

ANGLICAN EPISCOPAL HOUSE OF STUDIES

# Perspectives

DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL 2010-11

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ANGLICAN EPISCOPAL HOUSE OF STUDIES

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## Constant in Conflict

**I**t has become common recently—in the pulpit as in the press—to identify Anglicanism with conflict. If Spooner unintentionally lent his name to “spoonerisms” and Freud to certain kinds of “slips,” then I fear the Anglican family coining a new phrase of sarcasm: “As agreed as Anglicans.”

Painful as this association is, I have come to see this set of circumstances as opportune for the formation of future church leaders.



First, it shapes the expectations of those who respond to God’s call. Each year I am amazed at the prospective students who come through my office contemplating seminary and/or ordination within the Anglican-Episcopal world. Most are at a stage in life that some might term “naïve,” yet they are eager to sign up and serve. Not because they anticipate a bed of roses; rather, precisely because their illusions have been shed. They seek to be faithful to the gospel as they have encountered it, whatever the cost.

Others may be exploring confirmation as they are drawn to Anglicanism. To these students I ask, “What, at such a time as this?” I am sobered by the frequent reply: “Yes, in spite, even because, of such a time as this.” That the church *institution* bears within itself some of the cost of following Jesus—for conservatives and liberals alike clinging on in the Anglican Communion—adds, for some, to its authenticity.

Second, I have discovered how circumstances of conflict may be opportune for spiritual formation, the process by which our whole person—body, mind, and spirit—is shaped ever more fully into the image of God according to our calling, gifts, and graces.

Scripture suggests that the wilderness is the circumstance for God’s most thorough work of formation—for the new people of Israel in Exodus, for the re-formation of Israel in exile, and for Christ in preparation for his ministry.

Metaphorically, wilderness is the place where we are stripped of our props, reminded of God’s abundance, and taught dependence: not on the distant horizon, not on a supply of manna, not on our tribe—but on God’s promise of presence alone. Handled with care, conflict may bring us to that place of encounter and perspective. My ministry—my formation—is not, in the end, about “me.”

Third, conflict forces us to be honest if we are to be engaged. It teaches us unity especially in the absence of uniformity. [Duke Divinity School Professor] Stanley Hauerwas has described a marriage that claims to be without argument as “where one partner gave up long ago.” Is a church without conflict a church where a portion of the body has opted out? Continued engagement takes patience, perseverance, and generosity—far beyond that which we may think we have. We need help to grow such virtues: we need one another.

Conflict is nothing new in the Anglican tradition, even though we have much to learn in disciplining its devices and desires. Is it God’s means for handling our pride, for humbling us? As a peculiarly Anglican hallmark of holiness then I’d dare to propose: “As constant in conflict as Anglicans.”

**Jo Bailey Wells**, *associate professor of the practice of Christian Ministry and Bible at Duke Divinity School and priest of the Church of England, is the director of the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies.*

NEVER LIE BY DAVID CRABTREE

“Never lie.”

Two simple words, yet so complicated and profound. They were solemnly spoken by Dr. Stanley Hauerwas near the end of a compelling 90-minute public conversation sponsored by the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies last October.

Dr. Jo Bailey Wells [director of AEHS] explained the objectives when she invited me to lead the conversation on “Being a Christian in Today’s World.” Talk with this world-renowned theologian regarding his four-decade career. Weave a tapestry of his personal and professional life. Then “hang” the tapestry in the hallowed hallways of Duke Divinity School so that a wider audience can watch and respond.

As usual with Professor Hauerwas, the evening took a few unexpected turns. For example, I had framed a subtle question about the place of marriage in society to which he replied, “Oh, David, can’t I just talk about sex?” He has the ability to nail the issue.

We also talked of his recently completed memoir, *Hannah’s Child: A Theologian’s Memoir*, which contains almost 300 pages of spiritual insight, theological challenge, and accounts of his personal pain. Hauerwas, the Gilbert T. Rowe Professor of Theological Ethics at the Divinity School, said he wrote such a vivid and intimate account of his public and private story “in an attempt to understand myself, something that would have been impossible without my friends.”

