

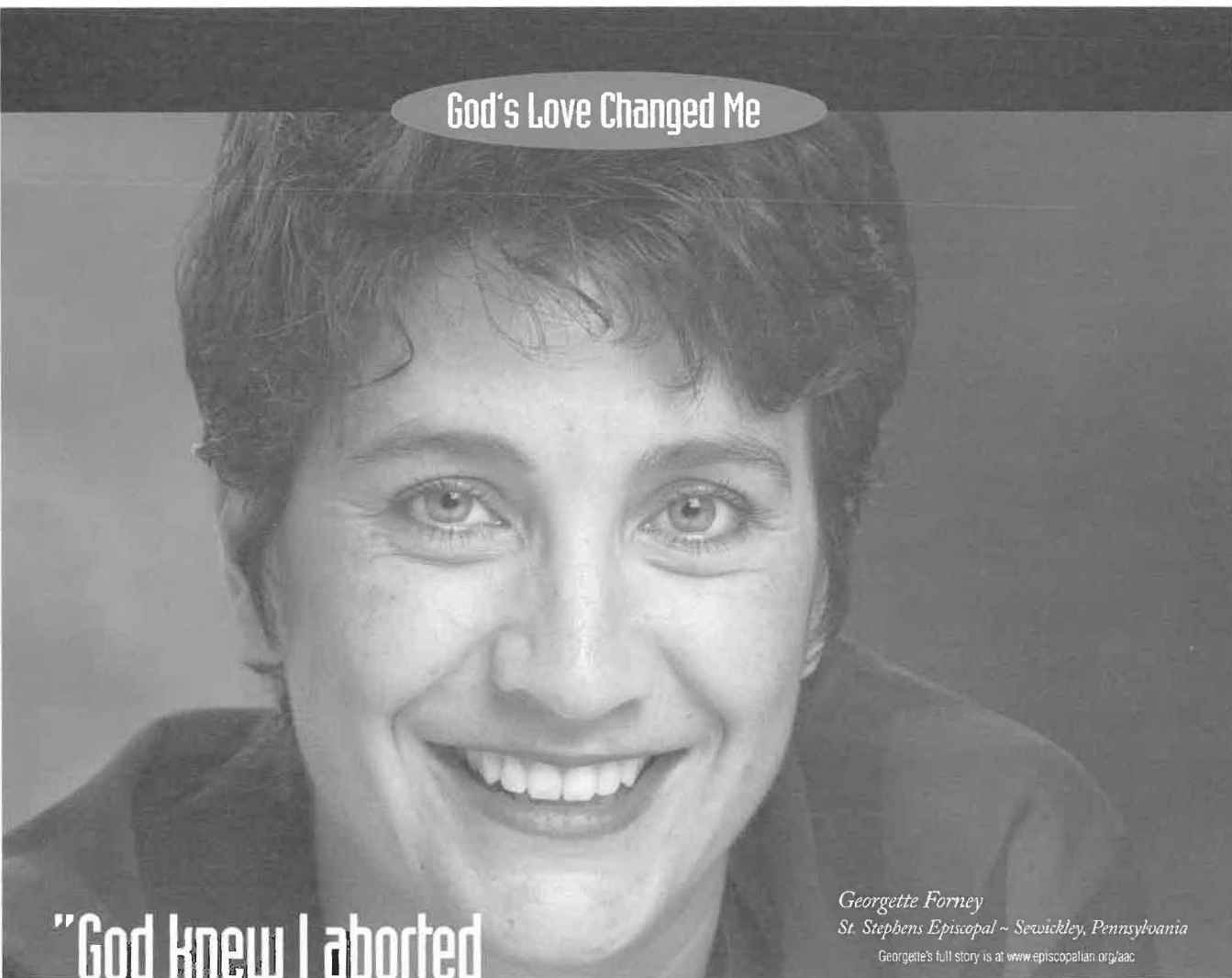
THE LIVING CHURCH

AN INDEPENDENT WEEKLY SERVING EPISCOPALIANS • DECEMBER 24, 2000 • \$2.00



The Youngest Shepherd

God's Love Changed Me



"God knew I aborted

my baby, but He patiently waited for me to know the depth of His forgiveness."

*Georgette Forney
St. Stephens Episcopal ~ Sewickley, Pennsylvania*

Georgette's full story is at www.episcopalian.org/aac

I really never thought it would come to this. Sexually active at sixteen, I became pregnant. But instead of asking for advice, instead of going to my parents, I decided on an abortion. A baby just didn't figure into my plans. After all, it *was* legal, so how wrong could it be, and if nobody knew who would be harmed? Then it was done and forgotten. Or so I thought.

Even after accepting Christ at 23 and repenting of my sins, I had stuffed the memory of my abortion so far down that it was almost an afterthought. So I set about getting to know God, and trying to live a good Christian life.

But by the time I hit 35, I knew something still wasn't right. I was miserable and overwhelmed with the stress of everyday life. I called out to God to search my heart, and show me the source of my anxiety. He had waited 19 years for me to be ready for this moment...then He told me I already knew the answer, and prompted me to remember the life I had aborted. Yet, when I did, the power of His loving embrace held me as I cried out my guilt and pain, fully surrendering myself and my baby to Him.

I really never thought it would come to this. But God's love is a forgiving love, no matter how long it takes.

God Changes Lives For Good

A Message of God's Abiding Forgiveness



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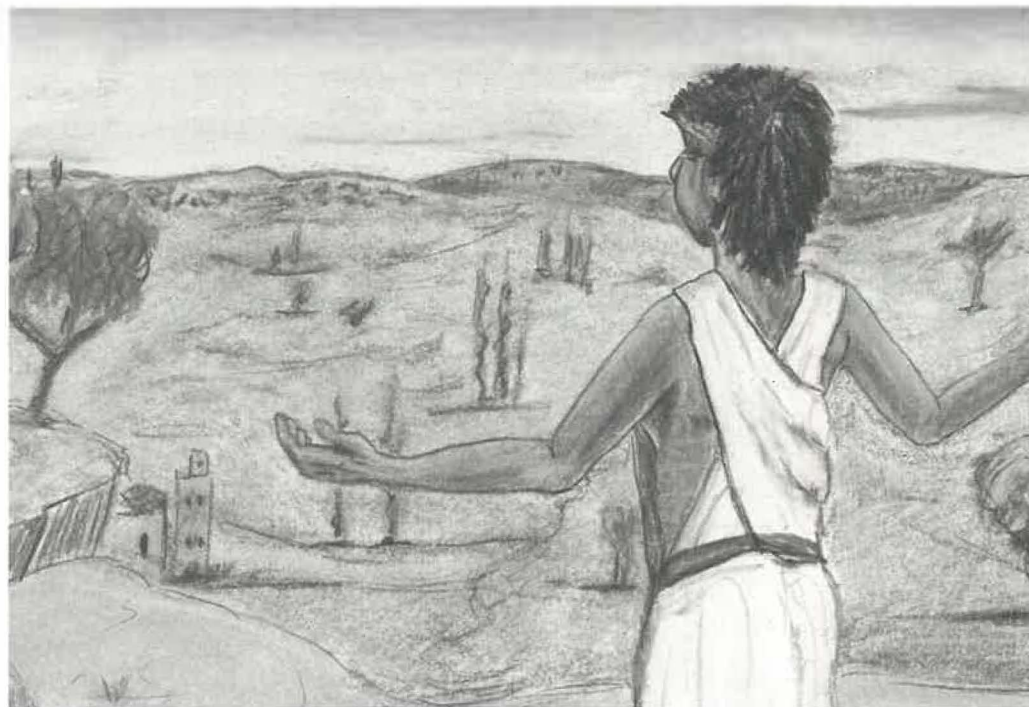
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Volume 221 Number 26



Cover and above:
Dean Graf drawings

He was the last to arrive. His flock grazed farther afield and he had not heard the angel's momentous announcement that a Savior had been born.

