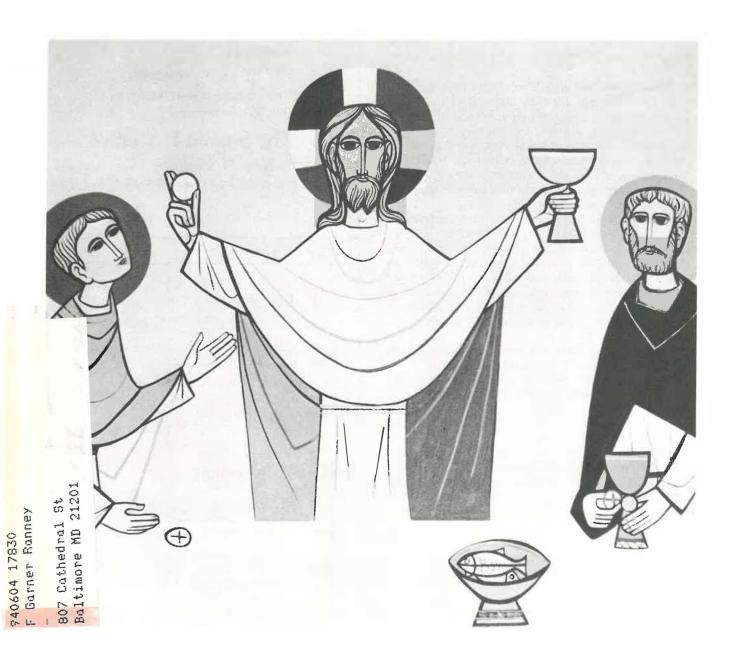
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IN THIS CORNER

Stop Being So Nice!

May I suggest that, if an obituary is ever written of the Episcopal Church, the causes of death may be listed as an overdose of niceness, an infection by jargon, and overindulgence in conferences, seminars and meetings?

Church leaders seem to be striving mightily to see that the church is a hive of polite discussion and sunny consensus. This Episcopal niceness, however, drains our debates of all real content. That is, when a secular politician comes out for Mom, apple pie and flag, we usually and rightly judge that person to be either a con or a fool.

What, then, exempts our church politicians from the same judgment? Confrontations between different factions may shake the church, but they are more productive than the meetings in which everyone is very nice and maunders on for hours in exalted language. For those who still balk, you may want to look up how nice the prophets were to the nation of Israel, how Paul avoided confrontation and controversy when discussing the circumcision party, and how Jesus tried to work for a consensus with the scribes and pharisees.

Which brings us to the jargon endemic to such conferences. I recently attended a meeting in which the chairman of a key committee presented his committee's report, which was filled with many long, impressive phrases. Then he was asked to explain the report. He mumbled and parroted a few of the key phrases, and then sort of gaped at us. Out of the abundance of our Episcopal niceness, we applauded as he escaped from his embarrassment at revealing that he did not understand his own committee's report.

I suggest this is more widespread than is recognized. I'll bet many of our clergy, especially those who read too much Tillich in their seminary days, have gotten so used to stringing together long and important words that some of them have forgotten that words should have meaning.

Finally, are all our meetings and boards and councils and seminars and workshops really important?

For these reasons, I suggest that all Episcopal conferences, committee meetings, seminars, etc., have the following rules:

1. Church meetings will be called only in situations of urgent need in accomplishing particular goals. All voting members of any meeting that fails to meet such goals will be required to pay, out of their own pockets, all of the conference's expenses.

2. Any proposal or statement that does draw opposition will be tabled immediately, on the assumption that anything everyone agrees with is probably too vague to be of any use.

3. All church statements must have the same readability as any good translation of the Bible. For this one, a list would be created of words the use of which would automatically get the speaker ejected from any meeting. I would include on this list "hermeneutics" and "process" and "consensus." I'm sure you have your own suggestions.

This should drastically cut down on church committees and conferences. We might even hear of a church get-together at which real positions were clearly declared, and at which something might be accomplished.

Of course, I'll have to call a conference to discuss my plan. Get a big-name speaker, schedule some workshops, book a hotel in some pleasant convention town ...

Our guest columnist is James E. Tynen, a member of St. Stephen's Church, Wilkinsburg, Pa.

