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MANUSCRIPTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: THE LIVING CHURCH cannot assume responsibility for the return of photos or manuscripts. THE LIVING CHURCH is published every week, dated Sunday, by the Living Church Foundation, Inc., at 816 E. Juneau Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202. Periodicals postage paid at Milwaukee, WI.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$39.50 for one year; \$54.60 for 18 months; \$70.72 for two years. Foreign postage an additional \$15.08 Canadian per year. All other foreign, \$24.96 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE LIVING CHURCH, P.O. Box 514036, Milwaukee, WI 53203-3436.

THE LIVING CHURCH (ISSN 0024-5240) is published by THE LIVING CHURCH FOUNDATION, INC., a non-profit organization serving the Church. All gifts to the Foundation are tax-deductible.

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Volume 224 Number 2

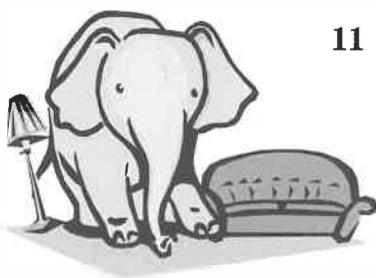
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The Jordan River
Photo by A. J. Weiss

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SUNDAY'S READINGS

The Baptism of Christ

"This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17)

The First Sunday after the Epiphany: The Baptism of Our Lord, Jan. 13, 2002

Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 89:1-29 (or 89:20-29); Acts 10:34-38; Matt. 3:13-17

Isaiah, with the help of the Lord, can clearly read the signs of the times. He apparently wrote the words of today's Old Testament lesson in the final months of the Babylonian exile. Cyrus, who shall liberate God's people, will shortly seize power in that city — and so the prophet's tone is one of expectation and of promise.

Isaiah's expectation, however, is not merely of political freedom. He foresees a time when God will send the Spirit upon a chosen servant, the mighty works of whom shall provide abundant proof of the Lord's presence among his people. The servant shall bring justice upon the earth, "open the eyes of the blind," and grant freedom to those who are imprisoned (Isaiah 42:7). And he will admonish the people to righteousness.

For Christians, this is a clear foretelling of the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. At his baptism by John "...the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon him" (Matt. 3:16b).

This anointing by the Spirit empowers the Savior to establish justice tempered by mercy (Luke 1:50-53), to

grant vision to those unable to see (Matt. 11:5), to bring release to captives of all kinds (John. 8:31b), and to call all sorts and conditions of people to lead lives of honesty and integrity (Luke 3:10-14).

We who profess to be the body of Christ in the world have been empowered through the anointing of the Spirit in our own baptism to continue the mighty works of the Chosen One. For us justice can mean far more than the strict enforcement of a few carefully selected bits of canon law. It might also include understanding and forbearance and even forgiveness. Illumination of the blind might well take the form of our working physical miracles, yet it also includes our bringing the light of Christ's truth to the multitudes around us who are trapped in the darkness of unbelief.

Peter has become convinced that all persons are invited into the body of Christ through the anointing of the Holy Spirit in baptism. If we took seriously our own membership in Christ's body and invited everyone we know to do the same, what a difference we could make in the world!

Look It Up

What is Paul's view on the nature of Christian baptism? How does it empower us for our personal and corporate ministries? (1 Cor. 12:4-13)

Think About It

What is the significance of the "permissive" rubric in the 1979 prayer book immediately to follow baptism with water with the anointing with sacred oil?

Next Sunday

The Second Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 42:1-7 Psalm 40:1-10; 1 Cor. 1:1-9; John 1:29-41

Five Women of the English Reformation

By Paul F.M. Zahl
Eerdmans. Pp. 128. \$28. ISBN 0-8028-3825-1

"There was a king of Yvetot," wrote the French poet Pierre-Jean de Beranger, "little known to history." Pick any period of history of which you are especially fond, and you will feel strongly that some figure you deem important is too "little known." Consider the era of the English Reformation. It is a time of tumultuous change. A king shifts his faith, leaders are burned at the stake, people flee the country, many monasteries are destroyed, and the king's successors shift back and forth in the middle of the 16th century with astonishing rapidity. Read any work on this time and the authors tend to focus on the politics, the leaders, the church, the liturgy and the men. When a woman is mentioned at all, the one bright light that gets nearly all the attention is Elizabeth I (1533-1603).

Paul Zahl picks Anne Boleyn (1507-1536), Anne Askew (1521-1546), Katherine Parr (1514-1548), Jane Grey (1537-1554), and Catherine Willoughby (1520-1580) for his examination. For Dean Zahl, the "Reformed religion" comes to England in three successive parts. "The first phase of Reformation theology was justification by grace through faith rediscovered. The second phase was the implications of justification by faith for the Mass, the Mass being the central action and transaction of medieval Catholicism. The third phase of the English Reformation was the focus on election and predestination."

