughters of the King and

was active in the service of the DOK in her parish.

There were many ways to serve the church as a woman, and Susan embraced it all. She served on the ECW diocesan board, then she became the province representative on the National ECW Board. She became an officer on that board. Then she learned about The Episcopal Women's History Project. She became an active member of that organization and then joined the EWHP's board where she was serving at the time of her death.

The work of the EWHP brought together her three loves: English, history and philosophy. She helped organize the Seneca Falls Conference in 2011 titled "Making It Do, Getting It Done." The Seneca Falls setting was where the Suffragettes began their work. The highlight of that event was a panel led by the Rev. Barbara Schlachter, with members of the team who were part of the famous Philadelphia Eleven.

At Seneca Falls, Susan learned of the story of Artemisia Bowden, a black woman from North Carolina who was recruited to Texas by Bishop Steptoe Johnson to teach black women at St. Phillip's College in San Antonio in 1902. Susan decided that Artemisia Bowden belonged in the Book of Contemporary Saints.

She took on that mission. She engaged many others and began the process of acknowledging the work of Artemisia Bowden to the church. Because of the work of Susan Johnson, Bowden became a saint at the 2015 General Convention of the Episcopal Church. The story of Artemisia is now celebrated as a new saint in *The Great Cloud of Witnesses*, the Episcopal book acknowledging the newer saints in the Kingdom.

## Fish Award gold goes to Kujawa-Holbrook

At the recent Tri-History Conference in Toronto in June, the third Laurence D. Fish Award was presented for an outstanding parish history. This year's "Gold" (first place) award went to Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook for her history of Church of the Incarnation, New York, *By Grace Came the Incarnation*. Receiving the award on her behalf was Dr Sylvia Sweeney, dean and president of Bloy House, the Los Angeles diocesan seminary, and a constituent part of the Claremont School of Theology where Dr Kujawa-Holbrook is a professor and administrator. The "Silver" (second place) was a tie between *The Middle Holds*, a history of St Thomas's Church, Canonsburg, Penn, by Samuel J. Richards, and *The Glorious Masterworks of Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral, Kansas City, Missouri* by Randal J. Loy. Third Place

("Bronze") was awarded to Elizabeth Watson Perry, author of *If These Logs Could Talk*, a history of St Andrew's, Chelan, WA. A merit award went to Neil C. Olsen, author of *Two Hundred Years on the Green*, a book that commemorates the bicentennial of the consecration of Trinity Church, New Haven, Conn.

The awards were presented by the Rev. Phillip Ayers, who has chaired the Fish Award committee for the past six years. Previous awards were made to Cordelia Frances Biddle, Elizabeth S. Browne, Alan J. Heavens, and Charles P. Peitz, authors of a history of St Peter's Church, Philadelphia (2014); and to Robert Lewis Semes, author of a history of St Paul's Church, Palm Springs, CA (2017).

# Searching for an Apology for Young Ministers

*NOTE:* Despite modern obscurity and a relatively brief life, Thomas Comber (1645-1699) was a prolific church historian and controversialist in the second half of the seventeenth century. A list of his published writings includes 33 distinct titles, with translations into Welsh and French. There are 191 editions of his works in the catalogue of the British Library. Comber's *Companion to the Temple*, or *A Help to Devotion in the Use of the Common Prayer*, first published in 1672, remained in print as late as 1841 when his works were among the selective retrievals of earlier theological materials edited and republished by the Tractarians. In addition to liturgical commentaries, Comber published sermons, controversial works on Roman Catholicism, explanations of his position on the Nonjuring schism following the deposition and exile of James II and VII in 1688, a discourse on the sinfulness of dueling, proposals to William Penn on the liberty of conscience, his own liturgical publications, and a defense of the church's right to receive tithes.

Comber was a child prodigy, reputed to be fluent in reading and writing Greek before he was ten years old. He was admitted Bachelor of Arts at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, in 1663 at the age of 18, and received his M.A. in 1666 by proxy—usual commencement exercises having been suspended by the Great Plague of 1665-1666. Comber began his ministry as curate of Stonegrave Minster in Yorkshire, and succeeded as rector there in 1669. In keeping with contemporary custom, he acquired pluralities (with archiepiscopal dispensation): a prebendary stall at York in 1677, the living of Thornton le Clay in 1678, another prebendary in 1681, and a chaplaincy to Princess Anne in 1682. In 1683 he became precentor of York Cathedral and the prebendary of Driffield. He was installed as Dean of Durham in 1691 and died in that office. He was buried in the chancel at Stonegrave, where he had begun service as an 18-year-old deacon. His descendants were clergy of the Church of England through the 1940s.

The two biographies of Dean Comber note peculiar circumstances surrounding his age at ordination to the priesthood:

Early in 1664 Comber, on the death of the vicar, Ralph Watson, was offered the living of Dalby in the North Riding of Yorkshire. He refused it for himself and obtained it for his friend Charles Man, whom he calls an old-time companion of his studies. "After a solemn strict examination" Comber was ordained priest by Archbishop Sterne 25th September 1664.

Richard  
Mammana

## NOTES AND QUERIES

Seeing that he was not yet twenty years old there was some comment on this uncanonical proceeding, but Comber had the satisfaction, years afterwards, of hearing the matter referred to in the archbishop's presence, and also of hearing the blunt archiepiscopal reply: "I have found no reason to repent." Comber, about the time of his ordination, defended his position in a discourse, *An Apology for Young Ministers*.

