

Monday,
June 29, 2015

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BP. BARBARA HARRIS ON STRUCTURE
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- PG. 3 EPF YOUNG ADULT DELEGATION VOICES &
EXCERPTS FROM 'TOO PROUD TO BEND'
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WOMEN LEADERS: EMA ROSERO-NORDALM

**Please join us for the next
Open Meeting of the Consultation**

Tomorrow, Tuesday, June 30 from 1-2 pm, all are welcome to discuss how the social justice work at General Convention is going and how we should use the remainder of our time in Salt Lake City to further God's mission. We meet in Convention Center Room 155 E&F.

**THE UNION OF BLACK EPISCOPALIANS &
THE WHOLE CONSULTATION CELEBRATES
THE ELECTION OF THE RT. REV. MICHAEL CURRY,
OUR FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN PRESIDING BISHOP**

The Union of Black Episcopalians sends congratulations and lifts up in prayer, longtime member, the Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry on being

elected the Episcopal Church's first African-American presiding bishop.



"We are ecstatic that the wider Church and Communion will now have the opportunity to experience the intellect, sensitivity and God-led spirit of Bishop Curry," said Canon Annette Buchanan, National President of the UBE.

"We continue to pray for him as he takes the helm during a time where, among other things, racism rears its ugly head even higher and we, as Black people, have to affirm that our lives do matter."

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ISSUES 2015

The daily General Convention newsletter of the Consultation

Calendar

June 29

Noon - Speaker's Corner: Dr. Charles Willie

Where: Under the Consultation banner in the Exhibitor Hall

Who: Dr. Charles Willie, Professor, Civil Rights Activist, Prophet

1:00 pm - Speaker's Corner: Louie Crew

Where: Under the Consultation banner in the Exhibitor Hall

Who: Louie Crew, LGBT Rights activist

2:00 pm - Speaker's Corner: Fair Trade

Where: Under the Consultation banner in the Exhibitor Hall

Who: Susan Sklar, *Equal Exchange*

8:15 pm - Integrity Eucharist

Where: Convention Center worship space

June 30

7:00 am - Open Meeting of the Consultation

Where: Convention Center Room 155 E&F

2:00 pm - Speaker's Corner: Immigration

Where: Under the Consultation banner in the Exhibitor Hall

Who: Dianne Aide, Episcopal Immigration Activist

The Speaker's Corner is a Consultation offering where experts speak on social justice topics. The space allows for an intimate question and answer format.

AN INTERVIEW WITH BP. BARBARA HARRIS ON STRUCTURE

Q – When I talk to many Episcopalians in their 20's, 30's and 40's, I think there is a fair bit of willingness to trust our leaders and bishops. Because of that, I think that people in my age bracket are open to considering shrinking the size of our governing bodies, trusting that a more centralized leadership will not compromise the church's ability to remain diverse and move forward into whatever mission God has for us next. What would you say to folks about that?

A – I think that the structure we have, if it represents centralized authority, is basically a sound structure. We simply, as a church, need to find a way or ways to better utilize the structure we have.

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(Bp. Harris on Structure continued)

Q – OK. Allow me to push here a little. So, a friend of mine who's a deputy in his early 40's says sometimes he's surprised by how some in the House of Deputies seem to start from a place of distrust towards the House of Bishops and other church leaders. He feels like the starting point should be trust and collegiality rather than assuming that church leaders are power-hungry. What do you think about that?

A – I don't think that the House of Bishops is power-hungry. I think there are others in the church who are power-hungry. And they want to make changes in our structure that will give them power that they think they do not have, and that the Bishops do not have either but are perceived to have. It simply is not true. I think as one wise person said to me, "As the whole society is moving horizontally, there are those in the church who want to move vertically." In

other words, they want to create something that would move us from governance to government.

Q – Are there particular pieces of this restructuring proposal, such as a unicameral house, smaller deputations and Executive Council, eliminating committees... anything that you find the most troublesome?

