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The Confession of St. Peter
JANUARY 19



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to build ...
architecture,
that is
the noblest
art of all
the arts.”

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
American Poet

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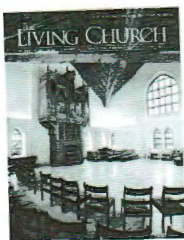
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THE LIVING CHURCH magazine is published by the Living Church Foundation, Inc. The historic mission of the Living Church Foundation is to promote and support Catholic Anglicanism within the Episcopal Church.

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The Cover

A depiction of St. Peter with the keys to the kingdom of heaven on the roof of Helsinki Cathedral, by German sculptor Hermann Schievelbein (1817-1867).



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SUNDAY'S READINGS

Knowing by Being Known

'I saw you under the fig tree' (John 1:48)

The Second Sunday after the Epiphany, Jan. 18, 2009

BCP: 1 Sam. 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 63:1-8; 1 Cor. 6:11b-20; John 1:43-51

RCL: 1 Sam. 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17; 1 Cor. 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

Secrets, riddles, puzzles, cryptic clues, symbolic codes—these are all common tools that we use in relating to one another in the everyday world. So it should come as no surprise that we expect God to play by the same rules. We assume that he has scattered clues about himself throughout the universe which we inhabit, and our job is to read these clues, and find God. The truth is, though, that we don't find God; God finds us. The wonderful story of the call of the boy Samuel tag teams with Jesus' exchange with Nathanael to set us straight on that matter.

Samuel's parents had apprenticed him to the priest Eli shortly after his birth. Samuel grew up literally in the shadow of the altar, in the almost tangible presence of God. One night as he lay in bed trying to get to sleep, he experienced God searching for him. Only after Samuel ran to Eli three times did the old priest realize who it was who was calling the boy, and he told him to answer, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." Samuel did not seek and find God; God sought and found Samuel.

For the most part, that's the way God prefers to treat us. The one who

seeks us out and finds us is the one to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid. When it comes to the basis of our relationship with him, God doesn't play guessing games. The basis for our knowledge of God is God's knowledge of us.

This is made clear for us in St. John's account of Jesus' encounter with Nathanael. Jesus greets him in an almost playful manner that would suggest he already knew him. Nathanael is mildly perplexed, but Jesus quickly explains, "I saw you when you were underneath the fig tree." We don't know exactly what Jesus was referring to, but Nathanael did, and it evidently touched a very private tender spot in his heart. When we experience that same touch, when we know that we are known at the deepest level of our being, we receive the confidence and the trust to respond as a disciple, to become a follower of the one who knows us so well.

Jesus sees us under our "fig trees" — wherever it is that we lay ourselves open without reservation, wherever it is that we simply quit playing guessing games. If we just sit still long enough, he'll find us!

Look It Up

Psalm 139 is a rich meditation on the lengths to which God will go to seek us out and find us.

Think About It

What is your "fig tree" moment — the time when, if Jesus were to bring it up to you, you would know that he knows you fully?

Next Sunday

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany, Jan. 25, 2009

BCP: Jer. 3:21—4:2; Psalm 130; 1 Cor. 7:17-23; Mark 1:14-20

RCL: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:6-14; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

No Lay Discipline in Proposed Canon Changes

In a change from an earlier draft, the Title IV Task Force on Disciplinary Policies and Procedures will not propose new canons to address discipline of members of the laity.

The much-anticipated new draft of its proposed changes to The Episcopal Church's canon on discipline will be included in the church's Blue Book of pre-filed General Convention legislation.

"It is the judgment of Task Force II that the time is not yet propitious for the inclusion of disciplinary provisions for the laity other than as already provided in the Book of Common Prayer, and no inclusion of laity is contemplated at this time," the task force wrote.

The 48-page document includes a six-page introduction that summa-

rizes the work of the task force, and lists the underlying theological principles upon which the task force based its revisions, and a brief description of the extent of changes.

"The large bulk of Title IV is or will be unchanged," the task force said. "Task Force II did not attempt to reinvent the wheel, but simply to express in new language much of what already existed. The abandonment provisions, appeals, modifications are essentially untouched, as is most of the other content of the canon. What has changed is the process by which complaints are brought and heard."

In addition to using new language, the canons also have undergone renumbering. Under the existing disciplinary canon, abandonment of

communion by a bishop is Title IV, Canon 9. Under the proposed version it would become Title IV, Canon 16, Section 1.

The current version of that canon requires the unanimous consent of the three senior bishops with jurisdiction before the Presiding Bishop can inhibit a bishop accused of abandonment. Under the proposed draft, the Presiding Bishop must obtain a majority of members to the Title IV [disciplinary] Review Committee before placing "a restriction on the exercise of ministry of said Bishop until such time as the House of Bishops shall investigate the matter and act thereon. During the period of such restriction, the Bishop shall not perform any Episcopal, ministerial or canonical acts."

AROUND THE DIOCESES

Challenge of Uncertainty

Given the uncertainty facing the church and the economy, it is tempting to withdraw and "circle the wagons," Bishop Gladstone "Skip" Adams told delegates to the convention of the Diocese of **Central New York**. But rather than "bowing to anxiety...we are called to be even more generous of spirit, not less." Convention met Nov. 14-15 in Liverpool, N.Y.

