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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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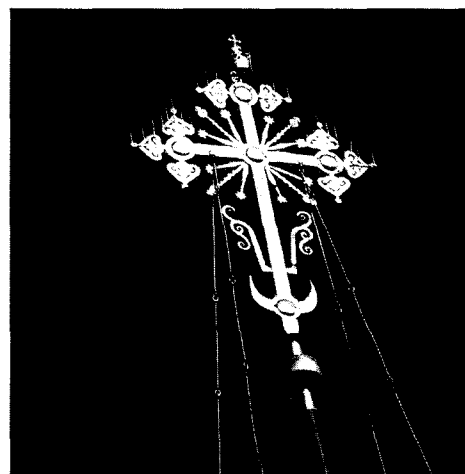
On the Cover

Mother Miriam, CSM, helps fill the grave of Sister Mary Helen Bradley, CSM, following the Oct. 17 consecration of a new cemetery for the Community of St. Mary, Eastern Province, Greenwich, N.Y. The Rev. Stephen Hart (right) and others joined in the service; the Rt. Rev. William H. Love, Bishop of Albany, officiated at the consecration, Solemn Requiem, and burial.

Stephen Hasslacher photo



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SUNDAY'S READINGS

In the Midst of Life

'...that you may not grieve as others do'

(1 Thess. 4:13)

The 26th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 27A), Nov. 9, 2008

BCP: Amos 5:18-24; Psalm 70; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Matt. 25:1-13

RCL: Josh. 24:1-3a, 14-25 and Psalm 78:1-7; or Wisdom 6:12-16, or Amos 5:18-24 and Wisdom 6:17-20 or Psalm 70; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Matt. 25:1-13

On the face of it, it seems odd indeed that this Sunday's readings focus our attention on death. We're still, after all, in the season after Pentecost, the liturgical color of which is a testament to life and to growth. Yet there's a definite purpose being carried out here. It reminds us that "[i]n the midst of life we are in death" (BCP, p. 492); that regarding our own dying, we "know neither the day nor the hour" (Matt. 25:13).

The inevitability of death, particularly our own, is something most of us go to great lengths to ignore or deny. Some decades back, Jessica Mitford's *The American Way of Death* examined in detail our cultural unease with the subject, then obvious in both custom and language. A similar examination today undoubtedly would reveal that little has changed. We still pay morticians to make up and dress up corpses to look as if they're merely sleeping. And newspaper obituaries continue to avoid the word "died," as though their subjects did something else altogether.

Death is a fearsome concept for

nearly all of us. We don't like it, and we certainly don't want it to happen. Yet it's only through facing our fear head on that we have any chance of overcoming it.

Accepting that our life is transitory, of course, gives a definite urgency to our living. What we do with our limited time on this earth suddenly matters. So we're freed from being pawns and victims of circumstance and empowered to become masters of our own fate. Accepting that our death might well be imminent, moreover, gives special meaning to what we choose to do here and now. It inspires us to live each day as though it were our last. Someday, of course, we'll be right.

Accepting that we "do not know the day or the hour" of our dying also frees us to be open to larger truth about death. We no longer have reason to grieve for ourselves, "as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him [all] who have died ... and so we will be with the Lord forever" (1 Thess. 4:13-14, 17).

Look It Up

What are Paul's hopes regarding the coming of Christ in glory? (1 Thess. 4:13-18)

Think About It

What are some of the reasons that many people are afraid of death?

Next Sunday

The 27th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 28A), Nov. 16, 2008

BCP: Zeph. 1:7, 12-18; Psalm 90 or 90:1-8, 12; 1 Thess. 5:1-10; Matt. 25:14-19, 29

RCL: Judges 4:1-7 and Psalm 123; or Zeph. 1:7, 12-18 and Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11), 12; 1 Thess. 5:1-11; Matt. 25:14-30

SHORT & SHARP

Mind and Spirit

Publishers are continuing to turn out books on spiritual or religious matters at a dizzying pace. Here is a brief look at some of those received at the TLC office:

What Size
Are God's Shoes
Kids, Chaos, and the Spiritual Life

WHAT SIZE ARE GOD'S SHOES? Kids, Chaos and the Spiritual Life. By Tim Schenck. Morehouse. Pp. 131. \$12. ISBN 978-0-8192-2312-8.

The rector of All Saints' Church, Briarcliff Manor, N.Y., an occasional author on these pages, offers candid looks at life in the rectory. His story of Happy Meals at the drive-through window ought to resonate with parents, and the dog adoption chapter is delightful.

AN OWL AMONG THE RUINS. By W.F. Bellais II. Vantage Press. Pp. 271. \$13.95. ISBN 978-0-533-15605-4.