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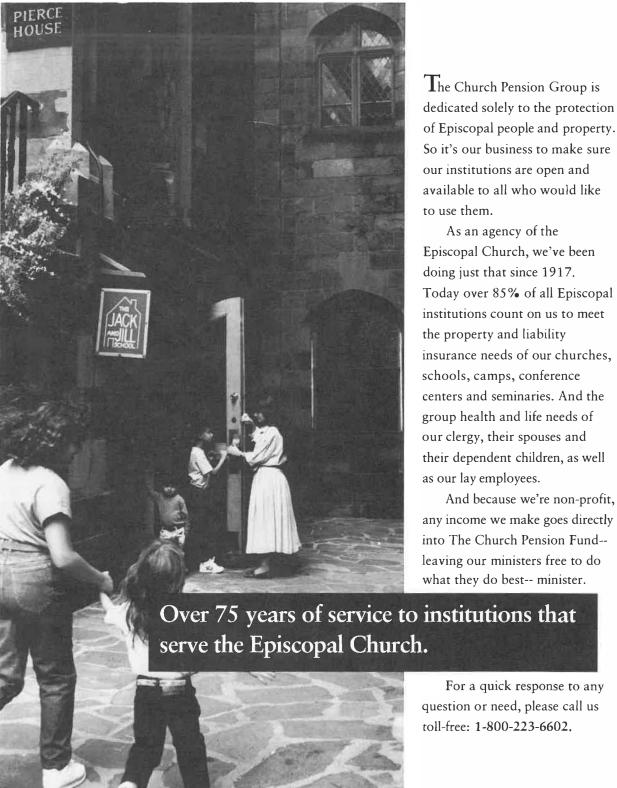
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ON THE COVER

"One Body," a drawing in the main dining room of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement in Garrison, N.Y., symbolizes the order's dedication to Christian unity. It has a motto using the words of St. Paul: "The one bread makes us one body, though many in number."

Religious News Service photo



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LETTERS_

Like a Business?

A successful business prospers when it meets the needs and good will of its customers. For example, the Coca-Cola Company experimented by changing the original formula of its beverage. According to a spokesman, the complaints of the customers were so numerous and the loss of sales so large that the company decided to regain its public support by changing back to the original components.

A statistical analysis of baptized membership in the Episcopal Church, beginning in 1880, records a consistent growth until 1967, when a decline started. By 1990, membership had dropped by 1.2 million members, or about one third of the total membership.

This marked loss coincides with the years of the trial liturgies and the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Church people have reacted unfavorably. Some have become indifferent, some have left the church, "continuing" Anglican churches have been established in many dioceses, mission churches have closed, financial support has dwindled.

Has not the time come to face realities and reassess our position, taking a lesson from successful business growth? Our traditional Anglican prayer book for 450 years has been a source of inspiration and comforting strength to our people throughout the world. It is surely the classic liturgy. Let us return to it before we suffer more losses.

(The Rev. Canon) DAVID C. TRIMBLE Hagerstown, Md.

Main Concern Lost

I am more than disappointed in the inaction of the members of the mainline Christian churches and of the Jewish synagogues with regard to the social disintegration of American society. In reading the Dec. 17 edition of the *Union News* of Springfield, Mass., I read a syndicated column by George Will regarding the lack of parental responsibility in the nurturing and ethical guidance of children. Statistics which seem to be accurate reflect the fact that 26 percent of white



children grow up in families where the parents are unmarried or, if Afro-American, 60 percent of parents are unmarried. Many children grow up with only one parent, usually female.

As Mr. Will points out, the lack of parental concern about children has resulted in an outbreak of violence and other unlawful behavior, particularly by young males. In our city of Springfield, as elsewhere, we are being faced with the fact that students are bringing lethal weapons to public schools.

As I pondered these facts, I was saddened and depressed. However, I read another article which revived me with hope. I read an account concerning the fact that scores of black churches will "adopt" their local public schools and offer help in controlling the violence that has plagued the school system in New York City.

Why are mainline churches and synagogues so enmeshed in matters of sexuality, gender confrontations and liturgical correctness that the main concern of Christian and Jew to worship and serve a loving God is lost? Could it be that we in the so-called middle class white society who go to church are asleep and will be shut out when the bridegroom comes to the feast?

(The Rev.) EDGAR H. FORREST East Longmeadow, Mass.

From New England?

