

The Prayer Book Society of Canada
Newsletter
Michaelmas 2004

The Way Forward

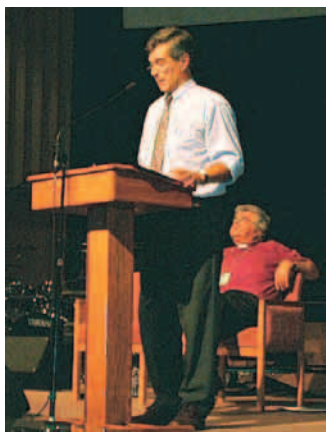
The Essentials Conference, Ottawa, August 30 – September 1, 2004

D. Scotchmer

This article appeared in a slightly different version in the Michaelmas edition of The Lamp.

The first thing that impressed me as I pulled into the grounds of Bethel Pentecostal Church on Fisher Avenue in southern Ottawa, where the Anglican Essentials Conference was being held, was the large number of volunteers directing the steady stream of cars into the parking lot. Immediately afterwards, I was impressed by two other things: the parking lot was huge, and it was almost completely full.

I was to see many impressive sights during the



PBSC National Chairman Michael Edward addresses The Way Forward Conference, Ottawa, August, 2004.

conference. Above all, I was impressed by the organization, determination, dynamism, commitment, and friendliness of the large number of disparate Anglicans who had come here to a Pentecostal Church in Ottawa at the end of the summer because they felt something needed to be done about the state of the Anglican Church in Canada.

Pulling off the Essentials Conference “The Way Forward” was a remarkable feat in itself. The conference had been, after all, conceived and planned during two months in summer, and summer is not always the best time plan a large undertaking with a volunteer workforce. Even more remarkable was the timing of the conference - the week before Labour Day. I remember thinking, when I heard of the projected dates for the first time, “Oh, dear,

the last week in summer! We’ll be lucky to get anybody to come, even if all the planning gets done in time!”

But I was quite wrong. Here it was. Well-organized, with teams of eager young helpers - and an attendance of well over 700 delegates. Wow! Impressive was the operative word.

Why was it necessary?

So, why had it been necessary to organize a conference on such short notice?

As most Anglicans are aware by now, the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, which met in St Catharines in May, was set to vote on a controversial motion which would have given individual dioceses the authority to permit same-sex blessings. The matter is highly

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divisive, and contradicts Scriptural teaching and classic Anglican norms. The international Primates of the Anglican Communion throughout the world had warned that to proceed down such a path would be to create divisions at the deepest levels within the Anglican Communion. A delegate from the Archbishop of Canterbury came to the Synod, and warned of the ramifications to Anglican unity if General Synod were to proceed.

In the event, General Synod deferred the motion until 2007. In the meantime, the matter will be referred to the Primate's Theological Commission, which will consider whether it represents a change of doctrine. The Archbishop of Canterbury welcomed the decision to defer the issue, saying that the decision to hold back "offers hope for the continuing collegiality of the Anglican Communion" (i.e., that it offers hope for unity within worldwide Anglicanism).

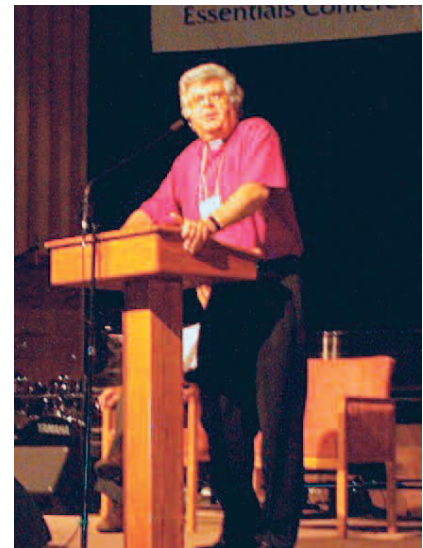
However, the very next day, General Synod passed, amidst a certain amount of confusion and procedural manoeuvring - and by a show of hands - a resolution affirming "the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same sex relationships."

