

# ST. MARY'S MESSENGER

APRIL 2025

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## MARK THE EVANGELIST

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The book of Acts mentions a Mark, or John Mark, a kinsman of Barnabas (Col 4:10). The house of his mother Mary was a meeting place for Christians in Jerusalem (Acts 12:12). When Paul and Barnabas, who had been in Antioch, came to Jerusalem, they brought Mark back to Antioch with them (12:25), and he accompanied them on their first missionary journey (13:5), but left them prematurely and returned to Jerusalem (13:13). When Paul and Barnabas were about to set out on a second missionary journey,

*Continues in Calendar, Page 4.*

## TEXAS SENATE PUSHING FOR PRAYER, TEN COMMANDMENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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The Texas Senate has passed a pair of bills to introduce religion in public schools.

One would require the Ten Commandments to be displayed in every classroom, while the other would allow school boards to provide students and staff with daily time for prayer and scripture reading.

"You really have to ask the question, are we better off or are we worse off since prayer was taken out of public school in the 1960s?"

*Continues in  
State News,  
Page 9.*

## KENYAN ARCHBISHOP BANS SPEECHES BY POLITICIANS

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The Archbishop of Kenya has ordered churches under his care to stop allowing speeches by politicians during their worship services. The ban moves the Anglican Church of Kenya into a stricter separation of church and states than is common in the United States, where politicians often visit churches and speak from pulpits during their campaigns.

"When the time comes for acknowledging all those who have come, we will do that, but I want to give direction that from today, henceforth in any Anglican congregation, there will be no opportunity for any political leader to have a speech in the Church," Archbishop Jackson Ole Sapit said on March 16

*Continues in International  
News, Page 22.*



# ATTENTION ALL CHURCH MEMBERS!

## ALTAR FLOWERS

If anyone is interested in furnishing the altar flowers,  
please call the church office at 432-267-8201  
or email the Parish Secretary at [baileys.stmarys@gmail.com](mailto:baileys.stmarys@gmail.com).

*\*Please note there will not be any altar flowers during lent season.*

*Altar flowers will resume on Easter Sunday.*

## SERVING SIGNUP

At this time, we are looking for people who are willing to volunteer to serve during the Sunday morning service. There are several positions available for anyone who would like to help.

The positions are:

- Chalice- Serves the cup of wine.
- Lector- Reads the lessons and the psalms, and the Gospel during Morning Prayer.
- Acolyte- Carries the cross and the Gospel, and guards the front.
- Ushers- Welcomes people and direct them as needed

If you are interested, please call the church office or email the Parish Secretary at [baileys.stmarys@gmail.com](mailto:baileys.stmarys@gmail.com).

The church would also like to thank everyone who does volunteer!

**APRIL CALENDAR**

**6<sup>th</sup>** Fifth Sunday in Lent

**13<sup>th</sup>** Sunday of the Passion:  
Palm Sunday

**14<sup>th</sup>- 19<sup>th</sup>** Holy Week

**17<sup>th</sup>** Maundy Thursday

**18<sup>th</sup>** Good Friday

**19<sup>th</sup>** Holy Saturday: The  
Great Vigil of Easter

**20<sup>th</sup>** Sunday of Resurrection:  
Easter Sunday

**21<sup>st</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>** Easter Week

**27<sup>th</sup>** Second Sunday of Easter

**28<sup>th</sup>** *Saint Mark the Evangelist*



**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

**Sunday**

10:30 AM- Morning Service

Coffee Hour- Following the  
service

**Wednesday**

10:30 AM- Bible Study/Coffee  
hour

5:30 PM- Evening Prayer



**BIRTHDAY WISHES**

**19<sup>th</sup>** Howard Bain

**23<sup>rd</sup>** Dennis Dingus

**30<sup>th</sup>** Melinda McCann

**MARK THE EVANGELIST- 25 APRIL N.T.**

BY JAMES KIEFER

*The following article has been taken from [James Kiefer's Christian Biographies](#). This article is to highlight the importance of the Saint Mark, who we commemorate on April 28<sup>th</sup>. Contrary to the Episcopal church, Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches celebrate Mark on April 25<sup>th</sup>. As such the article does list the 25<sup>th</sup> as the day of St. Mark. The text has been edited for reading purposes.*

*[Continued from the front page] Barnabas proposed to take Mark, but Paul thought him unreliable, so that eventually Barnabas made one journey taking Mark, and Paul another journey taking Silas (15:36-40). Mark is not mentioned again in Acts. However, it appears that he became more reliable, for Paul mentions him as a trusted assistant in Colossians 4:10 and again in 2 Timothy 4:11.*

The Apostle Peter had a co-worker whom he refers to as "my son Mark" (1 Peter 5:13). Papias, an early second century writer, in describing the origins of the Gospels, tells us that Mark was the "interpreter" of Peter, and that he wrote down ("but not in order") the stories that he had heard Peter tell in his preaching about the life and teachings of Jesus.

The Gospel of Mark, in describing the arrest of Jesus (14:51f), speaks of a young man who followed the arresting party, wearing only a linen cloth wrapped around his body, whom the arresting party tried to seize, but who left the cloth in their hands and fled naked. It is speculated that this young man was the writer himself, since the detail is hardly worth mentioning if he were not.

