

The Invite



The Newsletter of the Young Adult Festival at General Convention

Issue #7

Contributors

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- Carol Taylor, Diocese of East Carolina
- Bethania García, Diocesis De República Dominicana.
- Rachel Swan, Diocese of Minnesota
- Katrina Harding, Diocese of Olympia
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Reflections on the Eucharist

Tyler Pruessner, Diocese of West Texas

As I was raised in the Church of Christ, liturgy was a new experience for me when I became a member of the Episcopal Church. I first discovered the Episcopal traditions while attending an on-campus ministry at Texas State University. It was refreshing from the start to partake in Christian rituals that have existed for centuries.

Until I became an active member of the Episcopal Church, last January, I did not understand how peo-

ple could be captivated by liturgy. I grew up in a non-liturgical tradition and though we had some rituals in our church, they were not a large portion of our religious practice. There is something extremely powerful to think about all the other members of the Anglican Church across the nation and the globe saying the Lord's Prayer with me at the same time as I say it in my congregation. I believe that a stronger sense of community has a greater presence when a congregation participates and expresses its common beliefs through liturgy.

Some might say that the repetition of liturgy causes some of the meaning and context to be lost over time, causing it to become mundane. I admit that I used to think this. Knowing, however, that I am a part of a bigger picture, and that I am sharing these prayers with other Christians that I may never meet, is powerful.

Experiencing the Eucharist at Convention has driven this home for me. Seeing so many people, from all over this country and from around the world, has truly made me realized the universal nature

of the Christian faith. Being a part of universally shared worship has helped me to feel that I am in the right place, doing the right thing. It has intensified my faith, and has made me think of my home congregation in a new light.

The Eucharist has not only connected those of us sharing in this ritual, but it compels us to share the love and experiences with all those we encounter. By caring for all of God's people both inside and outside the church, through liturgy and worship, we can truly see ourselves become the

body of Christ.

Today's Calendar

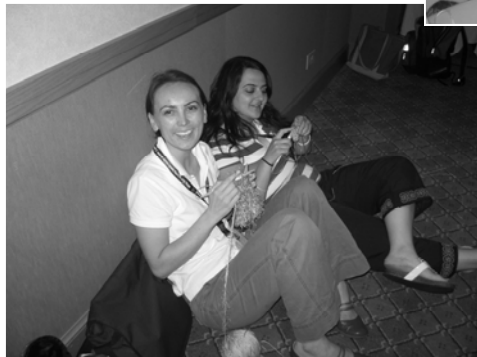
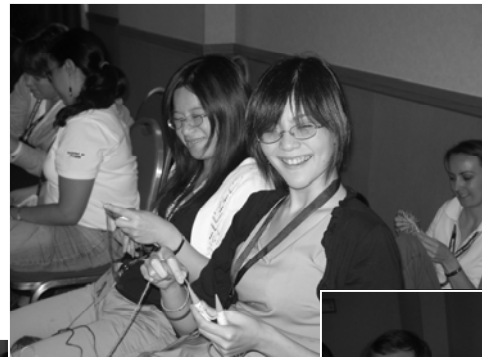
9:00 AM: Eucharist
Convention Center

12 PM: Presiding Bishop Election Begins
Room 34, The Columbus

3:30 PM: YAF Ice Cream Social and Wrap Up
Lounge

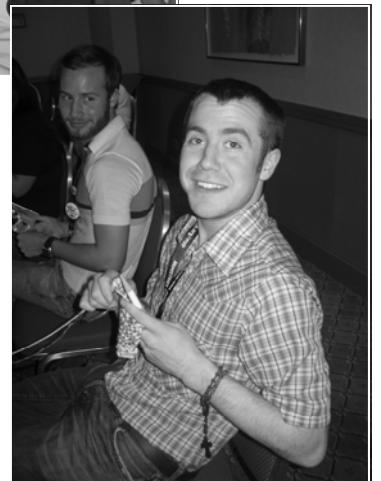
9 PM: Legislative Briefing
Lounge

10 PM: Compline
Trinity Church



Young adult participating in the Spiritual Knitting session led by Carol Taylor

Photos by Carol Taylor



Emonciones Ocultas

Bethania García, Diocesis De República Dominicana.

Muchas veces tenemos muchas emociones que no la dejamos ver. Solo en el momento en el que entregamos nuestro corazón y mente al Señor podemos ver que están allí. Cuando destapamos y nos quitamos la coraza de encima podemos tener un encuentro inimaginable con nuestro Señor Jesucristo.

Ayer tuvimos muchas esta experiencia pues en el Taller de Orando con la música, pudimos que cada uno tiene una canción que le ha marcado su vida y ve que Dios siempre nos acompaña. Deseo expresar mi canción más preciada de alabar a Dios, ye es:

*Tu fidelidad es grande
Tu fidelidad incomparable es
Nadie como tu
Bendito Dios
Grande es tu fidelidad.*

Dios siempre será fiel mientras confiemos y estemos seguros de que él nos guía, ahora cuida y cumple sus promesas.