I was amused to read in a classified ad that a source offering bulletin inserts, under the heading "Propers," with the Sunday readings printed on them, apparently has switched to using a different translation and is now providing them in the "New England" Bible translation

To Our Readers:

We welcome your letters to the editor. Each letter is subject to editing and should be kept as brief as possible. Submissions that are typed with double spacing are appreciated and more likely to be published. Writers must include their names and addresses. Because of the large volume of letters we receive, we are not able to publish all letters, nor able to acknowledge receipt.

[TLC, Dec. 19]. Could this new translation be the work of Tom and Ray Magliozzi of *Car Talk* fame?

(The Rev.) ROBERT A. SMITH St. Paul's Church

Dowagiac, Mich.

The error was not the advertiser's. Ed.

Strange Dichotomy

There is a strange dichotomy afoot in the world. Fundamentalists and some Roman Catholics claim HIV/AIDS is God's punishment for homosexuality. Whether God's punishment or not, a few of my friends have died of this disease, and many more friends of friends. But I am not aware of any lesbian who has died of AIDS.

Since subtlety may fail to guide some readers to an obvious conclusion, here it is: If AIDS is God's punishment on male homosexuals, God must love lesbians more than almost everyone else, since they rarely contract AIDS.

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Western Kansas Cathedral Dean Resigns

A disagreement between the Bishop of Western Kansas and his cathedral dean has led to the resignation of the dean and a cathedral canon.

The Very Rev. M. Richard Hatfield, dean of Christ Cathedral, Salina, and the Rev. Canon Joseph M. Kimmett resigned after being reprimanded by the Rt. Rev. John Ashby.

At issue is the fact the dean and canon did not participate in the renewal of ordination vows during the diocesan convention Eucharist. Bishop Ashby reprimanded the two because he said they broke collegiality with him and with the clergy of the diocese by not participating in that ceremony.

Dean Hatfield said he did not take part in that event because a woman priest, also a member of the diocesan clergy, participated.

"One of the things I will not do, because it violates my theological convictions that women cannot be catholic priests, is to stand together in the presbyterial college, or in any sacramental expression," Dean Hatfield wrote in a letter to members of the cathedral.

"Bishop Ashby and I hold different interpretations of the various 'conscience clauses,' agreements and promises made in the Episcopal Church regarding our state of 'impaired communion' which we have been living in since 1976," he added. "It is my understanding that I cannot be required to do anything which violates my theological position as related to the ordi-

nation of women to the priesthood and episcopate."

"Your readers need to know this has nothing to do with the ordination of women," Bishop Ashby said in a telephone interview. "It's a matter of ordination yows."

Bishop Ashby said diocesan clergy renew their vows every year during diocesan convention and laity renew their baptismal vows at the same service.

"I considered this a serious enough offense to the collegiality of the diocese to warrant a reprimand, so I put a letter in their files," he said.

"I have other clergy in the diocese opposed to the ordination of women who work well here," he added.

Dean Hatfield, 40, has been at the cathedral since 1988. Canon Kimmett, 31, joined the staff in 1992.

"Bishop Ashby and I reached the point in this matter where I could challenge his judgment, which would involve hearings and so forth, or I can do what I decided to do and that is to resign as dean," Dean Hatfield wrote. "I have chosen the latter, with absolutely no hard feelings toward Bishop Ashby."

The bishop made a similar statement. "The dean and I are really very fond of each other personally," he said. Dean Hatfield told THE LIVING CHURCH he wasn't sure of his plans after leaving the cathedral at the end of 1993, but others said he would enter the Antiochian Orthodox Church.



RNS photo

Bishops of four Arizona churches sign an ecumenical covenant pledging cooperation and mutual support. The Rt. Rev. Robert Shahan, Episcopal Bishop of Arizona, is at right.

BRIEFLY

Dr. **Donald R. Hopkins**, senior warden at Trinity Church, Chicago, was honored recently by the United Nations Children's Fund for his work with children. Dr. Hopkins, former deputy director for the Centers for Disease Control, now works for Global 2000.

Some controversial suggestions for church renewal have been put forth by an organization of lay persons in the Greek Orthodox Church. In a 344-page book covering seven areas of church life, an organization known as Orthodox Christian Laity recommends such measures as opening the diaconate to women and phasing out Greek as the primary language used for worship services.

CONVENTIONS

The **Diocese of Southern Ohio** approved a \$6 million capital campaign fund and affirmed the election of a suffragan bishop during its diocesan convention Dec. 3-4 at Ohio University in Athens.

The fund drive, to begin in 1994, includes rebuilding of Procter Conference Center, enabling outreach ministries through the Episcopal Community Services Foundation, and developing and supporting congregations.

The Rt. Rev. Herbert Thompson Jr., Bishop of Southern Ohio, called for the election of a suffragan bishop during his convention address, and delegates later affirmed that plan. Convention approved an election process culminating in the election to be held June 25.

The Rt. Rev. Paul Reeves, Anglican observer to the United Nations, spoke to convention and addressed identity.

"Questions of authority are now bound up with identity," Bishop Reeves said. "How different can you be and still be Anglican? Different from what, and who decides?"

The Rt. Rev. William Rukirande, Bishop of Kigezi, Uganda, also addressed convention, speaking of the devastation in his country from AIDS and civil war.

Convention adopted a resolution calling on the House of Bishops to rescind the "conscience clause" which it adopted in 1977 concerning ordination of women as priests and deacons.



Members of four ELCA churches share food and fellowship with members of Holy Comforter, Lower Brule, S.D.

Lutherans and Episcopalians Working Together

By PATRICIA WAINWRIGHT

hile discussion on unity and communion between the Episcopal Church and the Lutheran Church has been going on for decades, many parishes in small towns and rural areas have devised individual, pragmatic and ecumenical uses of limited facilities and resources.

The Rev. Fredrick Dennis, rector of St. Luke's Church in Saranac Lake, N.Y., said, "The ecumenical movement tends to grow from bottom up, rather than top down." His parish has had an "informal covenant" with the Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, which meets at St. Luke's, for more than 10 years. On the secular level, Fr. Dennis said, "We rent space to them." Episcopalians and Lutherans worship together twice yearly, on Maundy Thursday evening and the fourth Sunday of Advent. They use either the Lutheran or the Episcopal liturgy entirely; mixing them, Fr. Dennis said, "leaves everyone a little hungry."

The two congregations cooperate on several community projects, especially the yearly Strawberry Festival, a strawberries-and-ice-cream feast held on Independence Day.

Fr. Dennis said Saranac Lake is "the most ecumenical town I've ever worked in." The Ecumenical Council, consisting of the Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic ("very large") and Christian Science ("very small") churches sponsor the CROP walk, a food pantry, and a January "good old-fashioned pulpit swap." At Christmas and at Easter, the clergy meet in Fr. Dennis'

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Fr. Schriber with Lutheran acolyte Wendi Ghent at Grace Church, Whiteville, N.C.

study to broadcast readings and hymns over the radio.

Fr. Dennis said the ecumenical spirit would continue even with new clergy. "The laity expect it," he said.

In Price, Utah, the Rev. Bryant Bechtold serves one congregation of about 150 members, comprised since the late 1970s of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and Ascension Lutheran Church. Both congregations were small; they progressed "from sharing Christian education and youth activities to finances, to worship."

Fr. Bechtold alternates Lutheran and Anglican services. The group has joint bylaws and constitution, but Fr. Bechtold said he must maintain two separate rosters. "I have to sort out how much Lutherans and Episcopalians give, for parochial reports," he said. "Some parishioners don't know who's which." The bishops of both the Rocky Mountain

Synod and the Diocese of Utah are very supportive.

Fr. Bechtold said he once performed an Episcopal baptism during a Lutheran service. "It was a Lutheran Sunday," and the couple were Episcopalians. They chose the Episcopal baptism.

This sort of sharing may be the way of the future in small towns, Fr. Bechtold said. He mentioned the Concordat of Agreement between the Episcopal and Lutheran churches: "Unfortunately we've gotten theologians involved. The person in the pew is interested in practical things — sacraments, Christian education. The bottom line is we're all gathered together as one to worship Jesus."

The Rev. Robert Schriber said of Lutherans of the Church of Christ the King in Whiteville, N.C., "They worship with us." Grace Church, of which he is rector, is "an Episcopal Church with (Continued on next page)

Patricia Wainwright is an editorial assistant at The Living Church.