In its budget report to delegates, the diocesan board noted the budget for 2009 reflects "the economic realities of the communities in which we worship today," including "small membership congregations in areas that are not exhibiting significant population growth.

"Cultural shifts in church attendance patterns, the global financial crisis, and changing employment opportunities impact the financial lives of our congregations," the board concluded. "It is an ongoing challenge to discern where best to expend diocesan financial resources in a time of uncertainty."

A balanced budget of just more than \$2 million eliminated the property and benefits administrator, canon for youth and family ministries, and director of the diocesan formation program positions, while adding three full- and part-time staff positions with different responsibilities. In addition, staff salaries were frozen, and other expenses reduced. Anticipated revenues of \$1.8 million are nearly \$126,000 less than 2008.

In response to economic realities, and reflecting a new way of understanding the church's mission, Bishop Adams told delegates he is convinced that local strategies for mission will need to be developed "where difficult decisions will need to be made considering sharing of resources and confronting the use of our beautiful but old buildings which often are oppressive in the way they consume our energy and dollars.

"If this faith of ours is going to be a living one, we have to let go of the idea of Christianity as religion, which I understand to be a system of rules and regulations to get people to behave a certain

way that we have deemed acceptable," Bishop Adams said. "I believe that this approach has direct import on the struggles we have in being and becoming an Anglican Communion.

Among the resolutions adopted, delegates affirmed the diocese's "belief that all orders of ministry, lay and ordained, should be open to all persons regardless of sexual orientation or marital/partnered status;" endorsed membership in the National Religious Campaign Against Torture; urged diocesan conferences, committees and commissions to establish meeting times convenient for all lay persons, including students and parents responsible for child care; and encouraging greater understanding and support for all Native American people.

Planned Transition

The Diocese of **Western New York** adopted a resolution setting in place a plan for an orderly transition of episcopal authority and one on health care

(Continued on next page)

AROUND THE DIOCESES

(Continued from previous page)

coverage during the annual convention which met Oct. 24-25 at a hotel convention center in Cheektowaga.

Last year, the Rt. Rev. Michael Garrison, Bishop of Western New York, announced his intention to resign in April 2011. This convention authorized diocesan leaders to create nominating and transition commissions for the episcopal election and to take other steps to ensure an orderly transition.

In his address to convention, Bishop Garrison said he made his intention known well in advance "so that the diocese can go about the task of preparing, searching and electing the next Bishop of Western New York in an orderly manner and provide for a healthy and holy transition."

Convention adopted a resolution authorizing diocesan council to investigate whether selection of the Episcopal Church Medical Trust as the exclusive provider of diocesan health care would result in long-term savings.

Convention also approved a resolution that calls on the State of New York to lower from 18 to 16 the minimum age required for serving as a representative to the annual meeting. The canons of The Episcopal Church permit persons 16 years or older to serve.

Convention adopted three other resolutions: One asks the diocese to advocate on behalf of veterans returning from current conflicts. The second calls for the closing of the Guantanamo

Prison. The third changed language in the diocesan canons preventing vacancies in the deputation to General Convention from being filled less than 12 months prior to the start.

Among other business, convention approved slightly less than a \$1.2-million budget based on the 2009 "fair share" ask amounts. This represents a 6.6-percent increase from the previous year and included \$222,800 in funding for items that will be cut if there is a budget shortfall. Convention approved the budget with the understanding that diocesan council will adjust figures in February to reflect actual income from "fair share" pledges received from parishes. Parishes were not required to submit the amount they plan to pledge to the diocese until Dec. 31.

Comprehensive Identity

In his address to the convention of the Diocese of Ohio Nov. 14-15 at Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland, the Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, Jr., Bishop of Ohio, asked his listeners to examine their identities as Episcopalians in the context of hard economic times worldwide.

"Jesus did not provide the disciples with some immediate and supernatural infusion of power," Bishop Hollingsworth said. "Rather he provided them with a fantastic image ... that directed them to attend to whatever faith they had, even if it felt to

them as small and inadequate as the tiny mustard seed, and to begin there."

He said fear of change and frustration with their identities as Episcopalians in contentious times are the two main obstacles to spiritual growth for many people in the diocese. "I see such an identity as comprehensive, allowing us to reckon with our differences while not forcing us to reconcile them." He added, "I wonder whether our ability to live in a both/and church may be the beginning of our ability to minister to a world that is failing in its struggle to live with differences."

Among the resolutions adopted, one established minimum compensations for clergy. Another established an assessment credit for churches whose heating bills increase more than 10 percent from the previous year. A health ministry task force was established for encouragement, support and education. A resolution to support the Healthcare for All Ohioans Act was defeated.

A budget of \$3.6 million was approved. The amount represents an increase of \$59,000 over last year and includes a 12 percent increase in health insurance. Personnel expenses account for 42 percent of the budget.

The diocese's Joint Investment Fund, while having gone down \$4.8 million to \$30.4 million by year end (Sept. 30), has done "better than most" funds in the market, said John Shelly, chairman of the board of trustees.

Richard Schori/ENS photo

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori prays Dec. 23 outside the Pentagon at a memorial for the victims of the Sept. 11, 2001 attack with the Rev. Gerry Blackburn (left), director of federal chaplaincies, and the Rt. Rev. George Packard, Bishop Suffragan for Chaplaincies. Bishop Jefferts Schori's visit concluded a three-day pastoral call on Washington, D.C.-area military chaplaincies.





