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Editorial and Business offices: 816 E. Juneau Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53202-2793 Mailing address: P.O. Box 514036 Milwaukee, WI 53203-3436 Telephone: 414-276-5420 Fax: 414-276-7483 E-mail: tlc@livingchurch.org

www.livingchurch.org

MANUSCRIPTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: THE LIV-ING 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

Periodicals postage paid at Milwaukee, WI, and at additional mailing offices.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$42.50 for one year; \$62.00 for 18 months; \$80.00 for two years. Canadian postage an additional \$29.18 per year; Mexican rate \$55.42; all other foreign, \$44.27 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE LIVING Church, P.O. Box 514036, Milwaukee, WI 53203-3436. Subscribers, when submitting address changes please allow 3-4 weeks for change to take effect,

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. ©2008 The Living Church Foundation, Inc. All rights reserved. No reproduction in whole or part can be made without permission of THE LIVING CHUNCH. Volume 236

Number 17

THE LIVING CHURCH magazine is published by the Living Church Foundation, Inc. The historic mission of the Living Church Foundation is to promote and support Catholic Anglicanism within the Episcopal Church.

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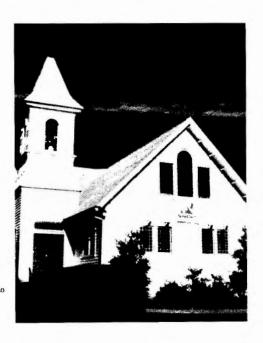
St. Philip's Church, Quantico, Md. The Feast of St. Philip and St. James is transferred to May 2 this year. St. Philip's Church photo

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SUNDAY'S **READINGS**

The Spirit of Truth

"...he will give you another Advocate" (John 14:7)

The Sixth Sunday of Easter (Year A), April 27, 2008

BCP: Acts 17:22-31 or Isaiah 41:17-20; Psalm 148 or 148:7-14; 1 Pet. 3:8-18 or Acts 17:22-31; John 15:1-8

RCL: Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 66:7-18; 1 Pet. 3:13-22; John 14:15-21

Years ago, language chosen by the Church to talk about God could strike terror into the hearts of impressionable young children. And it certainly struck terror in the young heart of this writer some decades ago in Sunday school. One of the Persons of the Trinity, after all, was a ghost, and this fit well with the frequent injunctions of the King James Version that we "fear" God. Pretty frightening stuff!

It's significant that in most of our churches the Holy Ghost has become the Holy Spirit, a far less foreboding image. And that Spirit is described in today's gospel in terms of advocacy, quite the opposite of a threat or a fear-some foe. It is this Advocate, this "Spirit of truth," whom Jesus promises will abide in his Church to the end of time.

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth," Jesus promises later in John's gospel (16:13). And undoubtedly the Spirit does that. But the mechanism by which this happens is open to debate. "I have as much authority as the

pope," comedian George Carlin has written. "I just don't have as many people who believe it." And it's difficult indeed for most Anglicans to see the Spirit abiding more fully in one person than in any other. Is the Spirit's guidance perceived then through headcounts? Sometimes, perhaps, but many popular theological notions have throughout history led whole pieces of the Church into what was later identified as heresy.

To the extent that the promised "Spirit of truth" is indeed an advocate and not a frightening power, one might suspect that he seldom speaks arbitrarily through a particular individual. One might also suspect, however, that the Spirit's leading isn't always known definitively through the machinations of confrontational politics. The promised Spirit's method of guiding us "into all the truth" is probably far more subtle than either.

However it is that truth is ultimately revealed, we can be assured that, given sufficient time, the Spirit always leads God's people to consensus.

Look It Up

What role does the Spirit of truth play in the freedom mentioned in John 8:31-37?

Think About It

What are some of the issues on which the Spirit had led God's people to consensus over the course of history?

Next Sunday

The Seventh Sunday of Easter (Year A), May 4, 2008

BCP: Acts 1:(1-7)8-14 or Ezek. 39:21-29; Psalm 68:1-20 or 47; 1 Pet. 4:12-19 or Acts 1:(1-7)8-14; John 17:1-11

RCL: Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 33-36; 1 Pet. 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

Keeping the Faith

By **Peter Williams**. WCC Publications. Pp. 64. \$23. ISBN 978-2825414774.

This wonderful book is a collection of stunning photographs and stories about Christian communities around



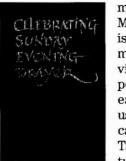
the world who are doing the work of "keeping the faith." It is a clear testimony to the extraordinary richness that exists under the broad umbrella of Christianity.

From a Full Gospel church in Seoul, Korea, to the Christian Evangelical Alliance in Indonesia to a Coptic parish in Kenya, this book covers a wide embrace in a few pages. It is an ideal book for Christian educators who need a resource that captures the imagination briefly and effectively, and shows the life of the Church in places that few will ever visit or get to know well.

(The Very Rev.) Peter Eaton Denver, Colo. done us a favor. Celebrating Sunday Evening Prayer is a very practical resource. It can be used by priests and musicians looking for more tools to enrich their parish's experience of the church's longstanding tradition of offering the evening sacrifice of prayer.

The introduction highlights the basic principles involved in the creation of evening worship: environment, symbol, and ministry. Basic elements of liturgical structure, prayer, silence, posture, and

ration



music are also addressed. More than half of the book is dedicated to music. The musical resources provided include psalms pointed to simplified tunes, easily adapted for parish use. Other music includes canticles and prayers set to Taizé and Taizé-styled tunes. An accompanying

CD is included with the texts and musical selections provided in PDF format.

(The Rev.) Scott Allen Seefeldt Racine, Wis.

Celebrating Sunday Evening Prayer

Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

Canterbury Press Norwich. www.canterburypress.co.uk. Pp. 192. \$51. ISBN 978-185117329

Some New Testament scholars were gathered at an ecumenical conference one day when, just minutes of 5 o'clock, the Anglican priest packed up and headed out the door. "That's the problem with you Anglicans," remarked another scholar. "The moment we are really on to something, the bell rings and you are off to Evensong!" One would thus not think we need any additional help in putting together a good evening service. Yet how many of our parishes really make use of this beautiful office: and how much of our evening service music is really within the grasp of the average church?

To that end, the Roman Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have

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Preliminary Ruling Favors Virginia Parishes

The ongoing division within The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion "is of the first magnitude," according to Fairfax, Va., Circuit Court Judge Randy I. Bellows, who issued a preliminary ruling April 3 in favor of 11 congregations that left the Diocese of Virginia after holding parish votes in 2006.