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RELAX.



SUNDAY'S READINGS

Unlikely Ministers

... he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.'
(Luke 1:48)

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-4; Psalm 80 (or Psalm 80:1-7); Heb. 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-49(50-56)

The prophet Micah says Bethlehem belongs to "one of the little clans of Judah" (5:2). We all know what happened in that humble place. In Luke's gospel, Mary says God has looked with favor on her lowliness (1:48). What is all this about little clans and lowly people? It's not a new idea. All through the Bible God consistently works through the lowly, the poor, the humble, the unexpected, the unlikely. Not much has changed. God still works through the unexpected. God's ministers will not only be found among the ones that readily come to mind. The prayer book catechism asks the question, Who are the ministers of the church? We might answer that the ministers of the church are the bishops, priests and deacons. But the catechism tells us the first on the list are "lay persons," then by the way are listed bishops, priests and deacons (BCP p. 855). First the people! In other words, let's not be so quick to leave anyone out.

All of us have been set aside for holy service. The Letter to the Hebrews makes the point that, because of the once and for all sacrifice of Jesus, God is no longer desirous of burnt offerings such as goats. All of us have been made holy or set aside. "It is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10). No one is left out, not even unlikely people. Some circles of the Episcopal Church call this total, mutual or baptismal ministry.

When it comes to being instruments of God, whom do we think not appropriate for the job? Nobody imagined Mary, the unwed pregnant teenager, fit for the job. Whom do we see as too small for the job? Bethlehem was such a little insignificant place. Who are the unexpected people? Let us be on the watch, for they may be the ones bearing gifts from God.

Look It Up

Read the non-exclusionary statements of ministry in the Church found in An Outline of the Faith in the Book of Common Prayer, pp. 855-856.

Think About It

Who are the unlikely people in our lives whom God chooses to minister to us? Here is a list of possible candidates: 1. A member of the family with whom we have had a falling out. 2. The person we think is never kind, always mean. 3. The one we view as selfish. 4. The person who bores us to death. 5. An individual who always seems to ignore us. 6. We ourselves.

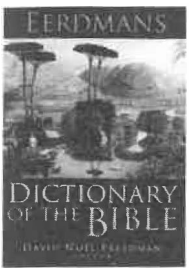
Next Sunday

First Sunday after Christmas

Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 147 (or Psalm 147:13-21); Gal. 3:23-25; 4:4-7; John 1:1-18

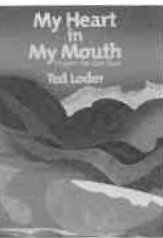
Collections & Conveniences

By Travis Du Priest



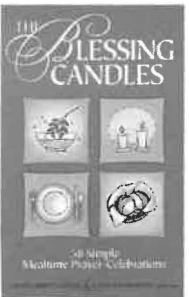
EERDMANS DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE. Edited by Noel Freedman, Allen C. Myers and Astrid B. Beck. Eerdmans. Pp. 1459. \$45.

Since I had spent the weekend helping a friend with a paper on Galatians, I immediately went to "Galatians, Letter to the" and found a good synopsis of the teachings of Paul, the letter's background and contemporary discussion on "the faith of Jesus Christ" rather than the traditional "faith in Jesus Christ." Helpful reference tool with maps and charts.



MY HEART IN MY MOUTH: Prayers for Our Lives. By Ted Loder. Innisfree Press (136 Roomfort Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19119). Pp. 158. \$14.95 paper.

The *National Observer's* Outstanding Creative Preacher, Ted Loder defines prayer as "my heart in my mouth." This collection includes seasonal and topical prayers. For Martin Luther King, Jr.: "O God of all nations and peoples, we are grateful for the dreams...exposing the lies, singing our faith, asking the questions, raising the Cain."



THE BLESSING CANDLES: 58 Simple Mealtime Prayer-Celebrations. By Gaynell Bordes Cronin and Jack Rathschmidt. St. Anthony Messenger. Pp. 134. \$8.95 paper.

Simple, symbolic rituals for families or small gatherings. The Blessing for Hopes and Dreams suggests spices as the symbol; two candles — one for those who have been afraid to hope and dream; and one for our dreams today; a reading, response and a sending prayer.

The Handbook of Private Schools: An Annual Descriptive Survey of Independent Education. Pp. 1408. \$95. *Schools Abroad*

of Interest to Americans. Pp. 543. \$45. Porter Sargent Publishers (195 McGregor St., Manchester, NH 03102.)

Descriptions and statistics for most of the nation's boarding and day schools, many of which are Episcopal, categorized regionally. Followed by a paid section in which more than 200 schools describe themselves and include photographs. *Schools Abroad* has an essay on education systems in other nations and country-by-country listings.



PATHS OF FAITH: Conversations About Religion and Spirituality. By Michael Thomas Ford. Simon & Schuster. Pp. 259. \$17.

Covers the religious map from the "old world" to the "frontier," featuring, among others, Sr. Frances Carr,

eldress of the last remaining Shaker community; the late John Cardinal O'Connor in one of his last interviews; Stephen Cary of the Society of Friends; Bishop John Spong and Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman, president of Hebrew Union College.



LITURGY COMING TO LIFE: The Eucharist Today. By Joseph W. Goetz. Forward Movement (412 Sycamore St., Cincinnati, OH 45202). Pp. 101. No price given, paper.

A cogent look at how the Holy Eucharist connects us with God, with those who have gone before, and with each other in common mission. The section "Mere Ritual" carefully separates misconceptions about ritual from its actual meaning and importance.

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Bishop Barrett Dies

The Rt. Rev. George West Barrett, 92, retired Bishop of Rochester and a leader in the movement for women to be ordained to the priesthood, died Dec. 3 in Santa Barbara, Calif., after deciding to end kidney dialysis.



(L.J.G. photo)
Bishop Barrett was particularly interested in civil rights.

Since his retirement in Rochester in 1970, Bishop Barrett had been serving in the Diocese of Los Angeles, until recent years as an assisting bishop.

On the day before he died, the convention of the Diocese of Los Angeles adopted a resolution commending him and recognizing his leadership and faithful service to the church.

Bishop Barrett was born in Iowa City, Iowa, and grew up in Pasadena, Calif. He received a bachelor's degree from UCLA, and graduated from Episcopal Theological School in 1933. He was curate of St. Paul's, Oakland, Calif., 1933-36; rector of St. Mark's, Upland, Calif., 1936-42; rector of St. Luke's, Monrovia, Calif., 1942-47; rector of St. James', Los Angeles, 1947-52; professor of pastoral theology at the General Theological Seminary, 1952-55, and rector of Christ Church, Bronxville, N.Y., 1955-63. He was consecrated Bishop of Rochester in 1963, and served there until his retirement.

In 1975, Bishop Barrett ordained three women to the priesthood before the church gave its approval. He was temporarily barred from the ministry for that action.

In recent years he was bishop-in-residence at Trinity, Santa Barbara, and at St. Alban's, Los Angeles, preaching and celebrating the Eucharist regularly at both churches.

He is survived by his second wife, Bettina, his daughter, Myra, his son, Richard, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The news service of the Diocese of Los Angeles contributed to this article.

Orthodox Anglican Leaders Hold Summit in Atlanta

Citing major changes in the landscape of Anglicanism in the United States and around the world, an unprecedented assembly of more than 50 leaders of orthodox Anglican jurisdictions and church-related organizations gathered Nov. 27-29 in Atlanta for a leadership summit. The meeting included representatives of the Reformed Episcopal Church, two continuing Anglican jurisdictions (the Anglican Province of America and the Episcopal Missionary Church), the newly established Anglican Mission in America, the Anglican Church of Canada, and the Episcopal Church in the U.S.

