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The Cover

Emily Boone of Cary, N.C., program director for Camp Kanuga near Hendersonville, N.C., administers the chalice to a camper.

Harmony Johnson photo

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SUNDAY'S READINGS

Dispute Resolution

'I am there among them' (Matt. 18:20)

The 17th Sunday After Pentecost, (Proper 18A), Sept. 7, 2008

BCP: Ezek. 33:(1-6) 7-11; Psalm 119:33-48 or 119:33-40; Rom. 12:9-21; Matt. 18:15-20

RCL: Exod. 12:1-14 and Psalm 149; or Ezek. 33:7-11 and Psalm 119:33-40; Rom. 13:8-14; Matt. 18:15-20

In the most familiar verse in today's gospel passage, Jesus says, "where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matt. 18:20).

This passage is sometimes quoted in a jocular way after church, for instance, on a holiday weekend when attendance at a parish worship service is meager. The implication is that we shouldn't worry about church attendance because however many of us there are, even two or three of us, Christ will still be present.

But in the verses leading up to this text, Jesus is addressing a broader problem: Wherever two or three human beings gather together, there is a potential for conflict. In season and out, this problem is endemic. Children argue over toys; neighbors argue over noise. The most minor sparks can generate major amounts of heat.

And this is an important fact about church disputes: They are often about relatively unimportant issues. Secular courts often seem mystified by the litigation generated by Anglican factions seeking to gain or retain parish assets. The disputants' worship customs and

professed doctrines seem so similar that it is not at all apparent why they are taking the court's time. They seem to be at each other's throats over tiny differences of opinion.

Individual disputes within parishes often center on issues like the color of paint in the church kitchen or the choice of hymns on Christmas Eve. Whether or not the patient suggestions in Matthew's gospel for resolving disputes among Christians have practical import today, the general implication that Christians can do much better than they are currently doing is incontrovertible.

Addressing conflict, lawyers employ what they call "dispute resolution." Through face-to-face mediation and arbitration, attorneys attempt to avoid lengthy trials. And these less rigid and costly approaches to conflict can be helpful for Christians, too, as the gospel indicates.

The real point of the story is found in its concluding assertion that wherever Christ's followers are gathered, they already share sacred ground: Christ himself. "I am there among them."

Look It Up

Paul advised Christians to avoid going to civil courts to settle their disputes (1 Cor. 6:1-8).

Think About It

Are there disputes you have been embroiled in that might have been more easily resolved if you had looked for common spiritual ground with your opponent?

Next Sunday

The 18th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 19A), Sept. 14, 2008

BCP: Eccclus. 27:30-28:7; Psalm 103 or 103:8-13; Rom. 14:5-12; Matt. 18:21-35

RCL: Exod. 14:19-31 and Psalm 114 or Exod. 15:1b-11, 20-21; or Gen. 50:15-21 and Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13; Rom. 14:1-12; Matt. 18:21-35

BOOKS

Good-Bye and Amen

By **Beth Gutcheon**. Wm. Morrow. Pp. 241. \$24.95. ISBN 0060539070.

This novel has an Episcopal priest as an important character in it. The Rev. Norman Faithful is married to Monica, one of the daughters in a prominent family who meet with their brother to split up the old family possessions after the death of their parents. Family values are presented skillfully with humor throughout the book.

The story of Fr. Faithful's talents, ambitions and sins is presented in a manner that rings true. Clergy and lay people will get a picture of how family impinges on the ministry of a priest and how his life affects a family. Reflections on theology and spirituality also make Gutcheon's book a fine read for insight into the real human life of all of us.

*(The Rev.) Robert Warren Cromey
San Francisco, Calif.*

SHORT & SHARP

IN SEARCH OF JULIAN OF NORWICH. By **Sheila Upjohn**. Morehouse. Pp. 92. \$15. ISBN 9780819222800.

First published in England in 1989, this work is an analysis of the 14th-century saint who has been a mystery to many. Followers of Julian as well as those who know little or nothing about her will find this to be good reading. Particularly interesting are the portrayals of English life during the 1300s.

