May 20, 2012

The Living Church

CATHOLIC EVANGELICAL ECUMENICAL

Orderly Counsel

INTRODUCING A SERIES ON GENERAL CONVENTION 2012

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We are grateful to Blessed Sacrament Episcopal Church, Placentia, California, and St. John's Episcopal Cathedral, Denver [page 29], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

THE LIVING CHURCH

THIS ISSUE | May 20, 2012

NEWS

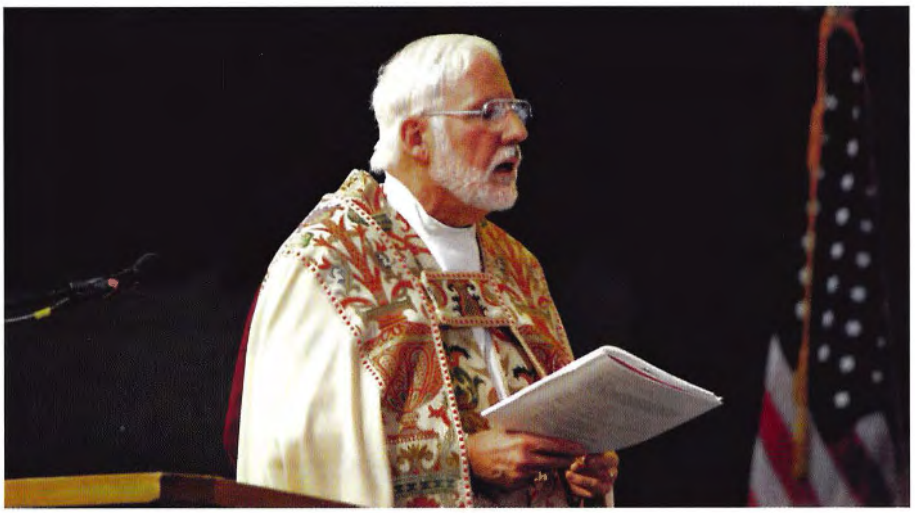
FEATURES

ORDERLY COUNSEL
Essays in Advance of General Convention 2012

BOOKS

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

The Living Church is published by the Living Church Foundation. Our historic mission in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion is to seek and serve the Catholic and evangelical faith of the one Church, to the end of visible Christian unity throughout the world.



Bishops Howe (above), Wolf (right) and MacPherson reflect on retirement. David S. Lewis/Flickr photo

Mary Murphy photo

New Chapters for Three Bishops

By Douglas LeBlanc

If a bishop looks to the Episcopal Church's canons in deciding when to retire, the timing is clear: a bishop must leave office at age 72. Some bishops, such as the Rt. Rev. Herbert Thompson, Jr., now deceased, and the Rt. Rev. Edward Salmon, Jr., remained in office under unusual circumstances. Few bishops remain seated firmly in their *cathedras*, however, until their age requires them to leave. Some leave earlier, thinking more of what a diocese needs than of what they may have planned earlier.

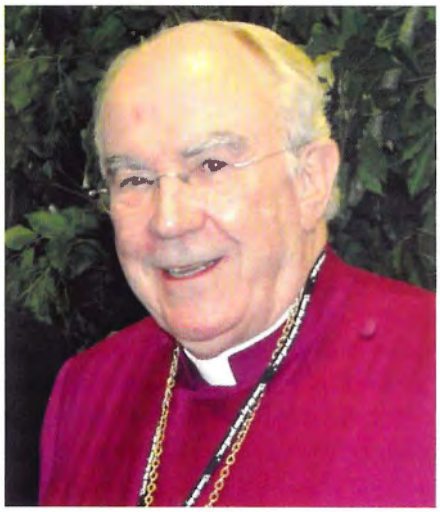
The Rt. Rev. John W. Howe of Central Florida retired early (he turns 70 in November) and his diocese voted to continue his legacy of evangelical theology by electing the Rev. Gregory O. Brewer as Howe's successor. Howe retired in March.

"My head knows that this has all happened, but what it feels like is being on sabbatical," Howe told TLC. "As Bill Folwell [second Bishop of Central Florida] says, *Retirement is an honest vocation.* I'm looking forward to experiencing the meaning of that."

Brewer, who began his ministry in the Diocese of Central Florida, has invited Howe to assist with parish visitations. Howe and his wife, Karen, also look after two grandchildren — Johnny, 14, and Madeline, 13 — who live with them. Karen Howe, who suffered congestive heart failure several years ago, relies on a pacemaker but is no longer congestive.

Howe speaks fondly of one aspect of his years in Central Florida: resolving property disputes with departing congregations without litigation, inhibition or deposition of clergy or the loss of any property. He did rely on one retired judge, however. The bishop asked John Upchurch, a former state judge, to lead the diocese and New Covenant Church, Winter Springs, through a mediation. The mediation session took 17 hours, Howe said, but Judge Upchurch was so impressed by the cooperative spirit on both sides that he later became an Episcopalian.

Howe said the timing of his decision to retire became clear in 2010, as he thought of what kind of leadership would best serve the diocese in the years ahead. The interim between his announcement and seeing Bishop Brewer consecrated made Bishop Howe a bit more retiring in his public pronouncements:



"To an extent it made me reticent to comment on what was happening" in the diocese and the Episcopal Church.

With his retirement, Bishop Howe has spoken up again, and punctually. A member bishop of Communion Partners since its founding,

Howe was one of seven bishops to sign on as *amici curiae* in a dispute between two dioceses over which owns the name (and thus the assets and property) of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth.

The Rt. Rev. D. Bruce MacPherson, Bishop of Western Louisiana, is another signatory to that legal brief. MacPherson, however, will remain on post until his elected successor, the Very Rev. Jacob W. Owensby, receives necessary approval at General Convention and becomes a bishop in July.

For Bishop MacPherson, retirement was a clear-cut decision determined primarily by the canon. MacPherson accepted his election knowing that he would complete his decades-long ministry as a bishop based in the central city of Alexandria. "It's been a good 10 years," he said. "When I retire at the end of July, I'll have had 32 and a half years of ordained ministry."

His years as bishop have not been placid. "Five hurricanes, and some rather tumultuous times in the church, occurred during my tenure," he said. "I can think of no better place to have concluded my years of ministry than Western Louisiana."

MacPherson and his wife, Susan, will place their home on the market and find a new home in Edmond, Okla., which will place them near one of two daughters; the other lives in Southern California. The MacPhersons have four granddaughters and one great-grandson, and a week after speaking with TLC the bishop was scheduled to celebrate the wedding of his eldest granddaughter.

"The focus of my prayers has been on where the Lord is leading us, and what role I should play in that process," he said. "The priority of my prayer is on the present," but with an openness to what comes next. MacPherson said he does not want to pursue ideas that may be exciting for him if they do not represent God's will for him.

For the Rt. Rev. Geralyn Wolf, Bishop of Rhode Island, retiring was a matter of using the time still available to her. The bishop, 65, is a 15-year survivor of cancer, and the disease has made no sign of attacking again.

"One reason certainly was that I'm healthy, and there are other things I would like to do," she said. "I look around and see people who put off retiring, or traveling, or doing what they want to do. Now is the right time to do this."

Bishop Wolf said she and her hus-

(Continued on next page)

BISHOPS (from previous page)

band of five years, Tom Bair, would like to live in New York City, where they both have family. "This is a very good time to reforge family ties," she said. "I have missed countless weddings and other family activities because they coincided with church duties."

She has found the idea of retirement freeing. "I think my prayer life moved into greater gratitude and thanksgiving," she said. "It's good to have a new leadership pattern and a new style."

The diocese has struggled with limited resources and the need to close congregations that were no longer viable, including (for now) the Cathedral of St. John in Providence. The bishop says the diocese has closed or merged 12 congregations during her tenure, which began in February 1996. Congregations ultimately choose whether they want to merge or prefer to fold their tents: "We have certainly done them in such a way that, except for one parish, they feel that they are better off now."

Bishop Wolf said she is considering a few different possibilities of serving as an assisting bishop. She will most enjoy preaching and visiting parishes, or counseling parishes in crisis, she said. "I can't think of doing anything better as a bishop."

ACI's Texas Intervention

Seven bishops and the Dallas-based Anglican Communion Institute filed a brief with the Texas Supreme Court April 23 regarding *The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth v The Episcopal Church.*

"These *amici* remain in The Episcopal Church and submit this brief solely because they disagree with the characterization of the governance of The Episcopal Church as submitted in support of the motion for summary judgment that the trial court granted in this case," the brief says. "The *amici* oppose the decision by the Appellants ('Diocese of Fort Worth') to leave The Episcopal Church, but in its ruling against them the court has misunderstood, and thereby damaged, the constitutional structure of The Episcopal Church.

"These *amici curiae* support the traditional polity of The Episcopal Church founded on the autonomy of its constituent dioceses and therefore submit that the trial court erred both as a matter of fact and as a matter of law when it found that The Episcopal Church has a hierarchical authority superior to the diocese and its bishop."

The brief names three priests as *amici curiae*:

- The Rev. Canon Christopher R. Seitz, professor of biblical interpretation at Wycliffe College, Toronto, canon theologian of the Diocese of Dallas and president of the ACI;
- The Very Rev. Philip W. Turner, former dean of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale and ACI vice president;
- The Rev. Ephraim Radner, professor of historical theology at Wycliffe College and senior fellow of the ACI. Radner, like many seminary faculty, retains canonical residency where he served previously — in his case, the Diocese of Colorado.

The brief also names seven bishops as *amici curiae*:

- The Rt. Rev. Maurice M. Benitez, retired, Diocese of Texas
- The Rt. Rev. John W. Howe, retired, Diocese of Central Florida
- The Rt. Rev. Paul E. Lambert, bishop suffragan, Diocese of Dallas
- The Rt. Rev. William H. Love, Diocese of Albany
- The Rt. Rev. D. Bruce MacPherson, Diocese of West Louisiana
- The Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins, Diocese of Springfield
- The Rt. James M. Stanton, Diocese of Dallas

Bishop Iker's diocese acknowledged the brief in a statement that described what the bishops have

argued. The diocese led by the Rt. Rev. Wallis Ohl, which remains in the Episcopal Church, had no immediate response to the brief.

One Day, Three Elections

Three elections in one day, April 21, led to new bishops in dioceses affected by the Episcopal Church's discussions of sexuality.

In Pittsburgh, one of the dioceses deeply divided by the departure of its previous bishop ordinary, the Very Rev. Dorsey W.M. McConnell was elected as eighth bishop. Other nominees were the Rev. Canon Michael M. Ambler, Jr., the Rev. R. Stanley Runnels, the Rev. Canon Scott T. Quinn and the Rev. Ruth Woodliff-Stanley.

McConnell, a participant in the grassroots New Commandment Task Force during the 1990s, emphasized healing and reconciliation in the diocese. The diocese has been led by two provisional bishops, Robert H. Johnson and Kenneth Price, Jr., since Bishop Duncan left in 2008 and helped found the Anglican Church in North America, based near Pittsburgh in Ambridge.

In the Diocese of Virginia, a special convention elected the Rev. Canon Susan Goff, the Rt. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston's canon since 2007, as his new suffragan. The other nominees were the Rev. J. Randolph Alexander, the Very Rev. David H. May, the Very Rev. Hilary B. Smith, the Very Rev. Shirley Smith Graham and the Rev. Canon Susan L. Sommer.

The Virginia diocese lost the majority of more than a dozen congregations to the Convocation of Anglicans in North America. Goff succeeds the Rt. Rev. David Colin Jones, who oversaw the diocese's vigorous creation of new congregations during his 17-year tenure, many of which left for CANA.

The Diocese of Western Louisiana has not lost any congregations, but there are ACNA churches in its precincts. The Rt. Rev. D. Bruce MacPherson, the diocese's bishop since 2002, is a member of Communion Partners, the most visible expression of loyal opposition to the Episcopal Church's gay-affirming trajectory.

The diocese elected the Very Rev. Jacob W. Owensby, dean of St. Mark's Cathedral in Shreveport since 2009. Owensby, like Bishop MacPherson, is a member of Communion Partners.

Other nominees were the Very Rev. John B. Burwell, the Rt. Rev. William O. Gregg, the Rev. Canon Gregg L. Riley, the Rev. Frederick A. Robinson, the Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson and the Rev. Canon Larry G. Wilkes.

Why did Christ Rise?

By Patrick T. Twomey

Why did Jesus come to be among us? Why did he pitch his tent? Why was it necessary that he suffer and be given into the hand of evil men? Why did he die so horrible a death? These important and difficult questions are the meat of theologians, sustenance that can inspire a deluge of words, thick and weighty volumes. Where reason is strained but faith is strong, poetry, hymns, visual arts, and living witness abound in response to these questions of faith. At this time, however, another question demands our attention, one which is seldom heard: Why did Jesus rise from the dead?

As with any good theological question, it puzzles deeply and seems to refuse a simple and immediate response. He died for our sins, we are told, a theological riddle itself of immense difficulty. He broke open the gate of hell to set the captives free. In a sense, we are more likely to identify with the depth of his humility in being born of a human mother, his temptations and suffering, his death and descent among the dead, than we are to understand the great significance of his rising, the imposing power of his fish-eating presence.

"Fear not." "Go and tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you" (Mark 16:7). Early Christians were so gripped by this news that they greeted one another during Easter with the salutation "Christ is risen!" and heard the reply: "Christ is risen indeed and has appeared to Simon." This defining event infused the disciples with explosive power and set the Church in turbulent motion. Giving an account for the faith that lies within us will then include some attempt to say not only that he is risen but why he is risen, why it matters to us, why it changes our lives, why it changes everything.

Not working alone, not pandering in the emotive folly of my story and its universal significance, I turn to my betters, my elders, the dead and still witnessing voices of tried and true saints. I listen to the tradition, and live in it as well and deeply as I can. What do they say? Not what would Jesus do but what did Jesus do when his living Spirit prompted the best and the brightest to speak so forcefully and beautifully in a cadence worth hearing again and again. What were they saying about the resurrection?

The following is one example, no more than a page and a half from the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas (*Summa* III 53, 1). Not surprisingly, an ordered list of reasons, in this case precisely five, is offered to explain why Christ rose from the dead. And, predictably, in question after question varied aspects of the resurrection are examined with scholastic precision and a customary length not well fit to modern hearers. Still, it is occasionally very helpful to read an ordered compendium on a single theological question. So, imagining the doctor is in, we listen. Listening, I sometimes quote and sometimes paraphrase, but I am always thinking into the mind of the doctor.

First of all, (1) Christ rose to commend his divine justice, which is something more than defeating sin, the flesh, and the devil. God sets things right by exalting those who have humbled themselves for God, just as stated in Luke 1:52. Just as on account of love and obedience toward God Christ humbled himself even to death on a cross, so it was necessary that he be exalted by God even to a glorious resurrection. *Glorious* is the relevant adjective, pressing forward the claim that Christ is not only out of the grave, breathing, speaking and eating; he is transformed into deathless life. He is life itself, pure, clean, and bright. He rose to give and share precisely this transformed existence, a human life rightly restored.

He rose from the dead (2) to confirm our faith in his divinity. Even if he was crucified in weakness, now he lives from the power (*virtute*) of God. "If I do not rise," Aquinas imagines the Lord thinking, "if my body will be corrupted, I will announce to no one, I will enrich no one." Coming to announce his new life, Jesus is living from the sheer obstructed power of God. And it is that very power he gives to the Church. We are not living simply because we are not dead, we are living as those animated by the virtue of God, the boiling burning presence that the Risen Lord *is*.

He rose from the dead (3) to inspire hope. "For when we see Christ rise,

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who is our head, we hope that we will rise," says Thomas as he cites 1 Corinthians 15:12 and Job 19:25,27. The head being attached to the body, the whole body is drawn up *ad sublevationem nostrae spei* (to the elevation of our hope). Thus we face the world with all its beauty and terror with a supernatural augmentation. We live in hope.

He rose (4) to exhibit the form of a faithful life. According to Romans 6:4, "Just as Christ rose from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we ought to walk in newness of life." Further along St. Paul says, "Christ rising from the dead no longer dies, so even we estimate ourselves dead to sin and alive to God." Thus the risen Christ shows an entirely new life lived entirely to God.

Finally, (5) he rose to complete our salvation. Citing Romans 6:25, Aquinas insists that Christ was humiliated by dying in order to free us from evil. Withholding for a moment Aquinas's final thought, it should be apparent that a certain kind of evangelical Christianity and a certain legitimate catholic devotion to the sufferings of Christ, if pushed too far, may lock the faithful in a position of seeing themselves freed from evil but patiently anchored to suffering. In a sense, a substitutionary death is seen to accomplish a juridical freedom without delivering the power and tools for a new life. The prisoner goes free, wearing a new suit, with a few hundred dollars in his pocket. If this is freedom, it is freedom without resurrection. Aquinas completes his thought, following St. Paul: "He was glorified by rising, so that he may promote us to *good things*; he was handed over on account of our sins, and he rose on account of *our justification*." He rose to begin and then share a new existence, our justification.