Tradition has it that after the death of Peter, Mark left Rome and went to preach in Alexandria, Egypt, where he was eventually martyred.

It is natural to identify the John Mark of Acts with the Gospel-writer and interpreter of Peter, and this identification is standard in liturgical references to Mark. However, "Mark" is the commonest of Latin first names, and they may well have been separate persons.

Mark's symbol in art is a Lion, usually winged. In the book of Revelation, the visionary sees about the throne of God four winged creatures: a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle. (Compare with the cherubs in Ezek 1 and 10.) It has customarily been supposed that these represent the four Gospels, or the four Evangelists (Gospel-writers). One way of matching them is to say... that the lion stands for Mark, whose narrative begins with John the Baptist crying out in the desert (a lion roars in the desert) ... An alternative assignment... calls Mark the ox (because he portrays Christ the servant, constantly doing the work for which he was sent).

## BISHOP'S VISITATION AT ST. MARY'S

FROM EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NORTHWEST TEXAS

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On February 16, 2025 Bishop Scott Mayer visited St. Mary's. During his visit Bryan and Shirley Beal were confirmed as members of the church. In March, the [diocese of Northwest Texas](#) released a photo from Bp. Mayer's visit (shown on the left). The picture was taken in the sanctuary and shows (from left to right) Bryan Beal, Shirley Beal, Bp. Mayer, Becky Henry, and Connie Fowler.

### **QUIZ QUESTION 1:**

**Who is considered the founder of the Anglican Church from which the Episcopal church evolved?**

- A. A traveling preacher whose name is unknown.
- B. Martin Luther.
- C. King Henry VIII.
- D. Saint Stephen, the follower of Jesus who, according to the Bible, was stoned to death for his beliefs.

### **Quiz Question 2:**

**The Episcopal Church is in communion with what other church?**

- A. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- B. The Church of England
- C. The Catholic Church
- D. The United Church of Christ

*Quiz answers will be on the last page.*

## IN MEMORY OF MARY ALICE

BY BAILEY SAFFLE

*This article was written as a tribute for Mary Alice Dingus, a former member of St. Mary who recently passed away. The picture in the article was provided by Mary Alice's husband, Dennis Dingus.*

On Friday, March 14, 2025, a memorial service was held in honor of the late Mary Alice Dingus. The service was arranged by Myers & Smith Funeral Home and held at St. Mary's. Several of Mary Alice's loved ones attended to say goodbye to their dearly beloved friend. A week prior to the funeral, an obituary for Mary Alice was released. [The obituary reads as follows:](#)

*Mary Alice Dingus, 65, died Monday, March 3, 2025. Memorial service will be March 14, 2025 at 10:30 AM at St. Mary's Episcopal.*

*Mary was born on April 7, 1959 in Pecos, TX. She grew up in Pecos, moved to Lamesa in [1976]. She graduated from Lamesa High School in 1978. She attended Wayland Baptist University and graduated in 1982. She married Dennis Dingus on March 12, 1987 in Lamesa, TX. She*



*was a member of St. Mary's Episcopal.*

*Mary taught at Lamesa High School, Runnels Jr. High, and Big Spring High School for a total of 36 years. She loved arts & crafts of any kinds. She really enjoyed knitting. She loved singing and traveling.*

*Mary is survived by her husband: Dennis Dingus of Big Spring; brother: Milton Woody (Yvette) of Coahoma; sister: Trezan Monroe (Vernon) of Baton Rouge, LA; and several nieces and nephews.*

*Mary was preceded in death by her parents: Joyce & Dennis Woody.*

On the obituary website and [Facebook post](#), people voiced their love for Mary Alice and their support for the family. Many of Mary Alice's former students shared their experiences with her as their teacher. Stories of Mary Alice creating fond memories and supporting

her students were revealed. Several of the comments noted that she impacted the lives of students and truly made a difference in the community. It is clear through the comments that Mary Alice will be sorely missed by all those who knew her.

Unfortunately for us, Mary Alice lost a battle with illness; but thankfully, she knew the love of God and was saved through the blood of Jesus. While she will be deeply missed, comfort can be found in the fact that Mary Alice's soul is now resting with her Savior. Mary Alice's remains, however, rest in St. Mary's columbarium.

During one conversation, Dennis stated that Mary Alice had wanted her remains to be placed in the columbarium since the couple began attending St. Mary's. Dennis explained that Mary Alice loved the idea of the columbarium as it reminded her of church cemeteries often found in small towns. Dennis also said that Mary Alice loved St. Mary's. So, Mary Alice quickly decided the columbarium was where she wanted her and Dennis to be after their deaths.

Dennis continued to reminisce on his life with Mary Alice. Dennis shared tidbits of who Mary Alice was as a person. Mary Alice loved using her first and middle name, so Dennis would oblige her (though he would rather just call her Mary). Mary Alice's favorite Bible verse was Joshua 24:15b (As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.) Dennis recounted Mary Alice's orneriness and how she remained that way to the end.

The deep love Dennis has for Mary Alice was very apparent throughout the conversation. His love for her showed in how he spoke about her and the way his face would light up when telling the stories. But sadness was also clearly visible as he grieves over the loss. Surely this sadness is felt by everyone who knew her. Mary Alice Dingus was a beloved wife, teacher, church member, and overall person. [As one of Mary Alice's former students said](#) "Knowing [Mary Alice] any amount of time was a gift... [she] made an impact, even in the smallest of ways.