A – Well, there are troubling aspects to what is being proposed. I think that the TREC report needs to be looked at very, very carefully to search out the possible pitfalls. And many people with whom I have spoken have genuine and legitimate questions that need to be thoughtfully discussed and addressed. Also, if there was a clearer sense of the church's mission at this time, then there would be more reason to explore changes positively.

Q – One of the most obvious concerns that people are talking about is around diversity. Do you think, if we had

smaller governing bodies, we could, as a church, maintain a wide demographic array of leaders?

A – I don't think power would be shared by those who have been traditionally disenfranchised. But rather we would create a new small elite clique.

Q – What am I missing that I should have asked you?

A – It is a little early. We've got to take time to have some real discussions that will raise additional questions that, at this point, I don't know what they are.

Q – How do we do that? As a parochial priest, I often feel like I personally do a poor job of inviting members of my parish into these sorts of questions and discernment in the wider church.

A – I think we need to focus on the specifics not concepts, such as who reports to whom, before any vote is taken.

Racism and Economics

In the past 50 years "white society" and "black society" have become increasingly unequal. Government policies and attitudes have perpetuated this inequality, and the wealth gap between white families and African American families continues to grow.

One of the main avenues for wealth accumulation is real estate. Unfortunately, African Americans have not had the same opportunities to purchase property as whites. For many years the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) had policies that barred developers from receiving federally subsidized construction loans unless they committed to excluding African Americans from the area. African Americans were also prevented from receiving FHA insured mortgages, forcing them to obtain high interest loans with little security. When the bans were finally lifted, banks routinely sent loan officers to African American neighborhoods to target them for high interest, low security mortgages – mortgages that were destined to fail before they were even signed.

In addition to enacting racist mortgage policies, the federal government also allocated money to strengthen the infrastructure of "white suburbs." However, in many African American neighborhoods, which did not receive the same financial support, infrastructure deteriorated. Eventually years of decay and overcrowding took its toll, and schools, public services, roads, and utilities began to collapse. But still nothing was done.

Although many of the racist economic policies no longer exist, the detrimental effects remain. The church must continue to work for the equality of all people and, to that end, we will pay particular attention to resolutions that address race and economics.

- Laura Russell, *Episcopal Network for Economic Justice*

(On Presiding Bishop Elect Curry continued)

Prior to Generation Convention, on June 23, UBE presented Curry with **The Rt. Rev. Quintin Primo Honors Award** at its annual Legendary Tribute and Gala. This award recognizes persons, lay or ordained, whose ministry demonstrates excellence and passion in effectively building diverse communities; faithful demonstration of Christian courage and grace when facing strong opposition to such witness; pastoral wisdom in speaking truth to the Church and to society; and prophetic effectiveness in advancing caring ministries to the least and neediest, locally and/or beyond.

Buchanan said it is these qualities and more that Bishop Curry possesses and will "bring to this new role that our Lord and Savior has prepared him for."

In accepting his award Curry said, "I have been coming to this place since I was a child. Bishop Primo and my father were friends and my Dad was a priest. My Dad would bring me to the UBE and I would participate in the activities. I was mentored and developed by the people of the UBE. I was a youth preacher and learned from people in my church in Buffalo. It was there that I learned the power of the stillness of grace and faith. So, it is particularly meaningful to receive this award."

Voices of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship Young Adult Delegation

Andrew Amanda Leigh-Bullard:

