

The Prayer Book Society of Canada
Newsletter
Eastertide 2004

For Such a Time as This: Finding Our Way Forward

Essentials Teleconference February 28th

Norah Johnston
Vancouver

On February 28th the Prayer Book Society of Canada, as a member of the Anglican Essentials coalition, co-sponsored a televised conference that was broadcast live to 21 venues including churches, universities, and hotels across the country. This unprecedented event alerted us to the current dangers to our Church, and called Anglicans to take action in the days leading up to our national General Synod starting May 28th. For those who were able to participate it was a day of great encouragement.

The conference was four



The Resurrection of Christ
“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you”
John 15. 27

well crafted hours: the first and fourth hours were broadcast only to those at Conference sites, the middle two were broadcast on national television. It was a creative way to reach many Anglicans who live in dioceses which will soon be riven by the same schismatic innovations which have torn the diocese of New Westminster apart.

The whole four hours of conference will be available as part of a DVD set to be ready by late April or early May¹. These DVDs will be distributed with an interactive CD-ROM to assist parishes and individual groups to educate themselves about the coming Synod and its pivotal implications for the Canadian Church.

The first hour of the broadcast posed the question: ‘*What has happened?*’ The Rev’d David Short, Rector of St. John’s Shaughnessy, gave a brief overview of the problems facing the Anglican Communion and the events leading up to the New Westminster synod of 2002, when members of 8 parishes in that diocese left the floor of synod, causing a chain reaction of events within the whole Anglican Communion. His talk was measured, gracious, and without acrimony. He

described why the decision to bless same sex unions in that diocese is a ‘communion breaking’ decision. Excellent questions came from a studio audience and through an innovative telephone uplink from national conference sites, and helped articulate the deep concerns Anglicans have about this ‘flash point’ issue facing our culture.

Then the national television broadcast began, with a two hour section entitled ‘*Finding our way Forward.*’ Three Anglican priests presented lectures, each complimenting the other. The choice of speakers and panelists for the day is an indication of a growing interdependence among the different expressions of orthodox Anglicans which come together in the Essentials coalition.

- The Rev’d Dr. Gary Thorne, Rector of St. George’s (the Round) Church in Halifax was the first lecturer. As well as being a scholar, Dr. Thorne has completed a tour of duty as a military chaplain with the United Nations on the Golan Heights. He is also a member of the Primate’s Theological Commission. His lecture, titled ‘*Our Life Under the*

– Continued on Page 2

INSIDE

1
For Such a Time as This: Finding Our Way Forward Essentials Teleconference February 28th

3
Traditional BCP Lectionary Now Available On-Line

5
The Same-Sex Issue before General Synod: A Momentous Time for the Anglican Church of Canada

6
1966 and 2002 or: Why I Walked in 2002

9
Book Review: Prayer Book an antidote to world run amok

10
Something to Think About

11
24th Annual Atlantic Theological Conference



For Such a Time as This...

– Continued from Page 1

Authority of Scripture, spoke about the richness lying at the heart of Anglicanism: the very old, tried and true system of reading Holy Scripture by the discipline of the BCP Lectionary.

- The Rev'd Dr. George Sumner is Principal of Wycliffe College in Toronto, and Helliwell Professor of World Mission. Dr. Sumner received his B.A. from Harvard, and his M.Div. and Ph.D. from Yale. His main teaching and research interests are in Christology, Inculturation, and the Theology of Missions. His lecture, *'Our Life in Relation to the Historic Church,'* was a brilliant look at Anglican history. He encouraged us to take our place within the history of Anglicanism, taking upon us the mantle of responsibility for the choices we make regarding 'the faith once offered.'
- The Rev'd Canon Bill Atwood [Episcopal Church USA] is the General Secretary of *Ekklesia*, an international Anglican network of individuals, clergy, and dioceses, including almost 100 Anglican Bishops, all committed to proclaiming and maintaining the historic and Biblical Christian faith. *Ekklesia* also supports numerous international development projects and missionaries. His lecture, *'Our Life as Responsible Members of a Worldwide Communion,'* challenged us to realize that although many 'Western' clerics and bishops label the faith of the Africans and Asians as 'superstitious' and 'backward' we have much to learn from them. In those cultures, lives enriched by profound devotion are set in stark contrast to daily realities of the crushing burdens of health, economic and geopolitical problems².