LUTHERANS

(Continued from previous page)

members." In 1984, the Lutheran Church in America would have closed Christ the King had not the Lutheran bishop appealed to the Rt. Rev. B. Sidney Sanders, Episcopal Bishop of East Carolina. The present combined congregation is small, with 5-6 active Lutheran members and 50-75 Episcopalians. While the Lutherans cannot vote in parish elections or serve on the vestry, "we solicit their opinions, their input. I can't recall any act of the vestry the Lutherans would have opposed." The official Lutheran representative to the vestry is Connie Ghent, who has been parish treasurer since 1985. "She's going to retire this year — let someone else have a crack at it," Fr. Schriber said.

According to the Rev. Mark Menees, Bishop of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, there are several places in the state where "Lutherans are cared for by Episcopal priests while maintaining their Lutheran identity."

"I like these places," Bishop Menees said. "They color outside the lines." He feels these unions help each church to define itself and provide "a broader view of the church catholic. They keep us from getting too parochial."

On the reservations of South Dakota, the diocese and the ELCA synod formalized "companion relationships" three years ago. The Rev. James Pearson, a sort of modern circuit rider with four churches at Lower Brule, Chamberlain, and Crow Creek, described the Episcopal Church on the reservations as "a church on welfare — half of our funds come from the



St. Luke's Church, Saranac Lake, N.Y., shares its building with an ELCA congregation.

national church." About four years ago, Fr. Pearson and the Rev. David Winterfeldt, a Lutheran pastor, discussed the possibility of these churches serving as training grounds for seminarians. The idea became the Lakota/Dakota Shared Ministry. (The two clergymen called it "Lutepisc.")

Linda Vork is the fourth Lutheran intern to serve and live on the Lower Brule Reservation. As Lutheran seminarians serve an internship between their second and third years, they are able to become much more involved than could

Episcopal students available for perhaps three months. Ms. Vork lives next to the church; she says Morning Prayer each Sunday, with Fr. Pearson celebrating the Eucharist two or three times a month. Her work is supervised by both Fr. Pearson and a Lutheran minister. "The three of us work so well together," she said. The Episcopal diocese provides for the intern's housing needs, while the Lutheran synod pays the stipend.

Fr. Pearson and Randy Reinartz, diocesan executive officer, explained that the Episcopal Church has served the reservations for a long time, while the Lutheran Church had "a greater off-reservation presence." Instead of bringing another denomination onto the reservations, Fr. Pearson said, Lutherans suggested to the Episcopal bishop, "Let us work with you." "It was a natural," Fr. Pearson said. "We didn't have enough pastoral support to give — we're spread too thin."

The new church building on the Lower Brule has just been completed, and land-scaping is underway. The construction of the church has brought great fellowship, Fr. Pearson said. Initially the Episcopalians on the reservation asked, "What's a Lutheran? Why are they coming here?"

"They learned that Lutherans are the ones who help us put shingles on the roof. They laugh with us, they bring food — they're people just like us."



Members of the Lutheran-Episcopal felllowship in Price, Utah.

The Shared Pastorate

Necessity leads to a new kind of ministry

By JOHN M. FLANIGEN, JR.

The ministry of the Rev. David Holsinger, vicar of the Church of the Redeemer in Salmon, Idaho, may be a sign of the future church. Fr. Holsinger's ministry in Salmon is not similar to that found in every small, rural, town, nor is it unique. Fr. Holsinger is not only vicar of Church of the Redeemer, he is also pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Salmon, a position which accords him seat, voice and vote in the councils of the Presbyterian Church.

Salmon, Idaho, county seat of Lemhi County, is located south of the Idaho-Montana border that runs east and west, population about 3,000. It is situated on the banks of the Salmon River, which was dubbed "the river of no return" by explorers Lewis and Clark. It is more than 60 miles north on winding, mountain road to Hamilton, Mont., and is about 160 miles south and east over open desert to Idaho Falls. This isolation mandates that the business and mercantile community of Salmon be far more complete than one would expect in a small town. The primary economic resources of Salmon are bean warehousing, ranching and some tourism.

There are at least three unpleasant facts of life confronting Church of the Redeemer and First Presbyterian. First, it is impossible for both to pay their pastor the minimum stipend demanded by their judicatories. Second, distances and isolation from other churches are increasing as communities die and churches are closed. It is 160 miles to the nearest Episcopal and Presbyterian colleague. Third, judicatories are giving less and less financial support for small congregations. Hence, if you cannot pay for it, you cannot have it. This is the invitation to do something that has never been done before, to the glory of God.