Recordemolo siempre.

Choices, Choices, Choices

Rachel Swan, Diocese of Minnesota

The time for the Young Adult Festival is drawing nigh and I can already feel myself beginning to miss it, and all of you. Being a part of the design team has been a privilege and an honor. For over a year, we have gathered, prayed and discussed what this time might look like, who might come, and what kind of an impact the festival might make upon the larger Episcopal community.

In yesterday's newsletter, there was an article by Sarah Jane Black of the Diocese of Massachusetts that caught my attention. It was about scheduling programming for the festival at the same time as the daily convention Eucharist. Sarah Jane makes a wonderfully valid point that part of the purpose of the festival is to, as she says "help young adults find (their) place in the Episcopal Church at a time in (their) lives when

that may be unclear. There is also a need for Young Adults, the future of our church, to be visible at General Convention." What Sarah Jane is saying is absolutely true. But, the purpose of the YAF is so much more than that.

When the Design Team first gathered, we spent a good deal of our time just visioning. We threw out words and ideas, mapped them out, and came up with the theme *Invitation*. We wanted to create a place where young adults felt invited to learn about who they are and who they could become. We wanted each participant to know that they are not only invited, but valued in the life of the church.

But as many of you know, there is no way to build a program that fits everyone's preference all of the time. So, for this festival, it was decided that there would be a plethora of choices. If you wanted to do nothing but attend

legislative hearings and other General Convention activities, great. If you wanted to do all festival and nothing at GC, that was fine too. We hoped that most people would opt for a balance or mix of the two. From what I have been able to see, this has been the norm. There are no less than 8 things per day that you could do with the YAF: Breakfast, Lunch, a morning program, an afternoon program, two times for spiritual practices, the nightly briefing, and Compline. We knew, that no one would attend all these things. We also knew that some of the YAF sessions would overlap what might be happening at convention. Unfortunately, or fortunately, there are choices, a lot of them, to make when coming to an event such as this. The point is the last thing we meant to do was exclude anyone from anything. Just the opposite is true. We tried to offer as many choices, in as many time slots, in a variety of learning styles, to offer as much to each of you, because you *are* the future of the church.

The Exhaustion of Compassion

Katrina Harding, Diocese of Olympia

I'm mostly through my time here in Columbus and the only feeling I have is exhaustion. I am physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally exhausted. The lack of sleep and surplus of walking I expected. The abundance of prayer and services is something I've experienced before, though never quite on this scale (if I attend nine Eucharists in one week, does that last until August?). It's the emotional exhaustion that surprised me.

It started Monday with my own fears about my competence as a delegate, which I still wrestle with today. It escalated on Tuesday when I attended the U2Charist and for the first time really learned what the Millennium Development Goals are, the incredible suffering they are working against, and the amazing level of achievability inherent in them. On Wednesday God blessed us with gorgeous weather, and I took the opportunity to walk through the Eyes Wide Open project laid out on the capital lawn. It being such a nice day out, I took my sandals off and walked barefoot through the grass, looking at the thousands of shoes laid out to represent the American and Iraqi lives lost in the war. I stopped in the middle of my walking to set my things down and fix my skirt, and when I leaned down to pick up my sandals I nearly collapsed. Seeing my own two shoes there on the grass amid the soldiers' boots and the tiny shoes of the Iraqi children was almost too much for me to handle.

Thursday I took a break from the House of Deputies to look in on the House of Bishops and watched a rough cut of *Traces of the Trade*, a documentary of one woman's journey along the path of her slave trading ancestors. It was a great film and I look forward to seeing the final cut, but it stirred up the feelings of guilt that so often accompany talk about slavery in America. Being at convention is difficult. It reminds me of my faith and the need to help others while showing me just how many others there are to help. Sometimes I feel like there is so much that we could change in the world if we only got enough people to join in. Sometimes I feel so small that my dollar donations and one vote on the floor will never be enough. What can I do? How much is too much and what is not enough? My backpack is covered in buttons. My folders are covered in stickers. I have t-shirts, bracelets, water bottles and tattoos. Being here has stirred in me a desire to be apart of things larger than myself. I want to be active in my world. But where do I start?

I wish I could end this article with some answers, but I think I'll be lucky if I have any when I leave on Monday. For now I'll just keep listening to the voices around me and following what I feel a passion for. I will keep picking up buttons and stickers and making dollar donations when I can. And until I find the answers to settle my soul, I guess I'll have to rely on Toby the Therapy Dog to cheer me up here in Ohio.



Vocare participants at their booth

**Please Join Us
For The Young
Adult Festival
Wrap-up,
Evaluation
& Ice Cream
Social
3:30 PM, in the
Lounge**

All submissions welcome from Young Adult Festival participants

yafnewsletter@gmail.com