*QUERY:* Can anyone identify a manuscript source for the *Apology for Young Ministers* mentioned in the 1799 and 1946 biographies of Comber? It is not included in any relevant bibliographies or catalogues, and it must address the Church of England's requirements for the canonical age of ordinands and exceptions thereto. Both references to the text are from more than a century after his death in 1699.

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Project Canterbury bibliographic directory: <http://anglicanhistory.org/england/comber/>

*NEHA member Richard Mammana is the director of Project Canterbury (Anglicanhistory.org) and a member of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences. His email address is richard.mammana@gmail.com.*

# Finding closure through archives and history

by Matt Gardner  
staff writer for the Anglican Journal

The death of a young woman in connection with a faith-healing cult based out of an Anglican church was a traumatic moment for the Anglican Church of Canada in the 1960s, sending shockwaves through the Diocese of Toronto.

Led by rector George Moore Smith at St. Matthias Anglican Church in Trinity-Bellwoods, the cult—known as the Ministry of Healing—saw followers speaking in tongues, going into trances, and performing exorcisms. In 1967, a 17-year-old follower of the ministry, Katherine Globe, developed intense head pain and was denied medical treatment by the group, who saw it as evidence of demonic possession. She eventually died in the rectory at St. Matthias. Later, Moore and other members of the Ministry of Healing went to the morgue and attempted to revive her, which led to a public scandal.

For David Neelands, this traumatic episode had a more personal aspect. Now retired after serving as dean of divinity at Trinity College, Neelands was a young theology student at Trinity at the time the St. Matthias cult was flourishing. Kathy Globe was the sister of his best friend at the time, who had encouraged Neelands to join the cult.

Speaking about the cult and its aftermath as part of a panel discussion at the 2019 Tri-History Conference in Toronto, Neelands recalled, “The church was traumatized. The local church was traumatized, the diocese was traumatized, and I think all Anglicans were ashamed, because it became fairly public, especially after they tried to resurrect her at the morgue. Then we went to a coroner’s inquest, and that was devastating.”

Stories of trauma and survival were central to the latest meeting of the

Tri-History Conference, an international gathering of Anglican and Episcopal historians and archivists that took place June 18-21 at Trinity College and Wycliffe College. This year’s conference marked the first time the triennial gathering had been held in Canada since 2001.

In total, 95 participants registered for the event, which saw additional support from the Canadian Church Historical Society and the Anglican Foundation of Canada.

## TRI-HISTORY CONFERENCE: Trauma and Survival in the Contemporary Church: Historical, Archival, and Missional Responses

“We try to encourage a mix of people,” facilitator and chief organizer Jonathan Lofft said. “So we have professionals and amateurs, clergy and laity [and academics]. But we have other presenters who are professional archivists, and people who are just lovers of Anglican and Episcopal history.”

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, served as homilist and National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald as intercessor during the conference’s opening Eucharist, which was held at Trinity Chapel. That day coincided with the commemoration in the liturgical calendar of Bernard Mizeki, an African Anglican missionary and martyr.

In his homily at the conference’s opening Eucharist, Archbishop Hiltz described the life and ministry of Mizeki and the traumatic events that ended his life, and paid tribute to his martyrdom. A catechist and teacher from Zimbabwe, Mizeki was dragged from his home and stabbed in 1896 during the Matabeleland Rebellion against the British South Africa Company. His pregnant wife Mutwa found him alive and sought help, but when she returned his body had disappeared.

Mizeki’s story, the primate said, “reflects the white supremacy of the times and the servitude endured by so many. It reflects too the amazing

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



photo by Matt Gardner

David Neelands, retired dean of Trinity College, Toronto, and Bishop Victoria Matthews, shared their experiences of trauma in the church in a panel discussion June 20. Neelands spoke about the scandal involving a faith-healing cult in a Diocese of Toronto parish in the late 1960s while Matthews shared her experience as bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand following the 2011 Christchurch earthquake that killed 185 people and nearly destroyed the cathedral.

resilience of a people whose trust is in God.... It reflects such a profound witness to Christ as to be exemplary for us all.”

### No strangers to trauma

Eric Taylor Woods, a senior lecturer in sociology at the University of East London, served as keynote speaker at the conference. His presentation drew upon his book *A Cultural Sociology of Anglican Mission and the Indian Residential Schools in Canada: The Long Road to Apology*.

Like other speakers at the conference, Woods is no stranger to trauma. In 2016, his infant child died, followed five weeks later by the death of his wife from complications related to her pregnancy. Shortly thereafter, Woods himself was diagnosed with an aggressive form of multiple sclerosis and lost the use of his legs, being able to walk again only recently.

In his keynote presentation, Woods offered a conceptual view of trauma from a sociological perspective, specifically cultural trauma and how it relates to the Anglican Church of Canada and the residential school system.

A key aspect of the process of cultural trauma, Woods said, is the attribution of responsibility: who or what is the perpetrator of the trauma? Such questions can in turn lead to “perpetrator trauma,” which occurs when persons or collectives feel they have acted in a way contrary to how they perceive their own self-identity. To avoid perpetrator trauma, individuals will either “seek to distance their identities from moral taint” by shifting blame, or “alleviate the taint” by making amends.

In the view of Woods, the Anglican Church of Canada has undergone its own struggle with perpetrator trauma since its formal role in the residential schools ended in the 1960s. The association of the church’s collective identity with this moral taint has been at the heart of its response.