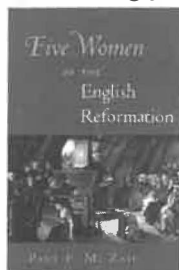
Appropriately, there is a chapter of reflection by Mary Zahl which concludes with the best call of the book: "Study the Bible. Be courageous. See God as [your] only authority. Be grateful that [we are] not being asked to die for" our faith.

For all the talk about theology, however, this theologian was most

struck by all the suffering these women went through, the physical agony, the emotional trauma of becoming convenient victims in other's schemes, and the lives cut so terribly short (Willoughby excepted).

Oh, how they suffered, but they suffered for and with Christ. May God grant us similar rich and deep devotion to him in our generation.

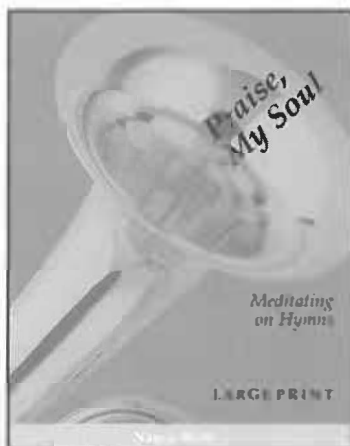
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-From the author's Introduction

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In Central New York, a New Way of Thinking About Mission

A full-time, paid philosopher on diocesan staff might seem to be an extravagance. The Rt. Rev. Gladstone B. Adams, recently consecrated Bishop of Central New York, believes it is a necessity.



Fr. Kowalewski

One of Bishop Adams' first acts after his installation was to name the Rev. Paul J. Kowalewski to the newly created position of canon visionary. He begins Jan. 1. "We don't exactly know where this will all end up," Bishop Adams said, "but we wanted to challenge people with [a title] that combined both the traditional and the modern."

For the past eight years, Fr. Kowalewski was the rector of St. David's in Dewitt, N.Y., and since 1999 he has also served part-time as dean of the Diocesan School for Ministry. The school was created to help train deacons and to allow adults to explore the priesthood as a second career without first committing to full-time seminary enrollment.

"We felt that was perpetuating the same old models," said Fr. Kowalewski. "The work I'm called to do will be engaging the culture. We wanted something that we could incorporate into the entire life of the diocese."

With the creation of the new position, the Diocesan School for Ministry will cease to exist as a separate entity. In his new role, Fr. Kowalewski will be responsible for helping Bishop Adams develop a vision for the diocese for the 21st century. His other main task will be to develop a new educational program that will help train clergy and lay leaders to implement the vision.

Trustees Stand by Former Dean

Past and present members of the board of trustees of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale continue to maintain that former dean R. William Franklin is a scapegoat for a financial system that existed long before his arrival at the Episcopal seminary three years ago [TLC, Jan. 6].

In the aftermath of his abrupt resignation, support for the former dean remains strong. His supporters contend that the recent public revelation of financial irregularities is not a criminal matter, but rather a dispute over accounting practices between Yale and the Episcopal seminary. The financial irregularities became public after the *Hartford Courant* obtained a copy of the conclusions of an internal confidential Yale audit.

"There was obviously a difference of perceptions by Berkeley and Yale for many years before Mr. Franklin became dean of the accounting procedures that Berkeley had to follow," said John E. Burke, a public relations specialist retained by Berkeley. "That difference is now being resolved in

the discussions about the continued affiliation of Berkeley and Yale."

The existing agreement of affiliation between Berkeley and Yale is complex and unusual according to the Rev. Rowan Greer, an Episcopal priest and emeritus professor at Yale Divinity School. Fr. Greer is also a past long-time Berkeley trustee. Since the agreement was first signed in 1971, most Episcopal churches have made their accounting procedures more transparent and less vulnerable to fraud, Fr. Greer said. Unfortunately Berkeley did not modernize, but that does not mean that there was wrongdoing, he added.

Information supplied by Mr. Burke supports Fr. Greer. Mr. Burke said that every year for at least that the past 10 Berkeley had undertaken and passed certified audits by independent agencies. In contrast, Yale had for at least the past 10 years failed to review Berkeley's books until last summer as part of an ongoing discussion between Yale and Berkeley to amend the original agreement.

Two Bishops Support Accokeek Appeal

The bishops of Fort Worth and Pittsburgh have filed an *amicus curiae* — or "friend of the court" brief — on behalf of the Rev. Samuel L. Edwards as he appeals his rejection to be rector of Christ Church in Accokeek, Md.

The Rt. Rev. Jack L. Iker of Fort Worth and the Rt. Rev. Robert Duncan of Pittsburgh have joined the case because they believe the matter should be resolved by ecclesiastical proceedings rather than the federal courts. The Rt. Rev. Jane Holmes Dixon, Bishop *Pro Tempore* of Washington, waited more than a canonically specified 30 days — the exact meaning of which is under dispute — before making public her rejection of Fr. Edwards' call to be rector.

Fr. Edwards subsequently occupied the rectory and began conducting services, despite Bishop Dixon's objection. She sued in U.S. District Court and that court ruled that a trial

was not necessary because the facts as presented supported her belief that she has the right both to interpret canons and implement policy within her diocese.

