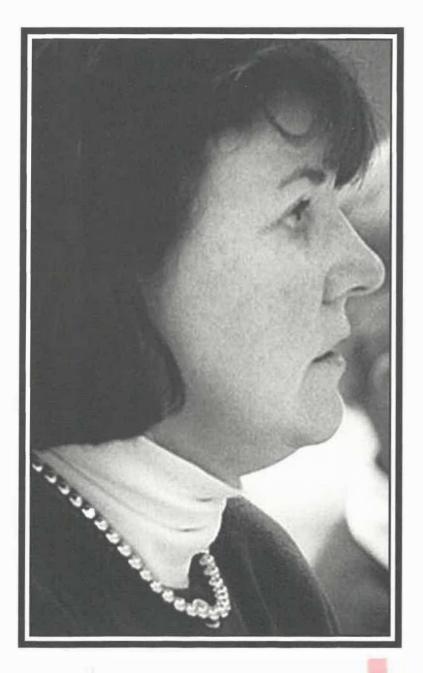
The Living Church May 21, 1995 / \$1.50 The Magazine for Episcopalians



Audit Reveals Misappropriation of \$2.2 Million in Church Funds by Former Treasurer Ellen F. Cooke pp. 6-8

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May 21, 1995 THIS ISSUE ...

Features



Servant Leader of the Laity By Thomas G. **Rilev**

page 12

Departments

Letters: Confusion over the number of bishops in Western Kansas (p. 3)

News: Presiding **Bishop discloses** details of the Ellen Cooke scandal (p. 6)



Viewpoint: The One Thing By Edward S. Little (p. 10)

Editorials: A Matter of Accountability (p. 11)

Benediction: Joy to Balance Affliction (Psalm 90:15) By John Crean (p. 13)

People and Places (p. 14)

Quote of the Week

The Rev. Cynthia Black of Kalamazoo, Mich., president of the **Episcopal Women's** Caucus, on the role of the caucus: "If we don't find ways to enable the church to free itself from racism, sexism, clericalism, heterosexism, and from the teachings and practices that sustain and reinforce power inequities, who will?"

In This Corner

'Read This Before Proceeding'

have this annoying habit of picking up a AIDS education. It includes a commendation book or magazine, or any other publication for that matter, and paging through it from back to front. So when I obtained a copy of the newly published Episcopal Guide to TAP (Teens for AIDS Prevention), I missed the section in the front that states clearly, "some Episcopalians may find certain sections of the TAP resource inappropriate for congregational use, activities which perhaps seem to be in tension with certain religious values, or material that is simply irrelevant for Episcopal churches."

Instead, the words "Condom Hunt," caught my eye quickly. There, on page 79, was what appeared to be a worksheet for teenagers to complete as to where they found condoms, and what kinds of condoms were available in that particular store. Naturally, I became curious. Wouldn't you? So I decided to spend some time with the publication.

What I learned was the TAP program is a secular resource published by Advocates for Youth, of Washington, D.C. Editors of the publication have added helpful "Episcopal inserts" on yellow paper, calling the Episcopal Guide "an unabashedly Christian resource which seeks to proclaim the gospel message of love of God and love of neighbor in the midst of this AIDS pandemic." In a section titled "Read This Before Proceeding!," the church's standard for sexual behavior ("within the context of monogamous, heterosexual marriage") is emphasized; then "there follows chapter after chapter of what should be done when people do not live up to the ideal."

The Episcopal Guide is a response to two General Convention resolutions related to by Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, objectives for training sessions, and a reading from scripture for each chapter.

Back to the condom hunt. The TAP project guide states its purpose is "to provide young people with the opportunity to obtain a condom without pressure; to develop a list of accessible places where teens can obtain condoms; to help teens develop the skills to protect themselves." Teens are asked to purchase a package of condoms, which will be used as "instructional samples."

Then there is a "condom demonstration." The Episcopal Guide's yellow insert cautions, "you need to decide what is appropriate for your congregation." Reviewing the correct use of the condom probably isn't appropriate for a large number of congregations, but I'm not going to comment on that. I caught a lot of heat two years ago when I criticized a cathedral canon for doing just that from the pulpit.

There's more. Role playing, interviewing a victim of AIDS, and suggestions on how to share the message also are included.

I am ambivalent about this publication. For the most part, the yellow pages provided by the church are sound, fair, helpful, educational and seem to strengthen an already successful program. But the condom hunt? I don't think so. If I were a parent of a 13-yearold, would I want my child sitting in on a condom demonstration at church? Probably not. The bottom line is we have this pandemic called AIDS, and it's still with us. Who knows? This could prove to be a helpful response.

DAVID KALVELAGE, editor

Sunday's Readings God is the Ever Dependable Reality

Easter 6: Joel 2:21-27; Psalm 67; Acts 14:8-18; Rev. 21:22-22:5; John 14:23-29

he lessons of Easter continue to declare forthrightly that God is a constant. In contrast to his eternality, we humans "have our day and cease to be." God outlasts everything that is - sun, moon, stars and planets in their courses. Our God is such an awesome reality that it is precisely a holy fear of him that offsets the various traumas of life.

Of course, there is the temptation to confuse God's identity with ours. It was terribly seductive at Lystra. The lesson reports Paul and Barnabas as being implicated in the healing of a crippled man in the city. Impressed with this feat, the bystanders quickly ascribed to them the status of deity -"Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul ... they called Hermes" (Acts 14:12). The apostles retorted, "We also are men, of like nature with you" (14;15). In short, we are not the power, only conduits of it. The power resides in God himself. The prophet's exclamation rings true: "I, the Lord, am your God and there is none else!" (Joel 2:27).

This radical distinction between us and God is crucial. All of us are mortal. God is the basic, ever dependable Reality. The Holy Spirit is God in the world, the One who comforts and empowers. We are not left desolate.

LETTERS

Counting ...

There is an inaccuracy in the report of the consecration of the Ven. Vernon E. Strickland as Bishop of Western Kansas, [TLC, April 16].