"We are pleased with this initial victory today," said Jim Oakes, vice-chairman of the Anglican District of Virginia and a member of the vestry at Truro Church. "We have maintained all along that The Episcopal Church and Diocese of Virginia had no legal right to our property because the Virginia Division Statute says that the majority of the church is entitled to its property when there is a division within the denomination."

Civil-War Era Statute

A rarely used Virginia statute enacted in the aftermath of the Civil War permits individual congregations to determine by majority vote what to do with local church property in the event of a schism. Lawyers for The Episcopal Church argued that Virginia Statute 57-9 was meant only in the event of a denomination-wide split,

and the local parish defections did not meet that threshold.

"The Court agrees that it was major divisions such as those within the Methodist and Presbyterian churches that prompted the passage of 57-9. However, it blinks at reality to characterize the ongoing division within the diocese, [The Episcopal Church], and the Anglican Communion as anything but a division of the first magnitude,' the ruling stated. The conclusion of the 88-page decision goes on to describe "the rapidity with which [The Episcopal Church's problems became that of the Anglican Communion, and the consequent impact - in some cases the extraordinary impact its provinces around the world."

The Office of the Presiding Bishop and the Diocese of Virginia expressed disappointment over the decision in statements published April 4.

"There will be time enough in the future to seek review of that decision if it becomes necessary," the statement from the Presiding Bishop's Office said in part. "In the meantime, we shall present to the court at the scheduled argument in May our contention that if the statute means what the court has held, it plainly deprives



The Episcopal Church and the diocese, as well as all hierarchical churches, of their historic constitutional rights to structure their polity free from governmental interference and thus violates the First Amendment and cannot be enforced.

"We also note that this decision does not bar the contentions of The Episcopal Church and the diocese regarding control over the property of the departing congregations that will be presented to the court in the fall."

On May 28, Judge Bellows will hear oral arguments on the constitutionality of the state statute. The fall hearing concerns a separate lawsuit.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu,
retired Primate of the
Anglican Church of Southern
Africa, made a surprise visit
April 6 to the Sunday school
of the African Episcopal
Church of St. Thomas, the
historic Philadelphia parish
founded in 1792 by the Rev.
Absalom Jones. Children
learned about the Nobel
laureate's work to end
apartheid and bring about
racial reconciliation in South
Africa during the 1980s.

Edward Muse/African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas photo



P.B. Presses Efforts to Remove More Bishops

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori continued preparations for a vote to depose Bishop Robert Duncan at a special House of Bishops' meeting before the Lambeth Conference this July. E-mail messages were sent April 8 to all members of the House of Bishops entitled to vote.

A disciplinary "Review Committee"

of bishops found sufficient evidence to conclude that Bishop Duncan had abandoned communion, a charge he has formally denied [TLC, Feb. 3]. Bishop Duncan has never been inhibited, a canonical objection raised by John Lewis, a lawyer retained by Bishop Duncan.

According to the Pittsburgh Post-

Gazette, David Booth Beers, chancellor to the Presiding Bishop, recently sent an e-mail to about two dozen Pittsburgh Episcopalians explaining that Bishop Jefferts Schori was not "seeking approval to proceed; rather, she seeks the mind of the House as to when to proceed" with a vote to remove Bishop Duncan. Shortly after the March 12 conclusion of the House of Bishops' spring retreat, Bishop Jefferts Schori called a Sept. 17-19 meeting in Salt Lake City.

Bishop Jefferts Schori also inhibited pending trial the Rt. Rev. Edward H. MacBurney, retired Bishop of Quincy, on April 2. Bishop MacBurney, 80, has been charged with performing confirmations last June at an Anglican parish within the geographic territory of the Diocese of San Diego that had previously affiliated with the Province of the Southern Cone [TLC, April 13].

Plea for Delay

The timing of the disciplinary notice deeply saddened the Rt. Rev. Keith Ackerman, Bishop of Quincy, who said he had pleaded with Bishop Jefferts Schori to delay the action for a short while out of pastoral consideration for the MacBurney family. Bishop MacBurney's son, Page, had been in hospice care and died April 4.

"I am beside myself with grief over this unnecessary action taken against my predecessor especially at a time when he is mourning the death of his son this past Friday," Bishop Ackerman said in a statement on the Forward in Faith website. Bishop Ackerman serves as the organization's president.

"In the midst of this difficult time for Bishop MacBurney and his family, I am really much more concerned about the implications of St. Matthew 18:15-17 as it relates to how reconciliation is pursued than I am with Title IV, Canon 1, Section 6 as it relates to disciplining my dear brother," Bishop Ackerman wrote.

Bishop Vest Was Progressive Advocate

Retired Southern Virginia Bishop Dies at Age 72

The Rt. Rev. Frank Harris Vest, Jr., retired Bishop of Southern Virginia and known for his commitment to social justice, died April 5 after a brief illness at his home in Westminster-

Canterbury Retirement Community in Lynchburg, Va. He was 72 years old.

Bishop Vest was serving as Bishop Suffragan of North Carolina when he was elected Bishop Coadjutor of Southern Virginia in 1989.



Bishop Vest

He served as Bishop of Southern Virginia from 1991 through 1998. Bishop Vest was elected and consecrated Bishop Suffragan of North Carolina in 1985.

A 1962 graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS) in Alexandria, Bishop Vest was born in Salem, Va., in 1936 and received his undergraduate degree summa cum laude from Roanoke College in 1959. He was ordained deacon in 1962 and priest in 1963 by Bishop William H. Marmion of Southwestern Virginia.

His initial ordained service was as curate at St. John's Church, Roanoke, for two years beginning in 1962. In 1964 he accepted a call as rector of Grace Church, Radford. While in Radford, he also was the chaplain to Radford College. In 1973, Bishop Vest became rector of Christ Church, Charlotte, N.C., a position he held until his

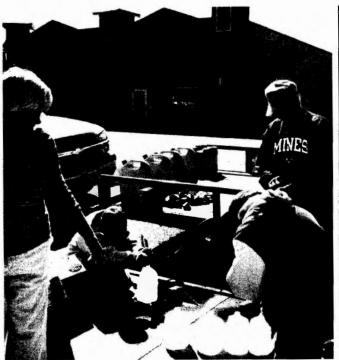
election as Bishop Suffragan.