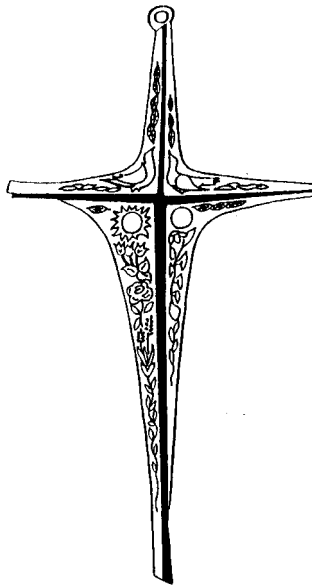
## ST. MARY'S CROSS

BY AN UNKNOWN AUTHOR

*The following article is from a document found in the church files. This article explains the origin and meaning of the St. Mary's Cross.*

St. Mary's Cross was created by St. Louis Sculptor William C. Severson in black walnut with copper enamel color. Incised intaglio carvings form the Marian symbols.

Reading from the bottom left clockwise the symbols are: the olive branch as a token of peace; the white rose (without thorns) as a symbol of purity and exemption from the



consequences of original sin; they cyclamen as the "bleeding sorrow in Mary's heart"; the sun as the symbol of Christ and Mary; the Queen of Heaven is crowned with twelve stars scattered from the sun over the top of the moon; the pair of doves symbolize purity and peace; the lily as the flower of the virgin and, finally, the almond as symbol of divine approval.

The cross was given in loving memory of Elbertine Johnson.

### **QUIZ QUESTION 3:**

**Who is the Anglican equivalent of the Catholic church's Pope?**

- A. The Cardinal of Canterbury
- B. The Archbishop of Liverpool
- C. The Cardinal of Madrid
- D. The Archbishop of Canterbury

### **QUIZ QUESTION 4:**

**The word "episcopal" means what?**

- A. Governed by bishops
- B. Assisted by deacons
- C. Organized into dioceses
- D. Led by priests

## TEXAS SENATE PUSHING FOR PRAYER, TEN COMMANDMENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY CAROLINE VANERGRIF | MARCH 21, 2025

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*The following article has been taken from [CBS News](#). The article examines legislation that is currently being discussed by Texas legislators.*

*[Continued from the front page]* and I think I know what the answer to that is," said State Senator Mayes Middleton, R-Galveston, who filed Senate Bill 11. "We're worse off."

Senate Bill 11 gives school boards the ability to adopt a policy requiring all campuses to give students and staff time during the school day to pray and read the Bible or another religious text. Parents would have to sign a consent form for their child to participate.

"No one's going to be coerced," Middleton said.

Critics say students and staff are already allowed to pray in school if they want.

"Likewise, if someone takes their Bible to school, there's nothing at all to prevent them from reading it," said Mark Chancey, a professor of religious studies at SMU. "So this invents a practice that isn't needed because these activities are already allowed under current law."

Chancey believes state lawmakers are trying to push a particular version of Christianity in public schools.

"That would be a move that jeopardizes all of our religious freedom," he said. "Public schools are for the atheist, the

agnostic, the Christian, the Buddhist, the Muslim, the Hindu, the Sikh, the Jewish person. Promoting one religion over others is an affront to all Texans because we're all paying for these schools with our taxes, and every child should be welcomed and affirmed in public schools, regardless of their religious identity."

The [Senate also passed Senate Bill 10](#), which mandates every classroom in elementary and secondary schools display a particular version of the Ten Commandments. It has to be at least 16x20 inches.

Lt. Gov Dan Patrick, the Republican who presides over the Senate, has indicated SB 10 and SB 11 as priority bills for this legislative session.

"A moment of voluntary prayer and the posting of the Ten Commandments are so much a part of the history and tradition of our nation that the founders of our nation would wonder why the Texas legislature even needs to pass a law about it," said Jeremy Dys, senior counsel at First Liberty Institute, a legal organization dedicated to defending religious liberty. "These proposed laws are consistent with several U.S. Supreme

Court decisions that welcome the recognition of our religious heritage and reflect the best of the nation's traditions."

One hundred sixty-six [Texas faith leaders sent a letter](#) to lawmakers urging them to vote against the bill in order to protect religious freedoms. It points out that "the text of the display mandated by these bills manages to produce a hodgepodge of scripture that includes twelve, not ten, commandments and fails to reflect the beliefs of many Christian and Jewish communities."

"That deeply troubles me as a Biblical scholar, as a Christian, as a person of faith," Chancey said. "The government has no business deciding what translation of the Bible people need to be reading, much less promoting that particular translation in public schools."

This is the version that must be posted if the bill becomes law:



The Texas Senate building. The photo is from [Texas Legislature Online](#).

*"The Ten Commandments*

*I AM the LORD thy God.*

*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

*Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven images.*

*Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.*

*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

*Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

*Thou shalt not kill.*

*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

*Thou shalt not steal.*

*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*

*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.*

*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor's."*

Rev. Cathy Sweeney, a pastor at Arapaho United Methodist Church, is also worried posting the Ten Commandments on display may force teachers

of different beliefs and backgrounds to answer questions on complex subjects like adultery and coveting a neighbor's wife.