The conversation then cascaded with brilliance and sensitivity on how one lives a Christian life in today’s world. While this sage was quick to point out that the odyssey of discernment never ends, his discourse distilled and then crystallized the answers that have worked for him,



The Rev. David Crabtree (right) leads a conversation with Professor Stanley Hauerwas, who was named “America’s Best Theologian” by *Time* magazine in 2001.

and thus possibly can for the rest of us.

First, be what God has created you to be. Don’t fight where you are and why you are there. Listen for God to give guidance. Pay attention to the signs and don’t question when you know that you know. Be open to God’s call and accept it for what it is, and what it is not. When I asked, “With all this knowledge and your obvious love of God and the risen Christ, why did you not seek ordination?”

Quickly and with his trademark acerbic wit, Hauerwas responded, “No church would have me.” After the audience’s laughter died down, he looked at me and said, “God doesn’t need me in that capacity; I need to be doing what I do.”

The second major theme of his conversation was the importance of friendship—the sharing, giving, and receiving from others. Friendships sustain, renew, and push us forward, he explained. They fulfill the need for community as Christ taught community.

Then the hammer fell. As I sat, spellbound and favored to be directing the queries for the evening, this astute servant of God looked me squarely in

the eyes. His countenance was pleasant but stern. His voice soft yet solid. His message direct and piercing: “David, if you really want to live as a Christian in today’s world ... never lie ... never lie.”

After that, I don’t remember what was spoken by either of us in the closing comments of the conversation. Those two words kept reverberating. Why? We’re taught that lesson as early as we can begin to process right from wrong. But my ears heard it differently this time. “Never lie.” Those two words touched me deeply in a way I never expected.

Stanley Hauerwas has become a dear and trusted friend. We have talked numerous times since then of the challenge of those two words. “You know David, sometimes to avoid lying, you just have to be quiet,” he says. “It’s amazing what you can hear in the quietness.”

**The Rev. David Crabtree** is a continuing studies student at Duke Divinity School, a deacon in the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, and news anchor for WRAL television station in Raleigh, N.C.



## ‘When Are You Going Back?’

Former classmate Heather Bixler interviews recent graduate Rev. Joseph Lasuba on helping rebuild the church in Southern Sudan

### What was it like growing up in Sudan?

**LASUBA:** I was born in Southern Sudan, although I have lived most of my life in Northern Sudan. I went there as a displaced student, a “Lost Boy” at 17. I knew that if I stayed in Southern Sudan, I would face death. I was smuggled into Northern Sudan in a cargo plane. I settled right in the enemy’s camp, like an Israelite in Babylon. My aunt was living in Khartoum, and I stayed there with her almost 23 years of my life.

### Have you ever returned home to Southern Sudan?

**LASUBA:** My first time to return to Southern Sudan was in 1999, to the capital of Juba where I was born. Upon arriving, my heart just broke open. The city looked like a ghost town. I couldn’t even hear birds singing. One evening we did a workshop in Juba, and pastors came with torn clothes and dirty collars. They looked terrible. That picture stayed with me. I knew that the time was coming when I would return home to be with these people who were suffering.

### In the West, we often associate suffering with God’s abandonment. As someone who has experienced and witnessed much suffering, what would you say to us?

**LASUBA:** When you read the Bible, it tells this truth: 50 percent of Scripture is made up of suffering and the other 50 percent is about the glory that follows. Do you see this? Unless, of course, you are reading a different Bible! We all know suffering—Sudanese and Americans alike. But the American context helps protect people from suffering and convinces them they are in control. However, we need to let things go. We are not in control; only God is.

### As a Sudanese Episcopal priest, can you speak more about the church in Sudan?

**LASUBA:** The church in Sudan has experienced centuries of suffering. But despite all the attempts to destroy it, the church has grown. Before the war, there were once only a few hundred Anglicans in Sudan. Now, there are over four million. Whenever a church building was destroyed, at least three or four would rise up in its place. With each building destroyed, more would be built.