In filing their brief, Bishops Iker and Duncan said they believe that the lower court failed to take into account the limitations placed on a bishop's authority relating to the election and call of a rector by an Episcopal congregation.

The two bishops also contend that this dispute should follow the precedent in which church and state are separate and as such the matter should be resolved within the structures of the Episcopal Church and not in the federal court system.

The Federal Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals is in Richmond, Va. Oral arguments to the Fourth Circuit Court on the appeal are tentatively scheduled for Jan. 24.

Smoky and Sooty, N.Y. Cathedral Presses On

A day after the five-alarm fire destroyed the north transept gift shop of the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City, organist Dorothy Papadakos relayed encouraging news. "The Great Organ, great choir and nave all survived. It's smoky, sooty and soggy, but still here," she wrote in response to hundreds of calls and e-mails. "The subway authority brought over their pumps used to empty subway tunnels because the gift shop basement was flooded ... The scene inside [the gift shop] was indescribable, once some of us were allowed in after the smoke toxicity had decreased to acceptable levels."

Fire officials believe the blaze started in wiring in the shop's computers which keep track of the inventory. Much of the \$1.5 million in revenue from the store is usually generated during Christmas time.

The most serious damage caused by the Dec. 18 blaze was done to two of a series of 12 17th-century tapes-

tries depicting the life of Christ. The 15- by 17-foot "Last Supper" and the smaller "Resurrection" were high up on the north wall, against windows that shattered from the intense heat. *The New York Times* reported that they were carefully brought down after they'd been thoroughly soaked. "The tapestries were black with soot and littered with debris and bits of broken glass, but members of the cathedral's conservation team said parts of them could be saved."

Four of the series were on the south wall, and were affected only by the smoke. Six more were safe in the textile laboratory, far from fire and water. The set was commissioned in 1643 by Cardinal Francesco Barberini, and woven in a Roman workshop. Only one other example of their work exists in the United States.

New York firefighters again came in for praise in the handling of the fire and of the cathedral itself. "The Fire and Rescue men, 200 of them, were incredible professionals in their

tender care of artifacts, especially the furniture, tapestries, and organs," wrote Ms. Papadakos. The *Times* story says "they refrained from smashing the stained-glass windows, which would have vented the fire and made conditions less smoky. They used heat sensors to detect flames to cut down on the amount of water used."

Columbia student Richard Mammana wrote about the "overwhelming feel" ... of "another shocking and terrible thing to hit a city which had already suffered too much in the space of just three months." Ms. Papadakos called it "yet another exhausting, shocking New York Tuesday."

And in what many residents are calling another New York miracle, the cathedral opened to some 5,000 Christmas Eve worshipers, and hundreds more on Christmas morning. Even with charred wood and the smell of smoke, the cathedral celebrated.

Patricia Nakamura



Kyle Riley photo

The Rt. Rev. George H. Quarterman, retired Bishop of Northwest Texas, marked the 55th anniversary of his consecration as a bishop, at a service on the eve of the first Sunday of Advent. During the service at St. Andrew's Church, Amarillo, Texas, Bishop Quarterman, 95, gave the homily and spoke of love: "Love, like that of God, is grounded in character that is free of fluctuations of sentiment and independent of the response of the object of his love."

BRIEFLY...

The **University of the South** will enhance its efforts to encourage young people to include the ministry in their career options after the Indianapolis-based Lilly Foundation awarded the Episcopal seminary a \$2 million grant. The grant was one of 28 with a combined total of more than \$55 million that the philanthropic foundation awarded during 2001.

A **Nigerian student** charged with theft has told an Islamic court that it has no jurisdiction because he is a Christian. A judge was expected to rule shortly on the motion. In recent years a number of northern Nigerian states have incorporated Sharia, or Islamic penal codes, into their judicial system. Christians are not directly subject to Sharia, however.

The **Law Enforcement Chaplaincy** in

Sacramento, Calif., will no longer require its volunteer members to profess to a literal interpretation of the Bible narrative and code of ethics after the Rev. James Richardson, an associate at Trinity Cathedral, expressed public concern that those values did not reflect the ecumenical diversity and lifestyle diversity of the community.

A jury found the **Anglican Church of Australia** liable for sexual abuse committed by one of its former Toowoomba Prep School employees, and ordered the church to pay more than \$430,000 U.S. to the 24-year-old woman who was victimized. The church immediately expressed "deep regret," but ruled out a blanket apology to all victims of its related organizations and reserved its right to appeal the decision.

Therefore let us keep the — *fiesta!*

By Lynne Atherton

Even from afar the completed Church of Faith and Joy was stunning to behold.

For many of the 36 Americans who “kept the fiesta” recently outside San Pedro Sula in Honduras this was a return visit.