It was the Rt. Rev. John S. Thornton, Bishop of Idaho, who initiated this new ministry, by contacting the authorities of

The Rev. John M. Flanigen, Jr. is a retired priest who is TLC correspondent for the Diocese of Idaho.



Fr. Holsinger

the Presbyterian Church, and suggesting the possibility of this shared pastorate. This concept was welcomed by members of Redeemer, First Presbyterian and Fr. Holsinger. In due, but short, order, more than a year ago, arrangements for this dual pastorate were completed.

On a recent visit to Salmon I met Fr. Holsinger's brother, the Rev. Paul Holsinger, ordained, non-parochial Baptist pastor/cowboy poet. Both men said: "I ride for the breed, not the brand." That is, their first loyalty and accounting is to the whole "body of which Jesus Christ is the head and all baptized persons are the members." Both are willing to do new things to make this body a reality to more people. This does not mean they are uncaring about the worship, doctrine and customs of the churches which ordained them.

On the Sunday of my visit, I assisted Fr. Holsinger in the Eucharist at Redeemer and attended services in the Presbyterian church. I was quickened by the lesson in our lectionary for the day, Jonah, that reluctant prophet who got into a "whale of a lot of trouble" because he

did not want to obey God and go convert the people of Nineveh. The lesson in the Presbyterian lectionary that morning was Exodus 16: 2-15, which describes the Israelites' criticism of Moses for leading them out of Egypt to the wilderness. I addressed both congregations, noting they were doing something that Jonah and the Israelites were quite reluctant to do: trying something new to the glory of God.

Both congregations are well blessed in terms of physical property. Church of the Redeemer, organized in 1878, has a gem of a building, built in 1903 of stone, Gothic in design, with seating for 100, and situated on a grassy lot with large trees. The parish house is a separate building with a large meeting room, kitchen, several smaller rooms, all well used. There is also a rectory on the property which is used by Fr. Holsinger.

Church membership is about 100, with about 30 in regular attendance at the Sunday Eucharist. The annual budget is about \$34,000.

One Sunday per month, a small group drives the 120 miles round trip from Challis, Idaho, to Redeemer for the Eucharist. Public school administrator/teacher Jim and Carol Espy and their children; Admiral Robert Chewning and his wife Ginny; Mrs. Harriet Richmond, widow of an Episcopal priest (they were missionaries in Africa), make this trek consistently, and lead services in Challis on the other Sundays.

First Presbyterian Church has a membership of about 40, with about 20 in regular attendance on Sunday mornings. The annual budget is about \$22,000. The church is a white frame building, loved by the members. There is also an annex which is now being used for counseling and other public health services.

In talking with the members of both congregations, I heard nothing but praise for this new ministry. At Redeemer, Bob Perry, senior warden, expressed complete accord with this shared pastorate. Mrs. Juanita Gehovic, a member, said the shared pastorate is a very good move, and she sees no problem that cannot be resolved. Treasurer Fran Cooper declared it "a wonderful thing."

Presbyterians Luke and Dorice Prange support Fr. Holsinger and his ministry with their congregation wholeheartedly. Members Bob and Jan Blackadar are delighted with the arrangement.

It is clear that no one is willing to surrender denominational loyalty; nor is anyone willing to see their church closed because financial support for their witness for Christ in the community is drying up. The shared pastorate has ensured the continuation of vital ministry.

EDITORIALS.

Ecumenical Success

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, observed from Jan. 18-25, goes almost unnoticed in most of the Episcopal Church. This week, extending from the feast of the Confession of St. Peter through the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, is an appropriate time to emphasize ecumenical activities. That is reason in itself why little attention is given to this observance by Episcopalians.

While the Episcopal Church continues to participate in ecumenical dialogue with other churches at the national level, it is at the grass roots, or local level, where the most effective ministries with other churches take place. This issue includes a brief look at some ecumenical endeavors in small communities which have proven to be successful. For example, in Idaho, an Episcopal priest serves both his own congregation and a Presbyterian church [p. 9]. Another article looks at some joint efforts between Episcopalians and Lutherans, perhaps the most common of ecumenical activities in which this church is involved [p. 7].

Many church members are outwardly in favor of ecumenical involvement, but few participate. Aside from becoming involved in joint ministries like community food pantries or ministerial associations, few of us get a chance to participate in any meaningful endeavor. As for dialogue, we usually leave that to others.