As a member of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship Young Adult Delegation, I had only a vague sense of what my work at GC would look like. I applied because I knew that I have a story to share with our church, but I had only the vaguest sense of what that would look like. After being accepted I started skimming the resolutions with growing anxiety, as I only felt connected to a few of them. Then I stumbled across A074 Updating the Safeguarding Materials. I decided that I should probably say something on it, though I wasn't really invested in it. As I started to prepare what I might say, my investment grew. I realized that the dated nature of these resources, might be more than inconvenient but possibly dangerous. I remembered that the gap in information about LGBTQ people who work with youth might have played a role in the way I got in trouble at an Episcopal Camp, because my very identity was considered inappropriate for youth. I remembered that pain, an injury still not fully healed. In the space of hours I went from being partially interested, to engaged, to passionate and eager. I knew that while the resolution at the time didn't include LGBTQ as I got up testify I knew that there was a space for growth, for amendment, for change. So I spoke, shaking and unsteady, rushing to get the words out. I left the meeting relieved that at least I had spoken. Later, when I learned that not only had the resolution been amended, but had been added to the HoD consent calendar, I realized the power that a voice can have. Now I'm excited to see where the rest of the process will lead.

Emily Shelton:

... And then there is the convention center. Never have I felt so much spirit in one place. I am so honored and blessed to be here, to be talking with these amazing people and standing up for issues I am passionate about. Amidst the meetings and speeches, there is one instant that will stick with me for the rest of my life. My roommate, Eva, and I walked over to the Thistle Farms booth to snag some free samples, and so I could hear what they are all about.

I don't know what I was expecting to hear from a vendor, but 20 minutes later, I am crying with a stranger, we are hugging and praying and exchanging mailing addresses to keep in touch. And all I can say is: only at General Convention. "J" has been at Thistle Farms for 16 months, slowly but surely recovering from drug addiction and a cycle of abuse by men in her life. Thistle Farms is a two year program for sexually trafficked women and/or women that are battling addiction. By living in this prayerful, intentional community where they make and sell skin products, they regain their lives. "I am learning to love myself, and more importantly, to let myself be loved. I am finding my self-worth again; and I can hold my grandson for the first time."

I like to think that Heaven involves people sitting around, connecting with each other through the grace of God and the movement of the Holy Spirit, by our stories, our triumphs and our scars, trusting one another to hear and to care, and inviting them in to become a part of you.

Thank you, J, for gifting me with your story. I will never forget your courage.

From Too Proud to Bend: Journey of a Civil Rights Foot Soldier

Sixth in a series of ten excerpts from Nell Braxton Gibson's memoir

The author is nineteen years old and a sophomore at Spelman College in Atlanta, GA.

The next day is Tuesday, February 13, 1962. Julian (Bond) drives his car to the capitol loaded with one group of students, and Smitty borrows Andrew Young's car to take the rest of us. James Forman comes along so he can let Charles Black, who is waiting back at the office, know what happens once we're inside the capitol building. Jim Forman's wife, Mildred, is with him. There isn't a soul outside the capitol when we arrive. We get out of the cars, enter the building, and head down a hallway that we think will lead us to the legislative session already in progress, but halfway down the hall it becomes apparent that we are walking away from the session. The hallway is too quiet. We don't hear gavels banging or the murmur of voices in session. So we start down a second hall. Not having been here before, we're confused about where the legislature is meeting. Then we see members of the custodial crew and say, "We're looking for the legislative session. Which way is it?" They look somewhat confused to see us inside but point us in the right direction. We thank them and walk toward the gallery, determined to desegregate it.... several policemen show up out of nowhere and surround us. One says, "Get the hell outta here, or you'll be arrested." "We're going to listen to the proceedings," several of us respond.

"If you enter those chambers, you'll be charged with trespassing."

"We're on public property," Ruby Doris says. "We're citizens. We're not trespassing." trespassing." "You're on state property, and that means you are trespassing." We refuse to move. "You're all under arrest," they say and begin to lead us toward an exit door.... James Forman moves away from the group as soon as the police show up, so he can contact Charles back at the office and let him know what has happened.

I follow my fellow students into the sunlight and into the back of a waiting paddy wagon. Hard benches line both sides of the vehicle. I'm nervous but struggle not to show it. I want to be as strong as everyone else, but my feelings are all over the place as horror stories I've heard about other Negro students come to mind. I've heard about some girls who got arrested, who were stripped and forced to walk naked in front of white male prisoners; others were raped by white prison guards. I know of Negro male students who had cattle prods placed on their genitals. One boy who was abused that way was left sterile and crippled. Other males were beaten. What will our fate be?