That jurisdiction was originally the Missionary District of Salina, and during the tenure of the late Rt. Rev. Arnold M. Lewis, 1956-1964, the name was changed to Western Kansas. The Rt. Rev. William Davidson became the second Bishop of the Missionary District of Western Kansas, and during his episcopate, the jurisdiction became a diocese.

So, Bishop Davidson was the second Bishop of Western Kansas and first bishop of the Diocese of Western Kansas; Bishop Ashby was the third Bishop of Western Kansas and the second bishop of the diocese; and Bishop Strickland is the fourth Bishop of Western Kansas and third bishop of the diocese.

(The Rev. Canon) CHARLES E. WOOD Spokane, Wash.

One Vote

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is a person whose life and witness continue to touch many people [TLC, April 9]. As April 9 already has a celebration on the calendar, I would suggest that the 1997 General Convention make April 10 the day to remember Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

On page 7 of the same issue, you note the doubts of the Jesus Seminar regarding the Resurrection of Jesus, while Abu Timsah, on the same page, has an article which speaks of the empty tomb in Jerusalem. My vote is for the faith of the empty tomb and the Resurrection of Jesus, not the doubts of the Jesus Seminar.

(The Rev.) Les Singleton

Church of the Mediator

Micanopy, Fla.

Trust the Promise

I agree with Fr. Gates' point [TLC, April 23] that we should trust the existing canons as sufficient. However, as one who experiences and celebrates the presence of the Holy Spirit in my life and in the life of the church, I am taken aback by the phrases: "Personally, I would relish the day when we the church, would welcome the Holy Spirit"... and "Once a holy man or woman is elected to this lofty office" [of PB] ...

Perhaps Fr. Gates judges the Holy Spirit present in those with whom he agrees and absent in others. I trust that, by God's grace, the Holy Spirit is indeed in the midst of the church. I trust that, by God's grace, the Holy Spirit fills and guides our Presiding Bishop, even when I disagree with him. Might we not all do well to expect the Holy Spirit to blow where it will? Might we not all do well to trust the promise of our Lord to fill and sustain, with the Holy Spirit, his church?

(The Rev.) M. EUGENE CARPENTER St. Luke's Church

Marianna, Fla.

A Mystery

Regarding the Rev. Travers Koerner's letter [TLC, March 12], I grew up in a parish in which the norm was Morning Prayer at 11 a.m., Holy Communion at 8 a.m. and at 11 the first Sunday of the month. I departed for life in seminary in the fall of 1961, and, at least in Wilkes-

Barre, Pa., from whence I came, and in Framingham, Mass., where I did field work between 1961-1964, the beginning of the falling off in church attendance was underway well before prayer book revision arrived in the local congregation.

It's a mystery to me that so few congregations seem to make use of Morning (Evening) Prayer as the service of the word in conjunction with Holy Communion. The prayer book certainly permits it (see page 142), shifting to the Nicene Creed with prayers, or staying with the Morning Prayer office, so long as the prayers meet the requirements spelled out on page 383 — which Suffrage A largely does in itself.

I make use of the optional hymn settings for the canticles listed on pages 680-

(Continued on next page)

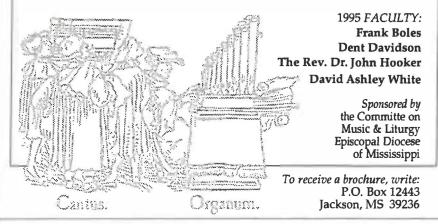
Q: WHAT DO THESE PEOPLE HAVE IN COMMON?

Alec Wyton Robert Powell Joe Morrow Larry King Ray Glover Calvin Hampton Ben Hutto Owen Burdick Richard Proulx James Litton Lionel Dakers David Hurd Carl Daw Marilyn Haskel Michael Merriman Marilyn Keiser Frank Boles John Hooker Minka Sprague Tom Foster Leonel Mitchell Sam Batt Owens Carol Foster Charles Raines John Paul Robert McCloskey George Mims William Wunsch K. Lee Scott David Ashley White Bill Roberts Jeffrey Rickard Mark Dirksen Mark Engelhardt Thomas Talley Dent Davidson Neil Alexander Judy Breneman

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LETTERS

(Continued from previous page)

681 of *The Hymnal 1982 Service Music, Accompaniment Edition Volume 1.* The paraphrased *Venite* in hymn 399, sung to hymn 625, is vigorous; or try using George Herbert's "Let All the World in Every Corner Sing," hymn 402 or 403, in place of the *Venite.* Far from ignoring Morning Prayer, we use it at least twice a month. If you like to sing, it's the way to go.

(The Rev.) DAVID B. RIVERS Philadelphia, Pa.

Concept of Holiness

In the old days (spell that medieval if you like) God wasn't so close to man. In churches, for example, the altar was next to the east wall, as far away from the people in the nave as it could get. To further separate God from the people, huge rood screens were erected. God was so sacred and removed, the words of the services were not even in a language that ordinary human beings could understand. I don't think I'd like to go back there or then.

And yet, in those days one must have had the sense of the majesty, the difference, the wholly otherness of Almighty God. In his presence one would want to "take his shoes from off his feet," for he or she was on holy ground.

Today, I miss that concept of the holiness, the awesome difference, between man and God — me and God. We've moved the altar closer to the people, in the round as it were. The gospel itself comes right on down to the nave with the people, although only ordained clergy read it, proving that some of the ancient ways are not quite dead.

The result of today's casual and chummy outlook on God is that most of the services I attend today take what I call a "gum-chewing" approach to the Divine. Instead of high and lifted up, God has become a good old boy.

Today, I'm OK and you're OK. We are not "miserable offenders" anymore. Or are we? I am, and I guess that is why I miss the God who is so different from me.

Please do not misunderstand. To say I am grateful that God came to man would be an understatement. That fact, however, should be treated with the awe and respect it deserves, both liturgically and personally. When it isn't, I feel like praying, "Lord, we've got enough social clubs. Please give us the church back again. Amen."

(The Rev.) DAVID MEADE BERCAW Albuquerque, N.M.