We had created and carried cinder blocks, lugged lumber for scaffolding, and experienced the surprising sting of sweat in our eyes. We had worked shoulder to shoulder with Honduran counterparts Carlos and “Hay-soss” (Jesus), who were in charge. At noon on the final work day, our chaplain, the Rev. Shawn Schreiner, had celebrated Eucharist on the nail-strewn dirt floor of the roofless, half-walled church.

Streamers and palm fronds decorated the entire community that now includes 140 (out of a planned total of 200) homes with electricity and running water, a sewage system, a new school, a community center, and the Frank Griswold Clinic.

Youngsters wearing bright white “Soy Episcopal” (I am an Episcopalian) T-shirts darted about before lining up for the huge 21-rank procession that was miraculously held together by one talented priest with a guitar.

We were handed bilingual programs and nudged into procession ourselves, after a lengthy time of sociable milling around in the shade of the school’s arcade. Our route took us past the impressive entrance wall that features in marble the names of 230 major contributors.

The preacher — in bilingual chunks of sermon — was the Rev. Canon Lloyd E. Allen, then Bishop-elect of Honduras. “By itself, building a new church cannot save the church,” he told the congregation, “any more than having a baby can save a marriage, or a new sound system can save a car. [The church’s] purpose is to serve the world in his name ...”

Over the past three years, more than 1,500 Episcopalians from all over the U.S. have gone to Honduras in small work groups. Episcopal Relief and Development (formerly the Presiding Bishop’s Fund for World Relief) and the Diocese of Honduras have choreographed the work weeks to make them user-friendly, meaningful, fun and productive.

“We have built a large church because God has helped us largely,” said the Rev. Leonel Blanco, rector and in-country project head. □

Lynne Atherton is a member of the Church of the Holy Spirit, Lake Forest, Ill.



Streamers are hung to celebrate the opening of Church of Faith and Joy.



The interior of the church on the day of consecration.



Two of the clergy provide music as children line up for the procession.

Lynne Atherton photo

Perhaps Not a Crazy Idea



"You're not going to believe what this woman has done," my co-worker said. I'm a gullible sort, so if she figured I wouldn't believe it, then I had to hear about it. She went on to tell me about a person who had canceled her subscription to TLC because she had canceled all mail delivery. She told our staff person that she was worried about the threat of terrorists striking by mail.

Unusual, I thought, but plausible. I forgot about it until someone showed me a piece of mail which had been sent by our business office to a woman in Connecticut. "Refused by addressee" was stamped on the envelope. It was our attempt to refund the subscription of the Rev. Christine G. Geer, of Southington, Conn. She really was refusing mail.

I had to know more, so I telephoned Ms. Geer. She sounded like a perfectly normal person. In fact, she probably could have convinced me to refuse my mail if she had tried. But she didn't. I learned she was a retired priest who lives in southeast Connecticut.

"It happened during the first week of November," she said. "I hadn't thought much about the mail until my son, who lives

anthrax," she recalled. "I thought my son's attitude wasn't so bizarre after all.

"I've got more important things to do than worry about the mail," she said. "I haven't got time to be sick."

Ms. Geer knows first-hand the results of terrorism. She has spent more than 50 hours as a volunteer chaplain working at ground zero of the World Trade Center site in New York City. "It's physically tiring, but emotionally draining," she said. She went on to tell of having conducted funeral-memorial services at the site. She was only somewhat prepared for this chaplaincy, having been a chaplain for the Santa Fe (N.M.) Police Department, at the San Francisco County Jail, at the New Mexico State Prison, and in various hospitals.

So she canceled mail delivery and alerted creditors. Now she pays bills online and does considerable telephone communication. "There have been some glitches," she admitted. "A few angry phone calls. But most of my meaningful communication takes place via e-mail or on the telephone."

And how are friends and acquaintances dealing with her decision to refuse mail delivery? "The reaction has been, 'Are you crazy?'," she said.

Would Ms. Geer advise anyone else — individuals, churches, businesses — to refuse mail? No, she wouldn't. "It all depends on where you live," she said. "And if you sense your mail could be a threat."

Ms. Geer lives some 35-40 minutes from the late Otilie Lundgren, who died after being exposed to anthrax apparently received in the mail. Ms. Geer's mail went into a different regional post office than Ms. Lundgren's, but she remains concerned about the possibility of contamination.

Besides staying in good health, Ms. Geer has found another benefit of having no mail.

"I don't miss things," she said, "all those catalogs they send out at this time of year. I do miss THE LIVING CHURCH."

On the day most of this column was written, my mail at home contained six catalogs, three bills, and three pieces of what I would call junk mail. Perhaps Ms. Geer has the right idea after all.

David Kalvelage, executive editor

A person had canceled her subscription to TLC because she had canceled all mail delivery, worried about the threat of terrorists striking by mail.



with me, raised it. He's in the medical profession. He told me he had canceled his mail but I wasn't getting mine either." So Ms. Geer went to the post office to get the matter straightened out and wound up agreeing with her son's idea.

"I had just read a *New York Times* article which mentioned tens of thousands of letters which could have come in contact with

Did You Know...

The Diocese of Northern California was once the Diocese of Sacramento.

