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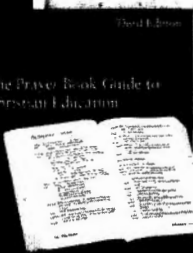
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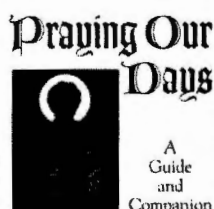
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Number 16

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.

THIS WEEK

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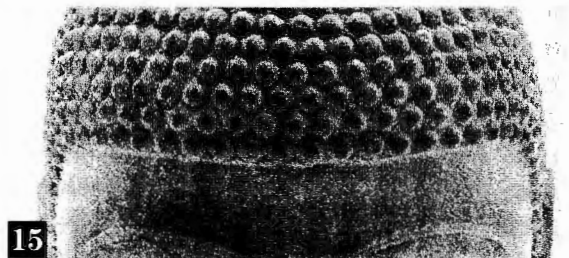
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On the Cover

Andy Fichter, a young parishioner at St. Peter's Church, Charlotte, N.C., works with the Mystery of Faith presentation materials in the parish's Catechesis of the Good Shepherd atrium.

Des Keller photo



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SUNDAY'S READINGS

Faith and Doubt

*'Unless I see the mark of the nails ...
I will not believe' John 20:25*

Second Sunday of Easter (Year B), April 19, 2009

BCP: Acts 3:12a, 13-15, 17-26 or Isaiah 26:2-9, 19; Psalm 111 or 118:19-24; 1 John 5:1-6 or Acts 3:12a, 13-15, 17-26; John 20:19-31

RCL: Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:19-31

Faith allows the possibility of doubt. Unlike a science experiment or a geometry problem, the truth of faith cannot be proved. Whatever is proven beyond question is no longer a matter of faith. By faith, we may encounter God's presence in our lives, but in ways that will always be open to interpretation and better understanding.

Faith is "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). Faith is beyond proof, off the scale of proof, and not subject to proof. Like love, faith can be known and felt, but never proved beyond doubt. Jesus himself rejects the devil's temptation to put God to the test (Luke 4:13). There can be no "test" of God's love, and there can be no proof of it.

Thomas can speak for us all when he admits his doubts. In this regard, we can admire Thomas' honesty and willingness to speak his truth. He knew Jesus died on the cross, and he would need more than a few enthusiastic reports to believe otherwise. That was his experience, and the basis of his perspective at the time. Fortunately for Thomas, he could be called to faith, and Jesus was glad to provide what

Thomas needed to believe. He was "teachable."

Like Thomas, the first step for us must be to admit and claim where we are in life — not where others think we should be, or where we would like to be in terms of an ideal. We have to start where we are. Doubts and all. When we face the limitations of our belief, we can begin to be transformed and grow beyond those limitations. It's unlikely that we'll be confronted by Jesus' own person in human form, offering us his pierced hands and side for demonstration. But we can echo the cry of the man who said to Jesus, "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24).

Jesus came to Thomas in the midst of his doubts, and gave him what he needed for faith. Thomas' honesty with himself and the other disciples made this possible. Following that example we can be honest with ourselves and the people around us. There is no need to deny or avoid our doubts. We can face who we are, and admit what we need. That's the starting point. That's when our real life of faith opens to Jesus, who is always present, even when we doubt.

Look It Up

See Hymn 203, "Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! O sons and daughters."

Think About It

How have you been called to faith in times of doubt? How have you experienced God's presence in times of great need? How have you been able to share your faith with others when they were struggling?

Next Sunday

Third Sunday of Easter (Year B), April 26, 2009

BCP: Acts 4:5-12 or Micah 4:1-5; Psalm 98 or 98:1-5; 1 John 1:1-2:2 or Acts 4:5-12; Luke 24:36b-48

RCL: Acts 3:12-19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48



Intersecting Communities

How a school and a parish can assist rather than hinder the mission of the other

By Daniel R. Heischman

Things are pretty tense in the relationship between All Hallows' Parish and School. In the autumn, the school board had asked the vestry for approval to move ahead with some revisions to its bylaws, allowing the number of requisite Episcopalians on the board to shrink from two-thirds to one-half.

All Hallows' school was eager to undertake a capital campaign for a new building on campus, and there was support on the school board to add a couple of "heavy hitters" to the board, namely, non-Episcopalians with considerable financial means who could help significantly with the campaign. At the same time, the school was having increasing difficulty finding parishioners who were willing to serve on the board. Vestry members wondered if the school board's proposal was but a first step toward the school becoming less Episcopal. "After all," said one vestry member, "from what I know there are not a lot of Episcopalians in the school. We should be realizing a lot more church members from the school, and that is not happening."

The previous year the school had decided to hire its own school chaplain, a break from the arrangement the school had forged with the parish some time ago to share a clergy person. While the rector had approved the change, he nonetheless worried that this might mean he had less influence on the chapel program and the school's religion curriculum.

Adding to the tension, parish income has been dropping, in part due to the economic slowdown. Members of the vestry wondered if there was some way

(Continued on next page)

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Intersecting Communities

(Continued from previous page)

that the parish might realize more revenue from the school. As one vestry member remarked, "They (the school) have a cash reserve, and, besides, the parents who send their children to the school have a lot of money."

At the same time, the head of school was under pressure from board members who wanted the school to incorporate separately from the parish. "It is high time we were in charge of our own affairs," one school board member argued. The school head knew that such a request might bring on disputes and heighten suspicions between school and parish.

Fortunately, the senior warden had proposed that the school board and vestry get together for a weekend retreat, "to talk over some of the issues we face." It would be the first time that the two governing bodies would meet face to face in many years.

The above scenario, while fictitious, represents a composite of many of the

issues that emerge between parishes and schools. Of the 1,000-plus Episcopal schools in the U.S., 781 are parish day schools — founded by a parish and maintaining a strong and close relationship with that parish, be they separately incorporated or not. In addition, there are at least 25 schools that identify themselves as "cathedral schools."

Connected as they are with worshiping communities, these schools lie at the heart of The Episcopal Church's strong and long-lasting commitment to education, and symbolize one of the potentially most important witnesses we undertake in the world. At the same time, the parish day school partnership is a fragile one, dependent upon the quality of a few key relationships in order for a thriving and mutually satisfying collaboration to be realized.

Structurally, a parish day school can be under the control of the parish, but without a good working relationship between, say, the rector of the parish and head of school, no clarity of bylaws

will compensate when problems occur. Indeed, appeals to bylaws or canon law can be a sign of a real rupture in that relationship. Likewise, a school that is fully independent of the parish can have a strong and intimate relationship with that parish if the two entities work hard to maintain it.

Building Relationships

Good relationships do not simply emerge. The leadership of schools and parishes must work intentionally to build these relationships that need to be in place prior to the times when they will be tested. And critical to the development of good relationships is understanding the similarities and differences of the two parties.

Parishes are voluntary organizations, while the schools they may have founded are made up of individuals and families who have entered into a contractual relationship. When I moved from parish work to a school chaplaincy, I was surprised to discover that

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Christian worship past and present

everyone I worked with in my new context for ministry was an employee of the institution. The reader may wonder why it came as a surprise, but the contractual nature of schools — and those in them, including the families whose children attend them — creates a different atmosphere than a church. For many parishioners, church is but one of many commitments in their busy lives. For those working at or attending school, this institution is central.

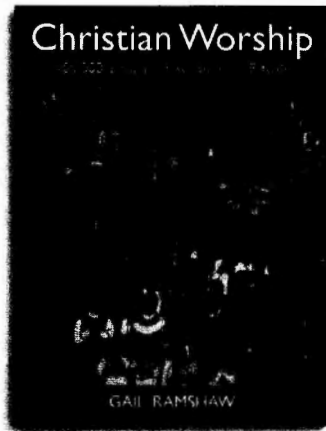
School and church have some important differences in the manner in which we use and interpret the word "Episcopal." While most parishes and schools together share a similar commitment to regular worship, the use of the Book of Common Prayer, and a deep commitment to the religious life incorporating the life of the mind, how a school defines being Episcopal is often different from how a parish views itself as Episcopal. Schools frequently identify their Episcopal nature, beyond chapel, in terms of values, while parishes tend to view Episcopal in terms of content. Hence, it is common to hear leaders of Episcopal schools speak of their "Episcopal identity," and even more common for them to point to certain values they hold dear as evidence of that identity.

Identity Understood Differently

When I ask people from a particular school about their Episcopal identity, I often hear, "Because we are an Episcopal school, we are diverse and welcoming of a variety of people and faiths." Not surprisingly therefore, the national average of Episcopal students attending Episcopal schools lies somewhere between 10 and 25 percent. So, too, school leaders will characterize their Episcopal identity in terms of a commitment to community service, as well as holding up of certain moral virtues (a great many of our schools have fine ethics courses and pay regular attention to the "core values" of the institution).

This distinction between values and content is crucial to the understanding of how both entities view their Episcopal mission. Members of the parish often find it hard to understand why there are so many non-Episcopalians in the school, while schools point with

(Continued on next page)



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Intersecting Communities

(Continued from previous page)

great pride to the manner in which they see their diversity as living out that Episcopal identity and mission.

Finally, there is frequently a distinct age difference between parish and school. Our graying Episcopal Church is faced with the challenge of how to re-create itself among younger generations. One can see it in the proliferation of search profiles of parishes seeking a rector with “youthful energy” as well as an ability to bring young people and families into the life of the parish. It is not uncommon for many of our schools — places that obviously work with the young and their increasingly young-appearing parents — to be attached to or in relationship with a parish with fewer families and young people. This produces a natural generational gap, with many parishioners living in a stage of their lives a bit removed from those of the families in the schools.

Young people have a tremendous need to connect with and learn from adults, and we older folks can find much joy in being models to the young. From this perspective, I see not only potential conflict but great opportunity in this generational difference, if channeled wisely.

Is there hope for the impending meeting between the vestry and school board at All Hallows’? If both entities are able to understand the fundamental differences between each other — in how they do business, in their constituencies, in differing perspectives on some of the fundamental meanings of what each is about — there could be great hope in what evolves out of a renewed appreciation for each other, as well as a clarification of how both are serving a common purpose. These are intersecting communities, places whose goals converge while different types and styles of operations are maintained.

There is still time to discover what we all know lies at the heart of any good relationship — the coming together of two very different worlds, mutually committed to a common life and to each other. When that type of bond is formed, we see in that intersection Anglicanism at its very best.

The Rev. Daniel R. Heischman is executive director of the National Association of Episcopal Schools.

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EDS Chooses Abortion-Rights Leader as Next Dean

The Rev. Katherine Hancock Ragsdale, vicar of St. David's Church, Pepperell, Mass., was named president and dean of Episcopal Divinity School by unanimous vote of the board of trustees.

Brett Donham, chairman of the EDS board of trustees, made the announcement March 30. She will assume her new responsibilities effective July 1.

"Katherine's gifts, skills, and experience are an excellent match with the criteria established by the search committee, both in terms of the current challenges and opportunities at EDS, and the personal attributes we are looking for in a new leader," Mr. Donham said.

Dr. Ragsdale has served as vicar of

St. David's since 1996. Since 2005, she has also served as president and executive director of Political Research Associates, a progressive think tank dedicated to building a more just and inclusive democratic society by exposing movements, institutions, and ideologies on the political and Christian Right "that undermine human rights," according to information published on the organization's website.

She has also been a passionate advocate and author on abortion from a Christian perspective. She served for 17 years (eight as chairwoman) on the national board for the Religious Coali-

tion for Reproductive Choice (RCRC).

As chairwoman, she oversaw a sweeping reorganization that included a change of name and mission. During her tenure, the RCRC doubled the size of both its staff and budget. She also serves on the board of NARAL: Pro-Choice America, The White House Project, the Progressive Religious Partnership, and the advisory board of The Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence.

She was ordained deacon in the Diocese of Newark in 1993 and priest the following year. She earned degrees from EDS and Virginia Theological Seminary.



Dr. Ragsdale

Lambeth Review Group Cites Conference's Missteps

An independent task force charged with investigating the financial management of the 2008 Lambeth Conference reported no evidence of financial malpractice or dishonesty, but the group said inexperienced management, poor communication, and overly generous contractual arrangements with some vendors contributed to the conference's shortfall of \$564,000.

Although the deficit was less than the \$1.74-million shortfall that was

projected last summer, the Lambeth Conference Funding Review Group said the smaller deficit was primarily because fewer bishops than originally expected attended the conference. Conference planners did not attempt to base the conference fee on actual cost. Instead the figure was based on what guests could afford.

The group also said that "reporting lines, responsibilities and authority were sometimes unclear," despite the

formation of the Lambeth Conference Company in 2006 to manage the administration and finances of the conference. The reviewers said that having a company "to own the cost and contractual implications of decisions and to provide legal and financial accountability" was positive, but said the company had been "set up too late in the planning process to be able to inform key decisions."

Despite the creation of the Lambeth Conference Company, the lines of authority for the conference were never made clear to those responsible for planning events and securing contracts, according to the report.

Recommendations for future conferences included having an approved operational and financial plan in place by 2013 for the 2018 conference; setting attendance fees that more realistically "factor in overall costs and financial need;" and "ensuring sufficient fund raising capability as part of future conference planning."

The Church of England's Archbishops' Council and the board of governors of the Church Commissioners established the review committee after the Lambeth Conference Company asked for financial help.



Steve Waring photo

The initial Lambeth budget proposal did not include the rental cost of slightly less than \$800,000 for the "Big Top" tent where most of the major conference events occurred.

Consents Process Underway for Northern Michigan Bishop-Elect

After official ballots were distributed during the House of Bishops' spring retreat in North Carolina March 13-18, bishops spent significant time in plenary and in some cases follow-up small-group table conversation discussing whether to consent to the consecration of the Rev. Kevin Thew Forrester as Bishop of Northern Michigan.

Fr. Thew Forrester's election has sparked controversy because he underwent lay ordination as a Buddhist several years ago and was the only candidate on the ballot. Many bishops reportedly voted during the meeting or soon after the bishops' spring retreat adjourned.

The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported on March 24 that the Rt. Rev. Gregory Rickel, Bishop of Olympia, announced in an e-mail message that he already had voted not to consent to Fr. Thew Forrester's consecration.

In a similar e-mail message to members and friends of his diocese, the Rt. Rev. William Love, Bishop of Albany, said he too had voted not to consent to the consecration of Fr. Thew Forrester.

The canons and constitution of the General Convention require that the bishop-elect receive consent from a majority of standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction to be consecrated. According to the church's canons, bishops and standing committees have 120 days in which to vote. Not voting is considered the same as a "no" vote.

Two other bishops with jurisdiction were consultants to the Northern Michigan search committee that nominated Fr. Thew Forrester. Bishops Tom Ely of Vermont and Bruce Caldwell of Wyoming have not made known how they intend to vote on consent, but they have previously issued statements indicating that they believe Fr. Thew Forrester is well qualified and that the consecration should go forward.



Left: Julio Torres (wearing headband) and Joel Joa (foreground wearing hat), mission youth leaders from Young Life, based at St. Jude's mission in Phoenix, with team members from St. Jude's at a high school dodgeball tournament, March 22 at All Saints' Church, Phoenix.

Below: Matt Marino, canon for youth and young adult ministries in the Diocese of Arizona, hands out prizes. The event included prayer and worship.

David and Jolene Cummins photos



Report Warns of Long-Term Decline

More than five years later, tensions caused by the consecration of a partnered homosexual man as a bishop continue to affect half of all Episcopal churches, according to census information compiled in the Blue Book report prepared for the 76th General Convention, to be held July 8-17 in Anaheim, Calif.

While praising the popularity and "calm and centered leadership style" of Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, the report, based on results from 783 completed surveys, is a sobering snapshot of an aging denomination, struggling with unresolved conflict and in danger of terminal decline. It was written by the House of Deputies' Committee on the State of the Church.

"In prior years the Committee on the State of the Church often heard the criticism that our church seemed unwilling to recognize the presence of a major source of internal controversy that some argued was having an impact on our common life, as reflected in declining membership

and attendance statistics," the Blue Book Report states. "The metaphor most often used was that we 'failed to acknowledge the elephant in the room,' referring to what many viewed as the momentous decision by the 74th General Convention (2003) to consent to the consecration of the Bishop of New Hampshire."

There are some indications that what the committee describes as "tensions" are growing in congregations. In a similar survey undertaken in 2005, 37 percent of congregations reported serious conflict that resulted in at least some members leaving. About one-third of those responding in 2005 attributed the conflict to decisions made during the 2003 General Convention. In a similar survey conducted in 2008, 64 percent of congregations reported some level of conflict over the ordination of homosexual clergy, with most reporting such conflict to be serious.

"Overall, 47 percent of Episcopal congregations had serious conflict

(Continued on page 20)

Developing a Ministerial Imagination

The Rev. Sue Singer is the assistant professor of ministry development and director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, Calif. A priest for 18 years, she shifted her focus to education in midlife after parish work and congregational consulting for the Diocese of California. She has served urban and suburban churches on both coasts and was exposed to a diversity of churches as a consultant. She continues to serve on the staff of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco.

Recently she spoke to managing editor John Schuessler about the value of parish experience when instructing students for future ministry. She also talked about a new Doctor of Ministry degree program that is being offered in collaboration with Seabury-Western Theological Seminary.

What have you found to be the most effective way to teach students about the good, bad, and ugly of parish ministry?

There are always a lot of practical stories you can tell, but that actually is not the most useful way to teach, I've found. More important is the ability to construct strategies for learning that help students develop the imagination needed to do ministry. Developing a ministerial imagination summarizes what I'm about.

The thing I do that is really fun, and students seem to enjoy enormously, is create a case study of a fictional congregation, with as much description as possible, then put students in virtual ministry teams of four to five persons to produce a portfolio of responses. They do sermon outlines, exegesis, liturgy planning, a response to a pastoral issue, an educational piece, and something for the larger community. We try to use every facet of their curriculum. It is a portfolio-based piece, but members of the group will say at the end, "We can't bear leaving this behind because we want to see what happens."

Explain some of the fears you perceive among seminarians as they look toward the future.

They have practical fear about the major changes the church is going



Dr. Singer says the call to act as leaven in the world is a gospel metaphor that rings true for many students.

through and whether what they've learned in seminary will prepare them to be change agents. And they have big job security fears. They have a need to work under an excellent mentor, but they see fewer opportunities for this. And they fear whether they are going to be capable of enabling the church they love so much to be able to continue to speak in a very unstable cultural context.

Many are wrestling with the question of how to do effective evangelism in a pluralistic and very secular culture. They are seeking new models, and many are drawn to an evangelism of attraction, based on the witness of committed Christian living in the world, rather than to proselytizing that aims solely at drawing people into the institutional church. A gospel metaphor that rings true for them is the parable of the leaven — Christians are called to act as leaven in the world.

I'm very interested in the nature of the shift the culture is making into post-modernity, where everything is a matter of choice and religious identity is an option. You can't just be socialized into religious identity in the way you might have been able to in the past. I'm concerned with the role of the leadership of the church in helping people do this extraordinarily difficult work, making a commitment when that is not something supported in the culture — not religious commitment.

In light of these challenges to religious identity, describe the pitfalls for church leaders to avoid.

One position is a complete rigidity and the attempt to create a little artificial Christendom all my own. The

other is laissez-faire, practical relativism. Neither of those positions does very much for people in the long run and is not particularly congruent with Anglican identity, which is responsive to and imbedded in relation to the popular culture. We (Anglicans) haven't taken a sectarian route.

Have you followed up with any of the students?

I am planning to do long-term research, keeping papers and final course evaluations, then 2-3 years out follow up with a group from each class to see whether it made any difference. That will begin next summer.

We (at the seminary) are always aware of and seeking to get better at connecting the more academic study and the practical work in ministry. The move I see happening, at least at our school, is a move toward a curriculum that is more a form of practical theology, seeing the classical theological disciplines as in the service of ministry.

Describe the Doctor of Ministry program you are running jointly with Seabury.

It begins this summer and draws on the resources of both schools. The course work will be in two intensive bursts each year — a week in Chicago in June and a week in Berkeley in January. The semesters in between will be done online in cohort groups. Students will work together on case and congregational studies, mentored by an expert ministry practitioner.

Again we have this shift toward theological reflection imbedded in congregational ministry. The online work in the new D.Min. program will be based on in-depth case studies, and lead up to the creation of a study of each student's own congregation or ministry setting. Critical reflection on ministry is key to developing skilled practitioners. And other than congregational ministry, we're seeing a trend among students in ministry that takes them beyond congregational boundaries — prison ministry, community organizing, working for labor justice or immigration rights ... that kind of thing. They are eager to learn how to connect congregations with this kind of hands-on ministry in the world. □



Children at Christ Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., listen to a Godly Play presentation.

Christ Church photo

Christian Education Choices ABOUND

Identifying the program that is right for your parish

By Michael O'Loughlin

More than 271,000 children attend Christian education programs at Episcopal churches, according to the 2008 *Episcopal Church Annual*. Parishes that serve these children have a wide range of choices when it comes to curricula, running the gamut from handmade materials and lesson plans to pre-packaged programs designed for churches of all sizes.

Finding the right approach for your church isn't necessarily easy, say a number of Christian education directors who discussed their programs with THE LIVING CHURCH. But careful consideration and planning is well worth the effort.

"I would recommend that a parish do a needs assessment, which would include values clarification, a look at who they are theologically, and a look at their mission statement as they decide on an approach," said Malinda Harris, director of Christian formation at Christ Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. "Only then are they ready to look at curriculum materials."

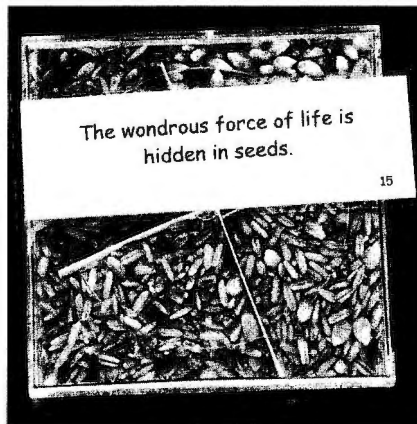
Ms. Harris said that it may be tempting for a parish to select a curriculum because it is well packaged or because it's worked well at another parish.

"It would serve parishes better to ask representatives from the National Association for Episcopal Christian Education Directors (www.naeced.org) to describe the various curricula now available, to form a committee including the rector and other pertinent leaders, and

or four times a year to discuss curricula, programs, challenges, and to offer support and share best practices with each other." Ms. Stewart also recommended membership in NAECED as a "tremendous resource."

Involving many parishioners in the process is important, noted Diane Bjorklund, Christian formation director at St. John's, Ames, Iowa.

"Listen to all the different people affected by curriculum changes," she said. "Match congregational needs to curriculum aspects. Make sure the clergy and church leadership are aware of curriculum changes and why the changes are being made. The clergy in particular are more likely to hear the complaints and therefore can be the Christian education director's best advocate if they are in the loop."



St. Peter's Church photo

Important Choices

In the mid-90s, St. Peter's Church, Charlotte, N.C., began to experience growth in membership and in parish programs. But the parish also faced some specific challenges.

"As an urban parish, we have to work extra hard to attract parents with children," said Anna Hurdle, St. Peter's children's ministry and Catechesis coordinator. "Because we draw from a large geographic area, it is not practical for children to come into town for the frequent programs and activities that are typically offered at suburban parishes. We have the children for two hours per week, and we want to make sure we are offering the very best spiritual food."

The parish chose the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (www.cgsusa.org), a Montessori-inspired formation approach that “honors the already-present spirituality of children and seeks to meet the religious needs of children at their various stages of development,” Ms. Hurdle explained. “Prayer is the aim, and everything that we do is aimed toward helping the child and ourselves enter into a more conscious relationship with God.”

Ms. Hurdle said the popularity of Montessori education in the Charlotte area has added to the appeal of the program at St. Peter’s, which now serves more than 100 children ages 3-12.

Good Shepherd Church also offers the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd as a supplemental Saturday program for its youngest children, in addition to its Sunday school program. The parish uses the *Bible-in-Life* program (www.davidccook.com) for preschool through first graders; the *Episcopal Children’s Curriculum* for grades 2-5; and the *Episcopal Curriculum for Youth* for grades 6-8 (www.morehouseeducation.org). Ms. Stewart said all the Sunday school curricula were chosen for being easy to use by the adult parish volunteer teachers, after she and other members of her team reviewed them.

St. Gregory the Great Church, Athens, Ga., began using the Workshop Rotation Model (www.rotation.org) five years ago, according to Catherine Drewry, director of children’s ministries. Children in the program are divided into four groups based on age.

“Groups study the same Bible story for four weeks,” Ms. Drewry explained. “Each week the groups go to one of four different workshops to experience the story.” The workshops typically engage the children through art, cooking, games and drama, and video or puppets, but also may include a science lab, gardening, or outdoor games depending on the subject of the story.

“Each age group has three [adult] shepherds who are responsible for reading the story, introducing the activity leader, and assisting the activity leader,” Ms. Drewry said. “They provide consistency, and know the children in their group well. The activity leaders present the activity for the workshop.” Lessons come from a variety of sources including purchased materials, online resources, and books. Ms. Drewry added that “children who attend Sunday school on a regular basis develop a real sense of belonging to the church community. They feel at home in God’s house.”

Both Christ Church and St. John’s use the Godly Play curriculum (www.godlyplay.org). Ms. Harris described the program as incorporating “storytelling, visualization of the story using manipulable materials, and reflection after the story that encourages individual discovery” and creative expression. She said her parish was looking for a curriculum that “would encourage children to think about God. We selected it because for us, the forming of a positive image of God and teaching our



Kids get crafty at the Creation Station at St. Gregory’s, Athens, Ga.
St. Gregory’s photo



Parishioners at St. John’s, Ames, Iowa, make a Jesse Tree at an intergenerational Godly Play Advent event.
St. John’s photo



Making liturgical beads at Good Shepherd, Waban, Mass.
Good Shepherd photo

children to think theologically were very important considerations.”

Ms. Bjorklund finds the program attractive because “children can be brought together in groups that are not dependent on reading ability or grade in school. This is great for smaller congregations that may only have a handful of children each week and the children’s ages span several years.” Because lessons are self-contained, she said, “children who attend occasionally can still be a part of the class. There is also great flexibility to focus on different stories at different times throughout the year according to the parish calendar.”

No matter what program or formation approach is chosen, every parish must remember that the curriculum is just the beginning.

“Choosing and using curriculum materials for children is very important, but it’s not the only thing,” Ms. Harris emphasized. “Incorporating children into the liturgy of the church, including them in outreach and pastoral care — that is, full inclusion of children into the life of the church — is very important.”

To read how these parishes support their Christian education volunteers through training and continuing education, click the “Supporting Christian Education Volunteers” link in the Web Exclusives section at www.livingchurch.org.

Neither Side a Winner

The announcement that the buildings and grounds of Grace and St. Stephen's Church, Colorado Springs [TLC, April 12], will return to the Diocese of Colorado has generated considerable publicity. Not only is the church involved a large parish, the charges and counter-charges that flew back and forth gained national notoriety.

A majority of the members of Grace and St. Stephen's voted two years ago to leave The Episcopal Church because of theological differences, but they continued to occupy the church and rectory. Those who chose not to leave The Episcopal Church are back in their church home after having worshiped in a nearby edifice. Meanwhile, the dissidents moved to a different church home.

Like most other church battles, this skirmish turned ugly fast. The Rev. Don Armstrong, rector of the parish before the split and leader of those who left, has been outspoken in his dealings with the diocese, and faced a number of accusations. On the other hand, the Diocese of Colorado has nothing to be proud of, as it moved quickly to bring suit against the departing congregation, and even after the decision was rendered, its use of security guards outside the church was unfortunate.