Bishop Vest served as president of Southwestern Virginia's standing committee from 1971-1972 and chairman of the House of Bishops' Dispatch of Business Committee from 1989-1998. He was a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Nominations from 1986-1988 and served as a trustee of VTS from 1991-1998.

In 1992, Bishop Vest endorsed a resolution calling on members of the diocese to leave private clubs that exclude Jews, African Americans, women or other minority groups. The resolution met with some resistance by delegates to the annual council meeting and the approved resolution merely called on members of the diocese to work to change discriminatory policies.

"He was an effective leader who did not hesitate to uphold women as they sought ... leadership in the church," said the Rt. Rev. O'Kelley Whitaker, retired Bishop of Central New York, in an interview with the Roanoke Times-Dispatch. In retirement, Bishop Whitaker served as Assistant Bishop of Southern Virginia under Bishop Vest.

Bishop Vest is survived by his wife Ann Jarvis Vest, two sons: Frank III of Nashville, Tenn., and Robert of Charlotte, N.C., a daughter, Nina Vest Salmon of Lynchburg; a brother, James A. Vest of Bedford, Va.; and eight grandchildren. A memorial service was held April 10 at St. John's Church, Lynchburg, and April 17 at Ascension Church, Norfolk.





St. Thomas' Church photos

A sign outside St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Alamosa offers free water to residents and visitors of the remote Colorado town after government officials abruptly shut down the municipal water supply to treat it for a salmonella outbreak on March 18.

Gospel Inspires Response to Water Crisis

When a salmonella outbreak forced temporary closure of the local municipal water supply on March 18, the Rev. Dawn Simpson, curate at St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Alamosa, Colo., used a recent Sunday lectionary reading as inspiration to help the local community get through what she has begun referring to as "the big flush."

Ms. Simpson said she and other residents in the isolated Colorado town of about 9,000 were given no advance notice before health officials used massive doses of chlorine to disinfect the water supply. Since then, all water for cooking, bathing, and drinking has had to be trucked in from elsewhere. The nearest town is 22 miles away.

Before the water supply was treated, Ms. Simpson said she believes that she and one of her children became sick with what she initially assumed was stomach flu. After the tap went dry, Ms. Simpson said it took her about a day to recover from her shock. Then she recalled the gospel

from the third Sunday in Lent about Jesus offering living water to the woman at the well. She contacted the director of communications for the Diocese of Colorado to ask if an announcement could be circulated.

Donations of cash and bottled water arrived quickly, and the church began distributing it free. Since the beginning of the crisis, members of St. Thomas', which has an average Sunday attendance of fewer than 20, have distributed more than 2,200 gallons of potable water. Alamosa has a sizable migrant worker population, and Ms. Simpson said few such persons are willing to accept assistance from government agencies, which are often staffed by government officials in uniform.

"Living water has great significance considering our town is in crisis with our city water system being contaminated by salmonella," she wrote on an internet blog she maintains. "We have been blessed with the living water that Jesus Christ brought us."

Northwest Texas Postpones Electing Convention

The Diocese of Northwest Texas has postponed the special electing convention scheduled for May 3 to elect a new bishop due to a canonically insufficient number of candidates.

Diocesan canons specify that the nominating committee prepare a slate of between three and five candidates. The diocese has received a number of nominations, but according to the Rev. Clifton A. Mann, rector of St. Andrew's, Amarillo, and president of the standing committee, the next bishop will face a number of challenges and diocesan leaders are dedicated to finding candidates capable of meeting those challenges.

In addition to tight finances, Fr. Mann said the diocesan mission policy, parts of which date back to the formation of the diocese at the start of the 20th century, needs to be updated. Several parishes are in financial and pastoral distress and need extra attention. The diocese as a whole also needs to heal after suffering the defection of two of its largest parishes in recent years.

"Our situation is serious, but not critical," Fr. Mann said. "There's a line of people who want to be Bishop of Northwest Texas, but we are being very careful. We are trying to find people with a genuine calling to be bishop of this diocese. Once we get our attention focused on what we need to, I am confident that things will work out."

The nominating committee had a slate of three candidates prepared and was to announce the names in early March, but one of the candidates withdrew from consideration at the last minute. Fr. Mann said April 7 he did not know when the electing convention would be rescheduled. Diocesan canons specify that the electing convention may not be held less than 30 days after the publication of the slate of nominees.

Steve Waring

• More News, page 16 •

Diocese of Ohio Litigation Ends 'Peaceful Way to Coexist'

The Diocese of Ohio recently filed a declaratory judgment with the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas in Cleveland, asking that it, the diocesan trustees, and a minority of members at five dissident congregations be declared the rightful owners of church properties where the congregations voted overwhelmingly to leave in 2005.

The March 26 filing came after a February 20 article in the Akron Beacon Journal described how the relationship between the five dissenting congregations and the diocese was an exception to the personal acrimony and litigation prevalent throughout many other dioceses of The Episcopal Church. In another break with standard practice in most other dioceses, Bishop Mark Hollingsworth, Jr., of Ohio did not depose the clergy when they requested transfer of their canonical license to the Anglican Church of Nigeria.

In the Beacon Journal article,

Martha Wright, communications officer for the Diocese of Ohio, had said. "The priests in those congregations have asked to be released from their orders and their requests have been granted, but we have not taken any action where property is concerned."

Ms. Wright told THE LIVING CHURCH she was not aware in February of any plans to file legal papers at the time of her interview with the Beacon Journal. But she denied that the decision to pursue litigation at this time represents a new approach in dealing with the five congregations.

"The Episcopal Diocese of Ohio is seeking to resolve issues of property ownership and use with respect to five of its parishes in a mutually respectful manner," she said in a written statement. "In order to move toward a longterm resolution, the Diocese of Ohio has asked the Court of Common Pleas to decide the parties' respective rights with respect to the property."

Bishop Hollingsworth declined to

elaborate on the statement provided by Ms. Wright.

Bishop Roger Ames, a missionary bishop for the Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA), is rector of St. Luke's Church, Akron, one of the five congregations which voted to leave the diocese. In an interview with TLC, Bishop Ames said during the first pre-trial meeting between litigants, the legal team representing the Diocese of Ohio left the defendants with the impression that the diocese was reluctantly pursuing litigation at this time.

"It was the impression of our legal team and the rectors when we met with the legal team from the diocese that something happened with the national church," he said. "We had worked out a peaceful way to coexist locally."