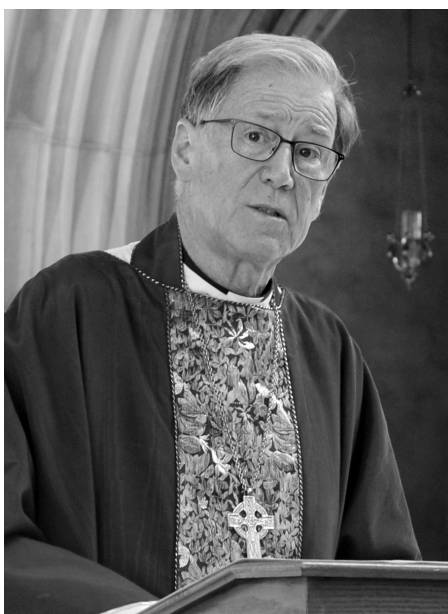


photo by Matt Gardner

In his homily, the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, spoke of the martyrdom of Zimbabwean catechist and teacher Bernard Mizeki, noting Mizeki’s story “reflects such a profound witness to Christ as to be exemplary for us all.”

Anglicans in different times and places, he said, have responded in a variety of ways: denial (suggesting abuses were untrue, arguing that “we were helping”), shifting blame (seeing abuses as the result of a “few bad apples” rather than the system as a whole), focusing on the future (“let’s build a better future together rather than focus on the past”), and seeking to make amends (“we were responsible and we offer redress”).

The church’s ongoing response to the trauma of the residential schools, Wood indicated, will help define a new “post-colonial Anglicanism.” During a subsequent discussion period, the primate and national Indigenous Anglican bishop discussed how the upcoming General Synod vote on a self-determining Indigenous church as part of the Anglican Church of Canada reflects that response from the church.

The residential school system may be the most well-known historical trauma that called for a response from the church. But in his account of the cult at St. Matthias, Neelands described how the Diocese of Toronto struggled

to respond to the institutional trauma that followed Kathy Globe’s death.

Then-bishop George Snell was reluctant to move against an inducted incumbent, Neelands said. It took some time before the diocese intervened in the form of a bishop’s commission, which produced an investigation and report. Eventually, St. Matthias began a new ministry and survived, with Neelands later becoming interim priest-in-charge for the congregation.

Reflecting today on how the church responded to this trauma, Neelands said, “I think that people moved on in a way that amounted to denial.”

“Once the cult was gone and the priest was gone, the congregation could just settle down, and frankly they had never been very implicated in it anyway,” he added. “The rest of us would say, ‘Oh, blame the bishop who did that, blame the clergy who were crazies.’ So I think that the rest of us would try and work through it by blaming, I’m afraid—and then just [through the passage of] time.”

On a personal level, the experience of the Ministry of Healing and the response of the Anglican Church of Canada caused Neelands to come into his adult experience of Christianity “with a healthy view that a church community can be wrong.”

It also had an impact on his relationship with his friend, who Neelands said “apparently did not blame the group and refused to discuss these matters, since I was an outsider and potentially an enemy. Although we have spoken since, there has never been the warmth that existed before, and I do not know what his reflections on the history are.”

Many other forms of trauma, and the ways that people dealt or continue to deal with them, were presented and discussed at the Tri-History Conference. Neelands’ presentation on the St. Matthias cult was part of a special joint session at the conference featuring

SEE **FINDING CLOSURE** PAGE 11

as an instrument for social change.”

The booklet also contains the bishop's brief tribute to Norman Livermore, the secretary of the California Resources Agency, for “his defiance of the pressures and forces of political and economic expediency — for his determination to preserve in reasonable measure the natural gifts which God has bestowed upon us against the encroachment of selfish and reckless immediate profit.” Myers then quoted Livermore as saying “Maybe the preservation of the State's environment may be more important and more desirable than water projects that would destroy it.” Livermore opposed the construction of one dam in northern California, but added, “I am not against sending water to the south. I am for all of these things provided they are in the context of giving maximum possible consideration to protection of the environment.”

Later the Ven. John Weaver, director of the Futures Planning Council, mentioned the river delta formed by the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, and provided a reason for opposing the general concept of the state's plan by noting the damage done to the Delta:

“Our magnificent Delta Area has been converted by man himself into a gutter, a toilet seat, turning the entrance to our great Bay from one of the wonders of a wonderful world into a cesspool, a depository of human and industrial filth, so devastated by mindless uncaring that even the crabs that dwelt there for millennia can no longer live or breed in the polluted waters!”

Six months later the Council distributed another information paper which included the history of water policies in California. Dr. David Seckler, the author, affirmed that the State Department of Water Resources was legally committed to deliver water to

## A bishop and his council prove too much for California's Department of Water Resources



source: the author

In his address to the 1970 Diocesan Convention, Bishop Myers proposed “that we use every means within our power to block the creation of the so-called Peripheral Canal until a complete and independently conducted re-evaluation is made of the threat to the environmental values involved.”

31 different southern California agencies. Seckler's opposition was to certain specific projects. His principal arguments were not ecological, but were based on economics. Put in contemporary terms, his perspective was a cost-benefit analysis not an ecological one.

Later, John Weaver issued a protocol “How recommendations should be made to the Bishop....” Attached to this document was a sample paper about the deposit of sediment in the Bay Area. It set the tone for the future exploration and findings directly related to the canal project.

The Council's Information Paper about the Peripheral Canal included

an article by Gerardo Budowski, which proposed abandoning a narrow quantity-related criterion for judging environmental projects. He used Egypt's Aswan High Dam as an example of destruction done by quantity-oriented projects. He identified three negative effects of the Aswan Dam: 1) preventing the deposit of nutrient-rich silt, 2) damaging fishing, and 3) the uncontrolled proliferation of a snail which causes pandemics of a disease. Budowski offered four criteria for maintaining environmental “quality:”

1) “the highest positive balance between beneficial and detrimental aspects.”