### How did you become a student at Duke Divinity School?

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Divinity School faculty and staff applaud the Rev. Joseph Lasuba on graduation day in May. Lasuba, who earned a Master of Theology degree, was among the “Lost Boys of Sudan,” one of the more than 27,000 boys from Southern Sudan displaced and/or orphaned during the second civil war from 1983 to 2005.

### PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SUDAN

The Anglican Episcopal House of Studies has a deep and longstanding partnership with the Episcopal Church of Sudan that includes:

- Sponsoring the Renk Visiting Teachers Program at Renk Theological College in Southern Sudan twice a year
- Duke professors Ellen Davis and Jo Bailey Wells serving as consultants on the Commission for Theological Education of the ECS
- Divinity School faculty leading an annual leadership seminar for continuing education of ECS clergy in Juba
- Summer field education placements in Juba for AEHS students starting in 2011
- Developing holistic interdisciplinary models to integrate theology, public health, and agriculture.

**LASUBA:** The archbishop of Sudan has a dream to upgrade one of our Bible schools in Juba to the university level, but this will not be possible unless we can train some of our ministers to be faculty. Through my studies at Duke, the archbishop saw a great opportunity to train new leadership for the church. He told me, “Joseph, prepare yourself. We are sending you to America. Someone is coming next month to bring some forms for you to fill out. Then



**ON THE WEB** For more information, visit [www.divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/aehs/renk](http://www.divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/aehs/renk)

you will go.” I was just doing my job [as priest at All Saints’ Cathedral in Khartoum], and he says this to me!

### What has your year at Duke been like?

**LASUBA:** Many people look to Africa and want to offer solutions. They say, “This is what Africa needs.” It has been good for me to realize the professors here do not think this way. In one course, the professor told me, “When I teach this class next time, I will be sure to bring in your perspective.” At Duke, I have often been given the opportunity to provide my African perspective and to broaden my thinking. Duke has helped me love Sudan better and prepared me for the next phase in my life.

### What is that next phase? What will you do when you return to Sudan?

**LASUBA:** I have decided to move from Northern Sudan back to Southern Sudan. Coming to America is preparation for this, and my own experience in Northern Sudan gave me courage and confidence. Now I believe it is time for me to return home. Once, a little boy I knew from my former home parish came up to me after I had returned from seminary in Beirut and said, “When are you going back? All the ones who left [Southern] Sudan have never come back.” This boy had seen many leave. His words struck me like an arrow. I told him, “Even if no one else will come, I will come back for you.” God spoke to me sacramentally through this small child.

### Do you have any advice for your fellow students at Duke?

**LASUBA:** To me, the one danger I have seen here is too much emphasis on “mental discipleship,” a type of discipleship that doesn’t involve the whole person, only thoughts and ideas. We learn from Jesus that discipleship involves everything, not just your mind, but your body, heart, and soul. So often in the West, Christians focus only on having the right doctrines. We must focus less on doctrinal differences and more on what we have in common. We all follow Christ. Come, let us worship him together.

**The Rev. Joseph Taban Lasuba, Th.M. ’10,** serves on the faculty of New Bishop Gwynne College in Juba in Southern Sudan. Heather Bixler, M.Div. ’11, is a member of the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies.

## THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS BY JOSHUA CALER

A few weeks ago, I was having lunch with a friend who grew up in a revivalist Christian tradition and became an Episcopalian in his twenties. When I asked him what he found appealing about the Episcopal Church, he responded, “I like it that the church is about worshipping—liturgy and Eucharist and everything—rather than concerned with ‘behavior modification.’”

This dichotomy between the worship of God and right action set off warning bells in my head. The worship of the Triune Lord is by no means “for” us or our moral formation, even if it is at the heart of being good. The act of worshipping exposes at every turn that we are not God and simultaneously cultivates the habits of heart, mind, and body that make for a well-ordered moral life.

Instantly, I recalled something

Professor Stanley Hauerwas once wrote: “bad liturgy eventually leads to bad ethics. You begin by singing some sappy, sentimental hymn, then you pray some pointless prayer, and the next thing you know you have murdered your best friend.” I thought to myself, “Worship is practicing how we should be in order to change who we are so that we know what to do. It’s all in the post-communion prayer. That sounds like an awfully radical sort of behavior modification to me!”

