

Saturday,  
June 27, 2015

# ISSUES 2015

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'DIDN'T YOU KEEP TURNING AROUND'



This is a momentous win for freedom, for equality, for inclusion and, most of all, for love. It is a day to celebrate with deep joy that our country is one step closer to keeping the promise of the pursuit of liberty and justice for all. Today's historic ruling means same sex couples will soon have both the freedom to marry and equal respect for their marriages across the country -- it is a triumph of justice over bigotry.

And even while we stand in this moment of deep joy we recognize that our brothers and sisters in Charleston are in a moment of deep grief. And so we stand in the tension of the joy and the grief of a kingdom not yet come with a renewed commitment to dismantle racism and end the marginalization and victimization of any member of God's human family.

But today we celebrate! And here in Salt Lake City at the General Convention of our Episcopal Church we are considering legislation that would eliminate barriers for same-sex couples seeking the sacrament of marriage in our church. We pray for justice to roll down like waters in Salt Lake City for the Episcopal Church just as justice prevailed today in our Supreme Court. It is time for us as a church to "let our yes be yes." It is time for full inclusion of LGBT people in the work and witness of the Episcopal Church.

- Susan Russell, Integrity

The daily General Convention newsletter of the Consultation

## Calendar

### June 27

1:00 pm - **Speaker's Corner: Fair Trade**

Where: Under the Consultation banner in the Exhibitor Hall  
Who: Susan Sklar, Equal Exchange

2:00 pm - **Speaker's Corner: Trans People in the Church**

Where: Under the Consultation banner in the Exhibitor Hall  
Who: Vivian Taylor, Trans Activist

### June 28

7:00 am - **Episcopal Women's Caucus Breakfast**

Where: Marriott City Creek

7:15 am - **Bishops Against Gun Violence March**

Where: Outside the Convention Center (Southeast Corner)

1:00 pm - **Speaker's Corner: Human Trafficking**

Where: Under the Consultation banner in the Exhibitor Hall  
Who: Laura Russell, NYC Human Rights Attorney

2:00 pm - **Speaker's Corner: Deportation in Dominican Republic**

Where: Under the Consultation banner in the Exhibitor Hall  
Who: Pedro Cuevas, Episcopal Priest, Dominican Republic

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.

## ENDORSEMENTS

*For Disciplinary Board  
for Bishops:*

The Rev. Erik W. Larson

*For The Executive  
Council:*

Mr. E. Bruce Garner  
Mr. Louis W. Glosson  
Ms. Julia Ayala Harris  
The Rev. Mally Lloyd  
The Rt. Rev. Bavi Rivera

*For General Board of Examining  
Chaplains:*

The Very Rev. Cn. Michael A. Bamberger  
The Rev. Dr. Thomas Ferguson  
Ms. Anne LeVeque

*For Trustees of the General Theological  
Seminary:*

The Very Rev. Dr. Susan Carter  
The Rt. Rev. Allen Shin  
Ms. Dianne Audrick Smith

*The Consultation considers demonstrated commitment to social justice  
and leadership skills for the position in making its endorsements.*

# RACIAL OPPRESSION IN AMERICA:

## CREATING A PLATFORM FOR DIALOGUE THROUGH AN AWARENESS OF STRUCTURAL RACIALIZATION

The recent string of lethal confrontations between law enforcement and unarmed black men have cast America's racial landscape into the spotlight once again. Public reaction to the police shootings are almost always split down racial lines. According to a 2015 Pew Research Center survey, 71% of blacks believe that police treat whites better than blacks. By contrast, only 36% of whites agreed. (Drake)

### Structural Racialization

Any discussion about dismantling the practices that perpetuate racial injustice must acknowledge and address the racial differentiation and disparities between whites and people of color that exist in America's social, educational, legal and political systems. The primary factor affecting race relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is structural racialization. This concept is described as a "set of practices, cultural norms, and institutional arrangements that are both reflective of and simultaneously used to create and maintain racialized outcomes in society." (Powell)

Certain historical policies have perpetuated structural racialization:

National Labor Relations Act -- NLRA is one example of a reform that was originally considered race neutral. However, by excluding farm and domestic workers (who were predominantly African American in the 1930s) to appease Dixiecrats, the NLRA perpetuated race-based inequities.

Mandatory Minimum Drug Sentencing -- In the 1980s this was a key tool in the War on Crime, which targeted communities of color in the wake of the civil rights movement.

Zero Tolerance Polices in Schools -- Rather than addressing systemic problems affecting public schools, zero tolerance became a mechanism for criminalizing and stigmatizing youth of color.