2) “preservation, to the greatest possible degree, of existing ecosystems”

3) “improve the surrounding environment by managing it for diversity”

4) “understand that nature has absolute limits or thresholds of tolerance to change”

Council members, and the bishop used Budowski's analysis.

In his address to the 1970 Diocesan Convention, Myers said “Selfish person that I am, almost the last straw was the news of the discovery of mercury in the bodies of striped bass in the Delta, which I love.” The implicit point was that there was no analytic balance between the benefits and the losses, as proposed by Budowski. Continuing, Myers said “A facet of renewal is reverence for life on this planet.” Then he added:

“I propose that we use every means within our power to block the creation of the so-called Peripheral Canal



until a complete and independently conducted re-evaluation is made of the threat to the environmental values involved.”

For most of the delegates to that Convention, the topic of the Peripheral Canal seemed to arise without warning.

An information sheet was distributed to bolster Bishop Myers’ position. It said only “conventional tests of engineering and economic feasibility” had been done and identified “the philosophy of single minded exploitation of natural resources” and that any damage to the eco-system of the Delta would be “irremediable.” The sheet had phrases such as “narrow concept,” “simplistic formula,” “massive manipulation.” and “exploitation.”

For two hours small groups discussed matters before the Convention. A summary report of the reaction to the Peripheral Canal was the unresolved question “should the Church act in a political way on Ecology, etc.?” Nonetheless a Convention resolution spoke of “radically conflicting statements on the damage which the proposed Peripheral Canal would do to the environment,” and added “there has not yet been adequate, competent, and independent evaluation of the project.” Three actions were resolved: 1) to urge the study mentioned, 2) to halt to any steps toward construction, and 3) to ask the clergy and congregations to exert efforts to temporarily halt the project.

The following Tuesday William Gianelli, the Director of the California Department of Water Resources wrote Myers that “It is inconceivable to me that you ... would attempt to influence the church membership on such complex and controversial issues, particularly when the Episcopal Church has never demonstrated any great knowledge or expertise in this field.” A flood of letters from the general public was directed to Myers. Some of the critical ones were selected

and sent to Dr. Ellen Weaver, a research biologist at the NASA Ames Research Center, asking her to prepare “a rough draft of an answer on the peripheral canal.”

A short time later, Jerome Waldie, the Congressman from east Contra Costa County, included a blunt summary of the exchange in the Congressional Record: “Bishop Myers then received correspondence from State officials telling him, in effect, ‘Stick to the affairs of theology and leave the water matters to us.’”

John Weaver sent a copy of the Convention resolution of the diocesan, and Gianelli’s letter to David Seckler. Seckler’s response questioned

added “I speak, not for myself, but on behalf of countless scientists of incontestable qualifications.” He added, “I have asked a number of recognized scientists, educators, physicians and people from other professions, disciplines and occupations to advise me on all manner of problems.” After reiterating the ecological concerns, Myers returned to the theme of “an impartial survey and reevaluation by an independent research agency or organization... [in which] full consideration would be given to the ecological impact on San Francisco Bay...” He closed his letter with an appreciation to Gianelli for “opening a dialogue.” The day after Myers

“Bishop Myers then received correspondence from State officials telling him, in effect, ‘Stick to the affairs of theology and leave the water matters to us.’”

*Summary of correspondence between Bishop Myers and the California Department of Water Resources entered into the Congressional Record by Rep. Jerome Waldie*

why Gianelli opposed an independent review of the project, and deplored the fact that “Gianelli regards his department as the only qualified authority on the matter.” Then he offered point-by-point responses to Gianelli’s letter. His letter had sufficient weight and reputability that Myers included that letter as typical of the letters with doubts about the Peripheral Canal.

Myers’ response to Gianelli was framed as an appeal to a fellow Episcopalian, and there was a gentle effort to find common ground. Myers went on to say “As Bishop of California, I have a broad canvas of spiritual duty” adding “...my duty extends to consideration of the quality of our daily lives — the daily lives of the totality of our society both within and without the Episcopal Church.” Myers acknowledged that he was not a scientist, but

sent his letter to Gianelli, quotations from the letter were printed in the Los Angeles Times under the headline “Bishop Defends Right to Speak Out on Issues.”

Gianelli did not know that Myers also had three professional items about the discovery of mercury contamination in Delta fish. One of those items was an article in Science magazine. The second item was a press release from the State Department of Fish and Game. The third was a memorandum from the California Department of Fish and Game with details about the methodology and precise levels of mercury in the striped bass.

What began as a small matter in the Diocesan Convention was expanded into a statewide conflict. John Weaver said that Myers “got