The purpose of the meeting, which was closed to the press, was to foster reconciliation among groups which have been divided but share a common commitment to the historic catholic faith, traditional moral standards, and the Anglican way. "Achieving disagreement" was a recurring theme of the conference. Differences over matters such as the prayer book, the ordination of women, and the transfer of people and parishes from one jurisdiction to another were recognized as disagreements which would not be resolved for some time in the current period of discernment and reception in the Anglican churches.

At the same time, it was agreed that these differences do not preclude mutual respect, support, and cooperation to proclaim the gospel, challenge false teaching, and work collegially to develop mission strategy both at home and abroad. The conference adopted a set of "Kingdom Norms" embodying these principles of unity and common effort.

Conference sessions were chaired by three members of the steering committee, the Rt. Rev. Edward L. Salmon, Bishop of South Carolina, the Rt. Rev. Robert W. Duncan, Bishop of Pittsburgh, and the Rt. Rev. Ray R. Sutton, a

bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church and dean of Cranmer House, the R.E.C. seminary in Shreveport, La. Formal contacts between the Episcopal Church and the Reformed Episcopal Church have been rare in the 127 years since the two separated. Participation in the conference by leaders of parts of the continuing church movement was also a landmark event in a history of division which is rooted in issues which arose in the 1960s and 1970s. The Singapore consecration of two bishops for the Anglican Mission in America earlier this year has opened yet another fault line in American Anglicanism, thus far attracting nearly 40 parishes which were represented in Atlanta by their bishops.

The conference laid a foundation for cooperative work in many areas. One task force will focus on the recruitment, training, and support of new leaders to meet a growing clergy shortage. A total of 14 opportunities for common strategy and effort were identified, including missionary work among the least evangelized, youth work, short- and long-term mission strategy, lay leadership development, and the crisis of the American family.

The group agreed to call an Anglican congress within the next two years and appointed the Rev. Richard Kew, convenor of the Atlanta meeting, to coordinate the planning process for the congress. The program of the congress will be to expand the process of reconciliation begun in Atlanta, to engage orthodox Anglicans in a renewal of their common life in Christ, and to build a united mission strategy for the extension of the kingdom of God in America and throughout the world.

(The Very Rev.) Gary W. Kriss

The conference laid a foundation for cooperative work in many areas.

More Balanced Life for Bishop Browning

The Rt. Rev. Edmond L. Browning, the retired Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, still has some causes which are "close to his heart," but he declined to identify them when asked recently at a one-day workshop on mission at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific.

Instead of reverting to the prophetic role which characterized much of his active ministry, Bishop Browning chose to reveal a more grandfatherly side of his personality. He noted that he "feels a lot more whole" than he did at the time of his retirement in 1998. Along with a new-found sense of "balance," he said he was grateful that he and his wife, Patti, now have time to play with their children, grandchildren and two dogs.

Bishop Browning also revealed that he enjoys going anonymously to open-air markets to sell blueberries that he grows on his farm along the Hood River in Oregon. This year, he sold more than a ton and donated the proceeds to the Episcopal Church

Relief and Development Fund, formerly the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief.

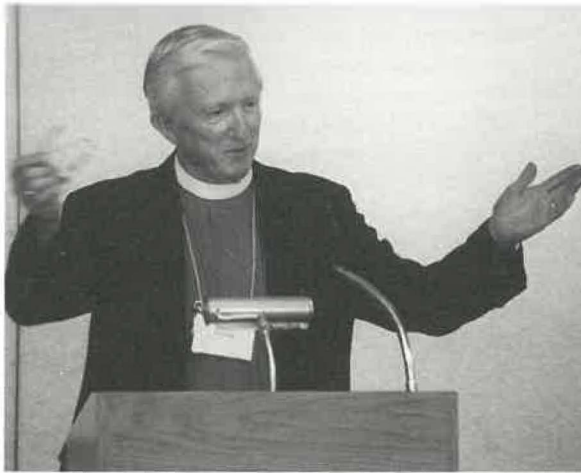
In addition to his personal revelations, Bishop Browning framed his discussion of mission in terms of his having served as priest and then bishop in the Diocese of Okinawa, and finally as Presiding Bishop, an office he held for 12 years beginning in 1986.

Whether going to a new culture overseas, or working with cultural minorities within the United States, "we must respect the tradition of people," said Bishop Browning. "Part of the church's role is to identify with the hopes and aspirations of (the) people it is called to serve. One key is to be able to listen."

Regarding his ministry as Presiding Bishop, he said he believed in the "necessity of seeing yourself as a prophet and a pastor. I have a sense that you can't be one without the other."

The workshop is one of the issue forums sponsored by the Center of Anglican Learning and Life (CALL) at the seminary.

Dick Snyder



Dick Snyder photo

Bishop Browning speaks about mission at CDSP workshop.

A Homeless Man's Place in the Kingdom of God

The ashes of a homeless man who engaged in a prolonged legal fight to regain the residence he'd signed away while drunk were interred Dec. 3 in the columbarium of the "church of the presidents," St. John's, Lafayette Square, Washington, D.C.

Every day for 15 years William Wallace Brown, Jr., 68, had walked from the porch of the historic church to Capitol Hill to display a poster board of newspaper headlines about stubbornness, heroism and justice denied. A large man who loved jazz throughout his years of employment with an electric company and bagging groceries, he always returned to the porch of the historic church.

It was there, on a morning in 1989, that he spoke to President George

Bush. He asked for the president's prayers, only to hear the chief executive invite him to "come inside with us and pray."

Soon Mr. Brown was a regular communicant at the 8 a.m. Sunday Eucharist, regularly putting a crumpled dollar bill in the silver collection plate. More often than not, it was money he had accepted from passers-by, once with hands so stiff from the cold that he was unable to put on gloves that one man offered.

"He really understood that the kingdom of God is for all of us," said the celebrant at Mr. Brown's funeral service, the Rev. Luis Leon, rector of St. John's. "It doesn't matter what ethnic background you are from, all the things that we have in common are the things that we share."

A parishioner, Dolph Hatfield, invited Mr. Brown for a meal every Sunday after church and took him shopping for food. It was Mr. Hatfield who read the lesson (Zechariah 14:4-9) to a dozen others who had befriended Mr. Brown, including two former congressmen, a nuclear scientist and a prominent patent attorney.

Ended at last was Mr. Brown's prolonged obsession with the attorney who allegedly swindled him of the house left by his family and re-

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 Filed for October

Retirement Announced

Toward the end of an uncompromising convention address on mission and evangelism, clergy and lay delegates from the **Diocese of Western Kansas**, meeting in Ulysses Oct. 20, were stunned when the Rt. Rev. Vernon E. Strickland announced his intention to retire after seven years as bishop of the diocese.

"The diocese is right now healthier financially than just six years ago," Bishop Strickland said. "Finances are often the best barometers that you have to gauge the life of a church. Good things are happening in this diocese in many places."

In discussing his decision to retire, Bishop Strickland made note of the fact that he averaged more than 50,000 miles a year doing visitations and with the diocese in good financial shape, this was a "good time for transition."

The majority of the address was devoted to the topic of mission. Bishop Strickland cited a study of 1,000 churches conducted recently by the Alban Institute. In response to the question: Why does the church exist?, 89 percent of those responding saw the purpose and role of the clergy as "keeping the sheep who are already in the pen happy and content."

"Life is short and opportunities limited," Bishop Strickland said. "To make the most of them, we need to know what we're after, what we're trying to accomplish - what matters most to us. If we don't take charge of that process consciously, as individuals and collectively, we'll simply drift along doing what we've always done. And that epitaph, 'We've always done it this way,' will bury us. Is that what you want, either personally or congregationally? I certainly hope not, but only you can answer that. I can't answer that. That's a choice you and your congregation must choose."

Bishop Strickland intends to step down Feb. 1, 2002. It is expected that a bishop coadjutor will be selected during next year's convention scheduled for October in Pratt.