### Conclusion

Unfettered discourse about structural racialization and its impact on communities of color can provide everyone with a better understanding of the disparities that haunt our nation, and the systems that perpetuate them.

Regardless of whether we agree with the alleged offender or the offended, our response should never be one of indifference. It is unrealistic to think that we not always agree with one another, or have the same priorities, desires or opinions; if we did, there would be no reason to consider the interests of others. Let us not walk in our own understanding by forcing others to agree with us, or refusing to listen to those who disagree with us. Rather, let us follow Paul's directive, and walk in the spirit: **"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."** (Philippians 2:4)

- Tiffany King, Union of Black Episcopalians, Atlanta Chapter

***UBE joins with our brothers and sisters at General Convention and the wider church in calling for the continued discourse on the topic of racial injustice as we mourn the martyrs of our struggle.***

### FROM THE EPISCOPAL PEACE FELLOWSHIP YOUNG ADULT DELEGATION BLOG

It might seem like being proud and being nervous might not go together – but today those two emotions were the main emotions that I felt.

I am proud of so many people! I am proud to be a member of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. I am very proud of each of the Young Adult Delegation that has showed up here with us. They are an amazing group of people. They prayed the litany at the Wall of Injustice that EPF used to demonstrate how we can break down the barriers to life that injustice create in our world. Today the EPF honored Newland Smith with the Sayre Award. Hearing about his dedication to peace and justice and then hearing him speak so humbly about his own influences and his own dedication to anti-racism activism, as a privileged white male made me proud of EPF. We are an organization that values the work that people put in over their entire lives to activism. We encourage and support those that give

their lives for peace – not through dying – but by living a life that embodies peace. What would you give your life for? Perhaps this question should be "What would you live for?" It creates a different meaning and different context. Newland is a person that has given his life for peace. He is such a joy to be around. I am proud that my organization honored him. I am also proud that the EPF encourages people, like me, to try to make a difference too.

I am trying to make a difference by testifying for legislation even if it makes me nervous. I found C048 just a few hours ago. This resolution proposes that the Episcopal Church formally endorse a policy of a minimum wage of \$15/hr. I was one of two people who testified for this resolution. The other person, also from EPF, although not part of our Young Adult Delegation (YAD), also endorsed it. In my testimony I pointed out that the Federal minimum wage for tipped workers is only \$2.13/hr while the minimum wage for non-tipped workers is \$7.25 an hour. The resolution does not specify that this \$15/hr stance

would be towards those that are tipped as well. By being present and testifying I was able to bring to the table a different viewpoint. I was able to bring to this committee the viewpoint of someone that earns minimum wage. It made me nervous to speak in front of them. After I spoke, I sat down and my hands were shaking. I had trouble holding my small notebook. I was not very nervous before I spoke but it was the nerves being settled afterwards that made me shake.

Today was a day full of pride – pride in the group that I am shepherding; pride in the organization that is sponsoring us; pride in myself for overcoming my nervousness to take a stance that is important to me and important for creating a more just world. As we said in our litany we will focus and be able to fight injustice with God's help.

- Maryann Philbrook, Episcopal Peace Fellowship Young Adult Shepherd

Check out more of the blog at:  
<http://epfnational.org/category/gc2015-yad/>

## **SUPPORT LGBT AFRICAN ADVOCACY (A051)**

As we as a church work toward LGBT justice in the United States, now is the time to support those beginning that journey in other countries. Resolution A051 asks the Episcopal Church to do so by supporting LGBT advocacy in Africa.

In Uganda, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Zimbabwe and elsewhere, LGBT activists, both lay and ordained, lose their livelihoods and sometimes their lives for advocating justice and equal access to health care for LGBT citizens.

Bishop Christopher Senyonjo of Uganda was inhibited and stripped of his pension by the Anglican Church of Uganda for welcoming LGBT people at worship services and counseling sessions.

Activist David Kato of Uganda was murdered after his picture and that of Bishop Senyonjo was placed in a local

tabloid under the heading "Hang Them."

The home of the Rev. Macdonald Sembereka of the Anglican Church in Malawi was firebombed because of his activism. Journalist Eric Lembembe of Cameroon was murdered for his activism. Attorney Michel Togu  of Cameroon received death threats targeting his family because he accepts LGBT clients. Activist George Freeman and two colleagues in Sierra Leone fled to Spain after they were repeatedly attacked and threatened with death.

Police raids and mob attacks are facts of life for LGBT rights organizations. Recent targets have included Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe, Alternatives-Ivory Coast, and the Cameroonian groups Alternatives-Cameroun, CAMFAIDS and CAMEF, whose leader fled to the United Kingdom for safety.

