



broadcast

from the Office for Young Adult & Campus Ministries
at the Episcopal Church Center

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A blessed Pentecost & plenty of Ordinary Time!

As we consider the gifts brought by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, the tongues given, the healings, the prophesying that took place, we might ask, how do we empower our own generation of thinkers, doers and dreamers? How do we provide for young adults the possibility and the desire to be prophets for a world they themselves are creating? The prophetic voice of young adulthood: what does it sound like and how do we minister to it, support it and make it heard? Young adult ministers & campus chaplains across the church are engaging the arts as one means of empowering young adults for spiritual and theological exploration and formation. Music, performance, liturgy and visual arts provide an avenue for free thinking, social change and engaging the Holy Spirit without the encumbrances of words and fully formed ideas. Perhaps with this approach the arts can provide a space for play where the Spirit is freed to move. How can YOU engage the arts in your ministry and provide a safe space for the creativity of those you minister to? We'd love to hear your ideas.

Also, (speaking of the Spirit moving in unpredictable and exciting ways), General Convention is right around the corner and registration for the Young Adult Festival at General Convention 2009 has been extended to this Friday, June 5. There are still a few spots open, so sign up today!

Paz y fuego,
Douglas, Jason & Miguelina

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Finding God in the MiX

by John Perea

What does it take to get more college students involved in Sunday worship? At the University of Southern California, a group of students (sponsored by the Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian campus ministries) have come together to form MiX:USC (MiX stands for "Music in Christ"), which provides a unique fusion of top 40 hits and the gospel. MiX is an effort to create a weekly service tailored to the needs of senior high school and college students who may feel disconnected from traditional forms of worship or are not available on Sunday mornings. In fact, MiX:USC which has been at 2:00

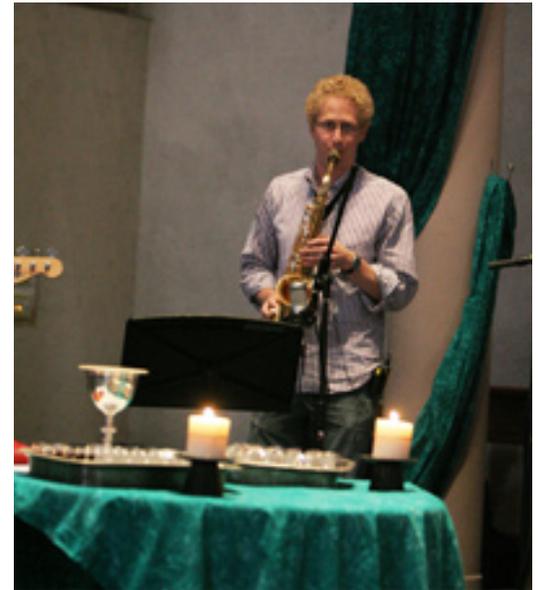
p.m. on Sunday is moving to 5:30 p.m. because students seem to want to worship later in the day. This year, the MiX band, lead by USC singer/songwriter Ryan McDermott, performed selections from contemporary rock, hip-hop, and gospel music. They creatively combined high-energy songs and engaging video clips to form a student-driven interpretation of the gospel message. In addition to the weekly services, MiX:USC is also a community service program which focuses on spiritual development. Students are invited to grow through active involvement in living out the message of Jesus: feeding the hungry, serving the poor, and helping others in need.

One of the major qualities of MiX is that it is almost entirely student-run. There is a great deal of diversity within the staff, which includes people from all different spiritual and cultural backgrounds—including several who would not consider themselves religious. This blend of perspectives reflects the overarching theme behind the program, the philosophy of 'One Church,' or open, all-inclusive spirituality that focuses less on the specific dogma and divisive politics of particular denominations and more on the spiritual experiences and growth of



its members. MiX:USC is organized into five divisions within which several students work together (under the helpful direction and guidance of Fr. Glenn M. Libby, the Episcopal Chaplain). Tyler Randall, a rising junior at USC, is the director of personnel and operations. He is also responsible for organizing video production for the services and often acts as the 'go to' person for details on current projects and staff assignments. Laura Wingert was in charge of hospitality and preparing the weekly meals. Sam Brawner '08, and John Perea, a sophomore, are the marketing and technical directors for the project. Ryan McDermott is the music director and was largely responsible for proposing which songs the band would perform and contracting the musicians. Rachel Bearer, the spiritual director, worked on creating the overall tone and message of the worship experience and regularly served as minister of the day. Also serving as a minister of the day was our hip-hop director, Matthew Trotter. The interaction among the directors was deep and intense as they coordinated their efforts to give birth to one idea of offering an engaging and authentic worship experience for emerging generations of Christians.