'Third Option' Sought

A group seeking reconciliation and representing various points of view in the Episcopal Church, the New Commandment Task Force, is calling for development of a "deliberate processes, carried out in a spirit of charity and discernment" for dealing in the future with congregations which wish to leave the church over matters of conscience.

Meeting at St. James' Cathedral in

South Bend, Ind., Nov. 13-17, the group's stated purpose is to help develop a "third option" for interpreting Anglican doctrine. This third option would not be framed along either liberal or conservative lines, according to participants. Among those participants are Bishop Peter Beckwith of Springfield, Bishop Ed Little of Northern Indiana, and Louie Crew, the founder of Integrity.

Bishop Gilliam of Montana Dies

The Rt. Rev. Jackson E. Gilliam, Bishop of Montana from 1968 to 1986, died Oct. 19 in Ocean View, Hawaii, of heart failure. He was 80.

Bishop Gilliam was born in Heppner, Ore. He was a graduate of Whitman College and Virginia Theological Seminary. Ordained deacon in 1948 and priest in 1949, he was rector of St. John's Church, Hermiton, Ore., 1949-53; canon educator at St. Mark's Cathedral, Minneapolis, 1953-55; rector of Incarnation, Great Falls, Mont., 1955-68, and consecrated bishop in 1968.

He served on a number of commit-

tees in the Diocese of Montana and in Province 6, and was president of the Montana Council of Churches. In the House of Bishops he was chair of the Committee on Pastoral Development and chair of the Council for the Development of Ministry.

During World War II he served in the Air Force in the South Pacific.

Following his retirement in 1986, he served as assisting bishop in Hawaii, and as vicar of St. Jude's Mission in Ocean View Estates.

His first wife, Kay, died in 1987, and his second wife, Markatheryn, died in 1999. He is survived by two daughters, Anne Vannatta and Peggy Spencer, a son, John, and two grandchildren.



(1985 photo)
Bishop Gilliam

BRIEFLY ...

The Most Rev. **David Gitari**, Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Kenya, was injured recently when he tried to calm down violence between Christians and Muslims in Nairobi. "The Muslims saw his purple cloak and just pelted him with rocks," said Anglican church provincial councilor Susan Mumina, who added that Muslim leaders came to assist him. The archbishop was treated at a hospital and released.

Nearly all the members of St. Nicholas' Church, Littleton, Colo., and their rector, the Rev. Ken Ross,

have **left the Episcopal Church** to form New Hope Anglican Church. Leaders said the congregation will be affiliated with the Anglican Mission in America.

Episcopalians were among a group of American church leaders who traveled to the Middle East Dec. 7-12 to express **solidarity with churches** there as they attempted to bring peace to the area. The Rt. Rev. Vincent Warner, Bishop of Olympia, and Patti Browning, wife of former Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, were among those who participated.



The Youngest Shepherd

By Boyd Wright

It was once upon a time. In fact, it was that very night 2,000 years ago when the great star blazed across the sky to hover over Bethlehem. It was the night the songs of angels echoed across the bleak Judean hills to awaken the world with tidings of great joy. It was the night shepherds heeded an angel of the Lord, left their flocks and journeyed down the valleys to an inn and to the cave that served as its rude stable.

One by one, the roughly clad shepherds stooped low and with cautious reverence entered the stable. The youngest shepherd was the last to arrive. His flock grazed farther afield and he had not heard the angel's momentous announcement that a Savior had been born. But the young shepherd saw the star and heard the singing, and so he came.

He was only a boy, yet strong from scouring the stony ridges of that barren land for precious grass. Now he waited his turn as the older shepherds came out of the dimly lit stable. He couldn't see their faces, but he heard them. One, his voice strangled by awe, blurted, "The Messiah!" Another spoke slowly, belief seeming to fight unbelief, "I say truly, he will be our Savior."

The men tramped away and the youngest shepherd tiptoed into the stable. Deep in the tunnel-like cavern stood a crude manger. Inside a baby nestled in a bed of straw. The infant lay pink and precious, like any newborn a true miracle.

The baby raised a rosy fist and smiled. The shepherd almost laughed, but that seemed indecorous, so he smiled back and, clutching his woolen hat, walked softly out of the stable. What had those older men heard? He only knew what he had seen. A beautiful baby to be sure, but only a baby. A baby born of a woman.

The young shepherd made haste back to his sheep, fearful they might have scattered. But he found them safe in the valley where he had left them, so after rounding up the stragglers, he settled himself for sleep.

It came like a stab of lightning out of the night. The wolf, haggard and hunger-crazed from a winter of famine, leaped from behind a rock to land on the back of a ewe. Jaws clamped on the neck of the bleating victim.

The boy grabbed his heavy shepherd's crook



The boy grabbed his heavy shepherd's crook and struck with all his might at the wolf's massive head.

and struck with all his might at the wolf's massive head. But the blow glanced off, and the weapon slipped from his grasp. The beast, fangs dripping blood, turned with a snarl.

The boy knew fear then, cold, wrenching fear, but he knew, too, he had to save his flock. He sprang at the gaunt animal, thrusting his bare hands into the deep ruff of the neck. Desperately the wolf writhed and twisted, but the boy kept his grip. The merciless jaws snapped, and the big eyeteeth slashed the shepherd's forearms. The wolf con-





The Youngest Shepherd

torted its whole body, feet flailing, and the cruel nails gouged into the boy's upper arms and chest.

But still the shepherd held on, throttling the furry throat until at last his enemy started to grow limp. Then, summoning his last strength, the boy heaved the heavy body aside and watched the animal slink off into the darkness. The sheep were milling and bleating, but they were safe.

The young shepherd stood bleeding and sore, but then, impelled by he knew not what, he set off over the hills back to the cave-like stable. This time he stumbled in without ceremony and found himself standing above the humble manger.

The baby was cooing gently, hands

waving as if in welcome. The shepherd stared into the tiny face. He saw only a human baby, but unaccountably he felt a new emotion. He had known fear and yet he had risked his life to save his flock. And this, wonder of wonders, somehow created a bond with the child. He had found a kindred spirit.

Suddenly he felt a miraculously gentle yet mighty power flow from that simple manger. It came to him that just as he, in his own small way, had saved, this baby could save, too. In fact, this infant body contained all the courage to sacrifice, and all the power to save everyone everywhere. Truly human, but more, more beyond any human imagining.

