

August 29, 2010

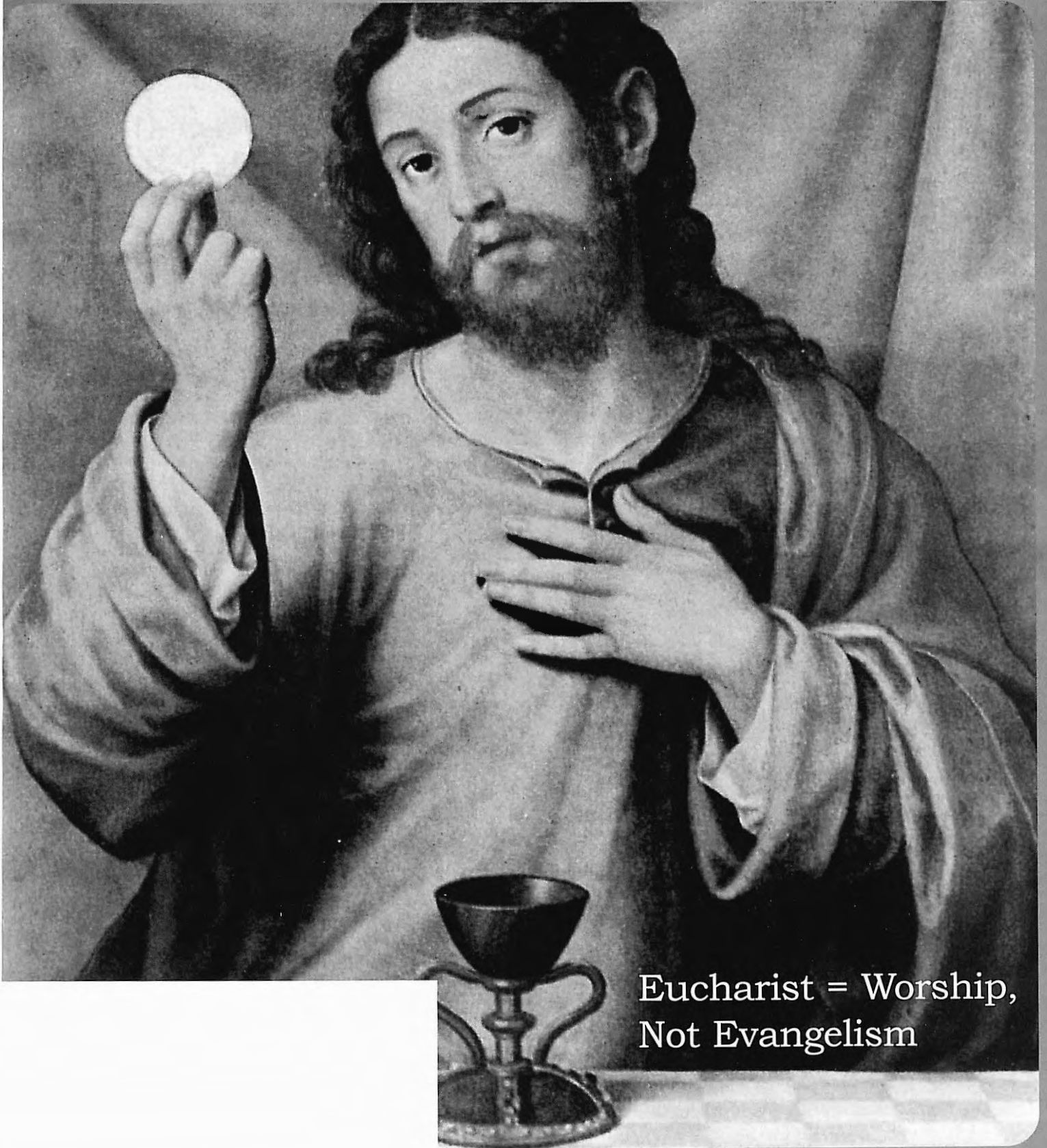
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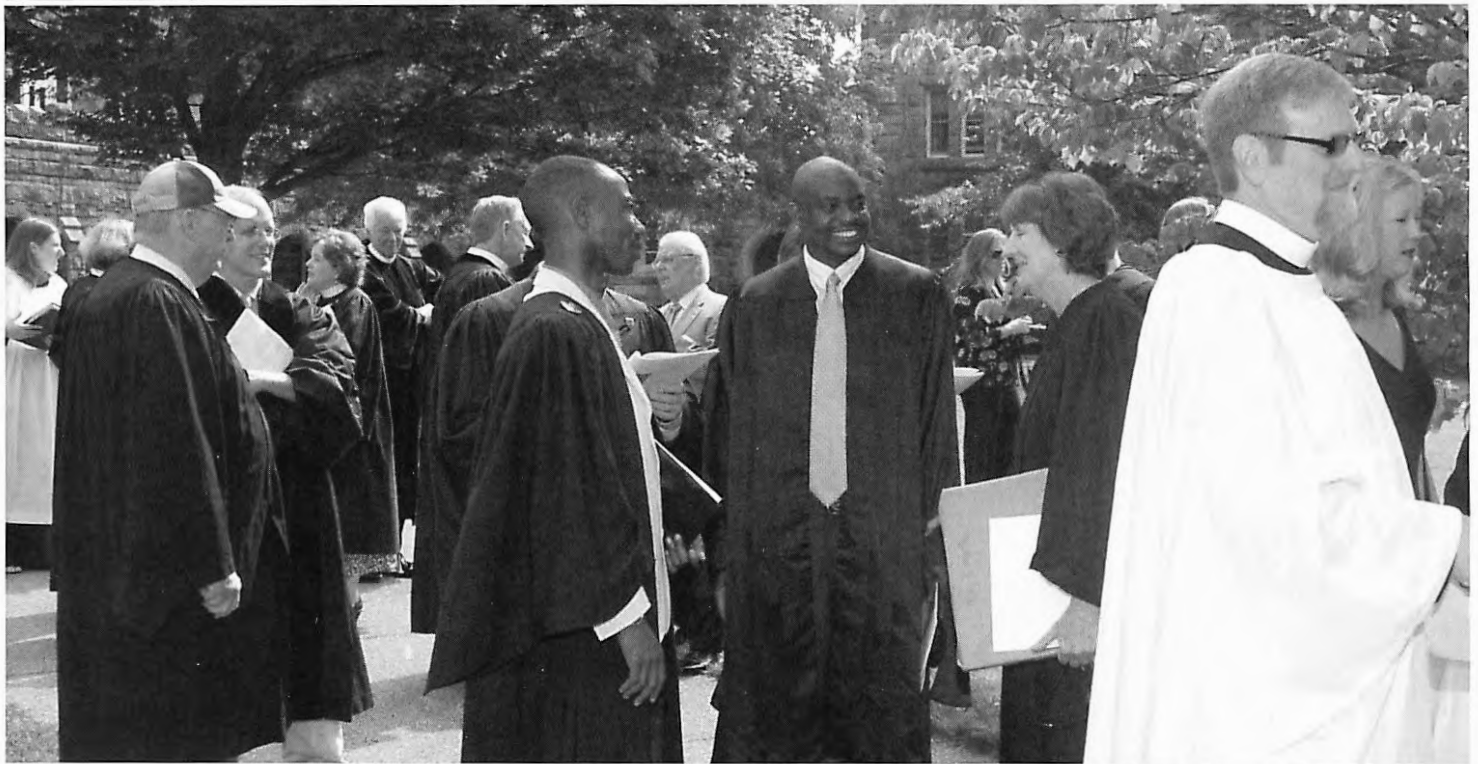
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on the cover

