

Rector's Report (for vestry meeting on October 3, 2021)

- On August 24, I received the good news from my lawyer David Nims that Judge Timothy Canning of the Superior Court of Humboldt County granted the 3-year Workplace Violence Restraining Order against Mr. Morgan. I filed the restraining order on April 20. The court hearing process began on May 14 and concluded on August 20.
- On August 28 – 29, I took a mini-prayer retreat in a small cabin in Burnt Ranch CA. You can read about the prayer retreat and its harrowing conclusion in my September 2021 Chronicle article here: <https://christchurcheureka.files.wordpress.com/2021/09/september-2021-chronicle.pdf>. Another version of this article was published in the the Christ Church Sausalito newsletter here: <https://deforestlondon.wordpress.com/2021/09/17/7077/>
- I began officially meeting with my Ethics students at the School for Deacons on the evening of Monday August 30. We are currently reading *Comparative Religious Ethics: A Narrative Approach to Global Ethics* by Darrell J. Fasching, David M. Lantigua, and Dell deChant. As we read through this text, I'm introducing them to Anglican Ethicists such as Jonathan Myrick Daniels, Earl Brill, Stephen Holmgren, Scott Bader-Saye, Lauren Winner, the late John Shelby Spong (who passed away on September 12) and Bishop William Swing, whom I plan to invite to Christ Church as a guest preacher and Rector's Forum guest. Bishop Swing is the founder of the United Religions Initiative and author of *A Bishop's Quest: Founding a United Religions*. He is also the bishop who ordained Mother Lesley.
- On Labor Day (September 6), I responded to Mr. Morgan's Title IV Canon Complaint. My response included a 12-page, single-spaced letter along with 12 other attached packets of documents. See pic below.
- Also, on September 6, Ashley and I participated in the Erev Rosh Hashanah zoom service at Temple Beth El. The service can be watched here: <https://www.facebook.com/devva.kasnitz>



- On September 8, I gathered with about twelve others at Big Lagoon to celebrate the life of Brenda Glyn-Williams. It was one of the holiest days in the Jewish year (the "Days of

Awe" between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur) when our Jewish brothers and sisters often cast bread (or other natural substances) into flowing water as a symbolic way of letting go. As we cast Brenda's cremains into the water, we fondly remembered her radiant and mischievous smile, her friendship, and her love for tea, Papa Murphy's Pizza, Ramone's lemon poppy-seed scones, Fetzer Gewurztraminer wine, Mar's bars, as well as her astounding skills in quilting (such tiny stitches!). The beautiful banner that she made for Christ Church Eureka portrays the Lamb of God, a powerful symbol in both Judaism and Christianity. For Christians, the Lamb of God is a symbol of Christ whose blood atones for our sins and opens for us the way to everlasting life. The Lamb also reminds us of Christ the Good Shepherd, in whose arms Brenda now finds rest as a sheep of Christ's fold, a lamb of his flock, and a sinner of his own redeeming.



- On Thursday September 9, Booklegger called me and asked me to bring them some more copies of *The Cloud of Unknowing Distilled*. Booklegger in Eureka and Northtown Books are both selling *the Cloud Distilled* in their local authors sections.

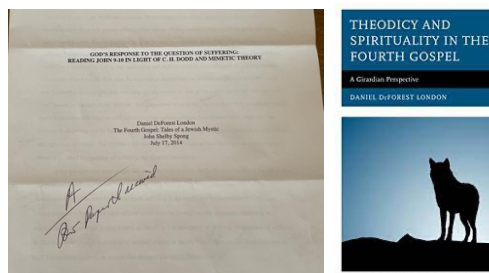


- Also on September 9, the Sabbatical Planning Team met for the first time. The team includes Pam and Paul Gossard, Dan and Karen Price, and Daniel Hafer and Steven Preston.
- On Friday September 10, I spent several hours working with our audio consultant Chris Parreira on installing our new audio mixer. Paul, Royal, and Thomas all helped as well.

- On Saturday September 11 at 2 PM, we celebrated the life of Marylee Rohde at Christ Church. Although the in-house audio had improved, the live-stream audio had not yet been set up so there were some audio glitches in the live-stream service, which can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QIDIo5U7kE>
- On Sunday September 12 at 4 PM, I attended the Latin Mass at the Catholic Church of the Assumption in Ferndale, where Merry Phillips played organ. I attended the service with Mother Nancy Streufert.



- On Monday September 13, I learned that the Right Reverend John Shelby Spong passed away on September 12. Bishop Spong was a controversial figure in the church and beyond. I took a class that he taught on the Gospel of John (based on his book *The Fourth Gospel: Tales of a Jewish Mystic*) at the Pacific School of Religion in the summer of 2014 with about 90 other students. On Monday, I reviewed an email he wrote to me as well as the notes he wrote on my final paper, which are not entirely legible. However, on the title page of my paper, he wrote “Best Paper I Received.” His notes inspired me to finish the dissertation, which eventually became published as *Theodicy and Spirituality in the Fourth Gospel: A Girardian Perspective* (Fortress Academic 2020).



- On Wednesday September 15, I took David Nims out for a drink at the Humboldt Cider Company Tap Room as a way of thanking him for representing Christ Church Eureka and me at the court hearing with Mr. Morgan. I think it would be nice if we as a vestry could write a collective “Thank You” card to David Nims, who has attended several worship services at Christ Church.