Protocol Developed

The question of pressure by The Episcopal Church to pursue litigation possesses additional credibility because during deposition testimony last November in the case involving 11 congregations which withdrew from the Diocese of Virginia, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori admitted under oath that she had personally intervened to prevent a protocol from being implemented which would have permitted the congregations to purchase outright title to the local property from the diocese [TLC, Dec. 9]. The protocol was developed by a diocesan task force appointed by Bishop Peter James Lee of Virginia.

When asked whether Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori had encouraged Bishop Hollingsworth to bring suit against the five congregations, a spokesperson for The Episcopal Church said even among senior staff the Presiding Bishop almost never discusses private conversation she might have had with another bishop, and would certainly not do so with a journalist.

Steve Waring



The Most Rev. Thabo Cecil Makgoba blesses the city of Cape Town during a four-hour liturgy marking his installation as Archbishop of Cape Town and Primate of Southern Africa on March 30 at the Cathedral of St George the Martyr. At age 47, Archbishop Makgoba is one of the Anglican Communion's youngest primates.

Blessing of the Fields

For more than 60 years, St. Andrew's Church in Farm Ridge Township, III., has observed the Blessing of the Fields on the Sunday preceding the Rogation Days (April 28-30 this year).

One of the few remaining rural congregations in the Diocese of Chicago, St. Andrew's and its cemetery are surrounded by fields of corn and soy beans. Most of its members farm in the immediate area and several families have been affiliated with the congregation through multiple generations.

St. Andrew's is now part of a cluster of four congregations known as the LaSalle County Episcopal Ministry.

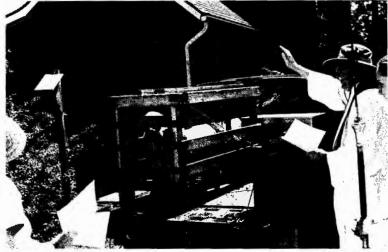
The Rev. John Crist, who serves the cluster, follows a traditional format entitled "The Cross and the Plow." The blessing begins in the church and then processes to four stations outside (clockwise from top): seeds and the fields, farm implements, animals and then farm families are blessed in turn. The service concludes at an outside stone altar.

St. Andrew's Church photos

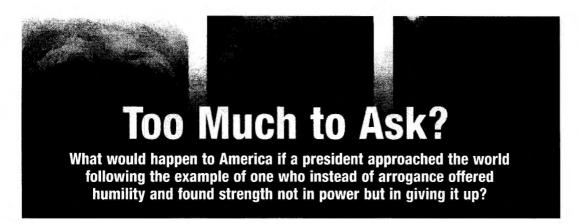












These days there is much enthusiasm on both sides of the aisle for presidential candidates. As the election draws closer, all involved will be analyzed and critiqued on every possible level. One area will be that of religion.

The interesting thing about that is that as of this writing all of the possible nominees declare themselves as Christian. This is nothing new. In fact, all prior presidents have claimed the same. Imagine, however, what would happen if actually doing what Jesus did was part of bearing his name.

Jesus sided with the poor and oppressed, particularly those whom society rejected. As one who accepted women and Samaritans, Jesus certainly would push for equal rights for women, for minorities, and GLBT persons. As one whose ministry focused on healing, Jesus probably would support universal health care. As one who asked the children to come to him, Jesus would have made sure that from health to education to hope, no child was ever left behind.

As a former refugee, he whose faith taught him to "remember the alien in your midst for you were once aliens in Egypt" would be likely to offer compassion to immigrants. As one who was called the Prince of Peace and said "the truth shall set you free," Jesus would undoubtedly seek the end of war and reconciliation for all people and nations.

Imagine for a moment how the one who taught us to love our enemies and forgive those who trespass against us would treat the peoples of Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, or Guantanimo Bay. Imagine how one who taught us to love our neighbors would respond to fences on our borders or in the Holy Land or to those who complain about agreements for fair trade.

Note that Jesus would champion "conservative" as well as "liberal" causes. As one who challenged people to be good stewards and "count the cost" before beginning projects, who in rendering to Caesar only what belongs

to Caesar, and commending the gift of widows mite, Jesus probably would be in favor of tax reform and encouraging personal responsibility. As one familiar with stories of laborers, farmers, and fishermen, Jesus would support small business. As one who supported soldiers in their work and himself modeled the greatest sacrifice, Jesus would honor and care for those who serve. And as one who was unafraid to speak against the political and religious leaders of his day, Jesus would confront the hypocrisy of government and the church.

In short, a Christian president would not be red or blue but would, like Jesus, wear the color purple. Is it possible? What would happen to America if a president approached the world following the example of one who instead of arrogance offered humility and found strength not in power but in giving it up? What would happen if instead of seeking support from religious authorities, a president offered a moral critique?

Perhaps this is too much to ask. Perhaps there are too many forces, too many conflicting ideas, too much evil and too many human failings in the world, for a Christian president to live in a Christ-like way.

What, however, about us? What if instead of hoping for a Christian president, people of faith modeled a Christian precedent? What if instead of expecting someone else to live his or her faith, we actually lived our own? Imagine the possibility if Americans — the vast majority of whom say they believed in God, the great bulk of whom claim to be Christian — sought to live in a Christ-like way. With such a precedent, we might indeed get a president whose faith is more than a political tool. More importantly, with such a precedent, we would transform our country and our world ourselves.

Our guest columnist is the Very Rev. Benjamin Shambaugh, dean of the Cathedral of St. Luke, Portland, Maine. Did You Know...
Charlton Heston, who died
April 5, was president
of the Episcopal Actor's
Guild from 1971-1974.

Quote of the Week
The Rev. Stephen T. Ayers,
vicar of Old North Church,
Boston, on the installation
of LED lighting at the historic church: "How many
places can you make
national news just by
changing a light bulb?"



Beauty of the Earth

There are few observances of the Rogation Days in The Episcopal Church anymore, which is a pity, for with so much emphasis being placed on taking care of our environment, the observation of these days could be particularly significant. The Rogation Days are the three days preceding the feast of our Lord's Ascension. Traditionally, these days were set aside as times to ask God's blessing on crops, herds, and other sources of food. Over time, various elements of the natural order were added to these observances.

The church has observed Rogation Days for more than 1,500 years. Observances, including a Rogation Sunday, were included in the prayer books of The Episcopal Church until the current version, but there are plenty of prayers in the 1979 book that can be used for a Rogation observance. In the Prayers and Thanksgiving section of the book, there are prayers for agriculture, for towns and rural areas, for natural resources, and other topics that can be used. *The Book of Occasional Services* provides directions for a Rogation procession along with appropriate readings from scripture.

