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Special Issue: Being Anglican

# Texas Episcopalian

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# Our Anglican Identity

In J. R. H. Moorman's classic text *The History of the Church of England* [1959], he writes in Chapter II on the Synod of Whitby, "By the middle of the seventh century ecclesiastical affairs were getting more and more chaotic in England, especially in the north. Two cultures had met, one from Rome and the other from Ireland, and there were various points in which they differed." The Synod of Whitby is for me a key turning point in the infancy narrative of the Church of England and its catholic development.

What was at stake in Whitby? In the north the people had received Christianity from Iona, which was in line with the Roman tradition; including the Roman date of

Easter. Other communities had received Christianity that was primarily Celtic in nature; not surprisingly they had a different Easter date. The issue came to a head when the King of Northumbria, Oswy, realized he would be celebrating Easter while his wife, who was Roman, would still be keeping her Lenten fast. It was a very serious decision facing King Oswy, would he walk with his wife or apart from her in their Lenten journey to Christ?

After some discussion and argument, Moorman tells us that King Oswy judged the Roman tradition superior. Moorman writes, "the king gave his judgment in favor of Saint Peter on the grounds, that he would rather be on good terms with the Keeper of Heaven's gate than with Saint Columba." Needless to say Oswy's decision was a blow to the Celtic tradition.

For me this conflict is a reminder, an icon if you will, precisely because of Anglicanism's missionary identity. Anglicanism has been an evolving and changing faith as it comes into contact with and evangelizes new cultures.

In the collection of Anglican writings, *Love's Redeeming Work*, you may find an evolving, maturing conversation between clergymen and theologians over the many centuries of our church's development. While in the very beginning of this text the authors collectively wonder about the future of Anglicanism in the new millennium, it is not hard to see as you read through the pages that we have always been in a missionary conversation with the population in which we find ourselves. Today is no different.

It is not hard to grasp then that the current divisions facing the Anglican Communion are in fact a result of the growing ecclesiastical "chaos" created between the West and the Global South. The conflict has arisen because our world is increasingly flat and the developed world cannot help but be in dialogue with the developing world, and vice versa. Just as we are missionaries in the West there are missionaries in the Global South. Both are offering a picture of who we



The Rt. Rev. Don A. Wimberly

are as Anglican Christians. Those missionary dialogues are also then in dialogue globally.

I was struck with an example of this conflict the other day while reading the *Houston Chronicle*. Featured was an article on the oldest human skeletal remains along with, as if taken from our own American history, several hostile quotes by the newest African Christians who do not believe they evolved from primates. This was a striking example of the developed world's attitudes in conflict with the developing world's reality.

While I am not making any claim about who is right and wrong in our current ecclesiastic debate and I certainly don't intend to rehash the Scopes trial...I am simply pointing out that the conflict is real as our two worlds collide. Our current debate on sexuality is only one piece of an ever-growing debate on western values

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## Texas Episcopalian

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## Regular March Issue Online

The regular news for March is included in an online version of the *Texas Episcopalian* for this month only ([www.epicenter.org](http://www.epicenter.org)) so that this special issue, covering Anglicanism, could be compiled for your information. Copies of this issue will be available online so that congregations can download for use in future Christian education discussions and classes. The pdf version can be found at [www.epicenter.org](http://www.epicenter.org).

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# Anglican Theology

by the Rev Sam Todd

There is no Anglican theology. That is to say, the Episcopal Church does not intend to teach any doctrine that is peculiar to it. The Anglican attitude was expressed by Bishop Thomas Ken in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century: “I die in the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Faith, professed by the whole Church before the disunion of East and West. More particularly I die in the Communion of the Church of England as it stands distinguished from all Papall and Puritan Innovations...” (Clarke, *A Life of Thomas Ken*, p. 223)

Anglicanism emerged during the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries as the Church of England felt her way between Roman Catholicism on the one side and, on the other, the extremes of Puritanism. In reply to Roman criticisms, Bishop John Jewel, in his *Apology* of 1560, pointed out that the Church of England had retained the Scriptures, creeds, sacraments and three fold ordained ministries of bishops, priests and deacons of the historic Church.

The most influential defense against the Puritans was Richard Hooker’s *The Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity* of the late 1500’s. The odd title is due to one of the points at issue, namely whether the Church should abolish bishops as the Puritans demanded. Hooker emphasized several things that have remained characteristic of Anglicanism. He makes a distinction between the essentials of the faith which are relatively few, and matters of lesser moment which may change from time to time and place to place. Puritans would prohibit things like vestments, organs and stained glass windows because they were not specifically warranted in Scripture. Hooker found permissible what was not prohibited in Scripture.

Hooker also identified Scripture, Tradition and Reason as sources for doctrine. It is not Scripture alone (*sola scriptura*) but Scripture as interpreted by the Fathers and Councils of the early Church, which is seen as normative. Cranmer had anticipated the distinction in his main theological work published in 1550: *A Defense of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament of*

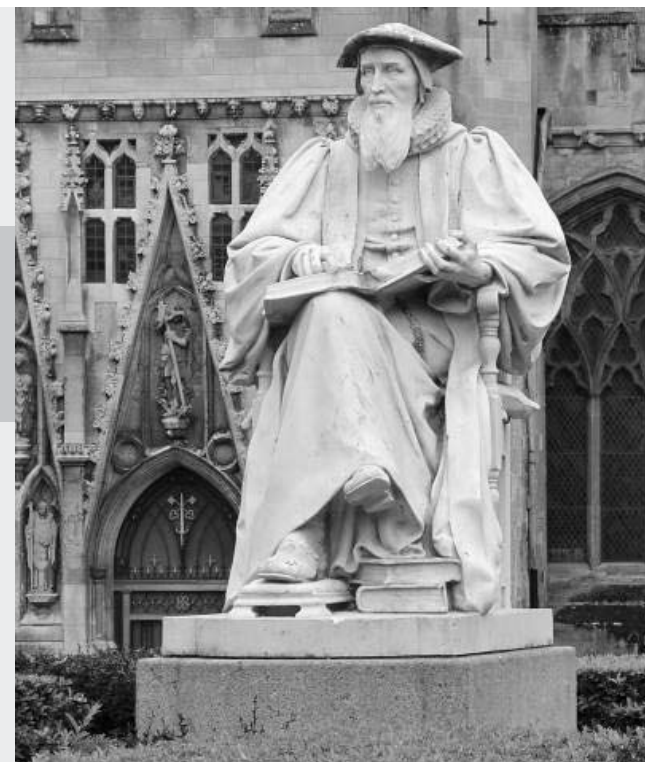
*the Body and Blood of our Savior Christ ... as Grounded and Established upon God’s Holy Word and Approved by the Consent of the most Ancient Doctors of the Church.*

Scripture, Tradition and Reason have been misleadingly called our three-legged stool or troika but those images obscure the fact that Hooker regarded Scripture as foundational, Tradition as secondary and Reason as tertiary.