After serving in the military for 22 years, the Rev. William F. Bellais, priest of the Diocese of West Missouri, has written a story about a priest, retired from the military, whose life changes unexpectedly when a letter arrives. A moving tale.

PATHS OF EXILE: Narratives of St. Columba and the Praxis of Iona. By James Lewis. Cloverdale. Pp. 204. \$19.95. ISBN 978-1-929569-24-3.

James Lewis, theological advisor to the Diocese of Kansas, has organized a study of the stories of St. Columba. Dr. Lewis presents interesting glimpses of early Christianity in Ireland, and his detailed Appendix will be valuable to those who want to learn more about the saint.

CANDLELIGHT: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction. By Susan S. Phillips. Morehouse. Pp. 252. \$26. ISBN 978-0-8192-2297-8.

Those who are providing spiritual direction to others should benefit from this book. Dr. Phillips, executive director of New College, Berkeley, Calif., provides readers an opportunity to "observe" her as a spiritual director.

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The Rev'd. John Kerr is on the staff at Bruton Parish in Williamsburg, Virginia and serves as Episcopal chaplain to the College of William and Mary. A native of England, he is a founder of the Society of Ordained Scientists and formerly taught at Oxford and Winchester College. Dr. Kerr will speak on biomedical ethics.

The Rev'd. Canon Christopher Chase is rector of Good Samaritan, San Diego and former chaplain to the University of Tennessee. Canon Chase is recognized as an expert on Islam and will speak on the subject.

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P.B. Would Keep Covenant Request Off Anaheim Agenda

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori said that if a proposed Anglican Covenant is released in mid-May for adoption by the Anglican Communion's provinces, she will "strongly discourage" any effort to bring that request to the General Convention in July. She made her remarks at a plenary session Oct. 21 during Executive Council's four-day meeting in Helena, Mont.

Anglican Communion provinces have until the end of March 2009 to respond to the St. Andrew's Draft of the proposed covenant. The Covenant Design Group meets in April, and the Anglican Consultative Council is expected to review the most current draft at its meeting in May.

"My sense is that the time is far too short before our General Convention for us to have a thorough discussion of it as a church, and I'm therefore going to strongly discourage any move to bring it to General Convention," Bishop Jefferts Schori told the Executive Council. "I just think it's inappropriate to make a decision that weighty" with two months to review the document.

Executive Council will be asked during its next meeting, which begins Jan. 30 in Stockton, Calif., to respond officially to the St. Andrew's Draft. The covenant drafters have asked provinces to say if they believe in principle that they can commit to the covenant, what provincial process is required for that commitment, and what changes to the St. Andrew's Draft would give them the greatest chance of being able to make the commitment.

Earlier last month, the Rev. Canon Gregory Cameron, deputy secretary general of the Anglican Consultative Council, told delegates to the Diocese of Western Louisiana that individual dioceses would be given the opportunity to commit to the covenant if their province fails to do so [TLC, Nov. 2].

Episcopal News Service contributed to this report.



Julie Murray/Trinity Church photo

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori returned to Trinity Church, Columbus, Ohio, on Oct. 7, the site of her election as Presiding Bishop. She preached during a Choral Evensong.

Bishop Donovan Becomes Liaison to Other Provinces

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop, announced Oct. 20 that the Rt. Rev. Herbert A. Donovan, Jr., will be her deputy for Anglican Communion Relations.

In this new position, Bishop Donovan, currently an assisting bishop in the Diocese of New York, will serve as the liaison for The Episcopal Church to the other provinces in the Anglican Communion, as well as to

international groups, organizations and partners.

Bishop Donovan resigned as Bishop of Arkansas in 1993. Since then he has served as interim Anglican Observer to the United Nations, executive director of the Compass Rose Society, assisting Bishop of New Jersey, provisional Bishop of Chicago, vicar of Trinity Church Wall Street, and interim at Trinity Church, Boston.

Episcopalians, Roman Catholics Continue Dialogue

Episcopalians and Roman Catholics launched a new round of ecumenical dialogue, exploring "Ecclesiology and Moral Discernment: Common Ground and Divergences" during a recent meeting at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

The meeting Sept. 29-30 followed a new format in light of the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue in the United States' (ARC-USA) decision in 2006 to meet in rounds. Under the new format, each round or phase of the dialogue will address a specific topic and will include members from both sides with expertise on the question at hand. The dialogue involves fewer members from each church than in

the past. Each round will be flexible in length, ordinarily lasting approximately five years, according to a news release from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

At the meeting, participants heard presentations on the history of the relationship between the two communions by the Rev. Ellen Wondra, academic dean at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, and John Borelli, special assistant for interreligious initiatives at Georgetown University. Co-chairs of the dialogue are the Rt. Rev. J. Thomas Breidenthal, Bishop of Southern Ohio, and Roman Catholic Bishop Ronald P. Herzog of Alexandria, La.

