

The New Epistle

a newsletter of

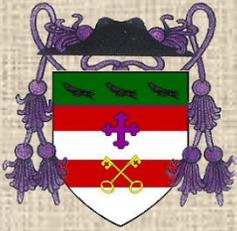
The Progressive Episcopal Church

Volume I Number 7

September 2015

September





Bishop-elect for the Diocese of the West

Venerable Thurlow Weed



Sunday, 30 August 2015. The Council of Bishops met for the purpose of balloting on the Venerable Thurlow Berend Weed, Vicar of St Luke's Progressive Episcopal Mission in Lancaster, Ohio, to receive episcopal ordination and consecration to serve this Church as Bishop of the Diocese of the West. Ven. Weed was proposed by Bishop Mansell C. Gilmore as the candidate to succeed him in that diocese.

Rev. Weed was ordained as a minister of the Progressive Christian Alliance in 2010, and to the priesthood of the Progressive Episcopal Church on October 18, 2014 on the Feast of St Luke. He was elected as General Secretary in February 2015, and appointed as Archdeacon to the Ordinary in March of 2015. Through his dedicated efforts, TPEC now has a central administrative office which maintains clergy records for the entire church, allowing for greater unity and communication between the church's clergy and ministries. He has begun initial exploration into possible intercommunion agreements between TPEC and other Progressive Christian denominations, such as the Progressive Christian Alliance.

Upon his episcopal ordination and enthronement in the Diocese of the West, his title as Archdeacon to the Ordinary will become inactive, though he will continue to serve as General Secretary of this Church. The ordination date has not yet been set, but is expected to be this Fall, most likely October or early November.

New Diocese to Form

Rev. Francesca Fortunato, Bishop-elect



With the unique geographic situation of the Northeast corner of the United States, it had been suggested that it might be prudent to establish a new diocese that will be primarily geographic in nature. This is now becoming a reality, and upon the ordination and consecration of Rev Francesca Fortunato this will become a reality. The name of the diocese has yet to be finalized, but for now the *working* title is "Diocese of New York."

Mother Francesca has a wedding ministry in New York City; the Facebook page for it may be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/nyceremonies/info>. She is also a Volunteer Chaplain at the St Nicholas Home in Brooklyn NY, hosting Sunday mass, holy day services and memorial services since 2010. She was ordained to the priesthood in 2009 in the Orthodox Catholic Church of America (OCCA), and was incardinated into the Diocese of Cumberland by Bishop Michael Sherbert in 2014. Her ordination and consecration to the episcopate is tentatively planned for Spring 2016.



Ministry Spotlight — Rt. Rev'd Mansell C. Gilmore

Editor's note: *Some ministries are public and are readily seen, whereas other ministries are hard at work behind the scenes, doing what needs to be done. We frequently read stories about the marginalised in our society, such as the homeless, the poor, people of colour, LGBT, etc. But there is one part of our population that is far too frequently overlooked, and consequently ignored and forgotten. Despite slowly increasing awareness, little has changed. The Doctrine of Discovery still wields its oppressive hand in public and government policies, leading to the continuing disenfranchisement of an entire population. I speak here of our indigenous peoples, those whom we call Native American. There is much yet to be done to reverse the oppression of those who have inhabited this land since time immemorial. Our recently-retired Bishop Mansell C. Gilmore is emerging as a pastoral leader in this field of ministry. These are his words.*

Coming Full Circle



I grew up in an activist environment. Growing up Comanche and Choctaw in the San Francisco Bay Area during the 1970s and 80s, I was surrounded by the men and women who founded the American Indian Movement,

took over Alcatraz Island, and stood at Wounded Knee in the 70s. I marched for women's rights, gay rights, and Native American rights while still in my teens. My father sat on the Urban Indian Health Board and ran the Indian Clinic in the Mission District in San Francisco. That is how I was introduced to AIDS activism.

The predominant efforts towards gay rights, gender rights, and AIDS activism was (and still is) strongly marked by the dominant, colonial culture of the United States. The few histories that have been written, and from which we can learn, are from this cultural perspective. Many of the issues that Native Americans deal with on a daily basis are not even considered in the histories told of AIDS responses. And many of the efforts to educate Native Americans about HIV / AIDS, or meet the needs of Native American AIDS patients are markedly ineffective because of the long-standing mistrust

and misunderstanding that comes from this dominant, colonial perspective.