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# Canal

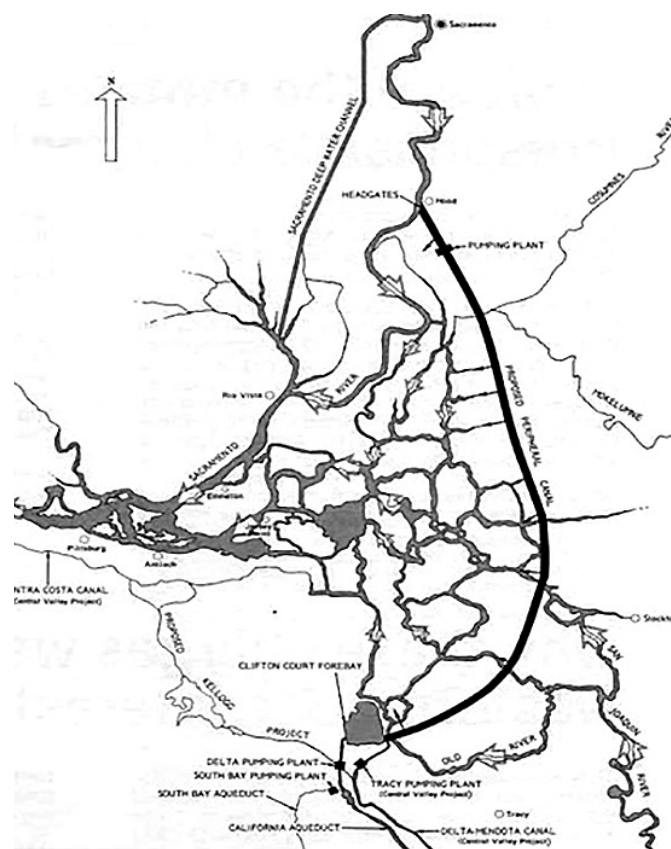
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

in the newspapers — out of town papers not just the San Francisco Chronicle.” Then the Los Angeles Times made the conflict known throughout the Los Angeles basin. Criticism of the State Water Plan was enhanced when the San Francisco Chronicle printed an article with a large headline: “Big Error Admitted On State Water Plan.”

Shortly before that newspaper coverage, Gianelli asked to have “a balanced presentation concerning all sides of the issues involved.” Myers had no intention of facing the state staff alone. Eventually six companions were selected: the Ven. John Weaver (the director of the Futures Planning Council), the Rev. John Gallagher (a diocesan staff member), the Rev. Dr. Conrad Bonifazi (a seminary professor of theology), Howard Freeman (diocesan public relations officer), Dr. Robert von Pagenhardt (international political scientist on the faculty of the Naval Postgraduate School), and Dr. Edwin Royce (of both the Lawrence National Laboratory, and the Sierra Club). Royce remembered that “Gianelli tried to ‘educate’ us — and explain to us that this was nothing a church should involve itself with — tend to your own knitting. The Episcopal gent [Myers] responded strongly and well, I thought, and the result was a stand-off.” So, Royce remembers that the meeting was a matter of great importance and that the controversy did not stop as a result of that meeting.

Myers’ had been the director of Chicago’s Urban Training Center, which helped church leaders understand how to face political leaders to pursue social justice. He seems to have followed the advice of another Chicago community organizer, Saul Alinsky, who taught that one should “Never go outside the expertise of your people,” and to “Keep the pressure on.” Alinsky was also reputed to say that when going to a meeting with those in authority, one should always take one person more than the other side would have. Myers had referred to taking “a small army,” in the Alinsky style. His group was diverse in skills and roles. Livermore was an Episcopalian who had been a lay leader in the diocese, so Myers’ companions were personally known to him. Gianelli was also an Episcopalian, and might have known them.

Seventeen days after the meeting, Myers published his account of the meeting and sent it to major church leaders throughout the state. So he was widening the scope of possible combatants. In a courteous nod to the state personnel, he said “Mr. Gianelli and his people are completely sincere and honest in their advocacy of its [the Peripheral Canal’s] prompt completion.” He then reduced his questions to three basic points. First, since removing water from



source: author

This map from the late 1960s illustrates the web of rivers and streams that feed the California Delta. The bold black line indicates the route of the proposed Peripheral Canal.

the Sacramento River before it reached the Delta, the question was “Who will control the ‘spigot’ that turns it on and off?” His second question was what would guarantee that it would not be necessary to erect additional dams? Third, he asked “...what will be the effect on the minds and spirit of a whole generation of young people in our State if we blindly proceed in the absence of answers to those questions?” Related to that, Myers raised the prospect that proceeding would “commit them to the consequences of an ultimately disastrous option.”

After identifying the uncertainties associated with the Peripheral Canal project, and affirming that the project should not proceed until the qualms and questions of all citizens were satisfied, a functional impossibility, Myers raised theological issues. Affirming the earth is “the only home the human family knows” he said it “likely will remain the one on which the human family shall reside so long as God’s breath confers life upon us all.” He went on to say, “surely man has no mandate or right to despoil it for those who follow him.” With a sad voice he mentioned “the fruits of man’s reckless waste of what God has given him.” In the same vein he spoke of California:

...we bask in the softness of the Mediterranean climate limited to a fortunate sliver of the continental masses, let

SEE CANAL PAGE 11

# Finding closure

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members of the Trinity Divinity Associates, the alumni association at the Faculty of Divinity.

Another speaker at that session was Bishop Victoria Matthews, who formerly served as suffragan bishop for the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, bishop of Edmonton, and bishop of Christchurch in the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia from 2008 until 2018. During her time as bishop of Christchurch, Matthews bore witness to the 2011 Christchurch earthquake that killed 185 people, injured thousands of others, and severely damaged the ChristChurch Cathedral in the centre of the city.

At this joint session, Matthews spoke about her experience of the earthquake and its aftermath, which saw prolonged controversy after the church decided to demolish the cathedral and build a new, safer building—a decision that was eventually reversed at its 2017 diocesan synod.

# Canal

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

us remember that the original Mediterranean, too, was once a garden spot, a land of precious foliage and vegetation which man's insensate greed has turned largely into a desert or harsh land of scarcity. And the great Aswan Dam in Egypt is bringing threatened disaster to many aspects of Egyptian life.

Of course, in the reference to the Aswan Dam, he was bringing to bear the scientific paper which had raised the alternative choices of quantity versus quality in life. So we can see the glimmerings of the background provided by the Futures Planning Council.