"Having words like 'maidservant,' is that really what we want to teach our kindergartners?" Sweeney said. "It's inappropriate because it oversteps that

boundary of religion and government... And I believe there's a vast number of people who are opposed to this bill because they believe that religious education belongs within the family and in their faith communities."

Both bills still have the pass the Texas House before becoming law.



## HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR SB 10 & 11

BY BAILEY SAFFLE

In 1962, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) ruled on the case [Engel v. Vitale](#). Prior to this case, a time of prayer was a common occurrence in U.S. public schools. Children were not forced to participate, but there were parents who did not believe in this practice. As such, a small group of parents in New York, led by Steven Engel, legally challenged the constitutionality of prayer in schools. The New York court system sided with the schools as the students were not forced to pray and it was, therefore, completely voluntary. Unsatisfied with this decision, the parents appealed the case all the way up to SCOTUS.

SCOTUS decided that a school-sponsored time of prayer went against the First Amendment. As one [case summary](#) put it:

*"The U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights begins with: 'Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or*

*prohibiting the free exercise thereof...' These words in the First Amendment are known as the 'establishment clause' and the 'free exercise clause.' They created what Thomas Jefferson called 'a wall of separation between church and state' for the American people.*

This ruling was later supported by another SCOTUS case, [The School District of Abington Township Pennsylvania v. Schempp \(1963\)](#). The decision of this case effectively banned schools from partaking in Bible readings as schools are not allowed to sponsor any religious activities. Furthermore, in the case *Stone v. Graham (1980)*, SCOTUS ruled that it is unconstitutional for public schools to post the Ten Commandments in their classrooms. Thus, it is likely that the senate bills currently passing through Texas legislation will be reviewed by SCOTUS at some point in time.

## THE REV. ANGELA MARIA CORTIÑAS ORDAINED AND CONSECRATED AS SEVENTH BISHOP OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS

BY THE DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS

The following article has been taken from the [Episcopal Diocese of West Texas](#). The photo has been taken from the [Episcopal News Service](#). The photo contains (left) Bishop Sean Rowe, (middle) Cortiñas, and (right) Bishop David Read during the service.

The Rev. Angela Maria Cortiñas was ordained and consecrated Bishop Suffragan of the [Episcopal Diocese of West Texas](#) on Saturday, March 15 in St. John's Episcopal Church, McAllen, Texas. Bishop Cortiñas will work alongside the Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read, D.D., Bishop of West Texas.



The Most Reverend Sean W. Rowe, Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, was the chief consecrator. Co-consecrators were the Rt. Rev. C. Andrew Doyle Bishop, Diocese of Texas, the Rt. Rev. Mary Gray-Reeves, Managing Director at the College for Bishops of The Episcopal Church, the Rt. Rev. Hector Monterroso, Bishop Assistant, Diocese of Texas, the Rt. Rev. Brian N. Prior, Assisting Bishop, Diocese of Alabama, and the Rt. Rev. Kathryn M. Ryan, Bishop Suffragan, Diocese of Texas.

A total of 15 bishops were in attendance for the traditional laying-on of hands.

Over 450 in-person attendees participated in the joyful service, with more than 1,300 people joining the livestream concurrently from across the diocese and the country. This was the first consecration of an Episcopal bishop to be held in the Texas Rio Grande Valley. The service incorporated Spanish throughout.

In his sermon, Bishop Read reflected on living and serving in challenging times stating, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit is what our nation needs. We have this gift of life from God. We know and have experienced how amazing is the gift of

grace. We know and have experienced the power of being forgiven, and the power of forgiving others. We know and have experienced the support of blessed, beloved community. We have all that we need, and today, the Holy Spirit gives to Angela all that she will need to do the ministry she has been called to do in this time.”

Cortiñas was elected bishop suffragan for the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas during a special Council at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Corpus Christi on October 19, 2024. She is the seventh bishop suffragan in West Texas. In her role, she will celebrate the sacraments of the new covenant and confirm, receive and reaffirm individuals within the 87 congregations throughout the diocese. Additionally, she will assist Bishop Read in the pastoral care of clergy, clergy families, and retired clergy and their families and the development and on-boarding of new clergy, curates and seminarians. She will oversee the development of lay ministry, Christian formation, and discipleship.

Giving thanks, Bishop Cortiñas shared, “My heart is full of gratitude and love at seeing all the wonderful people who have gathered both near and far to be here for this special day. I am grateful for the God who has called me and the people who have so persuaded me to

take on this new ministry. I am particularly grateful for all the people who have formed me as a priest and now as a bishop of God's church. I am looking forward to sharing this ministry with Bishop Read and the clergy of the Diocese of West Texas. I have felt the love and the hand of God throughout this entire process and am excited to share God's redeeming and reconciling love with all of God's people here in West Texas and beyond.”

Born to Cuban immigrants, Bishop Cortiñas is a native Floridian who grew up in Miami in a large family of eight children.

She was ordained as a deacon in the Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida in 2009 and into priesthood in 2010. From 2010-2012, she was Associate Priest at All Saints Episcopal Church, Fort Lauderdale, FL, and then served as Associate Rector at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, Boca Raton, FL from 2012-2017. She served in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas as Rector at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, College Station from 2017-2021 and as Associate Rector at St. David's Episcopal Church in Austin from 2021 through December 2024.

Bishop Cortiñas has a 23-year-old daughter, Victoria Fletcher.

## PRESSURE BUILDS ON WHEATON COLLEGE PRESIDENT PHIL RYKEN TO RESIGN AS WHISTLEBLOWER CALLS FOR RYKEN'S REMOVAL

MARCH 24, 2025

The following article has been taken from the [Anglican Watch](#).

[Phil Snyder](#), a whistleblower and former member of [Tenth Presbyterian \(PCA\) church](#) in Philadelphia, Pa., who achieved widespread recognition after the church tried to silence him via fabricated civil claims that Snyder was threatening members of the congregation, has issued a statement calling on Wheaton College president Phil Ryken to resign. Ryken previously served as Senior Minister of Tenth Presbyterian.

In an email sent earlier today to almost 800 Wheaton College alumni, faculty, and staff, Snyder said:

*When Phil Ryken was senior minister of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, he covered-up the naked beatings of male college students by the music minister, Paul Jones. In addition, crimes against minors were committed by pastor Carroll Wynne. Furthermore, it appears that Phil Ryken's wayward ways have continued at Wheaton College, as with Christopher Lapeyre, for example. Finally, I know that some of you are victims as well; it is time to rise up and make your voices heard. We are demanding that Phil Ryken immediately resign or be fired.*

*Here is the GRACE investigation/report, which documents the crimes of Paul Jones and Carroll Wynne. Phil Ryken is the former leader or "FL" who knew what Paul Jones had done and also the pastor who went to his residence. [\[Click here\]](#)*

*Sincerely,*

*Phil Snyder, Whistleblower*

*P.S. For more information, please see my blog. [\[Click here\]](#)*



This is a picture of the Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. The photo is from the [Current Pub](#).

## **Problems at Tenth transcend Phil Ryken**

Unfortunately, issues at Tenth Presbyterian transcend Ryken's departure, and continue to this day.

In addition to the perjurious/criminal efforts by the church to silence Snyder in a civil court, a recent investigation by anti-abuse group GRACE identified multiple incidents of sexual, spiritual, and relational abuse at the church.

And while the resulting GRACE report did not identify most of the alleged perpetrators, a clear pattern emerged of a feckless, dishonest church Session and elders, who collaborated to shield Ryken's successor, Liam Goligher, and other abusers from accountability.

While Goligher eventually pleaded guilty in church disciplinary proceedings to adult sexual abuse and other offenses, he has faced no criminal charges or accountability in the civil courts.

Additionally, many of the elders who supported Goligher's corruption remain in authority at Tenth, including George McFarland, who offered perjurious testimony against Snyder in court.

Tellingly, Session also has consistently opposed even rudimentary safeguards against abuse, including running background checks on key church personnel.

It was, however, a background check, conducted by Anglican Watch, that

brought to light Goligher's criminal conviction for sexual abuse of an adult female church member.

To date, Tenth Presbyterian has done nothing to address its moral failings and criminal conduct, including its perjury towards Snyder. Instead, the church opted for a lame "confession," offered at a recent meeting, in which so-called leaders blamed most of the church's failings on Goligher.

In other words, the church has opted for impression management, versus

Meanwhile, the church has set up a task force to help restore Goligher, while ignoring the needs of its many victims. Further, Tenth and its leadership remain unrepentant over their sinful treatment of Snyder.

### **What's next**

While Anglican Watch has not investigated all of the claims in Snyder's call for Ryken's resignation, we believe the evidence is convincing that Ryken knew of abuse at Tenth.

Moreover, as we have previously stated, Ryken's not off the hook if he didn't know about the allegations. As senior minister. Ryken had an obligation to know what was going on in the church and to protect those he purported to serve.

We therefore are deeply troubled that Ryken is now in a leadership position at Wheaton College, where he is

responsible for the welfare of impressionable, college-aged adults.

And if his skills were not adequate to address abuse at Tenth, how on earth can Ryken safeguard a much larger group of college students? And why is nothing yet being done to care for victims of abuse at Tenth?

Thus, Anglican Watch endorses calls for Ryken's immediate resignation or removal from office. We intend to take further steps to support Snyder and other whistleblowers at Tenth.

Furthermore, we reiterate our call for Tenth to repent of its criminal conduct towards Snyder. This must include:

*This photo is of Philip G. Ryken, Eighth President of Wheaton College. It was taken from [Wheaton College Website](#).*



1. The resignation of corrupt George McFarland and the other elders.
2. A public, written apology to Snyder.
3. Financial restitution to Snyder.

**To be clear:** We recognize that admitting to criminal conduct is not an easy thing, and may expose Tenth and its leadership to penalties, up to and including possible imprisonment. But it is not possible for Tenth to truthfully claim to be Christian if it cannot own up to its past transgressions, especially during this penitential season of Lent.

In closing, let's just say Tenth is in pretty sorry shape when us Episcopalians have to call folks there to repent.

### **QUIZ QUESTION 5:**

**When was the first woman ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Church in the U.S.?**

- A. 1876
- B. 1944**
- C. 1974
- D. 1976

## CHRISTOPHER LACOVARA HIRED AS EPISCOPAL CHURCH'S CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

BY DAVID PAULSEN | MARCH 18, 2025

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*The following article has been taken from the [Episcopal News Service](#).*

The Episcopal Church has named Christopher Lacovara as its new chief financial officer, replacing Kurt Barnes, who is [retiring from the top churchwide leadership position after 21 years](#).

Lacovara, a longtime Episcopalian with decades of financial management experience, was nominated by Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe and House of Deputies President Julia Ayala Harris, and Executive Council [appointed him in a voice vote March 17 during an online meeting](#). The vote in open session followed a discussion in closed session that lasted about a half hour.

"I am pleased to welcome Chris as our next CFO," Rowe said in a church news release after the vote. "He is a committed Episcopalian with a clear understanding of the financial issues facing our congregations and dioceses and brings significant expertise from his work in finance, law and the nonprofit sector. I look forward to working with him as we position The Episcopal Church for the coming decades of mission and ministry."

Lacovara has previous experience practicing law in the nonprofit sector and served most recently as chief financial officer, general counsel and

director of real estate development for [the New York nonprofit Community Access](#). He also spent two decades on Wall Street as an investment banker.

His academic credentials include bachelor's degrees from Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York; a master's degree from the Columbia University School of Engineering and Applied Science; and a Juris Doctor degree from the Columbia University Law School in New York.

Under the Episcopal Church's Canons, the presiding bishop and House of Deputies president, as chair and vice-chair of Executive Council, respectively, make a joint nomination for the position of chief financial officer, and then the Executive Council votes to appoint. Once hired, the chief financial officer reports to the presiding bishop.

One of the top responsibilities of the chief financial officer is the ongoing management of the churchwide budget, with support from the Finance Office staff and in consultation with the presiding bishop, other executive church leaders and Executive Council, which is the church's governing and oversight body between the triennial meetings of

General Convention. As chief financial officer, Lacovara will advise General Convention and Executive Council in adopting and revising the churchwide budgets and then will work to match actual revenues and expenses as closely as possible to the budgeted amounts.

The chief financial officer's 2024 salary was \$296,317, according to the church's [annual summary of officer pay](#). The job was advertised with a salary range of \$190,000 to \$225,000, though Lacovara's starting salary has yet to be finalized.

The search process for the position was facilitated for the church by the human resources and executive search firm [Pappas & Pappas](#). Through a range of recruitment strategies, the firm identified 121 potential candidates, including 30 that it described as "diversity candidates" based on LGBTQ+, race or veteran status, according to a written summary shared with Executive Council.

It screened 40 individuals from the potential candidate pool and eventually presented six "high-potential candidates" to churchwide leaders for consideration. Five from that group met the church's diversity objective.

"Chris Lacovara's depth of experience and his commitment to The Episcopal Church make him the right person to lead our financial strategy at this pivotal time," Ayala Harris said in the church news release. "His appointment reflects a careful and collaborative search process, and I am confident that his leadership will help ensure the church's resources are stewarded wisely in service of our mission."

Lacovara is a member of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Bedford, New York. He and his husband, Sam Green, live in Westchester County, New York, with their children.

### **QUIZ QUESTION 6:**

**The Book of Common Prayer contains the historical statements of the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. What are these called?**

- A.** The Westminster Confession
- B.** The Faith of Our Fathers
- C.** The Doctrine and Covenants
- D.** The Thirty-Nine Articles

## GHANAIAN DIOCESE LAUNCHES SEWING MINISTRY

BY MARK MICHAEL | MARCH 13, 2025

The following article and picture have been taken from the [Living Church](#). The article discusses a sewing ministry project, which is being done by the Anglican Diocese of Tema in Ghana. The picture contains Bp. George Kotei Neequaye and the members of the new diocesan sewing ministry



The professional seamstresses and tailors will share their skills to craft “altar linens, cottas, cassocks, and other church paraphernalia for churches within the Tema Diocese.”

A sewing ministry focused on producing liturgical vestments is a new ministry of the Anglican Diocese of Tema in Ghana. The Rt. Rev. George Kotei Neequaye and his wife, Esther Neequaye, the diocese’s “mother superior,” commissioned the ministry’s headquarters in Community 22, a district of Tema, on February 22.

The goal of the project, which is organized under the auspices of the diocesan Women’s Ministry, is “to assist less endowed churches to have standardized and well-designed vestments in all the liturgical colors across the diocese, and secondly, to train and create employment opportunities for the youth within the church,” the diocese [announced](#).

Dr. Mary Akweley Cobblah has promoted the project, and the costs are being underwritten by anonymous donors.

Neequaye “applauded the promoters and sponsors for such a laudable initiative. He urged other professional groups within the diocese to come together and to champion other similar initiatives towards the growth of the Anglican church and creation of employment opportunities for the youth,” the diocese said.

The Diocese of Tema, the newest in the Anglican Church in the Province of West Africa, was [launched](#) in December 2023 under Neequaye’s leadership. Tema is Ghana’s largest seaport and its 11th-largest city.