This summer, the team will participate in the Young Adult Festival at the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Anaheim, CA, where on July 13th the program leaders will offer a workshop on the MiX:USC style of worship, and MiX:USC will offer the evening Eucharist.



Prayerful Movement

by Lori Freeman

The Convention is coming! And there is no doubt that the Young Adult Festival will be the hottest ticket in town. I am so excited to be a part of the powerful spiritual energy of these events and to have the opportunity to offer a workshop during the Festival, expressing this energy in Body Prayer. I believe that each bodily expression is a valuable gift to God, ourselves, our Church and beyond.

Dance has been a part of my life since age three when I started pre-ballet. It eventually grew into a more serious commitment in classical ballet, jazz, lyrical, tap and any other form of dance I could try. One beautiful form of movement spoke to me with its reverence and joy... Liturgical Dance. While in high school, I had many interesting opportunities to do Sacred Dance in my hometown of Scranton PA. The seed was planted and I would return to Liturgical Dance in time.

After college, I was ready to move to NYC and test my training and to pursue a professional career in musical theater. My amazing dance teacher recommended that I do Pilates to gain strength in order to keep injuries at bay while learning crazy choreography for auditions and professional level classes. I loved it! Pilates resonated with me in the body/ mind/ spirit connection. Another seed was planted for future growth.

God's grace and lots of hard work led me to perform on and off Broadway, in National Tours and on several television specials. It was a time of joyful expression and reverence to walk in the footsteps of other artists. I went on to teach and choreograph dance for all ages and levels of ability and continued to watch the growth and richness of expression: the miracles that come from dance.

After teaching for many years, I was re-introduced to Pilates and followed the "nudge" to continue work with body prayer in yet another form. In Pilates a person has to be completely present in the session, body and mind, to get the most benefit. It is truly rewarding to see



someone come to me with challenges or goals and to facilitate their confidence, both physically and spiritually.

Liturgical Dance continues to be a thread in my spiritual practice, both performing and choreographing. I hope to share my passion for the body/mind connection during the workshops I will present at General Convention during the Young Adult Festival. What never ceases to amaze me is the power of the spirit when a group or individual arrives at a single intent in movement or stillness. I look forward to sharing this connection with many young adults during the Young Adult festival and at the greater Convention.



Beyond Contemporary

by James Derkats & Kevin Schubert

How many years can we still call a particular style “contemporary,” without it changing much? The great gift that “contemporary” worship, and what is commonly known as praise music, gave us Generation X’ers and Y’ers is the realization that there are options out there. We have found praise music (worship music led by guitar and/or a band using flowing seventies melodies) to be very liberating when we first heard them in a camp setting. It was a style of music we could call our own, and when we participated in leading that style of music while in high school and into college, it gave us a sense of connection back to that camp community. It was our brand of music. Not our parents’ (or, not all of our parents’). It was a gift that the evangelical portion of the church, particularly the Cursillo community and leaders at our camp gave us to help search for an authentic expression. We could go on singing the praises of praise music, except we can’t go on for long with much integrity.

There came a point when we started paying close attention to what we were singing in those praise songs, and comparing the lyrics to what we were singing in our traditional hymns. It became clear that the rich metaphors and mystery found in the hymns drew us closer to a clearer understanding of the vastness of God, and a broader understanding of our

relationship with God. One drawback of “contemporary” music, from our perspective, is that the theology tends to be narrowly focused (Jesus suffered, I benefit) instead of the wide variety of understandings in the relationship between God and humanity found in the story of Scripture, not to mention our full year of seasons. Another drawback is that some of the music carries undertones of unconscious/repressed sexuality. Sexuality and spirituality may go hand in hand, and we stand with the tradition of Solomon, that the sexual and romantic metaphor can be an approach to understanding the desire of our hearts, i.e. to be in communion with God. But that theme should be explored honestly and openly. Some of the lines in praise songs hint at frustrations needing to be expressed in another venue.

So, if “contemporary Christian music” is not the only way to sing to God, what do we have to offer the church instead? We have been given the gift in “contemporary” music: the opening of a door to new expressions. We have the gift of our traditional hymns, and the more recent collections published in the church. Now, what do we do with those?

Some interesting explorations are taking place at churches doing a “Jazz Mass.” In these settings the musicians will take a hymn, set it to a jazz style, and produce a new and interesting sound. At each of our ordination to the priesthood liturgies, we used the traditional “Litany of Ordinations” chant, but supported the cantor with a djembe drum to make the chant more dynamic. There are several examples of taking traditional texts such as a psalm and setting it to pop music, such as Nirvana’s “Smells Like Teen Spirit.” Many churches have explored using different instrumentation on hymns like “Open your hearts of faithful people,” set to drum and mandolin. A favorite song by many from the praise movement is “We are one in the spirit.” Recent exploration with that song using only percussion to support a capella voices, gives it a renewed, moving feel.