Reviewing this review, we assert the following: Christ rose from the dead (1) to show a *glorious resurrection*, a new life which he is and which he shares. He rose (2) to show that Christ lives from the *power of God*, which power is now the fuel of our life. He rose (3) to inspire *hope* that we, the body, will follow the head, and thus experience the elevation of hope, the quickening of hope, the power of hope. He rose (4) to exhibit the very *form of his new life* that we may walk in his ways and live no longer for ourselves alone but for God. He rose (5) to *finish his work*. Dying he broke the bond and curse and fear of death; rising he promotes us to all good things.

These "reasons" intersect, and, of course, they proceed from a position of accepted faith, and so are not designed as a logical proof. They do, however, effectively summarize what both Scripture and the great tradition have said about our Lord's resurrection. Why, I wonder, is there so little real exuberance about this in most mainline churches today?

Forget all schemes to renew the church! They don't work.

The following answer, encountered some years ago in Alexander Schmemann's excellent small book, *For the Life of the World*, remains an apt rebuke to our modern, depressed, anxiety-ridden church. "Yet, if there is something that we — the serious, adult and frustrated Christians of the twentieth century — look at with suspicion, it is certainly joy. How can one be joyful when so many people suffer? When so many things are to be done? How can one indulge in festivals and celebrations when people expect from us 'serious' answers to their problems? Consciously or unconsciously Christians have accepted the whole ethos of our joy-less and business minded culture" (p. 20). This disease, widespread among Christian laity, is nearly universal among the clergy. Sad, serious, frustrated, and depressed Christians are especially common among the "strong" and "deeply committed." Something is terribly wrong.

Any real retrieval of Christian tradition must include a retrieval of this original joy, this hope and power, this sharing in a new existence. We need the present tense in all our deliberations about Christ. Not what he did, but what he is doing. Everything he did, he does. Everything he is by nature, we are by grace; thus his rising is our rising, his victory our victory, his power ours too by infusion. We need, I think, a new confidence, boldness, and a wellspring of imagination to bring this great truth back up as a central focus in our worship and prayer, our teaching and ministry, our witness and outreach. The reason we are who we are and the reason we do what we do is that, in union with Christ, we have been raised from the dead!

Recommendations: Forget all schemes to renew the church! They don't work. Plan parties, tell good stories, eat chocolate, walk in the woods, listen to the silence of Christ, study Latin, sip wine, call a happy friend, call a hurting friend, feel your own living existence as the existence of the Living Lord in you, take your bread and cup with holy fear and righteous joy, let your drooping head fall upon the pages of Scripture, do some good work with a happy heart. Or do something else. Or do nothing. Whether going out or coming in, whether working or resting, someone, if the gospels are to be trusted, is with you. We ask, "Who are you?" He speaks, "*Vita Aeterna et Gaudium Infinitum et Semper Vivens*" ("Oh my God thou art true, Oh my soul thou art happy!" — Richard Hooker). ■

The Rev. Patrick Twomey is rector of All Saints Church, Appleton, Wisconsin.

ORDERLY COUNSEL

Essays in Advance of General Convention 2012

Another General Convention of the Episcopal Church is upon us — meeting this July in Indianapolis — and provides an opportunity again to reason about the purpose, protocol, and theology of church government. An irreducible aspect of Anglican life is the reality of provincial *autonomy*, that is, self-government among the member churches of the Communion. And within our churches we find smaller units of self-organization called *dioceses*, ordered by a further layer of canons and even constitution, the details of which may or may not match up seamlessly with provincial and Communion-wide commitments. As so often in the history of the Church, on-the-ground realities prove to be complicated and complicating, even as Anglican diversity-in-communion finds itself placed within and contributing to a larger matrix of denominational proliferation: a clamor of autonomous "churches" and "communions," criss-crossing and cross-pollinating in a whirlwind of would-be

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ORDERLY COUNSEL

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world evangelization. One day, we believe, the one Spirit of the one Church will discipline and order this multitude of nations, tribes, and tongues, drawing out of it a single witness to the one faith and one Lord. In the meantime, we — Anglicans, Episcopalians, Christians rooted in one and another geographic locale — are bound to press on to order our common life as coherently as possible, in hope and love.

We offer a series of essays on "orderly counsel" to aid this vital labor — in the run-up to this summer's triennial General Convention, and more generally as Anglicans seek to articulate and defend the properly theological foundations of an ordered, orderly Church. Starting in the present issue and extending across the following four issues, we will publish 10 loosely connected essays on a range of topics broadly within the field of Anglican ecclesiology and church government. In most cases our authors will jump off from concrete instances ready to hand in the Episcopal Church, but always press out to a larger pattern of reasoning, incorporating Scripture and the history of the Church. In this way, we hope to place a range of problems and questions — concerning mission and power, legislation and oversight, constitution and canon, episcopacy, and the nature and reality of dioceses — in a new light.

We offer a series of essays on "orderly counsel" to aid in the run-up to this summer's triennial General Convention.

We are grateful to the fellows of the Anglican Communion Institute for suggesting the possibility of such a series and generously convening a meeting at the newly formed Cranmer Institute in Dallas, during which initial brainstorming and a lively exchange of ideas took place. The editors of THE LIVING CHURCH in turn conceived the series, chose the topics, and selected writers from across the church, half of whom are younger leaders, coming to grips with the challenge of wise governance at the outset of their careers. We should all redouble our commitment to faithful reform on their account and that of their children, to the greater glory of God.

—Christopher Wells

4 Roles of General Convention

Custodian • Steward • Source • Town Hall

By Timothy E. Kimbrough

Any reflection on the role and function of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church places one in the deep end of the pool. The discussion, at times conflicted and complicated, is already well developed. Someone will want to review the convention's authority, another its mission. Another will want to identity the convention by its governance. Yet another will find the historical antecedents and evolution of the convention central to understanding it.

All might agree, however, that no discussion of General Convention can proceed without at least a cursory review of the documents it produces. Deputies, bishops, and members of standing committees may look to the Journal of Convention and the Constitution and Canons as constituting "the documents of General Convention." The Journal typically records the acts of convention while each new edition of the Constitution and Canons contains amendments, changes, deletions, and additions made by the immediately preceding convention. But limiting the list to these documents would overlook the Book of Common Prayer (1979), other supplemental worship materials developed for use under the ecclesiastical authority of a diocese, and the ecumenical agreements and documents which describe the relationship between the Episcopal Church and sister traditions.

All of these documents together, when reviewed with respect to the ecclesial principles affirmed for Episcopalians, show the essential, foundational work of General Convention unfolding in four roles.

1. Custodian of Common Prayer

If the time required by the convention to address a topic is any indication of its significance to the church and thus to the function of the convention, then there may be no more important topic than that of common prayer and no more important work than that of prayer book maintenance and revision.

The common prayer inheritance of the Episcopal Church is maintained by General Convention, which requires the use of the prayer book in every diocese of the church, mandates procedures for the prayer book's

revision, lists the non-observance of prayer book rubrics as offenses for which a bishop, priest, or deacon may be presented and tried, and creates provisions for trial use liturgies.

A quick review of the canonical requirements for the adoption of a new or revised Book of Common Prayer, like changes to the church's Constitution, indicates the required approval of two successive General Conventions. The process of reform that led to the Book of Common Prayer (1979), however, demanded much more than the attention of the 1976 and 1979 conventions. Prayer book study pamphlets, Green Books and Zebra Books preceded these conventions.

Likewise, the rejected resolution D061 (2006), "On the Topic of a Pastoral Plan to Revise the Book of Common Prayer," makes clear that both houses of General Convention recognize that the practical and pastoral matter of prayer book revision requires more than the constitutionally mandated approval of two successive conventions.

2. Steward of *Episcopé*

General Convention further provides for episcopal oversight of the dioceses of the church in describing the ministry of bishops and in establishing canons, which direct the election and consecration of bishops. Again, the space given to this topic (inclusive of the place and organization of dioceses) in the Ordinal, the Constitution and Canons, and ecumenical agreements suggests the foundational character of this work for General Convention.