Quote of the Week

The Rev. Andrew Thompson, of Oakwood, Derby, England, a priest and practicing magician, on holding a congregation's attention: "Church services can be rather dull; but as soon as you whip out a flaming torch or a guillotine, they tend to sit up and take notice."



There is nothing
more profound
that can be accomplished
by church members
during this week of prayer
than to pray that our Lord's
will be done,
and our divisions
healed.



Prayers for Christian Unity

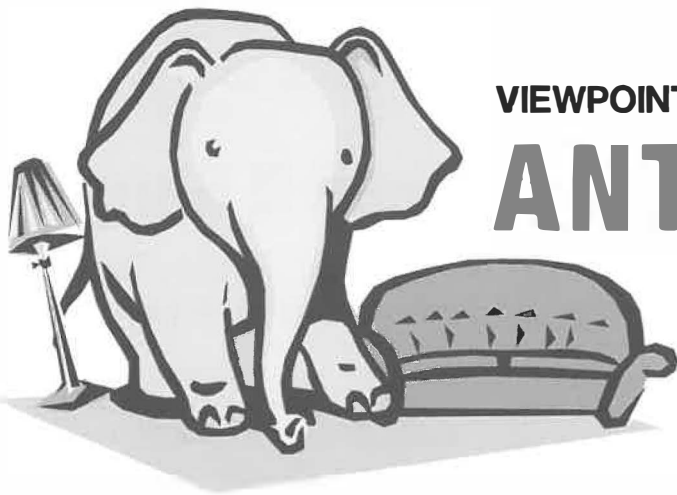
The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, observed from Jan. 18 (the feast of the Confession of St. Peter), through Jan. 25 (the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul), may have more impact than usual this year. *Called to Common Mission*, the agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has been in effect for more than a year, and seems to be more widely accepted around both churches. There are Episcopal priests in charge of Lutheran congregations, and Lutheran clergy functioning as pastors of Episcopal churches.

The Week of Prayer was begun in 1908 by a former Episcopal priest who became a Roman Catholic. It has continued ever since, with various degrees of interest and enthusiasm, mostly in local communities. For the most part observances have consisted of services of worship involving clergy and members of several churches, pulpit exchanges, celebrations of combined ministries or mission, or even ecumenical dialogue. Almost lost in the zeal for ecumenical activity is the title of the observance. Prayer, the original focus of this octave, cannot be overlooked. There is nothing more profound that cannot be accomplished by church members during this week of prayer than to pray that our Lord's will be done, and our divisions healed.

Day for Baptisms

Because of the importance the church places on the sacrament of baptism, and the importance for us of understanding what it means to be baptized people, the baptism of our Lord deserves to be richly celebrated. The story of the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist is a familiar one, but it was all but overlooked by much of the church until recent times.

Prior to the 1928 revision of the Book of Common Prayer, the commemoration of the baptism of Jesus was limited to the Daily Offices. The gospel story of the baptism was read on the second Sunday after the Epiphany in the 1928 book. In the 1979 revision, the baptism is commemorated on the first Sunday in all three years of the lectionary. It is particularly appropriate that baptisms take place on this day. With the emphasis on baptism in the 1979 prayer book, we have learned that baptism is not simply something that happens to babies. Baptism is the foundation of our life in the church. This Sunday is a wonderful time to affirm this.



VIEWPOINT

ANTI-SEMITISM

The Elephant in the Living Room

By Gardiner H. Shattuck, Jr.

On Oct. 30, the three Episcopal bishops of Massachusetts, the largest diocese in the United States, joined a dramatic pro-Palestinian demonstration in front of the Israeli consulate in Boston.

Surrounded by posters showing a Palestinian child dwarfed by an Israeli tank and condemning "destruction in Bethlehem," Bishops M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE, Barbara C. Harris, and Roy F. Cederholm, Jr. expressed solidarity with Palestinians killed and wounded in recent clashes with troops occupying West Bank towns. The bishops, dressed in purple cassocks and pectoral crosses

sized that they felt compelled to take action as leaders in the church, for Christians as well as Muslims were suffering grievously at the hands of Israeli soldiers in Jerusalem and elsewhere. There had long been "a simmering uneasiness in the Christian community" about the conflict in the Middle East, they thought, and it was time for church people finally to speak up. Instead of continuing to ignore what they termed "the elephant in the living room," the three bishops had participated in the vigil in order "to break the silence on Israel's unacceptable treatment of Palestinians."

Although the three Episcopalians received immediate support from the heads of other protestant churches

Israelis. They were not taking sides in the complicated struggle in the Middle East, they insisted, but simply wanted to encourage dialogue among Christians, Jews, and Muslims about it.

Coming in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, this controversy involving church leaders in Boston ought to be as disturbing to Episcopalians as it was to members of the Jewish community. As Jonathan Rosen noted in the *New York Times Magazine* ("The Uncomfortable Question of Anti-Semitism," Nov. 4, 2001), Jews in the United States, no less than Muslims, find themselves in an extremely vulnerable position at the present time. Mr. Rosen fears that anti-Semitism, which diminished markedly after World War II, might well re-emerge in strength in Europe and the Americas.