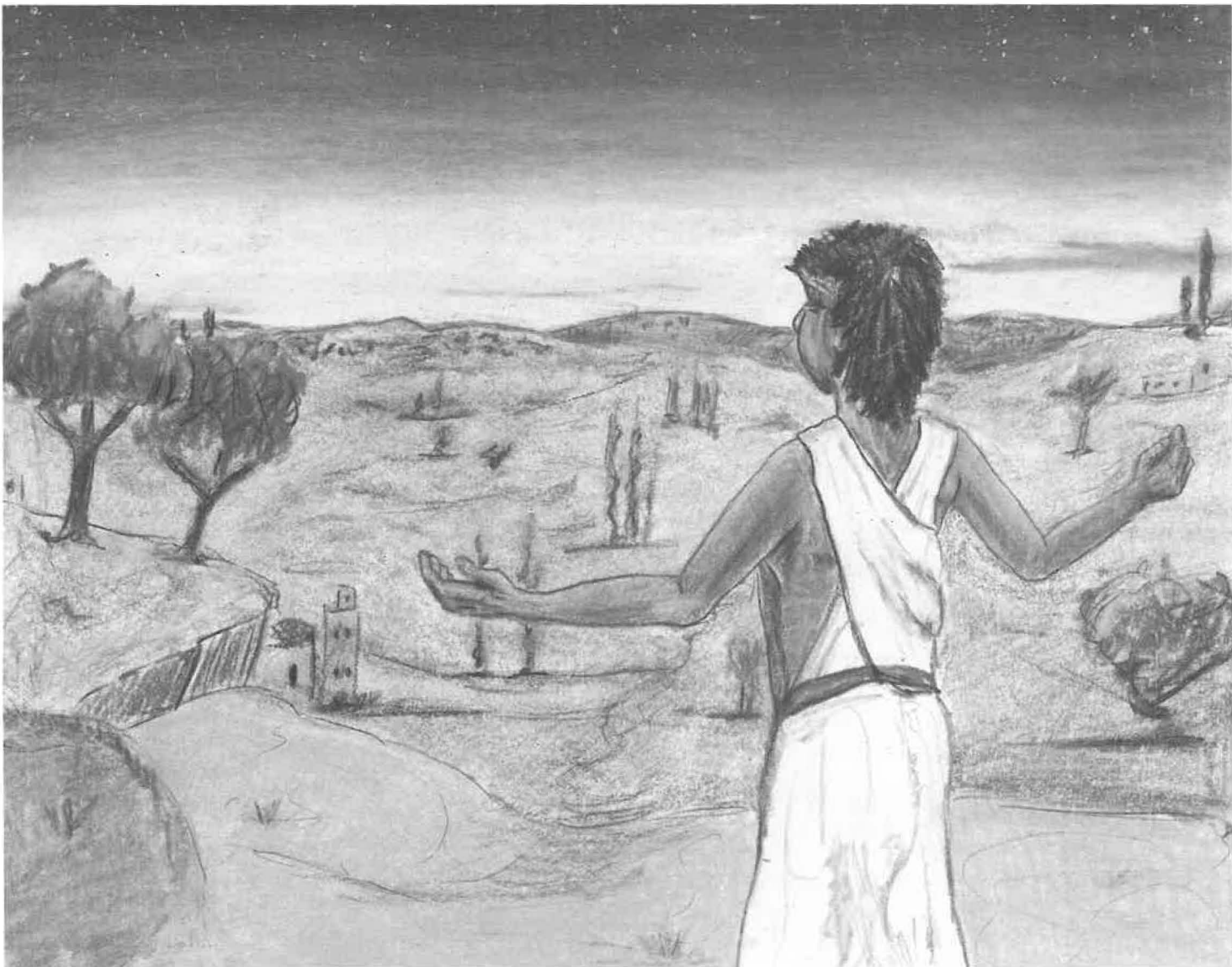
Now the most surprising feeling of

all swept the shepherd. No longer did he regret missing the angel's message to the other shepherds about the birth of a Savior. He didn't need to hear it. As he stood there, bleeding and battered, he felt — he knew — that he believed.

The young shepherd fell to his knees. Just at that moment he noticed his own hands and arms and chest. The blood and the wounds had disappeared. He was healed.

Outside he found dawn breaking in the east. The angels were singing with more joy than ever, welcoming a new day and a new beginning. □

Boyd Wright is an occasional contributor to TLC who lives in Mendham, N.J.



Surprised by the Joy of Christmas

In the early 1970s, when I was the rector of Christ Church in Shaker Heights, Ohio, I preached on Christmas Eve about how hard it was for me to sing and pray to the Prince of Peace when we were trying to bomb Cambodia into the stone age at the very same moment. I shared my own pain with the congregation, not trying to use the pulpit as a political platform but to give us all permission to bring our confusions and dilemmas of conscience to the feet of the Christ Child.

One of my parishioners stormed by me as he walked into the night after the service hollering "You ruined my Christmas." Well, I'd ruined mine too. But the pain and the conflicts of the moment seemed too related to the pain and the conflicts of that stable in Bethlehem and the realities of Lord and life just to sweep aside and ignore in the interests of a merry and a happy and a trouble-free Christmas.

In fact, there is no such thing as a merry and happy and trouble-free Christmas. In Bethlehem there was no room at the inn. Mary delivered the baby by herself in a stable. She and Joseph were poor and homeless. There is no record of friends gathering around, just some curious shepherds and the animals that were already housed in the stable. Yet God chose that couple, that place, that time, that way, to come into our world as one of us. Can we believe that? I hope and pray we can, for therein lies our way through the darkness and into the light.

An unhappy and very troubled man, identified only as Jeffrey in a book called *A Dresser of Sycamore Trees* that I've just finished, is quoted as saying: "I suppose one of the best ways to really get the significance and joy of Christmas is to be heartbroken. Because when your heart is broken, then and only then can Christ come in. And a strange thing happens; our lust turns into love, our hatred turns into humility, our greed turns into gratitude, and suddenly we are surprised by joy."

This is a tough season for a lot of us. We may be bereaved. We may be out of a job. We may be looking divorce in the face. We may

be broke. We may be sick. We may be sad or depressed or lonely. We may worry about the health of our country and the fate of the world. We may want to cry tonight for a lot of good and valid reasons.

But as Jeffrey said, that's okay. That's the way to God, and that's the way that the Christ Child can be born into our hearts and our hopes once again. He comes in pain, and into our pain, and relieves it. He comes poor into a greedy and materialistic world, and overcomes it. He comes perfect into imperfect people like you and like me, yet forgives us and sets us free. That is when we are sur-



There is no such thing as a merry and happy and trouble-free Christmas.

prised by joy. That is when the meaning of the birth of Christ finally sinks in and takes hold of us and gives us permission to be what we are, where we are, as we are this and every Christmas Eve.

Our guest columnist is the Rev. Alanson B. Houghton, a retired priest who lives in Pawleys Island, S.C.

Did You Know...

St. Peter's by-the-Sea Church, Cape May Point, N.J., has been moved four times.

Quote of the Week

David Williams, a member of St. Andrew's Church, Fort Worth, Texas, on the visit of the Executive Council's task force to the Diocese of Fort Worth: "When the task force comes to town we should treat them to lunch at the best place in town. Then we should give them a good ticket out of town."

O Come, Thou Wisdom From on High ...

All is neither calm nor bright as we once again celebrate the Savior's birth. Instead, we find ourselves in a bleak midwinter of fear and rage, rocks and bullets, which have turned the land of Jesus' birth into a war zone. Yet the Middle East is only one place among many in which neighbor is pitted against neighbor, and religious differences are exploited in the service of hatred. Well we might ask: How is it that faiths that profess mercy and compassion and God's love for all can be co-opted by political and ethnic ideologies and made into ammunition with which to maim and destroy one another?

On the home front, we are faced with a government in which partisan vitriol and self-interest have so immobilized the political process that many despair of recovering any sense of the common good.



As well, even within the Christian community the spirit of division has been hard at work seeking to obscure and undermine the unity into which we are born through baptism. Unity does not ignore differences, but rather supplies the context in which they can be openly and honestly explored with mutual affection and trust under the guidance of the Spirit of truth. In this way the community of faith is conformed to the mind of Christ and participates in Christ's mission "to restore all people to unity with God and each other." A church that cannot live the costly mystery of unity in its own life cannot speak a life-giving word to a divided world.

What does it say to us when, in God's name and with God's presumed blessing, we murder and defame one another with rocks and guns and the words of our lips? It says we need a savior, one who can reconcile us to God and one another. We need a savior who — through his own faithfulness, even to death on a cross — is able to break down all walls of division so we are able to perceive that in Christ we are one new humanity.

As we hear again the story of Jesus' birth, and sing of that silent night when all was calm and bright, may we do so with undefended and

penitent hearts that can take us beyond the externals of the season into the heart of God. There the bleak midwinter of our suspicions and mistrust are healed and transformed as the Word Incarnate finds a home in us and then, through the Spirit, draws us into his ongoing work of reconciliation for the sake of the world.

May Christ indeed make his home in us this holy season that we may know the truth — the truth of his transforming and reconciling love — the truth that makes us free.

(The Most Rev.) Frank T. Griswold, Presiding Bishop

The staff of THE LIVING CHURCH extends sincere wishes for a blessed Christmas to all our readers. May this holy season be a time of peace and joy for you.