Bishop Anthony Burton of Saskatchewan and Lorna Dueck, award winning journalist, were the Moderators of the day. I found it encouraging to

have a Canadian bishop at the helm of such a unique event. Praying Collects and Prayers together with Anglicans across the land, in real time, was truly lovely.

Why Essentials?

The founding strategy of the first Essentials Conference, Montreal 1994, was to form an alliance of Anglicans whose primary goal was renewal of the Anglican Church in Canada. The Rev'd Dr. Robert Crouse hit the nail on the head defining what might be needed to achieve such a thing:

Fundamental to any genuine renewal of Christian life in our church and in ourselves must be a renewal in the essential Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity... whereby our souls are conformed to the life of God the Holy Trinity. These virtues are gifts of God by his Word and Holy Spirit for our salvation, and they are nurtured in our lives by our exercising of them.

Fr. Crouse, an address to Essentials 94 Conference

This is a call to holiness by the rigour of exercising those disciplines leading to growth in the Christian walk. It is this holiness and discipline that will be our defence against discouragement. Ten years after this Conference the Canadian Church seems poised on the edge of a cliff. Yet the Church has seen darker times than this and so we must go about the business of being the church; accepting the weight of the challenge of this time.

General Synod 2004

Our Committee of General Synod (CoGS) has the responsibility to propose motions for debate at General Synod. CoGS is a committee of Synod made up of Bishops, Priests and lay-people. CoGS has proposed debate on a motion to bless same sex unions at the discretion of individual Bishops, a so-called 'local option'. The week CoGS announced this intention the *London Telegraph* reported:

...Although illicit gay blessings are widespread in the Anglican Church, such a vote would be seen as the first clear endorsement of the practice by an entire province [i.e. country]. It would represent a fresh blow to the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams...

The fact is that the power structure of the Canadian and American parts of Anglicanism is poised at the edge of breaking communion with the vast majority of the world's Anglicans. Last year, in attempt to head off schism, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, established *The Lambeth Commission*³ which will report to the international Primates in September of this year. Nonetheless, CoGS has made the decision to debate gay blessings in May.

This decision has accelerated the effect of tension in the Church. And so now we need to alert people to the dangers we face, willing nevertheless to work with hope at building a strategy toward finding our way forward. Indeed, one of the purposes of the day was, as Bishop Burton said in the broadcast, "To ignite a holy hope."

What ought we to do?

How will orthodox Anglicans know when the time is right to act decisively? How do we know when we must instead sit back, listen and be patient, resisting the urge to act with undue haste?

My father tried to teach me when I was a teenager that it is important to wrestle with this question. On the one hand he would say, 'It is vanity to believe that you are indispensable and that your presence is necessary at this party. There will be other parties; this one will go on with out you.' The other half of the lesson: 'You must be brave and speak your position, because if you don't nobody else will. You might feel inadequate to the task but you must take responsibility even though doing so

– Continued on Page 8

Traditional BCP Lectionary Now Available On-Line

Website contains all BCP Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, plus valuable background information for preachers and laypeople

A new website called Lectionary Central has been created to provide resources for preachers and interested lay people on the traditional Eucharistic Lectionary. What is the Eucharistic lectionary? It is that series of Collects, Epistles and Gospels set forth in the Book of Common Prayer for use on Sundays and holy days (see pages 94 to 330 of the Canadian BCP). It is called “the traditional lectionary” of the Western Church because the choice of these readings is believed to have remained largely intact since the 5th century.

Professor Robert Crouse expresses well the heart of the traditional lectionary:

“In the cycle of the Christian Year, in the ancient lectionary...which has served the Church for well over a millennium...the essential message of Holy Scripture, God’s word to us, is set before us in an orderly and supremely logical way. As we follow the lessons appointed for the Sundays and the great festivals, as we meditate upon them, as we open our minds and hearts to understand the pattern and meaning of them, we are led, step by step, into an ever deeper and clearer perception of Christian truth and the essentials of Christian life.”

The traditional lectionary is as theologically and spiritually vital as it ever was and the Lectionary Central website is meant to help in the recovery of this gift to the Church. The website

has the broader goal of helping the Church in the recovery of its memory - that we might “have power to comprehend with all the saints, the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ”. Seminary graduates often have little exposure to reading the Scriptures through the eyes of our forebears and may have a limited library. Through the website they can have immediate access to our wide theological tradition and can share the riches with their parishioners. Those involved in making Sunday bulletins will find short commentaries and links to images on the website to enhance the teaching opportunities that bulletins provide.