Prayer Book Custodian Talks About History of Revisions

The first Book of Common Prayer appeared seemingly out of nowhere in the spring of 1549 and faced significant resistance at times, even riots, a fate not unknown to a number of its successors, said the Rev. Canon Greg Howe, custodian of the Standard Book of Common Prayer.

Canon Howe gave the keynote address, "Prayer Book Revision: The Untold Stories," during a workshop Oct. 18 at Trinity Cathedral, Omaha, Neb. The process of revising the prayer book proved so traumatic within the Church of England that it has defeated several attempts to revise the version approved in 1662, although most English churches now use *Common Worship* for services.

Bringing together artifacts from the cathedral collection, personal items owned by Canon Howe and prayer books on loan from the Archives of The Episcopal Church, the cathedral workshop began with a historical display of various prayer book texts.

The custodian maintains physical possession and preservation of the true and exact copies of all alterations to the Book of Common Prayer. The position was created by General Convention in 1871, according to Canon Howe, who said that within the Anglican Communion The Episcopal



Tom Jeffries/Trinity Cathedral photo

Participants in a workshop on the prayer book, held at Trinity Cathedral in Omaha, Neb., Oct. 18, view artifacts on loan from the Archives of The Episcopal Church.

Church and the Church of Brazil are the only two provinces with prayer book custodians. Canon Howe was appointed custodian in 2000 by former Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold.

In the third part of his address, Canon Howe shared some behind-the-scenes observations from the General Conventions of 1976 and 1979 when the current edition of the prayer book achieved the necessary approval.

Historically, after General Conven-

tion approves a new prayer book, many years usually elapse before the committee returns a proposed draft for consideration. The first prayer book studies leading to the 1979 edition began in 1949, according to Canon Howe.

Merely approving variations of the current edition for trial use required consent from two successive General Conventions. Twelve more years would elapse before the current edition became the standard version.

Liturgy and Music Commission Proposes New, Revised Books

The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music is seeking General Convention approval for a replacement it has prepared to the book, *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, authorization to begin work on a new edition of the *Book of Occasional Services*, and approval of a new collection of prayers and liturgies that address reproductive loss and grief.

The commission, which considers policies and strategies concerning the common worship of the church, completed its pre-convention report for publication in the so-called Blue Book during a meeting Oct. 13-17 at a retreat and conference center in Ashland, Neb.

The proposed title for the revised *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* is "Holy Women, Holy Men" and includes an additional 70 people for commemora-

tion. No names have been dropped from the current edition, but some dates have been changed to correspond with ecumenical calendars.

Former Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold proposed revision of the book about a decade ago. He felt that previous editions overemphasized first-century saints and Church of England clergymen. In addition to the inclusion of more women, minorities and Episcopalians, the proposed edition also includes guidelines for anyone who wants to propose additional names for inclusion in future editions.

The *Book of Occasional Services* is a collection of liturgical resources for events that do not occur with sufficient frequency to warrant inclusion in The Book of Common Prayer, according to the preface of the current edition, which was authorized by General Convention

in 1994. The resolution prepared by the liturgy and music commission for consideration by convention next year would authorize the commission to begin preparing a new edition.

The working title of the third publication is "Rachel's Tears, Hannah's Hopes." In the resolution to be submitted to General Convention, it is described as a comprehensive collection of prayers and liturgies addressing issues surrounding reproductive loss and grief. A resolution previously submitted to General Convention by a precursor organization of Anglicans for Life sought a liturgy for those who were experiencing grief after an abortion. The draft submitted to General Convention by the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music expanded the list to include miscarriages and other reproductive trauma.

Reorganization Underway in Diocese of Pittsburgh

Following the vote by convention deputies in the Diocese of Pittsburgh to realign with the Anglican Church of the Southern Cone [TLC, Oct. 19], one standing committee member, the Rev. James B. Simons, rector of St. Michael's Church, Ligonier, Pa., was removed by the majority.

Fr. Simons and two new members he appointed to the standing committee were subsequently recognized by the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop, as the ecclesiastical authority and charged with reorganizing a diocese of The Episcopal Church in that region. (The constitution and canons of the diocese permits the

standing committee to appoint new members to fill vacancies.)

Bishop Jefferts Schori also wrote the other seven members of the standing committee on Oct. 9. Citing Title I, Canon 17, Section 8, she said that she no longer "recognize[d]" them as the ecclesiastical authority.

"Any person accepting any office in this Church shall well and faithfully perform the duties of that office in accordance with the constitution and canons of this church and of the dio-



Fr. Wilson

cese in which the office is being exercised," the passage states. It does not identify who decides whether a person has failed in that capacity, or specify a procedure for determining whether a breach of fiduciary duty has occurred. This point was raised by the Rev. David Wilson, president of the standing committee of the continuing Diocese of Pittsburgh and priest-in-charge of St. David's, Peters Township. Fr. Wilson responded to Bishop Jefferts Schori on Oct. 16.