The Colorado Springs matter is another regrettable incident in the ongoing discord that has plagued the church. Like similar cases, it will wind up with lots of losers: The dissidents had to find another place to worship. The "loyalist" congregation will have to assume the running of a large building and pay a sizable assessment with far fewer members. A once-popular rector will have to relocate. Thanks to some uncharitable behavior exhibited by both sides, both congregations, the Episcopal one as well as those who left, are likely to have difficulty attracting new members. As usual, the only winners would seem to be the attorneys.



Like most other church battles, this skirmish about the buildings and grounds of Grace and St. Stephen's Church, Colorado Springs, turned ugly fast.

Expanded Opinion

Regular readers probably will notice a different look to this issue of THE LIVING CHURCH, so an explanation is in order. There has been considerable publicity generated by the election of the Rev. Kevin Thew Forrester as Bishop of Northern Michigan [TLC, March 1]. In addition to the news articles, there has been an editorial, an Editor's Column, and letters to the editor about whether bishops and standing committees ought to consent to the bishop-elect's consecration.

Because of the number of responses we've received, we decided to step out of our usual routine and offer three articles on the same topic. Instead of the usual single Reader's Viewpoint article and an Editor's (or Guest) Column, this issue presents three separate articles on Northern Michigan. At issue is whether a person who is a practicing Christian can embrace elements of Buddhism and still be consecrated as a bishop.

We are thankful to all who have shared their opinions on this subject. We expect many more readers will offer their thoughts as the saga continues to unfold. We are pleased to present a forum in which people of faith can express themselves.

READER'S VIEWPOINT

READERS RESPOND to Northern Michigan Election

The Will of a Diocese

By Mark C. Engle

The election of Kevin Thew Forrester as Bishop of Northern Michigan has been greeted with a barrage of questions. It is time for us all to take a deep breath and sort things out.

Let's look at some facts.

The controversy over the bishop-elect has been framed as a case of competing loyalties — one to the Christian faith and another to Buddhism. Is this the case? The facts are clear. Bishop-elect Thew Forrester is a practicing Christian who uses a variety of prayer methods, one of which is rooted in Buddhism. Can a Christian practice Buddhist forms of meditation? Of course. Just as Christians can teach yoga, embrace literal interpretations of scripture, try transcendental meditation and participate in charismatic forms of worship without fear of excommunication. Is this not one of the hallmarks of our way of doing the faith?

Does use of scripture and liturgical texts at St. Paul's Church, Marquette, constitute an infringement of the canons or a response to a changing climate in which we practice our faith? We would be helped to recall how liturgical revision has happened in the past. I can clearly remember the widespread use of *The Anglican Missal*, the *St. Augustine Prayer Book*, and a variety of mimeographed hymn texts prior to the revisions of the 1928 BCP and the 1940 Hymnal. I well recall that later some of the innovations of these texts came into common use. In this case, the experimentation clearly serves to advance the gospel proclamation. The St. Paul's con-

gregation has been recognized nationally as an example of a growing congregation.

These are innovations in response to the gospel mandate, not wanton infringements of canon law.

There has been considerable controversy about the work of the search committee as it presented its candidate to the electing convention. Some have erroneously accused the bishop-elect as having chaired the search committee. The electing convention strongly endorsed the work of the search committee. These are devoted and competent folk, representing the spectrum of views in the church. Were there anomalies in the process, this would have been discussed widely within the diocese. In fact, there were no such discussions. The question we face is the same one we faced upon the New Hampshire's election of its bishop, "Shall a diocese be permitted to express its will?" Bishop-elect Thew Forrester's election is the fruit of a well-conceived discernment process, involving voices from around the church and spanning a period of nearly two years.

There is a serious question being raised by Northern Michigan's election. The Thew Forrester episcopate will be a cooperative work. A team has been called to do the work of episcopal oversight along with the new bishop. Is it possible for the episcopate to flourish in such a collaboration? Over the past two decades, Episcopalians in Northern Michigan have evolved such a model of ministry in its variety of congregations. These ministries have involved the discernment of teams and building mutual accountability. Team members have grown in their ability to do the work of

ministry on every level and in every order. That the episcopate now expresses a level of collaboration within and among dioceses might be, for some, a threat. For many, it is a sign of hope. We have yet to see how it will pan out. If Northern Michigan's track record is any indicator, this episcopal iteration will do a great service to the church. Among other things, it will serve to focus our attention on the richness of the Baptistal Covenant.

I think of this season in the church as a Gamaliel moment. You may recall from the fifth chapter of the Book of Acts, the disciples stood in the custody of the Sanhedrin. Gamaliel, a respected member of that ruling body, spoke up, saying, "Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God."

I agree with the THE LIVING CHURCH's editorial that this new form of episcopate will be "One to Watch Carefully." I do not agree that it poses a threat to our practice of the faith. Quite the opposite is true.

The Rev. Mark C. Engle is a retired priest who served as rector of St. Paul's Church, Marquette, Mich., for 19 years.

Operating with Integrity

By Carlson Gerdau

I must take exception to the coverage of the bishop-elect of Northern Michigan [TLC, March 22]. I admit to

(Continued on next page)

"Treat other people exactly as you would like to be treated by them"

READER'S VIEWPOINT

(Continued from previous page)

begin with what Reinhold Neibuhr called "an ideological prejudice." The Diocese of Northern Michigan is one of my two homes. I was ordained there in 1959, served there for 20 years at various times in nine of the congregations, and represented the diocese at five General Conventions and one Special Convention.

Since ceasing to serve Northern Michigan, I have kept up with it through regular visits and personal contacts and watched with interest as it has evolved, changed, and developed. I don't buy everything that goes on. For example, I don't think that the model of mutual ministry fits all. I think there is a place in the church for cardinal rectors. But I can attest that all is done with the utmost integrity.

Let me set the record straight on several insinuations and accusations in the magazine. First, the bishop-elect was not "for all intents and purposes, chair of the search committee." He was never part of the search committee, but at the request of the standing committee, he attended the first two meetings to train its members in team-building.

Granted the Rev. Kevin Thew Forrester was the only candidate presented by the committee, but the committee made great effort to find and contact other candidates. Yes, he has used liturgical experimentation. He has used gender-neutral language, and has used the New Zealand prayer book, but he is not the only person to do so in The Episcopal Church. In my background, I was a member of St. Mary the Virgin Church in New York City while in boarding school and college, and we did not know what the prayer book was. We had non-communicating Masses, and the strangest liturgical practices on Good Friday [i.e. "crawling" to kiss the cross] which are now part of the Good Friday liturgy in many places. Open experimentation is how change comes about. The fact that not everyone followed the rubrics of 1928 is how the 1979 prayer book came into being.

The accusation that there is something wrong because St. Paul's Church, Marquette, uses liberal Roman Catholic

documents borders on the absurd. Many of us have read and have been influenced by Hans Küng. Or how many are there like me who are partly formed by the writings of Thomas Merton, who started as a pre-Tridentine Catholic and moved to the extreme liberal side of the Roman Church? Are we under indictment by THE LIVING CHURCH?