At the end of his letter, Myers returned to his previous stance with forceful words: "But there still are too many imponderables, too many unanswered questions, to suggest any prudent course but cautious study before the final commitment is made." Of course, that means that his experts-to-experts meeting had not altered his basic position, it merely allowed him to continue his opposition to the construction of the Peripheral Canal. Edwin Royce called the meeting in Sacramento a "stand-off," but it was not. The Futures Planning Council had provided a perspective and support for Bishop Myers, who was both unconvinced and unbowed by the state experts. Furthermore, Myers wrote a forthright summary of the meeting, and at its end the reasons he still opposed work on the Peripheral Canal. The issue was placed on the statewide stage, and the state officials did not make an effective counter campaign. It was not a stand-off; it was a conflict which Myers quietly won, but about which he did not crow.

The church's original decision, Matthews said, flowed from questions about how best to develop resilience in the face of trauma.

Throughout the conference, participants heard an extensive range of papers and presentations on Anglican and Episcopal history and attended various workshops and panels.

An archives workshop included presentations from General Synod archivist Laurel Parson as well as Trinity College archivist Sylvia Lassam and West Texas diocesan archivist David Allen White. Parson spoke about the response of the Anglican Church of Canada to causing trauma in the residential schools, but also to positive responses to trauma such as helping care for Irish immigrants who suffered a typhoid fever outbreak in 1847.

More recently, she said, the national church's archives have played a constructive role in the healing process for residential school survivors and their families.

SEE FINDING CLOSURE PAGE 15

Following these public challenges, and uproar, the Peripheral Canal construction project was abandoned by the state water officials. Plans for a similar canal were rejected by voters in a 1982 ballot.

*John Rawlinson is assisting priest at St. Cuthbert's Episcopal Church in Oakland, California, and former archivist of the Diocese of California. This article is excerpted from the author's new book God Speaks to These Professions: anatomy of a church think tank.*

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# Remembering Wilmington's "light of the world"

by Peter Perschbacher

I am a member of the Church of the Good Shepherd Episcopal, in Wilmington, North Carolina. Although most dioceses have at least one Good Shepherd (our own Diocese of East Carolina has two), our church is the only one named after the Episcopal Sisterhood of the Good Shepherd and also inspired by their saintly Sr. Cecilia, who led the outreach begun by St James Parish, Wilmington, first to the indigent victims of the Civil War and then to the working poor. The cornerstone for our beautiful English Country Gothic church (Fig. 1) was laid in 1911, after we became a parish church. Notable architects, Hobart Upjohn and George Conable from New York, designed the church building along the simple lines Hobart's father had promoted. His grandfather was renowned as the father of American architecture, designing Trinity Wall Street.

For one hundred and thirty-seven years, Good Shepherd has continued the work of the Sisterhood. With the Diocese of East Carolina's Bishop Sidney Sander's encouragement and support, the vestry voted in 1980 to open a soup kitchen, which served almost 1 million meals over twenty years and was the major such outreach at the time in Wilmington. The work was expanded at the church with construction of the Good Shepherd House, and continues at the now independent Good Shepherd Center. We currently coordinate efforts of several Episcopal churches to assemble over four hundred Easter baskets and four thousand Easter eggs for the Hispanic farm workers' children nearby.

Who was Sister Cecelia?

How many people today know of Sister Cecilia and the Sisterhood of the Good Shepherd? If not for



photo by Elise Rocks

Wilmington's Church of the Good Shepherd was designed by New York architects Hobart Upjohn and George Conable. Upjohn's grandfather, Richard, designed Trinity Church Wall Street.

Susan Block's superb book on St. James Parish's history, our church and I would not, nor most of Wilmington. Yet, at her funeral in Wilmington, North Carolina, on January 25, 1894, not a dry eye could be found. Her "boys" were her pallbearers. These were her children. The headline of the Wilmington Messenger read: "A Saintly Woman Dead." Bishop Robert Strange, bishop of the recently established Diocese of East Carolina (1883), and the St. James Church vestry honored her as 'having been one of the choice vessels of the grace of our Heavenly Father and one of the lights of the world in her generation.'

Her story was remarkable in a remarkable time. Working with two other sisters, she was Sister in Charge of St. James Home, which was expanded from an existing house in central Wilmington to a Chapel of the Good Shepherd in the working class area known as Dry Pond, on the southern outskirts of Wilmington. She established the first free day school for working mothers and a Parish School for working children in Wilmington. The Sunday School grew to one hundred and seventy-seven

students and the day school to one hundred and twenty-three students. She also led worship, acted as family counselor, and sent annual reports to the New York-based Sisterhood, never mentioning her name in them.

Cecilia Lawrence's great compassion for orphans and widows is not surprising, being one of each herself. She was borne Cecilia Dabney Foster on March 21, 1836, to William Edward Foster and Mary Eleanor Wiatt, a prosperous North Carolina family in Louisburg, North Carolina. She became an orphan (using the older definition of orphans) at the age of eight, her father killed by his slave. She was listed as a communicant of St. Paul's Episcopal, Louisburg, at sixteen years age. St. Paul's was founded in 1845, and her mother was listed on the original parish register.

She was married in St. Paul's to Edward Lawrence in 1855. He is listed as a farmer in the 1860 census and of considerable property. Their household included the Duner family of eleven, listed as mulattos. We do not know of Cecilia's views on slavery and abolition. Although Cecilia and Edward had no children, many in Wilmington would later be counted as her "children."