Although "anti-Semitism" is a rela-

Instead of continuing to ignore what they termed "the elephant in the living room," the three bishops had participated in the vigil in order "to break the silence on Israel's unacceptable treatment of Palestinians."



Left to right: Bishops Harris, Cederholm, and Shaw outside the Israeli consulate in Boston on October 30, 2001.

symbolizing their office as Christian leaders, protested acts of violence in the town revered in their faith tradition as the birthplace of Jesus. "God is with all who are oppressed," they announced, and "today and every day we stand with our Palestinian brothers and sisters" in their struggle against the military forces of Israel.

In a letter to the clergy of their diocese explaining why they had become involved in the demonstration, the bishops noted that the issues they raised were not new but had been espoused by the Episcopal Church for several decades. Episcopalians had consistently supported both the Palestinians' right to establish their own state and international demands for Israel's withdrawal from territories seized during the Six-Day War. In addition, the bishops empha-

and organizations in Boston, they were soon roundly denounced by local Jewish leaders, who recognized the deeper historical implications of their actions. As the executive director of the Anti-Defamation League observed, it was troubling that the protest had been so one-sided. Why, he wondered, had the bishops been silent about terrorist attacks by Palestinians against innocent Israeli citizens? The pain that Jewish leaders felt was understandable, since the Episcopalians' apparent indifference to the murder of Jews seemed to echo the behavior of Christian prelates in Europe during the Nazi era. Sensitive to such criticism, Bishops Shaw, Harris, and Cederholm quickly amended their initial remarks, emphasizing that they grieved in equal measure for the deaths of Palestinians and

tively modern term, the bitter hatred of Jews is an ancient evil in which Christians have consistently col-luded. Throughout history, Jews have been treated as scapegoats for whatever problems a particular society has faced. Blamed for the deaths of Christian children (the "blood libel" myth) in the 12th century and for the bubonic plague that swept through Europe two centuries later, thousands of Jews were slaughtered by enraged mobs. Jews as corrupt and villainous child-killers, whether represented by the gospel's account of the killing of the Holy Innocents in first-century Bethlehem, by accusations of ritual murders in the Middle Ages, or by Israeli tanks menacing young Palestinians on the West Bank today, this image has remained vital within the collective Christian imagi-

Instead of overt violence, the anti-Semitism of Anglicans and Episcopalians has usually taken the form of social exclusion.

nation over the centuries. Given the power of this pernicious stereotype, it is scandalous that leaders in the Episcopal Church have lately chosen to repeat a historic pattern of singling out Jews for censure.

Anti-Semitism is, in a very real sense, Christianity's original sin — the unnoticed "elephant," as it were, standing in the middle of the church's living room. Thanks to interfaith discussions during the last few decades, I am sure that few Episcopalians would consciously defend the invectives uttered by theologians from John Chrysostom to Martin Luther, or similar pronouncements in which earlier generations of Christians depicted Jews as agents of Satan. However, because manifestations of anti-Semitism in England and the United States have been relatively mild in comparison to other countries, some modern-day Anglicans may well feel complacent about our role in this hateful tradition. In fact, we have very little to brag about. Instead of overt violence, the anti-Semitism of Anglicans and Episcopalians has usually taken the form of social exclusion — bigoted attitudes conveyed in literary works such as Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and T.S. Eliot's poetry rather than in pogroms and death camps. Indeed, members of the Episcopal social elite were still speaking openly of their contempt for Jews as recently as the 1960s — a culture of smirking anti-Semitism in which a number of today's church leaders were raised.

The statement by the House of Bishops on the events of Sept. 11 ("On Waging Reconciliation,") clearly needs to be understood in this light. In their remarks to the church, the House of Bishops rightly summoned Episcopalians to aid "our Muslim brothers and sisters . . . in this time of fear and recrimination." Unfortunately, their statement — unlike the more balanced one adopted by the Executive Council a few weeks later — offered no advice on how Chris-

tians are meant to relate to Jews. Thus, as an ironic result of the current emphasis on Muslim-Christian dialogue alone, there are increasing attempts to question America's traditional support of Israel. Since anti-Zionism is now a common way to express anti-Semitic sentiments in many parts of the world, the House of Bishops would have been wise to

***Anti-Semitism is,
in a very real sense,
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original sin.***



take note of this trend and to warn its membership against demonizing Jewish people when speaking about the Middle East.

Because of the enduring heritage of anti-Semitic bigotry, Episcopalians as well as other Christians in the United States need to be extraordinarily careful in their interaction with the Jewish community during these perilous times. The three bishops of Massachusetts are certainly to be commended for their desire to see an end of the conflict that has existed among Muslims, Jews, and Christians in Palestine. But the ill-considered tactics they employed during their protest at the Israeli consulate bring to mind troubling images of vested Christian clergy reproving the Jews in ages past. Because of the shameful history of Christian-Jewish relations, Episcopal leaders commenting on the state of Israel should never overlook the presence of this "elephant in the living room" — the sin of anti-Semitism that continues to pervade the church's soul. □

A priest and historian, Gardiner H. Shattuck, Jr. is the author of Episcopalians and Race: Civil War to Civil Rights. He resides in Warwick, R.I.