ROOTS AND WINGS. By **Margaret Silf**. Eerdmans. Pp. 162. \$14. ISBN 978-0-8028-2462-2.

The author, a British spirituality writer, columnist and retreat leader, explores through short, personal essays what she calls the "New Story" of Jesus' place in the universe. Her creative mix of science and faith includes imaginative retellings of familiar biblical accounts, but she also feels free to muse farther afield, sometimes into the realm of New Age philosophy.

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Bishop Wantland: Litigation, Confusion Ahead for Communion

Assisting Bishop William Wantland of Fort Worth offered a sobering assessment of a post-GAFCON, post-Lambeth Conference future for the Anglican Communion Aug. 15 in addressing members of the South East Wisconsin American Anglican Council at Nashotah House.

Bishop Wantland, who retired as Bishop of Eau Claire in 1998, minced no words.

"GAFCON (the Global Anglican Future Conference) didn't need Lambeth," Bishop Wantland said, "but Lambeth needs GAFCON."

Bishop Wantland said he was confident that the GAFCON council of primates, which is currently comprised of the primates who attended the meeting in Jerusalem in June, would recognize a provisional overlapping Anglican province in North America within the next year.

Rather than seeking official recognition of the new province from Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, however, he said the primates will work to bring the matter to a vote



Carolyn Chapin photo
At Nashotah House Aug. 15, Assisting Bishop William Wantland of Fort Worth said he expects the GAFCON council of primates will seek official recognition of a new North American province from the Anglican Consultative Council.

before the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC). By precedent, the ACC is the canonically recognized body with the authority to recognize a new province, Bishop Wantland said.

"It is not totally unknown to have overlapping jurisdictions, but it is not

the norm," the bishop said. "You think you're living in a litigious time of confusion now? Well, welcome to chaos after that happens. We are in for a long period of confusion and litigation. It almost makes me wish I was still a practicing lawyer."

When questioned by a member of the audience as to why he was so pessimistic that the Lambeth Conference aura of personal good will would not last, Bishop Wantland responded that all sides identified by the Windsor Continuation Group as breaching the unity of the Communion already have said they will rededicate their efforts to continue pursuing their respective agendas.

"In my opinion we missed a golden opportunity to address the crisis [at Lambeth]," he said. "Sweeping it under the rug is not dealing with it. I don't want to be unduly critical of this Lambeth Conference, but they really didn't know what they were doing."

Steve Waring

Judge Again Favors Virginia Congregations

The 11 Anglican congregations in Virginia involved in litigation with The Episcopal Church received a favorable ruling Aug. 19 in Fairfax County Circuit Court. Judge Randy Bellows said The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Virginia failed to prove that the 11 churches that left The Episcopal Church in 2006 previously waived their right to invoke a Virginia Division statute.

Judge Bellows also ruled that the statute, which concerns the rights of congregations to keep their properties when a majority of members votes to leave their denomination, does not violate the contracts clause provisions of the U.S. and Virginia constitutions as applied to the church properties.

The 11 congregations, now part of the Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANAm), are attempting to retain their properties, and The Episcopal Church claims the properties are held in trust for the diocese. A trial will be held in October

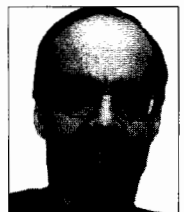
Pittsburgh Assisting Bishop to Step Down

Assisting Bishop Henry Scriven of Pittsburgh will be leaving the diocese and will return to his native England to take up a new position as part of plans to integrate the South American Missionary Society (SAMS) and the Church Mission Society (CMS).

CMS and SAMS are planning to join together progressively from January 2009, subject to final negotiations and decisions by their respective governing bodies.

Initially, Bishop Scriven will work in a leadership role within SAMS, but it is planned that he will become the mission director for South America for the new joint entity, according to a release prepared by the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

"My decision does not reflect any change of heart regarding realignment, or my confidence in the vision and leadership of the diocese," Bishop Scriven said in a letter announcing the change. "I know realignment will bring fresh incentive for mission, both local and worldwide. My experience at both GAFCON and Lambeth assure me that orthodox, biblical Anglicanism is very much alive and ready to continue God's mission."