"The only reason we are the ecclesiastical authority for the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh is because of your illegal 'deposition' of Bishop Robert W. Duncan," Fr. Wilson said. "Your effort to take advantage of this illegal action by following it with a subsequent illegal action (i.e., seeking to 'recognize' members of a diocesan standing committee despite the fact that you have no jurisdiction or authority to do so) is wholly improper."

The leadership of the continuing Diocese of Pittsburgh has been the defendant in a lawsuit brought by the rector and wardens of Calvary Church, Pittsburgh, in 2003. The matter was settled by a stipulation order of the court in 2005. The stipulation order noted that diocesan property, such as endowment accounts, but not necessarily parish property, would continue to be held by the "Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America" whether or not any parishes or diocesan leaders vote to leave.

After the diocesan convention took a preliminary vote to realign last year, Calvary went back to court and claimed the leadership had violated the stipulation order. The two sides agreed this summer to an independent, court-appointed "special master," who will review all diocesan financial records and make recommendations to the judge overseeing the case as to what property is covered by the stipulation order [TLC, Sept. 28].

Steve Waring

Alexandria Church Conveys Title to Virginia Bishop

The congregation of Christ Church, Alexandria, Va., voted Oct. 19 to convey to Bishop Peter Lee of Virginia title to several acres of property now occupied by the congregation of The Falls Church, one of 11 congregations where the majority of the congregation voted to leave The Episcopal Church in 2006. The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Virginia have gone to court, claiming they jointly hold title to the church properties.

Prior to the American Revolution, the Church of England was the established church in Virginia, and churches were overseen by a vestry elected by the voters in a geographic area. After Virginia became a state, the church was disestablished and ownership of church properties in Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax County passed from the Fairfax Parish vestry to Christ Church. The U.S. Supreme Court declared the vestry of Christ Church the successor to the Fairfax Parish in 1815, a ruling the court upheld in 1824.

Among the land to which the court said Christ Church held title is a portion of The Falls Church's 10-acre campus. The original two-acre parcel includes the historic church structure dating back to the 1760s. The congregation has subsequently built another,

larger building where most services are held. Christ Church has no ownership interest in the majority of the campus.

In September, lawyers for the diocese informed the senior warden of Christ Church, the Hon. T. Rawles Jones, Jr., that Christ Church held title to part of the land now occupied by The Falls Church. On Oct. 13, Bishop Lee formally asked Judge Jones whether the vestry of Christ Church would be willing to call for a congregational vote to convey title to the property now occupied by The Falls Church to Bishop Lee in his official capacity. The vestry met in executive session and approved the request on Oct. 15. Both the state and the Diocese of Virginia require a vote by the congregation before a church can transfer title to property.

The Oct. 19 vote preceded a hearing in Fairfax County civil court the following day.

A week prior to the vote in Alexandria, Judge Randy Bellows declared that title to the property of Christ the Redeemer Church was properly transferred back to Truro Church, another of the 11 CANA congregations. Christ the Redeemer was a mission plant of Truro. After Christ the Redeemer Church closed, the congregation deeded the property back to Truro.



Jim DeLaThe Southern Cross photo

Bishop Dabney Smith of Southwest Florida holds a carved giraffe, a gift he received from Bishop Ernest Shelita of Mahabura, Uganda, during convention.

Charities Fund

Delegates to the convention of the Diocese of **Southwest Florida** directed the commission on ministry to study the question of restoring the right of active deacons to vote at convention. They also approved a major revision of the diocesan canons, and assented to a plan to raise more than \$2 million during the next year to establish an Episcopal Charities Fund. Convention met Oct. 17-18 at Christ Church, Bradenton.

The commission was directed to prepare a report and recommendation in time for deanery meetings next spring. Granting deacons the right to a vote came up as the convention was considering a major revision of its canons. The revisions, two years in the making, clarify language, reorganize sections for easier reference, and update sections to conform to recent changes in The Episcopal Church's canons.

In his address, the Rt. Rev. Dabney Smith, Bishop of Southwest Florida, explained the reasoning behind the plan to create the charities fund.

"The revenues generated annually

by the Episcopal Charities Fund would be used for outreach purposes both within and outside the diocese," Bishop Smith said. "The first step in this endeavor is simply to establish the fund. I found it spiritually striking to be in the Dominican Republic in the midst of our economic meltdown. The needs there are so vast, and many so poor, that this economic downturn is, in many ways, incomprehensible. The need for us to be involved in and focused on mission is completely comprehensible."

Among other business, convention approved a \$3.3 million budget.