Detail from "The Last Supper,"  
by Juan de Juanes, oil, 1560s

# THE LIVING CHURCH

this week

| August 29, 2010



6

## news

4 Bp. Bennison Trusted the Canons

## student essay

6 Gratitude in Calvin's *Institutes*

BY LANE SCRUGGS

## catholic voices

8 Resisting the ACC's Growing Power

BY MARK MCCALL

## guest column

10 Eucharist = Worship, Not Evangelism

BY TONY CLAVIER

## other departments

13 People & Places

14 Sunday's Readings



8

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## Bp. Bennison Trusted the Canons

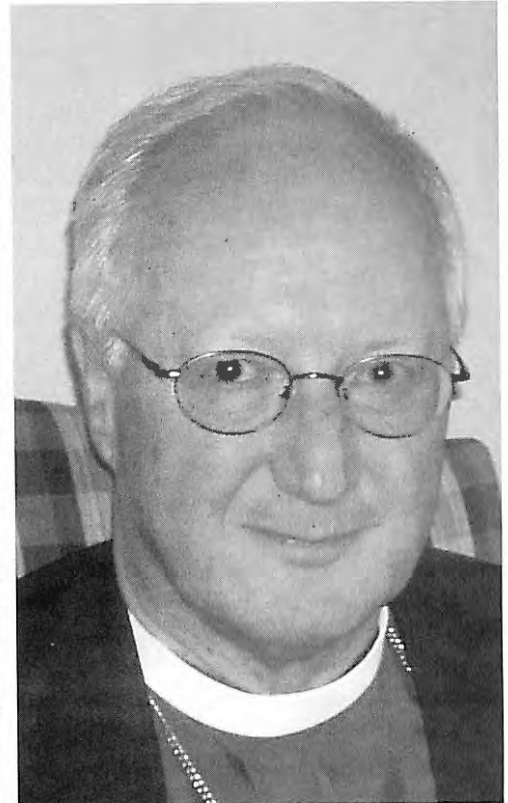
Through three years of a pastoral inhibition, pretrial discovery, court testimony, a guilty verdict and a sentence of deposition, the Rt. Rev. Charles E. Bennison, Jr., never lost faith that church canons would prevail.

On the evening of Aug. 4, Bennison's attorney, James A.A. Pabarue of Philadelphia, received word that church law had indeed prevailed in favor of his client. The Court of Review for the Trial of a Bishop had reversed a trial court's verdict that Bishop Bennison, Bishop of Pennsylvania since 1998, should be punished more than 30 years later for what the trial court ruled was conduct unbecoming a member of the clergy.

The case involved charges that Bennison, while rector of St. Mark's Church in Upland, Calif., had failed to protect a teenage girl from sexual abuse by Bennison's younger brother, John. As a first-time rector in the mid-1970s, Charles Bennison hired his brother to lead the parish's youth group while he completed studies at Claremont School of Theology.

In a lively 39-page ruling, dated July 28, the review court agreed with the trial court that Charles Bennison was guilty — while rector of the parish — of conduct unbecoming a member of the clergy. But the court also upheld a statute of limitations that can only be disregarded if a member of the clergy is directly responsible for sexual abuse, rather than "once removed" from such sexual abuse.

"The sexual abuse exception to the statute of limitations, if improperly applied, can wrongfully label a Respondent a sexual abuser," eight bishops of the court wrote in their unanimous ruling. A ninth member of



The Rt. Rev. Charles E. Bennison

the court, the Rt. Rev. Wayne P. Wright, Bishop of Delaware, recused himself for personal reasons.

"Title IV courts must guard against allowing that exception to be used without proof of actual sexual abuse," the ruling added. "This is especially true under circumstances where the exception is invoked not so much to deal with sexual abuse but, rather, as an effort to use events in the distant past when the Respondent was a priest to remove a bishop during current times of strife within the diocese.

To allow Title IV and the sexual abuse exception to the statute of limitations to be used in this manner diminishes the monumental efforts of the Church to address, punish and remove incidents of actual clergy sexual abuse."

Pabarue said in a conference call Aug. 5 that he was disappointed the review court considered his client guilty of conduct unbecoming a member of the clergy, but he was thankful for its ultimate decision.

Bishop Bennison joined his attorney in discussing the case.

"I'm very gratified by the decision of the court. I've always believed that the charges were without merit," he said.

Bennison said Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori told him four times that his troubles would go away if he would resign as Bishop of Pennsylvania.

"This has been a kind of death experience for me," Bennison said. "I had to be willing to be deposed."

Neva Rae Fox, the Episcopal Church's public affairs officer, said Thursday that the Presiding Bishop has not commented on any developments in Bennison's three-year legal battle and is unlikely to begin commenting now.

"I think I have shared in Christ's crucifixion," Bennison said. "I don't know what it will mean to walk in newness of life."

This much is clear: Bennison intends to return to his work as Bishop of Pennsylvania on Aug. 16. Indeed, Bennison said he has heard from the Presiding Bishop's office that his inhibition is lifted.

Bennison said he could return to the diocese immediately, if he chose, but he is on a family break in Michigan and trusts the diocese's standing committee and the work of the Rt. Rev. Rodney R. Michel, who has been serving as assisting bishop during Bennison's absence.

"I think they've done a great job. I think Bishop Michel's done a great job," he said. "We all pray for reconciliation and healing."

The standing committee, which has often been at odds with Bishop Bennison, issued a brief statement Aug. 5

in response to the court's decision.

"This evening, the Standing Committee will be meeting with the executive leadership of Diocesan Council," the statement said in part. "We will be communicating with you after our meeting. Please keep Bishop Bennison and the diocese in your prayers and thoughts."

*Douglas LeBlanc*

## Springfield Nominates Three

A nominating synod for the Diocese of Springfield (Ill.) has winnowed the slate to three nominees as the diocese prepares to elect its 11th bishop. The electing convention will convene Sept. 18.

The synod, meeting Aug. 7 and choosing among 14 people, selected three nominees:

- The Rev. Matthew A. Gunter, 52, rector, St. Barnabas, Glen Ellyn, Ill.
- The Rev. Daniel H. Martins, 58, rector, St. Anne's, Warsaw, Ind.
- The Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson, 45, canon to the ordinary, Diocese of Louisiana.

Stevenson serves on The Living Church Foundation. Gunter and Martins both have written for TLC this year, and have contributed regularly to Covenant, a weblog published by the foundation.

The synod devoted eight ballots to choosing the three nominees. The synod was expected to elect a fourth nominee as well, but neither of the two frontrunners who remained — the Ven. Shawn W. Denney, 59, Archdeacon of Springfield and vicar, St. Luke's, Springfield, and the Very Rev. Beth J. Fain, 58, rector, St. Mary's, Cypress, Texas — rallied a majority among both clergy and laity.

The synod chose Stevenson on the second ballot. Both Gunter and Martins were nominated on the third bal-

lot. After the eighth ballot, the synod voted to suspend its rules of order, nominated only three people, and adjourned.

## Veteran Deputy Charles Crump Dies at 96

Charles M. Crump, former chancellor of the Diocese of West Tennessee and deputy to 17 General Conventions, died Aug. 8 at home in Memphis, Tenn. He was 96.



He retired from a 71-year career in law on his 95th birthday in October 2008. He resigned as the diocese's chancellor at the same time, and declined to run for election to the 76th General Convention.

He was a first-time deputy to the 59th General Convention, which met in October 1958 in Miami Beach, Fla. Troubled that deputies did not receive written copies of resolutions, a daily agenda, or reports of the previous day's decisions, the new deputy recommended publishing that information. The next General Convention began distributing those written reports.

Crump and other longtime deputies were called "oaks" of the House of Deputies in recent years.

When Church of the Holy Communion, Memphis, began meeting as a mission of Calvary Church in 1939, Crump concluded his Saturday-night dates with Diana Wallace by stopping by the chapel to fire up furnaces before Sunday's services. Charles and Diana Crump were married at Holy Communion in 1940.

Crump helped select the church's location on Walnut Grove Road, where it opened in 1950. Holy Comforter now has more than 1,300 baptized members.

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## Gratitude in Calvin's *Institutes*

By Lane Scruggs

"When we are certain that the earthly life we live is a gift of God's kindness, as we are beholden to him for it we ought to remember it and be thankful" (John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* [III.IX.3]). This eloquent benediction from Calvin's multi-volume master work reflects the place of gratitude within his theological framework.

While some have maligned Calvin and his subsequent Reformed Protestant movement as guilt-mongers, T. Hartley Hall writes: "The dynamic that drives Reformed piety is not guilt but gratitude." This holds true within the text of the *Institutes*. Hall's statement does not preclude any concept within Reformed theology of falling short of glory or guilt within the Christian life; however, it contends that these realities are insufficient motivators for appropriate Christian discipleship.

In this essay, I will unpack the assertion that Reformed piety is roused by a profound acknowledgement of the triune God's gracious action already accomplished, paying particular attention to the contradiction between gratitude

and pride, and noting the implications for creation, community, and calling. The evidence for this thesis will be pared to a manageable cross-section from Book III of the *Institutes*, chapters VI, VII, IX, and X.

### The Natural State of Man

Calvin confirms explicitly that the Christian life is to be imbued with righteousness, despite the reality that humankind is "not at all inclined by nature" to love this righteousness (III.VI.2). He later establishes that our "degenerated" condition is not original to creation, but a result of humanity's own doing (III.VI.3). Third, rather than exhorting his listeners to try harder, strain further, and overcome the degenerate nature of humanity with acts of righteousness, Calvin indicates how far humanity is from true holiness by citing Leviticus 19:2: "You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy."

When Calvin recites this verse, however, he makes a slight but pertinent alteration: "[W]e must be *made* holy because our God is holy" (III.VI.2; emphasis added). In one small word, Calvin quashes any fantasy claiming humankind has either an inclination or ability to gain right

standing with God simply by doing better. Holiness is the bond of union between humanity and God, a bond that is thoroughly unachievable by relying on human virtue alone (III.VI.2). Despite this depravity — a word used generously within the Reformed tradition — of humankind’s natural state, Calvin alludes to a greater reality that has broken into the economy of salvation: the possibility of genuine human holiness, by God’s grace.

### The Grace of the Triune God

Calvinism is often lambasted for a supposed unhealthy dwelling on depravity, but Calvin spends only as much time as needed outlining the separation between the holiness of God and the lowly state of humanity, in order to set the stage for the good news of Jesus Christ. By section 3 of chapter VI, Calvin proclaims: “Scripture shows that God the Father, as he has reconciled us to himself in his Christ [cf. 2 Cor. 5:18], has in him stamped for us the likeness [cf. Heb. 1:3] to which he would have us conform” (III.VI.3). At first pass, this statement may seem to suggest that it is not out of a grateful response that Christian piety flows, but rather in order to conform or match up to the likeness of the image of Christ stamped within us. This interpretation is perhaps bolstered by Calvin’s suggestion that Christ “has been set before us as an example, whose pattern we *ought* to express in our life” (III.VI.3; emphasis added). Is the motivation for pious Christian discipleship rooted in an *ought* to mentality, compounded by the unattainable image of the perfect human being within us? For Calvin in the *Institutes*, this could not be further from the truth.

The basis for disqualifying this interpretation of Calvin’s reasoning is found in the conclusion of the very same section. Here, Calvin saturates the text with word pictures, attempting to communicate the true motivation for Christian action. This motivation is firmly planted in a grateful response to what has already been done through the work of the Trinity in the economy of salvation. Calvin appeals to the self-revelation of the Father, the cleansing work of the Son and his heavenly ascension, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and ultimately the changed reality that proclaims our souls and bodies as destined for heaven (III.VI.3).

Thus, the pious Christian life is not one of guilt, striving to measure up, but one of gratitude for the particular actions already accomplished by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In this light, it is not improper or contradictory for Calvin to announce that Christians *ought* to conform to the image of Christ within them, the impetus for piety being a humble gratitude. This response to God’s effective action,

Calvin concludes, is what is truly unique to Christian piety as opposed to the type of virtue preached by the philosophers (III.VI.3).

### The Opposition of Self-Love

Calvin’s most frequent line of reasoning that upholds gratitude as the dynamic for Christian devotion is his refusal of pride at any point within the Christian life. If Calvin’s ethic were driven by guilt, claiming that all humanity is evil and ought to do better in order to match up to the perfect example of Christ, then there would remain space for self-congratulation when steps, however small, are made in piety. But this thought is absent from this section of the *Institutes*, and moreover expressly spoken against.

When speaking about individual human cravings being supplanted by God’s will, Calvin claims: “When it has once taken possession of their hearts, it leaves no place at all, first either to pride, or arrogance, or ostentation: then either to avarice, or desire, or lasciviousness, or effeminacy, or to other evils that our self-love spawns [cf. 2 Tim.

3:2-5]” (III.VII.2). Later in the same section, Calvin chides those who “court the popular breeze” and who have “swollen souls,” citing Matthew 6:2, 5 and 16, affirming that “they have received their reward in this world” (III.VII.2). For Calvin, gratitude is not simply thankfulness for the work of God in Christ; it is also an altering of one’s trajectory, a rejection of pride, human stubbornness, and self-direction. Later in chapter X, Calvin gives a simple but practical example of the effects that ungrateful self-love produces: “Where is our gratefulness toward God for our clothing if in the sumptuousness of our apparel we both admire ourselves and despise others?” (III.X.3).

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### The Totality of Gratitude

To this point I have established that book III of Calvin’s *Institutes* admonishes the reader to recognize the expansive gap between God and human holiness, the evocation of gratefulness founded in the action of the triune God, and the rejection of pride as the antithesis of gratefulness. To conclude the discussion at this point would be sufficient, but not comprehensive. There are three other themes that Calvin uses, though less prevalently, that exhibit the pervasiveness of gratitude within his ethical framework: creation, community, and calling.

The *Institutes* is saturated with a conviction of the goodness of all creation, however marred by human sin, and the

(Continued on page 12)



Chantelle and Lane Scroggs

# Resisting the ACC's GROWING Power

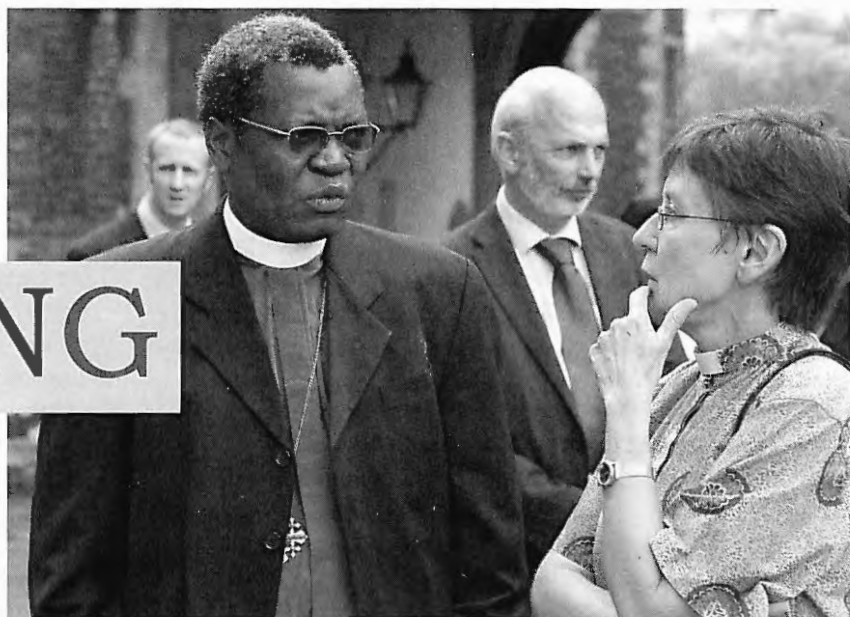
By Mark McCall

Last month the Anglican Consultative Council began operating under a new constitution. One of the four “instruments of Communion,” the ACC was created by the 1968 Lambeth Conference as an advisory council composed of lay, clerical and episcopal representatives of the churches of the Anglican Communion. The four instruments — the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates’ Meeting, and the ACC — have distinct but complementary functions in the life of the Communion.

The ACC usually meets every three years and has consisted of approximately 70 members, almost all of whom are directly appointed by the Communion’s 38 member churches. The membership criteria favor lay participation, and at the last meeting of the ACC the laity formed the largest group. To assure wider representation there are “term limits” restricting members to three meetings. The ACC thus serves as a complement to, but not a replacement for, the other instruments that emphasize the central role of bishops in a Communion that recognizes the historic episcopate as an essential element.

In the 1970s the ACC authorized its standing committee to form a charitable trust in the United Kingdom to manage its U.K. assets “on behalf of” the ACC. The standing committee members became the trustees of this trust. After the Primates’ Meeting was created as the fourth instrument and established its own standing committee, it became the practice of the two standing committees to meet together to help coordinate the two instruments. These joint meetings gave rise to the name “Joint Standing Committee,” but in fact they remained two separate committees and the primates were not trustees for purposes of the U.K. trust. Those matters continued to be addressed by the ACC committee alone.

As the Communion has struggled to cope with the



The Rt. Rev. James Tengatenga and the Rev. Canon Janet Trisk chat during the standing committee’s meeting in July. Anglican Archives photo

crises of the last two decades, various Communion commissions have recommended reform of the ACC and its standing committee. In addition, changes in U.K. law have resulted in legal advice to revise the legal structure of the U.K. charity. The result of these considerations was the recent incorporation of the ACC itself as an English company with the Articles of Association of that company becoming the ACC’s new constitution.

One noteworthy aspect of this process is that the new constitution was never disclosed for public review and comment although it was several years in development. Even those making inquiries were told it could not be disclosed while the ACC was consulting with the U.K. charity commission. It was only on July 12, when the certificate of incorporation of the new English company was issued, that the new constitution was made public, and even then disclosure was by the Registrar of Companies for England and Wales, not by the ACC. The ACC finally published the new constitution on its website on July 24.

The Anglican Communion Institute, Inc., an independent think tank, has published a detailed analysis of the new constitution that raises five concerns (<http://bit.ly/ACCFuture>). First, ACI notes, the new constitution has changed the legal structure of the ACC from an international unincorporated association not tied to U.K. law to an English company governed by U.K. and EU law like any other English company. It is incongruous that, at the same time the Church of England was itself raising concerns about the effects of new U.K. and EU equalities legislation on religious liberty, steps were being taken to incorporate the ACC under U.K. law and possibly subject one of the Communion’s instruments to those same regulations. Significantly, there is a



provision in the new ACC constitution that recognizes the possibility that standing committee members may have civil partners.

ACI emphasized that it did not question the legal advice that the appropriate legal structure for the entity responsible for managing the Communion's U.K. assets is a company limited by guarantee, but concluded that "we are not at all persuaded, however, that this legal entity should be one of the Communion instruments itself and that the fiduciaries charged with overseeing these charitable activities should be the same as those comprising one of the bodies responsible for faith and order in the Communion." ACI noted in particular the role of the Communion's primates, who bear special responsibility for "doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters that have Communion-wide implications."

ACI's second concern with the new ACC structure is that it reverses the traditional relationship between the full ACC council and its standing committee. Under the old ACC constitution, the powers of the standing committee were derivative of those of the full council. The standing committee had the power to act for the council between meetings of the full council and to execute matters referred to it by the council, but the standing committee's legal role was derivative of (and lesser than) the full council. Under the new constitution, however, it is the standing committee that has primary management authority and it is the full council that has a lesser and secondary role.

Put simply, the English company that now constitutes the ACC is composed legally of the members of the standing committee, not the full council. Not only are the standing committee members the full membership of the company, they are also the company's directors, giving the standing committee the entire legal power to manage the company. The Joint Standing Committee has been abolished, moreover, with the primate members becoming part of the ACC standing committee and subject to the ACC constitution and the fiduciary duties to the ACC that entails.

Nor is this merely a matter of legal formalities. The powers of the standing committee are now broader than those of the full council, now called the "Plenary Sessions," which are said to be "in addition to" the meetings of the standing committee, which are the only meetings of the company's members recognized by English company law. For example, the authority of the full council is now limited to matters dealing with the unity of the Communion, while the standing committee's authority is broader and not subject to this limitation. The standing committee is also given the power to enact rules regulating the plenary sessions, including regulating the elections of standing committee members. It is not clear whether the full council could overturn these rules even if it voted overwhelm-

ingly to do so. The wording of the new constitution suggests not.

The third concern is that the new ACC constitution infringes on the authority of the other instruments of Communion, which traditionally have been independent of the ACC. The new constitution includes a definition of the Primates' Meeting that defines that instrument by reference to the ACC membership schedule. This is a marked departure both in theory and practice from the historic understanding of the Primates' Meeting since the Archbishop of Canterbury has exercised discretion in deciding which primates to "gather" for this meeting and has not generally followed the ACC schedule in doing so.

The new ACC constitution also attempts to impose diversity criteria on the primates in selecting the primates' standing committee. They are to "have regard to" diversity between regions and sexes in appointing their members. The new constitution also infringes on the traditional prerogative of the Archbishop of Canterbury to appoint members of Anglican commissions by giving the ACC authority to establish these commissions. It is significant that at last December's meeting of the ACC's standing committee it considered measures to regulate the governance of the Lambeth Conference and the frequency of Primates' Meetings.

The fourth concern is that the new constitution reduces the role of the member churches in the ACC. In addition to redefining the ACC for legal purposes so that the members appointed directly by the member churches are no longer part of the legal entity, the new constitution also eliminates the requirement that amendments to the constitution be ratified by the member churches.

The last concern raised by ACI is that the new constitution appears not to be consistent in important respects with the new Anglican Communion Covenant, completed only last December. The Covenant not only reflects the traditional understanding of the ACC as the body composed of the members directly appointed by member churches; it also defines a Communion that recognizes "the central role of bishops as guardians and teachers of faith," that has four coequal instruments retaining their historic independence and control of their own memberships, and that is not subject to a central executive authority like that into which the ACC standing committee is evolving.

In light of these concerns, ACI asks the Communion to resist these innovations in the ACC constitution and to follow instead the vision for the Communion's future embodied in the Anglican Communion Covenant.

*Mark McCall is a member of the Anglican Communion Institute's advisory committee. He lives and worships in the Diocese of Albany.*



Eucharist = Worship,

# Not Evangelism

By Tony Clavier

How do we draw new people into church? The evangelical tradition in America, at least since the days of the great revivals of the 18th and 19th centuries, considered worship the central focus of church growth. Even when this involved reaching beyond the church walls, using tents or hired stadiums, the format centered on a form of loose liturgy involving hymn-singing, prayer, and an evangelistic message or sermon. Such a pattern influenced liturgical churches with the basic assumption that worship constituted the essential attraction.

Anglicans valued the compelling attraction of liturgy well done, accompanied by ritual and liturgical music. Catholic Anglicans sometimes added services conducted by missionaries drawn from religious orders such as the Franciscans or, in England, the Mirfield Fathers. I have a copy of *The Mirfield Mission Hymn Book* full of songs to catchy tunes, intended to supplement sermons and teaching about the sacraments, primarily the Eucharist and Penance.

Anglicans assumed that the target audience encompassed the lapsed, the unchurched, and those dissatisfied with nonliturgical traditions. The Episcopal Church assumed a special role in the marketplace of American free-enterprise religion, and was proud to replenish its clergy and laity ranks with a constant stream of converts. The inquirers' class became a normal feature of church life, organized to prepare new people for baptism, confirmation, or reception, and as a means to prepare cradle Episcopalians for confirmation, a rite which provided bishops their usual and immediate contact with the laity.

Much of the thinking about liturgical renewal in the 1970s centered on the accessibility of liturgy and lay involvement in an attractive package. The new rites moved from the older emphasis on sin and forgiveness, and the mystery of worship, to a stress on inclusive communitarianism, and an imminent Deity, all compassionate and open.

Few questioned whether worship, particularly Eucharistic worship, formed a primarily evangelistic focus. Little hard theology informed the idea of worship as evangelism. Most contemporary church growth programs rely on the concept that attractive worship is at the center of parish revival, and train clergy and laity to assist those drawn through the red doors to feel

accepted and comfortable in worship. Indeed the movement to admit the unbaptized to Holy Communion is a manifestation of such thinking.