## **HOLOCAUST SHOULD NOT BE REDUCED TO GENERALISATIONS ABOUT INTOLERANCE AND RACISM, SAYS LORD WILLIAMS**

BY MADELEINE DAVIES | MARCH 28, 2025

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*The following article has been taken from the [Church Times](#). In the article, former Archbishop of Canterbury was delivering a lecture in memory of Rabbi Lord Sacks. This news source is from the UK, so some words are spelled differently.*

The [Holocaust](#) and the attempt to destroy [Jewish](#) witness represent a “revolt against something of unique spiritual importance”, and should not be reduced to generalities about intolerance and racism, the former Archbishop of Canterbury [Lord Williams](#) told a gathering at King’s College, London, this month.

Delivering the second annual lecture in memory of Rabbi Lord Sacks, Lord Williams acknowledged concerns that “the current culture of Holocaust education and the developing culture around Holocaust Memorial Day are at risk of being swallowed up by a set of generalisations about the evils of general intolerance, racism, and exclusivism.”

He recalled how a group of sixth-formers who had joined a visit to Auschwitz had spoken in generalities about their experience: “Hardly any had much sense of how the Shoah relates to the entire history of Jewish identity in Europe. It had become an instance of something: intolerance and prejudice. Shocking and terrible of course, but detached from everything that makes the persecution of Jews a distinctive thing.”

Such a response reflected a lack of awareness of the distinctive contribution that Judaism had made to the moral imagination of society, he suggested.

“Jewish particularism is a sign of human action and interaction pervaded by a sense of conscious awe, by the expectation of finding significant life in every moment. It is a sign of what shared human life might look like in a world where transaction did not have the last word. . .

“This means that the mass slaughter of Jews is historically something distinct from genocide in a general sense or the killing of other minorities — which is most definitely not to say that other mass slaughters are somehow less serious or less in need of understanding against the specifics of their background, quite the contrary. . . The paradoxical twist in affirming Jewish particularity is precisely that it affirms the absolute commitment of God to every life in its unique location and ecosystem, and indeed every material element of the creation.”

He warned: “The particular attempt to destroy Jewish witness is a kind of revolt against something of unique spiritual importance, a revolt against the possibility of something more than contract in our dealings with one another.”

Lord Williams took as his title “Covenant, Solidarity, and Building Together: From cohesion to community”. Reflecting on frameworks for statecraft, he began with

transactionalism as an approach based on contract: agreeing to “watch one another’s backs . . . We don’t do much to allow diverse accounts of the good to interact and modify or challenge each other and we have low expectations of anything new emerging.”

Cohesion, meanwhile, meant “agreeing certain values as representing what we all want to protect in a situation of shared jeopardy”. But covenant was, in Rabbi Sacks’s words, “transformative”: a framework “in which, because it takes for granted that each life, each situation entails the divine demand for attention and expectancy, human agents are enabled to discover in relation with their neighbour possibilities for action and understanding that they could not have imagined alone”.

Much of his lecture was devoted to exploring the gift of Jewish particularism, and the need for Jewish identity to be “affirmed and defended in its distinctiveness, not reduced to an abstract universalism”.

He observed: “The notions of covenanted chosenness that define Jewish identity are not a way of implicitly affirming that Jewish human life is intrinsically more worth while than any other kind of human life. . . The point is that the ritualised, normalised attentiveness of compliance with the commandment is a dramatic sign of the immeasurable significance that lies under the surface of any and all phenomena in the world; so, any and all human life. It’s a sign . . . that the world is worth committing to. . .

And the presence of such a sign, in the covenanted community, such a visible society within yet not contained by the family of nations, is not a luxury for the human future.”

In Christian history there had been a failure to understand such covenantal living, he suggested, which had produced a “simplistic contrast between gospel and law.

Christianity was to recover in various ways something of the Jewish vision of acting in awareness and expectation in all things. Some aspects of monastic practice, for example, bring this back into focus, but there is a constant slippage away from any serious attempt to make theological sense of the continuity of God’s covenant with the Jewish people as an unbroken vocation.”

He warned of the resurgence of anti-Semitic rhetoric and activity since the “butchery of October 7th and all that has followed”. The plight of the hostages was “a bitterly vivid symbol of the way that so many lives, Jewish and non-Jewish, are held hostage by a climate of terror, in which the passionate determination to destroy the visible witness of Jewish commitment is a recurrent motif, generating, in turn, not only the self-defence that any society would put in place, but, in some extreme quarters, a counter-rhetoric of absolute destruction”.

Recent debate had been “disfigured” by “toxic sloganeering”, he warned, and had awakened “a never very deeply sleeping set of anti-Jewish tropes about collective blood guilt”.

## KENYAN ARCHBISHOP BANS SPEECHES BY POLITICIANS

BY DOUGLAS LEBLANC | MARCH 19, 2025

*The following article and picture have been taken from the [Living Church](#). The article explains the changing relationship between church and state in Kenya, as well as the push for further separation by some activists. The picture is of Archbishop Jackson Ole Sapit.*

[Continued from the front page] while speaking at Nairobi's [St. Stephen's Cathedral, Jogoo Road](#).

He made his remarks during the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Jonathan Kabiru as Bishop of Nairobi. Kenya's former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua; the leader of the opposition Wiper Party, Kalonzo Musyoka; and Nairobi's Governor, Johnson Sakaja, were all in attendance at the service, and were [reportedly](#) expecting to speak to the large congregation.