Junction Proposed

With the furnace still not operational after flooding last June, St. Paul's Cathedral, **Fond du Lac, Wis.**, was still somewhat of a renovation work in progress when the diocesan convention met Oct. 17-18.

The convention approved with little debate a resolution requesting General Convention consent for Fond du Lac and the Diocese of Eau Claire to consider a junctioning of the two dioceses into one [TLC, Oct. 19]. A resolution affirming the Communion Partner's initiative to which Bishop Russell Jacobus of Fond du Lac is a signatory was more vigorously debated. That resolution was adopted, but only after it was amended to clarify that convention was affirming the Bishop's Communion Partner involvement, but not necessarily giving the initiative itself diocesan endorsement.

The reduction of the diocesan youth coordinator position from three-quarters time to halftime also generated significant discussion. Convention did not approve the proposed \$600,000 budget for 2009 largely due to concerns over the position.

In his address to convention, Bishop Jacobus said he had become more environmentally aware of the carbon footprint he creates as a result of workshops and discussions he participated in during the Lambeth Conference last summer.

Supporting the Covenant

The convention of the Diocese of **North Dakota** gathered at a Bismarck hotel Oct. 4 with 70 lay delegates and 55 clergy present.

Also present was the Rt. Rev. Carol Gallagher, who has been assisting with episcopal ministry in North Dakota [TLC, June 29]. Bishop Gallagher gave a presentation the day before convention based on her new book, *Reweaving the Sacred: A Practical Guide to Change and Growth for Challenged Congregations*.

A resolution was adopted that urges General Convention to increase the base budget support awarded to each of the four "aided dioceses" for ministry with native peoples for purposes of evangelism, youth ministry, theological education, and projects consistent with the Millennium Development Goals.

Good Stewardship

Delegates also approved sending a fourth deputy from the lay and clerical orders to General Convention, and voted to support the "Windsor Process" and the adoption of the Anglican Covenant while remaining a diocese of The Episcopal Church. They also passed a resolution supporting the Genesis Covenant, which focuses on good stewardship of the earth and its resources, and designating the first Sunday in Lent as Episcopal Relief and Development Sunday.

"Either the instruments of communion of Anglicanism have moral authority that deserves our respect and attention, or they do not," said the Rt. Rev. Michael Smith, Bishop of North Dakota, in favor of the resolution in his address to delegates. "Either we are primarily an independent, national church beholden to none, or we are an interdependent church belonging to a global family of churches united through the historic See of Canterbury. This essentially is what the Anglican Covenant is about."

Convention approved a budget of \$685,935 for 2009.

(The Rev.) Jamie Parsley

In the Beauty of Homeliness

A subscriber made an interesting discovery on a recent trip to California when he tried to find some information about an Episcopal church.

"I had attended there before, so I knew where it was located, but was not sure of the times for the Sunday Eucharists." He decided to consult the Yellow Pages, which yielded no information.

"I arrived more than a half-hour early and the greeter, being a very friendly sort, engaged me in conversation," the reader offered. When he said he couldn't find the church listed in the Yellow Pages, he heard a tale of woe. It seems that somehow the Yellow Pages got hold of the parish's incorporation papers, which showed the church incorporated as "The Rector, Wardens & Vestrymen of..." That is how the parish was listed in the Yellow Pages. The name of the church was not listed.

The subscriber ripped a page showing the listing from the Yellow Pages (gasp!) to prove the story is for real. Needless to say, those who paid for the ad can't be very happy.

*

Another longtime subscriber reported that when he visited the website for All Saints' Cathedral, Khartoum, he found the regular Sunday schedule includes "English Homely Communion 0830 am." "So much for worship in the beauty of holiness," he writes.

*

One of the websites I looked at recently listed its Holy Week schedule, including a list of who would be preaching. Unfortunately, the schedule was for 2005.

*

The *Salem (Mass.) News* reported on the "elevation" from priest-in-charge to rector of Trinity Church, Salem, of the Rev. Johanna Barrett. The new rector apparently has a good sense of humor. "All of ordained life is between the hospital and the 'honey wagon'," she told a reporter. "But that's just normal life - you're trying to do your job, and then the toilet backs up."

The newspaper reported that Ms. Barrett "jokingly" offered a special prayer about the occasion: "Please, God, I don't want to go back to graduate school."

*

St. Andrew's Church, Milford, Conn., was host to an unusual event last month. The

church, along with the Temple Players, presented "A Biblical Sense of Humor," a staged reading of five independent, one-act comedies based on characters of the Bible. I'm sure most of us have a few favorite characters from scripture we'd like to see portrayed on stage.

A friend insists an entire musical based on the life of St. Paul would be great theater. Hasn't someone already done this?



*

Don't blame the Episcopalians for everything. A reader visiting Toronto recently attended an Anglican Eucharist and reported there was no creed. When he asked someone seated nearby about the omission, he was told the creed hadn't been recited for several weeks.