The suggestion that the bishop-elect should not be confirmed because of the model of episcopacy in the diocese "could bring about an unsettling precedent" is dubious. The model is a concept that is based on the premise that a bishop cannot do everything or have all the talents necessary but needs a supportive community. To suggest that somehow what Northern Michigan is doing violates episcopacy forgets that episcopacy in the life of the church has been everything from the prince-bishop of the Middle Ages to a bishop in the Irish church who was under the abbot of the monastery.

Finally, to fault the bishop-elect because he practices Buddhist meditation is to not understand who he is. He has made it plain that he is an "absolute Christian" but that Buddhist practices have helped him to understand the suffering of the world.

Unlike TLC, I think the consecration of Kevin Thew Forrester should be confirmed by bishops and standing committees. His willingness to explore the wide dimensions of spirituality and Northern Michigan's willingness to explore new models of ministry are needed by the House of Bishops and the church at large.

The Rev. Canon Carlson Gerdau is the former canon to the Presiding Bishop.

The Buddhist Influence

By Federico Serra-Lima

One of the blessings of embarking on a new venture is that it usually creates a wave of criticism. I call it a bless-



Fr. Thew Forrester

ing because the combined voice of proponents and opponents can alert us to the woes and boons that might be looming on the horizon.

With the election of the Rev. Kevin Thew Forrester — a Christian-Buddhist — as Bishop of Northern Michigan, The Episcopal Church has embarked through uncharted waters on a journey toward an unknown destination. This much we know. As to the journey's end, we can only speculate.

The purpose of this essay is to gather pertinent data to help us in our speculations. I will try not to take sides on the issue. This approach follows the advice given by the late Harold O.J. Brown at an ecumenical gathering in 1995. In his lecture, the renowned professor said we tend to analyze things from the perspective of "this or that." His advice was to think instead in terms of "this and that." I have found his approach both irenic and practical.

In most people's minds, Christianity and Buddhism belong to worlds apart. The theism of the one and the atheism of the other are regarded as a cleavage beyond repair. However, we must keep in mind that while Christianity is a religion and not a philosophy, Buddhism is a religious philosophy or a philosophical religion. In Buddhism, the distinction between philosophy and religion is lost.

What Christianity and Buddhism mostly share is the ethical ground on which they stand. Jesus said, "Treat other people exactly as you would like to be treated by them — this is the essence of all true religion" [Matt. 7:12] (J. B. Phillips translation). The Buddha said, "Let no one deceive another, let no one anywhere despise another, let no one out of anger or resentment wish suffering on anyone at all ... So within yourself let grow a boundless love for all creatures" (Buddha's Discourse on Good Will). The words are different, but the shining truth is the same. Love and compassion are the guiding lights of both Christianity and Buddhism.

What about the question of God's

this is the essence of all true religion" [Matt. 7:12] (J.B. Phillips translation).

existence? Doesn't that bespeak a fundamental incompatibility, an insurmountable antagonism? Some years ago, I heard a journalist ask the Dalai Lama point blank: "Do you believe in God?" His reply was, "We do not believe in an external God." Coming to think of it, St. Ignatius Loyola does not believe in an external God either. The whole teaching of his Spiritual Exercises is based on "finding God in all things, and all things in God." Since God is to be found in all things, God is external to no thing. The Lord himself, in Jeremiah 23:24, declares, "Do not I fill heaven and earth (i.e., the entire universe)?" He who thinks that God is an external supreme being must do so at his own peril. We may speak of a personal God, but not of an external One.

Rather than incompatibility, there is affinity between Christianity and Buddhism. Thomas Merton, after having a long meeting with Zen Buddhist master D. T. Suzuki, wrote in his diary that the experience was like having a family conversation, the likes of which he had not had in quite some time.

The Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies, comprised of practicing Christians and practicing Buddhists, has been active for a number of years. The University of Hawaii Press has published about 28 volumes of its work.

Thomas Ryan, in his book, *Prayer of Heart and Body*, mentions that Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI) once was asked about the value that Zen Buddhism, transcendental meditation, and yoga might have for Christians. His response was published in *L'Osservatore Romano* in January 1990 under the heading, "A Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of Christian Meditation": "The majority of the great religions which have sought union with God in prayer have also pointed out ways to achieve it. Just as the 'Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions' (Vatican II's Decree on Non-Christians, No. 2), neither should these ways be rejected out of hand simply because they are not Christian. On the contrary, one can take from them what is useful as long

as the Christian conception of prayer, its logic and requirements are never obscured."

Robert Thurman, of Columbia University and member of the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies, writes that the Dalai Lama, when giving lectures about Buddhism, always tells those who are non-Buddhists not to convert to Buddhism. "Rather, he cautions, they should take whatever they learn and use anything that seems good to them to enhance their original tradition, thereby remaining integrated with their families, communities, and local customs, perhaps even enriching their own traditions." The present pope and the Dalai Lama concur that Christianity and Buddhism have valuable gifts to exchange.

Buddhism can prove a wise companion on the journey toward the unknown destination, and instrumental in reaching a safe harbor (provided

that the compass is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not some new man-made gospel). The wise companion, by simply being there, would allow us to offer that most excellent gift of *caritas*, without which nothing has value.

What must be avoided is reinventing the Church by syncretizing two distinct traditions at the expense of Christianity. We cannot afford to jettison the precious heritage of carefully crafted theological and liturgical treasures accumulated through the centuries — the enlightened work of a myriad Christian hearts and minds. God forbid!

The Rev. Federico Serra-Lima, SSC, is a retired priest of the Diocese of Albany. He lives in Old Chatham, N.Y.

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

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sinful Perspective

I find Daniel Muth's description of Bathsheba quite offensive in his article, "David Learns a Lesson" [TLC, March 29].

Regarding her behavior toward David, who voyeuristically spied on her in the bath, then discovered that she was married and had her brought to him anyway, and then had intercourse with her, he states, "It is not recorded whether she resists." He considers briefly whether or not she could resist the most powerful man in her universe, but then adds to the insult: "More likely, she is an ambitious woman with no objection to trading up husbands."

I am shocked that such non-biblical, eisegetical, misogynistic, and patriarchal sentiment would get past the editor. THE LIVING CHURCH perpetuates the worst myth about sexual violence: If the victim didn't resist enough, then it wasn't rape. But I fear the headline on the series confirms this flawed, sinful perspective: "The Murderer and the Harlot." Yes, David murders Bathsheba's husband to cover his offense, but there is nothing in the scripture to suggest that Bathsheba is a harlot. St. Matthew brought her dignity, and every survivor of sexual violence, by including her in the genealogy of Jesus. Sadly, TLC has insulted her again. She deserves better.

(The Rev.) Timothy B. Safford
Christ Church
Philadelphia, Pa.

Not the First

An article [TLC, March 22] stated that there had been, until recent times, no provisional bishops in The Episcopal Church since before the Civil War. I do not believe this is correct.