The archbishop said he will allow clergy to recognize visiting politicians during the service and that politicians are welcome to stand and wave. "If they so wish to address the congregation, it will be done outside the sanctuary," he said.

He also said that the days of politicians making donations amid fanfare are over. "We have already declared and we want to declare today that giving in the Anglican Church will not be announced," he said. "Just give as God directs you to give. What we give to God, we don't

have to tell human beings what we have given him."

The Anglican Church of Kenya and the national government have been under scrutiny by layman [Mwabili Mwagodi](#), who has become outspoken about corruption, and has helped stage protests against appearances by politicians at church services.

A protest organized by Mwagodi last June forced Kenyan President William Ruto to curtail his remarks at the consecration service for Bishop of Nyahuru Samson Mburu Gachathi.

"Media reports of politicians living flashy lifestyles and dishing out unexplained millions in fundraisers at churches each Sunday troubled me," he said in a report by Jesse Masai for TLC. "Every Sunday, politicians were on an altar somewhere,



peddling lies while making hefty donations.”

The change is especially noteworthy because some African Christians, like the Anglican missionaries who served in Africa, are more relaxed about direct and visible interaction between church and state.

Ole Sapit has made drawing a clearer line a priority throughout his nine-year tenure leading the Kenyan Church. In September 2021, during the leadup to Kenya's last presidential election, he [banned](#) politicians from church

pulpits and said that amounts of donations given to churches by political leaders would no longer be publicly announced. Kenya's Roman Catholic bishops have made similar moves.

Some have credited the shift with playing a role in the relatively peaceful election in August 2022. Kenya's political system draws heavily on historic rivalries between the country's main ethnic groups, and several campaigns in recent memory have been marred by mob violence.

### **QUIZ QUESTION 7:**

**The historic King's Chapel in Boston, Massachusetts developed a revised version of the Book of Common prayer that eliminates trinitarian references. With which denomination is King's Chapel associated?**

- A. Methodist
- B. Presbyterian
- C. Unitarian
- D. Christadelphian

## **QUIZ ANSWERS**

The following questions came from [Fun Trivia](#) Episcopal church quiz.

**Question 1:** Who is considered the founder of the Anglican Church from which the Episcopal church evolved?

**Answer: C.** King Henry VIII

King Henry VIII decided to break away from the Catholic church and create his own church (the Church of England) when the Pope refused to grant him another divorce.

**Question 2:** The Episcopal Church is in communion with what other church?

**Answer: B.** The Church of England

The Episcopal Church is sort of the "American version" of what is called the Anglican Church or Church of England.

**Question 3:** Who is the Anglican equivalent of the Catholic church's Pope?

**Answer: D.** The Archbishop of Canterbury

The Archbishop is not nearly as powerful as the Pope. He is a spiritual leader but he does not dictate the rules of the church. Episcopalians, however, do not consider him their leader - they have their own presiding bishop.

**Question 4:** The word "episcopal" means what?

**Answer: A.** Governed by bishop

The Episcopal church is organized into dioceses and each diocese is headed by a bishop.

The information from the next question comes from the [Episcopal Church](#) and the [Episcopal News Service](#).

**Question 5:** When was the first woman ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Church in the U.S.?

**Answer: C.** 1974

On July 29, 1974, eleven women, now known as the Philadelphia Eleven, were ordained at the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia. The Episcopal Church did not authorize women being ordained at the time, so this was highly criticized. It was not until 1976 that the House of Bishops accepted their ordination.

Florence Li Tim-Oi was the first woman ordained in the Anglican Church in 1944. During World War II, Tim-Oi was ordained to be in charge of the Anglican Congregation of Macao (where many Chinese refugees were staying). Due to the controversy over her ordination, Tim-Oi halted her priesthood after the conclusion of the war. Tim-Oi continued to work for the church, but she decided she would wait to act as a priest until women were more widely accepted as priests by the Anglican Community. In 1971, Tim-Oi's ordination was recognized by the Anglican Consultative Council and she resumed her ministry as a priest.

*The following questions came from [Fun Trivia](#) Book of Common Prayers Quiz.*

**Question 6:** The Book of Common Prayer contains the historical statements of the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. What are these called?

**Answer: D.** The Thirty-nine Articles

"The Westminster Confession of Faith", which was drawn up in 1646, is a subordinate standard of doctrine in the Church of Scotland and has also influenced Presbyterian churches. "The Doctrine and Covenants" is a book belonging to the Latter-Day Saints movement (Mormonism).

The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican church were formulated in the decades following Henry VIII's break with the Catholic Church and were finalized in 1571. These doctrines are now often included as an appendix in a historical documents sections of the Book of Common Prayer.

**Question 7:** The historic King's Chapel in Boston, Massachusetts developed a revised version of the Book of Common prayer that eliminates trinitarian references. With which denomination is King's Chapel associated?

**Answer: C.** Unitarian

King's Chapel was the first Anglican church in New England and was founded in 1686. In 1785, under the leadership of James Freeman, it became Unitarian, and he revised the Book of Common Prayer to eliminate references to the Trinity and otherwise comply with Unitarian doctrines. The church still uses "The Book of Common Prayer According to the Use in King's Chapel."

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**MISSION**

Reaching out in Christ's love to our community and all God's creation  
through faith, worship, and service.