*

Somebody asked me the other day if I knew the difference between a Southern Baptist and an Episcopalian. I said I didn't. I was told an Episcopalian will speak to you if he's spotted in a liquor store.

*

As if the mention of two cathedrals presenting Buddhist monks' working on sand mandalas in their buildings wasn't enough [TLC, Nov. 2], word comes that Christ Church Cathedral, Louisville, Ky., was host to a similar event last month. An announcement on the Diocese of Kentucky's website said the sand mandala design is created through a prayer-filled process, by painstakingly adding small amounts of sand over many days. "At the end, recognizing the impermanence of all things, the design is ceremonially swept up and the prayers are released for the benefit of all."

*

At its recent Fall Bazaar, Church of the Nativity, Fayetteville, Ga., held a raffle to win \$1,000 in free gasoline. Tickets went for \$5.

*

Note to Shelley in Colorado: The next General Convention will be held July 8-17, 2009, at the Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. Visitors are welcome.

David Kalvelage, executive editor

Did You Know...
In a response to a recent survey on The Living Church News Service website, 88 percent of respondents said they disagreed with the Presiding Bishop's remark that The Episcopal Church is "well past the worst of the crisis" of departing parishes and dioceses.

Quote of the Week
The Rev. Chuck Weiss, rector of St. Thomas' Church, Canonsburg, Pa., in the Observer-Reporter of Washington, Pa., on his congregation remaining in The Episcopal Church: "We're warm and friendly, and we have good coffee."

Ecumenical Step Forward

While it received little notice from the secular media, the recent synod of Roman Catholic bishops at the Vatican included a remarkable event that may have major implications ecumenically. Bartholomew I, ecumenical patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church, addressed the bishops gathered in the Sistine Chapel after being invited by Pope Benedict XVI. The appearance of the patriarch does not indicate, of course, that the 1,000-year division of the great churches of the East and West is about to end, but it was, to use his own words, a "historic event in itself."

Pope Benedict is known to be committed to ecumenical endeavors, so the invitation to Bartholomew might not seem unusual. Yet the patriarch called it "a gesture full of meaning and significance." He said it was "a manifestation of the work of the Holy Spirit leading our churches to a closer and deeper relationship with each other, an important step toward the restoration of our full communion."

The extraordinary event was watched from afar by Anglicans, who have had significant ecumenical progress with both churches, albeit somewhat limited in recent years. Like most ecumenical relationships, important differences remain between the world's two largest churches. Nevertheless, the appearance of the patriarch represents a small step in the right direction.

Honoring Veterans

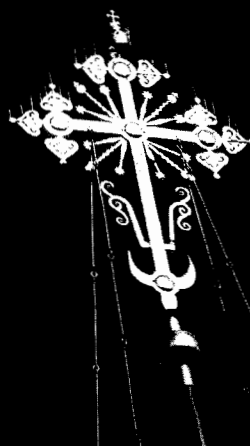
In our country's observance of Veterans Day this week, we recognize those who have served our country honorably in the military, both living and dead, in battle and in times of peace. Among those we honor are the chaplains who preach, teach and offer support to those in the armed services with whom they serve, in our own country and around the world.

Episcopal chaplains today serve with active duty, Reserve, National Guard, and Civil Air Patrol personnel. Wherever they work, they are called to build a community of faith, offering sacramental ministry based on the Book of Common Prayer. They also provide pastoral care and counsel to all people, regardless of faith, often far from home and in the most difficult circumstances.

While the work of these chaplains is much needed, so is the support that our congregations provide to military personnel and their families. Episcopal churches near military installations provide a spiritual home for many active-duty personnel and their loved ones. And no matter where a church is located, chances are good that a parish member, or the child or grandchild of a member, is serving in harm's way. Through regular communication, innovative outreach, and above all through prayer, parishes can help ease their burden and be reminders of God's grace.

We join in offering all veterans our gratitude for their service and sacrifice. Let us also honor those who minister with military families, and prayerfully consider opportunities to share in that ministry ourselves.

The appearance of the patriarch in Rome: "a manifestation of the work of the Holy Spirit..."



Tenants of the Vineyard

By James Workman



The national leadership of The Episcopal Church [TEC] says it must go to court, if necessary, to retain the properties and assets of departing congregations and dioceses. These legal actions rest on a claim to be the stewards of properties built by past generations. This is presented as an unassailable fiduciary reality. I believe a recent Sunday gospel reading raises questions about that claim.

My aim here is mainly to show that a debate is altogether proper on this pivotal issue. The Presiding Bishop emphasized recently that dissenting voices are welcome, and I offer mine here.

The parable of the vineyard tenants (Matt. 21:33-46) has a transparent message from Jesus for the mission of God in this world. The message includes a clear reference to leaders and structures.