My grandfather, the Rt. Rev. Herman Page, retired Bishop of Michigan, was appointed provisional bishop of the Diocese of Northern Michigan in 1940 and served until his death in 1942. His job was to raise funds to replace those missing from the diocesan trust funds, and bring life to the various parishes and missions. His death came only a couple of months before the diocese was able to elect a regular full-time bishop to serve, and to continue to rebuild trust in the diocese.

(The Rev.) Herman Page
St. David's Church
Topeka Kan.

Steve Waring's article on provisional bishops states that, until recently, there were only two such, both before the Civil War. There is, however, a 20th-century example, and

it involves another controversial election in Northern Michigan. In 1930, the diocese, then called Marquette, elected Hayward Ablewhite in a contentious process that included fist fights on the floor of convention. Bishop Ablewhite was deposed in 1939 following a financial scandal, and Herman Page, the retired Bishop of Michigan, was appointed provisional bishop, serving as such from 1940 to 1942.

The other leading candidate in 1930 was the Rev. Clark Attridge, then rector in Houghton, Mich., and later rector of Incarnation, Detroit. He had been given a pectoral cross in advance by a parishioner who expected him to be elected. He kept it tucked away for 33 years, and gave it to Walter Klein at the time of his election as Bishop Coadjutor of Northern Indiana in 1963.

Incidentally, Bishop Herbert Donovan reports he had the title "provisional bishop" when he served Chicago in 1998-99, following Bishop Griswold's resignation to become P.B.

(The Rev.) Lawrence Crumb
Eugene, Ore.



DAVID LEARNS A LESSON

By Daniel Muth

God's people grow restive and wish to be like all the other nations. They have been without a king as they are supposed to be, having God alone as King, and have failed repeatedly and been restored repeatedly. But now, with Samuel aging and his sons unworthy, they chafe to be like the gentiles.

Although it is not God's will and although the king will make demands on them, taking their sons as soldiers and their daughters as concubines, God grants their request. They are given Saul, who fails to appreciate the limitations of his station vis-à-vis the different calling of Samuel and is stripped of the longevity and in short order, his life. David is made king and unites the people, and although he is unworthy to build the Lord God a temple because his hands are too bloodied, he is promised a son who will complete this great work. David brings peace to his kingdom, which means, of course, as it so often does in the fallen world, that faith is being carried on elsewhere for a day. Perhaps a man of action like David was not made for Israel. Perhaps he is simply weak. As he luxuriates in his kingdom, he finds his gaze drawn astray, and he

Still a Sin?

Last month the Presiding Bishop visited the convention of the Diocese of West Tennessee. One day she graciously presided over a two-hour Q-and-A session. She fielded many questions, and in my estimation some of the questions received non-answers. One such question I asked as follows:

I was raised in the Presbyterian Church, where I was taught that fornication is a sin. Fifty-seven years ago my wife and I were confirmed in an Episcopal Church that was teaching the same thing. My biblical concordance lists the word "fornication" 43 times, and each listing with a meaning of being sinful. My question is who and on whose authority determined that the church no longer consider fornication to be sinful? One point I failed to include is the fact that I believe one's sexual orientation is immaterial, but our Lord is concerned with what we do with our various orientations. Scripture speaks plainly about that. All I got from the P.B. was a non-answer. Perhaps a TLC reader can provide an answer.

*(The Rev.) John C. Sterling
Lakeland, Tenn.*

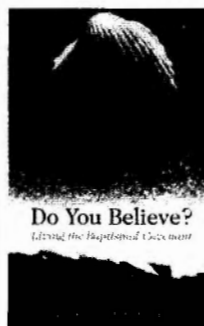
Misguided Clergy

"Nothing disturbs me more than when I see ministers, priests, and rabbis who are involved in interfaith dialogue, listening to imams say that Islam is a peaceful religion that has been hijacked by radicals. They cannot imagine that someone can look them straight in the eye and lie. They accept what they hear at face value and are deceived. In their ignorance, they support the spread of Islamic practices and culture in the West, and do so in the name of tolerance, understanding, and multiculturalism.

"In February 2008, the Archbishop of Canterbury said, 'The adoption of certain aspects of Sharia law in the United Kingdom seems unavoidable.'

"We now have the head of the Church of England himself calling for the advancement of Islam in Britain." — Brigitte Gabriel from her book, *They Must Be Stopped*.

*(The Rev.) Donald H. Langlois
Chandler, Ariz.*



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Philip Wainwright (St Peter's Pittsburgh, formerly of *The Episcopal Evangelical Journal*).

For more information or to register, please call Philip Wainwright at 412-884-5225. Rooms are available at the Seminary for those attending this event. Call Jim Palmer at 703-461-1854 to reserve a room.

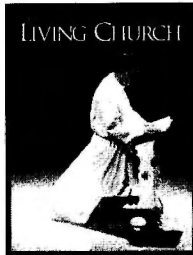
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Abortion Rights Group Affiliation Defended

The member of the national Executive Council who drafted and urged passage of a resolution to affiliate The Episcopal Church with the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC) has asked the diocesan council of Central Florida to nullify a resolution disassociating from the abortion rights organization.

In a letter sent March 16 to the Rt. Rev. John W. Howe, Bishop of Central Florida, John Vanderstar, of Arlington, Va., said he understood that Episcopalians hold varying political positions on the morality, legality, and necessity of abortion, and that "this is a sensitive subject for many people. But the board's harsh language with regard to RCRC is neither fair nor accurate. Moreover, the action of the council was squarely supported by positions

adopted by General Convention that date back some 40 years."

Accompanying Mr. Vanderstar's letter were several documents which he said provided a more balanced view of the subject "than is reflected in the quoted remarks of your diocesan board," and he urged Bishop Howe to share the information with the members of the diocesan council.

In his reply to Mr. Vanderstar, Bishop Howe said he had not initiated the board's resolution to disassociate from the RCRC, but that he fully supported it.

"I am, frankly, deeply embarrassed that the Executive Council adopted this affiliation in the first place," Bishop Howe said. He added that he would share the documents Mr. Vanderstar had included with his letter.

Four Nominees for South Dakota Bishop Coadjutor

The Diocese of South Dakota announced a slate of four candidates for the election of a bishop coadjutor.

The election is scheduled for May 9. Because the election falls within 120 days of the start of the General Convention, the bishop-elect will need to receive consents from a majority of diocesan deputations and bishops with jurisdiction.

The candidates are the Rev. Douglas Robert Dunn, rector, St. Luke's

Church and High Plains Regional Missioner, Denver, Colo; the Rev. John F. Floberg, canon missioner, Standing Rock Reservation, Bismarck, N.D.; the Rev. Peter A.R. Stebinger, rector, Christ Church, Bethany, Conn.; and the Rev. John T. Tarrant, rector, Trinity, Pierre, S.D.

The Rt. Rev. Creighton Robertson, Bishop of South Dakota since 1994, previously announced his intention to resign no later than Dec. 31, 2009.

Report in Blue Book Warns of Long-Term Decline

(Continued from page 10)

over this issue, 40 percent indicated that some people left, and 18 percent indicated that some people withheld funds," the committee report states.