My work is aimed at filling the gaps in the scholarship and providing a basis of understand from which future educational and activist efforts can move forward. By telling the story of the early days of Native American AIDS activism and pointing out the elements of Urban Indian life that intersected both in community identity construction and individual identity construction, I hope to inform both the Native American community and the dominant Anglo community about areas of consideration when serving the community in any regard, but especially in something as sensitive as HIV / AIDS.

Native Americans live in a continuous borderland within our homeland. What was will never be again. Issues such as targeted genocide through war, forced sterilizations, and other unnecessary medical procedures, interment on reservations, expulsion from those reservations, the removal of federal recognition, and forced assimilation, among many other issues are constantly in the consciousness of many Native Americans. We are shot by police at the same percentage as African Americans. We are imprisoned at the same percentage as African Americans. We are attacked and brutalized, our

women are raped without legal repercussions, our children stolen from us and placed with White families, because we are Indians. This has not changed. These were the elements that Native Americans dealt with throughout the 20th century. These things have not changed. All of this, and much more, contributes to the borderland in which Native Americans live (on and off the reservation). These things must be considered when trying to understand both the successes and the failures of Native American political and social activism, including our response to the AIDS crisis.

When I started this project, I thought that I would be able to serve TPEC and give what was needed to the Native American community and my work within it. As I have progressed I realized that this was simply not possible. The scholarship in this area was almost non-existent. I was breaking new ground, telling

stories that have not been told before. These stories need to be told. We need to learn from them. Not only for the Native American community, but Indigenous communities throughout the world.

The communities that are hardest hit by HIV and AIDS are indigenous communities who are dealing with a similar histories and similar issues as the Native American community. It is my hope that my contributions to the scholarship of Native Americans, HIV AIDS, and Ingenious Peoples will have far reaching effects. Personally, I have come full circle. This is my ministry. I am Comanche and Choctaw. I am an Indian. We are here. We have always been here. We shall remain.

+ Mani



Archdeacon's Report

VEN. THURLOW WEED, ARCHDEACON TO THE ORDINARY

What a month August has been! So much has been happening and so quickly, and at times it feels like a roller coaster ride. On August 4th, Presiding Bishop Mani Gilmore announced his retirement both as Presiding Bishop and as diocesan for the Diocese of the West. +Michael Sherbert was selected to succeed Mani as Presiding Bishop; Michael continues to serve as diocesan for Cumberland. With the increased administrative workload as Presiding Bishop, Michael has appointed Mar Michael Seraphim Melchizedek as Bishop Suffragan of Cumberland. Bishop Gilmore, although now retired in order to devote proper attention to his work and ministry, is still very much part of The Progressive Episcopal Church and is an active priest-bishop of this Church.

The Diocese of the West is currently in a state of *sede vacante* until the new bishop is seated; during the interregnum, the West is being administered by Bishop Michael Sherbert.

One of the things Mani had talked about with leadership is to look into formally incorporating as an organization. A brief history lesson is in order here ... TPEC was originally established as the "Diocese of the South" (Progressive Episcopal Church) by Jack Stafford, Maryann Gonzalez, and a few

others. It was incorporated in Tennessee and also had tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] status. As the organization continued to grow, additional dioceses were formed, but weren't part of the Diocese of the South from a corporate perspective. The new dioceses (West, Delta, Cumberland, and for a short time Georgia) became The Progressive Episcopal Church, of which the original Diocese of the South was loosely a part. Public records show that the Diocese of the South dissolved administratively in August of 2013, and was reformed in March of 2014 by +Maryann Gonzalez as an independent corporation separate from TPEC. The Diocese of the South remains a separate entity from TPEC.

Presiding Bishop Sherbert has made incorporation a high priority on his agenda, and the Church is blessed with the skills of Mar Melchizedek in this regard, who has incorporated several religious communities and schools, and knows the ins and outs of all this. The Articles of Incorporation have been drawn up, reviewed, questioned, tweaked, reviewed some more, further tweaked into a final version. The Initial Incorporating Officers are 1) Rt. Rev. Michael Sherbert, Chair; 2) Rt. Rev. Michael Melchizedek, Vice-Chair; 3) Rev. Thurlow Weed, Secretary-Treasurer. The Articles of Incorporation will be filed in Nebraska. Once the corporation has been approved by the state, we will be able to look into what would be required of us to secure tax-exempt status.