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NEWS ______ Audit Reveals \$2.2 Million Embezzled Former Treasurer Ellen Cooke Diverted Church Funds

Some \$2.2 million was diverted from church funds during a five-year period, Presiding Bishop Edmond -L. Browning announced May 1 in a message to the church. The announcement followed reports that an investigation was being conducted into possible misappropriation of church funds by former national church treasurer Ellen F. Cooke [TLC, March 5].

"Beginning in February, 1990, Mrs. Cooke systematically diverted certain church funds, consisting of unrestricted trust fund income and other unrestricted cash receipts, for her personal benefit and other unauthorized purposes," Bishop Browning said in his message. "The total amount diverted during the period February 1990-January 1995 was approximately \$2.2 million, not including a factor for interest."

Bishop Browning said there were three primary means of diverting funds:

1. Depositing funds that were supposed to be placed into church accounts at a commercial bank in Washington, D.C., and a church account at a New York City brokerage firm, into personal accounts maintained by Mrs. Cooke at both institutions (about \$1.5 million).

2. Writing checks on church accounts to third parties, for her personal benefit or for other unauthorized purposes (about \$225,000).

3. Misuse of a corporate credit card and other corporate accounts for personal expenses (about \$325,000).



Episcopal News Service photo

Ellen Cooke, former treasurer of the national church

Bishop Browning said Mrs. Cooke also wrote herself to а number of unauthorized checks. including one for \$86,000 "for what she represented to be back pay and/or vacation pay" at about the time of her resignation, Jan. 6.

The message indicated that the checks written to third parties included things such as tuition payments for the education of her two sons and payments of approximately \$90,000 to the vestry and the rector's discretionary fund at St. Luke's Church, Montclair, N.J., where her husband, the Rev. Nicholas Cooke, formerly served as rector. The charges on the corporate credit card include such items as non-business travel in the U.S. and abroad, meals, hotels and entertainment for herself, family members and friends, jewelry, clothing, gifts, and limousine service.

"Our information as to how the misappropriated funds were used is not yet complete," the Presiding Bishop wrote. "It is safe to say that a significant portion of the funds went for the purchase and considerable improvement by Mrs. Cooke and her husband of two properties: a house in Montclair, N.J., and a farm in Lancaster, Va.

"At this time we have secured title to both properties owned by the Cookes in New Jersey and Virginia, along with the outstanding mortgages. Both properties are now on the market."

In his message, Bishop Browning also revealed he had asked Mrs. Cooke to resign in December 1994, because "I had concluded that her working style did not well serve our common mission." Because Mrs. Cooke's husband was leaving the Montclair parish to become rector of St. John's, McLean, Va., it appeared she was resigning to relocate.

"I believed that because of her years of service to the church (1986-95) she should be allowed to leave with dignity," Bishop Browning said.

The Presiding Bishop recalled the issuance of a check in January which raised questions.

"Mrs. Cooke had asked the executive for human resources, John Colón, to issue her a check in excess of \$86,000 for what she represented to be back pay and/or vacation pay," he wrote. "Church policies do not provide such compensation of the type and amount she sought." Mrs. Cooke said she would provide documentation, and the check was issued. When documentation was not provided, Mr. Colón and controller Barbara Bunten became concerned and looked into other financial areas. They eventually informed assistant treasurer Donald Burchell (now the treasurer) and he informed Bishop Browning.

The Presiding Bishop's message included steps in the investigative process such as retaining legal counsel, consulting with other church leaders, and engaging an independent accounting firm. He said

(Continued on next page)

How Missing Funds Went Undetected

- 1. Ellen Cooke opened multiple church accounts at a commercial bank where she also maintained personal accounts. When Mrs. Cooke wrote checks payable to the bank, the transactions appeared to move funds from one church account to another. Deposits were sent by her, with a personal deposit slip, into one of her own accounts rather than into the appropriate church account.
- 2. Mrs. Cooke maintained control of the auditing and reconciliation functions of the treasurer's office, so no one on the treasurer's staff was aware of the activity in these accounts.
- 3. Mrs. Cooke filled out check request forms herself, in violation of church center policies, signed them herself, and signed the checks as well.
- 4. Mrs. Cooke wrote the improper checks in small amounts so as not to attract attention of auditors or staff members.
- 5. Mrs. Cooke maintained control of the corporate account authorization and payment process.

100

Ellen Cooke

Designated Funds Weren't Affected

(Continued from previous page)

the accounting firm interviewed appropriate members of the staff at the Episcopal Church Center in New York City. "I note that we felt compelled to look thoroughly for signs of possible complicity on the part of other members of the staff and have found none."

He said other church funds designated for specific purposes such as the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief and United Thank Offering were not involved in the misappropriation.

In addition to securing title to the Cookes' properties, Bishop Browning said an investigation is being made into Mrs. Cooke's assets to determine whether there may be additional resources available for restitution. He said the church has a \$1 million fidelity bond, and a detailed insurance claim has been filed.

Bishop Browning declined to comment on the possibility of prosecution of Mrs. Cooke. "It is my hope that before we are finished, justice will be served and our funds restored," he said.

"It would be difficult for me to describe the sense of betrayal that I have felt over these last few months," he said. "Funds taken from us were meant to serve the least of us. I have had many painful thoughts about how these funds would have been used had they been available, and who would have been ministered to, in the name of Christ.

"In the way that a family tragedy can bring the family together, I do believe that, out of these dark days, we have found new strength, and new closeness in one another, and in the Lord who loves us all."

'A Historical Tragedy in the Life of the Church'

"Shocked," "stunned," "saddened" were the words many church leaders chose to describe their reactions to the news of the misappropriation of \$2.2 million by former national church treasurer Ellen Cooke.

Vincent Currie, of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, chair of the Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance (PB&F), said the episode was "a historical tragedy in the life of the church." Businesses, he said, "have this problem on a regular basis. The church can't afford this as well [as they can]."

Marjorie Christie of Newark, PB&F committee member during the last triennium, mentioned the embezzlement by former United Way chairman William Aramony: "That was small potatoes by comparison," she said.

Ms. Christie, with several others, said she felt betrayed. "The church is built on trust," she said. Both she and Mr. Currie said that, although some found Mrs. Cooke difficult to work with, no one questioned her honesty.