With so much prominence being given to "green" projects in this country and elsewhere, an observance of the Rogation Days would seem to be more appropriate than ever. We continue to be dependent upon the gifts provided by nature, and for them we should give thanks and be prayerful that we will be good stewards of this bounty.

Ruling on Properties in Virginia

A long-awaited decision by a judge in Virginia gives hope to members of 11 churches that left the Diocese of Virginia to affiliate with the Convocation of Anglicans in North America, a mission endeavor of the Church of Nigeria. When Fairfax County Circuit Court Judge Randy Bellows issued an opinion that a Virginia division statue applies in the churches' attempt to retain their properties, it provided optimism for those churches that were sued by The Episcopal Church in an attempt to regain control of millions of dollars worth of property.

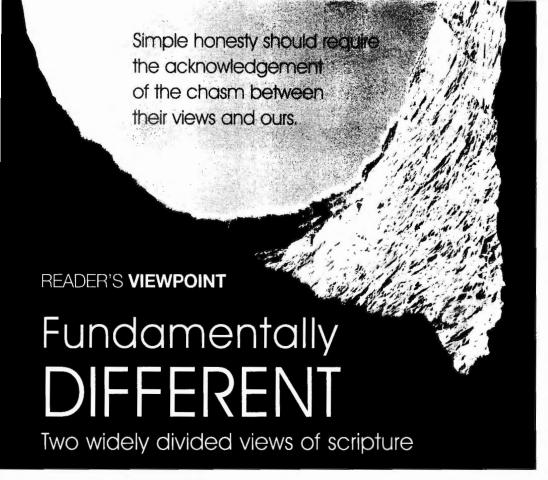
The judge's ruling does not mean that the 11 congregations have been awarded the properties in question. Rather, it clarifies that Virginia Division Statute 57-9 is applicable for those churches that want to keep their buildings and land. The judge's opinion applies only in Virginia, and will have no effect in other states where similar litigation is taking place.

When the Virginia churches took votes among their members as to whether they wanted to remain in The Episcopal Church, each of them decided to leave. Leaders of those churches attempted to negotiate with the diocese to keep their properties, but The Episcopal Church stepped in and joined the diocese in litigation against those congregations.

In his opinion on the applicability of 57-9, Judge Bellows wrote that his judgment "does not decide today any issue related to the constitutionality" of the law. The judge agreed to hear arguments May 28 on whether the state law is unconstitutional under the First Amendment. A trial on the property claims against the 11 churches is set for October.

The Episcopal Church has maintained that its "Dennis Canon" should be applicable as it has been for most cases like this. That canon states all real and personal property held by or for any congregation is held in trust "for this Church and the diocese thereof" in which the church is located. The matter is complicated further by the peculiarity of state laws. What is applicable in Virginia may not be a statute in another state. And religious corporation laws in various states can affect decisions.

Regardless of one's opinion on how this case should be resolved, it is hard to avoid looking with pity on the proceedings. Not only is the spectacle of Christians doing battle with one another depressing, and the fact that a secular court can intrude in the life of a church unnerving, it makes the heart sad to see millions of dollars being spent on legal expenses. That money could be used far more wisely in ministering to the hungry and homeless and in any number of mission endeavors.



By Daniel Muth

recently had occasion to attend a Christian gathering which involved, among many other things, a particular speaker who gave a deeply insightful, cogent, and moving defense of the authority, trustworthiness, and life-changing power of God's holy scriptures.

Along the way, the presenter, a justly famous scholar, pastor, and writer, made one side comment that had this Anglo-Catholic boy wincing. As an illustration of the glad news of post-medieval Anglicanism's embrace of the centrality of scripture, he noted the apparently true fact that, whereas prior to the Reformation, each newly minted priest of the English Church was presented with a chalice, each has since then been presented with a Bible.

Alas, I cannot see this apparent triumph of word over sacrament as a particularly celebratory development. The replacement of chalice with Bible would seem to represent precisely the sort of rejection of the sacramental world of the Church Fathers that the English Reformers sought to reclaim more forcefully. It also would tend to mark the Anglican as a theologically protestant church in the more recent sense, rather than one in continuity with the great Catholic tradition.

Following the speaker's presentation was a panel discussion during which was mentioned a statement a few months ago by an archbishop of the wider Anglican Church: "There is a difference between taking scripture seriously and taking it literally or as being inerrant or infallible. The books of the Bible are the inspired response to revelation, but the

responses are fallible, and responses are not identical with the revelation, for the 'word of God comes to us through the words of men,' to quote one theologian."

The panelist who mentioned this (full disclosure: it was this writer, who did not believe it proper at the time to discuss his reservations about the above-mentioned remark) considered it both representative of the understanding of a significant portion of the progressive vanguard who dominate the councils of The Episcopal Church and other relatively small parts of the Anglican Communion, and as problematically simplistic and wrongheaded.

The primary implication of the archbishop's proposed hermeneutic would seem to be that divine revelation, inasmuch as it has any objective reality, takes place off the page, as it were, and is communicated to us by error-prone, culturally conditioned, and scientifically ignorant men whose primary role is to misunderstand and thereby obscure the purity of the divine revelation. Holy Scripture in this view is an essentially human artifact that at best records subjective encounters with the divine, but both the experience itself and record thereof are filtered through the fallible, contingent métier of ignorant sinners.

The goal of biblical interpretation then, is to clear away the dross of human error so as to tease out the nuggets of divinity that lie hidden underneath. Generally speaking, these little nuggets are held to be fairly incomplete and disjointed, leaving a vague God about whom we have very little real information. The human author, in this understanding, is set against the divine inspirer rather than the two being combined in an incarnational whole.

Stepping back to the speaker I heard, to whom I will henceforth refer, with no intention of being either precious or pretentious, as my Evangelical Brother, let us suppose that I have heard him properly, that his offhand remark was indeed indicative of a position he holds regarding the precedence of scripture over the sacraments, and that I indeed disagree with him in this regard. Were the speaker and I to enter a debate, we would both share a view of scripture as both inerrant and infallible as regards that which is necessary for salvation, and a most significant part of what is necessary for salvation is

(Continued on next page)

READER'S VIEWPOINT

(Continued from previous page)

accurate, objective knowledge about who God is in himself.