Keep It Simple

Charles Wilson's article, "Why the 2020 Goal Will Not Happen" [TLC, Dec. 9] speaks boldly of the concerns that many have regarding the mandate for increasing the size of the Episcopal Church by 2020. I'm not quite as apprehensive as he is, but I do have some concerns that I see looming on the horizon because of action from Executive Council.

The original efforts on the part of volunteers committed to evangelism, led by Ted Mollegen, are to be commended. I believe they had a vision and saw the possibilities.

My two concerns in this "next phase" is that the organized church, including the Executive Council (I was a member from 1990-96), will try to micro-manage winning people to Jesus Christ. They will (1) over-organize the effort, making it politically correct, thereby losing the zeal of the original task force; and (2) the leadership of the Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism will wear itself out trying to meet impossible requirements established by the church hierarchy before a new member finds his/her way through our doors.

Any effort worth doing needs structure. The DME Commission can give the leadership, but let's not drown the cause in so much organization that we lose sight of those who need to know the saving grace of Jesus Christ. There are many dedicated people sitting in our pews who are willing to get off their "duffs" if they know their talents will be used. I hope the DME lays out simple marching orders and challenges our bishops, other clergy and lay leadership in each diocese to get to work. We then will see where the zeal for Christ is really planted.

*Harry Denman
Coffeyville, Kan.*

Among all the articles that are written concerning the reasons for growth (or lack thereof) in the Episcopal Church, including Charles R.

Wilson's "Why the 2020 Goal Will Not Happen," two critical pieces are often missing.

My congregation has been through a transition from pastoral to program size, and now is moving into the corporate size. In order to make these changes, we have had to deal with our own resistance to growth and meaningful provision for new people. For years we said we wanted this, but when it came down to it we said "no" to anything that seemed to threaten our sense of being "a small, friendly community where the priest is accessible" (sound familiar?).

This sentiment no doubt comes from a very real need: our contemporary tendency toward isolation and lack of extended family. But what we often don't understand is that meaningful community and connection with clergy and other spiritual guides can happen in many ways, and not just through small numbers. Until we are willing to confront our assumptions and look at alternative perspectives, we fearfully and unconsciously resist capital campaigns for building, extra liturgies, ambitious new-member classes, and anything else that would make growth possible.

The second piece has to do with clergy. If clergy are not emotionally healthy and well grounded in their own faith life, they will have nothing useful to say when they preach, teach or pastor. If they take the time to pray, retreat and study, if they work with a spiritual director and struggle with faith issues, chances are they will have something to say. It will probably be compelling, and people will, by word of mouth, hear about it and come on Sunday. Others who are vital and alive in their faith journey will come, and over time many more than just the clergy will help sustain an atmosphere that is spiritually awake.

*(The Rev.) Brian C. Taylor
St. Michael and All Angels' Church
Albuquerque, N.M.*

Charles Wilson is right on target with his critique of the 2020 goal.

One of his reasons that 2020 will fail is what he calls "a medieval/English village model of ministry that doesn't work." He doesn't say it in so many words, but a clear expression of this outmoded framework is that many Episcopalians call their priests "Father," (or sometimes, in the case of female clergy, "Mother") — and that many clergy encourage this nomenclature, which is of relatively recent vintage in the Episcopal Church.

As my former bishop would say, the problem with this is that the church isn't supposed to be modeled

The church isn't supposed to be modeled on the family; it's a community. When we use the parental terms for our clergy, the obvious implication is that we — the laity — are the children.

on the family; it's a community. When we use the parental terms for our clergy, the obvious implication is that we — the laity — are the children.

I prefer to think of myself and my contemporaries as adults, capable — as Charles Wilson says — of "collegiality and mutual responsibility." As long as we address our priests as "Father" or "Mother," we're perhaps unconsciously accepting the notion that those folks will take care of the church. Who knows? If the laity bought the idea that the church's work is really their work, the Episcopal Church might grow significantly.

So I suggest that we grown-up Episcopalians regard each other as fellow grownups, working side-by-side at the tasks of the church in the world. I hope we're on first-name terms with our clergy, but if some of us are not, then "Mr." or "Ms." preceding the surname will be just fine.

*Cary Patrick
Atlanta, Ga.*

I can't figure what Fr. Wilson's purpose was in writing his Viewpoint, "Why the 2020 Goal Will Not Happen."

Was it to be a prophet, an expert, a stick-in-the-mud? The only thing I can imagine is that he is in hopes of later saying, "I told you so." I hope and pray he doesn't get that chance.

I'm reminded of those who trashed the Decade of Evangelism. Certainly it didn't all work out as well as we had hoped. But to question the church's motives? And to suggest that it was not a fruitful exercise? We do, as Archbishop Temple said, "exist for those outside of ourselves," don't we?