Bringing our clergy closer together is also high on PB Sherbert's agenda. As I have been working my way through the [known] clergy list and trying to connect with people, I've discovered a few who were surprised (pleasantly!) to hear from TPEC, as they'd not had any personal communication from TPEC for about a year. One minister frankly admitted to me wondering if TPEC even still existed! This lack of communication is not good, and this is slowly being corrected. However, the downside is that for several of our clergy we have no contact information, and the target email address for their website contact form is no longer valid, and all other attempts to contact them have failed to elicit a response. The result is that these clergy have been placed on "Inactive" status which is equivalent to suspension, and their website contact forms have been disabled.

In order for us to better connect as progressive clergy, PB Sherbert would like to have quarterly conference calls that are open to ALL clergy of the church. To this end he has already set up a conference calling account for TPEC.

There has been considerable work within TPEC as we continue to become more administratively organized. Our dioceses remain autonomous, but are now centrally connected via the General Office, which maintains all clergy records for the Church, and issues licensure, ordination and incardination certificates upon the request of the diocesan bishops. In the past, the diocesan bishop maintained their own diocesan clergy records which weren't generally shared with the other bishops. This practise proved detrimental, and although diocesan bishops may still maintain their own records, the General Office maintains primary clergy records. The centralization of records is necessary for 1) better communication throughout the church and its clergy, and 2) accountability. This is why it is essential that we have everyone's information current and on file: Date of birth, mailing & home addresses, spouse/significant other names, emergency contact info, dates of ordination and in what denomination if outside TPEC, as well as licensure & certification information, and ministry websites.

The Progressive Episcopal Church continues to slowly grow. More people are becoming aware of us, and are finding our website and Facebook page. From time to time this generates an inquiry about clergy or communities in a particular area, or an inquiry about affiliation. We are also exploring a formal Intercommunion agreement with the Progressive Christian Alliance. Not only do we share several clergy between the two denominations and operate on basically the same progressive platform, the PCA has clergy and worship communities in areas where we do not, and vice versa.

Our continuing evolution has brought us to a place where we are looking at two additional dioceses to be formed, which will be geographic in nature. There will be more on this in a later newsletter when things are more solidly together; as of this newsletter it is all still under formation & planning.

As you can see there is quite a bit happening, but all things take time. As TPEC continues to move forward in its life, let us remember to pray for each other. We all need each other's support in ministry as we work to bring Light to the world around us. We must also support each other in dialogue and friendship. We are a community.

Blessings and peace,



A Hymn for Labor Day

Text by Michael Morgan © 1993

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1. All our work and all our being
come from you, most gracious Lord.

Ev'ry task which lies before us
is Creator's will outpoured.

Help us as we build your kingdom
know we labor not in vain;
give us sure and deep conviction
for the tasks that you ordain.

2. Some may nurture those who hunger,

tend and heal the broken heart;

set our flagging spirits dancing,
spark our vision through their art.

Others teach and offer counsel,
bear life's burdens, ease its care;
strive for justice, peace, and freedom
for all people ev'rywhere.

3. Let us labor in the knowledge

that no task can be too small;

that the God who stretched the heavens

no less shaped the least of all.

Give us strength, Lord, to accomplish

what you set our hands to do,

that by serving those around us,

we return the gift to you.



Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. We remember also the people in this land who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Strengthen those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all. And grant that every one of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of this land. We pray this in the name of the Great Mediator and Advocate, Jesus. *Amen.*