My Evangelical Brother may well present arguments, based on scripture, supporting his position regarding its primacy. I would present mine, based on scripture, regarding the equal importance of the sacraments as commanded by Christ. We would both share a view of divine revelation as incarnational, that God has drawn the authors of scripture into his fullness such that they are, through divine inspiration, capable of presenting his self-revelation without their contingency or sinfulness obscuring their presentation of his objective actuality.

In its humanity, scripture can be studied critically; in its divinity, scripture is both authoritative and transforming. Scripture is not a scientific textbook as scientific knowledge is not necessary to salvation. Scientific knowledge changes nothing of what scripture reveals regarding the character of God — or of man, who is as much a metaphysical as corporeal being. Literalism, a modern error from which the Anglican Communion is generally free, never enters the discussion. Scripture is not divine dictation and neither I nor my Evangelical Brother would see it that way.

Note that a Progressive Friend who shares the archbishop's view cannot possibly enter into this discussion. The moment he begins to converse with the two of us on matters relating to scripture, the dispute we have been engaged in ends and a new one must begin, one concerned with fundamentally different matters.

This Progressive Friend does not share our incarnational understanding of scripture, and cannot accord to it the same authority as that recognized by my Evangelical Brother and me. His disagreement with us will not be over the interpretation of scripture, but rather its definition. We cannot be in dispute over the content of divine revelation until we have gotten past our disagreement over its fundamental nature, and this conversation can take place only when and if our Progressive Friend acknowledges his basic differences with us.

And this our Progressive Friends have thus far strongly refused to do. It is understandable that they would prefer not to see themselves in such a light. But simple honesty should require them to acknowledge the chasm between their views and ours. The situation in Anglicanism has gotten too dire for anything less.

Daniel Muth is a member of Christ Church, Port Republic, Md.

The Reader's Viewpoint article does not necessarily represent the editorial opinion of THE LIVING CHURCH or its board of directors.



All for Reconciliation

All laud and praise to the Title IV Task Force II [TLC, March 9] for proposing a canon change whereby clergy (and for that matter, also lay leaders) can be charged in a church court for "conduct unbecoming" for making any public criticism of the church. It is most reassuring to note that the prologue to the canon change warns troublemakers that by accepting any position of leadership in the church that one has waived all constitutional rights not specifically granted.

We also have the assurance of the task force that the church proceedings are not civil or criminal in nature, but rather reconciliation based. This is wonderful, because as we all know, the best way to reconcile anyone is to haul them into court. With the addition of nine proposed appellate courts (one in each province), what a wonderful new vehicle for the church's ministry of reconciliation we will have! Just think: If church courts in every one of the 100 or so dioceses of The Episcopal Church were to sit in session 365 days a year, what a massive amount of Christ's ministry of reconciliation could be accomplished in that time. We will indeed be the envy of the entire Christian Church.

Thanks to the task force for this fantastic, new, proposed reality in our midst.

(The Rev.) Robert B. Gibson Macon, Ga.

Curious Customs

I appreciated David Kalvelage's column, "Worship with the Orthodox" [TLC, March 30]. I'd like to explain what he saw to help those unfamiliar with Orthodoxy better understand what he found in his visits.

Mr. Kalvelage noted numbers of worshipers who came (and went) at various times. While this is lamentable (no Christian tradition is exempt from this particular crowd), it is also the case that there are as many as three or four services on a particular Sunday morning which are unique and strung together, and between which there isn't any noticeable (to the visitor) delineation. We have the Proskomide (a brief preparation of the bread and wine for the liturgy); we read the Third and Sixth Hours of Prayer (psalms and prayers related to the crucifixion of Jesus); many



We prefer to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to the visitor first through the architecture, music, and liturgy.

parishes have Matins (Orthros, Morning Prayer); and then the liturgy. These all form an integrated whole on Sunday mornings.

Likewise, our Divine Liturgy is not linear in format and execution. There are points, for example, when the choir is singing one thing, the priest is praying a sacerdotal prayer, and the deacon is censing the church.

With respect to going "unnoticed," this is also true. Sometimes this

can be received as a "cold shoulder," and sadly, in some places it is. More deeply, however, it is assumed that folks who come to church are coming to pray, and to pray peacefully, without distraction. In my parish, most of our greeting is done at the coffee hour. In general, we don't try to talk anyone into anything. This should not be confused as ambivalence toward evangelism. We prefer to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to the visitor first-through the architecture, music, and liturgy. In a word, we let God introduce himself, first in silence and beauty, then in spirit and truth.

> (The Rev.) John Parker Holy Ascension Orthodox Church Mt. Pleasant, S.C.

We Have it All!

Over the glorious celebration of Easter Day, it appeared to me that The Episcopal Church continues to suffer from the malady "my-apathy." As I viewed the many, varied and colorful invitations from other Christian expressions to come and share with them this "day of days," the local Episcopal churches were silent. In my area (the border between the dioceses of Kansas and Western Kansas), I could not find so much as a "y'all come" shouted by a single parish. Where are the passion, energy and exaltation of the glorious news of Easter Day?

My fear is that many of us have settled into a self-satisfied stupor and echo the dowager lady who down her uplifted nose said, "I'm guite sure that everyone who wants to be an Episcopalian already is!" I'm one of those fools for Christ's sake who finds it hard to understand why everyone isn't an Episcopalian. We have it all! Why don't we shout that from the rooftops?

We have a heritage that reaches back to the "faith once delivered to the saints." We have a breadth that encompasses all sorts and conditions of humankind. We have a destiny that reaches to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Our worship is devout and reverent, expressed with decency and order. We possess and share deeply meaningful sacraments. We are a church for these times. We must make ourselves known.

> (The Rev.) Robert P. Layne McPherson, Kan.

Extensive Revisions

The review [TLC, March 16] of the new edition of my book, Dirt, Greed & Sex, described it as "reissued with minor adjustments." In fact, the revisions are quite extensive. I do not imagine that a more careful reading would have made the reviewer like the book any better, but it might have spared him from bearing false witness.

(The Rev.) William Countryman Berkeley, Calif.

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Around the DIOCESES

Christ's Uniqueness

Delegates to the annual convention in the Diocese of **Louisiana** considered a number of resolutions, some of which sought to move the diocese into closer partnership with General Convention, while others sought to reaffirm its commitment to traditional church teaching. Delegates met Feb. 29-March 1 at St. Luke's, Baton Rouge.

With virtually no debate or dissent, convention approved a resolution to "reaffirm the uniqueness of Christ." In recent decades, similar resolutions declaring Christ to be the only means by which humans can be "saved" or reconciled to God have been tabled or ruled "out of order," at other Episcopal diocesan conventions and at General Convention.