Go the main page of the website: www.episcopalian.org/austin/lectionary/index.html. Each Sunday of the Church year is listed in a column on the right hand side. Click on any Sunday and you will be linked to a page with the Collect, Epistle and Gospel, Introit and Gradual Psalms (added in our 1962 BCP), and in the right hand column, links to commentary or sermons on the readings from Early Church Fathers, Reformers, Anglican Caroline Divines, Evangelical Revival, Oxford Movement and contemporary sources. The website is continually being built up with additions.

The Rev'd David Phillips
The Rev'd David Phillips is currently on a leave of absence from the Diocese of Saskatchewan.



The Great Humility of Our Lord Jesus Christ

*“He was taken from prison and from judgement;
With his stripes we are healed”
Isaiah 53. 5; 8*

Late 18th Century Arab Icon by Mikhail Polychronis,
Monastery of Saydnaya, Syria

We at the PBSC wish all our members and friends a truly blessed Eastertide.



Christ Enthroned in Glory as Creator of All Things Surrounded by Scenes of the Passion

Lebanese Icon, 1783, by Fr. Semaan Basilian Order of the Holy Saviour, Lebanon

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”
The Epistle to the Hebrews, 1. 1-4.

This icon reminds us that it is only through the Passion and Suffering of Christ upon the Cross that our salvation has been won.

Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.
1 Corinthians 15. 20.

Easter Anthems, Book of Common Prayer p. 182.

Editorial: The Same-Sex Issue before General Synod: A Momentous Time for the Anglican Church of Canada

Against the pleas of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the International Primates of the Anglican Communion, and against the advice of its own consultants, a motion is being placed before the upcoming General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, which is set to meet in St Catharines, Ontario at the end of May. The motion would permit bishops and dioceses to allow same-sex blessings. That such a motion is being tabled at its General Synod is a benchmark of how far the Anglican Church of Canada has drifted from its Scriptural and Catholic moorings.

“The motion before General Synod is breathtaking in its contempt for both the...authority of Scripture, and for any concept of the Catholicity of the Anglican Church.”

The motion must be defeated. Here's why:

- It repudiates the authority of Scripture
- It repudiates the classic Anglican understanding of the role of Anglicanism within the universal Catholic Church
- It will fracture the unity of the Anglican Communion worldwide, and the unity of the Anglican Church of Canada here at home.

The motion before General Synod is breathtaking in its contempt for both the traditional understanding of the authority of Scripture, and for any concept of the Catholicity of the Anglican Church. It is in direct contradiction to the Statement of the 1998 Lambeth Conference on issues of human sexuality, and hurls defiance in the face of the International Primates of the Anglican Communion, who met in Lambeth in October 2003, and made a direct appeal to Anglicans worldwide

not to move in this direction. It breaks the Guidelines of the House of Bishops of our own Church.

The notion that the Anglican Church of Canada, or a single diocese within

“...[this motion] hurls defiance in the face of the International Primates of the Anglican Communion, who met in Lambeth in October 2003, and made a direct appeal to Anglicans worldwide not to move in this direction.”

the Anglican Church of Canada, has the authority to repudiate traditional Christian moral teaching and bless same-sex unions is contrary to any historic understanding of Anglicanism. It violates two foundational and distinguishing characteristics of Anglicanism: the understanding that the Anglican Church stands under the authority of Scripture, and that the Anglican Church forms but one part of the universal Catholic Church (cf Articles VI, XIX, XX, XXI, as well as the founding document of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Solemn Declaration of 1893). Simply put, the Anglican Church of Canada does not have the authority to remake Christian moral teaching (still less one of its dioceses). The Archbishop of Canterbury and the international Primates of the Anglican Communion have made this clear.

In addition, passage of this motion would seriously compromise ecumenical relationships with our sister churches: the Roman Catholic Church, and the Orthodox Churches have made this quite clear. For instance, the Roman Catholic Church has suspended all conversations with

ARCIC (the joint Anglican-Roman Catholic consultative body investigating commonalities between our two churches), the Orthodox Church in Russia and half a dozen other Orthodox bodies have suspended all relations with the Episcopal Church in the USA, which voted to permit same sex blessings last year. Within our own Communion, over twenty of the thirty eight Anglican provinces have declared themselves in a state of broken or impaired communion with the Episcopal Church; and we can expect them to do the same with regard to the Anglican Church of Canada, if this motion is passed.