A third emphasis of Hooker was upon the Incarnation as the central fact of the faith. “As our natural life consisteth in the union of the body with the soul, so our life supernatural consisteth in our union of the soul with God.” And there can be “no union of God with man without that mean between both which is both” namely the Word made flesh (E.P. V, 1). Hooker speaks of our participation in the divine nature. (cf. 2 Pet. 1:4) Of the Eucharist Hooker says, “this sacrament is a true and real participation of Christ, who thereby imparteth himself even his whole entire Person as a mystical Head unto every soul that receiveth him, and that every such receiver doth thereby incorporate or unite himself unto Christ as a mystical member of him.” (V, lxxvii, 7) Belief in the Incarnation leads to a high valuation of the sacraments. Bishop Lancelot Andrewes concludes a Christmas sermon by saying that as the Son of God took our flesh and blood in the Incarnation, so we take his in the Eucharist.

But the great achievement of the English Reformation was neither a work of systematic theology like Calvin’s *Institutes* nor prophetic diatribes like those of Luther but rather a prayer book. To this day the only official theology of the Episcopal Church is that found in the *Book of Common Prayer*. The character of Anglican worship has had an effect on our theological attitude as well.

From the beginning Anglican worship was marked by comprehensiveness. As the Tudor dynasty united the houses of York and Lancaster, so Queen Elizabeth wanted the Church of England to be one in which Catholics and Protestants could worship. Thus the Church maintained a strong grip on both word and



Richard Hooker, Exeter Cathedral

sacrament in an age when passionate partisans were pitting one against the other. And thus Anglican liturgical language puts Catholic (“the body of our Lord”) and Protestant (“take and eat this in remembrance”) phrases side by side, united by a happy ecumenical “and.” The community which has prayed together has been able to stay together despite significant theological disputes.

Where the Divine is primarily related to in adoration rather than in theological or legal terms a keen appreciation of the mystery of the Divine being and activity is not surprising. Here Anglicanism has been more akin to Eastern Orthodoxy than to its Western brethren. A correlative of our sense of Divine mystery is an axiomatic denial of infallibility to any human agency. No person has been deemed free of error as happened in Rome. No man’s writings have gained a de facto sacrosanctity as Luther’s and Calvin’s did in other churches. The Bible itself has not been read with bibliolatrous eyes.

A great freedom of inquiry and belief has been allowed in theological matters. No one’s writings have been suppressed by curial authority. Heresy trials have been few and ineffective in our Church. Theological aberrations are left to die a natural death from criticism and ridicule. We have a basic trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in the mind of the Church as a whole over the long haul. Of innovations in doctrine and practice we have tended to follow Gamaliel’s advice to the Sanhedrin: “If this plan or undertaking is of men it will fail; but if it is of God you will not be able to overthrow [it]. You might even be found opposing God.” (Acts 5:39)

*Todd is a regular columnist in the Texas Episcopalian.*

# An Hispanic Perspective

*“Our Father, we are offering to you  
With this bread and with this wine  
Our sadness, our happiness,  
The work and labor of our hands!”*

by the Rev. Luchy Littlejohn

These are the lyrics of one of the most meaningful hymns sung at the Spanish Holy Eucharist at Christ Church Cathedral. In this song, the connotations and “flavor” of liberation theology is mingled with the rich heritage of poetry and romanticism, ever so present in every aspect of life of the Latino-American world.

I must confess that my becoming an Episcopalian was not easy for me. This was not a step that I took lightly, for I had deep roots as a parishioner baptized and raised in the Roman Catholic faith. The church of my youth, my adolescence and early adulthood was a very strict institution, under the leadership of a Franciscan order. I grew up under the spiritual direction of some rather cantankerous priests and some very “full-of-affectations” nuns whom, in retrospect, were very superstitious. My faith had at its core the fear of the wrath of the Holy Father in Rome, and of being excommunicated.

My conversion had its beginning in the painful truth that I was deeply wounded by the Church of my youth. However, as the time goes by, it is more and more evident that, as the prophet Isaiah proclaimed, God said, “My Word will not come back to me empty.” God does not waste anything. My pain and my wound have been redeemed, empowered and transformed, so that I can be blessed at the service of the loving God who fills my life with joy. Therefore, today, as a priest, I joyfully proclaim that I am a catholic of the Anglican tradition.

As a Latina, poetry and symbols are very impor-

tant in my life. This is one of the reasons why I love stained-glass windows.

There are beautiful windows at the Cathedral, the holy space where my ministry takes place. In particular, two of the windows at this church, could easily summarize my reasons for being an Episcopalian, with all that wonderful and rich heritage of our Anglican Faith. The window above the altar, depicting the angel at the empty tomb, joyously tells me about the promise of the Resurrection of Christ. This is the window that I stare at when I approach the altar to be fed. As I leave the table of the Lord I see the main window at the back of the nave, which portrays the timelessness of the sacrifice of that loving Christ. I am reminded of the enormity of the price paid by Jesus for me and you. I am an Episcopalian because it was this tradition that guided me into the understanding of the shame and the victory of the cross. The shame and guilt for my brokenness, the shame of the cross is transformed in gratitude, for I am forgiven because I am loved: there it is, the victory of the cross. I know that it is not “cheap grace,” because Christ ransomed my life at a very high price.

Throughout my ministry as an Episcopal priest, my own personal experience and stories about my spiritual journey and struggles with the Church, resonate, and almost become one story with those from Central and South America who I encounter. The majority of these immigrants have a background of deep faith, incredible thirst for the presence of God in their lives and have been on a journey where rejection, fear and other negative emotions pushed them away from the Church. It is my joy then, to proclaim to them a message of love and forgiveness, sharing the freedom and the joy that comes with the truth of the Gospel.

The essence of Anglicanism allows me to teach that the love of Jesus is so encompassing, that one might approach the table of the Lord and place there one’s brokenness, without fear, when we accept God’s tender mercy. It is the certainty that the Anglican/Episcopal way has its roots in the teachings of Jesus and of the

apostles. This gives me the confidence to share with other Latino-Americans that ours is a legitimate and wonderful Church.

The Episcopal Church taught me the joy of knowing that I am “Christ’s property forever”--(the victory of the Cross). The sense of contrition that comes in true repentance, bemoaning my “manifold sins and wickedness” (the shame of the cross) has never been lost on me. Instead, it elicits in me a most profound sense of awe, reverence and gratitude toward that loving Christ, who gave up His life, so that I could have eternal life. Indeed, I have the best of both worlds.

The beauty and poetry of the Anglican tradition is very easy to incorporate into what matters in my own culture, as a Spanish-speaking person. The liturgical aspect of the Episcopal faith becomes truly enhanced when the boisterous and lively musical traditions of the Latin world are mixed and incorporated with the most meditative and dignified aspect of the Anglican hymns. If you wish to have a notion of the experience that I am describing, just come and attend the Holy Eucharist in Spanish, at 1:00 pm, at your Cathedral. We will gladly say, “Bienvenido, welcome!” and invite you to sing with us and the Mariachis.