A resolution recognizing "the sanctity of life" was referred back to committee after the diocesan chancellor determined that the proposed resolution was canonically deficient.

"The resolution as proposed referred to several other documents which were not included," said the Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson, canon to the ordinary. "This resolution will be brought back next year either with the other documents included or the references to them deleted."

Resolution on Tithe

Another resolution calling for a 10 percent tithe from individuals, congregations and the diocese was also referred back to committee. Under some circumstances the proposal could have increased the diocese's contribution to the program budget of General Convention while decreasing the amount of income available for local ministry.

"I think it became apparent that more discussion needed to be held and that the floor of convention was probably not the best place to have it," Canon Stevenson said.

"Whether it passes or fails, by the time this comes to a vote again next year, I think people will have a better understanding of its implications, both for the dioceses and for our parishes and missions."



Wallace VanNortwick/Churchwork photo

The Rt. Rev. Michael Smith, Bishop of North Dakota, preaches at the Holy Eucharist March 1 during the Diocese of Louisiana's convention.

Canon Stevenson said delegates had a number of questions during committee hearings about a provision requiring diocesan congregations to obtain permission from the bishop before undertaking any new ministry initiatives, such as new church plants, in other geographic regions of the diocese. But during the business session, the provision was approved with minimal debate as part of a canonical restructuring of diocesan deaneries.

The Rt. Rev. Michael Smith, Bishop of North Dakota, delivered his first sermon to convention since becoming a part-time Assisting Bishop of Louisiana [TLC, Sept. 30]. Bishop Smith said that both he and Louisiana Bishop Charles Jenkins are committed to the hard work of reconciliation and he urged similar dedication from convention.

"Your motives and the quality of your commitment to Christ and the gospel will be questioned," Bishop Smith said. "You will be accused of having no spine or backbone and of burying your head in the sand. But that's okay. These are small prices to pay for the one who 'came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many'."

Signature

Appointments

The Rev. John M. Phelps is priest-incharge of St. Luke's, PO Box 759, Mineral Wells, TX 76067.

The Rev. Geoffrey Piper is rector of St. Gabriel's, 124 Front St., Marion, MA 02738.

The Rev. **Suzanne Poulin** is rector of St. John's, 118 High St., Sanbornville, NH 03872.

The Rev. Canon **Kerry Robb** is interim rector of St. Paul's, 401 Duval St., Key West, FL 33040-6550.

The Rev. **Frank Roth** is rector of St. Matthias', 2310 Skyland Blvd E, Tuscaloosa, AL 35405.

The Rev. **Scott Thompson** is rector of Holy Cross, 5653 W River Park Dr., Sugar Land, TX 77479.

Ordinations

Priests

Alabama — Jon David Chalmers, Joan Marie Henrick, Eric James Liles, James Christian von Gal.

Mississippi — Walton Jones. Vermont — Regina Lee Christianson.

Deaths

The Rev. William Sidney McInnis, of Bennettsville, SC, died Jan. 24. He was 69.

A native of Bennettsville, he was a graduate of Wofford College and the School of Theology of the University of the South. In 1973, he was ordained deacon, and the following year he was ordained to the priesthood. He was vicar of All Saints', Beech Island, and assistant at St. Martin's, Columbia, SC, 1974-75; vicar of St. John's, Clearwater, SC, 1975-79; and rector of Trinity, Scotland Neck, NC, 1979-88. He was active in diocesan life in both Upper South Carolina and North Carolina, serving on the evangelism task force, the department of camp and conference centers, evangelism and renewal commission, diocesan council, and as a rural dean. In recent years he was a chaplain at Penick Village, Southern Pines, NC. Fr. McInnis was a former member of the Army Reserve. He is survived by his wife, Kay; a daughter, Melody, of Greenville, SC; a grandson; three brothers, Sidney, of Bennettsville, Lee, of Richmond, VA, and Paul, of Summerville, SC; a sister, Donna Usher, of Cheraw, NC, and three step-children.

The Rev. John Ahern Schultz, 91, rector of Trinity Church, Ambler, PA, for 25 years, died Jan. 17.

A native of Scarsdale, NY, he was educated at Bard College and the General Theological Seminary. He was ordained in the Diocese of New York, as deacon in 1942 and as priest in 1943. Fr. Schultz was a chaplain in the Army during World War II, serving in India, Burma and China. He was chaplain at Valley Forge Military Academy, Wayne, PA, from 1946 to 1949, rector of Advent, Cape May, NJ, 1949-53; and rector in Ambler, 1953-

78. Fr. Schultz was a finance officer and director of management information systems at the Episcopal Church Center in New York City from 1977 until 1986, when he retired. He also was assistant secretary of General Convention. Following retirement, he assisted at several churches in Bucks and Montgomery counties (PA). He is survived by two sons, John, of Rochester, MN, and Timothy, of Lexington, MA; a daughter, Jeanie Lael, of Chapel Hill, NC; four grandchildren and a great-grandson.

The Rev. **William C. Seitz, Jr.**, 88, of Clermont, FL, died Jan. 14 of complications from Alzheimer's disease.

Fr. Seitz was a native of Bellefontaine, OH. He graduated from Kenyon College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Bexley Hall Divinity School. In 1950, he was ordained deacon and priest. His ordained ministry included service as vicar of St. Andrew's, Lincoln Park, and Transfiguration, Towaco, NJ, 1950-55; rector of Emmanuel, Corry, PA, 1955-64; rector of St. Andrew's, Akron, OH, 1964-68; and rector of St. Matthias', Clermont, 1968-82. He was a member of the Civil Air Patrol and the Society of the Holy Cross. Surviving Fr. Seitz are his wife, Ann; two daughters, Claudia Seitz-Ricklick and Nancy; a son, John; six grandchildren and two great-grandsons; two brothers, the Rev. Thomas Seitz, Sr., and George; and a sister, Lucy Peirce.