The effect of this motion, if passed,

“...all priests of our church swore a solemn oath before God and the congregation at their ordination to be loyal to the doctrine, discipline and worship of Christ as this Church has received it...let us pray that our clergy and bishops will remember their solemn oaths before they vote at General Synod.”

would be to make the Anglican Church of Canada into some sectarian, congregational body with no common understanding of what constitutes the Christian faith, where individual dioceses are responsible to no authority but themselves. Nothing further from the concept of the Anglican Church as envisaged by the Reformers, or held by Anglicans down the centuries, can be imagined. It is simply a sell-out of everything that has ever distinguished Anglicanism.

Oaths sworn before God and the Congregation

Whether they were ordained using the BCP, or the BAS, all priests of our

– Continued on Page 7

1966 and 2002 or: Why I Walked in 2002

The Rev'd Dr. J. I Packer

In 1966, in Britain, when evangelical leader Martyn Lloyd Jones called on Anglican evangelicals to leave the Church of England, I with John Stott and others stayed put and maintained publically that this was not the way to go. But 36 years later, in 2002, I was one of the 80-odd who walked out of the Synod of the Canadian Diocese of New Westminster, declaring communion with the Bishop and Synod broken. I have been asked: what had changed? Have my principles shifted over time, or were the two situations significantly different? I here respond to these questions.

In June 2002, New Westminster Synod passed by a 62.5% majority a motion requesting Bishop Michael Ingham to do as he said he wished to do and start the blessing of same-sex unions on request. We who walked out when the Bishop said he was going ahead formed ourselves into the Anglican Communion in New Westminster (ACiNW), choosing the name to show that we had not left the diocese but the diocese had left us. We have not withdrawn from the Anglican Church of Canada, nor from the Anglican Communion nor from the diocese as such (though as of now we send our diocesan apportionment to other destinations); we are simply protesting with all our power a decision that officially disrupts the fellowship in the gospel that gives the Anglican Church its public identity, the identity of commitment to biblical faith and biblical holiness.

Because of this decision, we found ourselves compelled by conscience to suspend communion with the Bishop and the Synod, and to ask for alternative episcopal oversight, for our diocesan, having committed himself to act out a negation of the gospel, should now in our estimate be brought under discipline.

In a spelling out and living out of the New Testament gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ there can be no compromise, nor can an explicit denial of any part of that gospel be treated as a small thing.

“In a spelling out and living out of the New Testament gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ there can be no compromise, nor can an explicit denial of any part of that gospel be treated as a small thing.”

In 1966 there were bishops in the Church of England who seemed to be believing and behaving badly, as were some clergy also. But the views of these deviant office holders had no official status, and when it was insinuated that we who were officially in communion with them were guilty by association of all their errors we could not agree. Our reasoning was that we were adhering to Anglican doctrine as officially defined in the Articles and delineated liturgically in the Prayer Book, and these documents were unchanged. We could speak freely against the individual errors, as Paul spoke freely against the Galatian and Colossian and Corinthian errors, and like Paul, we could not be held guilty of what we denounced. So with full integrity we could identify ourselves as Anglican constitutionalists and make clear that we were working and praying for full-scale spiritual revival. Meanwhile, in the time-tested Anglican way, we looked to the discipline of public debate to discredit the errors of deviants, and re-establish theological truth and pastoral wisdom in everyone's mind.

In 2002, however, a single diocese, cutting loose from the solidarity of

biblical, Canadian Episcopal, and worldwide Anglican consensus against homosexual behaviour, treated itself as competent to legitimize and constitutionalize the gay lifestyle as an acceptable mode of Christian discipleship. Two questions arose. First, how dare any part of God's church ask God to bless what he has declared that he forbids? Second, with what credibility could anyone in the dioceses, having accepted this constitutionalizing of the gay way, then protest that it ignores the Bible, negates the gospel, and parts company with authentic Anglicanism? The Bishop's acceptance of the Synod's notion put all in the diocese who were not prepared to give up fighting the issue into an irretrievably false position.

In ECUSA the same question arose when a practicing homosexual who had left wife and children became Bishop of New Hampshire. Should Canada's General Synod legislate permissive blessing of same-sex union, the same question would arise in every Canadian diocese.