Church of the Ascension photo

Members of Church of the Ascension, Clearwater, Fla., build a labyrinth of canned goods to help restock a local food bank. The collaborative effort with other local churches collected more than 3,000 pounds of food.

Churches Reach Out in Face of Economic Trials

By Willy Thorn

"It is easy to see the recession" in Clearwater, Fla., said the Rev. John Hiers, rector of the Church of the Ascension. "All you have to do is drive by the local food pantry. The lines are longer every day. The calls for assistance have dramatically increased. You can just see tension on people's faces."

The subprime mortgage crisis and collapse of Wall Street have sent shock waves through the country. Though effects vary by region, everyone is impacted. At the parish level, many officials, administrators, and treasurers face pledge reductions, withering investments, and rising unemployment among parishioners. But many are finding new ministry opportunities blooming alongside those challenges.

As budget belt-tightening for 2009 begins, a "wait-and-see" atmosphere is common.

"It's pretty savage," said the Rev. Tom Scott. "The front page of the *Muskegon [Michigan] Chronicle* says we have the highest unemployment in the country for communities of 20,000-plus: 22.1 percent."

St. Paul's Church, where he has been rector for six months, "is in the heart of the city. The impact is real," he said.

In southwest Florida, "all the land developers, real estate agents, and car dealers have been dramatically impacted," said Fr. Hiers. "We have lots of retirees living

off Social Security and pensions that have been cut in half. They're very concerned."

In some other places, there has been less of an impact.

"There have been plant closures, and we're obviously feeling it. But central Pennsylvania has traditionally had low unemployment and cost of living. We've been somewhat insulated," said the Rev. Mark Scheneman, rector of St. John's Church, Carlisle, Pa. "We have many government employees and a lot of academic communities nearby."

"The impact in Wilmington [N.C.] is not as dramatic as elsewhere," said the Rev. Ron Abrams, rector of St. James' Church.

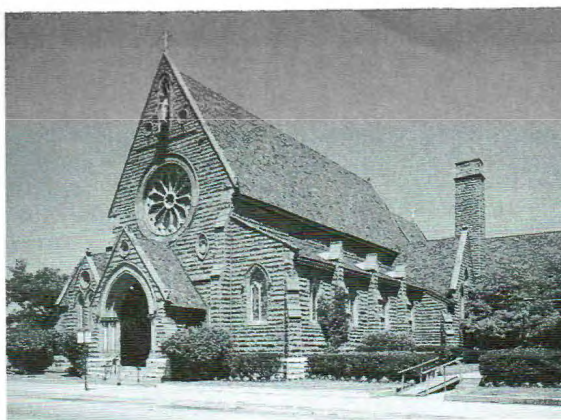
"The south is economically stronger right now, and Wilmington has several industries that are immune, including one of the largest movie studios in the nation, and pharmaceutical testing firms. Since we're an ocean-front community, though, we are finding retirees living off investment income who are challenged."

In Tucson, Ariz., a major employer is Raytheon, "which makes missiles and bombs, and is certainly part of the military-industrial complex. The University of



(Continued on next page)

Churches Reach Out in Face of Economic Trials



St. Paul's Church photo
St. Paul's Church, Muskegon, Mich., has increased its ministry to assist people who are having trouble paying bills.

(Continued from previous page)

Arizona is here," said the Rev. John Kitagawa, rector of St. Phillip's in the Hills Church. "Our demographics are on the higher end in income and education."

Even for churches like these, looming economic circumstances rein in optimism.

"We're not really looking at cuts," Fr. Kitagawa said before Christmas. "But how we end the year will determine a lot. And employers I've spoken with are doing everything possible not to lay off people until after the holidays. There may be stuff coming down the road."

Leaders of St. John's, Boulder, Colo., have seen investments shrink, and pledges drop by a third, said the Rev. Elizabeth Simmons, assistant rector. "But one advantage is that we knew we'd be operating with a deficit due to capital projects. The projects are finished, and we've got some experience."

"I'm just out of a finance meeting," said Fr. Scheneman in Carlisle. "It's pretty bleak. We have a net reduction (in pledges). Some are moving away, others are out of work. Some left for other churches. But couple that with the decline in investment income? Our portfolio went down 38 percent! When you lose that chunk of assets, you just don't bring the same money."

"For the first time in my 37 years of ministry, we're not going to meet diocesan asking, which is 18 percent here. It has nothing to do with protesting. The vestry just feels we need a 2-3-year reserve. After that, we're running deficits every year."

"We're prepared to make cuts, if need be," Ms. Simmons said, "but none have been announced. That's keeping everyone from being anxious. Our attitude has always been, the last thing we want to do is cut staff members."

"I'll take a pay cut myself," said Fr. Scott. "I don't ask of anyone what I won't do first. Our 2009 budget is reduced about 5 percent. Mostly we'll be using the church building less, and use the choir house and parish house more."

"The vestry was looking at a capital funds campaign," Fr. Hiers said. "But that's been put on hold. Repair projects? All dried up. We'll only do what we have to do, and postpone the things we can."

"Unfortunately, the endowments we have are restricted — for repairing the organ, outreach, seminarians, etc. They don't help with normal bills. Utilities, for instance, have mushroomed. Old buildings! Maintenance, of course, is deferred."