Recall the elements of the parable. The "master of a house" plants a vineyard. Clearly God is in view. The familiar imagery of a vineyard in the Bible often refers to the people of God and our productive purpose in this world. The owner erects structures — a wine-press, a wall, and a watchtower. It is not hard to picture the actual structures of worship and rule in Jerusalem — to which Jesus has now come in Matthew's narrative. The right to make use of these structures comes from the purposes of the owner.

The owner leases the vineyard to tenant managers, who rebel at a particular harvest time. They mistreat and kill the owner's servants who come to make the owner's claim on the produce of the harvest. Think of the prophets; think of John the Baptist. The owner sends his son. What a remarkable

detail, emphasized by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The tenants seize the son, cast him out of the vineyard, and kill him. Picture Jesus saying that in Jerusalem days before his arrest and execution.

Matthew alone records Jesus asking the religious leaders of Israel what should happen next. They began their answer: "He will put those wretches to a miserable death." It could be argued from standard New Testament studies that Matthew (or an editor) was well aware how concretely that happened in 70 A.D. The structures of worship and rule were taken away. And remember that Jesus has just previously cleared part of the temple plaza of those who were misusing it.

The second part of the leaders' answer was: "He will let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Matthew, Mark, and Luke record that the leaders got the point and tried to arrest Jesus on the spot.

Jesus projected the transfer of God's vineyard to new tenants — his apostles. The leaders of the Church at the time of Matthew's publication could easily see themselves in the place of the tenants in the parable. Church leaders today are now in that position. All claims to stewardship of the structures of the vineyard are brought under scrutiny by this text. Any particular leaders of any particular church body must now face the standards and expectations of the owner for his vineyard. The vineyard, with all its structures, has been taken away before and it can happen now.

The standard of judgment belongs to the owner of the vineyard, not to the current tenants. TEC's leaders may assert that they are meeting the standards of God for the mission of the vineyard. But it

is not a foregone ecclesiastical conclusion that the present tenants are right just because they are the tenants. The faithfulness of the current leadership of TEC to the mission of God is the crucial question in their claim to the structures of mission. So, what is the owner looking for?

Holy scripture, read in the light of church tradition with the eyes of holy reason, is a full source of information about God's expectations. References to vineyards, vines, branches, fruit and harvest are one of the great threads of the Bible. Other passages add other themes. The aims of the owner include some of what the leadership of TEC emphasizes. These aims flow well from harvest language, having to do with feeding hungry people and, by extension, providing shelter, water, medical care, and education. These are good and right concerns.

Now I will take a side in the debate about whether the leadership of TEC can rightfully claim the structures of departing congregations and dioceses.

In this same gospel (9:37, 38), Jesus looked upon lost people and said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." Has the Church been wrong through the centuries,

when, along with feeding the hungry and giving shelter and all the rest, she saw the heart of the harvest being the announcement of Jesus Christ's work of eternal salvation through his death on the cross and resurrection? Isn't this theme of the victory of Christ over sin the very heart of each of our eucharistic prayers? Isn't the final test of the harvest, according to the aim of the owner, that lost people are gathered in through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and find the light and life of God through his Son?

And isn't this standard for the harvest announced at the end of this same gospel according to Matthew (28:16-20) with an astounding call to "make disciples of all nations," putting the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ on them by baptism, and, yes, teaching them to live in the way of Jesus?

The structures of the vineyard are meant for the full harvest, announced by the full gospel. The tenants' use of these structures is justified only by meeting the expectations of the owner. Whether The Episcopal Church is meeting those expectations at the national level is, like every church through history, open for evaluation. □

The Rev. James Workman is the rector of St. Michael's Church, Easley, S.C.

"The Handbook has been a treasured resource for me for many years. The inclusion of RCL texts, with suggested hymns, is most helpful."

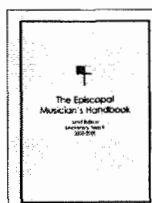
—Janette Fishell, Distinguished Professor of Music, East Carolina University
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Back to the Table

After reading "A Decision to Leave" [TLC, Oct. 19], I found myself asking, "Am I the only one who suffers ennui from all the articles castigating 'the other side,' imputing with remarkable prescience the basest of motives to other Christians?" I doubt it. Rather than just rolling my eyes and moving on, though, a couple of observations:

1. Bishop Duncan was tossed out in a manner that appears not to comply with pretty clear canon law. So instead of whining about it, why not ask the federal courts to determine if the canons were followed as the TEC Constitution and Canons allow?

2. Rejecting the "gay agenda" does not require trampling the canons of Nicaea and Chalcedon and ignoring more than 16 centuries of church order. Or, two wrongs don't make a right.