Bishop Scriven

Quincy Delegates will Consider Separation in November

Delegates to the annual synod of the Diocese of Quincy will consider a second and decisive vote to leave The Episcopal Church when the annual meeting of the diocese is held Nov. 7-8 at St. John's Church, Quincy.

"No formal resolutions have been drawn up or submitted yet," said the Rev. James Marshall, president of the standing committee, "but I don't see how it could not happen."

At the diocesan synod last year, delegates voted by substantial majorities to amend parts of the canons, and chose not to elect a slate of deputies for the 76th General Convention, to be held July 8-17, 2009, in Anaheim, Calif. With anxiety in the diocese already high over recent innovations to church teaching by General Convention, the recent inhibition and pending ecclesiastical trial of retired Bishop Edward MacBurney has made the national church even less popular within the diocese, according to Fr. Marshall.

With a vote by Quincy confirmed, this brings to three the number of dioceses whose annual meetings will consider separation from The Episcopal Church this fall. The other two are Pittsburgh and Fort Worth. The Diocese of San Joaquin held a similar vote last year and was subsequently given temporary refuge and primatial oversight by the Anglican Church of the Southern Cone.

In mid-August, Quincy's standing committee sent every household in the diocese a copy of a 35-page report that seeks to address questions and provide answers about the possibility of leaving The Episcopal Church. Many of the questions addressed in the report were raised during a meeting of clergy and lay leadership of the diocese in May. When reached on sabbatical leave by THE LIVING CHURCH, Bishop Keith Ackerman of Quincy said he had attended that meeting, but did not preside at it.

Because of his attendance at the Lambeth Conference and the Global Anglican Future Conference in June in Jerusalem, Bishop Ackerman said he has not met with the standing committee since May.

In a related development, the dioceses of Quincy and Springfield held a joint meeting of clergy and lay leadership at St. Paul's Cathedral, Springfield, Ill., on Aug. 30. The meeting was mandatory for clergy from the Diocese of Springfield, said Bishop Peter Beckwith of Springfield. Details were not available at press time.

Unlike leaders in Quincy, Bishop Beckwith said he intends to remain canonically resident in the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church. He added it was highly unlikely that there would be any vote at the annual meeting in Springfield to leave when synod meets Oct. 24-25 in Whittington, Ill.

Steve Waring



Bishop Iker: No Plans for Diocese to Join Roman Catholic Church

At the convention of the Diocese of Fort Worth in November, delegates will consider for a second and decisive time a proposal to realign with another Anglican Church in hopes of finding a greater sense of communion and catholicity than is currently afforded within The Episcopal Church, according to a statement issued by Bishop Jack L. Iker.

The statement came in response to a report in the *Dallas Morning News* that four influential priests of the diocese had met on June 16 with the Most Rev. Kevin W. Vann, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, and his chancellor. The Rev. Canon Charles A. Hough, SSC, canon to the ordinary; the Very Rev. William A. Crary, Jr., SSC, rector of St. Lawrence Church, Grapevine; the Rev. Louis L. Tobola, priest-in-charge of St. Barnabas', Keller; and the Very Rev. Christopher C. Stainbrook, vicar of St. Timothy's, Fort Worth, met

with the Roman Catholic bishop.

Following the meeting the four priests gave Bishop Vann a 16-page proposal "that would lead our diocese into full communion with the See of Peter." The group, which claims that as many as 90 percent of clergy in the diocese would be sympathetic to full communion with the Vatican, apprised Bishop Iker of their intention to meet with Bishop Vann during a meeting in April.

The priests were acting on their own initiative and their claim about clergy support is speculation since no one actually polled the Fort Worth clergy, said Suzanne Gill, director of communications for the diocese. "Furthermore there is no evidence of a groundswell of support from the

laity for a move toward Rome," she added.

"The priests' discussion with Bishop Vann has no bearing upon matters coming before our diocesan convention in November, where a second vote will be taken on consti-

"There is no proposal under consideration, either publicly or privately ..."