The Catechism adopted for The Book of Common Prayer (1979) was intended to be the pattern and content of lay formation. It continues to hold valuable possibilities for such a purpose. Clergy should be capable of teaching its contents without resorting to canned courses often deficient in Christian orthodoxy.

Faced with an increasingly secular and scripturally uninformed population, the church is challenged to reform its evangelical method. The first step should be recognizing that treating the Eucharist as an evangelical tool is theologically erroneous. The eucharistic offering is the work of the people of God, in union with the whole Church militant and triumphant.

The early Church was right to exclude catechumens from the Great Offering of the Sacrifice once offered and continually recapitulated. A restored emphasis on sin, repentance, and forgiveness for the initiate must accompany our rescuing the Eucharist and its restoration as the liturgy of the Church.

The task of conversion, of presenting the faith to the wider community, will involve developing means to enter the secular world in its context rather than attempting to draw people into church buildings. The focus will involve using every contemporary technique available, especially the internet, because more and more people absorb information visually.

Both clergy and laity must be trained to present the cardinal teachings of the faith in a winsome manner, and to create community as an adjunct to teaching. It is in such a context that accessible language and popular music are most needed, whereas the language of worship may reflect theological precision and a special vocabulary. From sport to computer science, initiates use a special vocabulary. Worship is not exempt, and indeed God-centered offerings require a vocabulary which includes awe and mystery.

A recovery of the separate roles of worship and outreach, and a return to catechetical teaching, will do much to restore to the church its orthodox integrity. It is therefore particularly vital for those called to restore and revive Anglicanism in the West.

*The Rev. Tony Clavier (afmclavier.wordpress.com) is rector of St. Paul's Church, La Porte, Ind.*

(Continued from page 7)

appropriate human response of thanksgiving. In chapter IX Calvin expresses this: "When we are certain that the earthly life we live is a gift of God's kindness, as we are beholden to him for it we ought to remember it and be thankful" (III.IX.3). Even when creation is not functioning as intended, Christian piety is still formed within a place of grace and gratitude. "Indeed," concludes Calvin, "this life, however crammed with infinite miseries it may be, is still rightly to be counted among those blessings of God which are not to be spurned" (III.IX.3).

The relationship between community and gratitude is implied within the text. If one does not love one's neighbour, how can Christian piety be a reality, no matter what the driving dynamic is? Calvin writes: "We are the stewards of everything God has conferred on us by which we are able to help our neighbor" (III.VII.5). If Christian piety is driven by gratitude, then it is first and foremost a

gratitude for what God has done and promised. There is also a secondary gratitude, however, for all that is bestowed within the community. Thus, faithful gratitude to God includes gratitude for one's community — called by Calvin "the common advantage" (III.VII.5).

Lastly, within this section of the *Institutes*, Calvin introduces the topic of calling and abilities. This concept is related to gratuitous living because it reveals the extent of God's gracious gifts for humanity's good, for which a particular human response is appropriate. As Calvin writes:

we are instructed to remember that those talents which God has bestowed upon us are not our own goods but the free gifts of God; and any persons who become proud of them show their ungratefulness. "Who causes you to excel?" Paul asks. "If you have received all things, why do you boast as if they

were not given to you?" [1 Cor. 4:7]" (III.VII.4).

And later in the chapter, Calvin reiterates: "It remains for us not greedily to strive after riches and honors ... but for us always to look to the Lord, so that by his guidance we may be led to whatever lot he has provided us" (III.VII.9). All human actions should be a grateful response to God, who provisionally guides and ordains human destiny.

As Calvin himself concludes: "he who rests solely upon the blessing of God ... will give God the credit as its author" (III.VII.9). God as "author" acts generously and comprehensively in human lives, evoking a response of gratitude which leads to piety, rejection of pride, and a recognition of God's work in creation, community, and calling.

*Lane Scruggs is a senior in theological studies at Wycliffe College, Toronto, Canada.*

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## The 54th Episcopal Musician's Handbook 2010-2011 Edition (begins Nov. 28, 2010) Lectionary Year A



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EMH53A

## Appointments

The Rev. **Mercedes Julian** is Hispanic missionary in the Diocese of Rhode Island, 275 N Main St., Providence RI 02903-1298.

The Rev. **David C. Killeen** is priest-in-charge of St. John's, 211 N Monroe St., Tallahassee, FL 32301.

The Rev. **Robert S. Lawrence** is rector/executive director of St. Christopher's Camp and Conference Center, 2810 Seabrook Island Rd., Johns Island, SC 29455.

The Rev. **Ted McNabb** is minister of worship and praise teams at St. Michael's, 71 Broad St., Charleston, SC 29401.

The Rev. **Amanda Nickles** is vicar of Grace Mission, 303 W Brevard St., Tallahassee, FL 32301-1117.

The Rev. **Mark Norris** is priest-in-charge of Transfiguration, 27640 Hwy. 74, Evergreen, CO 80439.

The Rev. **John Scott** is assistant at St. Paul's, 316 W Carolina Ave., Summerville, SC 29483.

The Rev. **Ruth Woodliff-Stanley** is rector of St. Thomas', 2201 Dexter St., Denver, CO 80207-3756.

## Ordinations

### *Priests*

**Albany** — **Neal Patrick Longe**, curate, St. Michael's, 49 Killean Park, Colonie, NY 12205.

**South Carolina** — **Charles D. Pollak**.

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**Colorado** — **Beth Taylor**.