2(a). And, if Bishop Venables is succeeded by a "liberal," will all the Southern Cone people then affiliate with an African national church? Where will it end?

3. I challenge all interested parties to do what is apparently generally unthinkable, and visit the Anglican Communion website. There you will see clearly that the Anglican Consultative Council [ACC], per the directory of provinces and dioceses, does not recognize "offshore" jurisdiction of any primate. For all intents and purposes the ACC does not recognize, for example, Southern Cone churches and dioceses in the United States (or elsewhere).

Let's get over it. Let's get back to the table as the Archbishop of Canterbury keeps trying to have us do. Let's recognize that what we share outweighs our differences and really listen to one another in prayer and charity.

(The Rev.) Bob Woods
St. Peter's Church
Kernville, Calif.

No Easy Answers

It's not quite true that The Episcopal Church was "an institution that did not own slaves" [TLC, Oct. 19]. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel [SPG] inherited a plantation in Barbados from a family named Codrington in the first part of the 1700s, which included slaves, and the society benefited from their labor.

A descendant of those slaves wondered in 2005 about apologizing for the ownership. It seemed hypocritical to do so without granting reparations. And although she thought the slave ownership was wrong, she said she was grateful for the school the SPG had for black children. What she says is complicated, and I don't think there are easy answers.

Is it simply an effort to be "politically correct" (which implies hypocrisy) to apologize for a corporate sin which occurred in the past —

and an effort to make the church look bad? Is such an apology worthless without reparation? And should the church be "complimented for identifying a sin and trying to do something about it" (such as the helpful anti-racism training offered by the church today) as the editorial observes? I'm not sure the answer is "yes" on any of those counts.

I think we are all repentant for the fact that part of the church did own slaves (the SPG as quoted above) and — in other instances — did profit from the slave trade (as pointed out in studies done for the workshops in Philadelphia). So why not say so?

In short, I don't think TEC is misguided in its public apology for its participation in the institution of transatlantic slavery. It is indeed too bad that we didn't do so a century ago as the editorial notes.

Celinda Scott
Indiana, Pa.

PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **James Kellaway** is priest-in-charge of Trinity, PO Box 276, Brooklyn, CT 06234.

The Rev. **Lucy LaRocca** is assistant at Trinity, 1109 Main St., Branford, CT 06405.

The Rev. **Lauren Miller McDonald** is associate at Hickory Neck Church, 8300 Richmond Rd., Toano, VA 23168.

The Rev. **John Miller, Jr.**, is vicar of Grace, 44 Old Ellington Rd., Broad Brook, CT 06016.

The Rev. **Jonathan Mitchican** is rector of Holy Comforter, 1000 Burmont Rd., Drexel Hill, PA 19026.

The Rev. **Doug Neel** is priest-in-charge of St. Patrick's, 225 S Pagosa Blvd., Pagosa, CO 81147.

The Rev. **Heather Payton** is curate at St. Ambrose, 7520 S Boulder Rd., Boulder, CO 80303.

The Rev. **Leigh Preston** is Hispanic missionary, Greater Hartford Regional Ministry, 12 Rector St., East Hartford, CT 06108.

The Rev. **Catharine Randall** is associate at St. John's, 78 Green Hill Rd., Washington, CT 06793.

The Rev. **Kathryn Reinhard** is associate at Christ Church, 84 Broadway, New Haven, CT 06511.

The Rev. **Ann Richards** is curate/assistant at St. Mark's, 111 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT 06840.

The Rev. **Lee Ann Tolzmann** is rector of St. Paul's, 200 Riverside Ave., Riverside, CT 06878.

The Rev. **John Valentine** is priest-in-charge of St. Paul's, Weston, and Transfiguration, Buckhannon, WV; add: 206 E Second St., Weston, WV 26452.

The Rev. **Frank E. Wismer** is vicar of Christ Church, 2 Emerson St., East Norwalk, CT 06855.

Retirements

The Rev. **Wanda Lucas**, as deacon at St. Francis of the Islands, Savannah, GA.

The Rev. **Rod Brown**, as rector of Holy Trinity, Oxford, MD.

The Rev. **Bennett Brockman**, as rector of St. Paul's, Fairfield, CT.

The Rev. Canon **John Mitman**, as executive director of the Society for the Increase of Ministry, West Hartford, CT.

The Rev. **Pedro Valdez**, as diocesan Hispanic missionary and priest-in-charge of St. Nicholas', Noel, MO.

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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

OTHER ANGLICAN

MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL, MN

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF ST. DUNSTAN
Anglican Church in America/FIFNA
1928 BCP/Anglican Missal
www.stdunstananglican.org (952) 920-9122
Sun H Eu 8 & 10
Traditional Worship/Eternal Truths

LUTHERAN

BORON, CA

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

MOJAVE, CA

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.