- On Sunday September 19, Pastor Paul Harris guest preached and talked about The Forgotten Initiative in Humboldt County, one of the main non-profits that we support at Christ Church. That afternoon at 3 PM, Pastor Paul was the Rector's Forum guest. You can watch the Rector's Forum here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmSmLc2P5sk>
- On Wednesday September 22, I celebrated the Jewish holiday of Sukkot (the Feast of Tabernacles) by setting up a tent in the side yard. I slept outside with Seabury and Gubbio for one night, but I ended up going back inside the house at around 3 AM because Seabury kept barking at all the random noises she heard. I kept the tent out until Sukkot ended on September 27.



- On Friday September 24, I began the Best Skills Best Churches program, which met from 6 – 9 PM and then again on Saturday Sept 25 from 9 AM to noon. I'm participating in this course with about 36 students from across the diocese (lay and ordained), including the Rev. Anne Pierson and Merry Phillips. The first module focused on "Volunteers in Service." I learned that the value of a volunteer hour in California is \$28.54, which helps me appreciate even more the time you all invest in our vestry meetings and other church commitments.
 - o The keynote speaker during the evening session was **Jayson Matthews**, the Director of Ending Hunger for Valley of the Sun United Way. He's Jewish and his partner is Episcopalian. He serves on the board of his synagogue while also worshipping with his wife at Trinity Cathedral in Phoenix AZ (where my friend Troy Mendez serves as dean). Our discussion on the Principles of Volunteerism and the difference between volunteering and "voluntelling" gave me ideas on how we can improve the ministry of lectors.
 - o The keynote speaker during the morning session was Pastor **Rock Fremont**, pastor of Shepherd of the Hills United Church of Christ congregation in Phoenix AZ. During our conversation with Pastor Rock, we all decided that the term "volunteer" was not adequate for service in the church because when one serves in the church, they're being more than a volunteer, they're being a minister.

Ushers are Ministers of hospitality. Lectors are Ministers of the Word. Intercessors are Ministers of Prayer and so on. He also talked about “Receptive Ecumenism” which approaches people from outside traditions with the question, “what do we need to learn from them?” rather than “what do they need to learn from us?” I also learned from Pastor Rock that the traditional name for the Syro-Phoenician woman of Mark 7 (whom I preached about on Sept 5) is St. Justa. Pastor Rock expressed interest in my work at the School for Deacons as well as in my book on *The Cloud of Unknowing*. So we now have a zoom/phone date scheduled for Friday Oct 15.

- On Sunday September 26, I participated in the orientation meeting with my Forest Therapy Guide training cohort (Wolf Pack). The cohort includes people from Costa Rica, Australia, Canada, Japan, the Pacific Northwest, Montana, Iowa, southern California, and the East Coast. The cohort trainers are Ronna Schneberger from Alberta Canada (who is known for her [popular Ted Talk](#) about being “nature-wise”) and Marcela Morales from Costa Rica.
- On Monday September 27, I met with the students of my Ethics class and we discussed the final chapters of *Comparative Religious Ethics: A Narrative Approach to Global Ethics*, which focus on eco-justice and eco-feminism. The Anglican Ethicist to which I introduced them was the Rev. Canon Sally G. Bingham, author of *Love God Heal Earth* and founder of [Interfaith Power and Light](#), (which I mentioned in my Oct 3 sermon).
- On Wednesday September 29, we celebrated the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels by blessing the home of David Lochtie, which he calls “the Reach.” His home includes a spiral garden, dance floor, short trails, a natural spring, outdoor art, and musical instruments as well as a little studio/bungalow. You can view pictures of the Blessing of the Reach here: <https://deforestlondon.wordpress.com/2021/10/01/7037/>. The liturgy, which was a hybrid of Sacred Saunter and Blessing of a Home, can be viewed here: <https://christchurcheureka.files.wordpress.com/2021/10/blessing-of-the-reach.pdf>



- Since April, I’ve been meeting with the Humboldt COAD Launch committee on a bi-weekly basis. On Thursday September 30 at 1 PM, we successfully launched the Humboldt COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster), with a zoom meeting (in

which I spoke about the Mental and Spiritual Health Working Group). I also served on the subcommittee for the Humboldt COAD logo, which you can see below. The new Humboldt COAD website can be viewed here: <https://www.humboldtcoad.org/>



- On Friday October 1, I participated in the online retreat for the Associates of the Community of the Transfiguration. The theme of the retreat was “Diakonia: From Service to Servant” and the retreat leader was the Rev. Douglas Argue, who has served as the Managing Director for the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio. He was ordained to the diaconate in 2008 and currently serves at the Cathedral Center for Spirituality at Christ Church Cathedral in Cincinnati OH.
- ***Also on October 1, I received an email from the Rev. Rodney Davis, the diocesan intake officer, informing me that the investigation into the Title IV complaint by Michael Morgan has been completed and the complaint dismissed.***
- On Saturday morning October 2, I helped lead the COM Day of Discernment program on zoom by moderating the panel discussion on what it’s really like to be a deacon, priest, clergy spouse, and member of a religious order/community. The panelists were the Rev. Patty Park (deacon at St. Luke’s in Auburn), the Rev. Megan Anderson (vicar at Trinity Cathedral), Earl Cunningham (husband of Mother Geri Cunningham), and the Revs. Kathy and Karen Law (members of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans).
- On Saturday afternoon October 2, I participated in my first guided Forest Therapy walk via zoom at Sequoia Park. The Forest Therapy walk was led by Ronna Schneberger and lasted about two hours.
- On Monday October 3, Ashley and I continued our tradition of driving along the Avenue of the Giants around the time of the Feast Day of St. Francis. This time we brought along Seabury and Gubbio, who were initially concerned but eventually thrilled.
- On October 4 and 5, I participated in a Mystics and Animals online Colloquium hosted by the Mysticism & Lived Experience network. The program provided some helpful food for thought for the article I’m writing on St. Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio.