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The Cover

Primates and staff from the Anglican Consultative Council arrive at St. Mark's Pro-Cathedral in Alexandria, Egypt, for Holy Communion at the start of the primates' meeting on Feb. 1. Clockwise from left front: The Most Rev. Barry C. Morgan, Archbishop of Wales; the Rev. Canon Kenneth Kearon, general secretary of the Anglican Consultative Council; the Most Rev. Idris J. Jones, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church; the Most Rev. Gregory J. Venables, Primate of the Southern Cone; and the Rev. Canon Gregory K. Cameron, director of ecumenical affairs for the Anglican Consultative Council.

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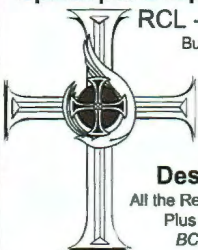
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SUNDAY'S READINGS

God's Beauty

'Out of Zion, perfect in its beauty, God reveals himself in glory' (Psalm 50:2)

The Last Sunday after the Epiphany, Feb. 22, 2009

BCP: 1 Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 27 or 27:5-11; 2 Pet. 1:16-19(20-21); Mark 9:2-9

RCL: 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Cor. 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

Many of us can remember a soul-stirring spiritual encounter with a song, a painting, a poem, or a story. A moving encounter with profound beauty often comes as a surprise. We treasure such moments precisely because they are sublimely unnecessary, serving no evidently practical purpose. Even amid the horrors of Nazi concentration camps, beautiful music got composed and performed, and in those brief moments, the light of heaven shone in the pits of hell.

From inside our dull, if not always overtly ugly, existence, we will grasp at such glimmers of heavenly beauty as may be within our reach. The story of the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ is one of those glimmers. It's difficult not to be envious of Peter and James and John. It was an encounter with sheer beauty that drove them to make some response, but in fact, no response was adequate, so great was the transfigured splendor of Jesus on that mountaintop.

Among the other inherent attributes of his nature that he has revealed to us, God is beautiful. God's beauty is

made accessible to us, broadly speaking, in the Incarnation. In the face of Christ, we see the face of God. But God's beauty is made available to us specifically and concretely when we come together to re-member, to put back together, the body of the transfigured Christ as we celebrate the Eucharist, as we take our places beside Peter and James and John and "behold the fair beauty of the Lord" (Psalm 27).

In the light of the transfigured Christ, we can take the ugliness of human experience and look at it from an angle that calls forth hope rather than despair. This is why it is so vitally important that we come back to the altar, Sunday by Sunday, as often as we are able, to seek the face of God, to behold his fair beauty in his house, his temple. It is the vision of God's beauty — God's beauty touching us in the innermost parts of our souls, God's beauty made available to us in word and sacrament, in the liturgy of the church — that enables us to keep on keeping on in the face of the ugliness and blandness that surrounds us.

Look It Up

The Revelation to St. John depicts several scenes of awesome beauty in which God is gloriously worshiped by his people. See especially chapters 4 and 5.

Think About It

What music, art, poetry or natural scene strikes you as deeply beautiful? Has the experience of that beauty made you feel closer to God?

Next Sunday

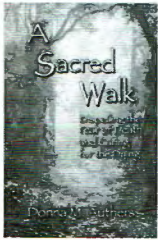
The First Sunday in Lent, March 1, 2009

BCP: Gen. 9:8-17; Psalm 25 or 25:3-9; 1 Pet. 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-13

RCL: Gen. 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-9; 1 Pet. 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

BOOKS

A Sacred Walk



Dispelling the Fear of Death and Caring for the Dying
By Donna M. Authers. A&A Publishing. Pp. 213. \$15.95.

Caregivers, seniors, and those with aging parents will find this to be a sensitive, scripture-based read with invaluable insight and personal experiences, as well as constructive counsel regarding the practical side of death.

Already acclaimed by Hospice and Stephen Ministry, *A Sacred Walk* is far more about living than dying, offering encouragement to both caregiver and care receiver, with poignant "living libraries" to strengthen, affirm, and draw one closer to a Spirit-filled life everlasting. The author is no stranger to death. She is able to use personal experiences and scripture-centered prayer to move the reader from anxiety through discouragement to trial and triumph.

Ms. Authers emphasizes, "Choose to believe in a loving God, to forgive the hurts of the past, and to love unconditionally."

Here is an excellent book for small-group discussion or to leave at one's bedside, and most certainly to keep desk center for quick reference.

*Tom Riley
Vienna, Va.*

MUSIC

Dies Domini, Sunday Prayer, Glenstal Abbey
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In a time when all European monasteries seem to be racing to produce recordings, the Benedictines of Ireland are a clear winner. This is not precious droning of moaning monks. "Dies Domini, Sunday Prayer" is youthfully crisp, clear and quick – all with just a hint of Irish lilt. A pleasant mixture of Latin and English psalms, canticles, and prayers, this recording of Gregorian chant is one of the best yet to be produced. Highly recommended for anyone who enjoys chant.

*(The Rev.) Shane Scott-Hamblen
Cold Spring, N.Y.*

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—Janette Fishell, Distinguished Professor of Music, East Carolina University
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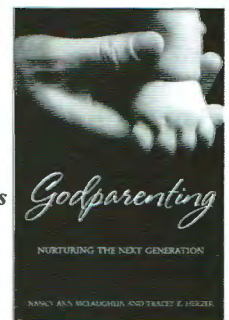


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Covenant, Windsor Process Top Primates' Agenda

As the primates of the Anglican Communion arrived in Alexandria, Egypt, representatives from both the liberal and conservative factions of the Anglican Communion indicated they expected little of substance to arise from the week-long meeting, and they were unsure what the gathering had been designed to achieve.

The primates' gathering opened Feb. 1 with an informal Eucharist in a hotel conference room, followed by a session of prayer and informal conversation. The primates also participated in a session devoted to introducing the seven new archbishops as well as an overview of the week's agenda from Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams.

Later that day, they moved to St. Mark's Pro-Cathedral, where they met with students of the Alexandria School of Theology, a four-year-old theological school established by the diocese to train ordinands and provide lay theological education. A tour of the school and presentations from the dean and Archbishop Williams was followed by a service of consecration for the colonial-era British garrison church as a pro-cathedral of the Diocese of Egypt, North Africa and the Horn of Africa.

Christian Charity

In his sermon, Archbishop Williams described the city's history in the life of the Church, and touched upon some of the theological controversies of the past, alluding to the relevance of the Arian controversy in the present day. Christians should pursue stillness, quietness and diversity, he said, and not be quick to condemn those who hold opposing theological views. He urged the primates, and the congregation, to extend Christian charity to those with whom they disagree.

The Anglican Covenant was a focus of the primates' first business session on Feb. 2. At an afternoon press brief-

ing, the Most Rev. Philip Aspinall, Primate of Australia, said that among many primates, there has been a "pulling back from the language of sanctions and teeth" in the crafting of the Anglican Covenant. He said that whereas earlier drafts of the covenant envisioned sanctions for violations, disciplinary mechanisms were not likely to make it into the final draft.

"Hitting people over the head with sticks" was not what the Anglican Communion wanted to do to provinces that violated the covenant, Archbishop Aspinall said. Instead, the covenant — designed to set the parameters of Anglican life and worship — is evolving into a document about "koinonia ... fellowship ... of communion" between churches, and would not be a sanctions-based legal code, he explained.

This was the view shared by many, but not all of the primates, he added. Several primates declined to discuss the issues raised in the meeting, but agreed the primates had been candid in sharing their views. Later, Archbishop Aspinall emphasized that the Anglican Covenant Design Group, not the primates, has responsibility for crafting the final draft of the covenant that will be submitted to the May meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, and said his earlier description should not be construed to mean that the Anglican Covenant Design Group shared his impressions.

Zimbabwe

Primates heard a presentation on the current state of affairs in Zimbabwe. The Most Rev. Thabo Makogba, Primate of Southern Africa, and the Rt. Rev. Albert Chama, Dean of the Church of the Province of Central Africa, spoke about the unfolding humanitarian, political and economic crisis devastating the country. The following day, the primates asked that Archbishop Williams, in conjunction



George Conger photo

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori speaks with Archbishop of York John Sentamu on Feb. 2 at the meeting of the primates of the Anglican Communion in Alexandria, Egypt, after she gave an address.

with the Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa, appoint an envoy "to go to Zimbabwe to exercise a ministry of presence and to show solidarity with the Zimbabwean people." They also urged President Robert Mugabe to step down, and have called upon the international community to intervene in the Zimbabwe crisis.

The primates' closed-door sessions also yielded public statements on the crisis in the Sudan and on global warming.

A presentation by the Windsor Continuation Group (WCG) on Feb. 3 was scheduled for two hours in the morning, but spilled over into the afternoon. The WCG met in December at the Diocese of West Texas's conference center and prepared a final draft of its report to the primates. The report was placed under a media embargo until the close of the conference. The Archbishop of Canterbury chartered the WCG to advise him on the "implementation of the recommendations of the Windsor Report, how best to carry forward the Windsor Process in the life of the Communion and to consult on the 'unfinished business' of the report." The six-member team also offered three presentations to the bishops at the 2008 Lambeth Conference.

(The Rev.) George Conger

Council Recommends Delaying Covenant Vote to 2015

Executive Council endorsed a report on the proposed Anglican Covenant that expresses significant reservations with the current draft and recommends delaying until 2015 a final up-or-down vote by General Convention.

At a Jan. 31 press conference at the conclusion of the three-day council meeting in Stockton, Calif., Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori and Bonnie Anderson, president of the House of Deputies, said council made virtually no changes to a report prepared by a task force in response to the second draft of the proposed covenant.

The report said that delaying a vote until 2015 "would provide a fruitful opportunity for TEC to hear the voices of other members of the Anglican Communion as they discuss future drafts." It also insisted the covenant can only "be embraced on the provincial level, that is, The Episcopal Church, and not on a diocesan level."

The report took into consideration comments submitted by 31 of the church's 110 diocesan deputations. It expressed significant reservations with provisions for holding covenant partners accountable to one another. The report approved by council noted that

the majority of diocesan deputations would prefer to see those provisions of the covenant eliminated entirely.

"Care needs to be taken that our conversations around an Anglican Covenant do not draw us necessarily toward a hierarchical model of a church union or even the perception of Anglicanism as a singular global church," the reports states in its introduction. "Matters of moral authority and interdependence amongst the churches result from mutuality, not from regulation."

Draft Budget Approved

The meeting was held in the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin to show council's support for Episcopalians in the area who are reorganizing after the majority voted during the annual convention in 2007 to affiliate with the Anglican Church of the Southern Cone. Council members spent time hearing about the progress made by the diocese.

Council also approved a draft 2010-2012 budget that includes an 11-percent increase in funding for General Convention, a 17-percent increase for Advocacy, a freeze on staff salaries, and a 2-

percent decrease in overall mission and program support. The increase in funding for General Convention is primarily due to a need to update software that tracks legislation and will enable committee members to register via the internet, according to Mrs. Anderson. A new accounting system for the controller's office is also expected to result in a 14-percent increase in funding for that office.

The Episcopal Church's contribution to the Anglican Communion declined 18 percent, with most of that amount due to decreases in the foreign desks at the Episcopal Church Center. The Episcopal Church's assessment contribution to the Anglican Consultative Council is projected to decline by 8 percent. Bishop Jefferts Schori said that she had expressed concern about the perceived shift in priorities that the draft budget might convey by reducing financial support for overseas mission and ministry.

The Episcopal Church's investment funds lost 33 percent in 2008, said Kurt Barnes, treasurer. The value of the church's endowment funds at the end of 2007 was \$363 million. Even if the council agrees to increase the draw on the endowment from 5 percent to 5.5 percent as proposed, that income line would still be down by about \$7 million from the last triennium. Because the draw is based on a five-year average of the income, "we'll be dealing with the 2008 result for the next five years," Mr. Barnes said.

The council is required by canon to present a balanced budget for the upcoming three-year period to the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance no less than four months before the next meeting of the General Convention. The joint standing committee can then refine that version before it proposes a budget to convention. The budget will not become official until after General Convention approves it in July.

Episcopal News Service contributed to this report.



Official Website of the Moscow Patriarchate photo

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia during his enthronement at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, Moscow, Feb. 1. He was elected Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church in a secret ballot Jan. 27 and succeeds Patriarch Alexy, who died in December.



John Shadle/Grace Church photo

A statue of Jesus in the memorial garden at Grace Church, Paducah, Ky., is shrouded in ice Feb. 3 following the recent ice storms. A number of churches in the dioceses of Kentucky and Lexington were forced to reduce or cancel Sunday services. Matt Jaeger, Grace Church's parish administrator, said many of the stately trees on the church's campus were damaged. Debris removal was estimated at \$10,000.

BRIEFLY...

The **Diocese of Virginia** filed formal notice on Feb. 3 of its intent to appeal a Fairfax County Circuit Court decision which ruled that 11 congregations that disaffiliated from The Episcopal Church are the rightful owners of the local church property. There is no right of appeal under Virginia law, so the court may decline to hear the case. If it accepts the appeal, a final decision would probably not be issued for at least a year.

Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, Calif., and Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill., announced Feb. 3 that they will collaborate on a **joint Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.)** degree in congregational development. Students will take courses offered for one week in June at Seabury-Western's campus and one week in January at CDSP, and also work online for joint project work, discussion and support over the three years.

Kentucky Bishop Agrees to Serve Fort Worth

The Rt. Rev. Edwin F. "Ted" Gulick, Jr., Bishop of Kentucky, has accepted an invitation to serve on a part-time basis as provisional Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth in The Episcopal Church as it seeks to reorganize.

The invitation, which was approved by the Kentucky standing committee on Jan. 21, was extended to Bishop Gulick by Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori. In a letter asking Bishop Gulick and the standing committee to consider the appointment, Bishop Jefferts Schori noted that "an experienced bishop, with excellent pastoral and leadership skills, is needed to assist the leaders of that diocese in righting themselves, beginning and continuing the healing process, and setting a course for a renewed future."

Bishop Jefferts Schori was scheduled to convene a special reorganizing

convention of the diocese at Trinity Church, Fort Worth, on Feb. 7. Assuming the approval of Bishop Gulick by clergy and lay delegates, he was to have been installed that same day.

Last November, approximately 80 percent of clergy and lay delegates to Fort Worth's annual convention voted to withdraw the diocese's affiliation with The Episcopal Church and realign with the Anglican Church of the Southern Cone.

Bishop Gulick, 60, was ordained and consecrated as Bishop of Kentucky in April 1994. In 2008 he announced his intention to retire by 2010 and called for the election of his successor [TLC, Oct. 19]. Because of previous commitments, Bishop Gulick plans only to serve as the provisional Bishop of Fort Worth through General Convention in July.

Ohio Bishops Weigh in on Domestic Partner Issue

Local pastors who oppose Cleveland's domestic-partner registry, recently enacted by the city council, are guilty of selective reading of the Bible, according to the Bishop of Ohio, the Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth.

Bishop Hollingsworth and three assisting bishops in the diocese wrote Jan. 21 to commend the council, contending that passage of the registry witnessed to the Judeo-Christian mandate to love one another.

The bishops decried clergy who have tried to organize a vote referendum on the registry.

"We are especially concerned that they would lift verses out of context much the same way that some Christians in a previous era selected verses to bolster their views in support of slavery, segregation, and the oppression of women," the bishops wrote.

Signing with Bishop Hollingsworth were the Rt. Rev. David C. Bowman, Bishop of Western New York, 1987-1998; the Rt. Rev. William D. Persell, Bishop of Chicago, 1999-2009; and the Rt. Rev. Arthur B. Williams, Jr., Bishop Suffragan of Ohio, 1986-2002.

Bishop Kimsey of Oregon to Assist in Alaska

The Rt. Rev. Rustin R. Kimsey, Bishop of Eastern Oregon from 1980 to 2000, has agreed to serve as an assisting Bishop of Alaska until a diocesan bishop is elected. He assumed his new post effective Feb. 1.

Bishop Kimsey will not be in Alaska full time, but he intends to make extended trips which will include attendance at every deanery meeting as well as diocesan convention.

After resigning from episcopal jurisdiction in Eastern Oregon, Bishop Kimsey served as assisting Bishop of Navajoland in 2005 and 2006.

The Diocese of Alaska has been without a bishop since the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald resigned in 2006 to become National Indigenous Bishop in the Anglican Church of Canada.

An election that had been planned for January was postponed to 2010.

No Recession in Ministry

The Rt. Rev. John B. Chane, Bishop of **Washington**, exhorted clergy and lay delegates to the diocesan convention to find new ways of financing crucial church ministries despite the worldwide economic crisis. Convention met Jan. 30-31 at Washington National Cathedral.

The economic crisis is not the time to cut the budget, Bishop Chane said. "I believe that as an Episcopal diocese we are now being challenged to the very core of our faith and practice to discover new and exciting ways in which to grow our ministries rather than curtailing them and waiting for the storm clouds of recession to recede."

The bishop added, "It is clear that if we are unable as a diocese and as parishes to find additional income beyond basic pledge income, and if we continue to be encumbered by significantly reduced income from investments, our parishes and the diocese will face the hard realities of hard times ... As your bishop, I am unwilling to accept what some have said is the inevitable, that financial realities will curtail the current programmatic life and mission of this diocese."

Bishop Chane challenged listeners to be creative in seeking new money: "Rather than accept what some say is the inevitable, I challenge each of us as our number one priority in 2009 to seek and identify alternate forms of funding through interested parishioners, private individuals, trusts and foundations from within and outside of the diocese that could generate new revenue sources."

He mentioned a number of vulnerable ministry initiatives: the new Bishop John Walker School for African American boys, youth ministry, college chaplaincies, Spanish-language ministry, parish growth and development, and clergy and family wellness ministry, as well as the diocese's global outreach efforts.

Convention passed a 2009 budget of about \$4.5 million, which represented a decrease of 1.7 percent compared to



Joe Thoma/Diocese of Central Florida photo

Acolytes from host site Trinity Preparatory School, Winter Park, process during the Holy Eucharist at the convention of the Diocese of Central Florida on Jan. 24.

last year's budget. The approved budget includes a \$100,000 contingency based on the assumption that revenue from investment income for 2009 will be approximately \$100,000 less than the amount last year.

Among the legislation adopted was Resolution 4, reaffirming the non-discriminatory provisions of The Episcopal Church (TEC) Canon III.1.2 when considering consents to episcopal elections. Resolution 4 includes a lengthy explanation noting that its sponsors felt it was necessary to counter Resolution B033, which was approved by General Convention in 2006. B033 is a response to the Windsor Report that calls for restraint by "not consenting to the consecration of any candidate to the episcopate whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church and will lead to further strains on communion."

Resolution 4 passed easily despite objections by several delegates.

Peggy Eastman

Committed to Growth

Meeting under a theme of "From Generation to Generation," Jan. 24 at Trinity Preparatory School in Winter Park, the annual convention of the Diocese of **Central Florida** renewed the diocese's commitment to grow churches, take short-term mission trips, develop contemporary worship, and infuse the diocese with the theological vision promoted by Bishop John W. Howe.

Convention approved a total of 12

resolutions, including one calling on Bishop Howe to appoint a contemporary worship committee that would be charged with developing a contemporary worship leadership school "in which talented men and women will be trained and invited into congregations within the diocese for leadership in this style of worship, and a mission plan to assist congregations in funding such leadership positions."

Another resolution called on the evangelism commission to encourage congregational mission trips.

Convention also requested that General Convention incorporate three amendments to the proposed revisions of the Title IV disciplinary code. The proposed revisions would clarify language of the abandonment canon and standardize the threshold and voting procedure for removing clergy or bishops charged with abandonment.

In his address to convention, Bishop Howe said that the past year had been a rebuilding one for fellowship and for several congregations where a number of members quit The Episcopal Church in order to affiliate with overseas Anglican primates.

"Here is the bottom line concerning this terrible season of splits and disaffiliations: We have weathered this 'perfect storm' with no inhibitions, no depositions, no lawsuits, and no loss of property," he said. "We remain on good terms with those who have left."

Among other business, delegates approved a budget of \$2.37 million for 2009, which is \$38,400 less than actual expenses in 2008.

God Sees Us Differently

There is quite a contrast between two of the scriptures selected in the Daily Office and eucharistic readings for St. Matthias' Day (Feb. 24). In the Old Testament lesson at Morning Prayer (1 Sam. 16:1-13), the prophet's assessment of the qualifications of Jesse's oldest son, Eliab, is rejected. Of the whole bunch of eight sons, the last and least likely is the one God chose. David — so unqualified in the eyes of his father that he wasn't brought in from the sheep pasture for consideration — was God's choice.



of the Christian movement, an accomplice in the imprisonment, suffering and death of many early Christians. What was God thinking when he intervened in this man's life and literally forced him, with his upstart views and new theology, on the 12 and the young Church?

On the other hand, institutional Christianity began with those 11 apostles when they made Matthias one of their own according to the standards they set. Ever since, we Christians

Did You Know...
Chasubles continue to be illegal in the Diocese of Sydney (Australia).

In the scripture describing how the 11 apostles went about choosing a replacement for Judas Iscariot, the opposite process was used. First, a pool of the most likely and best-qualified candidates in their eyes was established. The two men in the running seem to have been chosen for all the reasons that God did not choose any of David's older brothers. Then, under the assumption that both the candidates were equally able, after a suitable prayer lots were cast, "and the lot fell on Matthias."

This is not an isolated or unique example of the difference between how God looks at us, takes the measure of our hearts and minds, and calls some to special roles and leadership positions in the church. The 11 men who chose Matthias had to be among the most unlikely and ill-suited persons to become apostles that Jesus could have chosen for that role. Look at them: Four unlettered fishermen, a conceited skeptic, a despised revenue agent in league with the Roman occupation, a militant insurgent with blood on his hands.

Look at Jesus himself. He was conceived and born out of wedlock to a teenager promised to another man, then raised in a backwater hamlet in a region of Palestine known for its rough people and loose religious ways. He first became famous as the man who sat at the same table and ate with sinners, including tax collectors and prostitutes. He flaunted custom, made radical pronouncements that overturned the traditional morality supposedly enshrined in the law of Moses. He said things that were conspicuously calculated to make everyone mad at him sooner or later.

Look at Paul. In many ways he was the most questionable one of all for God to convert and call to his service. He was a leading opponent

have used our best judgment to ensure that only the best and most upright of us gain entrance into the ordained ministry and lay office to serve God's people. At the same time, we must never forget that God sees not as we see. We look on the outward qualifications, but God looks into the heart.

We have reviewed a few examples in the Bible and church history of how God has often defied human reason, gone beyond human judgment, and even overturned divine moral standards to draft flawed, unlikely, and obviously unqualified individuals to be leaders in the forefront of God's mission on earth. With knowledge of those precedents, is there any one of us who can set any absolute categorical prerequisite that limits God's will or restricts his mercy in choosing those he wants to serve him?

I believe not. I believe rather that God has made a place for V. Gene Robinson alongside Peter Akinola, Katharine Jefferts Schori, and John-David Schofield in the ranks of the apostolic episcopate. Every bit as much as Jesus called both Levi Matthew, the former Roman collaborator, and Simon, the former zealous insurgent, to take their places among the original 12, Gene and Peter and Katharine and John-David have a unique ministry and service to render to the Lord and his people, even to one another, please God.

Indeed, if there is room for these at the holy table as celebrant and communicant, forgiver and forgiven, there is surely room for us, stubborn sinners though we be.

Our guest columnist is the Rev. D. David Clemons, a priest of the Diocese of Northern California who lives in Yucca Valley, Calif.

Quote of the Week
Andrew Carey, columnist for Church of England Newspaper, on church-state relations in American political life: "American political life is much more overtly religious than Britain's even though we have an established Church."

Making Prayer a Priority

When the Archbishop of Canterbury preached at the dedication of St. Mark's Pro-Cathedral in Alexandria, Egypt [p.6], he made some welcome remarks about the importance of prayer. Archbishop Rowan Williams told the congregation that churches ought to concentrate more on praying and less on being "busy." The archbishop used an example of an enormous notice board at a church with which he was familiar, and said he wondered whether "there was ... room in the week for God to find his way in among all these activities."

We suspect that there are probably many other churches that are so wrapped up in scheduling activities that prayer may be overlooked. A variety of parish ministries is important to be sure, but let us not forget to make room for prayer.

To the Ends of the Earth

Since 1997, the Last Sunday after the Epiphany has been designated World Mission Sunday in The Episcopal Church. It is a time to increase awareness of and participation in the global mission of the church. This year's observance has the theme "Building Up the Body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12).

While mission work has been less emphasized in recent years, The Episcopal Church has a long history of being active in mission endeavors. Missionaries representing this church have traveled to all parts of the earth in order to spread the gospel. In some cases, these mission efforts have been more specific, emphasizing such elements as medicine, education and spirituality.

At present there are Episcopal missionaries in more than 30 countries. Their stories deserve to be spread far and wide. World Mission Sunday is a good opportunity for the church to do so.

Returning to God

Ash Wednesday continues to be one of the most widely observed days on The Episcopal Church's calendar, with many churches reporting large turnouts of the faithful on this day. In most churches, the Liturgy for Ash Wednesday is celebrated, but there are places where only the imposition of ashes is offered as a sign of penitence and mortality.

Ash Wednesday is one of two days for which fasting is recommended (the other is Good Friday). The Liturgy for Ash Wednesday is intended to help the local congregation get off to a good start for the holy season of Lent. While the season may not be as austere as it once was, it still reminds people of faith of the need to return to God and to try to avoid sin. As we move into this penitential season, may we be mindful of the mood of Ash Wednesday.



The Liturgy
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READER'S VIEWPOINT

By Tad de Bordenave

In the controversies swirling around the Anglican Communion, the accepted thinking is that there can be no evil greater than the church erring on matters of unity, authority, and practice. The primary manifestations of these would be biblical teaching, schism, and sexuality. Disobedience on these yields the greatest evil of the church. So goes the mainstream thinking.

I disagree. There is a greater evil, one that lays responsibility for this failure at the feet of the church. This evil is the fact that 1 billion, 700 million people remain without any knowledge of Jesus Christ and God's redeeming work on the cross. That would be more than 20 percent of the world whom the church has left with probably no alternative to hell.

Somehow or other, in spite of an upsurge of missions activity, our short-term trips, our missionary personnel, our partnerships all but omit places like the nation of Yemen, or the city of Urunchi in western China, or the state of Bihar in India. The population of these places amounts to more than 125 million people. The Christians among them are about 0.06 percent. And these groups represent less than one-tenth of all the people omitted by the church's missionary efforts.

By saying that this is the greater evil, I do not mean that the other issues are not important. They are extremely urgent and must be dealt with biblically and charitably. Also, I do not see this as an either/or choice. We cannot decide to address one and not the other. I am simply arguing that there is no evil as great as the church abandoning 20 percent of the world to hell.

Why are the voices for the reality of hell so ignored? There are several reasons, ones that should not surprise us. I will mention a few.

Hell, its reality and its dreaded circumstance, has become a joke. "You think it's hot here...," and all that. It is mocked in derision and thereby defused. Hell has been dismissed from the serious vocabulary of the church. We delete almost all references to hell in our lectionaries, thereby apparently eliminating its reality. Believing in hell is seemingly the exclusive territory of fundamentalists. Jesus is certainly not the only way to the Father, so, not surprisingly, the prevailing views of salvation are universalist.

With that as our theological platform, no wonder we are not driven to seek the lost.

How could we believe anyone is lost? Simply by

The Call of the Good Shepherd

taking on face value the teachings of the Second Person of the Trinity. And teach on hell Jesus did, always as the cost of refusing God's forgiveness. The consequence, he taught, is an eternity apart from God and the place of his love. The terror of the alternative Jesus described in haunting metaphors like weeping and gnashing of teeth, darkness, and eternal fire.

What about those who have not heard? Could God consign them to hell when they haven't even heard the gospel, much less refused it? To this there are two answers:

First, we do not know. But any expression of hope for them is conspicuously absent in Christ's teaching. Nowhere does the New Testament teach entrance into heaven apart from faith in Jesus Christ, God's Redeemer.

Second, we do know that God expects the church to go to the ends of the earth as his witnesses. That means a missions program that would include work among North Koreans, the Baloch of Pakistan, the Marwari of Rajasthan, India, and the Qashqa'i nomads of Iran, to name a few. He expects the church to make disciples in each and every ethnic group.

At present, our missions personnel and resources go to places where the church already exists, not

among the unevangelized nations. The ratio of workers where the church is established to workers among Muslims and Hindus is 185 to 8. That is scandalous disobedience.

True, most of the 1 billion, 700 million people are remote. Some are hostile. Some are deeply committed to other faiths. But God loves them and wants them in his kingdom. That means that there are ways to reach them. God is the chief strategist and foremost missionary

In his kindness God gives the church more time and sufficient grace to respond to the call of the Good Shepherd. If we go, he will take us deeper into the love of God and his heart for the lost. We will find his generous supply of wisdom and resources, and we will discover the strength of his promise to be with us. □

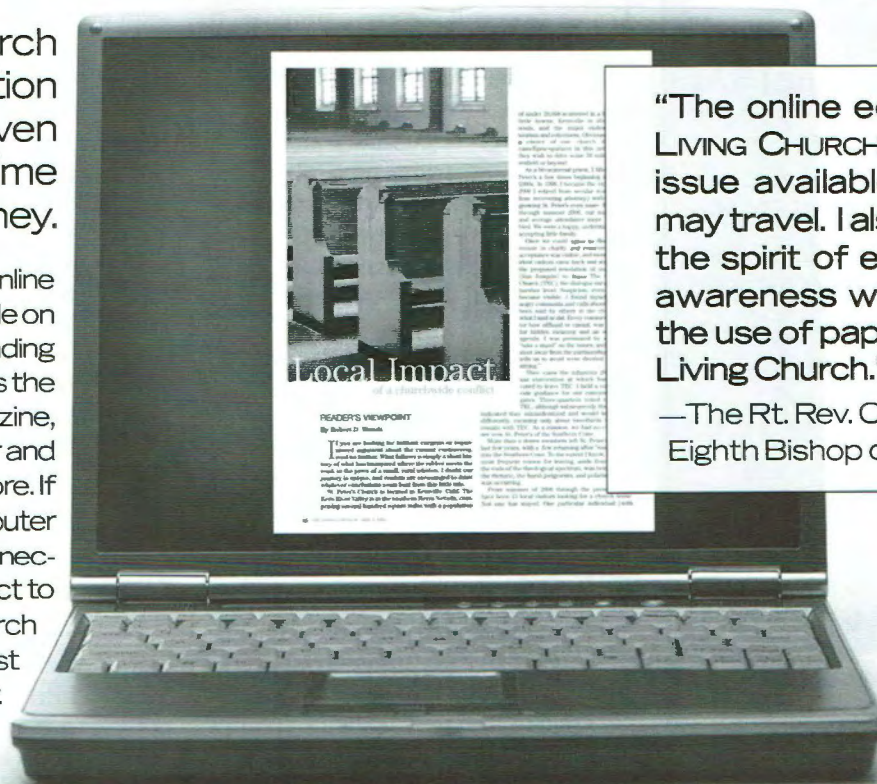
The Rev. Tad de Bordenave is the founder and first director of Anglican Frontier Missions and is the author of Light to the Nations: God's Covenant with the Unreached Peoples. He lives in Richmond, Va.

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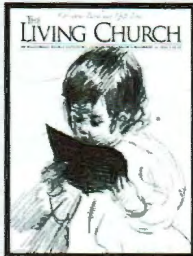
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Personal Disputes

The editorial page [TLC, Feb. 1] is surprisingly contradictory.

On the one hand, TLC joins the many voices that deplore the fact that our churches are involved in court cases. On the same page, there is an editorial that approves the rules which require annual audits of our dioceses and parishes by independent certified public accountants.

It is time to recognize that when St. Paul scolded those Christians who took their disputes to court, he was clearly referring to personal disputes which Christians should be able to resolve amongst themselves.

But property issues, and accounting practices, are not simply personal disputes. Both fall under civil law. Civil law is part of the structure of government to which Paul requires us to be subject and obedient because government is instituted by God for maintenance of good order and justice.

When any of us, individually or as an organized church, acquires property or engages in receiving and disbursing money, we necessarily place ourselves under the law. When property or monetary issues arise, we make use of judges and courts and certified public accountants because that is what is appropriate and necessary in our orderly — although complex — society.

Why should a court action be "heartbreaking" while a required audit is "simply good business practice"?

*Gordon W. Gritter
Avila Beach, Calif.*

Confusing Calendar

I read recently that the General Convention will receive a proposal to remember more "saints" in the calendar. This may be good. At one time I had the pleasure of preparing propers for a college community that, with diocesan permission, remembered all manner of concerns and worthies at a daily Eucharist. However, adding more named days exacerbates a calendar concern that has been with us since 1979.

As General Convention moves ahead with weighty matters, perhaps we could resolve this simple one of observances entirely within the jurisdiction of the church. Already the calendar is frequently confusing. The 1979 prayer book calendar rubric, in an attempt to emphasize the importance of Sundays and feasts of our Lord, requires that observances that fall on Sundays be "transferred" to the first open day. For most Episcopal congregations, this means in practice that they are not noted at all, or only by a few at a mid-week service, and seldom on the "transferred" date shown on the calendar.

I would like to see permission for any holy day to be commemorated with an additional collect on the date it falls, with a general permission for the propers of any holy day to be used as may be locally most convenient so long as they are not substituted for any feast of our Lord or principal Sunday celebration.

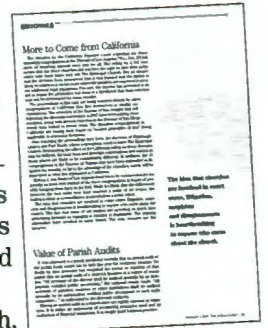
Finally, could the collective wisdom of the church come up with something more edifying for the season after Pentecost than numbered Sundays whose numbers conflict with the date of the day and the number of the proper of the day?

*(The Rev.) Robert Gribbon
Old Trinity Church
Church Creek, Md.*

The Other God

Bishop V. Gene Robinson has hit the nail on the head when he states that "the God Rick Warren is praying to is not the God he knows."

The bishop is right. One is the God of revelation, the other a god of speculation and imagination, a god made in our own image, and therein lies the



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PART-TIME VICAR: *St. Francis of the Tetons Episcopal Church, Archa, Wyo.*, seeks energetic part-time vicar to serve as spiritual and theological leader for small, historic church located in the foothills of the Grand Teton Mountains. Ideal priest will help grow children's program and cultivate the exclusivity of different beliefs and spiritual practices within the welcoming tradition of the Episcopal liturgy. A gift of the vicar would be to feed, enlighten and strengthen the congregation in outreach and pastoral care service as well as stewardship of God's creation. Contact **The Rev. Rand Fagg, Diocese of Idaho Deployment Officer**, at rfagg@pmt.org.

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dilemma facing the Anglican Communion at this time.

Despite the rhetoric that the more biblically conservative members of the church are "valued parts of the body of Christ," actions continue to belie the words. The remark of former Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning that there will be no outcasts in The Episcopal Church has a hollow ring these days.

*(The Rev. Canon) Brian C. Hobden
Las Cruces, N.M.*

Powerful Message

No one else has said that I "seemed sad" during the Spirit-filled rededication of the cathedral and the great organ [TLC, Jan. 25]. I said that we do not have enough people to fill the cathedral regularly to illustrate how its size expresses its mission beyond its role as mother church of its diocese.

We work at increasing attendance by attracting lapsed or un-churched Christians. But we also invite those of other faiths and of no faith to enter the unique conversations made possible under the huge roof of this cathedral. The diocese envisioned the cathedral as that generous and gracious place in this international and interfaith city. Surely that is part of the powerful message we have to share.

*(The Very Rev.) James A. Kowalski
Cathedral of St. John the Divine
New York, N.Y.*

Wrong Title

A news article indicates that ENS contributed to a report referring to Bishop Dawani ("Gaza conflict strains diocese's resources") [TLC, Feb. 1].

As I have previously commented (I believe) to both ENS and TLC, our bishop in Jerusalem is not properly referred to as "the Bishop of Jerusalem." That title should be reserved for the Orthodox bishop.

*Nigel A. Renton
Berkeley, Calif.*

letters to the editor
tlc@livingchurch.org

Appointments

The Rev. **John Bender** is priest-in-charge of Our Saviour, 704 Hartsville Pike, Gallatin, TN 37066.

The Ven. **Frederick C. Byrd** is archdeacon emeritus of the Diocese of Upper South Carolina, 1115 Marion St., Columbia, SC 29201.

The Rev. **Mary Canavan** is rector of St. Andrew's, 232 Durham Rd., Madison, CT 06443.

The Rev. **Craig Dolack** is rector of St. Mark's, 111 S Roanoke St., Fincastle, VA 24090.

The Rev. **Anne Fraley** is priest-in-charge of Epiphany, 1500 Hickory Ridge Rd., Lebanon, TN 37087.

The Rev. **Matthew Greathouse** is rector of St. Paul's, 576 Roscoe Rd., Newnan, GA 30263.

The Rev. **Paul Nancarrow** is rector of Trinity, 214 W Beverley St., Staunton, VA 24401.

Deaths

The Rev. **Herman John Pomy**, priest of the Diocese of Tennessee, died Oct. 26 at a Nashville hospice. He was 84.

Born and raised in Chicago, he served in World War II, then graduated from Loyola University. He was ordained to the diaconate in 1979 and to the priesthood a year later in the Diocese of Tennessee. He was an associate priest at St. Bartholomew's Church, Bluff City, TN, 1980-85, then he organized St. Patrick's Mission, Smithville, where he served until 1991. He was associate at Resurrection, Franklin, 1991-2002. He was involved in interim ministry in recent years. Fr. Pomy was spiritual director for Cursillo, and was active in hospital ministry. He is survived by his wife, Ginny; sons Charles, William and James; daughters Margaret, Suzanne and Marianne; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

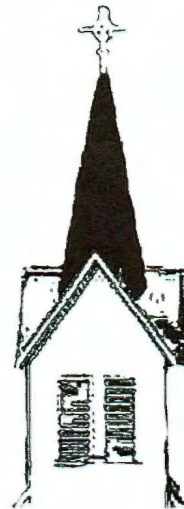
The Rev. **Mary M. Taylor**, teacher and priest, died Dec. 25 in Whitehorse Village retirement community in Newtown Square, PA, from the effects of Parkinson's disease. She was 79.

Born in Swarthmore, PA, Mrs. Taylor was a graduate of Bryn Mawr College and the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Following a career in teaching lower-school science in Bryn Mawr and anatomy and physiology at Montgomery County Community College, she was ordained deacon in 1987 and priest in 1988. She was chaplain at Cathcart Home, Devon, PA, 1989-91, and vicar of All Saints' Church, Fallsington, PA, 1988-92. Later she served at St. Mary's, Chester, PA. She is survived by a son, Conrad, Jr.; two daughters, Delia and Polly Turner; five grandchildren; and her first husband, Conrad W. Turner.

Next week...

Lent Book Issue

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