So, what is beyond contemporary? Perhaps it is daring to think inside the box. We have a treasury of music within our tradition which, with a little work and creativity can become new again. One of the gifts of postmodernism is the opportunity to look at all that has come before, and consider it in our new context. We have the authority to be creative with our tradition. We in the Episcopal tradition tend to sing hymns that are community focused, theologically grounded in the Trinity, incarnational, and beautiful.

This year at the Young Adult Festival during General Convention, we will continue to test the waters, wading back into the treasury of liturgy and music passed down to us, and considering how we might experience it anew in our 21st century context. We have been given these gifts, let’s dust them off and remember how wonderful they are, instead of feigning boredom and wandering off for greener pastures.

Come to the Banquet!

by Lucas Grubbs



St. Michael's Cathedral is a vibrant and growing place of worship and ministry in the heart of downtown Boise, Idaho. For well over a year now I have overseen our young adult group, known affectionately around the cathedral as Ex-Nihilo. We started mainly as a fellowship group with dinners and outings, but as the young adult numbers grew, so did our desire to offer something meaningful and service oriented to the ministry life of the cathedral. Enter: Come to the Banquet! (yes, the exclamation point is on purpose). Come to the Banquet! is a ministry of food, hospitality and dignity to the rather substantial community of homeless, hungry and disadvantaged in the downtown Boise area. The idea is simple. Jesus did a lot of his ministry around the table, eating and drinking with friends, enemies, strangers and disciples. So, we are attempting to recreate and relive that spirit of service and companionship for those with the greatest need.



Once a month (the last Saturday), the young adults transform the cathedral parish hall into a veritable banquet hall. Tables are lovingly set with linens and real plates and glassware. Napkins and silverware are set as well as beautiful centerpieces, just like at any dinner party. And at noon, anyone who wants and who is in need comes to the banquet. In terms of the food, we also take that a step further. A three-course meal of healthy, hot and seriously delicious food is prepared. And once our guests arrive, they are seated and served by folks who are assigned to each table. The servers take care of any needs our guest have. Also, our servers (mostly our young adults, but anyone from the cathedral who wants to volunteer, as well) are required to eat with our guests. The idea is not to be a distantly benevolent charity group, but instead, to create meaningful community among and with those who enter the door. There is no fee for our guests, thanks to a grant we received from the Idaho Episcopal Foundation, and they are invited to come in, relax, eat, drink and converse.



At its foundation, Come to the Banquet! operates on two important principles: 1. Do NOT serve food to the hungry that you would not eat yourself. Furthermore, try going the extra mile by making and serving food that you would eat on a special occasion. Far too many of us take restaurants, grocery stores, farmers markets and the like for granted. Let's offer that level of quality and nutrition to those for whom those are usually out of reach. 2. Food eaten together is the locus of community, dignity and where we see Jesus Christ in each other. Hence, the service aspect of Come to the Banquet!. If we take restaurants for granted, we take being served for granted. Instead of setting up a chow line, let's give folks the chance to enjoy being served. Most of our guests live in a world where that is not only out of reach, but often an unimaginable luxury.



Our first banquet was a great success and as word spreads throughout the community, I have no doubt that Come to the Banquet! will flourish into a regular ministry in downtown Boise. All ministries, of whatever ilk, usually start small and are riddled with unending questions and plenty of unknowns. Come to the Banquet! is no exception. Thus far in our endeavor, Ex-Nihilo has undertaken Come to the Banquet! with this knowledge in mind. With each new corner we turn, we arrive at challenges: how to promote, how to organize volunteers, how to set up the space for such a feast, not to mention how to buy, prepare and serve such a great quantity of food. I believe that much of what we are doing can only be learned as we go and "on the job." But I would offer that the key to undertaking something like this is to first identify a ministerial or service based need: There are lots of hungry people in our community, so let's do something about it! Secondly, we have to gather a group of interested and committed people. This takes active recruitment by all means possible: e-mail, phone calls, Facebook and of course, personal interaction. And finally, once a game plan is in action the most important part for the success of a ministry is this: Empower your volunteers! Make it known that this is a job and a service that needs doing and that depends entirely upon them. Volunteers will often easily fall away if they sense they are not needed. But all of us know that if the ministry is worth doing, the volunteers are crucial! Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we need to undertake these endeavors with our eyes, minds and hearts pointed toward Jesus and with a great sense of humility for whatever failures or discouragements may arrive. It is the Lord who empowers us to do anything at all. And if it is meant to be, by the power of the Holy Spirit, it will!