Quick to Listen

Slow to Speak

By Alda Marsh Morgan

Last spring, while participating in an e-mail discussion about the state of the church, I was brought up short by one of the contributions to the chat. What had been posted prior to it was liberal in tone, much of it responding in anger to the Singapore ordinations. This letter broke in with a traditionalist critique of the reasoning behind what had been said. Besides admiring its author for his courage, I was chastened by the message because it held up a mirror to me that revealed the derision and smugness of much of what I had been thinking and saying over the years during which this estrangement has been growing.

This encounter began a discussion between the author and me which led to my asking him to help me understand where he and his colleagues were "coming from." So far apart were we in our starting places that I was often puzzled, as well as irritated, by what the traditionalists were saying. It seemed to me that they inhabited a world I couldn't fathom. This has been an informative and enriching tutorial. I cannot say that it has changed my convictions or hermeneutical perspective, but it has surely helped me understand better what fuels the concern and anger expressed by the traditionalists in the Episcopal Church.

The threat of schism worries me,

but one thing I have learned is that if it happens, it cannot be blamed on the traditionalists alone. There are, of course, die-hard members of each camp who match each other in ideological rigidity and who hurl anathemas at each other with equal fury. Most of us are somewhere closer to the middle and many of us share a deep love for this church and the Anglican heritage, however differently we accent it. But the divide is real and it is dangerous. Some of my liberal friends shrug their shoulders and say, "In the proper scale of things, whether

lyzed as a sociological reality, is also part of the mystery of the body of Christ, commissioned to witness to the love of God for this impoverished, aching world, to proclaim the glory of that love in Jesus Christ, to worship and praise this One through Christ in the Spirit. There is also a spiritual reality. Because the power of sin inhabits the church as it does the world, we'll fall short but that doesn't excuse us from the calling to be faithful. And the spiritual schism we are now enacting — regardless of whether it will result in organizational schism — is scan-

'In the proper scale of things, whether or not the Episcopal Church remains intact is small potatoes.'

or not the Episcopal Church remains intact is small potatoes." And, of course, they're right. Set against global poverty, impending environmental disaster, the scourge of HIV/AIDS and other devastating ills, the health of this small group of predominantly middle-class, well-educated, comfortable Americans shrivels in comparison.

But here, I've been reminded by my tutor, there may be another angle of vision. This church, which can be ana-

dalous.

Frankly, I don't see us resolving our differences any time soon. But a lesson for the Sunday of 13 Pentecost (James 1:17-27) offers, to my mind, at least a starting place for all of us who are weary of being mired in this struggle. This is a well-known passage where James defines religion that is "pure and undefiled before God, the Father." As I listened to it being read, I understood it through my liberal lenses. Then I read it again during the

VIEWPOINT

offertory and something strange happened. This time I read it through the traditionalist lenses I was beginning to understand. It was discouraging because it only confirmed my fears that resolving our differences would be difficult at best.

But, as I thought about it, I realized that it was in the general statements that our differences emerged — “keep unstained from the world,” “rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness,” “be doers of the word and not merely hearers.” There were, however, three very specific admonitions in that reading: Do not give in to anger; no one is religious who cannot bridle his (her) tongue; true religion is (first) to “care for the orphans and widows in their distress.” If we can agree that the “orphans and widows” are a metaphor for those who suffer, perhaps there is a kind of provisional directive here. It may be a way in which to stay in spiritual conversation with each other, even if we cannot find the words to resolve

our theological differences, knowing as we do that these differences represent profoundly disparate faith stances.

“Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger” ... Do not give in to anger. This isn't a com-

mand to forego anger altogether, for anger will come and sometimes rightly so. Rather, we're not to live by it, to let it rule us.

And again, “true religion” means we must learn to bridle our tongues. A bridle enables the rider to guide a horse where it should go. So we must bridle our tongues so that we may be guided by the Holy Spirit in our converse with each other. In that sense, we should let the Spirit “ride” us.

Continue together to engage our primary task, which is to serve, in God's Name, those who suffer in the myriad ways to which humankind is prey. An example: The so-called 1928 BCP parish in my area, at one time close to leaving the diocese, was reconciled by — among other things — its shared work with other parishes in the welcoming and care of refugees. It is still a 1928 BCP parish, but we're living together now in mutual respect and affection.

We have our Lord's promise that we are not alone in what may be difficult disciplines. We know that he loves us all. Now we need, hard as it is, to learn to love the brother and sister we see all too well, so that we can more faithfully love the One we cannot see. □

Alda Marsh Morgan is the director of Continuing Education at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Real Danger

I was glad to hear that Fr. Zabriskie had taken the time to worship at All Saints', Pawleys Island [TLC, Nov. 26]. I was surprised and disturbed that he thinks traditionalists such as Bishop Murphy “base their theology on *sola scriptura*, scripture alone...” From my experience and practice, this is simply not true. While scripture is clearly the ultimate authority in true Anglican Christianity, the creeds and the Articles of Religion help remind us what scripture says. I'm sure Bishop Murphy adheres to the creeds and the articles. From the tone of Fr. Zabriskie's article, I seriously doubt he sees the creeds and the articles as authoritative in the life of the Episcopal Church. Fr. Zabriskie mentions “church anarchy.” Church anarchy is found when we break away from the firm anchor of holy scripture. That is the real danger in the Episcopal Church.

*(The Rev.) Herbert G. Hand
Church of the Annunciation
Cordova, Tenn.*

Marek Zabriskie's article is full of distortions in attempting to paint the Anglican Mission in America (AMIA) as just another continuing church movement.

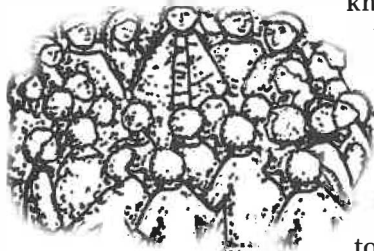
First, his article fails to mention that at Nassau, three Anglican primates gave their blessing to the crossing of diocesan boundaries [TLC, Sept. 17]. Second, rather than being in the minority on the homosexual issue, the AMIA is in alignment with the theological position of the Lambeth Conference as well as that of the Orthodox and Roman Catholic communions. It is the Episcopal Church that is in rebellion. Third, the movement is not based just on holy scripture, but is also consistent with Anglican tradition at least down to the 2000 General Convention. Finally, if the Episcopal Church would hardly notice a split-off, why is the liberal establishment so upset about it? Are they afraid that their house of cards will come crashing down if Episcopalians are given a choice to affiliate with an Anglican body that is both scriptural and aligned with the position on sexual morality that is the norm in worldwide Anglicanism?

Many of us in the Episcopal Church are disgusted at the lack of morality at the highest levels of our church and would welcome a Christian alternative to the obsession with perverse sexuality that obfuscates other necessary ministries within our church.

*Charles C. Wicks
Elkhart, Ind.*

What value Marek Zabriskie's observations in “Breaking Away” may have had was negated by the nastiness and vituperation of the last paragraph. Although the consecrations of Bishops Murphy and Rodgers were irregular, they were every bit as valid as the ordinations of the “Philadelphia 11,” whom Fr. Zabriskie recognizes as priests.

It is disingenuous to state that “the primates of the Anglican



It seems that the priest long dead checks up on each new rector to see if he carries on in Anglo-Catholic tradition.

Communion do not accept Mr. Rogers or Mr. Murphy as bishops" when two primates were among the consecrators and several others expressed their approval. Those angry with Bishops Rodgers and Murphy cannot have it both ways: If they want others to abide by the Lambeth Conference's position on respecting diocesan boundaries, they must be willing to abide by Lambeth's position on human sexuality. It would seem that Fr. Zabriskie's understanding is that there is room for everybody in Anglicanism except those awful "fundamentalists."

(The Rev.) Kenneth Aldrich
Trinity Church
Red Bank, N.J.

I disagree with Marek Zabriskie when he writes "sola scripture, scripture alone ... has never been the Anglican way of understanding the world."

