



NEWS FROM The Episcopal Church

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Presiding Bishop Curry invites gifts to Absalom Jones Fund for Episcopal HBCUs

Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry invites people of all backgrounds and faiths to give generously to the Absalom Jones Fund in support of the work of two historically Black institutions of higher education in cultivating and preparing diverse leaders: Voorhees University and Saint Augustine's University. Many congregations take dedicated offerings around Feb. 13 in observance of the Feast Day of Absalom Jones, the first Black priest ordained by the church. Jones recognized education as a key to empowerment.

EYE 2023

Regreso a Casa: A New Age of Faith. Registration open for 2023 Episcopal Youth Event delegations

The Episcopal Church Youth Ministries Office announces open registration for delegations of young people and chaperones planning to attend the Episcopal Youth Event (EYE) July 4-8 at the University of Maryland in College Park. Volunteers are also sought for multiple roles. Celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2023, EYE is the church's second-largest event after General Convention, drawing nearly 1,500 young people ages 15-19 from every province every three years. Attendees participate as part of a delegation, which can be from a diocese or coordinated through a congregation, school, or other Episcopal organization.

Parochial Reports are due by March 1

Online filing for the 2022 Parochial Report for all Episcopal Church congregations is now available. Reports must be filed by March 1. An email was sent

to congregations on Monday, Dec. 7. Those who did not receive the email or need help with their login name should contact their diocesan office for assistance.

**In our diocese, Contact Chris Speed at cspeed@edola.org for assistance.*

Presiding bishop nominating committee announces application timeline

Members of the Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop have decided on a timeline for receiving names of potential nominees to be the 28th presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church. The nominating committee plans to release its profile and call to discernment for the next presiding bishop and begin receiving names on May 15. Names will be received until July 15. Bishops who discern a call to enter the nomination process will have until Aug. 15 to submit their applications. The committee plans to announce its slate of nominees in the spring of 2024.

Episcopal Migration Ministries launches project, survey focused on LGBTQ+ forced migrants

Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) is excited to announce The Rainbow Initiative, a 2023 project focused on working with Episcopal congregations to bring visibility and aid to LGBTQ+ forced migrants. Participation is also encouraged in an online survey. EMM is partnering with Max Niedzwiecki*, who holds a doctorate in cultural anthropology and whose work has focused on the intersection of forced migration, LGBTQ+ communities, and faith within The Episcopal Church and more broadly. Through this work, EMM will focus on activities in June 2023 including Pride marches, Pride services, and World Refugee Day (June 20), as well as foster new partnerships involving Episcopal congregations, forced migrants, U.S.-based resettlement agencies, community groups, and more.

A pastoral word from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry on the death of Tyre Nichols

Sense cannot be made of the murder of a young man at the hands of five men whose vocation and calling are to protect and serve. This was evil and senseless.

There is a passage from the Hebrew prophet Jeremiah, which is later quoted in Matthew's Gospel when innocent baby boys are killed by an immoral dictator:

"A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more."
—Jeremiah 31:15, Matthew 2:18

With the murder of Tyre Nichols, another mother, as in the biblical texts, weeps, with the mothers of Emmett Till, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many others. A family grieves. A community fears. A nation is ashamed. Like the psalmist in the Bible, something in us cries out, "How long, O Lord, how long?" How long violence, how long cruelty, how long the utter disregard for the dignity and worth of every child of God? How long?

As if this wasn't enough, there is another horrible dimension to what happened. Tyre Nichols was beaten, kicked, and cursed as if he was not a human being. Then, after he was lying on the ground, having called for his mother, they let him stay there for several minutes without anyone, including the police and EMT who were present, providing medical assistance. Not one Good Samaritan.

Jesus once told a story to teach about what it looks like to love one's neighbor, which Moses and Jesus both said is a commandment of God. It's a story about a man beaten nearly to death and left on the side of the road to die by people who knew what Moses taught about love for God and neighbor—and what the prophet Micah taught when he said that God requires three things of us: to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

Only one person stopped to help the man, and he did so without regard for the fact that they were of different religions, nationalities, ethnic groups, and even different politics. This second man was a Samaritan, and he helped because the man on the road was human. He helped because he was a fellow child of God. He helped because the man lying on the side of the road, regardless of race, class, clan, stripe, or type, was his brother. And the man who helped has been called the Good Samaritan.

The fundamental call and vocation of law enforcement officials, and indeed every one of us, is that of the Good Samaritan. Here is where there is hope: The Good Samaritan in the parable of Jesus was not the last one.

There are Good Samaritans who are government officials in Memphis who, after assessing what happened, fired the offending officers, charged them with crimes against human life and dignity, and have committed to addressing systemic and cultural issues that created an environment in which this evil was enabled.

There are Good Samaritans doing what is necessary to radically reform the environment and culture of law enforcement—to create an atmosphere in which the dignity and worth of every human being is respected, protected, affirmed, and honored.

There are Good Samaritans in law enforcement, and other first responders, who often work while others sleep, laboring to protect and serve, at times risking their own lives for the neighbor they do not even know.

There are Good Samaritans, people of goodwill and human decency, who are peacefully protesting. There are Good Samaritans who are activists working tirelessly for the realization of communities and countries where there is truly, as the Pledge of Allegiance proclaims, "liberty and justice for all."

While we grieve, we cannot give in or give up. Just throwing up our hands in despair is not an option lest we leave a brother, a sister, a sibling on the side of the road again. No, let more Good Samaritans arise so that Tyre Nichols' death will not be in vain.

Please pray for Tyre's family, the whole Memphis community, this nation, and world. But also pray for people to rise up like the Good Samaritan and work to create change so this never happens again.

And may the soul of Tyre, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercies of God, rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry
Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church