"I was just bowled over at the allegations of financial misconduct, and even more so at the extent," said Pamela Chinnis, president of the House of Deputies. "When the Presiding Bishop called, I literally got sick at my stomach." Later, she said, while flying cross-country, "I got mad."

George Lockwood of El Camino Real is a business person who served six years on the Executive Council and "25 years on various boards, commissions, committees within the church." His first reaction was, "It's obviously horrible." He said he still considered himself a friend of Mrs. Cooke's. "We've learned about temptation and our reaction to it from the Book of Genesis," he said. "We pray about it daily. The Executive Council placed Ellen Cooke in a position of temptation without providing adequate versight. Similar problems are replete throughout the church, at diocesan, parish and mission levels."

Diane Porter, senior executive at the Episcopal Church Center, was "offended and insulted" by statements, in Mrs. Cooke's letter to the Executive Council, of "pain, abuse and powerlessness" experienced as a "lay woman on a senior level at the church headquarters."

"I'm a lay woman and a black woman; I've got three strikes, she only had two. It didn't make me lose my morals. Her statements are hurtful to any woman who's ever worked in a church," said Ms. Porter.

"I was amazed at her letter," said the Rt. Rev. Don Wimberly, Bishop of Lexington and chair of the administration and finance committee. "That she would think she was powerless — she was one of the most powerful people at church headquarters. She was blessed with tremendous skill. The tragedy for her is [that this] ruined any career in financial management she could have had."

Others were disbelieving initially that no checks and balances operated to prevent the losses, and that no audit discov-

(Continued on next page)

NEWS ______ In Her Own Words . . . Ellen Cooke writes of 'enormous pressures and stress'

Former national church treasurer Ellen Cooke said she experienced "a breakdown precipitated by many factors external to me and to the workplace," in an "open letter" addressed to members of the Executive Council. In the letter, written two days before details of the misappropriation of funds revealed by an audit was released by Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, Mrs. Cooke said she underwent a series of extensive psychiatric examinations and is continuing with the therapy.

"In the judgment of the psychiatrist who has evaluated me, I am one of a small percentage of the population who by reason of personality are simply unable to stop in the face of enormous pressures and stress," she wrote. "He believes that my subsequent actions, blocked from memory during this time, were a cry for help which I fully expected to be discovered and questioned, and which escalated as I tried to escape from a situation which had become intolerable."

Mrs. Cooke's letter was written in response to a short article in the May 1995 issue of *Episcopal Life*, in which it was stated that "lawyers and the Presiding Bishop's office were negotiating a date in early May to provide for disclosure of the audit results and any action the church might consider as a result of the misuse of funds by former treasurer Ellen F. Cooke." Mrs. Cooke said that until this announcement, her lawyers "had not been consulted about a date for any kind of statement or report. It was my desire, supported by my attorneys, that we discuss and establish a mutual date and a complete process before any full disclosure statement was to be revealed by either party."

On May 1, the Presiding Bishop detailed the misappropriation of \$2.2 million in church funds by Mrs. Cooke in a five-page message to the church.

Mrs. Cooke said she was asked to resign as weasurer by Bishop Browning on Dec. 21, 1994, and that she did submit her resignation Jan. 6.

"On Feb. 9, 1995, in response to his request to me the night before, I met with the Presiding Bishop and his legal counsel, to hear allegations of misuse of funds," she wrote. "At that time I expressed to the Presiding Bishop, and reiterated to my diocesan bishop, Peter Lee [of Virginia], a desire to know the facts of the matter, to accept full responsibility for my inappropriate use of funds, to make full and complete restitution to the church, and to seek therapeutic assistance immediately in order to understand what happened and why." Two days later, she began psychiatric evaluation. "In late March, a priest of the Episcopal Church wrote and offered her pastoral support if and when I needed it," Mrs. Cooke continued. "After several conversations she agreed to be my priest and pastor. She has consistently held up to me the truth of my inappropriate and wrong response to the situation in which I find myself. But she has also helped me acknowledge the pain, abuse and powerlessness I have felt during the years I worked as a lay woman on a senior level at the church headquarters."

Mrs. Cooke said she has been working with her accountant to identify funds which she may have misused, and that "significant differences" with the auditors' report need to be addressed and agreed upon before any settlement can be reached. She said she has offered to relinquish future interest in pension, health and life benefits, and "any interest in the separation agreement based on my eight years' work," and described in a letter from the Presiding Bishop.

"I am experiencing deep remorse and regret for the pain and grief my actions have caused my family, friends, co-workers and the general church," she wrote. "I also feel sorrow for any pain I may have caused the Presiding Bishop. I do pray regularly for the Presiding Bishop and for the church."

No Hint of Dishonesty or Misconduct in Treasurer's Office

(Continued from previous page)

ered them. The Rt. Rev. Roger White, Bishop of Milwaukee, said, "I'm appalled at the amount. Who's watching the house? If she is not charged, there is going to be a huge revolution. This is a felony. She should be charged."

The Very Rev. David Collins, former president of the House of Deputies, said that while he sometimes had "questions about [Mrs. Cooke's] understanding about the role of General Convention," he had had no hint of dishonesty or misconduct. In hindsight, he said, he wondered whether someone volunteering to take on added responsibility might be doing so to hide other activities. Many people contacted by TLC applauded Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning's handling of the affair. The Rt. Rev. David Bowman, Bishop of Western New York, issued a statement which read in part: "I am so grateful for the forthright manner in which Bishop Browning has insisted on full disclosure about the matter for the whole church."

Mr. Currie said he was "very pleased at the way the Presiding Bishop and Mrs. Chinnis handled this, and with the appointment of Donald Burchell [as treasurer]. They have been working tirelessly to put out this fire. They've gone above and beyond the call of duty." Ms. Porter, the Rt. Rev. Peter Lee, Bishop of Virginia, as well as the Presiding Bishop and others who are acquainted with the Cooke family, remembered especially Ms. Cooke's two sons. Bishop Lee offered "the prayers and concern of the people of the Diocese of Virginia;" Ms. Porter said, "I think about those youngsters. They're great kids.

"The important thing now, " she said, "is that this be brought to its logical conclusion and justice served." Bishop Lee wrote, "We support the efforts of all to seek justice and mercy in this sad situation." Ms. Christie said, "We move on." PATRICIA NAKAMURA

St. Paul's Cathedral, Oklahoma City

More Damage Than First Thought



The west side the cathedral shows heavy structural damage.

St. Paul's Cathedral, Oklahoma City, may be unusable for some 10-12 months while restoration takes places following the explosion April 19 at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building two blocks away [TLC, May 14].

The Very Rev. George Back, dean of St. Paul's, reported April 27 that engineers did not see conditions threatening to the building, but that long-term renovation would be necessary.

"While the possibility of collapse is 1 in 10 million, and there are no visual signs of such happening, it would be wise not to take any risks at all," Dean Back said. "We will hold our services in the Education Building."

The dean said the plan is to use the Education Building until temporary external braces secure the east and west walls of the cathedral. Then the cathedral could be used for services until repairs are made in the Education Building. When those repairs are finished, the congregation will vacate the cathedral "for the extensive restoration."

Services held in the Education Building April 30, marked the second straight week it was used for Sunday liturgies. Dean Back said the three services on April 23 were well attended, especially at 9 a.m. when the Rt. Rev. Robert Moody, Bishop of Oklahoma, was the celebrant.

"The area from 7th to 10th Street is

restricted access," Dean Back said. "You are supposed to have a pass, which makes it difficult to get a congregation in on Sunday. It depends on which checkpoint people try to get through as to how successful they are.

"Sunday presents a dilemma," he said. "How can we preach the good news of an empty tomb only a few hundred yards from a building still filled with the bad news of dead bodies?"

Dean Back said volunteers and helpers have been plentiful. He recalled one day on which "almost a hundred volunteers had been all over the

grounds. Now almost everyone was gone. We were trying to get the last details resolved. Two rescue workers were kneeling in the chapel. I went into the pew behind them and waited in silence. Eventually they sat back. We talked a little about what was happening. I began to notice the term they used for what they found in the blasted building was not 'bodies,' but 'recoveries'."

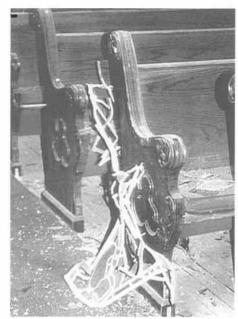
The dean said offers of

assistance came from many places. He mentioned deans of cathedrals as being particularly responsive. "We feel a part of a larger whole," he said.

During the first few days following the blast, Dean Back put his thoughts on paper.

"The phone rings continually," he wrote. "People offering help, news media asking questions, people seeking information on loved ones. Some line up to call out, 'I need to let them know I am OK.' A rescue worker comforts his young daughter, 'Don't be worried, I'll get home, but I don't know when.' Some just need a rest room or a cup of coffee.

"Someone finds a rainbow-colored key chain on a rain-soaked card. It must have blown out of the book store when the win-



The force of the blast shattered windows.

dows went. It seems a sign to share with Noah. God is faithful. We are again baptized into Christ's death and participants in his Resurrection."



Dean George Back, of St. Paul's Cathedral, pieces together the remains of a window of St. Francis.

May 21, 1995



The Endless Search For the Meaning of Christian Life

By EDWARD S. LITTLE

urly said it best. Asked about the secret of life, the grizzled cowpuncher from "City Slickers" extended his index finger enigmatically "One thing," he replied. "Just one thing." But what thing? Curly never said.

Episcopalians appear to be trapped in an endless search for the "one thing" for the idea, the emphasis, the cause that will unlock the meaning of the Christian life. If we can only find that key we seem to hope, almost desperately, everything else will become clear. Every three years, General Convention makes a new attempt to find the "one thing." Thus, the 1988 Blue Book report of the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development (with an accompanying resolution) declared "stewardship is the main work of the Church." Three years later, the 70th General Convention narrowed

The Rev. Edward S. Little is rector of All Saints' Church, Bakersfield, Calif.

the focus a bit, telling us that "Christian Stewardship of God's created environment, in harmony with our respect for human dignity, requires response from the Church of the highest priority" (Resolution A195s). The Standing Commission on Peace with Justice, in its 1994 Blue Book report, asserted: "The Gospel challenges us to fashion a just and peaceable world. This is not at the periphery, but the center, of the Christian life." Successive conventions, too, have targeted particular societal ills for special attention. In 1991 it was racism; in 1994, sexism. Perhaps in the attempt at combatting a dehumanizing evil, we will discover our particular key to the kingdom the "one thing."

Please do not misunderstand me. The concerns I've mentioned all have a place in Christian discipleship. Yes, we are stewards of God's gracious gifts (2 Cor. 4:1-2; 1 Pet. 4:10), caretakers of his creation (Gen. 2:15), heralds of his justice (Amos 5:24; Mic. 6:8). Racism is indeed

a grievous sin against persons who bear the very image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and for whom Christ died (Eph. 5:1-2). Sexism does in fact relegate to secondclass status half of the human race, and thereby negates our baptismal unity (Gal. 3:27-28). But have we found it, the "one thing" which provides the key to the whole?

The Christians in Corinth also tried to identify the "one thing," and in Paul's analysis they failed. They were infected with a case of "glossamania," an obsession with the more spectacular spiritual gifts. Their obsession led them to downplay the less splashy gifts, not to mention the "still more excellent way" (1 Cor. 12:31) of love. Confused about priorities, they fragmented into personality-driven factions (1:12), tolerated grotesque lapses into sexual immorality (5:1-2), and showed a stony callousness toward the conscience of "weaker" brothers and sisters (8:11). No wonder that they became cavalier about the resurrection. It was at the far edge of their interest. Reading the 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians "backwards," gleaning from Paul's instructions the distortions he sought to correct, we can detect the attitude of these Christians. Nothing else matters, they seemed to believe, except speaking in tongues. That's how you'll know if you're truly "spiritual." It's not what you believe, or how you live your life day to day, or how you deal with people. The gift of tongues is the "one thing."

Thus Paul's words about the resurrection provide a powerful corrective. (I write this analysis as one who affirms the continuing reality of the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Cor. 12-14. Thus Paul's words are aimed at me as well as at his first century readers.) Paul says, "For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas ..." (1 Cor. 15:3-5a). What is "of first importance," the "one thing"? Paul's answer is not a what but a who — Jesus Christ: crucified, dead, risen, alive. No cause however pressing, no gift however spectacular, no issue however gripping, can take precedence over Jesus Christ. The lively but diseased church in Corinth had failed because it had elevated what was good to a place of overarching prominence. But aren't we Episcopalians tempted to do the same?

The Episcopal Church has been my Christian home for 29 years, nearly 24 of

(Continued on next page)

EDITORIALS_

A Matter of Accountability

The disclosure by the Presiding Bishop that former treasurer Ellen F. Cooke embezzled at least \$2.2 million in church funds (p. 6) should come as a shock to anyone who cares about this church. While we have known for three months that Mrs. Cooke was being investigated for misappropriation of funds, the revelation of the amount is staggering.

Reactions to the news of the auditor's report have ranged from anger to compassion and have included nearly every emotion in between. Two matters which come to mind immediately are betrayal of trust and accountability. The Presiding Bishop and Executive Council placed immense trust in Mrs. Cooke to manage the national church's accounts. More indirectly, deputies of General Convention trusted Mrs. Cooke as well, for she also held the position of treasurer of General Convention in addition to her duties at the Episcopal Church Center.

Apparently, the Presiding Bishop placed such trust in Mrs. Cooke that she was accountable to no one. As Christians, if we are going to live our lives together in responsible community, we seek accountability from other members of the community. It would appear that was not the case at the Episcopal Church Center, at least not in the treasurer's office. Much of our society has adopted a lackadaisical attitude toward accountability. The line of thinking often is, "Whatever goes wrong, it is society's fault, not mine. I am not accountable. I am victimized." Some of this attitude appears in Mrs. Cooke's open letter to the Executive Council (p. 8). She cites pressure and stress, actions blocked from her memory, and a situation she called "intolerable," and she mentions pain, abuse and powerlessness as a lay woman working for the church. In reality, Mrs. Cooke exercised as much power as anyone on the church center staff.

The role of the Presiding Bishop in this case ought to be examined. Bishop Browning should be commended for his full disclosure of the facts. On the other hand, some questions should be asked of Bishop Browning. Was Ellen Cooke accountable to him? If not, why not? And why did it take more than eight years for the Presiding Bishop to discover "that her working style did not well serve our common mission"?

What now of Ellen Cooke? Should she be prosecuted? Would a Christian response be not to bring charges? According to the auditors' report, Mrs. Cooke committed a felony. So far she has not been charged with a crime, and the Presiding Bishop has said he is undecided whether to recommend prosecution. Given the amount involved, and the fact that the misappropriation occurrred over an extended period of time, it would seem prosecution would be in order.

Time will tell whether Mrs. Cooke's personal use of church funds has caused irreparable damage to the church. One cannot help but think about the cutbacks in staff at the church center, and the reduction in funding from various ministries which were part of the national church's budget. The already shaky diocesan apportionment system could be weakened even further if parishes and dioceses lose trust in the national church.

Finally, how should we, the "people in the pews," respond to this debacle? Recognizing that we all are sinners who have fallen short of the glory of God, we can pray for Mrs. Cooke and her family, for the Presiding Bishop, and for the Episcopal Church, "where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in any thing it is amiss, reform it" (BCP, 816).

We Become Consumed With the Issue of the Day

(Continued from previous page)

them as an ordained person. I love this church and can imagine myself in no other, precisely because our worship (and the prayer book which orders it) is the most Christ-centered and Christ-honoring I have ever experienced. From the first time I set foot in an Episcopal church — St. Thomas' on Fifth Avenue in New York City — I was captured by the presence of Jesus Christ.

Yet for these 29 years I have been aware of another reality: that our church seems caught in limitless fascination with some issue, some concern which rivets our attention and drains our energy. We are "The Church of What's Happenin' Now." (Older readers will recognize the reference to Flip Wilson.) The issues change from convention to convention, from decade to decade, but the problem remains the same. We invest penultimate concerns (albeit important ones) with ultimate meaning. The result is spiritual disaster. We become consumed with the issue of the day — until, that is, the next issue arrives.

Years ago, when I was less tolerant of Anglican diversity and even more infected by hubris than I am today (some would say I'm far from cured!), I used to read the newspaper of a certain diocese and apply what I called the "Jesus Test." The test was simple. I'd see how many pages I could read before the name of Jesus appeared in print (excluding advertisements, of course). The newspaper was filled with the stories of effective ministries being carried on throughout the diocese. Sometimes the name of Jesus would not appear for many pages. Sometimes it would not appear at all. While I recoil now at the spiritual superiority which drove the "Jesus Test," I can still at years' distance sense that something was dreadfully wrong. Something essential was missing: not something as much as someone. We are never so sophisticated theologically that we can take the presence of Jesus for granted, as though he were a "given" who need not be made explicit. Even among the most committed Christians, Jesus must be named, and often.

Alister McGrath, in his book The

Renewal of Anglicanism, comments on our resurgent interest in evangelism: "It is not so much 'articles of faith' that Christians have in common, but the redeeming presence of the risen Jesus Christ. Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia ... Evangelism reminds us that this fundamentum is no abstract doctrine, no antiquated formula, but a living presence - a presence that lies at the center of Christian proclamation and adoration" (p. 62). Again, the answer is not a what but a who - Jesus Christ. He is, as King Alfred prayed, the journey and the journey's end. Jesus Christ — presented in the scriptures, affirmed in the creeds, exalted in the liturgy, made present in word and sacrament; Jesus Christ - dwelling at once in heavenly glory (Rev. 1:12-20), in his body the church (2 Cor. 13:5), and in broken, suffering humanity (Matt. 25:40); Jesus Christ crucified, dead, risen, alive: He is the "one thing," around whom all else revolves. I believe that he calls us, as he called the hyperactive but unfocused Ephesian church, to return to our first love, Jesus himself (Rev. 2:4). He calls us to our true home, our real Center.