*Littlejohn is Canon Pastor at Christ Church Cathedral, Houston*



The Rev. Luchy Littlejohn

# Accidentally Anglican

by the Rev. Thomas C. Davis

People who say that Henry VIII founded the Church of England in order to divorce his wife are mistaken. And the people who think that his marital troubles had nothing to do with it are also mistaken. The Church of England is the Roman Catholic Church without the pope. It is also Lutheranism without Luther and Calvinism without Calvin.

Anne Boleyn became the object of Henry's roving eye and lustful heart. But she was a Protestant. Anne would have been better off to climb into Henry's bed without insisting that she must also be queen. Then her later adultery would not have been treason, but then, Elizabeth would not have been queen either.

Anglican origins played out on the larger stage of world events. The great Holy Roman Empire continued in name only. England was never a part of that empire, anyway. The disintegration of political centralization in Europe was accompanied by the fracturing of the western Catholic Church.

Henry did not think of himself as a Protestant. After all, the pope had titled him "Defender of the Faith" for his anti-Lutheran writing. But he convinced himself that to be a Catholic Christian did not mean rule from Rome. Nor did it mean tithes and taxes to Rome, and Henry was always in need of money.

Anglicanism was an accident of sorts. It was not intentional. Perhaps the Reformation itself was an accident. No one except perhaps a few extreme radicals ever intended to divide the Church. Luther and Calvin thought that it was Rome that had separated itself from the true Catholic faith. And their almost constant references were to the "Fathers" of the first centuries and to Scripture.

Henry did not want a divorce. That would have been impossible. He sought an annulment. He had married Catherine of Aragon, who was his brother's widow. That was contrary to Scripture and to Church law. A brother's wife became a sister, and to marry a sister was incest. (Of course, there is another Scripture passage that says exactly the opposite.)

Henry asked to have the marriage to Catherine annulled, declared invalid, but the pope, who had already granted

one dispensation to allow that marriage, was not about to grant another. Still, the pope did approve Henry's nomination of Thomas Cranmer as archbishop of Canterbury. Henry knew that Cranmer would grant his annulment.



Henry VIII

It may be interesting to note that all the churches of the Reformation allowed for divorce and remarriage except the Church of England. Only since the middle of the 19th century has there been civil divorce in England.

## From Edward to Elizabeth

Edward VI, his only living legitimate son, who died while he was still a teenager, followed Henry. He had been raised a Protestant, and the revision of the *Book of Common Prayer* during his reign was very much influenced by continental Protestantism. Then Mary I, Catherine of Aragon's daughter, who never forgot her mother's betrayal, took England back to Rome. She burned so many hundreds of Protestants as heretics that she will always be called "Bloody Mary."



Anne Boleyn

Elizabeth I, who ascended the throne in 1558, was the child of Henry and Anne Boleyn. She was raised in the Reformed tradition. The action of the pope in excommunicating her and absolving her people from their allegiance to her resulted in a long-standing anti-Catholic tradition in England, and for that matter in the first century of our own country's history.

## Too Catholic, Insufficiently Protestant

There were people who felt that the Church of England was still much too Catholic, or, perhaps, not yet sufficiently Protestant. The church had abandoned the pope but not much else from its tradition. The *Book of Common Prayer* even retained the title "priest." The Puritans, frustrated by the slow progress of the Reformation in England, and their successors in the Evangelical Party have preferred "minister."

There were also a good many people who retained their loyalty to Rome. The Jesuits trained priests to serve those families, and they slipped into England and ministered there at very great personal risk. Elizabeth thought, as many rulers have, that a nation should have a single religion.

## A "Middle Way"

What we usually call the "Elizabethan Settlement" was something Elizabeth never planned. It refers to her desire to seek a "middle way," one that might make the Church of England as inclusive as possible. Neither the extreme of the right, those obedient to Rome, nor those of the extreme of the left, the Puritans, could join in that enterprise. Some Puritans went to the continent, some came to New England, some remained as a low church or Protestant party in

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# Benedictine Spirituality Within Anglican Tradition

by the Rev. Sandra McMahan Mizirl

The ancients say that once upon a time a disciple asked a wise one, “Teacher, is there anything I can do to make myself enlightened?” And the wise one answered, “As little as you can do to make the sun rise in the morning.”

“Then of what use,” the surprised disciple asked, “are the spiritual exercises you prescribe?”

“To make sure,” the wise one said, “that you are not asleep when the sun begins to rise.”

The practice of being in the presence of the Divine will keep us, like this mythical disciple, awake until what we practice lives in us.

This makes worship for Anglicans/Episcopalians especially important. When we gather in Christ’s name and remembrance we place ourselves in the presence of the Divine. In the Gospel reading for the fifth Sunday after the Epiphany (Luke 5:1-11) we share that fearsome moment in Peter’s life when he becomes aware of being in the presence of the Divine. His words, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man,” are not so much a confession as they are a realization for Peter of his need for God.

Orthodoxy is a word I find used today, as a rule of exclusivity measured by *right* belief. In spite of having no understanding of right belief, Peter fell down at Jesus’ knees, expressing right worship. I speak of this distinction, because I believe it speaks to a particular reality for Christians in general and Anglicans in particular.

This particular reality, is for me, the heart of the Benedictine spiritual tradition. And Anglican spirituality is Benedictine in nature. The spiritual disciplines of the sixth-century Rule of St. Benedict are the heart of *The Book of Common Prayer*. The practice of prayer and worship, in community, are an expression and witness to our need for the Divine. It is not a case of humiliation but of humility, in which we discover our total dependence on God. The experience of *common* prayer is a way of practicing our need for God and a way of confronting the idea that anything else could hold a greater claim on our heart and life. Right *worship* then becomes a matter of first things first. Consequently the first acts of worship are as simple as they are fundamental, showing up; making room for God; honoring God and finally responding to what it is like to be in God’s presence.

How many times have I heard complaints that the

music in the service just wasn’t what I expected, or your sermons just don’t meet my spiritual needs, or I just don’t get anything out of worship any more. These are complaints centered on self and have little if anything to do with worshipping God. Don’t get me wrong, I would never advocate careless, boring worship, but I am compelled to point out that “right worship” is not *primarily* about “getting something out of going to church.”

“Right worship” is first and foremost about facing God, the ultimate reality, and facing what life with God is like. In Christ we are able to face the reality of God and glimpse what true life with God is like. Only then can we possibly begin to respond to the divine reality and presence and perhaps, one can only hope, be moved to choose life.

Episcopalians, having been referred to as “the frozen chosen” may have something to say about our habits of hospitality for which we may have much to learn, but it also points to the Anglican ethos that to “do this in remembrance of me” is less about one’s emotional response to such “presence” and more about daring to be present to God and to one another as God’s people.

Benedict understood that “prayer shapes belief,” and the *Book of Common Prayer*, through the gifts of 16<sup>th</sup> century Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer,

who produced the first BCP, shows an awareness and sensitivity to the rhythm of the lives of everyday people, first by using English, the language of the people, and by choosing the hours of prayer to be compatible with the everyday lives of the people.

Within the BCP are found four services of daily prayer (Morning Prayer, Noon-day Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline, prayer at the close of the day) in addition to services of



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# Notes on Worship

by George Mimms

How often have you heard it said, “I just want some traditional Anglican worship”? Be careful what you wish for, because traditional Anglican worship is not what most people think it is. The Anglican Communion encompasses people of many races, languages and nationalities the world over.

Today, we find an enormous breadth of diversity in prayer and musical expression throughout the Anglican Communion. The Word of God is held high in evangelical worship. Prayer and praise through the Holy Spirit are esteemed in the charismatic worship. The sacraments are the central part of Anglo-Catholic worship. Many parishes also attempt to combine all of the above elements within their liturgical life.

## Rooted in Jewish Temple Worship

Music and worship are often seen as synonymous in the Anglican tradition. Prayer and praise, interwoven into an effectual tapestry in the *Book of Common Prayer*, have withstood the tides of change over several centuries. Rooted primarily in elements of the Jewish temple worship, a rhythmic flow of words and music has come together in a liturgy endeared to millions of Anglicans the world over. Much of the synagogue service, psalmody, hymns and sacred text have remained intact while, during the past 2,000 years, Christians have developed additions to the liturgy for Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion, Marriage and the Burial Rite.

## First Rites

In the earliest years of Christianity, worship was, of necessity, conducted in secrecy. The format was simple and non-invasive of the exterior community. Clearly defined rites began to be developed after Constantine authorized the practice of Christianity and the presence of Christians in the public sector. As monasteries, convents, abbeys, cathedrals and educational institutions evolved, there developed a highly regimented schedule of prayer and praise throughout the twenty-four-hour day. Thus, every minute of the day and night, Christians somewhere were before the Lord

Jesus in thanksgiving and petition. These institutions of higher learning and religious vocation were the most apt to have organs. Though these organs were in the early stage of development and difficult and strenuous to play, they were known to be used to accompany plainsong.

## The Parish Church

The parish church has been and continues to be the place where Christians express their allegiance to God by presenting themselves weekly for worship. The earliest parish music was folk psalmody. Except within wealthy parishes, organs were non-existent. As with all folk music, the number of variations on any melody was tremendous. In a practice called lining out, a lay clerke would “bawl out” the psalm phrase by phrase, and the congregation would repeat it after him. Wind or string instruments were used to lead or accompany the melody.

Parishes often had a hand-carved desk for the clerke and the instrumentalist. Copies of the *Book of Common Prayer* were scarce and seldom in the hands of the laity. The Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Sanctus were often inscribed in large decorative letters on tablets in the Altar area of parish churches as late as the 19th century, enabling the congregation to read aloud in unison.

Wherever you worship within the Anglican Communion, you immediately note that the service seeks to engage all of your sensory perceptions of sound, sight, smell, touch and taste. You may encounter at least a bit of the following: spires, bells, incense, candles, choirs, praise teams, musical instruments—including pianos and pipe organs, colorful choir and minister vestments, stained glass, the Cross, the bread and wine of the Holy Communion, processions in The Way of the Cross at the entrance and exit, scripture readings expressed through interpretive dance, procession of the Gospel Book into the congregation, the Kiss of Peace and often, kneeling for prayers. These are a few of the experiences that touch one or more of our senses.

As you travel abroad, you often will discover whole congregations in brilliantly colored dress dancing for joy...the raising of hands in prayer and praise...all kinds



of instrumentalists playing a plethora of native instruments, such as drums, trumpets, guitars, maracas and tambourines, while singing vibrant indigenous hymns...village processions with smiling, brightly clad youths clapping, shouting, and singing songs of praise and invitation as a normal part of weekly worship...and seasonal processions throughout the community, such as the Posada during Advent and Christmas.

What is the norm for Anglican worship? Surely, worship with readings from the Word of God and the use of the *Book of Common Prayer*, in one of its many editions and languages, are the common threads of our brethren around the world.

*The author's own pilgrimage is a microcosm of the Anglican Communion. Confirmed in the anglo-catholic parish of St. Mary the Virgin, New York City, NY, in 1962, Mimms has ministered in anglo-catholic parishes, evangelical parishes, charismatic parishes and parishes that strive to combine music and liturgy relating to all three streams of the Anglican Communion. Mimms' extensive travel in ministry as far away as South Africa has given him a broad look into the musical life of the Anglican Communion. He is the Organist and Director of Music at St. Martin's, Houston.*

# Early Church History

by the Rev. Robert Browne

**W**hat is an “Anglican”? What is an “Episcopalian”? A quick review of history may clarify these questions.

In the year 596, a devout Benedictine monk named Augustine, landed on the shores of southern England. He planted there the Christian church and established the Sea of Canterbury which would become the symbol of unity within the Anglican Communion. The English Church was primarily Roman Catholic until the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the winds of the Protestant Reformation blew in from continental Europe and created a climate for change.

While it is true that King Henry VIII had some marital problems with Rome, the forces of the reformation had a significant effect in turning the English church into an independent body free from Rome, but retaining both Catholic and Protestant influences. The great theologian Richard Hooker called it the “via media” (the middle way). The term Anglican means of England, but it took on a larger meaning when the English church expanded overseas.

When the colonies in America revolted in 1776, the American congregations of the Church of England formed a free and independent church. In the first General Convention meeting in 1789 the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States was constituted. It adopted the *Book of Common Prayer* and a constitution in which the formularies for doctrine, disci-

pline and worship were set forth. Much power was abrogated to local dioceses because of their former experience with lordly English bishops.

The new American church sought to remain in connection with the historic Anglican Church, but insisted on complete autonomy from the Sea of Canterbury.

In short, Episcopalians are Anglicans in



Richard Hooker



Henry VIII

America bound to the larger Communion by a common heritage under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Anglicans in the United States are called Episcopalians because in 1789 they took the name Episcopal (from the Greek, Episkopos, overseer) which denotes a church under the authority of bishops in apostolic succession.

The Episcopal Church in the United States is one of 38 autonomous Provinces in the Anglican Communion worldwide, having membership in the Anglican Consultative Council, an entity which is purely an advisory group and is not a legal body with legislative power.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, speaking to bishops, priests and laity in “The Challenge and Hope of Being an Anglican Today” said:

“The only reason for being an Anglican is that this balance of Reformed, Catholic, and cultural and intellectual concern seems to you to be healthy for the Church Catholic overall, and that it helps people grow in discernment and holiness.” (June 2006)

*Browne served as communication officer for the Anglican Consultative Council during the 1988 Lambeth Conference and has produced videos throughout the Anglican Communion.*

# The Anglican Communion

Anglican/Episcopal churches uphold and proclaim the Catholic and Apostolic faith, proclaimed in the Scriptures, interpreted in the light of tradition and reason. Following the teaching of Jesus Christ, Anglicans are committed to the proclamation of the good news of the Gospel to all creation. Our faith and ministry have been expressed through the Book of Common Prayer, received and adapted by local churches, in the Services of Ordination and in the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, first expounded at the missionary Conference in Chicago in 1886, and revised by the Lambeth Conference of 1888. The Quadrilateral sets out four essential elements of the Christian faith:

- The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as “containing all things necessary to salvation,” and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
- The Apostles’ Creed, as the baptismal symbol; and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.
- The two Sacraments ordained by Christ himself – Baptism and the Supper of the Lord – ministered with unflinching use of Christ’s words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.
- The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.