The report states that among the most enlightening insights gained from the survey is the skewed age structure of The Episcopal Church. The report noted that The Episcopal Church has an average 19,000 more deaths per year than births, a figure which is comparable to the loss of an entire diocese every year.

"Despite these trends of decline, about 50 percent of 'cradle Episcopalians' are being retained. Detailed analysis of our survey data suggests

that The Episcopal Church does make up for some of its losses through 'transfers in' — although not nearly at the same rate as in the historic past," the report notes.

The ongoing tension and loss of membership has caused what the report describes as an "alarming" increase in the number of congregations reporting financial difficulty. In 2005, 44 percent of congregations reported experiencing some degree of financial difficulty. By 2008 the figure had increased to 68 percent. Only one domestic diocese, South Carolina, reported growth in active members and communicants in good standing between 2003 and 2007.



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Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, (right) participates in an interfaith dialogue in Omaha March 27. Also participating are: Rabbi Peter Knobel of Beth Emet Synagogue, Evanston, Ill.; Ingrid Mattson, president of the Islamic Society of North America, and Mark Pel, moderator.

Nebraska Initiative Engages Three Faiths

More than 1,100 persons from three different faiths attended a dinner, worship service, and conversation on peace in Omaha, Neb., on March 27.

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori was one of the panel discussion members for the event, which was titled "Dinner in Abraham's Tent: Conversations on Peace." The event, which was also broadcast via internet, included three different worship services held in succession: Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer, Shabbat, which is the Jewish Sabbath worship service, and Salat al Asr, Muslim prayers of the afternoon.

"The moderated conversation among three brilliant faith leaders was enlightening and filled with relevant

insights," said Bob Freeman, president of the Tri-Faith Initiative. "Attendees at the worship service had the unique opportunity to experience in 55 minutes all three faiths' separate approaches to worship God — and the similarities were striking to many people. In all, this was a very positive step on our path of fostering understanding and respect among Jews, Christians and Muslims."

The event is one aspect of a more ambitious plan to construct three houses of worship on a single 30-acre campus which would also include an interfaith center. Funds already have been pledged for purchase of land, according to Nancy Kirk, executive director of the Tri Faith Initiative.

Quincy Diocese Asks Judge to Clarify Rights to Funds

The Diocese of Quincy has asked the circuit court of Illinois in Quincy to issue a declaratory judgment, clarifying the rights of the diocese to hold and manage its endowment funds now that it is no longer part of The Episcopal Church.


"We hoped from the beginning to avoid any legal action," said the Rev. John Spencer, president of Quincy's standing committee. "We want people to understand this is not a typical 'law suit.' We're not trying to take property away from anyone. We're simply trying to protect the property of our diocese and local churches which we believe legally — and morally — belong to the people of those churches, and to our historic diocese that has existed since 1877."

The petition was filed in March after a series of legal actions by the leadership of The Episcopal Church that began soon after the annual synod voted in November to leave The Epis-

copal Church. In January, lawyers for The Episcopal Church successfully convinced the diocese's investment bank to freeze its assets. In February, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori wrote to members of the Quincy standing committee to inform them that she no longer recognized them as officers. Bishop Jefferts Schori was scheduled to convene a special reorganizing synod in Peoria on April 4.

"It was clear that a lawsuit was heading our way," Fr. Spencer said. "From suits they have filed elsewhere, we know Episcopal Church leaders will start by trying to seize our funds and eventually try to take our churches."

Relying largely on its "Dennis Canon," The Episcopal Church maintains that individuals are free to join or leave the church at will, but congregations and dioceses are bound in perpetuity to the denomination.


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A letter of application, a full curriculum vitae, and at least three letters of reference should be sent directly to: **The Rev. Dr. William S. Stafford, Dean, The School of Theology, University of the South, 335 Tennessee Ave., Sewanee, TN 37383-0001.** The position will remain open until it is filled, but **applications received by May 1, 2009, will be assured of full consideration.**

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PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Lynn Orville** is priest-in-charge of St. Clement's, 103 Clinton St., Greenville, PA 16125.

The Rev. **Siobhan Patterson** is rector of Christ Church, 824 Fairmont Ave., Fairmont, WV 26554-5138.

The Rev. **Michele Quinn-Miscal** is rector of St. Joseph's, 11202 W Jewell Ave., Lakewood, CO 80232-6140.

The Rev. **Glenna Reed** is rector of St. Luke's, Baltimore, and vicar of Holy Nativity, Baltimore, MD; add: PO Box 20596, Baltimore, MD 21223-0596.

The Very Rev. **Joy Rogers** is dean of St. James' Cathedral, 65 E Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611-3728.

The Rev. **Bonnie Spencer** is rector of St. Paul's, 1208 W Elizabeth St., Fort Collins, CO 80521-4509.

The Rev. **Robert D. Taliaferro** is rector of St. Peter's, PO Box 3751, Amarillo, TX 79116-3751.

The Rev. **Dina van Klaveren** is priest-in-charge of St. Andrew's, PO Box 52, Glenwood, MD 21738-0052.

Ordinations

Deacons

Arkansas — **John Drymon**, deacon-in-charge, St. Paul's, PO Box 2255, Batesville, AR 72503-2255; **Allan McCaslin**, Holy Cross, 209 Park Dr., West Memphis, AR 72301-3055; **Jim McDonald**, St. Andrew's, 511 Coley Dr., Mountain Home, AR 72653; **Jesse Perkins**, St. Mark's, 531 W College Ave., Jonesboro, AR 72401-4984.

Texas — **Phyllis Colleen Hartman**, **Tracie G. Middleton**, **Pat R. Ritchie**, **JoAnn Tomberlin**, **Barbara A. Van Black**.

Western North Carolina — **Barbara Burns**, **Melissa Eggers**, **Marilyn Walters**.

Deaths

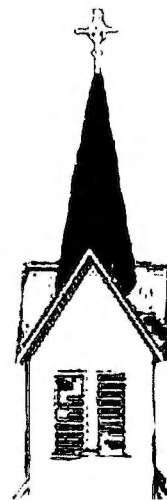
The Rev. **William Senter III**, priest of the Diocese of Mississippi, died Feb. 11 in Jackson, MS, of cancer. He was 73.

Fr. Senter was a native of Chattanooga, TN. He was a graduate of the University of the South and Bexley Hall Divinity School. Following his ordination to the diaconate in 1961 and to the priesthood in 1962, he was priest-in-charge of St. Columba's, Bristol, TN, 1962-68; priest-in-charge of Epiphany, Lebanon, TN, 1968-84; rector of Grace, Canton, MS, 1984-94; and vicar of Good Shepherd, Terry, MS, 1994-2000. He served several congregations in recent years. He was active in youth ministry in the Diocese of Tennessee and in leadership training for Province 4. Fr. Senter is survived by his wife, Linda; a daughter, Lydia; a son, Matt; and a grandson.

Next week...

The Blue Book

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Sun Eu 8

MOJAVE, CA

HOPE CHURCH K and Inyo Streets (909) 989-3317
The Rev. William R. Hampton, STS
Sun Eu 10

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

CHURCH DIRECTORY KEY

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

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