She became a widow when Edward died (presumably in the war) and is listed in the 1870 census as living with the family of a doctor in nearby Halifax, North Carolina and teaching school. She must have learned of the work started in 1867 by the rector of St. James Parish, the Rev. Alfred Watson, at the St. James Home for Civil War victims. She moved to Wilmington in 1873 and it became her mission to assist the women of St. James Parish in caring for the many local indigent widows and orphans,

SEE **GOOD SHEPHERD** PAGE 14

# From mansion to spiritual venue in Manhattan

I first became aware of House of the Redeemer when I was a subscriber to *The Living Church* and *The American Church Union News* in the sixties. In the advertisement section of those periodicals, there appeared “House of the Redeemer” under “Retreat and Conference Centers.” Much later on, a woman in my parish when I served in Connecticut told me that she often went on retreat at the House and highly recommended it to her peers.

Little did I know that, in 2017, I would be a guest there. The House was recommended as a suitable place for participants attending the NEHA Conference which was to take place at St Michael’s Church in Manhattan, almost directly west across Central Park. After arriving at the House and being shown my room, and after getting some supper, I returned to the House to attend a lecture by Brother Adam McCoy, OHC, who was the priest-in-residence in June, 2017. His talk was concerned with the role played by American Episcopal religious orders in the life of House of the Redeemer, especially focusing upon his order. In attendance that evening was Percy Preston, the author of this book, a distinguished gentleman in coat and tie (it was a sultry evening and the chapel where the lecture took place was not air-conditioned). After the lecture, I struck up a conversation with Mr. Preston, expressing my interest in this beautiful place, and he obtained from the office a copy of his book. I promised that I would review it for *The Historiographer*.

Happily, I purchased the book later on and have it in my library. It is a handsome book with stunning photographs and informative text. The story of the House is told sympathetically by Preston, expressing his great affection for its presence in his own life and the lives of many people, past

## BOOK REVIEW

*A Place Apart: The House of the Redeemer in New York City.* By Percy Preston, Jr. New York: Printed by House of the Redeemer, 2012, Pp. 105. \$40.00, cloth. Available from House of the Redeemer, 7 East 95th Street, New York, NY 10128 (212) 289-0399.

reviewed by Phillip Ayers

and present. Three chapters appear without introduction (acknowledgements appear at the end of the book), each one telling the interesting story of the House’s beginnings as an opulent private residence for the Fabbri; the ministry of the Sisters of the Community of St Mary who lived there and ran the House after Mrs. Edith Fabbri gave it to a private corporation; and the “new beginning” for the House as a place of retreat and as a venue for community offerings of music and culture in the Upper East Side of Manhattan, known as “Carnegie Hill.”

The history of the house as a retreat center is given in detail, from the possibility of the Order of the Holy Cross running it as a priory (an idea that had to be abandoned as the Order had just then, in the late 1940s, opened up a new house in California), through the long ministry of the Community of St Mary (1950-1981), then through the leadership of various clergy. One prominent personage in the history of the House was the Rev. Herbert L. Linley and his spouse and step-daughter (1982-1990).

This book is replete with many photographs of the House, which is the book’s most attractive feature. Pictures from its beginning as a private residence through the present day when concerts and banquets take place on the premises fill the pages, most of them in color. Full

descriptions of the opulent woodwork and furnishings are given. In an address given in 1949, Mrs. Fabbri mentions in detail the many elegant features of the house: “The woodwork of the library came from the Ducal Palace in Urbino and was shipped over during World War One in two separate vessels, the idea being if one boat was torpedoed we would still have, with luck, half of the room anyway.”

Portions of Mrs. Fabbri’s address to a collection of bishops and others in 1949 are worth reproducing here in part as they fairly well tell the story of this elegant place, designed to be a private home, and became truly a “place apart” for retreats and the cultivation of both personal and corporate spirituality. As she put it, “for the glory of God and the good of souls.”

Upon her confirmation (she had once been a Presbyterian), “a new happiness in the church came to me at that time, which in recent years has increased, and which I am sorry to say has been rather a sentiment than an active taking part in the work of the church itself. I have long felt, whatever may have been the excuses, that this was not as it should be.”

Bishop Austin Pardue (of the Diocese of Pittsburgh) spoke in a Lent sermon Mrs Fabbri heard in South Carolina about retreat places:

“I always felt it [my house] should be associated in some useful way with the church, and have occasionally expressed this belief to both family and friends.”

... the idea of a Retreat House has come to me so strongly that I have accepted it as the will of God.

Does not a Retreat House supplement and strengthen the Church—offer special help to those already in the

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# Spiritual venue

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Church—and preparing others to partake of the Church's supreme spiritual benefits?

So, with great humility, knowing well how unworthy I am to appear before you with this idea, I offer you this house as a Retreat House in perpetuity without any other purpose or object." [from the Appendix]

Part of the book deals with the retreat movement within the Episcopal Church and its association with the religious orders and communities within it. Fathers Alan Whittemore and Shirley Carter Hughson, of the Order of the Holy Cross, influenced this movement along Catholic lines. That a religious community such as the Community of St Mary could be in residence for those many years speaks boldly about this influence. After all, Mrs. Fabbri had "always felt the house to have a monastic atmosphere."

This Place Apart, located in one of the most convenient and attractive parts of Manhattan, is a spiritual venue for

many who come through its doors, whether for a retreat, quiet day, or a comfortable place to stay when visiting the city. And the best part of this place is that it is under the auspices of The Episcopal Church; within it is made available corporate worship from *The Book of Common Prayer*, and an Episcopal cleric available for worship leadership and private consultation. It is a serene and beautiful setting for concerts, social occasions and even film sets. Today, Judi Counts, the executive director of the House since 2008, along with a board, provides expert and entrepreneurial leadership, coordinating the priest-in-residence and seeing to the day-to-day operations. She succeeds a long line of bishops (including the late Horace W.B. Donegan), priests, and dedicated lay people who have believed in providing such A Place Apart in the midst of a world and culture that at times does not seem very affirmative of it.