Episcopé, as provided for in the documents of General Convention, secures the historic episcopate for the Episcopal Church, directs the maintenance of the House of Bishops, and guarantees the determinative voice of the laity in the election of, gathering of consents for, and consecration of bishops. Moreover, General Convention expressly provides for the participation of the laity in the episcopal oversight of a diocese when, in the absence of a bishop exercising oversight, the standing committee functions as the ecclesiastical authority.

An Episcopal Church without bishops and without *episcopé* is an absurdity. General Convention deliberates and acts on the stewardship of *episcopé* (inclusive of the disciplinary canons for all clergy) as a matter of primary importance.

3. Source of Mission Structure

Additionally, General Convention reviews, reaffirms, and directs the mission of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society — approving a triennial budget expressive of mission priorities, providing for its board of directors, officers, and all program ministries and concerns of the Society. How the Constitution and Canons deal with the organization of General Convention, naming the standing committees of General Convention and describing the roles of the officers of the convention, shows that General Convention seeks to provide for the mission structure of the DFMS.

The development of the office of the Presiding Bishop may be followed in the evolution of the Constitution and Canons. Likewise, the current debate about parity between the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops may be traced by studying canonical development and actions of General Convention regarding budget appropriations. The impending restructuring debate for the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society is an excellent example of a matter that in the end will be decided by General Convention and no other.

4. Town Hall

That the General Convention must meet "not less than once in each three years" (Article I, Section 7) suggests that Episcopalians, as represented by their bishops and deputies, depend on this meeting. We learn how to speak here. We learn the vocabulary of the Episcopal Church. We worship together across diocesan boundaries, putting into practice the rule of faith (*lex credendi*), praying for the life of the world and our sister provinces around the world. We receive information to disseminate to the dioceses we represent. Our discussions and debates about church and society often result in resolutions that express the mind of General Convention for a moment in time, encouraging Episcopalians across the church and nurturing the ties that bind us together.

In this sense, the town hall character of General Convention suggests that we *must* meet together. General Convention must convene that we might know who we are as Episcopalians.

It is not uncommon to hear General Convention referred to as "the largest (democratic) legislative body in the world," or "the primary governing body of the Episcopal Church," or "the bicameral government of the Episcopal Church." I wonder if what we say about General Convention is in fact at variance with what the convention is, how the work of the convention is received, and what the convention says about its work from the vantage point of its documents.

Would we prepare differently for General Convention, would we pray for our deputies and bishops differently, if General Convention were instead thought to be primarily the custodian of common prayer, the steward of *episcopé*, the source of mission structure, and the town hall where the identity of Episcopalians is explored and reinforced? ■

The Very Rev. Timothy E. Kimbrough, dean and rector of Christ Church Cathedral in Nashville, is a seven-time deputy to General Convention. This year he will serve as vice chair of the convention's Constitution Committee.

ORDERLY COUNSEL

What is the Message of the Mission?

The Missiology of the Proposed Triennial Budget

By Thomas Ferguson

There are two oft-repeated statements in a budgeting process. One is that budgets are "outlines" rather than strict spending plans: whether in a parish, or a diocese, or a seminary, we adopt budgets that pledge to spend money that we do not yet have. We trust that pledges, or tuition, or assessments will come in as planned. Another is that budgets reveal deeper understandings of an organization's outlook — just Google "budget as a moral document" to see numerous statements from politicians and other interest groups.

Budgets are often understood as extensions of ideological understandings of the nature and role of an institution. In the church, they evidence the ways in which we shape, incarnate, and give emphasis to how we are called to carry out God's mission entrusted to us. There's biblical warrant for this kind of thinking; Jesus once told his disciples that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." The appropriate use of wealth in establishing the kingdom of God is one which Jesus speaks frequently about in the gospels. Budgets are somewhat dry reading, especially for those of us who have not taken a mathematics class since high school, so we can forget that there is at heart a missiological imperative in any budget: where we put our treasure determines what we do and how we do it.

In what follows I use "budget of the Episcopal Church" as shorthand for a wide range of churchwide ministries coordinated in various ways by the Presiding Bishop, Executive Council, and General Convention. This includes everything from the salary of the bishop of the Convocation of American Churches in Europe to the work of all the standing committees

and commissions of General Convention to supporting staff in areas like Christian education and formation.

I have two main missiological concerns with the proposed 2013-15 triennial budget of the Episcopal Church approved (though there is some dispute about this) by Executive Council at its January meeting and now in the hands of the Program, Budget, and Finance Committee, a joint body of General Convention.

One is the understanding of missiology, or lack thereof, that has guided some of these budgetary decisions. It should be clear to most people that we are living in a time of profound transition in our society and in our churches. There are fundamental shifts in American society and American Christianity affecting all religious organizations. As a result of these and other realities, difficult choices must be made. What kind of structures should we have, what should we be doing, and how should it all be funded? What are the theological and missiological reasons for the choices made?

The official message from the January 2012 Executive Council meeting stated that the budget should "bear" the Five Marks of Mission, which were adopted by the 2009 General Convention as the "center" of the 2013-15 budget. But nowhere is it explained how these funding decisions bear those marks. For instance, why does this draft budget cut funding to the Anglican Communion secretariat in London and domestic dioceses but increase grants to individual provinces of the Anglican Communion and non-domestic dioceses of the Episcopal Church? We could ask a similar question about a number of other choices. Other than the mention of the Five Marks of Mission, there is no reference to resolutions of General Convention, Scripture, or any kind of governing or authoritative sources which informed the numerous decisions that were made. The only other additional guiding principle seems to be a survey commissioned by Council to determine at what level certain ministries of the church should best be done.

This leads directly to my second concern: a fundamental confusion in ecclesiology as it relates to mission. According to the accompanying budget narrative, it was noted at budget deliberations at the January 2012 meeting of Executive Council (and, for that matter, in the presentation of the budget to the 2009 General Convention) that mission and ministry is best done at an appropriate level, and this budget ostensibly reflects at what level certain ministries should be done. For example, on the assumption that youth and young adult ministries are best done at a diocesan or local level, the churchwide budget in these areas is cut dramatically. This is an inherently limited understanding of ecclesiology because ministry is never "done" at any one level.

There are numerous examples of how different levels of the church in fact complement one another. For instance: a parish calls a rector, since it would seem that parishioners know best what they need in a pastor. However, the bishop must license that rector to serve, since the bishop also has legitimate concerns and interests in who is ministering in his or her diocese. Yet the Constitution and Canons define who may properly be called as rector in any Episcopal church. A shibboleth underlying this budget seems to be the often misconstrued understanding of subsidiarity in the Episcopal Church: that one level of the church is free to do as it pleases so long as it does not contradict the level "above" it. Thus, it is argued, dioceses may pass canons to govern their internal life, so long as they do not directly contradict the Episcopal Church's Constitution and Canons, and a parish may pass its own bylaws, so long as it does not contradict diocesan or national canons.

The Standing Committee on the Structure of the Church attempts to define subsidiarity in its report to General Convention. However, this definition still notes that General Convention is the church in its "fullest embodiment" and that it "sets the parameters" for other levels of the church to take action — which privileges General Convention as the determinative body and does not reflect the mutuality and interdependence of the levels of the church. In addition, the resolution itself (A90, p. 536) nowhere notes this definition in the substance of the resolution. Convention does not vote on explanatory notes or Blue Book reports, with the likely result in the affirmation of the shibboleth.

This notion of subsidiarity does not accurately reflect the mutually interlocking levels of the church at the core of our ecclesiology. All levels of the church are involved with one another, with certain aspects of mission and ministry accomplished in a particular way, but not solely, at various levels. Let's take another example: funding for the General Ordination Examinations is eliminated in the proposed budget on the rationale that this is best done at the diocesan level. However, the areas ordinands must show competence in are defined by the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, so dioceses are not actually free now to pick up this work "on their own."

These two concerns strike at the core of the budgeting process as it is playing out in the Episcopal Church. We are not having important missiological or theological conversations about those difficult decisions and choices that we have to make. We are not setting mission priorities as a church; we are restructuring through defunding program, with decisions based on a flawed ecclesiology. In perhaps the best example of this confusion, the proposed budget calls for a churchwide conference to discuss significant structural change and priorities. But it calls for the conference to occur after the General Convention, after another round of decisions are already made: placing, in effect, the budgetary cart before the missiological horse. ■

The Very Rev. Thomas Ferguson is dean of Bexley Hall, Columbus, Ohio.