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FULL-TIME RECTOR: St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Murfreesboro, TN, seeks an experienced rector to lead us through the process of clarifying a vision for the future with Jesus Christ as our guiding light. We want our next rector to be theologically strong, Bible-centered and an excellent preacher and teacher. We expect our rector to be capable in pastoral care and to be experienced in pastoring lay ministers. We want someone who can facilitate consensus. We desire to learn from our rector's rich personal spiritual life. We desire someone who is outgoing with a heart for people, who possesses great energy, and who can be a wonderful motivator. Excellent managerial skills and the ability to identify and develop lay leaders are very important traits in our next rector. St. Paul's has an average Sunday attendance of more than 350. Inspiration through its involvement in Cursillo has strongly aided the parish's growth and has become a signature of the church. It is located in the vibrant university (Middle Tennessee State University) city of Murfreesboro (population: 92,000). Visit our website at www.stpaulsmboro.org or contact The Rev. Canon Pamela Snare, Diocesan Deployment Officer, The Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee, 50 Vantage Way, Suite 107, Nashville, TN 37728, PH: (615) 251-3322, E-mail: pamela.snare@episcopaldiocese-tn.org.

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RIVERSIDE, IL (CHICAGO WEST SUBURBAN) ST. PAUL'S PARISH 60 Akenside Rd. www.stpaulsparish.org (708) 447-1604 The Rev. Thomas A. Fraser, r; the Rev. Richard R. Daly, SSC, parochial vicar

Sun Eu 9 & 10:30. Wkdy Eu Tues 7, Wed 7, Fri 10:30. Sacrament of Reconciliation 1st Sat 4-4:30 & by appt, A/C

NEW ORLEANS. LA

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL (504) 895-6602 2919 St. Charles Ave.

On the street car line at the corner of 6th St.

Website: www.cccnola.org The Very Rev. David duPlantier, dean

Sun Mass 7:30 (1928), 10 (Choral H Eu), 6 (Rite II). Daily Mass: M-F 12:15, Sat 9:30

BOSTON, MA

THE CHURCH OF THE ADVENT (617) 523-2377 30 Brimmer Street Web: www.theadvent.org E-mail: office@theadvent.org

The Rev. Allan B. Warren III, r; the Rev. Patrick T. Gray, assoc; the Rev. Daphne B. Noyes, d; Sharon Knox-Hutchinson, Pastoral Assistant for Families

Sun MP 7:30, Ch S, 10:15; Masses 8, 9, 11:15 (Sol High); Mon-Fri, MP 9; Mass 12:15 (except Wed); EP 5:30; Wed, Mass 6; Sat, MP 8:30, Mass 9, C 9:30

NEWARK, NJ

GRACE CHURCH 950 Broad St., at Federal Sq. www.gracechurchinnewark.org The Rev. J. Carr Holland III. Sun Masses 8 & 10 (Sung); Mon-Fri 12:10

PASSAIC, NJ

ST. JOHN'S Lafayette and Passaic Avenues Website: www.stjohnschurchpassaicnj.org (973) 779-0966 The Rev. William C. Thiele, p-i-c frthiele@gmail.com Sun Low Mass 8, Sung Mass 10:30, HD anno.

RED BANK, NJ

TRINITY CHURCH 65 W. Front St. Website: www.TrinityRedBank.org The Rev. Christopher Rodriguez, Sun Masses 8 & 10 (Sung), MP and EP Daily

NEW YORK, NY CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY

(212) 737-2720 1393 York Ave @ E. 74th www.epiphanynyc.org Sun 8:30, 11, 6

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The Rev. Canon James H. Cooper, D. Min., r The Rev. Canon Anne Mallonee, v (212) 602-0800

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Broadway at Wall Street Sun H Eu 9 & 11:15. Mon-Fri MP 8:15, H Eu 12:05, EP 5:15.

Open Sun 7-4; Mon-Fri 7-6; Sat 8-4

Broadway at Fulton The Rev. Canon James H. Cooper, D. Min., r Sun H Eu 8, 10. Mon-Sat Prayer Service 12:30 Open Sun 7-4; Mon-Sat 10-6

ST. THOMAS 5th Ave & 53rd St.

www.saintthomaschurch.org (212) 757-7013 The Rev. Andrew C. Mead, r; John Scott, organist and dir. of music; the Rev. Charles F. Wallace, headmaster; the Rev. Robert H. Stafford, the Rev. Victor Lee Austin, the Rev. Jonathan M. Erdman, the Rev. John Andrew, asst. Sun H Eu 8 (Said), 9 (Sung), 11 (Choral), Ev 4 (Choral); M-F MP & H Eu 8 & 12:10, EP & Eu 5:30 (Tues, Wed & Thur Choral Evensong); Sat H Eu 12:10

ASHEVILLE, NC

CATHEDRAL OF ALL SOULS 3 Angle St. www.allsoulscathedral.org

(Biltmore Village) (828) 274-2681

(570) 724-4771

(843) 722-2024

Sun H Eu 8, 9, 11:15. Wed noon, 5:45; Tues EP 5:30

SELINSGROVE, PA

129 N. Market The Rev. Robert Pursel, Th. D., r Sun Mass 10 (Rite I); Wed Mass & Healing 1; Weekdays as announced (Rite II); Sacrament of Penance by appt.

WELLSBORO, PA

ST. PAUL'S Website: www.stpaulswellsboro.org The Rev. Gregory P. Hinton, r Sat Eu 7, Sun Eu 8, 10; Wed H Eu 12

CHARLESTON, SC CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMMUNION 218 Ashley Ave.

Website: www.holvcom.org The Rev. Dow Sanderson, r; the Rev. Dan Clarke, c; the Rev.

Sun Mass 8 (Low) 10:30 (Solemn High)

GRACE CHURCH 98 Wentworth Street (843) 723-4575 Website: www.gracechurchcharleston.org

The Rev. Canon J. Michael A. Wright, r; the Rev. Dr. Kirt-ley Yearwood, v; the Rev. Alastair Votaw, assoc; the Rev. Paul Gilbert, assoc; Dr. Scott Bennett, organist & choirmaster, Jodi Bennett, children's choirs; Jimmy Hartley, youth & young adults

Sun H Eu 8 (Said), 9 (Sung), 10:10 (Christian Formation), 11 (Choral), 6; Wed H Eu & LOH 5:30; Mon-Fri MP 8:45

MILWAUKEE. WI

ALL SAINTS' CATHEDRAL (414) 271-7719 818 E. Juneau Ave. www.ascathedral.org The Very Rev. Warren H. Raasch, dean Sun Masses 8, 10 (Sung). Daily Mass, MP & EP as posted

LUTHERAN

BORON, CA RESURRECTION Sr. Citizens Ctr. 20 Mule Team Rd. Sun Eu 8

MOJAVE, CA

HOPE CHURCH K and Inyo Streets The Rev. William R. Hampton, STS Sun Eu 10:30

(909) 989-3317

CHURCH DIRECTORY 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; 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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