Note: *The good folks at Amazon.com would be happy to help you read more from Nell's book.*

From the history of ISSUES

ISSUES, conceived in the living room of the late William Stringfellow, has been around as a voice for social justice at General Conventions since 1967. This year we are going to reprint some articles from our history.

September 22, 1976, Minneapolis

*"We Haven't Done All
We Set Out To Do
But Lord, It's Been A
Mighty Good Day"*

Many members of U.B.E. were heard humming this popular Gospel song following the election results at this Convention... with the first time election of two Black priests, Greene and Hayes, to Executive Council... this Convention has been a mighty good day.

Before we go on our way rejoicing, however, the sober reality of our witness and mission looms larger on the horizon. Are we going to oppose publicly the execution of the Death Penalty in our States? Are we going to prioritize support for creative Urban Mission strategies which can help save our major cities from irreversible segregation and violence? Are we going to redefine Mission in such a way that foreign and domestic programs will no longer be put in the position of fighting for the same meager dollars? And are we going to develop a theological and educational base to undergird the change of life style actions our crisis of diminishing resources demands? For Lord knows, we need a lot of Good Days!

- Edward Rodman



The Consultation is a collaboration of progressive organizations within the Episcopal Church that partner to work for social justice. Before every triennial General Convention, we come together to develop a platform that will guide our shared advocacy and goals.

The Consultation member organizations are:

Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission
Episcopal Asiamerica Ministry Advocates
Episcopal Church Publishing Company
Episcopal Network for Economic Justice
Episcopal Peace Fellowship
Episcopal Urban Caucus
Episcopal Women's Caucus
Integrity
TransEpiscopal
Union of Black Episcopalians

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: EMA ROSERO-NORDALM

"I follow Jesus so what starts in pain ends up in power."

Ema Rosero-Nordalm is a deacon and the Missioner for Latino Hispanic Ministries of the Diocese of Massachusetts with an irresistible, positively torrential impulse to serve. Raised a Roman Catholic in Bogota, Colombia by a mother who was immensely entrepreneurial, a teacher, principal and superintendent who organized her slum-bound working-class community to build a church, then schools with medical facilities, Ema was expected to stay home and care for her many siblings. Within the confines of that expectation burned in Ema a faith in a God to whom she prayed every night, discovering in God's faithfulness an empowering sense of her own belovedness that eased her into sleep, so that she woke in the morning refreshed each new day.

With the intercession of nuns who advocated for her education, and a marriage to an American that lifted her from Colombia and planted her in Brookline, Massachusetts, teaching language at Boston University, that faith never left Ema, though she never found a church to house it or a community to nurture it. Not until she met her mentor and ministry partner Daniel, a Latino gay man who had just discovered the Episcopal Church and his call to priesthood, did Ema begin to discern her own call to serve God through Latino communities, particularly Latinas.

Since that discovery, there is no stopping the torrent of Ema's energy and entrepreneurship, a "mother to mothers," organizing Hispanic women of all ages to view themselves not as victims of the church kitchen, but rather as powerful agents of their own futures, full of possibility in concert with each other, in the faithfulness of God. In Salem's immigrant community, she taught mothers to support their gay sons with sex education. In Boston's South End, she has forged community with Hispanic youth and women elders. Now in East Boston, she is partnering with a young Lutheran woman church-planter to grow a new Hispanic church community that bridges denominations. Escaping by faith her mother's constraints, Ema's open, compassionate, loving deacon's heart - a woman's heart - has taken up her mother's community service, devoting 100% of every day to expanding our own Episcopal heart to include a whole new and growing Hispanic community learning, as Ema herself has learned, that they are made in the image of God.

- The Rev. Holly Lyman Antolini



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