Theological, pastoral and constitutional missteps of secondary importance can ordinarily be accepted under protest. That, for instance, is how many with whom I sympathize accept the ordination of presbyters and bishops. But when a primary Christian doctrine that is part of the gospel is negated, integrity calls for direct non-acceptance, which the suspending of communion expresses. In this case, what is being negated is Paul's assurance to the Corinthians that those who do not set themselves against homosexual activity behaviour in their own lives – who do not, in other words, repent with regard to it, and labour to leave it behind – will not inherit the

– Continued on Page 7

1966 and 2002...*– Continued from Page 6*

kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6: 9-10). So people like me in New Westminster diocese must show that we take Paul seriously, and find for ourselves an uncompromised place to stand, a position from which we can with integrity reach out pastorally to practising gays on the same terms as Paul did. If we suffer loss in the process, well, so be it; faithfulness, we know, sometimes involves that. This is the course that the ACiNW has sought to follow, and it has been heartening to find that most of the Anglican Communion thinks we did the right thing.

I am, if I know myself at all, first and foremost a Reformed Evangelical, centred upon the majesty of God, the authority of Scripture, the glory of the cross, the need for conversion and the priority of mission. To my own way of thinking, this makes me a catholic Christian, and what I long for most is the unity of all Christians everywhere in those truths and in the love, praise, evangelistic zeal and cultural endeavour which they can generate, all bathed in evangelical passion. This would be life in the Lord at its best, and a true foretaste of heaven. But now, within this larger frame, I am a convictional Anglican who sees supreme worth in the mainstream Anglican heritage of theology, worship, and moral guidance, and I seek unity and renewal in the truth of the gospel within an Anglican frame. In 1966 this led me to refuse the appearance of lapsing into sectarianism; in 2002 it led me to refuse an apparent lapse into lethal error that sanctifies sin and negates the gospel. Circumstances alter cases. The fixed point is the goal of unity in, and life through, the truth of the gospel and the grace of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. May God hold all of us to this.

The Rev'd Dr. J. I. Packer is Professor of Systematic Theology at Regent's College, Vancouver and Vice Chairman of the PBSC. As one of the most widely published Christian authors in the English language, he is the author of numerous books including *Knowing God* and *God Has Spoken*.



**Duccio (1255-1318), *The Betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane*
From the *Maestà*
Museo dell'Opera Metropolitana, Siena**

'But Jesus said unto him, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?"
Luke 22. 48

The Same-Sex Issue ...*– Continued from Page 5*

church swore a solemn oath before God and the congregation at their ordination to be loyal to the doctrine, discipline and worship of Christ as this Church has received it. In the Book of Common Prayer (which remains the official standard of doctrine and teaching of the Anglican Church of Canada), bishops at their consecration solemnly swear to drive away all erroneous doctrine. In the BAS, bishops at their consecration solemnly swear to "guard the faith, unity and discipline of the Church."

The International Anglican Primates warn that this passage of this motion will strike at the very heart of the faith, the unity, and the discipline of the Anglican Communion, in their words "tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level." Let us pray that our clergy and bishops will remember their solemn oaths before they vote at General Synod.

Not the Time to be Discouraged

Many in our Church are discouraged that things could ever have come to such a pass. However, this is not the time to be discouraged, or disunited. The PBSC, along with our partners in the Essentials Movement, will be mounting a presence at the General Synod. We will be doing our utmost to ensure that synod delegates understand exactly what is at stake. Should this motion pass, that will be the time for us to re-evaluate how we can best live and worship as Anglicans faithful to the Scriptures, faithful to historic Anglicanism, and faithful to world-wide Anglicanism beyond our borders. In the meantime, it's the time for all those for whom the authority of Scripture, the Catholicity of the Anglican Church, and the unity of our Communion are not negotiable, to stand together, work together, and pray together.

Desmond Scotchmer

Desmond Scotchmer is Editor of the National Newsletter of the Prayer Book Society of Canada, President of the Toronto Branch, PBSC, and former National President of the PBSC.

For Such a Time as This...

— Continued from Page 2

could make you unpopular.’

The teleconference took its name, ‘For Such at Time as this,’ from The Book of Esther in the Old Testament. This Book tells the story of this human dilemma: what to do at ‘this’ moment. It tells how our willingness to serve God with action at particular times can have an effect on the outcome of complex problems. By their faithfulness Esther and Mordechai saved their people, who were living in captivity, from a sure death.

The mission statement of the Essentials movement articulates with clarity the hope that Essentials is ‘...to be the theological and spiritual rallying point for historic Christian orthodoxy in the Anglican Church of Canada. Our mission is to call the Anglican Church of Canada to embrace and live by its orthodox Christian heritage under the renewing guidance of the Holy Spirit.’ Canadians, and Canadian Anglicans in particular, can sometimes be complacent. Now is a time to resist that urge and to rise to the challenge set before us as orthodox Anglicans.

A sermon for the third Sunday in Lent by Fr. Crouse calls us to submit ourselves to God’s scrutiny. The price of liberation is dear but this is the way to find our way through complicated and difficult times.

‘The price of liberation’

...Today’s Gospel tells us that it is the ‘finger of God,’ the Word of God, that casts out our sins, and next Sunday’s Gospel tells us that it is the same Word of God, the ‘bread of heaven,’ (John 6.41) which fills our empty souls with virtue.

Sin is what the Word of God forbids. Virtue is not what we happen to find pleasant, or nice, or pretty. Virtue is what the Word of God demands. Our liberation lies in our humble obedience to that Word.

We need the grace of humility to see that our likes and dislikes are not the standard of good and evil. Nor is

human calculation any final standard. It is the “finger of God,” it is the Word of God that casts out the devils and liberates the soul. Therefore, Christian life must be life lived in attentive obedience to that word....

In the world of practical affairs, moral problems are not simple, not black and white, but a thousand different shades of gray; and how do I know what the Word of God says about this or that particular situation?”

Well, certainly, I dare not pretend that it is easy. I do not find it so, and I don’t suppose that you do, either. But at the same time, we do know something of what the Word of God demands of us. Let’s start with the little bit that we do know, and let’s not make the complexities of our problems an excuse for doing nothing. Let’s start with the little that we do know, in humility and obedience, and trust God for the rest.

Fr. Robert Crouse

Sermon for the third Sunday in Lent

Norah Johnston is Chairman of the Vancouver Branch of the PBSC. She is married to a G.P., Will Johnston, has two children, and is an artist when not devoting her time to the Anglican Church.

¹ I commend them to you. The teleconference was well done and the DVDs might be used as a jumping off point for discussion. The hope is that they will promote more awareness of how perplexing is the situation in which we now find ourselves.

² After meeting many of the African and Asian Primates one is humbled by the depth of their faith. I get angry at the condescending tone of many of the Western critics who seem genuinely perplexed that African Clerics, ‘one stage removed from animism,’ would dare presume to cast doubt on doctrinal revisions now threatening the unity of the Church.

³ also known as the *Eames Commission* after Archbishop Eames of Ireland who is overseeing it.

For Such a Time as This

was supported totally from the personal donations of concerned Anglicans across Canada. You can support this conference through a donation made to Essentials Canada, which is a registered charity.

For Such a Time as This: Finding Our Way Forward

DVDs of the entire conference, plus an interactive CD-ROM: with questions designed to help parishes, home discussion groups or bible studies to hold discussions on our current Canadian problems. The cost will likely be \$25, including shipping and should be ready to ship in a few weeks

**Contact the Essentials office at
1- 866-883-7328 (toll free)
or e mail: essentials@cogeco.ca**



Duccio, *The Incredulity of St Thomas*, From the *Maestà*, Museo dell’Opera Metropolitana, Siena

“Then he said to Thomas, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing”.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, “My Lord and my God.”

John 20. 27-8

Book Review

Prayer Book an antidote to world run amok

Reprinted from Christian Week March 2, 2004

DISCOVERING THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER: A HANDS-ON APPROACH
By Sue Careless

TORONTO, ON: THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY OF CANADA, ABC PUBLISHING, 2003
280 PAGES, PAPERBACK, CDN \$19.95
ISBN: 55126-398-X

REVIEWED BY GREG BAILEY

Those whose daily conversations with God are completely spontaneous might question the appearance of a book about written prayers. Nevertheless, *Discovering the Book of Common Prayer: A Hands-on Approach* is an unexpected treasure.

Sue Careless, a Canadian author and Anglican worshipper, explores the traditional Anglican prayer book, treating it both as resource for prayer and a manual for spiritual understanding and growth. She has written a powerful apologetic for classic Anglican devotion and belief that will serve as an antidote to the church's topsy-turvy world of modern political correctness

"If you're looking for a richer daily prayer life, if you've been away from the Anglican Church for a long time, or even if you are new to it, this book was written for you", she writes.

The Book of Common Prayer (1962 Canadian Edition) is the official prayer book of the Anglican Church of Canada... The BCP is a priceless possession of the Anglican Church and has endeared itself to generations of devout Christians throughout the world. Versions of the Book of Common Prayer

are used in over 50 countries, and have been translated into over 150 languages. In Canada alone, it is available in French and Inuktituk, Gwich'in, Mohawk and Cree, as well as in English."