**Easton** — **Joan Marie Testin**.

**South Carolina** — **H. Dagnall Free, Jr.**, associate, St. John's, 3673 Maybank Hwy., Johns Island, SC 29457; **Robert Kunes**, associate, Galilee Church, 3928 Pacific Ave., Virginia Beach, VA 23451.

## Resignations

The Rev. **Vaughn McTernan**, as vicar of St. David's, Woodland Park, CO.

The Rev. **Stephen Reed**, as vicar of Prince of Peace, Sterling, CO, to become a hospital chaplain in Alaska.

## Retirements

The Rev. **Ronald Hiester**, as associate for pastoral care at St. John's, Florence, SC.

The Rev. **Pat Murphy**, as parish administrator at St. Paul's, Kansas City, KS. She remains a deacon at the church.

The Rev. **Ronald L. Reed**, as vicar of St. Paul's, Kansas City, KS.

The Rev. **Richard J. Simeone**, as rector of St. John's, Gloucester, MA; add: 203 Pemberton St., Unit 3, Cambridge, MA 02140-2543.

## Deaths

The Rev. **William F. Gender III**, a priest of the Diocese of Connecticut, died July 21 at the age of 81.

Born in Brooklyn, NY, he earned degrees from Hobart College and Philadelphia Divinity School. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1957. He served as vicar at St. John the Baptist and at St. David's, Scranton PA, 1957-61. He was assistant at St. Mary's, Manchester,

CT, 1961-64. He was curate at Trinity Church, Torrington, CT, and chaplain at Torrington Chapel, 1964-68, then vicar of Grace Church, Broad Brook, CT, and chaplain for East Windsor Senior Citizens and for the Broad Brook Fire Dept., 1968-75. He was vicar for Christ Church, Morris, CT, 1975-85. He is survived by his wife, Dorothy.

The Rev. **Donald B. Pierce**, a priest of the Diocese of Connecticut, died July 19. He was 82.

Born in Syracuse, NY, he earned degrees from Trinity College, Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, and Southern Connecticut State University. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1954. Fr. Pierce was rector of St. Andrew's, Northford, CT; rector of All Saints', Ivoryton, CT; and served at Church of the Holy Nativity, Kinsley, CT. He also worked at Chester Elementary School while serving as rector. He is survived by his wife, Marilyn, and daughters Melinda, Candace, Cheryl and Mary.



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# The Folly of Self-Seeking

“My people have changed their glory” (Jer. 2:11b).

BCP: Ecclus. (Sirach) 10:(7-11)12-18; Psalm 112; Heb. 13:1-8; Luke 14:1,7-14

RCL: Jer. 2:4-13; Psalm 81:1, 10-16 or Ecclus. (Sirach) 10:12-18; or Prov. 25:6-7; Psalm 112; Heb. 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14

In last week's lesson from Jeremiah, the prophet's call is set forth. Though Jeremiah initially protested that he was unskilled and too young to serve, the Lord assured him that he would be empowered and protected, and Jeremiah accepted the call. In today's lesson, Jeremiah begins his public ministry with a ringing denunciation of the nation's leaders who have led the people astray. “The priests did not say, ‘Where is the Lord?’ Those who handle the law did not know me; the shepherds transgressed against me; the prophets prophesied by Baal” (Jer. 2:8).

This early prophecy of one who had considered himself unsuitable for the work of a prophet declares that the apostasy of the nation through the waywardness of its leaders is not only appalling to God himself and unprecedented even among pagan nations, but outright egre-

giously foolish. The message is clear: to abandon God for falsehood is not only wrong, it is shockingly stupid. “My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water” (2:13). Even more than that, it is the very leaders of the nation who have brought the people to this abysmal situation: the priests, lawyers, rulers, and the prophets. Even this does not sufficiently describe the outrage, for the leaders have done this immediately after God had delivered them from slavery, brought them through the desert, and given them “a plentiful land to enjoy its fruits and its good things” (2:7a).

The psalm connected with this lesson reveals God's response to this folly: “I gave them over to their stubborn hearts” (Psalm 81:12a); yet he still holds out the

promise of rescue: “O that my people would listen to me ... Then I would quickly subdue their enemies ... I would feed you with the finest of the wheat” (81:13a, 14a, 16a). Though more subtly, the other lessons appointed for today carry out the same theme. The lessons from Sirach, Proverbs, and the Gospel of Luke all set forth the sin of pride through self-seeking that brings about disharmony in all relationships and eventual disruption and humiliation. Throughout all the lessons, the message is that dedicating oneself to the principle of “Me first!” over the common good and the revealed will of God leads to disaster in every aspect of life. The triumphant answer is given in Psalm 112: “Happy are those who fear the Lord ... they will be remembered forever. They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the Lord” (112:1a, 6b-7).

## Look It Up

Reflect on Jesus' words in Matt. 16:24-25.

## Think About It

When have you made a significant sacrifice in your life and found it to be a tremendous blessing? Did you miss whatever it was that you left behind? Did you regret the choice?

## Next Sunday

## The Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost (Proper 18C), September 5, 2010

BCP: Deut. 30:15-20; Psalm 1; Philemon 1-20; Luke 14:25-33

RCL: Jer. 18:1-11; Psalm 139:1-5, 13-18; or Deut. 30:15-20; Psalm 1; Philemon 1-21; Luke 14:25-33

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