I am thrilled that the church has the guts to undertake the 2020 goal. At the very least (and I know there will be much more), we will be challenged to consider inviting those outside of the church inside. I have challenged our congregation to double its size in five years (fortunately we are in a growth area), but if we don't, so what? At least we tried, and certainly learned something in the process.

Fr. Wilson asks the question, "in order that ... (what)?", as if there is not a good reason to undertake this project. Around here, we've got such a great thing going, we'd like to invite others to join us as we know, love, and serve Christ in a wonderful Christian community. That's what!

*(The Rev.) George D. Young III
St. Peter's Church
Fernandina Beach, Fla.*

I wonder where the Spirit of God is in the article about why the 2020 goal will not be achieved. Without the Holy Spirit we are just another corporate outfit. The church that is in the power of the Holy Spirit will spread the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The churches that are the fastest-growing in the Anglican Communion are those in Africa. These Spirit-filled churches meet anywhere and don't have a "business plan" or use a corporate organization as a model. If God is in our church, we will grow. If not, we will fail.

*(The Rev.) Todd Sermon
St. Andrew's Church
Cripple Creek, Colo.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Repentance Needed

The ongoing debate over repentance and forgiveness is generating much heat without much light. Do so many of the clergy pay no attention to the prayer book worship at which they preside? Whether in the Eucharist or Daily Office a confession always precedes an absolution. In the clear directions for administering the rite for The Reconciliation of a Penitent, the priest is to grant absolution only after confession has been made and "evidence of due contrition" provided. In the Ash Wednesday liturgy, there is public teaching that the clergy are to declare and pronounce to the people, "being penitent," the absolution and remission of their sins.

In Luke 17:3, Jesus clearly teaches his disciples that repentance precedes the granting of absolution. His words from the cross about forgiving those "who know not what they do" are most obviously directed to his immediate executioners, the Roman soldiers, who, as far as they knew, were simply carrying out the judgment of a lawful court and should not be taken as negating Jesus' own teaching on the subject.

A priest who preaches forgiveness without repentance and then presides at prayer book worship negates his own sermon. And a priest who grants absolution without requiring confession and evidence of contrition is in direct violation of his ordination vows.

Unconditional love is indeed at the heart of the gospel and forgiveness is central. But real love demands repentance and conversion of life.

Forgiveness is but one element in the whole process of our reconciliation to God and one another, and it is no loving act to short circuit the process by offering "cheap grace."

(The Rev. Canon) Stephen N. Brannon
Trinity Church
Sonoma, Calif.

I hope that this will be of help to Sally Campbell and those who share her reading of Fr. Flowers' point that forgiveness and grace "do not come cheaply." "Cheaply" has nothing to do with any price we pay, but with what it has cost God to make the gifts — to offer them to those who may say, "That's very nice (or presumptuous) of you, but I don't need them." In human terms, I am painfully aware of what it has meant to some persons to forgive me when I saw no need, to love me when I turned away.

(The Rev.) Robert Carroll Walters
Worcester, Mass.



If we are to double the size of our congregations by 2020, we will be better equipped to offer the uniqueness of the gospel of Jesus Christ if we understand our faith in the larger context of our pluralistic society.

Learning About Islam

As a result of the September tragedy, I have been moved to engage in a crash course in the study of the Muslim religion. As I reflect back 20 years to seminary, little was said about Islam except for perhaps a passing historical reference. In college, most of the weight of comparative religion courses were on Christianity and Judaism, with perhaps a cursory offering of Eastern religions. Again, little was said about Islam and the immensity of its impact. Consequently, I find myself ill equipped to understand or explain the belief system of more than a billion people on this planet and one

of the fastest-growing religions in this country.

The recent presentation by Trinity Institute at the cathedral in New York City was most helpful. The writings of Karen Armstrong on Islam are clear, readable and accessible, and there are numerous internet resources from which to pull. A door has opened for me as I read these texts, not only into the hearts and minds of Muslim believers, but also greater clarity as to what we as Christians believe.

On this note, a few suggestions might be offered. It seems obvious that seminary training should include more than a brief look at this monotheistic, Abrahamic faith. It is also possible for clergy and laity to engage with this study on the parish level through the sharing of study material and resources. In many locales, a trip to a mosque may be possible or an Imam may be invited to speak. (I overcame my shyness, invited the local Imam and he was with us for a study in Advent.)

The benefits have been worth the effort. It is my hope that we as a people of faith will have greater sensitivity and welcome to our Muslim neighbors. Furthermore, if we are to double the size of our congregations by 2020, we will be better equipped to offer the uniqueness of the gospel of Jesus Christ if we understand our faith in the larger context of our pluralistic society. If one is looking for ways to assist God in making something good out of tragedy, perhaps greater understanding of Islam is one way to make a Christian response.

(The Very Rev.) David G. Bollinger
St. Paul's Church
Owego, N.Y.

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