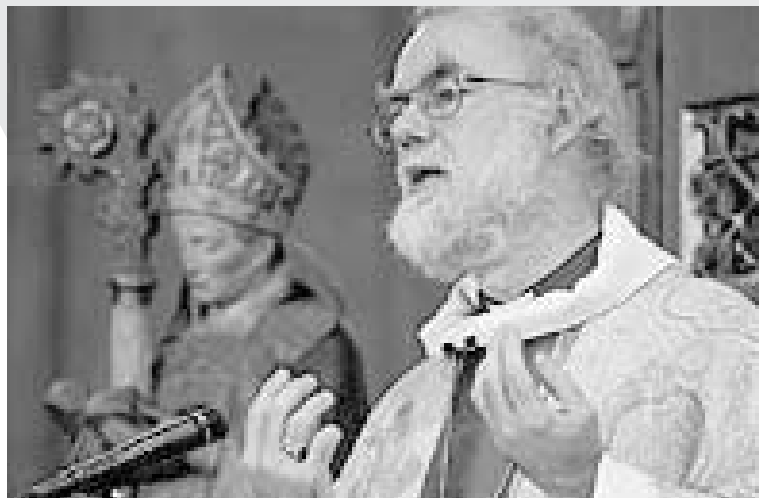
Central to Anglican worship is the celebration of the Holy Eucharist (also called the Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper or the Mass). In this offering of prayer and praise, the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ are made a present reality through the proclamation of the Word, and the celebration of the Sacrament. Anglicans celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism, with water in the name of the Trinity, as the rite of entry into the Christian Church, and celebrate other sacramental rites, including Confirmation, Reconciliation, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick and Ordination.

Common prayer is at the heart of Anglicanism. Its styles

may vary from the simple to the elaborate, from evangelical to catholic, charismatic to traditional. The various Books of Common Prayer give expression to a comprehensiveness found within the churches, which seeks to chart a via media in relation to other Christian traditions.

## Our Churches

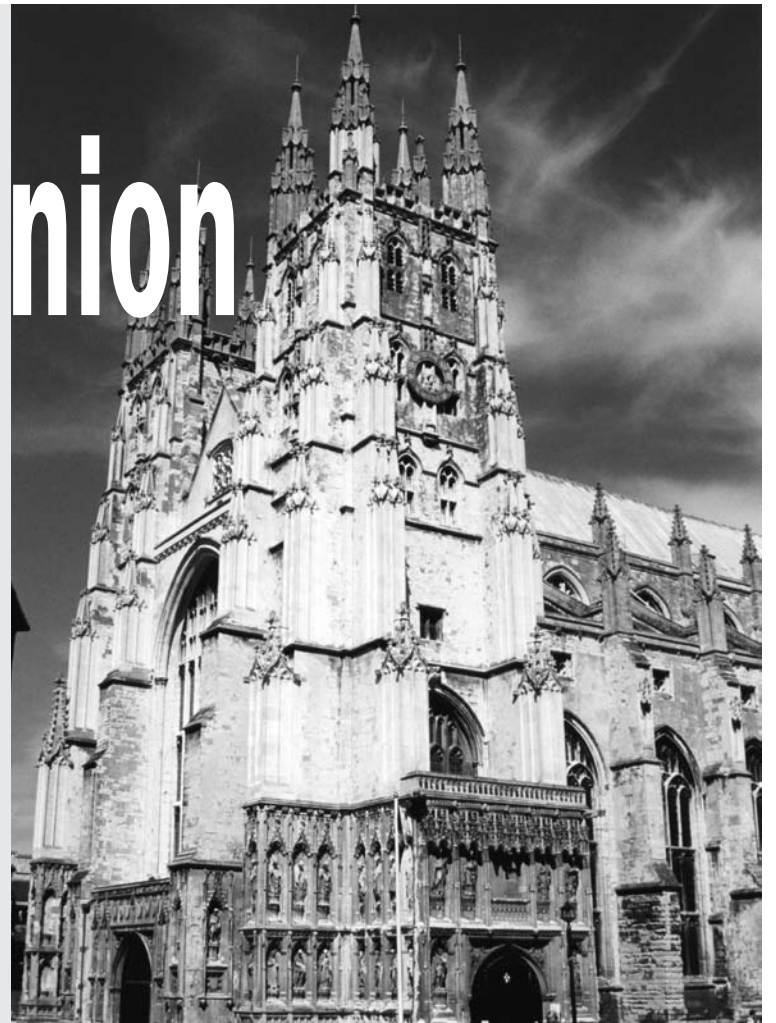
Deriving from the ancient Celtic and Saxon churches of the British Isles, Anglicanism found its distinctive identity in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Reformation, when



Archbishop Rowan Williams

the separate Church of England, along with the Church of Ireland and the Scottish Episcopal Church, came into being. At the time of the American Revolution, an autonomous Episcopal Church was founded in the United States, and later Anglican or Episcopal churches were founded across the globe as a result of the missionary movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many of these were given autonomy as Provinces in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In South Asia, the United Churches, formed between Anglican and several Protestant traditions, also joined the Anglican Communion, as did churches elsewhere such as the Spanish Episcopal Reformed Church and the Lusitanian Church of Portugal.

Today the Anglican Episcopal family consists of an estimated 78 million Christians who are members of 44 dif-



Canterbury Cathedral

ferent churches. These make up 34 provinces, four United Churches and six other churches, spread across the globe.

## The Instruments of Communion

The churches of the Anglican Communion are held together by the bonds of affection and common loyalty, expressed through links with the “instruments of Communion” – the Archbishop of Canterbury as the focus for unity, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates Meeting and the Anglican Consultative Council.

## The Archbishop of Canterbury

The churches are all in communion with the See of Canterbury in the Church of England, and thus the Archbishop of Canterbury, in his person and ministry, is the unique focus of Anglican unity. He calls the Lambeth Conference, and Primates Meeting and is president of the Anglican Consultative Council. The 104th Archbishop of Canterbury in succession to Saint Augustine, the Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. Rowan Williams, was enthroned in February 2003.