Article VI of the Articles Of Religion states:

"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor

may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith ..."

I do not appreciate any attacks on the Church of Rwanda, furthermore, or any other "conservative" churches in the Anglican Communion. So many of our third-world partner churches in the Anglican Communion are just that — "conservative," and "conservative" is an acceptable expression of Anglican faith and practice. This expression doesn't demean women in itself.

(The Rev.) Douglas A. Puckett
St. Paul's Church
Graniteville, S.C.

The Rest of the Story

There is a sequel to the story of St. Mary's ghost [TLC, Nov. 26]. On Oct. 30, with loving care and prayers, the body of the Rev. Henry David Jardine was brought back to St. Mary's Church. The chain, the subject of the novel, *The Chain* by Paul Wellman, was found in a box at his feet. A simple crucifix was on his chest. A Solemn Requiem Mass was cele-

brated on All Souls' Eve.

Each week, with loving care, a simple Mass is celebrated on Saturday, followed by lunch for the poor and homeless of downtown Kansas City. Often the attendance is more than 300. St. Mary's has a large food pantry, with a full-time social worker, Roger Goldblatt. We are a small congregation, but our community outreach continues, as the spirit of Fr. Jardine lives on.

Thomas Atkin
Kansas City, Mo.

The article about the ghost at St. Mary's, brought to mind an experience I had shortly after becoming the rector of Grace Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

I was there about two weeks when I saw a priest in cassock and biretta walking down the side aisle. I mentioned it to one of the vestry members and he said, "You, too." It seems that the priest long dead checks up on each new rector to see if he carries on in Anglo-Catholic tradition.

(The Rev. Canon) Paul Traeumer
Sarona, Wis.

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Look Again

There seems to be some distress over the encyclical *Dominus Iesus*, according to Bishop Townsend [TLC, Oct. 8].

We might do well to re-read the conclusion of the document: ". . . We believe that this one true religion continues to exist in the Catholic and Apostolic Church." In other words, the Roman church has never and isn't going to water down the gospel truth that Christ is the way to salvation; to say, believe or teach otherwise is a contradiction of our Lord's words, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

This encyclical wasn't written to claim a smug superiority. It was written to counteract heresy, which is blatantly, publicly and grievously widespread.

*Heather J. Austin
Anchorage, Alaska*

Questions ...

Why in the doxology which concludes Eucharistic Prayer A of the 1979 prayer book, do we read, "...all honor and glory IS yours ...", whereas, in the Eucharistic Prayer D, we find, "...all honor and glory ARE yours ..."?

Also, why in the opening address of the marriage service, do we read, "The bond and covenant of marriage WAS established...", rather than WERE?

*(The Rev.) Jonathan King
Ridgewood, N.J.*

TO OUR READERS



Letters to the editor are appreciated and should be kept as brief as possible.

Appointments

The Rev. **Ellen Rutherford** is vicar of Riverfront Team Ministry, Bridgeboro and Webster, Riverside, NY 08075.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Searle** is associate at Christ 5030 Henry Hudson Pkwy., Bronx, NY 10471.

The Rev. **Chris Steele** is assistant rector at Trinity, 1015 Holman, Houston, TX 77004.

The Rev. **Julio Torres** is priest-in-charge of St. Mark's, 131 E 10th St., New York, NY 10003.

The Rev. **Joyce U. Tompkins** is associate rector at Trinity, N Chester Rd. and College Ave., Swarthmore, PA 19081.

The Rev. **Jeremy Warnick** is rector of St. Mark's, 1373 Nepperhan Ave., Yonkers, NY 10703.

The Rev. **John Wells** is vicar of St. Paul's, Highway 190 W., Woodville, TX 75799.

Resignations

The Rev. **Timothy B. Cherry**, as curate of Christ Church, St. Michaels, MD.

Deaths

The Rev. **Charles Henry Long**, 77, retired director and editor of Forward Movement Publications, died Nov. 17 at his home in Cincinnati, OH, of lymphoma.

A native of Philadelphia, Fr. Long was a graduate of Yale University and Virginia Theological Seminary, also receiving degrees from Philadelphia Lutheran Seminary and the Episcopal Theological Seminary of Kentucky. He and his wife, Nancy, were missionaries to China from 1946 to 1949. He was personnel secretary of the then Overseas Department of the Executive Council from 1950 to 1954. The Longs then served as missionaries in Hong Kong from 1954 to 1958, during which time he became a member of the standing committee of the Diocese of Hong Kong. He was secretary of the World Christian Student Federation in Geneva, Switzerland, from 1958 to 1960. Returning to the United States in 1960, he became rector of St. Peter's Church, Glenside, PA, remaining there until 1973. He was also visiting lecturer in mission and ecumenism at the Philadelphia Divinity School. From 1973 to 1978 he was executive secretary of the New York Office of the World Council of Churches. He was director and editor of Forward Movement Publications in Cincinnati from 1978 to 1995. Fr. Long was a member of the boards of SPCK/USA and the Evangelical Education Society, a deputy to General Convention, chair of the House of Deputies Committee on Theological Education, and vice chair of the General Board of Examining Chaplains. He is survived by his wife and four children.

Next week...

Lost and Found



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Finding the Missing Piece

Finding myself in a melancholy mood during the holiday season, I decided I needed some Christmas inspiration. So I hopped into the car and began searching, not for a star, but for some memories of Christmas past.

It was always a custom when I was growing up that sometime before Christmas our family would hop into the '60 Galaxy and drive the 70 miles to the big city to cruise the rich neighborhoods and get all "oogie-eyed" at the light displays.

And so I found myself traveling the streets of our closest large city, Asheville, N.C. The downtown was lit up like a Christmas tree, and the malls were unbelievable with their tinsel and glitter, but it seemed I had still not satisfied the craving in my soul.

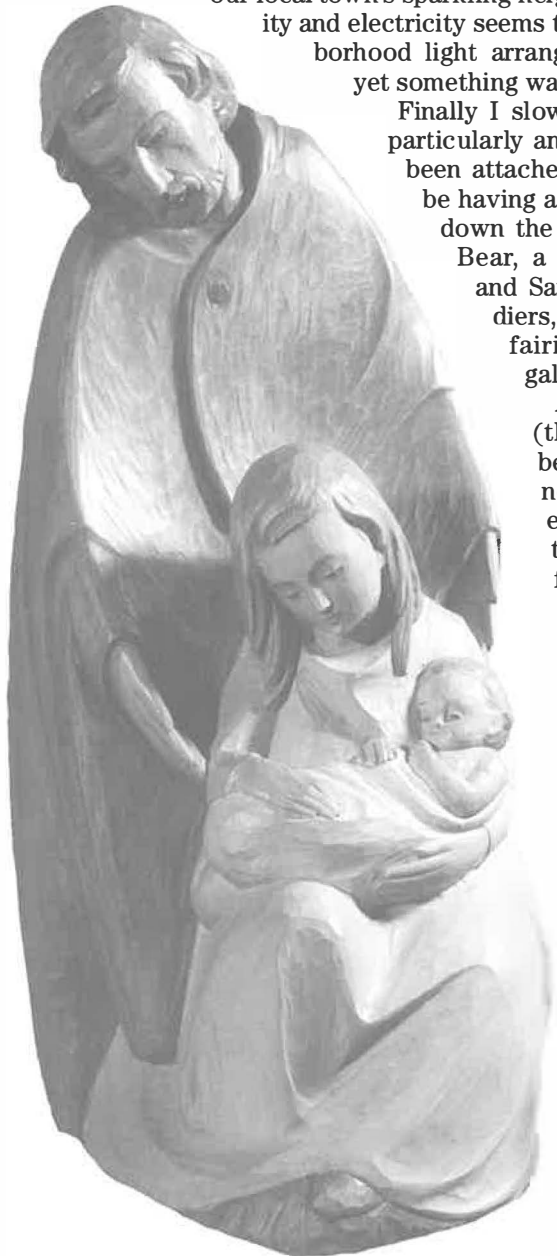
Next I started cruising some of our local town's sparkling neighborhoods. So much creativity and electricity seems to be poured into these neighborhood light arrangements. I enjoyed them all, yet something was still missing.