The Rev. Ephraim Radner (left), the Rt. Rev. C. FitzSimons Allison and Prof. David Steinmetz at Nashotah House. GabrielMorrow photo

Firmly I Believe

By Anthony Clavier

"Justification in Anglican Life & Thought: Retrospect and Prospect" began on April 19, Founder's Day, at Nashotah House Theological Seminary. After an afternoon devoted to hearing impressive young students offering papers on the conference theme, all assembled in the chapel for the Festival Eucharist. Seminarians, male and female, the faculty, presenters and participants filled the space. The liturgy was celebrated with that deceptively easy-looking understated ceremonial that typifies worship at its best.

The broader theme of the two-part conference — the first half met in October — was "justification." That great central doctrine of the Reformation in all its complexities came back to life, the controversies of former times revived and revisited, at this Anglo-Catholic seminary. Accompanied by these theological and pastoral issues were the people who engaged them, not an inappropriate invocation in a place devoted to the Communion of Saints. The presenters summoned everyone from Augustine of Hippo to the World War I chaplain Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy — "Woodbine Willie," as troops on the Western Front called him.

In sequence we met Luther and Calvin and the assembled bishops at the Council of Trent, John Wycliffe, Thomas Cranmer and Hugh Latimer, Richard Hooker and Lancelot Andrewes, Caroline Divines and unlikely names such as John Locke, all in the shadow of John Henry Newman and his lectures on justification. No one was mentioned closer to us in time than Eric Mascall, with the remarkable exception of Bishop N.T. Wright, and that, as Fr. Ephraim Radner suggested in his concluding paper, is no accident, living as we do in an age in which justification by faith gains little traction in a world losing its communal awareness and fear of death. It was left to Fr. Radner to thrust the great teachers of the past into historical and social context, which he did with wit and clarity.

It would be invidious to single out particular presenters, some of whom were from afar, for praise or criticism. Yet I came away particularly impressed by the quality of scholarship exhibited by Nashotah's faculty, not least in biblical studies and church history. It was thrilling to see seminarians following the lectionary in their Greek New Testaments, and inspiring to experience the hopes and confidence of these young and not so young Christians sacrificing their times and means to prepare for ministry. Despite our unhappy divisions, made manifest in the persons of faculty members

Shining with the Gospel

James Lloyd Breck's Final Mission

By Ephraim Radner

James Lloyd Breck spent the last years of his ministry in the little town of Benicia, California, which is on the Carquinez Strait, where the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers flow into the San Francisco Bay. In the 1850s, Benicia was briefly the capital of California, and it was given the title "the Athens of California" because of all the schools that were founded there. Breck himself started a boys' school (St. Augustine's College, 1858) and a girls' school (St. Mary's of the Pacific, 1870), neither of which lasted very long, and only one small building of which remains, as a private residence. Some people think he died in part from the exhaustion of these labors, and the many that preceded them.

I grew up in the area, and my mother would drag me to Benicia regularly, as she plied the junk and antiques stores that had gathered in the depressed little downtown. Just last year, I came across an old stained-glass window. My mother had bought it in Benicia 40 years ago or more, and it had been carefully packed up after her death, and lugged around the country and stored in garage after garage. So I took it home with me to Toronto. It's big, arched, with a simple floral pattern of blue and gold glass laid out in rows of small wood frames. It came from an old church in Benicia, probably from Breck's day. I had a craftsman fix the frame, then carefully cleaned and painted it, and it now has been fitted into our main living-room window, where the sun comes in off the street and lays out dappled shadows on the carpet and walls.

That's how I remember Breck. This is a rather sentimental *entrée* into the Prophet: "how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the

(Continued on next page)

and students now divided by jurisdictional confusion, unity in faith and vocation shines through. Much credit for this restored morale lies at the door of Nashotah's dean, the Rt. Rev. Edward L. Salmon, Jr., retired Bishop of South Carolina, whose optimism, humor, and energy is a constant motivating and unifying presence.

I drove away hearing in my mind the Nashotah hymn, one I sang regularly to another tune as a boy in England. "Firmly I believe and truly, God is Three and God is One." Obeying Newman's instruction to venerate Holy Church as God's creation and her teaching as my own is no easy task in contemporary Anglicanism. And yet that contentious doctrine, justification by faith, seemingly so dated and unfashionable, draws me back to considerations of God's grace and his unmerited love. God remains sovereign and his will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven in our lives as families, nations and the Church herself. I am grateful to Nashotah House for hosting the conference and was even more grateful to be present. Above everything I gain courage from meeting the younger participants, priests, seminarians and laity who work daily to be instruments of the Church's revival in the midst of the years. ■

The Rev. Anthony Clavier recently accepted a call to oversee two missions in the Diocese of Springfield.

Shining with the Gospel

(Continued from previous page)

Gospel of peace." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace and salvation" (Isa. 52:7). "How beautiful!" It's a word in Hebrew, and in the Greek that Paul quotes for this text in Romans 10, it means just that: pleasing to the eye, comely, yes, "beautiful."

We need to bear this claim in mind — preaching the Gospel is something beautiful. This, of course, is what Breck did, but he also died of exhaustion. He *worked*, and worked harder than most. It's a great paradox. Here we are, gathered to talk about the doctrine of justification by faith — but as a Church, all we do is work. We train ourselves for work; we judge ourselves and each other on the basis of our works; we celebrate or denounce the works of others; and we organize ourselves to plan our works as forcefully and effectively as possible. Works, not grace. The Anglican Communion, it could be argued, is in the mess it is in largely because we have spent more energy trying to save ourselves than preaching the Gospel, let alone the Gospel of peace.

As I said, there's a paradox here. To preach the Gospel is not to slide into quietism and passivity. How could it be? And there have been various ways of trying to engage this paradox truthfully. Calvin spoke of works as a form of "thanksgiving." Thomas Aquinas and Protestants too, like Tyndale, spoke of works as the outflowing of "love." And, of course, thanks and love both respond to grace; they do not engender it.

But here Isaiah presents us with another way of engaging the paradox: beauty. To preach the Gospel is something "beautiful": beautiful in its depth. It is as beautiful, certainly, as the windows and the light of this or any other glorious building, carrying its colors even into distant rooms. And surely far *more* beautiful than that! If you want to keep to the triad of "the True, the Good, and the Beautiful," you could perhaps speak of the Gospel's truth, or the redeemed heart's goodness — but "works," the works we so struggle over and trip over, often to our destruction, the works of the Gospel heart, are beautiful in themselves. And if their beauty is lost or forgotten or ignored, they are deadly in themselves.

So what "beauty," exactly? The words used in Scripture range over large territories — so word studies have only limited usefulness here. When God sees the works of his hands, in Creation, and calls them "good" (cf. Gen. 1:31), that is certainly an aspect of this beauty, which is also applied to the visage of the beloved in the Song of Songs, in various ways, and more literally in the Greek (6:4). The point is, what is "beautiful" joins together the "fairness" of something well-made and delightful and glorious to the excellence of its maker and the joy of its making. Beauty is not an ideal or a spiritual quality. It is concrete, material, the actual palpable form that truth and love take within the world. "This is what truth," this is what "love" "looks like"; and by definition it is beautiful. "Thou art beautiful, oh my love" (6:4).

When the unnamed woman at the house of Simon the leper in Bethany anoints Jesus with costly ointment, much to the indignation of his disciples, Jesus stops them: "she has done

something beautiful to me," he says (Matt. 26:10). Just as Solomon writes in the Song of Songs: the fragrance of your beautiful ointments draw out the love of all the maidens (1:3). Jesus himself is surely alluding to this text. Literally, Matthew calls it an *ergon kalon*, a beautiful deed, or a "good work" (cf. Mt. 5:16), as the same phrase is usually translated in the Sermon on the Mount: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works — your beautiful deeds — and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Yes, and Jesus goes on to say at Bethany that wherever "this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her" (26:13). Do you see? To preach the Gospel is to fill the world with beautiful things. Mother Teresa recognized this — it was one of her favorite phrases, and became the title of Malcolm Muggeridge's famous documentary and book about her: *Something Beautiful for God.*

The issue here is, as the culture likes to put it, simply "being"; but it is "being by doing." And it is doing something particular: preaching the Gospel. To preach the gospel is to *be beautiful*; it is to engage in the "it is very good" of God's created display of himself. And I press this point only because, of course, we *have* exhausted ourselves, as well as perverted ourselves, in all our "doing" that is not simply displaying God's beauty in its very act, but rather "saving" and "fixing," organizing and winning, and all the rest. None of that is beautiful. Useful; not beautiful.