*Reviewer the Rev. Phillip W. Ayers is a retired priest in the Diocese of Oregon, currently serving as an Assistant at Trinity Cathedral, Portland. He is The Historiographer's book review editor, and chaired the Fish Award committee that made its third award this year in Toronto.*

# Good Shepherd

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and several men obliged to leave the hospital with no home of their own. As they became overwhelmed by the great needs of the community, then Bishop Thomas Atkinson of the Diocese of North Carolina met with Bishop Horatio Potter of New York in 1879 to ask for the assistance of the Sisterhood of the Good Shepherd. Cecilia, having travelled to New York for induction in the Sisterhood, returned to Wilmington with another sister in 1880, saying her vows to Bishop Atkinson.

Her order is remarkable in itself. Established in 1870 in New York by Bishop Horatio Potter, it was an evangelical (low church) order, with few trappings and rituals. The son of the author of sign language, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Gallaudet, was their Priest in Charge. Their mission was to minister to the poor, the sick, the homeless, the outcast, and to care for the little children. Eventually the Sisters were in five dioceses, and established

the still-functioning Hospital of the Good Shepherd in Nashville, Tennessee. The order was disbanded in 1899 when the general convention voted to transition them to deaconesses. At the time, this meant little independence and responsibility, and they remained Sisters to their deaths. We are indebted to Mr. Wayne Kempton, Archivist and Historiographer for the Diocese of New York, for providing their annual reports online through the Project Canterbury<sup>2</sup>, which gives wonderful insight into their work and considerable opposition as Episcopal nuns.

## Legacy

Sr. Cecilia ran the Home as sister-in-charge with two other sisters for twelve years. Sr. Cecilia's direct relationship with the Home ceased in 1892 when she left Wilmington due to an illness begun in 1890 and thought to be related to the demands of the work. The involvement of the Sisterhood ended shortly after. The effects and impact of their work continued never the less. In 1892, the Chapel of the Good Shepherd



source: the author

A recently installed window depicts the seal of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

was established by St. James Parish at Sixth and Queen Streets (our present location and origin) to spiritually and educationally reach the men, women and children working in the nearby cotton mills.

Sr. Cecilia returned to the New York headquarters of the order and there died Sunday January 21, 1894. No mention was made of her death in the annual reports of the Sisterhood. She was fifty-eight years old. Katherine Walker Whitehead, widow of Major General Whitehead of Wilmington, provided a space in her family plot at Oakdale Cemetery for a simple

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## Finding closure

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“We’ve been able to help a lot of families find missing people [or] photographs about their relatives,” Parson said. “They may never have seen photos of their grandparents, or their parents even, as children.

“We had photos from the schools, and going around the regional and national [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] events provided opportunities to share those photos, and it was very popular when we were at the national events. They would come back over and over again and bring more people with them, just for them to see, and they were able to get copies as well.

“It proved that having those archives helped those people, and to get closure on people who had died at the schools, but [relatives] may not have gotten all the details, or where they were buried.... If we’re able to find that in our records, then that

helps them [find] some closure.... We’re able to do that because of the archives and history.”

Along with workshops and presentations, the Tri-History Conference included an evening concert at the Church of St. Mary Magdalene celebrating the music of Anglican organist and composer Healey Willan. On the final day of the event, participants travelled to Six Nations to visit the Mohawk Institute, the Chapel Royal of the Mohawks and the Woodlands Cultural Centre.

Lofft describes fellowship and worship as some of the main goals of the conference, in addition to helping participants find opportunities for publication.

“It’s always a great opportunity to reach across the border and interact with our Episcopal brethren.... But I think we also want to encourage serious scholarship into Anglican and Episcopal history.”

*reprinted with permission from Anglican Journal*

## Good Shepherd

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marble stone cross with the inscription “Sister Cecilia, Sisterhood of the Good Shepherd, N.Y.” We recently commissioned a stained glass window in her honor from Laws Stained Glass Studios in North Carolina, depicting the seal of the Sisterhood of the Good Shepherd, and have held two, 2018-2019, of what will be annual commemorations of her death at her graveside. It’s our mission and dream that one day she will be recognized as one of God’s “holy witnesses.” Unfortunately, we can find no image of her.

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*Peter Wesley Perschbacher is a retired professor of fisheries biology. He lives in Wilmington, NC with his wife Virginia.*

## Can you name and place this church?

### our new puzzler



This multi-ethnic Anglo Catholic parish operates a twice weekly meal program, nutrition ministry and community food pantry. It has a vibrant music program and maintains an urban garden on its expansive campus. It was the first Episcopal church in its neighborhood, and a few years back celebrated its 200th anniversary with the current Presiding Bishop serving as president. In 1968 it merged with its sister parish under its name. Many of the prominent families of the host city are buried on its campus.

Email your best guess to [thehistoriographer@gmail.com](mailto:thehistoriographer@gmail.com)

### Answer to last issue’s puzzler:

No one came up with the correct answer, which is Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver, British Columbia. In the final phase of a 11-year restoration a 100 foot tower of steel, clad with 60 feet of stained glass, custom-designed by Canadian artist, Sarah Hall., was added in 2016. The glass spire design is entitled ‘Welcoming Light.’

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Seeking congruence  
in repurposing sacred  
places