Yet as I reflected on my friend’s response later, I also realized that he was pointing to something of deeper significance. Precisely because worship of the Triune God is a morally formative activity, we can expect the Holy Spirit to show up in the midst of it in ways that inspire the continuing pursuit of virtue for us all.

This realization has been central to how I have thought about preparation for the priesthood lately. Learning to be a theologically—and morally serious—priest is the reason I am at Duke. Concern for wise teaching and beautiful liturgy is central to my vocation.

To that list, I now add: learning to distinguish between my future responsibility and that of the Spirit. It seems clear to me that it will not be my job to cultivate well-ordered moral lives, but to witness to God’s faithfulness through the gifts He has provided, trusting that the Holy Spirit will inspire the pursuit of holiness.

**Joshua Caler, M.Div. ’11,** is a candidate for priesthood in the Diocese of Virginia.



## Shaded, Illuminated, Welcomed: The Imposition of Hands

BY ADRIENNE KOCH

**“Welcome,” is a simpler way of saying,** “I feel well knowing that you have come.” The sentiments of welcome are common to our daily lives; we receive them through words and handshakes and smiling eyes. But on days when words are spoken at just the right time and the touch of a hand comes on just the right occasion, the sentiments of welcome illuminate not only our hearts, but our spirits.

By my second year of study in the Master of Divinity degree program at Duke, I became increasingly aware that all of the professors and students I was most drawn to were somehow connected to the worldwide Anglican Communion.

In response to this realization, I attended a luncheon sponsored by the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies. Dr. Jo Bailey Wells [the director of AEHS] led a casual discussion with students on the current climate of the Anglican world. At one point, she asked whether there was anyone present who was not Anglican. Two of us raised our hands. She smiled and told us both that becoming Anglican was like joining a family through marriage—“for better or for worse.”

The day I was confirmed about 18 months later, Professor Wells’ words

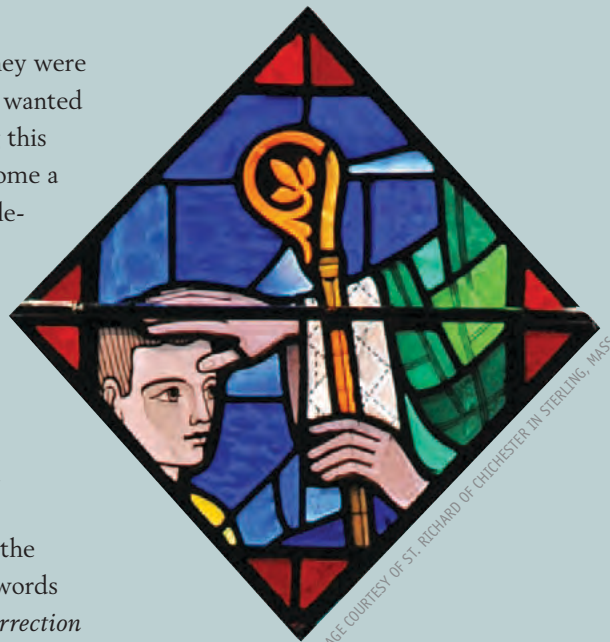
were still ringing in my ears. They were ones of welcome. I knew that I wanted to join other Christians walking this “Middle Way.” I wanted to become a member of a church whose ecclesiastical polity made room for people to wrestle with issues together through the intersections of faith and practice—for better or worse. As a lesbian, I wanted to be a member of a family who would welcome even me.

During the first centuries of the church, Tertullian wrote these words about confirmation in *The Resurrection of the Dead* (8:2-3): “The flesh is shaded by the imposition of hands so that the soul may be illuminated by the Spirit.” The moment Bishop [William] Gregg placed his heavy hands upon my head I understood some of what Tertullian may have meant. My scarred and sinful flesh was shaded by the bishop and by my presenters, whose hands rested on my shoulders. In that moment, to paraphrase Galatians 3:28, “All of us were one in Christ Jesus.” This was truly a great act of welcoming, and through it, I could feel my spirit being “illuminated by the Spirit” of God.