SERVANT LEADER OF LAY MINISTRY

By THOMAS G. RILEY

Two-star Gen. Garry A. Schnelzer has been managing the multi-billion dollar development and acquisition sections of the Defense Department's satellite and space launch systems. This month he retires from the Air Force to become a canon of the Diocese of West Texas.

An unlikely transition? Not from the perspective of the Rt. Rev. James E. Folts, Bishop Coadjutor of West Texas. The bishop seeks to bring new life to the growing number of small congregations in rural areas of the diocese.

Both bishop and canon face challenges. Many of the strong lay leaders in these small congregations have to take advantage of employment opportunities. Young people have moved to colleges and jobs far from home. West Texas is very much a cross-cultural diocese, and Bishop Folts recognizes this as an increasing challenge to a responsive church. This part of the country is also attracting an increasing number of military retirees, many of whom have served at one of the many military bases in Texas.

Bishop Folts has known his new lay canon for administration and lay ministry for almost 20 years, when the Schnelzers were members of his congregation at the Church of the Heavenly Rest in Abilene, Texas, while Bishop Folts was rector. He has monitored the pilot's skills in identifying and affirming leadership in increasingly responsible positions within the military community as well as in a broad range of church settings.

Maintaining his residency in Texas since the mid-1970s, Gen. Schnelzer has served as a forward air controller in Vietnam, a research scientist at Cambridge Research Laboratories, chief pilot for a C-130 Squadron, and deputy director for the Strategic Defense Initiative.

A strong church leader with experiences ranging from vestry member to Sunday school teacher, he has successfully led the organization of a Christian men's fellowship and house churches. He has also been a member of the leadership team of the Washington-based Christian Embassy and is involved in supporting the leaders of the national Russian Youth Movement.

In addition to certain administrative responsibilities, including oversight of the diocesan calendar, the new canon is charged with "calling forth, training, equipping and commissioning lay ministers throughout the diocese," according to Bishop Folts.

"I have seen the vision in action," Gen. Schnelzer said. "Spending several days in the Diocese of West Texas with Bishop Folts, touring churches and meeting with vestries, I caught not only his vision and enthusiasm, but that of the people I met.

"And, as one whose life and career have been involved in the identifying and mentoring of leadership, I am hopeful that I can be used to bring this vision to fruition."

The new canon said that, since moving to the Episcopal Church in 1977 (because the city in which he and his family were living had no Congregational church), he has come to appreciate and treasure its tradition and variety of worship opportunities.

Thomas G. Riley is executive director of Faith Alive. He resides in Vienna, Va.



Gen. Garry A. Schnelzer

"My military assignments and my work in a number of lay ministries have provided me with exposure to a wide variety of churches with a broad spectrum of wonderful resources through many different organizations, such as Navigators and Campus Crusade's Military Ministry," he said.

"Garry's leadership abilities provide unique qualifications in identifying and enabling those within our diocesan family who have the God-given capacity to lead — and not everyone has that capacity," Bishop Folts explained. "We seek to train and equip such persons in that distinctly Christian role of servant leadership

"Canon Schnelzer has impressed me with his own life, demonstrating the ideal of servant leader."

Garry and Helen Schnelzer have been married for 26 years, and have two children. Their son, Douglas, is a lieutenant in the Air Force and member of All Saints' Church in Beverly Hills, Calif. The Schnelzers' daughter, Heather, is a freshman at William & Mary College in Williamsburg, Va., where she is active in campus ministries.

Helen Schnelzer served several years as secretary of their home parish, Holy Comforter in Vienna, Va., where she also chaired the altar guild for five years.

The recent retirement ceremonies recognizing Gen. Schnelzer's 30-year military career included his receiving the highest peacetime Air Force award, the Distinguished Service Medal.



Benediction

Joy to Balance Affliction

A Meditation for Saturday in the Sixth Week of Easter

Psalm 90:15

Make us glad, for the days when you afflicted us, for the years when we saw evil. (New American Bible)

Lord, I thank you for today, and for all the days that led up to today. For the many recent yesterdays, days of your special grace and favor.

These are, indeed Lord, "days which balance the afflictions" of yesteryear. Were my earthly days to be called to an end today, I would feel, I could honestly say, you have, in the balance scale of life, more than made it even. You have more than compensated for the days of heavy affliction in my life.

Through the most powerful intercession of your Blessed Mother, my Mother Mary, you have done yet another healing work in my life. For this, I thank the both of you! But I especially honor your wonderful "birth mother": the Lady who said "YES." She so often hears my Memorare prayer, so often asks me: "Well, what is it today, son? What would you ask of me?" Invariably, she listens patiently and responds. This totally accessible, wonderful woman: I absolutely cannot

wait to meet her in person! (I have often fantasized about her pronounced Jewishness, that culture I have so admired all my life, having grown up in New York... how gutsy and downto-earth she must be, even though we all know she is "up" in Heaven.)

Hail, Mary! Hello, there, you who are filled, brimming to overflowing, with grace: the Lord's own special favorite, the one showered with all his blessings, thousands of years ago! This is the favor that you choose to recycle, to redistribute readily to us, your adopted sons and daughters here below!

You are blessed! Specially consecrated and gifted among all womankind. Why? Because you simply said yes.

May I likewise, as your true and devoted adopted son, be prepared to say my simple yes ... whenever, however and wherever your Blessed Son calls. Amen.

> (The Rev.) JOHN CREAN Honolulu, HI

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People _____ and Places

Ordinations Priests

San Joaquin — Joseph Robert Rees, assistant of St. Francis', 915 E. Main St., Turlock, CA 95380. Washington — (for the Diocese of the Virgin Islands performed by the retired Bishop of Chicago) Ezra A. Naughton, assisting, St. Paul's, 2430 K St., Washington, DC 20037.

Deacons

San Joaquin — Douglas Darling Folsom, vicar of St. Mark's Mission, 415 W. Emerson Ave., Tracy, CA 95376.

Resignations

The Rev. J. Barney Hawkins, IV, as rector of Ascension, Hickory, NC.

Deaths

The Rev. **Robert Creamer**, executive director of church relations at the University of the South, died March 23. He was 56.

Fr. Creamer was born in Norfolk, VA. He attended the University of Virginia, Arizona State University and the University of the South. He was ordained priest in 1972. Fr. Creamer served parishes in Lawrenceville, VA: New Orleans, LA: and Potomac, MD. He was a member of the board of trustees of the University of the South, vice president of Sewanee's School of Theology Alumni and a past president of the School of Theology Alumni Council. He was a field work supervisor and adjunct faculty member teaching a liturgics practicum at Virginia Theological Seminary from 1982 to 1992 and a member of the editorial board of the Sewanee Theological Review. Fr. Creamer was vice chairman of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and coordinator of the Education for Ministry in the Diocese of Washington and was a leader in the Disciples of Christ in Community Program. Fr. Creamer is survived by his wife, Marilyn, and two sons

The Rev. Earl O. Minturn, retired priest of the Diocese of Kansas, died March 28 at his home in Clay Center, KS. He was 70.

Fr. Minturn was born in Kansas City, KS. He was a graduate of the University of Kansas and Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. He was ordained priest in 1939. Fr. Minturn served parishes throughout Kansas including Wetmore, Hiawatha, Holton, Newton, Garden City, Fort Scott, Pittsburg, Manhattan, Baxter Springs, Columbus, Fredonia, Galena, Neodesha, Abilene, and Clay Center. Fr. Minturn was preceded in death by his first wife, Minturn He is survived by his wife, Ailene, four daughters, a stepdaughter, a sister and several grandchildren.

The Rev. **James Melvin Dix**, rector of Fox Chapel, Pittsburgh, PA, died after a long battle with cancer on April 1. He was 61.

Fr. Dix was born in Beloit, WI. He attended Beloit College and Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. He was ordained priest in 1958. Fr. Dix served as curate of Holy Spirit, Lake Forest, IL, and as rector of St. Thomas', Oakmont, PA, until becoming rector of Fox Chapel in 1970. He is survived by his wife, Sarah, and their four children. The Rev. Jonathan A. Crawford, vicar of Ascension, Hayward, WI, died April 14 of liver failure at the age of 47.

Fr. Crawford was born in Port Sulphur, LA. He was educated at Louisiana Technical University, Northwestern University of Louisiana, the University of Wyoming and Church Divinity School of the Pacific. He was ordained priest in 1983. Fr. Crawford served the Diocese of Wyoming as curate of St. Mark's, Casper, as youth minister, and as a member of the ecclesiastical court and the liturgics and music committee. He also served at St. Stephen's, Miami, FL, and was a member of the Constitution and Canons Committee of the Diocese of Southeast Florida. In 1988, he sat on the diocesan council for the Diocese of Eau Claire and later became dean of the Brule-Flambeau Deanery. He had served as vicar of Ascension, Hayward, WI, since 1987. Fr. Crawford is survived by his mother and one sister

The Rev. Jack O. Koonce, priest-in-charge of St. Dunstan's, Modesto, CA, died April 8 in Turlock, CA, of cancer. He was 61.

Fr. Koonce was born in Colorado. He spent most of his professional life as owner and manager of several radio and television stations in central California. He attended the Episcopal School of Theology in Claremont (Bloy House) from 1978-82. He was ordained deacon in 1982. After retiring from his secular positions he became assistant of St. John the Evangelist, Chico, CA. In 1993, he returned to St. Dunstan's as priest-in-charge until illness forced his resignation. Fr. Koonce is survived by his wife, Sharon, a son, a daughter, and two grandchildren.

The Rev. Edward H. Ehart, Jr, retired priest of the Diocese of Connecticut, died April 1 at Atlantic General Hospital, Berlin, MD, of heart failure. He was 88.

Fr. Ehart was born in Wilmington, DE. He was educated at the University of Delaware, Philadelphia Divinity School, and Temple University. He was ordained priest in 1937. He served parishes in Bridgeville, Milton, Indian River, Wilmington, and Brandywine, DE; Norwalk, CT; and Tyaskin and Berlin, MD. He also served as chaplain of several hospitals and prisons and on the committee for social relations in the dioceses of Connecticut and Delaware. He was a chaplain of the Connecticut Assembly of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew. He retired in 1971. Fr. Ehart was preceded in death by his wife, Grace. He is survived by his son, Edward L. Ehart, Jr.

The Very Rev. **Ray Holder, Sr.**, retired priest of the Diocese of Mississippi, died April 20 of congestive heart failure at St. Dominic-Jackson Memorial Hospital, Jackson, MS. He was 81.

Fr. Holder was born in Lucedale, MS. He was educated at the University of Mississippi, Duke University and the Episcopal Theological Seminary in Kentucky. He was ordained priest in 1943. He served parishes in Wadesboro, Henderson and Raleigh, NC; Highland Park, IL; and Los Angeles, CA. He was chaplain at the University of Kentucky and served on the board of trustees of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, the board of examining chaplains, and the board of directors of the Mississippi Historical Society. He was a religious broadcaster at KABC, Hollywood, CA, dean of the Episcopal Theological Seminary in Kentucky and author of three volumes of southern religious history. Fr. Holder is survived by his wife, Virginia, a son, a daughter and three grandchildren.

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MEETINGS

"GO FORTH FOR GOD"—1995 Integrity National Convention, All Saints Church, Atlanta, GA, June 8-10. Speakers include the Rev. Canon Gray Temple on Scripture, the Rev. Willa Goodfellow on Tradition, and the Rev. Dr. John Westerhoff on Reason. Contact: Mark Graham, 620 Peachtree St., NE, #407, Atlanta, GA 30308-2334.

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KEY - Light face type denotes AM, bold face PM; Act – 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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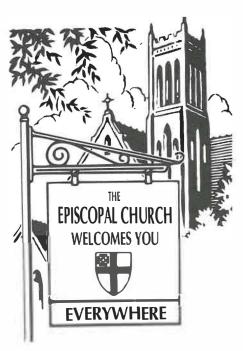
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