September 2015



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Churchman's Ordo Edition

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>READINGS Mass — Year B Office — Year One</p> <p>Weekday Eucharistic Readings for use throughout the year are found in LFE, pages 498-528.</p> <p>See Notes on Reverse</p> <p>[] - In some Places</p>		<p>David Pendleton Oakerhater, Deacon and Missionary of the Cheyenne, 1931 [Giles, Abbot in Provence, c. 708]</p> <p>1</p> <p>Prf.Ap. [Common of a Monastic II, Glo.Prf.St.2]</p>	<p>The Martyrs of New Guinea, 1942</p> <p>2</p> <p>Glo.Prf.H.Wk.</p>	<p>[Phoebe, Deaconess at Cenchræe 1st Cent.]</p> <p>3</p> <p>[Common of a Saint I, Glo.Prf.St.1]</p>	<p>Paul Jones, Bishop and Peace Advocate, 1941</p> <p>4</p> <p>Glo.Prf.St.3</p>	<p>[Boris and Gleb (Romanus and David), Princes and Martyrs, 1015]</p> <p>5</p> <p>[Common of a Martyr II, Prf.St.2]</p>
<p>The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>6 ^{T14}</p> <p>Proper 18 Glo.Cr.Prf.L.D.</p>	<p>Labor Day</p> <p>7</p> <p>Variou Occasions 25</p>	<p>[Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary]</p> <p>8</p> <p>[Propers for May 31 Glo.Cr.Prf.Inc. or BVM (TASB)]</p>	<p>Constance, Nun and her Companions, 1878</p> <p>9</p> <p>Glo.Prf.St.1 White may be used.</p>	<p>Alexander Crummell, Priest, Missionary, and Educator, 1898</p> <p>10</p> <p>Glo.Prf.St.2</p>	<p>Feria [✠]</p> <p>11</p> <p>Proper 18</p>	<p>John Henry Hobart, Bishop of New York, 1830</p> <p>12</p> <p>Glo.Prf.St.1</p>
<p>The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost ^{T15}</p> <p>13</p> <p>Proper 19 Glo.Cr.Prf.L.D.</p>	<p>HOLY CROSS DAY [Exaltation of the Holy Cross]</p> <p>14</p> <p>Glo.Cr.Prf.H.Wk.</p>	<p>[Seven Sorrows of the BVM]</p> <p>15</p> <p>[Glo.Cr.Prf.Epi. or BVM (TASB)]</p>	<p>Ninian, Bishop in Galloway, c. 430 (Ember Day)</p> <p>16</p> <p>Glo.Prf.Pen.</p>	<p>Hildegard of Bingen [Lambert of Maastricht, Bishop and Martyr, c. 705 - R]</p> <p>17</p> <p>Prf.Epi. [Common of a Martyr I, Glo.Prf.St.3]</p>	<p>Edward Bouverie [✠] Pusey, Priest, 1882 (Ember Day)</p> <p>18</p> <p>Glo.Prf.St.2</p>	<p>Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury, 690 (Ember Day)</p> <p>19</p> <p>Glo.Prf.St.1</p>
<p>The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost ^{T16}</p> <p>20</p> <p>Proper 20 Glo.Cr.Prf.L.D.</p>	<p>SAINT MATTHEW, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST</p> <p>21</p> <p>Glo.Cr.Prf.Ap.</p>	<p>Feria</p> <p>22</p> <p>Proper 20</p>	<p>Feria</p> <p>23</p>	<p>[Our Lady of Walsingham]</p> <p>24</p> <p>[BVM Propers for May 31 Glo.Cr.Prf.Inc. or BVM (TASB)]</p>	<p>Sergius, Abbot of Holy Trinity, Moscow, 1392</p> <p>25</p> <p>Glo.Prf.St.2</p>	<p>Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, 1626</p> <p>26</p> <p>Glo.Prf.St.1</p>
<p>The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost ^{T17}</p> <p>27</p> <p>Proper 21 Glo.Cr.Prf.L.D.</p>	<p>[Wenceslaus, Duke of Bohemia, and Martyr, 929]</p> <p>28</p> <p>[Common of a Martyr II, Glo.Prf.St.3]</p>	<p>SAINT MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS</p> <p>29</p> <p>Glo.Cr.Prf.Tri.</p>	<p>Jerome, Priest and Monk of Bethlehem, 420</p> <p>30</p> <p>Glo.Cr.Prf.Pen.</p>	<p>Glo.—Gloria Cr.—Creed Prf.—Proper Preface of Adv.—Advent Inc.—Incarnation Epi.—Epiphany H.Wk.—Holy Week Eas.—Easter Asc.—Ascension</p>	<p>Pen.—Pentecost Tri.—Trinity Sunday A.S.—All Saints St.—Saint Ap.—Apostles Ded.—Dedication Bap.—Baptism L.D.—Lord's Day</p>	<p>Days of Special Devotion are noted with ✠</p>



Hildegard of Bingen

1098 -- 1179

Feast Day 17 September

Hildegard of Bingen is a beautiful example of a person of faith who delights in discovering God in science, art, and music.

Hildegard saw humans as the thinking heart of all creation, called to work with God in shaping our world. Humans, and indeed all of creation, are “living sparks,” “rays of his splendor, just as the rays of the sun proceed from the sun itself.” She taught that our separation from God through sin brought harm to us as humans and to all of creation, but through Christ, we have the way for all to return to our original state of blessing.

All living creatures are sparks from the radiation of God’s brilliance, and these sparks emerge from God like the rays of the sun. If God did not give off these sparks, how would the divine flame become fully visible?

– St. Hildegard of Bingen, Doctor of the Church

God of all times and seasons: Give us grace that we, after the example of your servant Hildegard, may both know and make known the joy and jubilation of being part of your creation, and show forth your glory not only with our lips but in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.