Discovering the Book of Common Prayer doesn't come across as a stuffy academic work. Careless is far too conversational in her writing for that. For the most part, the book is delightfully erudite, taking the reader on a guided tour of this spiritual masterpiece, pausing ever so often to point out some fascinating detail that renders the picture entirely comprehensible.

These include boxed or highlighted lists of arrow prayers of adoration, together with some useful acronyms to help prayer life. Sections on the Daily Office (the formal name for morning and evening prayer) explain not only the content but also the rationale for it.

Careless borrows freely from writers as diverse as C.S. Lewis, Brother Lawrence, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Philip Yancey, John Stott, and Eugene Paterson to encourage the reader.

Appendices include a brief guide to the essentials of grammar or phrases in Prayer Book English – essential for anyone unfamiliar with the language of the King James Bible or Shakespeare – plus a lexicon of several hundred entries. (Does Hosanna really mean "Praise God" in Aramaic?)

"Anglicans are not the only ones who pray using the words of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Over time, other denominations have lifted large chunks out of the BCP, from the marriage and burial rites, for example, and put them into their own services. Traditional

Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian prayer books have all borrowed from the BCP."

In this highly readable book, Sue Careless has given us an indispensable guide to Anglican prayer, spirituality and history: I highly recommend it.

Greg Bailey, currently serving in the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, was formerly the national director of the Canadian Bible Society.

Christian Week is Canada's largest interdenominational Christian newspaper

Discovering the Book of Common Prayer Nominated for Award

Discovering the Book of Common Prayer: A Hands-on Approach, the book written by Sue Careless and sponsored by the PBSC, has been placed on the short-list of finalists for the 2004 Word Guild Award for Christian writers, for the "Personal Growth" category.

The Word Guild awards prizes for books in 23 categories, ranging from "Personal Growth" and "Leadership" to "Historical Novel" and "Culture". Among other authors on the short-list are Jean Vanier, of Trosly, France, founder of L'Arche and author of *Finding Peace*, Brian Stiller (President of Tyndale College and Seminary in Toronto) for his book *Jesus and Caesar* (both nominated in the "Culture" category), and John Stackhouse, Professor at Regent College, Vancouver, for his book *Evangelical Ecclesiology* (in the "Leadership" category).

Winners will be announced on June 18, at Guelph, Ontario, during *Write! Canada*, the 20th Annual *God Uses Ink* Christian Writers' Conference. Congratulations, Sue!

Something to Think About

From our Intrepid Correspondent within Niagara Diocese

From the Diocese of Niagara, one of the most liberal in the Anglican Church of Canada, comes news that St George's Reformed Episcopal Church has purchased the buildings of St Margaret's Anglican Church in the west of the city of Hamilton, Ontario. The parish of St George's was closed down and divested of its building a few years ago by the then Bishop of Niagara. The parish, however, refused to die, joined the Reformed Episcopal Church, a Continuing Anglican body, and began camping out in the basement of a Baptist Church on Main Street in downtown Hamilton. Offering *only* services from the Book of Common Prayer, St George's began attracting standing-room-only crowds. Over the years it built up a war chest, awaiting the time when a suitable building might become available. The recent slew of closings of parishes within the Niagara Diocese offered a good choice of buildings: as a result, St George's purchased the buildings of old St Margaret's parish. The new premises are promising, as they are near McMaster University: St George's attracts many university students looking for something different and more challenging than the bland fare served up in many other Anglican churches.

Summer Barbecue with Sue Careless

Sue Careless, author of *Discovering the Book of Common Prayer* will speak on June 27, after Evening Prayer at 4:00pm, and before a summer barbecue at St John's, Nassagaweya, as a guest of the Niagara North PBSC branch. St John's Church is in Campellville, on the Guelph Line, just north of Highway 401. For more details, phone (905) 971-7863.

Voices From the Pew

Doreen Langmead

We are truly fortunate in that our parish, St Luke's, Victoria, provides two Anglican forms of service to its congregation. The BCP (Book of Common Prayer) and the BAS (Book of Alternate Services). This probably accounts for the size of its congregation and is certainly my reason for joining. As in most aspects of life, we expect our separate wishes and beliefs to be respected and our previous priest was scrupulous in this regard.