“You’re an official Episcopalian now!” one of my presenters, a fellow student and member of AEHS, exclaimed to me after the liturgy.

“It feels like a gift,” I responded. “It feels like grace.”

Her eyes sparkled, knowingly. She had been confirmed just two years



*“The flesh is shaded  
by the imposition  
of hands so that  
the soul may be  
illuminated by  
the Spirit.”*

— Tertullian

earlier. Her response revealed to me that understanding my confirmation as a gift was not something unique to my own experience: “Welcome,” she said, simply. “Welcome.”

**Adrienne Koch, M.Div.’11**, is a member of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Durham, N.C., where she was confirmed.



PHOTO BY ZAC KOONS

## JOURNEY IN THE AMIA

BY ZAC KOONS

The last 500 years have seen the Protestant tradition splintering perpetually into more and more acronyms: a schismatic epidemic from which the Anglican Communion, tragically, is not immune.

At January's annual Winter Conference, the Anglican Mission in the Americas (AMiA) celebrated its 10-year anniversary: 10 years since the archbishops of Rwanda and Southeast Asia consecrated two "missionary bishops" to the United States. That is, 10 years of church planting, working inter-continently, and figuring out how to fit drums and electric guitars into a liturgical worship service. And 10 years since rendering a break with the Episcopal Church USA.

I'm new to the AMiA. I didn't grow up Episcopalian. I was an evangelical refugee who found a liturgically-oriented, sacramentally-focused, traditionally-rooted, happy home in an AMiA church as an undergraduate. I quickly fell in love with the idea of being Anglican—the idea of being part

of a worldwide communion some 80 million strong. Only later did I learn of the brokenness, division, and confusion that characterize that communion's current state; only later did I learn that my decision to join one Anglican church meant my effective rejection of another.

At different points during January's conference in Greensboro, N.C., the AMiA's "escape" from the Episcopal Church was compared to the escape of baby Jesus from Herod's sword, and to the escape of Daniel from the lion's den. I know that some of my AMiA-affiliated brothers and sisters have experienced soul-wrenching pain as a result of decisions made by the Episcopal Church, and I don't seek to diminish that. But, I'm uncomfortable with these analogies. That's just not my story.

Seeking to escape the tradition from whence we came is a recent innovation in ecclesiastical history. Few post-Reformation denominations have taken the idea of traditional authority as seriously as has Anglicanism—something I particularly value. I admit, therefore,

that AMiA's beginnings seem questionable at best—anti-Anglican at worst. But then again, the grounds upon which Henry VIII founded the Church of England were similarly controversial. It seems to me there is no holy ground on which to stand.

How are we to move forward, holding this marred legacy in tension with the importance we ascribe to tradition? It seems appropriate to acknowledge within our heritage the negative as well as the positive. That is, to allow the sins as well as the successes of our past to inform our direction in the present. This leads us to one place: namely, to acknowledge our utter neediness, and hence our utter dependence, on God.

I wonder: if, in the acceptance of the negative tradition, a communion wrought by divorce, strife, and schism can become a communion of forgiveness, healing, and reconciliation?

**Zac Koons, M.Div.'12**, is an aspiring candidate for priesthood in the AMiA.



## the SOUND of hope:



*Exploring How Music Informs and Shapes Our  
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AEHS Clergy Study Day led by Jeremy Begbie  
Duke Divinity School Research Professor of Theology

THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2011

[www.divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/aehs/clergy-continuing-education](http://www.divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/aehs/clergy-continuing-education)



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## Congratulations CLASS OF '10!

**Members of the** 2010 Anglican Episcopal House of Studies graduating class are: *(from left, back row)* Jordan Hylden, Parker Reeves, Jillaine Van Essen, and Colin Miller; *(from left, front row)* Bobby Hadzor, Elyse Gustafson, Joseph Lasuba, Director Dr. Jo Bailey Wells, Wren Blessing, and Melissa Mills. Not pictured are: Thomas Dixon, Stephen Hulme, and Travis Smith.

**ON THE WEB** For information on where the graduates are now, visit [www.divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/aehs/graduates](http://www.divinity.duke.edu/initiatives-centers/aehs/graduates)

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