There's no point to making a cult of

failure anymore than one of success. But the fact is, Benicia was Breck's graveyard; his schools barely lasted 15 years apiece. The town is a dump, and the church — his and others — are limping along at best. Nashotah House, with all its challenges, is still here and flourishing. Neither one is the point, though. Breck's life was *beautiful* insofar as he preached the Gospel. That's all we need to know in our ministries. It is interesting to read Breck's first sermon delivered to the Chippeway in 1852, mainly through a translator. It is, as he puts it, "the blessed Gospel" that they are "hearing for the first time," delivered in a makeshift sanctuary of pine branches.

The sermon is a simple and short retelling of the creation, Fall, and redemption of humanity in Christ, which he describes pointedly in pastoral terms, that is, in terms of sheep, Shepherds, and a sheepfold that is "safe" within a dangerous world. "Would you make Jesus, the great and good Shepherd, rejoice? Then come to this place, and hear His words. He has left with us, in His good Book, what we are to say to you. ... You will be sheep of the Good Shepherd. ... And if you come to Him, Jesus Christ will say to His Father, 'I have found my sheep which were lost.' What sheep? You, my children — you that today hear the blessed Gospel for the first time" (*The Life of the Reverend James Lloyd Breck*, 1883, p. 213).

Yes, that is very beautiful indeed. Would that you and I, each day, every day somewhere and somehow, to someone — this is what we are about as creatures of the King, at least *this*: would that we might preach so beautiful a thing. In this we would weary not, nor fade, but shine, with Breck and so many others, like the stars of heaven. ■

The Rev. Ephraim Radner is professor of historical theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto. He preached this sermon in April during "Justification in Anglican Life & Thought: Retrospect and Prospect," a conference at Nashotah House Theological Seminary.

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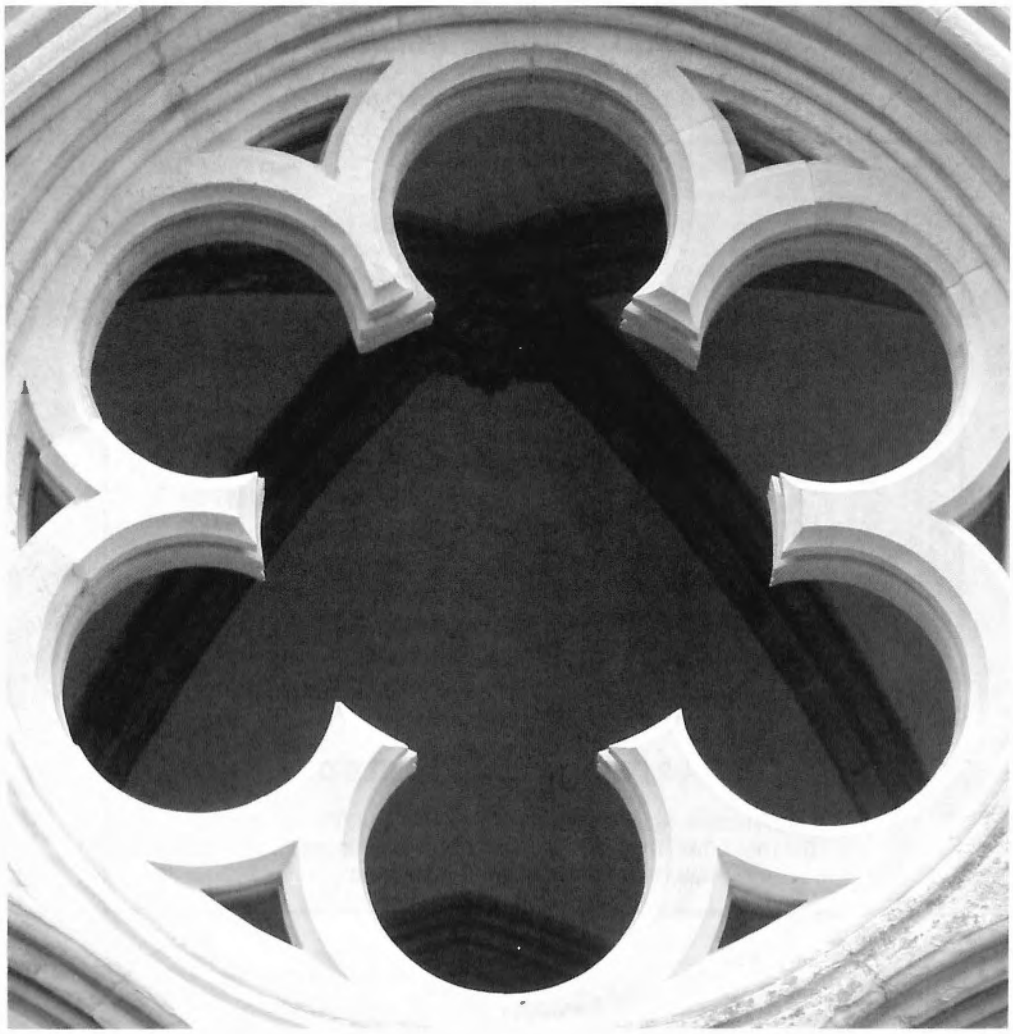

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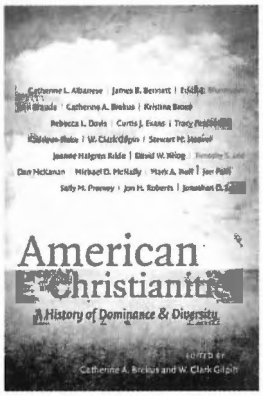
New Religious History

American Christianities

A History of Dominance and Diversity

Edited by **Catherine A. Brekus** and **W. Clark Gilpin**. UNC Press. Pp. 534. $34.95, paperback.

Review by Justus D. Doenecke



A Religious History of the American People, weighing close to five pounds and containing more than 1,100 pages, has been recognized for 40 years as the preeminent account of our nation's religious heritage. The Yale historian Sidney E. Ahlstrom took a narrative approach, one that emphasized major events within Baptist, Congregational, Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic churches.

In one sense Catherine A. Brekus and W. Clark Gilpin, both historians at the University of Chicago Divinity School, update Ahlstrom, although they take a quick tack toward religious history, for here institutional description is replaced by the interplay between Christian movements and the wider culture. The book is organized in topical form, its 22 authors drawing upon path-breaking research in sociology, anthropology, and social history. To compare this work to such traditionalist accounts as Ahlstrom's shows how radically the field of "church history," however broadly conceived, has changed in four decades.

The first major section deals with matters of diversity, as exemplified by essays on interactions with Jews, impediments to interchurch cooperation, and the experiences of Native Americans, African Americans, and Asian and Latino immigrants. One learns, for example, how Native people skillfully adopted Christianity to indigenous folkways and how Jews met the Christian challenge by tracts, Sunday schools, and a separate philanthropic network.

The second component focuses on applied Christianity. Here articles center on modernity, popular iconography, Bible translations, parish design, and proselytizing. One discovers that although the Bible remains the nation's bestselling book, with 20 million copies sold every year, less than half the population can name its first book, only a third know Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount, and 60 percent cannot name half of the Ten Commandments.

A third part is dedicated to culture, as seen by work covering materialism, the use of captivity narratives, innovative media, religion-science relationships, the uniqueness of American Christianity, and homosexuality therapy in the mid-1950s. Here one finds that evangelicals echoed a long tradition of condemning avarice and luxury while Roman Catholicism scorned laissez-faire capitalism. Only in the late 20th century did a "prosperity gospel" emerge.

A final section offers treatments of Christianity and American national identity: religious pluralism, social protest, the political rights of women, attitudes toward war, and questions of legal "establishment." Contributor Jon Pahl offers a fascinating account of ways in which Christians used the principle of "sacrifice" to defend the nation's participation in a sequence of wars.

Errors are few but should be noted. Protestant elites did not push "free trade" during the Gilded Age (p. 413). No one could be a Unitarian-Universalist in the 19th century, for the two denominations merged in 1961. Abner Kneeland was a Universalist (p. 229). Episcopalians "encountered the Bible through the Book of Common Prayer" (p. 225) but the prayer book never served a mediating role between believer and Scripture.

A serious reader comes away with a sense of the excitement generated by recent scholarship. ■

Justus D. Doenecke is emeritus professor of history at New College of Florida, Sarasota.

Go Forward

From THE LIVING CHURCH, Oct. 30, 1949, pp. 22-23. Clifford P. Morehouse, editor
Selected and transcribed by Richard J. Mammana, Jr.