— Bishop Iker



tutional changes concerning our relationship with the General Convention of The Episcopal Church," Bishop Iker said. "There is no proposal under consideration, either publicly or privately, for the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth to become part of the Roman Catholic Church."

Difficult Path for Church of the Congo Bishop

The father of Bishop Lambert Funga Botolome of Kisangani in the Anglican Church of the Congo never saw his son graduate from college. Bishop Botolome also never had the chance to tell his father one more time that he loved him before "he got sick and died," the bishop said during the Lambeth Conference.

Born and raised as the oldest of seven children in a Roman Catholic household, Bishop Botolome, 47, dreamed as a boy of becoming a Roman Catholic priest. Partly as a result of that interest, as well as his academic promise, he was able to receive an education beyond what his family could afford or what his tiny village in the heart of Africa could offer.

When he was 16 and about to take his final exams for the school term, an Anglican missionary informed the young man that his father was very ill and might die. As soon as the exams were over, the missionary drove the student from the school to the largest city near his village. The trip took seven days. The two were forced to sleep in the car on the side of the road at night because there was no lodging available along the way, and travel by night over large stretches of dirt road with no markings or lighting was too hazardous. Once he arrived in Kisangani, Bishop Botolome had to undertake a three-day trip by boat to his village. At night he and his guide slept fitfully in the boat, keeping watch for crocodiles, snakes, hippopotamus and other hazards of the jungle. When he finally arrived home, he learned that his father had died four days earlier.

Draw of Anglicanism

Bishop Botolome speaks five languages, with English being the one in which he is least comfortable conversing, but he was eager to share what life is like for the people in his diocese and to tell the story of how he came to be their shepherd.

Soon after graduating from college with a teaching certificate, he fell in



Steve Waring photo

Bishop Botolome: "the living conditions of the servants of God remain very bad."

love and married, ruling out the possibility of becoming a Roman Catholic priest. He was unable to find a teaching position with a Roman Catholic school, but eventually he was offered a position at an Anglican school. The couple would go on to have four children.

After several years of getting to know Anglicans, he felt increasingly drawn to the Anglican church, and eventually his family converted. After five years as a teacher, the Bishop of Kisangani at the time and his diocesan staff offered Bishop Botolome the chance to pursue his childhood dream of studying theology. He attended the Institute Superior Théologique Anglican seminary, and was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1993.

Bishop Botolome and his family were happy serving the Anglican church, despite the fact that the Congo was in the midst of brutal civil war in which millions were killed. But his wife became sick, which in many parts of the Congo, where even in the best

of times medical care is either rudimentary or non-existent, is equivalent to a death sentence. She died two years ago. "It was her time," he said with a sense of fatalism evident in his voice. Last February he remarried.

Infrastructure Destroyed

The country has been at peace for seven years now, but much of what little infrastructure existed before the civil war has been destroyed. As Bishop of Kisangani, he has 56 churches, 76 priests, and 111 trained lay evangelists under his care. All but three of the churches are made of wood with the roof constructed of leaves. About every three months the roof must be replaced. Unemployment is high. Most people eke out a living by cutting wood from the forest which covers most of the diocese.

"Since the creation of the Kisangani Diocese in December 1980, the living conditions of the servants of God remain very bad," he said. "The basic infrastructures such as housing, accommodation facilities, and means of transport are almost non-existent. The Diocese of Kisangani does not have any unit of production in order to get money for the achievement of its needs. The 87 primary and secondary schools supervised by the Kisangani Diocese look like those of medieval times."

Bishop Botolome must make do traveling around the diocese on a small motor scooter. He is still trying to raise money to purchase an episcopal crozier, and the poor condition of the roads in his diocese makes travel for confirmations arduous and hazardous. Bishop Botolome went to the Lambeth Conference in hopes of establishing some partners in mission and development for his diocese, but natural shyness, lack of fluency in English, and the overall emphasis on discussion on human sexuality at the conference limited what he was able to achieve, he said.