However, we now have an interim priest and on my last visit to the early Communion Service he announced that we would be following the Collect, both Readings, the Psalm, the Gospel, the Prayer over the Gifts and the Prayer after Communion from the BAS insert. This instead of what we'd come for, our usual service from the Book of Common Prayer. We were given no option but to allow ourselves to be thus forcibly manipulated into following a form of service we do not believe in.

This has happened to me before in other churches and is happening throughout the Anglican Communion. No one, myself included, had the courage to stand up and say firmly "No, Father. This is a BCP Service and we'd like you to respect that. This is what we're here for." Instead of which I stood up and walked out. On previous occasions, instead of standing our ground I, along with other committed BCP'ers, have simply left and have kept right on walking.

Well, not this time. It just isn't right.

From the very beginning, there were indications where our interim priest's sympathies lay. Things began to be changed: for instance: the insertion of the word "PEOPLE" into the Book of Common Prayer where it is written "Hear also what St. Paul saith: This is a true saying, and worthy of all MEN (not "PEOPLE") to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Likewise: "Almighty and everliving God, who by thy holy Apostle hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks, for all

MEN: ..." Again, not "PEOPLE".

Those of us who adhere to the BCP are quite sufficiently well educated to understand that "MEN" is being used generically and - the Women's Lib notwithstanding - we are not so insecure as to need the corruption of the word "PEOPLE". Likewise we want, and expect, the Communion to be offered with the BCP text as written and not the BAS: "The Body of Christ ... The Blood of Christ." Those of us who care about these things have to understand that the Book of Common Prayer is constantly under attack and that its survival - and our right to use it for our worship - needs defending.

In the Christmas Edition of the PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY OF CANADA NEWSLETTER the article "Voices From the Pew" by Billie Farmer was dealing with the same subject. The article relates how, in her parish, it was also an interim priest who started introducing BAS inserts in an attempt to force the BCP congregation into what he described as a more personal form of service.

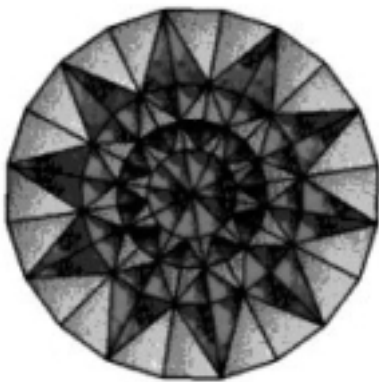
Because this wasn't nipped in the bud, it was only with a great deal of courage, effort and conflict, letters of complaint to the Bishop and so forth that the congregation was eventually able to win back their right to have their beliefs and their form of service respected ... and we DO have that right!

There are quite enough schisms in the Anglican Church as it is and we don't need to create any more. Just as we respect the BAS congregation's right to their preferred form of worship - which they follow with NO interference from us - so should they, likewise, respect ours. Our convictions are no less valid and we are as entitled to hold onto them as they are. It is unequivocally wrong to try to force us to toss them aside for whatever reason, and a priest, however well-meaning, whether permanent or interim and whatever his private agenda, is supposed to serve his congregation, not the other way around.



The 24th Annual ATLANTIC THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

*Sunday evening, June 27th ~ Wednesday noon, June 30th, 2004
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.*



Multiculturalism and Religious Freedom

*Sunday June 27th
Evensong 7:30 Christ Church
Cathedral, Fredericton, followed
by a Reception hosted by The
Very Rev'd Keith Joyce, Dean of
Fredericton,*

Papers:

“The Relationship of Jews and Greeks in the Hellenistic World, and the Rise of Christianity”

The Rev'd Dr. Carsten Peter Thiede
*Professor of New Testament Times and
History with
Papyrology and Archaeology at STH Basel,
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Response:

The Venerable Patrick Curran
*Chaplain of Christ Church, Vienna, and
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Eastern Archdeaconry in the Diocese of
Europe.*

Religious Toleration and Persecution in the Roman Empire

Dr. Paul Epstein
*Associate Professor of Classics,
Oklahoma State University,
Stillwater, Oklahoma.*

Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Europe

The Rev'd Dr. Robert Crouse
*Professor Emeritus of Classics,
Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S.,
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Saskatchewan.*

Response:

The Rev'd Dr. Barry Craig
*Assistant Professor, Department of
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**“Distinguish in Order to Unite:
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**Choral Eucharist (Feast of St. Peter and
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Tuesday, June 29th 5:00 p.m
Sermon - The Venerable Patrick Curran
*Chaplain of Christ Church, Vienna, and
Archdeacon of the
Eastern Archdeaconry in the Diocese of
Europe.*

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