Ecumenical dialogue can be a valuable activity on any level. When members of churches which confess the same Lord become involved in conversations, each can get to know the other better. We may find that we didn't know what the other church teaches, and we might realize we can learn from one another.

Jesus established one church. As it spread to various parts of the world, it began to take on various characteristics of the local culture, and eventually we had many churches rather than one. Through ecumenical dialogue and involvement, we may find that through baptism, we are together as members of the body of Christ. In living the gospel together, we are likely to find we have more in common than we realize.

Valuable Meetings

This is the time of year when annual meetings are held in many congregations. If you've never been to one, perhaps this is a good year to attend. For newcomers, those who attend church only occasionally, or for persons considering membership in a parish, an annual meeting can provide valuable information about a church and its leaders. For example, the report of the rector or vicar can reveal much about the pastoral leader's hopes for the future of the parish. Reports from various committees, whether presented orally or in writing, give us some insight about what kinds of ministry may take place in that congregation. Elections to the vestry or other positions provide an opportunity to ensure that future leadership is in good hands.

While the church is not a democracy, this is an opportunity for its members to participate in the decision-making process. It's a good time to get involved.

VIEWPOINT

Getting at the Real Issue

and will be made by parliamentary

By GORDON T. CHARLTON

uring the 1991 General Convention, the inability of the members of the House of Bishops to deal amicably and effectively with the thorny issue of homosexuality led to several extraordinary executive sessions. That convention has been followed by three special meetings of the house devoted to prayer, Bible study and small-group discussions. During the same period, a church-wide study of sexuality has been conducted.

It is to be hoped that these measures will serve to clarify the issues before us and to inform those who must make the necessary decisions. The decisions, however, remain to be made and they must process in the political arena of General Convention. One hopes for greater civility and decorum in this year's convention in Indianapolis, but the divisions within the fellowship remain deep and passionate.

Power Struggle

The greatest danger we face in deciding whether or not to bless same-sex unions is that we will act, not by means of consensus on clearly thought-out theological principles, but by means of a power struggle between the forces of "conservatism" versus those of a coalition of "oppressed minorities" and their sympathizers, the arguments being focused not on God's will, but on our own emotional concerns, on current secular mores, and on scientific and sociological data of dubious value and no relevance to the theological question.

Our greatest need, as we enter the next round of the debate, is to think clearly and to keep focused on the real issue. What follows is one person's attempt to do this.

The question is properly expressed as follows: Shall the Episcopal Church pronounce God's blessing on same-sex unions? This wording is important because we must keep clearly in mind the fact that it is God who blesses while we merely pronounce the same. In doing this, we are assuring people of God's approval and affirmation of that which is blessed, and it follows that we may do this properly only when we are sure we have adequate warrant to do so.

This means questions of genetics, psycho-sexual development, justice and compassionate treatment for the unfortunate are pertinent only when, and to the extent that, they shed light on the main question, which is what sort(s) of sexual

(Continued on page 14)

The Rt. Rev. Gordon T. Charlton is retired Suffragan Bishop of Texas. He resides in Pittsboro, N.C.

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> and the LORD has lessed you werever I turned. But now when shall I provide for my own household also?" 31 He said, "What shall I give you?" Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything: if you

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Wilder, of Shepherd's House in Van Nuys, Calif., understands rites of passage in general and the search for connectedness that challenges men in particular.

THE OXFORD MOVEMENT AND ITS LEADERS: A Bibliography of Secondary and Lesser Primary Sources. Supplement. ATLA Bibliography Series, No. 24. By Lawrence N. Crumb. Scarecrow (P.O. Box 4167, Metuchen, NJ 08840). Pp. 320. \$37.50.

Citing his year-long sabbatical, computer technology, and the original cut-off date of 1983 for his first volume (published in 1988), Fr. Crumb, Episcopal priest and librarian at the University of Oregon, convinces us easily of the need for this Supplement. Adds numerous titles and authors to an important topic in Anglican church history, liturgics, theology and culture. Prefaced with a fascinating "What if" list of events comprising a "Non-Chronology of the Oxford Movement" – a bit of creative speculation from this imminent church bibliographer.