Steve Waring

Watching the English

You get a different perspective on what it means to be a bishop when you have to share antiquated "shower" and "toilet" rooms, each about the size of a telephone booth, with five of them for three weeks in a college dormitory. The facilities were at the University of Kent in Canterbury during the Lambeth Conference. On most days, the bishops began with Morning Prayer at 6:30 a.m. They were usually at breakfast by the time I got up. Most nights I didn't finish filing articles until long after they had turned in. It wasn't until the last day of the conference that I realized that I was living two doors from Bishop Michael Smith of North Dakota. To this day I am not sure who else was in my dormitory wing.

This was my first visit to England. What I found most amazing was not the toilet with the water tank bolted to the ceiling and the butler-like pull chain used for flushing it, but how much nearly every aspect of daily life seemed to be opposite of what I've come to accept as "normal" in the U.S.

For instance, in this country, newspapers and magazines are slashing editorial staffs, especially their religion reporters. In England, the religion beat is one of the most coveted assignments, and newspapers and magazines seem to be profitable. The first thing most British people did when I told them I was from Milwaukee was to ask me about "Laverne and Shirley," an American sit-com that was set in Milwaukee in the 1950s and canceled by ABC-TV in the late 1970s.

Perhaps because British television is not such an all-consuming part of daily life, I was easily able to strike up conversations with roughly 20 local people. Regardless of whether I was in London or Canterbury, every person with whom I spoke was interested in and well informed about the Lambeth Conference and the struggles of the Anglican Communion. With the exception of one person who claimed to be a "humanist deist," all of those with whom I spoke said they belonged to the Church of England, but only one of the 20 admitted to having been to church within the past month. Church attendance, based on my unscientific sample, is for the most part limited to the weddings and baptisms of friends and family members.

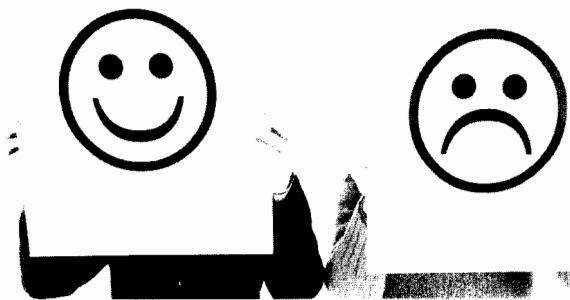
There were considerable differences

between the Lambeth Conference and the General Convention of The Episcopal Church. At General Convention, the media are allowed to observe nearly every hearing or legislative session, but reliable scheduling information can be very hard to obtain unless you have the right connections. At the Lambeth Conference, the media received detailed information on where the bishops were and what they were supposed to be doing at any given time. Unfortunately, aside from two daily media briefings, that was about the only information easily available because nearly all conference events were open only to the invited bishops and their spouses.

When, at nearly every media briefing, someone in the press griped about the lack of access, we were dutifully reminded that we were free to approach any bishop on campus if he or she was willing to talk. What the Archbishop of Canterbury did not tell us until after the conference had ended was that the bishops had been asked repeatedly for solemn promises that they would not share any details about the conference with the press. Nevertheless various members of the media tried to approach the bishops. It was both amusing and poignant to watch sleep-deprived bishops look inconspicuously for their nearest escape route. Most tried to walk away quickly in the other direction, which usually meant a slow-motion version of the movie scene in *A Hard Day's Night* when the Beatles are chased back and forth through a train station by a pack of love-struck teenagers.

Perhaps the defining work of the conference was the discussion on the proposed Anglican Covenant known as the St. Andrew's draft. For that discussion individual bishops received forms with smiling and frowning faces to circle for the sections they especially liked or disliked. The small Bible study groups were then expected to color with various magic markers the parts of the draft they liked or disliked based on how many smiling and frowning faces each section received. No wonder conference organizers didn't want the media to observe what the bishops were actually doing.

Steve Waring, news editor



Did You Know...

Since 1977, the Church of South India has planted 12 congregations in the United States under episcopal oversight of that church's primate.

Quote of the Week

The Rt. Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE, Bishop of Massachusetts, in an interview with the *Boston Globe* on what happened at the Lambeth Conference: "I don't think anything happened that is going to wow you or your readers."

Patience and Support

Like most other publications in this country, THE LIVING CHURCH has been affected by the economic downturn of the past year or so. Along with other magazines and newspapers, our circulation has dropped. People have told us they don't have time to read a weekly magazine, or they can find what they're looking for on the internet. Advertising too has slipped, for the advertisers also are feeling an economic strain. When one considers there are fewer Episcopalians than there were, for example, two years ago, and the costs of paper, printing and postage have increased, it's fairly easy to see why we've experienced some financial concerns.

We're doing our best to roll with the punches, so to speak. We are operating with fewer employees than we had in the past, and the hours of some of the current employees have been reduced. We have reduced expenses wherever possible, and are continuing to explore further cost-cutting measures. So far, our subscribers, advertisers and friends have been patient with us, and we hope that will continue. TLC has never had a large staff, but now that it's even smaller, we ask for the indulgence of our subscribers. Bear with us, please, if you are asked to leave a voicemail message instead of speaking to a human being. We assure all that messages will be answered as quickly as possible. We have no secretaries or clerks or interns on our staff, so your requests to find information contained in a past issue may not be addressed immediately, but we will address them.

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All of this helps to emphasize the importance of the Living Church Fund, which augments our working budget. When income from advertising and subscriptions was no longer enough to balance our working budget, this fund was created to enable our supporters to assist our mission. The annual campaign of the Living Church Fund also is lagging, as we are just over half way toward our 2008 goal of \$155,000. Persons who would like to contribute to the Living Church Fund may do so by filling out the form in this issue [p. 14] or by visiting our website (www.livingchurch.org). We are grateful for the support of so many during these difficult times. The patience and generosity of friends and supporters is most gratefully appreciated.

The Church on Campus

Most Episcopalians probably would admit that we see few college-aged students attending church these days. Many people in that age group have left their communities to attend college or to become immersed in a new job, so it's easy to lose track of them. For those on college campuses, there does not have to be an estrangement with the church. A glance at the listings of college ministries on page 13 of this issue offers a snapshot of the activities for college students led by chaplains or organized by local parish churches around the country.

From meals to discussion groups, fellowship to the Eucharist, there are plenty of opportunities for college students to become involved during their time on campus. Some of the chaplains offer creative sorts of pastoral care to help students get through a difficult time in their lives. Other leaders may be members of a parish that's enthusiastic about sharing ministry with students. We urge students to stay involved with the church wherever they may be. And for those young people who aren't in college, we hope they will make the effort to attend a local church. The benefits, both to young people and the church or chaplaincy, are great.

Although TLC is experiencing some financial concerns, we're doing our best to roll with the punches. But we need your support.



Let us not then be ashamed to confess the Crucified. Be the Cross our seal. . . . Despise not the Seal, because of the freeness of the Gift; but for this rather honor thy Benefactor. — St. Cyril of Jerusalem

By Torey Lightcap

The practice of ordained persons using the cross (the plus sign on your keyboard) next to their names in written communications — what I call the “nominal cross” — is commonly held and yet often goes unacknowledged. Not all follow the practice, but many do. I tend to use it quite often.

I have, however, become aware lately of just how little any of us know about that practice. This lack of knowledge is widespread and therefore leads to a great deal of misunderstanding about it.

The sign of the cross used with one's name, whether preceding the name or following it, and with however many crosses are employed, is taken by the signer as a signifier of his or her office. There are all sorts of signifiers of office, of course: the collar, the ring, the mitre, and so on. But none seems as subject to special scrutiny as the nominal cross. The precise form this scrutiny takes on, it seems to me, can sometimes be a judgment by the lay person as to the ordained person's sense of self-importance.

In similar fashion, the cross used in conjunction with the name may be there for any number of legitimate reasons, but I believe that it (along with a host of other signs) unconsciously invites the ordained to believe that we are entitled to our offices, rather than needed for them.

This indeed — and pardon the pun — is the crux of the problem.

In The Episcopal Church, the need for qualified leadership is the whole reason that our offices exist in the first place — that is, the mission of the church requires orderly, sensible, and passionate leaders. So then, as the saying goes, form follows function, and the requirements for our ordained leaders are made clear. When a position becomes available, we hope to fill it with the person most qualified. In the case of the work of the church, qualifications on paper are just part of the equation. There must be prayer, discernment, testing, fit, and a sense of calling within the community. We rejoice greatly when these things come together, judging them rightly to be the tangible work of God in our midst. We had a set of requirements, in other

words, and by golly we found the right person. Title and office are derived from need.

The foregoing is true but not always practiced, because there's a dirty little secret that gets in the way. If ordination means the setting aside of a person for a particular purpose, the one who has been ordained has the freedom to commit an error in his or her thinking, which will more or less state that the act of having been set aside means that one is special, deserving, and entitled. One who acts according to this pattern of thought will perceive that all the signs of office, including the ability to use the nominal cross, point to this specialness of status.

Consequently, the one who views himself or herself as special and entitled to office also will view his or her opinions as being especially true or correct, for “Why else would God have put me here?” And if I'm that right, then I have no need to listen, and certainly no need to change. This is a major reason for why the church is currently undergoing so many trials.

One way of envisioning a corrective to the error of entitlement-thinking is, oddly enough, found in one of its mechanisms: the nominal cross.

One can still sign one's name with the cross or type the plus sign, indeed one should. But that signing should come with a gut-check. Rather than be inflated by that small cross, one should be humbled by it, honestly asking, Is what I'm communicating here the effective witness of Christ best suited to the need of my office? Have I fulfilled the requirements of my office as I have best discerned them? Can I say, as Paul did to the Galatians, “I live no longer, not I, but Christ in me”? And will my communications back that up?

That little cross is, after all, usually the final thing written on the page — the last word, if you will. Rather than use it as a source of self-esteem, can we place ourselves under its authority?

The Rev. Torey Lightcap is priest-in-charge of St. Barnabas' Church, Glenwood Springs, Colo.

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



Invalid Comparison

When a local retired priest opined to our local newspaper that what has been happening in the church since 2003 was no different than what happened in the '70s with ordination of women, I could chalk it up to someone who didn't really keep up with the news.

When a retired bishop writes essentially the same story in 2008 for a Reader's Viewpoint article, I have to conclude that the bishop is either in deep denial or is deeply delusional. Bishop David Reed's assertion [TLC, July 20] that the opposition to the innovations of The Episcopal Church [TEC] stem merely from the "resistance and opposition" of a group of 10 percent who simply read scripture differently is absurd.

When did any of the controversies of the '60s and '70s result in the instruments of unity in the Anglican Communion telling TEC not to do something? Did we have organized instruments of unity in that time period? We certainly had an Archbishop of Canterbury. Did that archbishop publicly tell TEC not to do something? Did the Archbishop of Canterbury travel to the U.S. at that time to meet with the American House of Bishops because of the crisis created in the Anglican Communion by TEC? Was an emergency meeting of the primates called to deliberate on the unilateral actions of TEC? Was there a council of advice, or a panel of reference, or a pastoral council, or a pastoral forum established by the Anglican Communion

to deal with issues that Bishop Reed mentions?

I think that the answer to all these questions is no, but perhaps the retired Bishop of Kentucky can explain how the current crisis has these elements in common with the earlier times of strife that he mentions.

*(The Rev.) M. Anthony Seel, Jr.
Vestal, N.Y.*

Back to the Beginning

Perhaps our problems in The Episcopal Church would be helped if we go back to the beginning.

Archbishop Akinola of Nigeria was in the U.S. talking to disaffected Episcopalians, presiding at services, and confirming those who did not want to be confirmed by their own bishop. At the point when the archbishop began holding services, he was in violation of Canon 5 of the Council of Chalcedon, otherwise known as the fourth Ecumenical Council, and dated 451 A.D. Such canon provides bishops and other clergy to stay in one see. Further, Canon 13 provides "strange" clergy are forbidden to celebrate the Eucharist in other dioceses without a letter from the bishop of that diocese.

These statements come from my notes in a church history class many years ago. However, I took good notes, and it would seem the archbishop is in violation of a very old canon. As to Bishop Martyn Minns or other newly consecrated bishops representing the African churches, the same canon

applies. This is far from being a catholic and from defending the catholic faith.