## The Lambeth Conference

Every ten years or so, the Archbishop of Canterbury invites the bishops of the Anglican Communion to join with him in prayer, study and discernment. At the last Lambeth Conference in 1998, more than 800 bishops were welcomed

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# Anglican Liturgy



by the Rev. Ed Stein

What makes our worship “Anglican”? The word “Anglicanism” is a fairly new word. It comes from the mid-nineteenth century when the Church of England found itself by accident of history becoming the center of a growing family of Christian bodies, some within the dominions of the British Empire, some not (which originally meant mostly us Americans). With no common name how could they all be described? Not all were British, much less English, and if not English then what were we? Gradually we fixed on the ancient Latinism “ecclesia Anglicana,” the English Church, modernized into a descriptive adjective -- “Anglican.” And lo, there was an “Anglican Commu-

nion,” an Anglican theological tradition and an Anglican liturgical tradition – “Anglicanism,” where there had been just the Church of England and the use of the English *Book of Common Prayer*.

And what did this family of churches share that made us all “Anglican”? They were all in communion with Canterbury of course, but the reason they were is that in their history each member of the Anglican Communion had 1) received their succession of bishops and Episcopal form of church-order through the English Church, and 2) used the liturgy of the English *Book of Common Prayer*. Certainly in the American Episcopal Church, the most conspicuous thing about being Episcopalian was our commitment to the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Indeed, our attachment to the Prayer Book was the

largest single factor that preserved American parishes of the Church of England from vanishing into some form of pan-Protestant congregationalist church after our Independence was won. During the next century we Episcopalians were confident and at times a tad too smug in our assurance that in the Prayer Book we had “an incomparable liturgy,” infinitely more desirable than Rome’s Latin rite or the non-liturgical doings of most protestant denominations.

Certainly for a good long while, the heart of what was “Anglican” about most Anglican worship around the world was the text of the *Book of Common Prayer*, exactly the way Cranmer had penned it, the Parliament of 1662 had established it and God in his heaven had willed it to be. All around the world being properly Anglican meant buying one’s vestments from Wipples’ if one had money, and building churches that would look at home in Wessex or Yorkshire, and hoping the kids’ choir would somehow come off sounding like King’s College Cambridge.

Anglo-ophile Anglicanism had one great advantage: wherever you went around the world, the local Anglican or Episcopal parish would be mostly familiar whether the service itself was in English or Urdu.

And then in the last century we began to ask questions. What was valuable in all the great families of Christian liturgy coming from the undivided Church? What was valuable in the ancient liturgy of the Church of England before the Reformation? What about the present Prayer Book seemed out of joint to new generations? Where do we stand in relation to a Rome that suddenly worships in English, or to Protestants who have recovered the liturgical tradition? How do we go about speaking in a fresh language to future generations? And we entered into the amazing and wonderful world of Prayer Book revision and liturgical experimentation.

## Byzantine to Jazz

The world of Prayer Book revision and liturgical experimentation is sometimes an adventuresome place to be. Episcopal churches have seen Byzantine-rite style celebrations of the Prayer Book liturgy, and Roman-use style versions (both of the Vatican I and Vatican II variety), and Sarum old-English rite, and *New Zealand Prayer Book*, and Taize-chant adaptations of the Prayer Book; and jazz masses, rock masses and blue grass masses; and charismatic praise services, user-friendly “Rite III” (I defy anybody to find something actually called or intended to be a “Rite III” anywhere in the Prayer Book), “clown Eucharists,” renewal celebrations and seeker-friendly-non-sacramental preaching services. Thanks to the brave new world of desktop publishing, occasional services appear to be Prayer Book-

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# A Trinity at the Heart of Anglican Spirituality

by the Rev. Mark Crawford

Two questions arise when we speak about Anglican spirituality. Do we Anglicans have a spirituality distinct from other Christians? How was it formed? The answer to the second question lies in the study of our history. Anglican spirituality has its roots in both Celtic and Benedictine spiritualities. Christianity arrived on the shores of the British Isles before the fall of the Roman Empire. After the departure of the Romans, the Angles and the Jutes pushed the remaining Britons west into Cornwall and Wales. When Roman missionaries arrived in Kent in the 6th century under St. Augustine they were surprised to find Christians throughout the land.

## The Celts

Christianity had taken root among the Celtic tribes that settled in Britain. Their practice of spirituality differed in many ways from the Romans who came to re-establish their presence and rule in England. Celtic spirituality is often characterized by a reverence for creation expressed in their poetry and prayers. Men and women lived and worked side by side in many monastic communities that produced leading lights such as Columba, the famous missionary monk of Iona and Hilda, the Abbess of Whitby. Celtic spirituality was never entirely lost after the Romans returned and re-organized the church according to Catholic order and discipline.

## Both Clergy and Lay

Benedictine Spirituality became the dominant expression of faith through the foundation of monasteries throughout the British Isles. The monks and nuns held tenaciously to a practice of Christianity that enabled them to survive Viking invasions, schism, plagues and the harsh northern climate. The Rule of Benedict proscribed a regular discipline of prayer, the study of Scripture and work. Outside the monasteries there was group of English



Iona Abbey photo by Clive Smith



only in the works of priests and bishops, but also ordinary men and women.

## The Middle Way

The monastic life suddenly came to an end during the tumultuous years of the Reformation. The dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII in the years 1535-40 ended the monastic period in England, however, it did not entirely erase the Benedictine spirituality found in the language of prayer. Thomas Cranmer conflated the hours of prayer into Morning and Evening Prayer offices in the first edition of

the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1549. Queen Elizabeth who ascended the throne after the death of her older sister, Mary, is known for the via media. She successfully steered a course for the church between the polarities of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, but she is also known for her scholarship and piety. The Prayer of General Thanksgiving (p. 58, 101 BCP) written by Edward Reynolds, Bishop of Norwich, may have been inspired by one of her private prayers.

## A Trinity of Resources

Anglican spirituality is characterized by three main resources: the *Book of Common Prayer*, the English translation of the Bible and music. The King James Version of the Bible published in 1611 continues as the best known and used English translation of the Bible. There is also a treasure trove of poetry during the early part of the seventeenth century by churchmen such as George Herbert and John Donne. Many poems of this age are now found in our hymnals set to music which we still enjoy in our worship. Although the main spiritual life shifted from the monastery to cathedrals and parish churches, the

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# T.S. Eliot & Anglicanism

*“The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is Incarnation.”*

T. S. Eliot



T. S. Eliot

by the Rev. Kit Wallingford

In these days of urgent wondering about what exactly it means to be an Anglican, perhaps it is instructive to consider the life and writings of T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), Nobel-prize-winning poet, iconic figure of literary modernism and an editor and critic so famous in his day that 14,000 people showed up in 1956 to hear him lecture on *The Frontiers of Criticism*.

Eliot, born in St. Louis into a Unitarian family with a strong English and New England Puritan background, lived in London for most of his life. He was baptized and confirmed in the Church of England in 1927.

Eliot found in Anglicanism a theology and a tradition both deep enough and capacious enough to ground his mind and heart, and also to allow them room for reflection and growth. He found himself especially drawn to the Anglican poets and priests of the seventeenth century. The sermons of Lancelot Andrewes, particularly those on the Incarnation of Christ, drew Eliot's fervent assent. And the poetry of poet-priests John Donne and George Herbert elicited one of his most important pieces of literary criticism.

In *The Metaphysical Poets* (1921), Eliot writes of what he calls an early “dissociation of sensibility” that disconnected thought from feeling, mind from heart. Seventeenth-cen-

tury poets like Donne and Herbert, he says, corrected this grievous dissociation. Donne and Herbert and others like them put thought and feeling back together; they were able to feel their thought and thus were able to communicate in their poetry the sense of life lived as a whole, mind and heart together. As Martin Thornton and others have pointed out, this linking of intellect and feeling is characteristic of Anglican theology and worship.

As his poetry, plays and prose demonstrate, Eliot's mind ranged widely among history, philosophy, western and eastern religions and literature, and he cultivated a dry and detached style. But the detachment could not quite hide the struggles of a man who, behind his furred-umbrella façade, was painfully aware of the vast gap between the man he was and the good man he wished to be. To help narrow this gap, Anglicanism offered him “prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.”

In addition, Eliot understood that there is a knowing beyond that of the intellect, and as readers of his poetry well know, he considered ambiguity and mystery as graces to be embraced rather than avoided. Prayer, worship, scripture, tradition, reason, theology, experience—for the Anglican, all are portals into the holy. And what is the essence of

the Holy One? In Eliot's last work of literary criticism, he returned to his fascination with the seventeenth-century poet-priests and wrote a pamphlet on George Herbert. In the text, he quoted Herbert's powerful poem “Love” in its entirety.\* Perhaps Eliot is leaving us with this conclusion: Whatever the struggle, whatever the question, the Incarnation is the answer. Christ is the answer. Love is the answer.

\* Lyndall Gordon, *T. S. Eliot: An Imperfect Life* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1999), 523-24. The second paragraph of this article also draws from Gordon's work.

The title and other quotations in the article come from Part V of *The Dry Salvages* (1941), the third of Eliot's Four Quartets.

*Wallingford is the former assistant rector, Palmer Memorial, Houston.*

## Early & Strong Leaders

Thomas Cranmer (1489-1586) was appointed archbishop of Canterbury by Henry VIII and served as well under Henry's successor, Edward VI. He is credited with much of the composition and with the compilation of *The Book of Common Prayer* (first published in 1549), which established the basic structure of Anglican liturgy that continues to this day.

It was, in large part, thanks to Cranmer that the Church of England came into being. His 1552 revision of the Prayer Book, under Edward VI, reflected in its details the influence of the Protestant Reformation.

Under Edward's successor, the Roman Catholic queen Mary I, Cranmer was tried for treason, convicted of heresy, and burned at the stake.



Thomas Cranmer

Richard Hooker (1554?-1600) was an Oxford-educated theologian and clergyman of the Church of England who wrote, in eight volumes, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, a work that laid the groundwork for the tradition of Anglicanism. He has been described as a “co-founder,” with Thomas Cranmer of the Anglican religious tradition and is believed by some to be the closest counterpart in the Anglican-Episcopal denomination to Martin Luther for Lutherans or John Calvin for Presbyterians or John Wesley for Methodists.

In his masterwork, which sets forth the principle of *via media*, or middle way, he explains how such an approach to the search for religious truth differs from that of the reformers, on the one hand, and the supporters of the pope, on the other.

The image of Anglicanism as a three-legged stool—with legs of Scripture, tradition and reason—has been derived from the work of Richard Hooker.



Richard Hooker

# Mission is Part of Diocese's DNA

by the Rev. Canon C. Andrew Doyle

Shortly after the very wet Christmas of 1849, the Rt. Rev. George Washington Freeman, the Missionary Bishop of the Southwest, rode to Christ Church, Matagorda, to a meeting that would organize the missionary field into the Diocese of Texas. We are told that four clergy and six laity met the bishop and organized the diocese in order to seek the support of the General Convention of 1850. There was a sense of great urgency that the mission of the Texans needed the missionary support of the greater church and the support and shepherding of a bishop of their own. Their hope was that both the financial resources and the bishop might bolster their mission. It would be nine years of great expansion and labor for the Diocese of Texas before Bishop Alexander Gregg was elected and became the first bishop diocesan of Texas.

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**In the Episcopal Church,  
as was the case in Texas,  
mission requires the structural  
support of a diocese in  
relationship with a bishop.**

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In Bishop Gregg's first address to the diocesan council of Texas he remarked on his missionary calling:

"I appear before you, on this occasion, the first assembling of the Convention since my consecration to the Episcopate of Texas, with emotions of no ordinary nature. Called, in the providence of God, to enter upon so great and responsible a work, and that in a field of labor for which I might well have feared my former experience had in no way peculiarly fitted me... Your previous disappointments, and the sore trials through which you have been called to pass, only served to make the summons more imperative. There was but one thing left for me to fall back upon – that grace freely promised, and all sufficient for the servant of Christ, into whatsoever state of life, or sphere of labor, it may please God to call him."

The Diocese of Texas was formed out of the first foreign missionary field of the Episcopal Church. Mission is in our DNA, it is part of who we have been and who we

are, and are to become. Part and parcel with the mission identity of Texas is our structure. In the Episcopal Church, as was the case in Texas, mission requires the structural support of a diocese in relationship with a bishop.

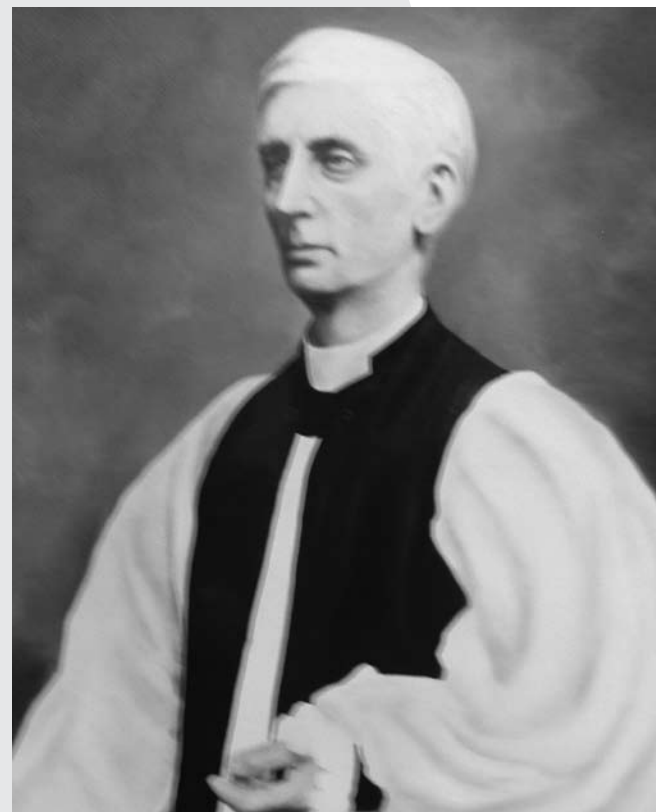
Our local experience is yoked to the experience of the ancient church. In Paul's Letter to Titus 1.5ff, we see made reference to the organization of mission and the importance of choosing well bishops to be God's steward of mission. Paul writes to Titus and says:

*I left you behind in Crete for this reason, so that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you: Someone who is blameless, married only once, whose children are believers, not accused of debauchery and not rebellious. For a bishop, as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or addicted to wine or violent or greedy for gain; but he*



Christ Church, Matagorda, Christmas 2004.