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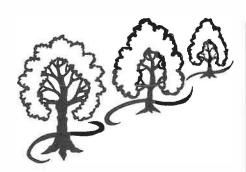
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VIEWPOINT

(Continued from page 10)

relationship(s) God wishes to affirm, bless and see fostered and propagated among us? This leads of course, to another question: How does the Episcopal Church discern the purposeful will of God?

As everyone who reads must know by now, we seek God's will in holy scripture, in Christian tradition and in the application of reason to the understanding of these and of the rest of our experience. All must agree that (for whatever reasons) there is little or no affirmation of samesex unions in either scripture or tradition, so the question is whether faithful reason

Reasons for change must be of a theological nature.

tells us there are overriding considerations of a theological nature, arising out of our contemporary experience, which will justify a radical departure from traditional practice.

Stress must be laid not only on the necessity that reasons for change be overridingly weighty, but also that they be of a theological nature. We must be persuaded that we know the mind of God on this matter better than any previous generation of Christians, including those of the apostolic period. It would be wrong, unworthy and potentially tragic if the church were to decide a matter of this nature and of such far-reaching consequences on any other grounds. Thus it must be stated again that data concerning current scientific hypotheses, opinions concerning rights and equity and feelings of anger or compassion are admissible in this debate only to the degree that they offer to provide some insight into God's intentions and desires concerning human behavior.

The question once again is, shall the Episcopal Church pronounce God's blessing on same-sex unions? As in all debates, the burden of proof lies upon those who argue for the affirmative.

PEOPLE and PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Stephen R. Billings** is director of chaplaincy services at Episcopal Community Services in the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

The Rev. **Susan Baker-Borjeson** is rector of St. Peter's, South Dartmouth, MA.

The Rev. William M. Brock is assistant of St. John's, Box 722, Fayetteville, NC 28302.

The Rev. **David Carl Buxo** is rector of St. Timothy's, 15820 Wyoming Ave., Detroit, MI 48238.

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The Rev. **Randal Foster** is rector of Messiah, Rockingham, and vicar of All Saints', Hamlet, NC; add: 143-E Hartley Dr., High Point, NC 27265.

Deaths

The Rev. **Robert H. Bonner**, former director of stewardship for the national church, died of brain cancer on Oct. 29. He was 62.

Fr. Bonner was born in Corpus Christi, Texas. He received his BA degree from the University of Houston in 1971. He then attended the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, TX. He served many parishes in the Diocese of Texas including St. David's, Hondo, 1959-1963; St. Francis', Victoria, 1963-1969; St. Mark's, Houston 1969-1970; St. Francis', Temple, 1970-1977; and Trinity, Baytown, 1976-1987. He retired in 1992. He was honored by the Seminary of the Southwest on the day before his death with the Hal Perry Distinguished Alumnus Award. Fr. Bonner is survived by his wife, Donna, two sons and a daughter.

The Rev. Samuel C. W. Fleming, retired priest of the Diocese of South Carolina, died Sept. 9 at the age of 78.

Fr. Fleming was born in Baltimore, MD, and was a graduate of Baltimore City College, Johns Hopkins University and Virginia Theological Seminary. He was a Navy chaplain in World War II. He served churches in Maryland, Georgia, Florida and South Carolina. Fr. Fleming was a deputy to the General Convention from 1952 to 1964, and from 1970 to 1984. He was also president of the standing committee of the Diocese of South Carolina. He is survived by his wife, Laura, three daughters, four sons, three sisters and 19 grandchildren.

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Wed 6, Sat 9. MP: Mon-Fri 7, Sat 8:30, Sun 7:30. EP MON-

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Masses: Sun 7:30 Low; 10 Solemn. Mon-Fri 7. Also Wed 10;

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Sun Eu 8, 9:15, 11:15 (1S & 3S), **6**; MP 11:15 (2S, 4S, 5S) followed by HC **12:15.** Sun Sch 9:15; Daily 7:30 & **5:30** ex Sat8:30 & 4:30; Év 5 (1S, Oct. June)

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; Instructions; Int, Intercessions; LOH, Laying On of Hands; Lit, Litany; Mat, Matins; MP, Moming 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/C, handicapped accessible

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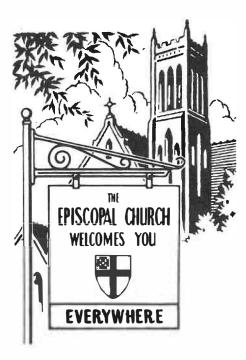
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