I am a retired priest, so don't look to me to solve the problem. But I have spent many years in The Episcopal Church, and when this stuff happens it makes me very angry.

*(The Rev.) Robert Hall
Norwich, Conn.*

Next in Line

Now, for the first time in history, a man/husband/father/sperm donor and woman/wife/mother/egg provider can be six different persons.

Since it is likely that The Episcopal Church soon will recognize same-sex marriages (which are very different from same-sex civil partnerships) and do so with an insistence that there is no substantial difference between same-sex and heterosexual marriages, then it would seem obvious that there must be a single liturgy of holy matrimony.

If so, there will be substantial changes required with all references to child bearing omitted. Indeed, recognizing same-sex marriages to multiple sexual partners is but a short step. Already in some law schools and among the more daring Christian ethicists that possibility is being canvassed and even pushed.

The Episcopal Church [TEC] will be left saying nothing about child bearing. Indeed, with the emphasis on baptismal vows and covenant to the virtual exclusion of any others, infant baptism is questionable. If it does become questioned, then TEC would have nothing to say about child bearing or children. Is the church ready for that? I don't have any idea since I have spent almost 30 years of my ministry outside the United States, during which the doctrine and discipline of TEC have changed almost beyond recognition. However, most Episcopalians are increasingly past child-bearing age, and the children themselves are few and far between. So perhaps the question will not come up.

*(The Rev.) Joseph P. Frary
St. Andrew's Theological Seminary
Manila, Philippines*

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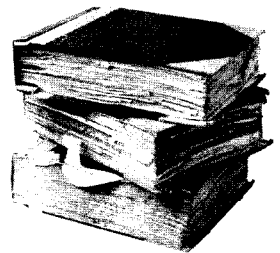
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Deaths

The Rev. **Louis H. Fracher**, rector emeritus of St. John's Church, Waynesboro, VA, died June 12 at Shenandoah House, Fishersville, VA. He was 89.

Born and raised in Detroit, MI, he was a graduate of Duke University, Yale University, and Virginia Theological Seminary. During World War II he served in the Pacific with the Naval Reserve. He retired in 1954 at the rank of lieutenant commander. Following the war, he worked in public relations for the DuPont Company and later for Dan River Mills until he pursued holy orders. Following ordination to the diaconate in 1954 and to the priesthood in 1955, Fr. Fracher served three congregations in the Diocese of Virginia known as the Pruden Cure until 1958. In that year he was called as rector of the Waynesboro parish. He served there for 26 years, retiring in 1984. He was named rector emeritus at that time. Following retirement, Fr. Fracher was a clinical pastoral counselor in substance abuse at two institutions in Charlottesville, VA. He is survived by his wife, Patricia; his first wife, Marjorie; four children, Gretchen Hardage, of Raleigh, NC, Jeffrey, of Charlottesville, Christopher, of Staunton, VA, and Andrew, of Newport, KY; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; and three step-children.

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 E-mail: meadechurch@yahoo.com
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HOPE CHURCH K and Inyo Streets (909) 989-3317
 The Rev. William R. Hampton, STS
 Sun Eu 10:30

To place a church directory listing, contact Amber Muma at amber@livingchurch.org

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; CP, Contemplative/Centering Prayer; c, curate; d, deacon, d.r.e., director of religious education; EP, Evening Prayer; Eu, Eucharist; Ev, Evensong; ex, except; 1S, 1st Sunday; hol, holiday; HC, Holy Communion; HD, Holy Days; HS, Healing Service; HU, Holy Unction; Instr, Instructions; Int, Intercessions; LOH, Laying On of Hands; Lit, Litany; Mat, Matins; MP, Morning Prayer; P, Penance; r, rector; r-em, rector emeritus; Ser, Sermon; Sol, Solemn; SD, Spiritual Direction; Sta, Stations; V, Vespers; v, vicar; YA, Young Adult; YPF, Young People's Fellowship. A/C, air-conditioned; H/A, handicapped accessible.

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Ellen K. Wondra, Editor in Chief

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Richard A. Norris, Jr.

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