Finally I slowed down while passing one particularly amazing display. Reindeer had been attached to a sled. Santa seemed to be having a squeeze of it stuffing himself down the chimney. There was a Santa Bear, a Santa Mouse, elves, Frosty, and Santa Frog. There were tin soldiers, and nut crackers, sugar plum fairies, and Christmas trees galore.

As I drove past this scene, (the third time), suddenly I became aware that the emptiness I'd been sensing all evening was no more. I pulled the car to the curb and focused on what I had been looking for all along.

Beyond the sled, beyond Santa, beyond the elves, the tin soldiers, and the sugar plum fairies, tucked back in a little corner of the lawn sat a dimly lit manger scene, like the ones I used to see so long ago. It looked like it could have been around that long. The color was faded, the donkey was minus an ear, and Joseph was missing part of an arm. Yet as I looked at the child figurine cradled in the mother's arms, I became aware, more than I have in a long time, that Jesus is still the reason for the season.

*Ron Reese
Canton, N.C.*



I became aware,
more than I have
in a long time,
that Jesus is still
the reason
for the season.

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POSITIONS OFFERED

ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH is in search of a rector. We are in Fort Worth, downtown. Here is our mission statement: St. Andrew's Episcopal Church exists to bring people to a faithful, thoughtful and dynamic encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ as He is revealed in Holy Scripture. The clergy and lay leadership of St. Andrew's therefore commits itself to: maintain high standards of preaching, teaching and worship, true to historic evangelicalism and based on the Book of Common Prayer 1928; emphasize personal Christian commitment through prayer, stewardship and service; work together with other Christian churches in obedience to Jesus Christ, for the extension of His Kingdom and the unity of his people; remain true to the foundations of the Anglican Reformation, especially in its understanding of the authority of Scripture and our salvation in Christ through faith alone. You know who you are. If curious or nudged by God, contact: **Mrs. Marty Leonard, Chair of the Search, 1411 Shady Oaks Lane, Fort Worth, TX 76107. (817) 738-2424 home; (817) 738-7171 (FAX). Martyleo@flash.net**

ST. STEPHEN'S, Goldsboro, NC, seeks rector. Enthusiastic priest wanted in historic downtown parish of 350 members. Teaching, preaching, growth in spirit, service and numbers are important to us. Goldsboro is located in eastern North Carolina between Raleigh and the coast. Contact: **Jon Williams, 106 Cassedale Dr., Goldsboro, NC 27534.**

RECTOR NEEDED: Our spirit-filled parish in the heart of California's Central Valley is seeking a rector who has the gift of teaching and preaching the Word of God. We are a strong, fiscally sound parish with well-established programs in family and lay ministry, adult and children's Sunday school programs, and mission and outreach. Our services are a blend of both contemporary and traditional worship. The candidate should be committed to our vision that Jesus is central in our lives, that we share his love through spirit-filled worship and caring fellowship, that we are called to bring people into his church, and that we reach out with the Good News to our city and beyond. For further information contact: **Search Committee, All Saints Church, 3200 Gosford Rd., Bakersfield, CA 93309. (661) 832-8582 or startrek121440@cs.com**

RECTOR: Church of the Saviour, Hanford, CA, is seeking a full-time rector for our parish. We are located near Fresno in the Diocese of San Joaquin. Our fervent prayer is that our new rector will guide us in the worship of God and unite us in Jesus' love to be faithful witnesses of our Lord and Saviour. Please send a letter of interest and resume to: **Search Committee, Church of the Saviour, 519 N. Douty Ave., Hanford, CA 93230** or e-mail **tpeyeguy@cvconline.com**

THE CHAPEL HILL AREA of the Diocese of North Carolina seeks a priest called to plant a new and dynamic congregation in a fast-growing area near Chapel Hill with the goals of empowering a laity-driven ministry and becoming self-sufficient in 3-5 years. Must be very motivated and have a heart for the unchurched and for moving ministry out into the community. Contact: **The Rev. Stephen Elkins-Williams, Search Committee Chair, 304 E. Franklin St., Chapel Hill, NC 27514.**

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

CLASSIFIEDS

POSITIONS OFFERED

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, Mobile, AL, is looking for a youth minister to lead our youth in faith and involvement. Home to the largest Episcopal school in the continental United States, this position holds great opportunity for evangelism and growth. We seek an experienced, hands-on minister, with a deep faith in Jesus Christ and an enthusiasm for sharing that faith with all ages. The ability to relate to youth is a must and musical skills are helpful. If you've been feeling a new call, give us a call or drop a resume in the mail to: **The Rev. John Riggan, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 4051 Old Shell Rd., Mobile, AL 36608. (334) 342-8521.**

RECTOR: Love the mountains? Enjoy outdoor activities? Then beautiful northwest Montana is for you. We are two churches in Whitefish and Columbia Falls, Montana. We share the services of one rector with a goal, to pursue a more complete relationship with God through Jesus Christ. www.casweb.com/ben/holynativity/. Apply: **Joint Search Committee, 163 Falcon Lane, Columbia Falls, MT 59912.** E-mail address: cptkat@centurytel.net

RECTOR: Full-time rector needed for midsize all inclusive parish. We desire a priest to guide us as we develop our leadership goals, build our church school, youth program, grow to our capacity and strengthen our sense of fellowship. We are seeking a rector with vision as well as pastoral sensitivity and a sense of humor. Five years experience as a priest is requested. We encourage minorities and women to apply. Send resume and CDO profile to: **Search Committee, Episcopal Church of St. Anne, 1020 W. Lincoln Rd, Stockton, CA 95207. (209) 473-2313. FAX (209) 473-2314.**

NEW JERSEY ISLAND VACATION and fishing community seeks recently pensioned healthy priest offering leadership to mission parish. We offer newly renovated oceanside vicarage, a relaxed venue, modest compensation at historic and artistic church built in 1890. Profile available. Send resume to: **St. Peter's at the light, P.O. Box 428, Barnegat Light, NJ 08006** or e-mail Stpeterlight@juno.com

POSITIONS OFFERED

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, LONGMONT, CO, is looking for an experienced ordained youth leader. For a complete description and contact information on the web go to <http://mrftemp.bmb.colostate.edu/ss/index.htm>

RECTOR: St. David's Episcopal Church, Roswell, GA (northern Atlanta suburb) seeking a rector for its vibrant, corporate sized church. Important that new rector be skilled in parish administration and recognize need to work cooperatively with ordained staff, lay staff and lay leadership. New leader must be strong preacher, motivator of others, counselor and pastoral caregiver. Please send resume to: **Mrs. Sally Batson, Chair, Nominating Committee, St. David's Episcopal Church, 1015 Old Roswell Rd., Roswell, GA 30076.**

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KEY — Light face type denotes AM, bold face PM; add, address; anno, announced; A-C, Ante-Communion; appt., appointment; B, Benediction; C, Confessions; Cho, Choral; Ch S, Church School; c, curate; d, deacon, d.r.e., director of religious education; EP, Evening Prayer; Eu, Eucharist; Ev, Evensong; ex, except; 1S, 1st Sunday; hol, holiday; HC, Holy Communion; HD, Holy Days; HS, Healing Service; HU, Holy Unction; Instr, Instructions; Int, Intercessions; LOH, Laying On of Hands; Lit, Litany; Mat, Matins; MP, Morning Prayer; P, Penance; r, rector; r.em, rector emeritus; Ser, Sermon; Sol, Solemn; Sta, Stations; V, Vespers; v, vicar; YPF, Young People's Fellowship. A/C, air-conditioned; H/A, handicapped accessible.

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