"For the first time in my years here, we're looking at a fund raiser just to support the budget," he said. "At the same time, youth and child care will actually

get an increase. We're not bringing in people in their 20s and 30s. Those [ministries] just have to be in place for young families."

St. James', Wilmington, has an outreach committee — the Samaritan Guild — with 15 volunteers, said Fr. Abrams. "They meet with anyone who shows up, and assist with finance, distribute vouchers for gas and food, and direct people according to need: to the homeless shelter, Salvation Army, social services, on down the list."

"St. James' is a downtown church. The number coming in off street has increased exponentially over the last two months," he said, "from maybe four per day before to 20 per day now."

St. Paul's, Muskegon, has had increased attendance at its free lunch-and-concert series and has beefed up its outreach. "We're working hard to meet medical bills for the uninsured, too," said Fr. Scott. Funds "are depleting at a ferocious rate. But we're doing it because things here are the worst they've been since the 1970s."

"Our first obligation is to be pastorally aware of people's anxiety," said Ms. Simmons. "But there is opportunity here. One woman — recently laid off — is using it to reshape her life, re-evaluate her personal priorities, and re-envision the things she's always wanted to do."

"I wish it didn't take difficult times to encourage people to go to church. But when things are falling apart, people are more open to the Christian message, and they recognize their own need," Fr. Hiers said.

As people's livelihoods and outlooks change, and parish budgets and ministries fluctuate, a different message is flowing from the pulpit.

"Be patient. Don't panic. Don't be fearful," said Fr. Abrams. "We are people of faith. Our church was founded in 1729. It was occupied by the British during the Revolutionary War, and the Union during the Civil War. It's been through the Great Depression, the Civil Rights movement, and many hurricanes. It's not going away. It's God's church."

"In fact, now is the time for faithful people to step forward," he said, "and remind everyone the church is here to help."

"We've talked about being more aware of those on the margins," agreed Fr. Kitagawa. "Also, I urge parishioners to participate in social programs. It's a tough period."

Fr. Scheneman said he isn't preaching a new message. "Stewardship of God's kingdom? In good times and bad, that message is the same." □

Willy Thorn is a free-lance writer based in Milwaukee, Wis.

Ecumenical Life: Ideas for Parishes

Ecumenists often lament the fact that, with all the full communion and agreed statements between the various Christian communions, very little seems to be happening “on the ground” so that “people in the pews” (and pulpits) can get excited and involved. This paucity of activity can sometimes be blamed on people like me, engaged in national and international dialogues, often to the exclusion of giving adequate time on the reception of these agreements. Allow me to atone by making some specific suggestions:

The Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute not only encourages all of us to observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Jan. 18-25 each year) in our local congregations, but offers suggestions. On the “Ecumenical Sundays” falling within the Week of Prayer (Jan. 18 or 25 in 2009), evening prayer services can be scheduled in a central location, using resources from the Graymoor website: www.geii.org.

During the Week of Prayer, worship daily in different congregations using the traditional prayer forms of the host congregation, but perhaps including leaders, readers and choirs from the other participating churches. Conclude the event with refreshments and fellowship. Even where joint worship cannot be shared, have pulpit and/or choir exchanges.

But don't let the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity be only an annual event. Include activities and events of neighborhood churches in your Sunday bulletins and ask the other churches to do the same for yours. Pray in your own church for the ordained and lay members of the Christian congregations in your area. Teach about the various Christian communions in your own education programs so that your people will understand similarities and differences.

Organize a benefit concert to share the music used in different traditions. How about tours of area churches conducted by guides who can share something of the architecture, history, organization, and liturgical traditions of the congregation? As always, conclude with refreshments and fellowship.

Include regular prayer for ecumenical ministries and organizations in your area. Display material about those organizations and, during worship, call for an offering of food or money designated for the use of these ecumenical agencies. In cooperation with such organizations, sponsor a speaker series featuring theologians, ecumenists, teachers or social justice leaders

who can help us all learn more about living a faithful Christian life.

Invite representatives from ministries dealing with interchurch marriage and family support groups to address an adult forum after your Sunday liturgy or during an evening program. And don't forget the young people. Local musicians, storytellers, and crafts persons offer unique opportunities to gather young people from various Christian traditions. Organize shared youth retreats and even consider merging youth groups where numbers are small. Why not one ecumenical, Christian youth group of about 30 in your community rather than three or four with eight or nine members each?

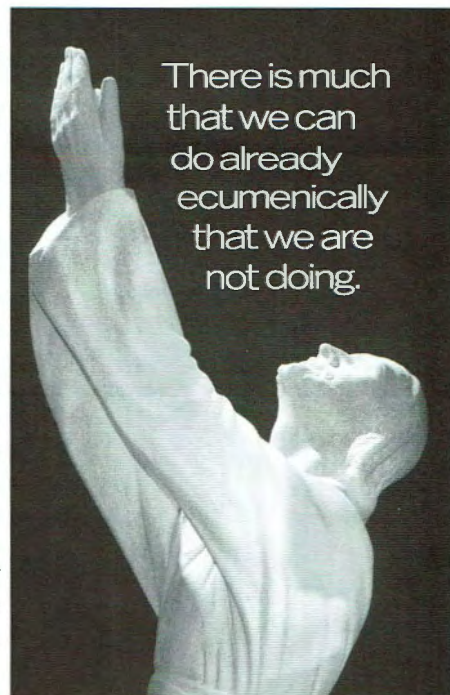
Joint Bible Study: The theme for the 2009 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is “That they may become one in your hand” from Ezekiel 37:15-19, 22-24a. Resources are available at the Graymoor website to engage in daily, or weekly, Bible study around this theme and its implications. This can be done in parish halls or homes, ecumenically or in your own church family joined together with those around the world exploring the same texts.

Churches Uniting in Christ adds the following suggestions for local ecumenical interaction: Invite a member of a local church to teach about his or her tradition. This could happen in an adult forum, Bible study group, Sunday school, or at regional denominational meetings. Pray for neighboring congregations by name.

Consider inviting a member of another church to serve on an outreach committee or other commission in your parish. Develop joint support groups for single parents, other singles, or divorced persons.

The point is there is much that we can do already ecumenically that we are not doing. In a time when new breakthroughs seem few and far between and there is a tendency to remain focused on survival or our own internal struggles, it is more important than ever to explore these and other creative ways to demonstrate the oneness which is both Christ's gift to us and his heartfelt prayer for us.

Our guest columnist is the Rt. Rev. C. Christopher Epting, deputy for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations for The Episcopal Church.



There is much that we can do already ecumenically that we are not doing.

Did You Know...

Christ Church, Stratford, Conn., is 302 years old.

Quote of the Week

The Rt. Rev. Michael Smith, Bishop of North Dakota, on the proposed Anglican Covenant: “... the proposed Anglican Covenant is the most important development in Anglicanism since the English Reformation.”

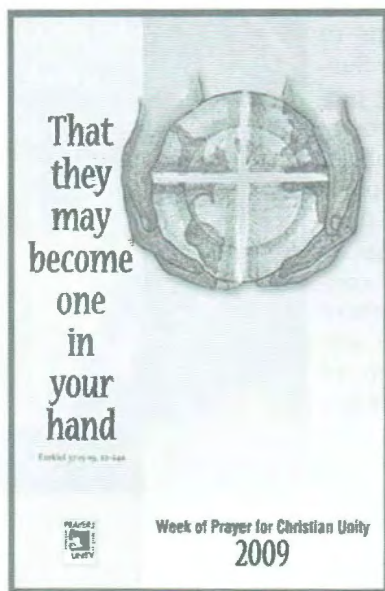
Serious About Church Unity

For a brief eight-day period each January, many Christians in all parts of the world turn their attention toward ecumenical ministry. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place on the days of and between the Confession of St. Peter and the Conversion of St. Paul (Jan. 18-25). Those dates were proposed 100 years ago by the Rev. Lewis Thomas Wattson, an Episcopal priest, who took seriously the Lambeth Conference's emphasis on prayer for unity made some 30 years earlier.

It is always encouraging to learn of various events held during this observance. There are ecumenical services of vespers or evening prayer that sometimes include several churches, programs with noted speakers, cathedrals reaffirming their covenant relationships, group Bible studies, and prayer by individuals. In the midst of these promising signs, it seems appropriate to ask whether it is sufficient to hold these observances during one week each year, and then to do little or nothing about ecumenical relationships for the other 51 weeks.

As one observes the ecumenical landscape, it is tragic to find enormous numbers of churches that profess they are Christian. How confusing it must be for non-Christians or non-practicing Christians to look at the splintered Christian communities and wonder about the seriousness of their gospel message. It is equally tragic for lapsed Christians or church shoppers to see what's happened to The Episcopal Church and to the Anglican Communion. In the midst of our name calling, accusations and litigation, how can anyone take us seriously?

The Episcopal Church has worked hard on its relationships with Lutherans and Roman Catholics, and is involved in serious dialogue with Moravians and Methodists. Let us develop and enhance these ecumenical relationships during 2009 beyond the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Let us be serious about the unity for which Christ prayed, "that they all may be one ... that the world may believe."



The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place on the days of and between the Confession of St. Peter and the Conversion of St. Paul.

Decision on Lay Discipline

It is encouraging to note that no new canons on the discipline of lay persons will be proposed to the 76th General Convention [p. 5]. The Title IV Task Force on Disciplinary Policies and Procedures decided this was not a good time to include lay persons in the disciplinary canons, so when convention meets in Anaheim, Calif., in July, the only changes will involve new language and procedure. In its report to General Convention, the task force summarized, "no inclusion of laity is contemplated at this time." This is good news, for attempting to draw lay persons, who are largely volunteers, under the jurisdiction of the disciplinary canons, would likely lead to unnecessary complications and criticism. The task force exercised wisdom in its decision.



Good vs. Essential

Opportunities in the midst
of the financial crisis

READER'S **VIEWPOINT**

By Joseph Neiman

Scarcity breeds clarity. The present financial crisis, with declining portfolios and increasing unemployment, is

having a serious impact upon our congregations. To people of faith, however, crisis need not be a frightening experience. Many of them see it as a time of decision and not of destruction.

Some people see a crisis as a disease that leads to death. They may believe there is something wrong with the parish which, if not fixed, can lead to closing. But sociologists define “crisis” as a “serious interruption in the normal way of life of an individual or a group resulting from the occurrence of an unexpected situation for which customary responses are not adequate” (*Dictionary of Sociology*). This definition

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

is less threatening and can describe the crisis in the Church without some of the emotional reactions.

The theological term *kairos* is derived from the same Greek word (*krinein*) from which the English word "crisis" originates, but it means a moment of decision. To people of faith, therefore, the present crisis is not a disease that leads potentially to death, but a time of historical decision in which God is present, calling us into a new future. The clarity of the present *kairos* moment can be seen with the help of three sociological processes: institutionalization, professionalization, and conceptualization. Big terms for what we already know we are experiencing.

The various life styles and charisms of the early Church took on form when Constantine became a disciple and started building structures, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and old St. Peter's in Rome. Constantine also gave status to clergy, set aside Sunday as the Sabbath, organized the territories of the Church, and took responsibility for clarifying church teaching by calling the Council of Nicea. The Eastern Church reveres him as the "Thirteenth Apostle," and designates a feast day for him, along with his mother, Helena.

Travelers to the British Isles and Europe know there are more than enough church buildings which are vacant or in disrepair. Here in the United States, the great building boom in the post-war era has given us many structures, some of which can no longer be sustained. Many churches struggle to decide whether to retain professional staff or the historic building. Smaller budgets precipitate priority decisions, but why do we so often decide in favor of buildings rather than people? How do we strengthen the community and its mission with or without the building?

Institutionalization also denotes how the assembled disciples function together. Who is a member? Who makes the decisions and how? What is our purpose and how do we implement it? Does one need to be baptized to take part in the life of the assembly? Is there a difference between a baptized disciple and an unbaptized disciple? What is acceptable behavior and what is not?

Do we need professional clergy? Is ministry a profession? Is there a difference between an ordained disciple and a lay disciple? Can lay persons preside at the Eucharist, as is being discussed in Australia? What does it mean that some disciples are placed under "holy orders"? What is the role for seminaries?

Perhaps most challenging is the conceptualization of what we believe as disciples of Jesus — the debate over the interpretation of scripture and doctrine. Do the words salvation, atonement, redemption, incarnation, grace, and a host of others mean anything to the people in the pews today? Look at the collect for Trinity Sunday. Is that

The clarity of the present *kairos* moment can be seen with the help of three sociological processes: institutionalization, professionalization, and conceptualization.



a prayer from the heart or a theological statement put into prayer form? The same is true for our hymns. Many are theological statements put to music. The re-conceptualizing of the gospel for the 21st century is a paradigm shift of major proportions.

Paradigm shifts cause reorganization of thinking, of institutions, and of relationships. The famous example is the shift from the Ptolemaic vision of the universe to the Copernican. Some believe we are experiencing a paradigm shift in economics and politics in the present world crisis. And with a paradigm shift, there is suffering. Some hold on to the old ways more intensely. Others move ahead in a superficial way.

Richard Hooker, the great Anglican divine, stressed in the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Politie* the difference between what is of the essence of the faith and what is for the good order of the Church in a given era or place. The Windsor Report of 2004 spoke of "the necessity of theological development, including radical innovation, and on the fact that the Holy Spirit enables the Church to undertake such development" (paragraph 32). The authors also identified the *adiaphora*, "a key distinction between core doctrines of the church ..., and those upon which disagreement can be tolerated without endangering unity" (par. 36).

Jesus said, John tells us: "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth ... He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you" (John 16:12-14).

In Advent, we were taught to stay awake, to read the signs of the times, and to prepare a way for the coming of the Lord. At Christmas, we were taught that God is with us (Emmanuel), and will be with us to "the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). God is with us and loves us, and we need first and foremost to love one another as together we cope with the changes which are coming. Scarcity can breed clarity, as we re-examine our place in the mission and ministry of the risen Lord in the world today. Prayer, consultation, collaboration and theological insight are needed to enter the future to which the risen Lord is calling us. □

The Rev. Joseph Neiman is the former communications officer for the Diocese of Western Michigan. He lives in Paw Paw, Mich.

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



Like Hypocrites

The Rev. William Hesse's Reader's Viewpoint article [TLC, Dec. 14] is right on the money!

If we are going to be examples to the rest of the world, fighting within our own ranks makes us look like hypocrites to everyone else. Jesus taught us to love and to forgive, and our leadership needs to do this as an example to all of us. We see nothing but the proverbial power struggle, and this is not what Jesus came to teach us.

I also see a huge waste of time, talent and treasure that we use for the General Convention and Triennial. Have one glorious Eucharist and then get down to business and get the work of the church done, so that people can get back to what God is calling them to do in their own communities. I am sure that more people would be willing to participate in General Convention if it

wasn't such a huge burden and a waste of time, talent, and treasure.

Perhaps if we promote P.E.A.C.E. (Promote reconciliation, Equip servant leaders, Assist the poor, Care for the sick, and Educate the next generation) as Rick Warren suggests, we could make good use of those gifts that God has given us and do his will

*Barbara Drewry-Zimmerman
Plymouth, Wis.*

'No Authority'

Did Bishop Iker of Fort Worth really declare that "Katharine Jefferts Schori has no authority over me and my ministry as a Bishop in the Church of God. She never has and she never will" [TLC, Dec. 14]?

If so, perhaps Presiding Bishop Venables might want to take another look at his newest bishop. What happens

when Bishop Iker comes across some policy he disagrees with in the Province of the Southern Cone? Perhaps he is hoping that Bishop Venables has a softer style than the formidable archbishops of African Anglicanism.

*(The Rev.) Jim Stickney
Holy Family Church
Fresno, Calif.*

Another Century

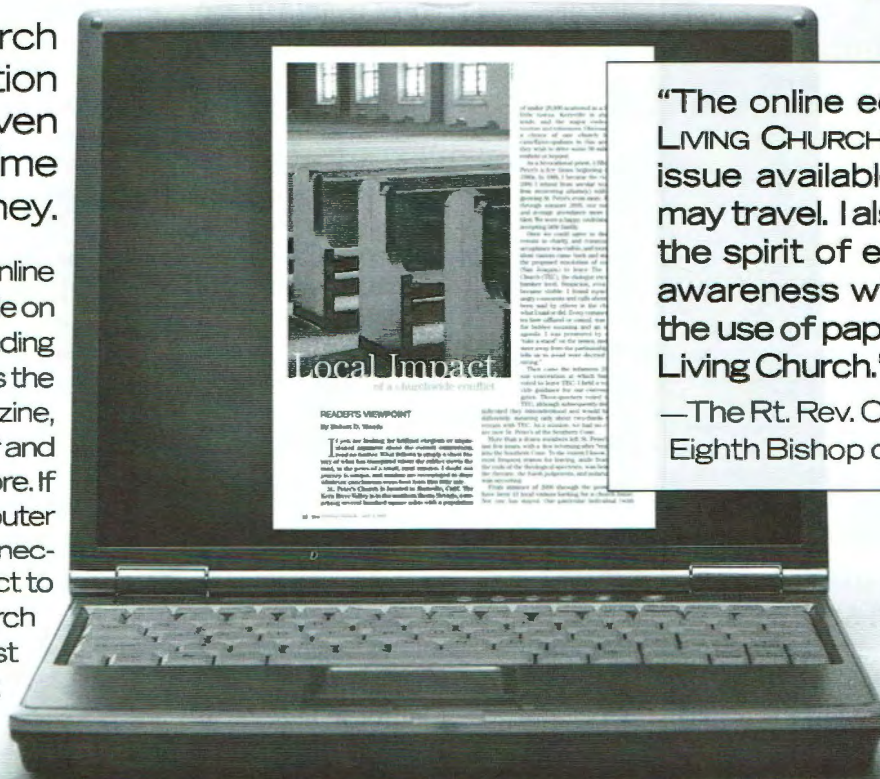
After reading the Rev. Douglas Buchanan's letter, "Honest Label" [TLC, Dec. 14], I have come to the conclusion that the Presiding Bishop and her henchman are a throwback to the 16th century. I do wonder, however, if the stake were reintroduced (for religious purposes only) who would be tied to it! What a shame that the P.B. did not try to act in a loving way and keep The Episcopal Church together. It was her call and she muffed it. The onus rests on her.

*Gary G. Engels
Sarasota, Fla.*

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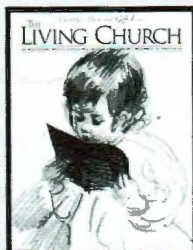
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BOOKS

Anglican Approaches to Scripture

From the Reformation to the Present

By **Rowan Greer**. Crossroad. Pp. 244.
\$29.95. ISBN 978-0-8245-2368-8.



If the current unpleasantness in the Anglican Communion could be boiled down to a single sentence, it would surely be this: We are immersed in an ongoing battle over the nature and content of divine revelation. In the Anglican tradition, holy scripture holds a particular place as the principal means by which divine revelation is communicated. Hence, any book discussing the place of scripture in Anglicanism will be of particular interest in the current environment.

Here we have distinguished historian Rowan Greer's book, *Anglican Approaches to Scripture*, a history of 500 years of biblical interpretation. The author begins with the movement of scripture to center stage in the declining years of Henry VIII and the brief reign of Edward VI, with particular emphasis on the thought of Hooker. The author's learned dissection of modern oversimplifications such as "Hooker's Footstool" is cause for particular gratitude. Hall, Chillingworth and Hammond are next examined as, arguably at least, antecedents of the low, broad and high church traditions, respectively. Various approaches to exploration of scripture's relation to nature in the 18th century and history in the 19th and 20th are examined.

Thought of Luminaries

The author generally takes the "great man" or probably more fairly, the "representative man" approach, eschewing popular understandings of scripture in favor of the thought of specific theologians and scholars, including, along with the aforementioned, Joseph Glanville, Joseph Butler, William Paley, John Wesley, John Newman, F. D. Maurice, William Gladstone, Maurice Wiles, Charles

Gore, and William Temple. Often a single essay by an author is examined. Readers will not be surprised to find that there is no single "Anglican" approach to scripture. An examination of the thought of the luminaries discussed in the current volume *vis-à-vis* current scriptural understandings is left to the reader. This is history, not theology.

This is a fascinating and well-written report on the understanding of holy scripture by many of the most important thinkers of the Anglican Church over the last 500 years, and should be of particular interest at the current time.

The Great Medieval Heretics Five Centuries of Religious Dissent

By **Michael Frassetto**. Blue Bridge. Pp 241.
\$24.95. ISBN 978-1-933346-12-0.

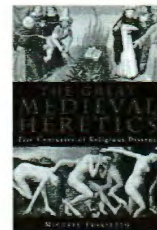
The dust jacket promises herein "tales of courageous men and women and the violent religious intolerance they encountered." Fortunately, the author sticks to the facts, provided via a compact and sprightly narrative.

A chapter each is devoted to an eclectic mix that runs the gamut from clearly heretical dualists (Bogomils and Cathars), Docetists (Stephen and Lisois, who deny the humanity of Christ) and violent apocalyptics (Fra Dolcino and the Apostolici) to deniers of certain then-current Catholic orthodoxies (Wycliffe and the much more moderate Hus), to intemperate or insubordinate but generally theologically sound preachers (Henry the Monk and Valdes, leader of the Waldenses.)

The narrative is brief and at times wanting in context.

This is a lively, skillfully written, and enjoyable introduction to a fascinating part of an important period of church history.

Daniel Muth
St. Leonard, Md.



PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Scott P. Bellows** is rector of St. David's, 4700 Roland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21210.

The Rev. Canon **Mally Lloyd** is canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Massachusetts, 138 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02111.

The Rev. **Steven McCarty** is deacon at St. Paul's, 209 W Main St., Sharpsburg, MD 21782.

The Rev. **Michael Mortvedt** is vicar of Trinity, PO Box 996, Kremmling, CO 80459-0996.

The Rev. **Christy Shain-Hendricks** is rector of St. John's, PO Box 2166, Breckenridge, CO 80424-2166.

The Rev. **David G. Showers** is rector of Middleham and St. Peter's, PO Box 277, Lusby, MD 20657.

The Rev. **Jennifer Ovenstone Smith** is associate at St. John's, 9120 Frederick Rd., Elliott City, MD 21042.

The Rev. **Charles Wilkerson** is deacon at Advent, 1301 S Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21230.

The Rev. **Steve Wilson** is priest-in-residence at Holy Redeemer, 2552 Williams St., Denver, CO 80205-5526.

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Fond du Lac — Mark Evans, Anne Schnaare. Quincy — David Adams, Colin Ambrose, Frank Dunaway, Joseph Hermerding, Rodney Hurst, Joel Prather.

Resignations

The Rev. **Jim Fraser**, as curate at St. John's Church, Detroit, Mich.; add: 4514 Deer Spring Rd., Middleton, MD 21769.

The Rev. **Andrew Kline**, as rector of Christ Church, Denver, CO.

The Living Church publishes obituaries of members of the clergy and well-known lay persons when they are submitted in a timely manner. Death notices may be sent to our office by mail, fax or e-mail, and should arrive no later than 60 days after the time of death. Obituaries should include the date and place of death along with biographical information and names of survivors.

We urge persons who know of the deaths of clergy and prominent lay persons to send notices to us as soon as possible.

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Next week...

The Conversion of St. Paul

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POSITIONS OFFERED

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The person must be a leader that is able to motivate, be compassionate and possess excellent interpersonal skills with a sense of humor. This person must be able to delegate and will be responsible for effective parish performance in planning, program design and implementation, communications, organization, general administration with management oversight abilities of parish fiscal/administrative operations. The ideal candidate should have ministry specialty strengths in stewardship, youth program development, and new membership initiatives. He/she should encourage worship, offer spiritual guidance, pastoral care, counseling, and nurturing the youth of our community through children's education and youth formation. It is important for this leader, who will integrate and foster the diversity of our parish and community (which includes St. Peter's Chapel, a summer chapel open from Memorial Day through Labor Day, is an integral part of St. Luke's parish), to love and reach out in service to the community.

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For copies of parish profile and position description, please e-mail the **Transition Committee Member, Deb Gillikin** at stlukesearch@optonline.net.

Please send resumes to stlukesearch@optonline.net.

For more information about St. Luke's and photographs, please visit us at www.stlukeseasthampton.org.

FULL-TIME RECTOR: *St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Hudson, WI.* Located in beautiful northwestern Wisconsin close to the rich cultural resources of Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota, we seek a personable, experienced, full-time rector to provide leadership, spiritual growth, traditional and contemporary worship, and education.

Please contact **Alberta Rupert, Search Committee Chair** at stpaulsearch@sbcglobal.net or visit our website at www.stpaulshudson.faithweb.com. Or send CDO/resume to Search Committee, 502 Cty. Rd. UU, Hudson, WI 54016.

POSITIONS OFFERED

FULL-TIME RECTOR: *St. Luke's Church, Kalamazoo, MI,* seeks an experienced rector who will provide vision, direction, and spiritual guidance as our parish strives to fulfill our mission of glorifying God and reflecting the love of Christ. We seek candidates with strong skills in preaching, administration, and spiritual ministry who work well in a collaborative environment. St. Luke's is blessed with a warm, welcoming, diverse congregation worshipping in a beautiful, historic, downtown Kalamazoo church. We value strong Episcopal traditions in liturgy and music. Kalamazoo, an educationally and culturally rich community, is home of the innovative Kalamazoo Promise, site of Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College. Our SW Michigan location, midway between Detroit and Chicago, is less than 40 mi. from the Lake Michigan shore. Parish profile is available at www.stlukeskalamazoo.org. Direct your resume to: **Tom Folkert, Search Committee Chair, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 247 W Lovell St., Kalamazoo, MI 49007.** Church office phone (269) 345-8553 ext. 26.

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