Yet many African activists bravely continue their work, and many rely on their faith to give them strength to do

so. That was evident in Kenya in 2014, when a discussion of the Bible's "lobber passages" – often cited by anti-LGBT conservatives – was one of the most popular sessions at a secular conference for African activists. Dozens of Anglicans, former Anglicans, evangelicals, Roman Catholics and Muslims crowded into the room and were told the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is a story about lack of hospitality, not about homosexuality.

In this context, the Rev. Sembereka, among others, calls for the adoption of Resolution A051 to encourage the church "to stand with the downtrodden" and to move forward, away from sins of commission and omission of the past and present. The resolution, he says, "has my support as one of the clergy who feel unsupported even by progressive Episcopal churches and clergy."

- Colin Stewart, Erasing 76 Crimes (76crimes.com)

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

Fifth 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.

This is what I've been working toward since I joined the movement. I just thought I'd be braver when the time came.... Suddenly we are blocked by a police captain who I later learn from a newspaper account is J. L. Moseley. "Why can't we cross the street?" (our leader) Charles Black asks. "Look right over my shoulder and you'll see why," Moseley replies. Across the street stand thirty state troopers. "We don't want anything to happen that will reflect on you or on the city," Moseley continues as he walks beside us. When reporters question him later about diverting our march, he says he did it because "we obviously had a condition today that was tense."

At this point Charles Black and James Forman, who have been walking with us, step aside and attempt to speak to Colonel Connor, who is head of the State Department for Public Safety, but they are redirected by an Atlanta policeman and sent to a Georgia Bureau of Investigation man who produces an executive order from the governor. Charles and Jim read the order and bring it back to our small group... After reading the order to us, Charles says, "The adjectives used here do not apply to us. Now, who is ready to cross the street?" We all raise our hands, but Captain Moseley blocks us again. Looking at the people across the street where the capitol building is, then past them to the capitol itself, he refers to the politicians inside the building. "All they want to do is get elected...It's not good for Atlanta for you to go over there."

"Some of us still want to go across the street," Charles Black responds. The captain reluctantly escorts us across but warns, "There won't be a lot of conversation over there like there is over here. You'll be arrested pretty quickly." As we begin to move forward, James Forman asks Captain Moseley, "Is this suggesting that we as people can't walk across the street just because we're of a different complexion?" Forman's question is never answered. We cross the street and are blocked by a phalanx of state troopers when we reach the capitol steps. Charles Black climbs the steps while troopers hold the rest of us at bay. At the top of the stairs, he takes out a prepared statement to read and then responds to a barrage of questions from reporters....

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 20, 1976, Minneapolis*

We celebrated the passage on first reading of the draft BCP. At a theological level, the shift of emphasis contained in the book is more radical (i.e. goes more to the root of the matter) than any call to people the barricades. Those who complain that the book downgrades the sense of individual sin which marked earlier Anglican books fail to consider how guilty this generation is and how guilty it feels. The book centers on the Resurrection, the ground and means of our Christian hope. In the community of that hope, individually and as a body, Christians find the freedom to be. What has caused many to back off from the social activism of the '60's is not less concern for the misery of mankind, but the emptiness in themselves. Adoption of new liturgical texts will no more guarantee lively Christian community and renewed faith than GCSP achieved faithfulness in the social realm.

Both, however, may be taken as signs of the Spirit in the renewal of the Episcopal Church. The juxtaposition on the same day of an appeal to conscience and the adoption of a new liturgy is worth nothing. As the appeal says, "the Church's institutional reality and social witness and personal piety are indivisible in the Gospel." A community which lives in the hope of the Resurrection and celebrates that fact in its corporate liturgical life is one which can speak with power to the individual human heart... and to the misery of the world.

## Didn't You Keep Turning Around?

I was glad when they said unto me,  
let US go to the house of the Lord.  
We mostly did it, We almost did.  
We almost became a real live Us.

The conga line formed and we all turned.  
We sang Siyahamba and we danced.  
And didn't you keep turning around,  
And turning around to see the Us.

The Us assembled baptized Body,  
Completely unwilling to sit still,  
Keeping hands folded on the desk top,  
And our eyes looking forward at Them.

Environmental theology  
Defaults to empire mode of being.  
The best one could do one supposes,  
Given convention contingencies.

Let's rebel and keep turning around  
Organic, wanting, feeling; Body  
The whole people of God assembled  
Not for a show but for the Kingdom.

Let's keep turning around and around  
And around and around and around  
Till we circle and see and make real  
The presence of Jesus in the Us.

- Philip Carr-Jones,  
*Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission*



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

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

On 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.



### **Stay connected with ISSUES and the Consultation:**

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