General Convention is a curious phenomenon in many respects, and the attitude of Churchmen toward it is almost unique in Christendom. Most provinces and national bodies of the Church Catholic take their governing synods for granted, as a normal part of continuing Church life. Not so Episcopalians, who have come to regard the triennial sessions of their major governing body as cataclysmic eruptions in Church life, which will either throw a monkey wrench into the machinery of the Church or give it a new burst of energy to carry it through the ensuing three years. Too often the end of Convention elicits a sigh of relief that the Church is still functioning, and that no major damage has been done to it by its bishops and duly elected clerical and lay representatives.

Why should this be the case? We think it is partly a natural result of the so-called Catholic-Protestant tension under which our Church normally lives. But that is not enough to account for it entirely, since the convocations of York and Canterbury and the Church Assembly do not seem to evoke the same sense of crisis in our British fellow-Churchmen. It is also partly because this country is so big, and the General Convention, coming at three-year intervals, has such a short time in which to attempt to settle matters of policy for a diverse and scattered constituency. But we think that the heightened sense of triennial crisis in the past two decades stems largely from the "depression mentality" from which the Church is only now beginning to emerge.

Let's take a look at the record, as Al Smith used to say. The high point of the first half of this century, so far as national Church policy is concerned, was the General Convention of 1919, in which the Nationwide Campaign was launched. For the first time the Episcopal Church had a truly unified national and international program of missionary advance. As always, the missionary attitude of the Church proved to be a fairly accurate barometer of its spiritual health, and the Church awoke to new life in parishes and dioceses as well as in its larger activities. Its new-found unity of purpose was signalized by the development of the National Council, which gave direction to its expanding activities between the sessions of General Convention.

If 1919 was the high point of the first half-century, certainly 1934 was the low point. Depression, which had struck the financial world late in 1929, had by that time engulfed the Church in its suffocating tentacles. Debts were sky-high and contributions for all purposes earth-low. Confidence in the National Council was at its nadir. The Church was unable even to adopt a working budget, and was forced to operate for three years on an "emergency schedule." But out of the depths of despair was born the Forward Movement, which began the long and arduous task of revitalizing the life, and rehabilitating the work, of the Church.

Progress from 1934 to 1949 has been slow but steady. The Church weathered the storm of a Second World War, and was immediately faced with new opportunities and soul-stirring demands in the postwar world. True, some doors are closing to the Church's message, as in some parts of China; but other doors are opening, as in Japan, where General MacArthur unhesitatingly declares time and again that the Church has a golden opportunity.

Unhappily, the General Convention of three years ago, which might have addressed itself to these new opportunities, was torn by internal dissension. This year there was no such dissension, and in its rediscovered unity the Church found itself in a position to take a stride forward comparable to that of 1919. Bishops and deputies, we truly believe, caught something of a vision of a more vital

(Continued on next page)

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Episcopal Church, ready to follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit even into new and uncharted fields. In the words of the report of the Committee on Program and Budget: "We seem to discern the renewed stirring of the zeal that in times past sent Jackson Kemper to the Western frontier, Channing Moore Williams to the Orient, John Payne to Africa, and Lucien Lee Kinsolving to South America." Truly there were giants in those days; can we develop leadership of such stature in our own time?

We believe the answer is a ringing affirmative; and we think the General Convention of 1949 has set the stage on which may be enacted a new drama of spiritual, educational, and missionary progress on the part of the Episcopal Church in the second half of this century, which lies immediately before us.

We agree wholeheartedly with Bishop [Henry Knox] Sherrill's analysis of the situation. "I have the conviction," says the Presiding Bishop in a post-Convention statement written especially for this issue of THE LIVING CHURCH, "that when the Church as a whole is told the story as presented to and understood by the General Convention, there will be a great response in renewed consecration and in sacrificial giving of our means and of ourselves."

The budget appended to our national Church program is the largest in the history of the Episcopal Church. It means that every parish budget and every diocesan budget must be rethought, and that every individual communicant must have a new concern about his own stewardship of the material gifts of God. We must give more generously, and more intelligently, if the goal is to be achieved. We must broaden our horizons, and think more about the needs of the whole Church.

Diocesanism as well as parochialism must be broken down. We must awaken to the fact that an unchurched area in Long Island or Tennessee is the concern of Churchmen in Maine and California, just as a call to advance in Brazil or Okinawa is the responsibility of the Church in Virginia and New York and Wisconsin. And if any diocese or parish fails to do its full share, the work of the whole Church and the very cause of Christianity must suffer. It is not merely a matter of budgets and quotas, but of true conversion and sacrificial giving. But budgets and quotas are necessary if the program is to be achieved and the advance of the Church made effective.

When Bishop [Karl M.] Block stood before the joint session of both Houses of General Convention and the Woman's Auxiliary, he electrified that great audience with his quiet earnestness and the sincerity of his message. We wish the whole Church might have heard him, both in his reading of the report and in the few words that he added out of the depth of his own great heart. We cannot point up this editorial better than by quoting a few paragraphs from the beginning and end of that report, which we hope will prove to be the keynote of the united advance of the Episcopal Church, not only in the next triennium but in the next fifty years, so that the second half of this twentieth century may be redeemed for Christ and His Church in ways that we can now but dimly foresee and to a degree that we cannot begin to measure.

"The ringing call to advance in the name of God," said Bishop Block as he began to read the committee's report, "is one that has always awakened response in the hearts of His people. It is that call that is being made to the Episcopal Church today, when new opportunities are opening up for Christian advance in all parts of the world.

"Conscious of this divine call, yet painfully aware of our human limitations, your program and budget committee has tried to shape the glad response that we know our Church will want to make. While in some areas we have perforce had to yield to defensive tactics and to be limited for the moment to a strategy of 'hold the line,' in other areas we have charted a bold advance in the belief that God the Holy Spirit is indeed commanding us to 'go forward' under the banner of Christ the King. …

"We have tried … to begin the process of what we hope will be a great upsurge of faith, of hope, and of love, which are the marks of the truly converted Christian. Only thus can we really measure up to the splendid heritage that is ours as members incorporate in the mystical body of Christ — His Holy Catholic Church."

Then followed the details of the $5,600,000 budget — the largest ever proposed to any General Convention, but one that yet should be well within the means of an aroused and consecrated Episcopal Church. A truly adequate program of Christian education, which we need so

It is not merely a matter of budgets and quotas, but of true conversion and sacrificial giving.

badly to cure what the bishops' pastoral refers to as the basic weakness of our religious illiteracy. The opening up of a new mission field in Okinawa. Advance in Brazil and Japan, in the Philippines and in Central America. Help to the Church in China, with freedom to adjust appropriations to meet the rapidly changing situation there. New work to serve the shifting populations in this country. Assistance to dioceses in urban, rural, and industrial areas, with development of new kinds of Christian evangelism to meet new situations. Christian world relief and Church cooperation. These are many facets of the same jewel, the precious gem of Christian conviction which cannot reflect the light of God's countenance unless it be brought into the open and shown forth to the world.

Finally, as Bishop Block completed the reading of the report, soon to be enthusiastically and unanimously adopted, came these sober but stirring words:

"When the program of the Church becomes a matter of heart concern to the rank and file of our people, the raising of a much greater budget will be the inevitable response of regenerated hearts. The call is to do for God with God's strength what we would not dare attempt for ourselves and in our own strength. Let us go from this place determined by God's grace, as an act of penitence and gratitude, to show the world that the Episcopal Church has shaken itself free from parochialism to justify its claim as a true branch of the Holy Catholic Church."

In a sense, this was the first "normal" General Convention in twenty years. Its cry was neither "Let us retrench" nor "Save the Church." Its spirit was rather one of listening for the voice of the Holy Spirit. And many feel that the answer came quite plainly in the quiet but compelling words of the Old Testament with which the program committee prefaced its report:

"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." ■

THE LIVING CHURCH
VOLUME 244 • NUMBER 11

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THE LIVING CHURCH is published biweekly, dated Sunday, by the Living Church Foundation, Inc., at 816 E. Juneau Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202. Periodicals postage paid at Milwaukee, WI, and at additional mailing offices.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: $45 for one year; $85 for two years. Canadian postage an additional $55 per year; Mexico and all other foreign, $62.00 per year.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE LIVING CHURCH, P.O. Box 514036, Milwaukee, WI 53203-3436. Subscribers, when submitting address changes, should please allow 3-4 weeks for change to take effect.

THE LIVING CHURCH (ISSN 0024-5240) is published by THE LIVING CHURCH FOUNDATION, INC., a non-profit organization serving the Church. All gifts to the Foundation are tax-deductible.

MANUSCRIPTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: THE LIVING CHURCH cannot assume responsibility for the return of photos or manuscripts.

The Testimony

The addition of Matthias to the remaining eleven following Judas's betrayal of Jesus underscores the providential necessity of restoring the number twelve to the flock of the elect. The twelve tribes and their hopes are fulfilled in the appointment of the twelve disciples. Although the selection occurred by lot, requirements were considered. The new apostle was to come "from those men who were gathered together during the entire time that Jesus went in and out among them, beginning from the baptism of John to the day he was taken up, to become a witness to the resurrection with us" (Acts 1:22). Shortly thereafter, sound, wind, and flame fill the air (Acts 2). The twelve, symbolizing a totality, are ignited with a divine dialect for the world. Their words hook hearts, immediately.

Preaching, they announce "Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested by God" (Acts 2:22). They attest as God has attested. What is the testimony of God? "This is the testimony of God; he has testified concerning his Son" (1 John 5:9). Please, some simple clarity! What is God saying? "The one who believes in the Son has the testimony within himself" (1 John 5:10). Is the testimony then whatever thoughts currently occupy the unstable house of the mind? I have my testimony and you have yours. I have my God, my private word, my singular truth. But the testimony which awakens in me has the surprising quality of concordance with the voice in you. We hear together: "This is the testimony; God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (1 John 5:11). This is verified by mutual confession in the holy Church. All speak with one voice, saying: "We have eternal life (now) in the Son" (1 John 5:13).

The Gospel speaks of "your name," "your word," and "your words." Jesus says that he has "manifested your name to the people." The "name" of the Father, though hidden, identifies the deepest possible communion between the Father and Son. The Father has given his name to the Son, who then in turn gives the name to the people (John 17:11). Recalling that the name of God is a profound sacred mystery guarded with silence, the giving of the name implies giving what is deepest and dearest and most desirous. The "name" approximates the being of God, *Qui est.*

The mystery is given, however, in two distinctive forms, approachable to mere mortals. The name comes as the *logos*, the word. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The people are said "to preserve your word" (John 17:6). Against the backdrop of St. John's symbolic world, Jesus is this Word. As the Word, Jesus makes the Father known (John 1:18). Speaking of the Father, the Son uses words, but only those which he receives from the Father (John 17:8). Having preserved the Word, and having accepted the words which the Son receives from the Father, the disciples, at Jesus' praying plea, are safe *in your name.* Sharing in the holy name, the disciples are called to be one just as the Father and Son are one. It is precisely this oneness, this catholic wholeness, this mutual life, which is "my joy fulfilled in them" (John 17:13).

Look It Up

Read Psalm 1. Blessed is the one who takes long walks in the company of the Word.

Think About It

St. John does not want us to wait for eternal life. Eternal life is in the Son, and the Son is where we are.

SUNDAY'S READINGS | Day of Pentecost, May 27

Acts 2:1-21 or Ezek. 37:1-14 • Ps. 104:25-35,37 • Rom. 8:22-27 or Acts 2:1-21
John 15:26,26; 16:4b-15

Reconstruction

On this sacred day, the breath of the Lord, coming as violent wind, flickering tongues of fire, native speech to the nations, is entirely life-giving. This is the Spirit poured out upon all flesh. Prophecy, visions, and dreams are ignited by the sparking wind. Everyone hears and dreams about the wonders of God "in their own language." The turbulence of the Spirit is directed toward a single intelligence. Everyone understands.

The Spirit bears witness to our spirit that we are sons and daughters of God. This suggests an interior communion as we are caught up into the life of the eternal Son of the Father. What is being drawn up, however, is not a mere portion of our humanity. While testing the limits of our imagination, we are pressed to recall that Jesus rose bodily, ascended bodily, will return in a glorious body. Thus he is working salvation through bones, sinews, flesh, skin, and the breath by which we were made living beings. Salvation is the proper reconstruction (recapitulation) of our broken humanity. The fragments of our being are reassembled with precision and the resulting life is new life altogether. The Lord opens our grave and says, "Come forth!"

We are children of the earth, formed of mud and breath. Coming to us, Jesus comes to creation. Did he not sanctify the Jordan by the touch of his feet? He gave sight through an ointment of dirt and spittle. He replicates his body with bread and his blood with wine. He calls us *his body*. In our bodies we feel the groaning not only of our lives, but of creation itself. For the whole creation, Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, is the subject of God's calling and saving. Do you listen when God says "good" again and again? Who said you would be run from your Christian pew because you love water and earth and sky? Yes, nature can be ruthless, indifferent to our immediate need. Nature can bite and devour and destroy, but not because nature is evil. Nature longs as we do for complete redemption. What will a redeemed creation look like? Some people seem to know, some scholars are willing to guess. Personally, I have no idea. I do know, however, that the Christian story is about bone, tissue, flesh, skin, earth, wind, and fire. Love the earth God wills to redeem. Tend rightly to your body.

The Spirit makes us alive. The Spirit is renewing creation. And the Spirit is helping us in our pilgrimage through time. The Spirit helps us to recall everything that Jesus said and did, and how he opened the Scriptures to us. And the Spirit helps us to live with confidence in our own time, for the Spirit leads us into all truth. This applies to both our personal lives and to our life in the holy Church. The Spirit directs us, often through the good counsel of those we trust and love. The Spirit guides the Church. How do we know absolutely and without equivocation that the Spirit has acted decisively in the present moment? Simply, we do not, and thus are compelled to live in hope and trust. The church has an "infallible consciousness," but it is not lived "outside all deliberation and all judgment" (Vladimir Lossky, "Traditions and Tradition"). Expect debates, difficulties and trials in your soul, in your home, in your church. Still, God reigns.

Look It Up

Read Ezekiel 37. To remove all doubt, the hand of the Lord led Ezekiel among the bones. There were very many and they were very dry. Very many dry bones + noise and rattling = I open your graves.

Think About It

"A small particle of creation wants to praise you," Augustine ponders. Of creation!

Dual Congregation

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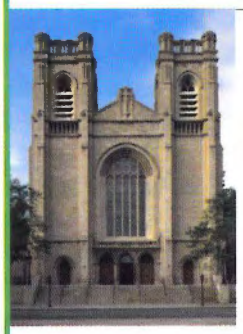

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Cathedral Nite

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Appointments

The Rev. **Lucas Grubbs** is rector of Ascension, 600 Gilpin St., Denver, CO 80218.

The Rev. **Ken Malcolm** is rector of St. Mark's, 910 E 3rd Ave., Durango, CO 81301.

Retirements

The Rev. **Philip W. Snyder**, as rector of St. John's, Ithaca, NY.

The Rev. **David Kosekela**, as rector of St. Raphael's, Colorado Springs, CO.

Deaths

The Rev. **Jay Leroy Lauer** died Jan. 7 in Gainesville, FL. He was 89.

A native of New York, NY, Lauer served in the U.S. Army Air Corps and the U.S. Air Force for 23 years and retired in 1965 as a lieutenant colonel. From 1965 to 1989 he worked for the University of Florida, first as an officer in the communications laboratory and later as an administrative assistant in the College of Education. He was ordained deacon in 1986. Based at St. Jopseh's Church, Newberry, FL, he served in prisons and hospitals. He is survived by his wife, Barbara; a son, Jay Lauer, Jr.; a daughter, Jan; three granddaughters; and three great-grandchildren.

The Rev. **Cody C. Unterseher** died April 25 in New York, NY, of complications from an aneurysm that he suffered April 14. He was 36.

Unterseher was ordained deacon and priest in 2007. He was a graduate of the University of Mary, Bismarck, ND; St. John's School of Theology, Collegeville, MN; and General Theological Seminary. He was working toward a doctoral degree in liturgical studies at the University of Notre Dame. Beginning in 2009 Unterseher was priest associate and theologian in residence at Christ Church, Bronxville, NY. He was an oblate of Assumption Abbey in Richardton, ND, and editor *The Anglican*, the journal of the Anglican Society in North America. He wrote regularly for a weblog, Pray Tell, and was author of the books *Marked as Christ's Own Forever: Toward a (re-)interpretation of Sacramental Character in the Episcopal Church and American Sarum: The Liturgy of Christ Church, Bronxville, New York, within the History of Anglican Worship.*

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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; 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; Sta, Stations; V, Vespers; v, vicar; YPF, Young People's Fellowship. A/C, air-conditioned; H/A, handicapped accessible.

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