At the close of the session, Donald Harvey, Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador took the stage to read a statement on behalf of nine Canadian bishops:

"General Synod's opinion is in error and contrary to the teaching of Scripture and the tradition of the undivided Church, the clearly expressed conviction of the Anglican Communion at the Lambeth Conference of 1998, the overwhelming ecumenical consensus of the Church inside Canada and abroad, and the 1997 Guidelines of our own House of Bishops." Reaction to the motion from abroad was swift, as well. Writing from a theological consultation in the Bahamas, Archbishop Drexel Gomez of the West Indies criticized the action saying "In our view, the amendment is much more serious than even the original form of the motion...in employing expressions which Scripture uses to describe marriage (Eph. 5:25-33)".

Many Anglicans were dismayed at the resolution, deeming it prejudicial to any decision by the Theological Commission. For others, it is a sign of how far the Anglican Church of Canada has drifted from its Scriptural, Apostolic, and Catholic roots, and from classical Anglican norms. Many Anglicans felt a need to repudiate the actions of the Synod, and to distance themselves publicly.

So, amidst all the confusion, disunity, and uncertainty, traditionalist Anglicans put their heads together. An organization was needed which could hold all faithful Anglicans in Canada together, in communion with the world-wide Anglican Communion,



The Rt. Rev'd Donald Harvey, Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador takes the podium at The Way Forward Conference, Ottawa, August, 2004.

whether in association with the structure of the Anglican Church of Canada or not, an organization which could speak for them, and would have the ability to speak to the wider Anglican Communion beyond Canada.

So, the idea for the conference was born, and carried through to a reality, here in Ottawa, in the last week of the summer.

The Conference began by affirming its determination to work for (1) a renewed Canadian Anglican orthodoxy that will recover the principles of our heritage (2) the support and expansion of orthodox Anglican ministry, through faithful witness to the truth of the Gospel, and then (3) re-affirmed its unity with faithful Anglican believers

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CORRECTION

PLEASE NOTE

A typing error appeared in Dr. J. I. Packer's article "1966 and 2002: or Why I Walked in 2002", which appeared in the Eastertide 2004 edition of the Newsletter of the Prayer Book Society of Canada. On page 6, column 3, the words "women as" were omitted from the sentence which incorrectly appeared as "That, for instance, is how many with whom I sympathize accept the ordination of presbyters and bishops." Dr. Packer writes "This wrecks my argument and makes me a Quaker, Salvationist, or Plymouth Brother."

The sentence in its context should have read:

"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 women as 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."

Our apologies to Dr. Packer, and to all our readers.

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throughout the Anglican Communion world-wide.

PBSC National Chairman Michael Edward put it well: "we reaffirm what is quintessentially Anglican, what Anglicans have always believed." He then quoted

the principle of universal Christianity, what C S Lewis called "mere Christianity": that principle which has always been at the heart of Anglicanism, the desire to hold only to that which has always been believed by Christians "*ubique, semper, omnibus*" ("everywhere, always, and by all").

The Conference then set about

its main task: the creation of new structures for orthodox Anglican believers in Canada. The vision is for a new, national, grassroots federation of orthodox Anglican individuals and constituencies committed to the recovery

and revival of orthodox Anglicanism, with representation from laity, clergy, and bishops from all four of the ecclesiastical provinces of Canada.

In order to realize this goal, the Conference then agreed in principle to the establishment of two new national bodies, and set in place a steering committee to oversee their birth. These two bodies have been given the interim, working names of "The Federation" and "The Network". The likelihood of changing the name from the "The Federation" at some time in the future was mentioned. As one speaker wryly noted, there had been far too many jokes flying around about Klingons and Vulcans.

In essence, the old Essentials Coalition will be absorbed into a new organization, which will be a Federation of all Canadian



Some PBSC members at The Way Forward Conference: left to right, Desmond Scotchmer, Editor PBSC Newsletter; Naomi Luth, Federation Representative for the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario; Walter Raybould, PBSC President, Niagara North Branch.

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Anglicans committed to the recovery and renewal of the orthodox faith of our tradition. This Federation, unlike the old Essentials Coalition, is not limited to the three original founding organizations (the Prayer Book Society of Canada, Barnabas Anglican Ministries, and Anglican Renewal Ministries), but is open to all Canadian Anglicans who uphold traditional Biblical orthodoxy. The creation of this new body was seen as necessary. While the old Essentials Coalition has done sterling service in the past, there was a perceived need to widen its base to form a truly national and representational organization for all orthodox Anglicans which could have the ability to speak to the wider Anglican communion beyond the borders of Canada.

The interim Council of the new organization comprises members of the Essentials executive, (the four officers, plus the three “heads” of the coalition organizations), now joined by members elected from each of the four Canadian ecclesiastical provinces. There are four bishops on the council, one from each ecclesiastical province. Naomi Luth, former President of the PBSC Lambton County Branch is a newly-elected member of the Council, having been elected from the Province of Ontario.

Many speakers stressed repeatedly the need for Anglicans

around the world to know that, whatever the shenanigans of General Synod, there still exists a centre of orthodox Anglicanism; people who re-affirm and believe the principles of the Solemn Declaration of 1893, the founding document of the Anglican Church of Canada, set out in the beginning of the Book of Common Prayer

Alongside this structure, and working with it, will be a new group, given an interim working name of “The Network”. It will be led by Donald Harvey, retiring Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Network will consist of organizations, parishes, and individuals who find themselves in impaired communion with their dioceses and bishops, and/or the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. An obvious example is those parishes within the Diocese of New Westminster who walked out of the diocesan synod and refused to accept the Episcopal leadership of Michael Ingham. Members of the Network make it clear that it is not they who are leaving the Anglican Church: it is the Bishop of New Westminster and those who agree with him, who, in spite of the unequivocal warnings from the International Primates of the Anglican Communion, and from the Archbishop of Canterbury, have disassociated themselves from the worldwide Anglican Communion, and repudiated the doctrinal standards of Anglicanism.

This group will likely grow, and grow rapidly, as there are a number of dioceses across the country where moves are afoot to put in place a process similar to that which resulted in the blessing of same-sex unions in New Westminster. The Network will constitute a national body where faithful Anglicans who cannot accept decisions of their dioceses (or of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada) will be cared for. The intention is to see that all faithful Anglicans receive adequate Episcopal oversight, whatever the agenda of revisionist bishops or diocesan synods.

Orthodox Anglicans are determined not to be divided from one another. And why indeed should they be? They hold one Faith, and will not permit the actions of renegade synods, or of bishops who have contravened the solemn oaths they took before God and the congregation, at their ordination and consecration, to divide them.

Also of great interest was the highly informative and thought-provoking presentation made by the legal team for the dissenting parishes in New Westminster about the legal issues which ensue when congregations and clergy wish to disassociate themselves from their own dioceses. Following this was an equally probing presentation about the financial aspects related to these issues.

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The conference was attended by several representatives of global orthodox Anglicanism: including the Most Rev'd Greg Venables, Primate of the Southern Cone in South America, the Rt Rev'd Wallace Benn, Bishop of Lewes in England and a representative of Anglican Mainstream, the Rt Rev'd Robert Duncan, Bishop of Pittsburgh, and Moderator of the Anglican Communion Network in the USA, and Dr Bill Atwood, General Secretary of Ekklesia, an international organization connecting First and Third World Anglicans. The conference ended with a Eucharist from the Book of Common Prayer, presided over by the Rt Reverend Don Harvey, who was assisted by all of the bishops who were present from Canada and around the world.

Anglicans everywhere need to understand the gravity of the situation confronting them. The agenda for change is underway in many dioceses, and often has support in the highest places. The prevailing official line is that nothing will change, even if proposals to bless same-sex unions are passed by diocesan synods in Toronto, Niagara, Ottawa, and elsewhere. Make no mistake. Even where they support the proposed changes, the hierarchy is far more concerned than they let on. However, this is an ideologically-driven issue, and, unless the push-back from orthodox church

members is strong enough, the local authorities will push ahead with a revisionist agenda.

It needs to be stressed that, in a very real way, the issue is not homosexuality, which has always been with us, and which needs to be dealt with pastorally, sensitively, with Christian compassion. Same-sex blessings are only the presenting issue. The underlying issue is of paramount importance, and this is why the principles involved cannot be sacrificed. And this is perhaps where conservatives have not made their point clearly enough. Many well-intentioned people, motivated no doubt by good intentions about "inclusivity" are favourably disposed to this motion, and have failed to grasp the larger issue, which is this: what is the Anglican Church of Canada to be? Is it to be a church under the authority of Scripture, in communion with the Anglican Communion throughout the world, and a part of the universal, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, holding the faith received from the Apostles and delivering the same unimpaired to succeeding generations, or is it to be a splinter church buffeted like a flag by the winds of secular culture, which believes, contrary to all accepted understanding, that a small section of the Church can remake Christian teaching at will – remake it, moreover, in a way that contravenes directly the plain meaning of Scripture, and universally-accepted Christian teaching?

The Federation and the Network will, I hope, play a vital part in determining the future of Anglicanism in this country. They are very much grass-roots organizations. Interestingly, two of the speakers at the conference quoted from *The Lord of the Rings*. Paul Orritt, in talking about the role that ordinary Anglicans had to play in the work that is unfolding in our church, quoted the words of Elrond, spoken at the Council at Rivendell, when Frodo steps forward to take the task of bearing the Ring to the Cracks of Doom in the Fire-Mountain, Orodruin. "This is the hour of the Shire-folk, when they arise from their quiet fields to shake the towers and counsels of the great." "We're the Shire-folk", he added, "and now is the time."

Brett Cane also quoted the words of Frodo, spoken at another time: "I wish it had not happened in our time", only to have the obvious pointed out by Gandalf, that we have no choice in the timing of these things. Mr. Cane pointed out that it is the same for us. We have no choice over the dilemmas and conflicts that confront us. But we do have a choice in how we respond. Frodo made his choice, and Anglicans are being faced with their own. Hence the title of the conference "The Way Forward", and the theme chosen by the Essentials Council earlier in the year for their televised teleconference, beamed coast to coast via satellite, "For Such a Time as This."

As Others See Us: A Roman Catholic View

No Theology Please, We're Anglicans

By George Weigel

This past summer I had a pleasant dinner with a senior British churchman who happened to be visiting Cracow while I was teaching there. His Grace was, in many respects, an Anglican prelate straight from central casting: handsome, charming, urbane, impeccably attired, emotions under control, disclaimers always preceded by a "perhaps," etc., etc. Earlier in the day, he had gone to Wadowice, the Pope's birthplace, and was clearly moved to have seen the roots from which a great Christian witness had sprung.

What was disconcerting about our conversation was that it never touched on theology. We discussed at length the impact on the Anglican Communion and the Anglican-Catholic dialogue of last year's decision by the Diocese of New Hampshire (supported by a majority vote of delegates to a national Anglican convention) to ordain as the local bishop a man who has lived for years with his homosexual lover -- this, after divorcing his wife in a church ceremony. My interlocutor suggested, politely, that the real problem here was one of management, or perhaps of manners: U.S. Episcopalians had rushed into this before the rest of the Anglican Communion had had a chance to adjust its thinking to more enlightened (so to speak) ways. That the Gene Robinson case in New Hampshire engaged some core theological questions, including the Church's claim to be the bearer of moral truth, did not seem to be at the top of my dinner companion's menu of concerns.

Later in the summer I remembered this conversation when reading several reviews of, and commentaries on, the memoirs of George Carey, the former

Archbishop of Canterbury and head of the Anglican Communion. It is no offense against charity to suggest that Lord Carey is confused about several things -- and, once again, they are theological in character.

Carey argues that, as John Paul II has experienced more physical difficulties, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger has taken the Catholic Church in a new direction, undercutting the Pope's heroic personal witness. The evidence for this? The 2000 Vatican document *Dominus Iesus*, which reaffirms the unique salvific mission of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church's ancient understanding of itself as the most rightly ordered expression in history of the One Church of Christ. Why has Ratzinger done this? Because, Carey writes, Ratzinger is "exceedingly conservative," a man who shows "little of the flexibility that characterized the approach of the Second Vatican Council."

Really? *Dominus Iesus* contains 102 footnoted citations; fifty of them are taken from the documents of the Second Vatican Council. Another thirty-seven citations are from the magisterium of John Paul II, who, as *Dominus Iesus* states, approved the document "with sure knowledge and by his apostolic authority."

Carey also blames Ratzinger and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for the strained relations between Rome and Canterbury over the Anglican admission of women to the ordained ministry. But this, too, makes no sense. Carey's predecessor, Archbishop Robert Runcie, had been told in letters from the Pope and from Cardinal Johannes Willebrands (whom no one would ever

style "conservative") that Anglican approval of the ordination of women would raise extremely grave questions about the future of the Anglican-Catholic dialogue and the hope for ecclesial reconciliation. Runcie replied that there were indeed serious theological and ecumenical issues in play -- and then proceeded to make the case for ordaining women on strictly sociological grounds.

Which leads to the awkward but inescapable thought that some high-ranking Anglican prelates of recent vintage have suffered from a dramatic theology deficit. Lord Carey's successor, Dr. Rowan Williams, is a formidable and well-regarded theologian. Whether he can convince his fellow bishops of the Anglican Communion to think theologically, rather than sociologically and politically, about central questions of Christian doctrine and Church order would seem to be one of his challenges.

If Dr. Williams is unsuccessful -- if senior Anglican figures continue to treat the Gene Robinson affair as a management problem, while others blame ecumenical chilliness on that great bogeyman, Cardinal Ratzinger -- then, before too much time has passed, many Catholics, including those fully committed to ecumenism, will sadly but ineluctably conclude that what styles itself an Anglican "Communion" is in fact a fraternity of quarreling Protestant sects.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

This article appeared in "Viewpoints", from the website "Tidings On-Line", on September 3, 2004.

Editorial

The Current Crisis in Anglicanism

It's been a summer of confusion in the Anglican Church of Canada, and indeed in the wider Anglican Communion throughout the world. At this stage, I believe it is a good time to take a step back and assess what this crisis is really about. It's a crisis over the authority of Scripture, it's a crisis over the catholicity of the Anglican Church; it's about the Anglican Church of Canada's relationship to the wider Anglican Communion. Same-sex blessings are merely the presenting issue.

The current crisis has been years in the making. It represents the culmination of what has been going on within Anglicanism for more than two generations. We need only look at the liturgical changes brought in over the past two or three decades to see this. Modern liturgies concentrate on "us", on the gathered community, they teach us to celebrate the church, to celebrate ourselves, and think of ourselves as good people. In contrast, traditional Christian liturgies, that of the Book of Common Prayer, for instance, or the Liturgy or the All-Night Vigil of the Orthodox Church, or the old Tridentine Rite of the Roman Catholic Church, concentrate on God, on His glory and mercy and loving kindness, and on our own

unworthiness.

I remember well the debate that accompanied the introduction of the Book of Alternative Services almost 20 years ago. There was much denigration of the Book of Common Prayer as "irrelevant", "too penitential", "too negative", not celebratory enough. Criticism of the new liturgies, for instance, that they set up new idols, those of the Gathered Community, or of the need to be "relevant" to contemporary culture, was dismissed out of hand. In light of current events, I believe, that debate needs to be revisited.

The setting up as a primary objective for contemporary worship the notion that the Church must be relevant to the surrounding culture has engendered in modern Anglicanism a mind-set among many which, I believe, predisposes the Church to sacrifice anything which might be perceived as old-fashioned, or "negative", or "irrelevant". A mind-set which dictates that Christian worship and Christian teaching need to be attractive to the unchurched is one step away from a mind-set which dictates that Christian worship and teaching need to conform to secular thinking. According to this mind-set, wherever there is a potential

mismatch between traditional Christian worship and teaching on the one hand, and secular thinking on the other, it is traditional worship and teaching which must go. The result is a church which, as Dr. George Weigel points out in the article which appears elsewhere in this Newsletter, has long since ceased to think about things doctrinally or theologically - or Scripturally. Such thinking is deeply entrenched in the minds of many Anglicans. I have no doubt that it influenced many delegates to this past summer's General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada.

Traditional Anglican teaching locates the source of true doctrine in Holy Scripture. Liturgy must reflect what is taught in Scripture, and the Church must in turn

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St Michael defeating Satan, Raphael (1483-1520)

...Crisis in Anglicanism*– Continued from Page 7*

witness to that Truth to the world. The BAS makes an explicit link between contemporary culture, doctrine, and liturgy, but in a very different way. The BAS maintains, in its *Introduction*, that doctrine is found in liturgy. Liturgy, in turn, must wear "the idiom, the cadence, the world view, the imagery" of the passing age. Moreover, as the times change, so also must liturgy – and with it, doctrine: "The church must be open to liturgical change in order to permit the continuous development of a living theology" (BAS, p. 10).

The loss of a doctrinal, a Scriptural, basis for the church's way of thinking is clearly evident in the BAS. Again, the book's *Introduction* sets out clearly the modernist view of Scripture as the "repository of the Church's symbols of life and faith." (BAS, p 9). The implication is quite clear. Scripture becomes a collection of themes and symbols, haphazardly stored away (a mere "repository of symbols") which may be retrieved individually or severally, re-arranged, and restructured to conform to contemporary ways of thinking. The Rev'd Dr. Robert Crouse, Honorary Chairman of PBSC, that clear-thinking, far-seeing critic of the liturgical revolution that remade Anglicanism in the 1980's, pointed this out over and over again during those debates which surrounded the introduction of the

BAS. In his address "Rites for a New Age?" given to the Annual General Meeting of the Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island Branch of the Prayer Book Society of Canada in May 1990, he put it this way: "The BAS starts from the acceptance of contemporary culture as its standard, and reinterprets the Gospel in its light."

Where you pick your starting point determines where you end up. For two generations now, contemporary Anglicanism in Canada has been deeply influenced by what I would characterize as these dubious doctrinal and liturgical precepts: that Christian doctrine changes, and that the refashioning of doctrine should reflect the preoccupations, the outlook, and the prejudices of the passing age. We are a church that has forgotten how to think doctrinally, to think Scripturally, a church that has fallen into the habit of reinterpreting the Gospel in the light of contemporary culture. Time to rethink the past 40 years.

The idea of a Gospel that is eternal and unchanging is at the heart of all classical Anglican thought, and is the very essence of all orthodox Christian teaching. The Gospel is revealed, and it is objective, and it is set out in the Holy Scriptures: it is True, and it exists of itself, independent of what we may think or feel at any given moment, and independent of changing fashions, philosophies or

modes of thought – or our own predilections or weaknesses.

It's argued that the issue of same-sex blessings needs to be put in perspective: homosexuality in and of itself is not one of the major concerns of the Bible; references in either Testament are rare. Gay couples wish for happiness like any others. Nevertheless, where the plain meaning of the Scriptural text, supported by the traditional understanding of the universal church clashes with contemporary western culture, serious Christians have no choice but to stand with the prophets, the apostles, and the church Fathers. The unchanging Gospel, in all its fullness, cannot be compromised.

So it's time to rethink the past 40 years, time to reconstruct an Anglican mind that stands on a sound Scriptural basis, on our collective memory: our true collective memory, not the ersatz memory that has been imported into Anglicanism over the past two decades. Time to think once again about what vision of the Church we wish to embrace: that of traditional Christianity on the one hand, which seeks a world transformed by the Word, or the modernist revision, which is prepared to see the Word conformed to the world.

Desmond Scotchmer

REMINDER

Copies of the Book of Common Prayer with an updated Table of Moveable Feasts now available at the new Anglican Book Centre

Some of our members may not realize that new copies of the Book of Common Prayer are available at the Anglican Book Centre at its new location at 80 Hayden Street, Toronto. Of particular interest to all love and use the Book of Common Prayer is the fact that the copies now available show an **updated Table of Moveable Feasts for Fifty Years from 1971 to 2020**. The *Table of Moveable Feasts* appears at the beginning of your BCP (page xiv), and tells you upon which date Septuagesima, Ash Wednesday, Easter, Rogation Sunday, Ascension Day, Whitsunday, Trinity Sunday and Advent Sunday will fall in any given year.

For all those of you (like me) whose BCP shows the table ending at the year 2000, these copies are a must have! Also available are new Books of Common Prayer bound with the Book of Common Praise, the old and much-loved "blue hymn book" dating from 1938, and containing all your favourite, fabulous old hymns with the REAL words...texts undiluted by modern politically-correct censors.

Your editor was at the new bookstore recently (where I snapped up my new BCP), and was very pleased to note that these books are actually prominently displayed. This is great news, as it shows a vote of confidence for the future of the Book of Common Prayer. Copies would make wonderful Christmas presents.

"I Believe: The Nicene Creed", illustrated by Pauline Baynes

While I was there, another book caught my eye: a slender volume entitled "I Believe: The Nicene Creed", published by Eerdmans of Grand Rapids, Michigan. This has lovely colour illustrations by Pauline Baynes, the very same Pauline Baynes who did the illustrations for the original version of C.S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*. The illustrations are up to the quality of those original ones for the *Narnia* stories: filled with grace, charm, vigour, and elegance. If you are in Toronto, slip down to the new Anglican Book Centre, and have a peek, or ask your local bookstore to order a copy. Once again, these would make great Christmas presents. - Editor



St Michael the Archangel

Something More to Think About

St George's Reformed Episcopal Church, Hamilton, Ontario

As we reported in our Eastertide 2004 edition of the PBSC Newsletter ("Something to Think About"), St George's Reformed Episcopal Church in Hamilton, Ontario, bought the buildings of St Margaret's Anglican Church, which has just been closed. St George's was a former parish of the Anglican Diocese of Huron, shut down by the then bishop. St George's refused to die, joined the Reformed Episcopal Church (a Continuing Anglican body), and lived out of rented space in a Baptist Church on Main Street, in Hamilton, until they were forced out by standing room-only attendance.

The saga continues. We now hear that the first morning service at St George's was packed, and that seventy-nine worshippers showed up for Evening Prayer. St George's offers services exclusively from the Book of Common Prayer.

God bless, and continued success, St George's!

St Benedict, Archbishop Cranmer, and the Spirit of Anglican Worship

An Address by the Rev'd Canon Dr Robert Crouse
Given at St. Barnabas' Church, Ottawa, March 25, 2004

Peter Scotchmer

Dr. Robert Crouse's lecture took place on the feast day prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer for honouring the memories of both St Benedict, Abbot of Monte Casino, and Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, Translator and Reviser of the Liturgy, and Martyr. Although a thousand years separates the founder of western monasticism from the founder of the English Reformation, Dr. Crouse maintained that what they have in common outweighs by far the difference between them, and the differences between the circumstances in which they lived.

Both men lived, as we do, in times of "turmoil and confusion." St. Benedict, born in 480 A.D., seventy years after the sack of Rome by barbarian hordes, was repelled by what he saw as the city's "moral vacuity" when he went to study there, a reaction which led him to forsake the world for three years of solitary living in a cave, out of which experience came the Benedictine Rule, the basis for all future developments in monastic life. St Benedict's influence can be seen in the art and architecture of the period, and in frescoes and music of the liturgy of the Romanesque era, and in the Benedictine motto "Ora at Labora", ("Pray and work"). So great was this influence that he has been called the "Father of Europe". It was Benedictine monks who were sent to England by Pope Gregory the Great to convert the pagan Anglo-Saxons in 597 A.D. According to Benedict, the "Opus Dei", or Work of God, is paramount in human affairs. Prayer is not a means to an end, but an end in itself: we must not pray in order to work, but work in order to pray. All is for prayer.

In a very real sense, Dr. Crouse contends, Archbishop Cranmer continued Benedict's work. Born into the turmoil of the English Reformation, and the father of the Book of Common Prayer, Cranmer was burned as a heretic during Bloody Mary's reign. Before his death, he had taken the canonical hours of Benedictine prayer, and in the words of Dr. Crouse, "conflated them into Morning and Evening Prayer" which form the daily offices of the Book of Common Prayer. The Opus Dei was to be the daily work of all Christian People: "the word of God descending in grace" to be responded to by the "word of God ascending in prayer". For both Benedict and Cranmer, the community exists for the sake of prayer, and not as modern liturgists would have it, the other way around: prayer for the sake of community.

Expanding on his latter theme, Dr Crouse argued that liturgists today have a very different view of prayer, seeing it as "therapy" for "personal efficiency", for "serenity", or for "community self-consciousness". Opus Dei was never a means, but an end. Both Benedict and Cranmer knew that prayer would become "common prayer" when its practice became so habitual as to be instinctive. This tradition of common prayer, "a theological system which includes but transcends the subjective inclination of the worshipper" has been "eroded", and in some places even discarded altogether, with "disastrous consequences liturgically, morally, and theologically for the cohesion of the Anglican Communion," continued Dr. Crouse. Anglicanism will "rapidly move towards dissolution", or exist only as a bureaucratic institution "with no religious significance", Dr Crouse warned. The language of the King James Version of the Bible, and of the Book of Common Prayer itself, are deeply ingrained in Anglican devotional memory, but it is a memory that is being plundered by the "the new breed of service books" with their multiplicities of "alternatives".

If we "lose sight of the language" of the original, we "lose too much of our Christian memory," warned Dr. Crouse. The integrity of Anglicanism exists in Common Prayer, in Opus Dei, and only if it resists the revisionists can it stand. The cohesion of the Anglican Communion will not be recovered by bureaucratic manoeuvring. We must embrace Opus Dei. It is "the Anglican Communion for the sake of Common Prayer," concluded Dr. Crouse, "not Common Prayer for the sake of the Anglican Communion."

This article first appeared in the Trinity, 2004 Edition of the Newsletter of the Ottawa Branch of the Prayer Book Society of Canada.

Grand Valley PBSC Branch Annual Church Crawl August 2004

Every summer the Grand Valley Branch of the PBSC holds its annual "Church Crawl", through some of the most historic and picturesque Anglican churches in the area.



Above: St John's Church, South Cayuga, 1842, near Dunnville, Ontario, consecrated by Bishop John Strachan, 1846.



Above: Interior of St John's Church, South Cayuga, 1842, with original oil lamps.

Right: Christ Church, Port Maitland. Rebuilt after a fire in 1926 in grey concrete to resemble stone, replacing the original church consecrated by Bishop John Strachan in 1846. The graveyard is close to the mouth of the Grand River. There is a stone to the memory of soldiers and dependents lost when the steam boat "Commerce" sank offshore in 1850."



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