*must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled. He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.*



Bishop Alexander Gregg

Both Paul and our own history show the evolving nature of the missionary field, diocese, and bishop.

In the Episcopal Church and throughout the Anglican Communion the basic structure of the church is the bishop diocesan and his or her diocese, also called a see. The historic episcopate is of primary importance throughout our Communion. The Anglican Covenant Design Group states the importance of the episcopate in this way: "The historic episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his Church and the central role of bishops as custodians of faith, leaders in mission and as visible sign of unity." Again, historical unity between bishop, mission and the church are stressed.

## The Episcopate

The position of bishop is one elected by the people and priests of the diocese. The *Book of Common Prayer* speaks of both the selection and the missionary aspect of this office: "...The people have chosen you and have affirmed their trust in you by acclaiming your election. A bishop in God's holy Church is called to be one with the apostles in proclaiming Christ's resurrection and interpreting the Gospel,

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on behalf of Jesus Christ. The authors of the Windsor Report wrote: "God has unveiled, in Jesus Christ, his glorious plan for the rescue of the whole created order from all that defaces, corrupts and destroys it. The excitement and drama of that initial achievement and that final purpose pervade the whole New Testament, and set the context for understanding why God has called out a people by the Gospel, and how that people is to understand its identity and order its life." [WR p 11, Sec A.1] The authors continue, "The unity of the Church, the Communion of all its members with one another and the radical holiness to which all Christ's people are called, are thus rooted in the Trinitarian life and purposes of the One God. They are designed not for their own sake, but to serve and signify God's mission to the world, that mission whereby God brings to men and women, to human societies and to the whole world, real signs and foretastes of that healing love which will one day put all things to rights." [WR, p 11, Sec A.3]

It is important to me as an Anglican, as an Episcopalian, that we walk together as One Diocese, One Church, One Communion.

We are wed to the global church. We are in what I believe is a sacred union--one that was created by God. Myles Coverdale [1488-1568] wrote on the unity of the sacrament and the Church saying, "Ought we to be joined together with the indissoluble bond of friendship. And so do we all receive one body of Christ, to the end we may be his members. But if we be full of discords and dissensions, we do tear Christ, and pull him in sunder; neither shall we be guilty of smaller sacrilege than if we had done the thing in deed."

These are powerful words and worthy of our meditation and prayer. I believe both the West and the Global South need one another. It is each who will suffer should the other walk apart. Each portion of the Communion would lose a revelation of the face of Jesus Christ if we turn our backs on one another.

At the same time I know that Anglicanism itself does not hang upon the decisions we humans shall make this year or the next in regards to issues of sexuality, polity or communion. Anglicanism forever will hold a place that is truly and forever apart of the great river that is the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. Anglicanism is much more than simply the agreements and disagreements before us today.

The Proposed Draft of the Anglican Covenant being developed in order to further unify our Communion speaks quite eloquently of this identity we share:

God has called us into communion in Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Jn. 1:3). This call is established in God's purposes for creation (Eph. 1:10; 3:9ff.), which have been furthered in God's covenants with Israel and its representatives such as Abraham and most fully in the life, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. We humbly recognize that this calling and gift of communion grants us responsibilities for our common life before God.

Through God's grace we have been given the Communion of Anglican churches through which to respond to God's larger calling in Christ (Acts 2:42). This Communion provides us with a special charism

and identity among the many followers and servants of Jesus. Recognizing the wonder, beauty and challenge of maintaining communion in this family of churches, and the need for mutual commitment and discipline as a witness to God's promise in a world and time of instability, conflict and fragmentation, we covenant together as churches of this Anglican Communion to be faithful to God's promises through the historic faith we confess, the way we live together and the focus of our mission.

Our faith embodies a coherent testimony to what we have received from God's Word and the Church's long-standing witness; our life together reflects the blessings of God in growing our Communion into a truly global body; and the mission we pursue aims at serving the great promises of God in Christ that embrace the world and its peoples, carried out in shared responsibility and stewardship of resources, and in interdependence among ourselves and with the wider Church.

The draft covenant also speaks of those unifying elements that hold our common life together. The following are elements evident within our liturgies on Sunday morning, throughout the daily office, and deeply entwined in our Anglican theology. While we are a denomination that has faced conflict, changed or not changed, in the face of missionary context there are those principles that unify us as the Anglican Communion.

1. We are a part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, worshipping the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;

2. We profess the faith which is uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures as containing all things necessary for salvation and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith, and which is set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation;

3. We as a church locally and globally holds and duly administers the two sacraments ordained by Christ himself – Baptism and the Supper of the Lord – ministered with the unfailing use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by him;

4. We participate in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God;

5. Led by the Holy Spirit, as individuals and corporately we witness to Christian truth in its historic formularies, the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons;

6. We are loyal to this inheritance of faith as our inspiration and guidance under God in bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making Him known throughout the many societies and nations in which we live and work.

Anglican practice illustrates how these faith statements are lived out through our manner of life as individuals and as a community.

1. We uphold and act in continuity and consistency with the catholic and apostolic faith, order and tradition, biblically derived moral values and the vision of humanity received by and developed throughout the communion.

2. We seek in all things to uphold the solemn obligation to sustain Eucharistic communion with one another and throughout our communion.

3. We ensure that biblical texts are handled faithfully, respectfully, comprehensively and coherently because we believe that scriptural revelation must continue to illuminate, challenge and transform the cultures in which we live, structures in which we work and our own ways of thinking about ourselves and our neighbors.

4. We continue to nurture and respond to prophetic and faithful leadership and ministry to assist our churches as courageous witnesses to the transformative power of the Gospel in the world.

5. We pursue a common pilgrimage with other members throughout our congregation, diocese, church and communion to discern truth, that peoples from all nations may truly be free and receive the new and abundant life in the Lord Jesus Christ.

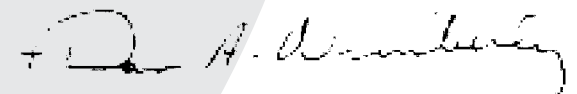
As you can well read, Anglicanism at its heart is a way of following Jesus Christ. For me personally Anglicanism as expressed here is lived out through my daily experience of liturgy and worship, baptism and Eucharist, the theology of *via media*, the daily office, the meaning of One Church in Mission, the friends young and old who have crossed my path walked with me and gone on their way, the communion of saints, the Diocese of Texas and the Episcopal Church, the Altar Guild and the vergers, the seminaries and the health system. It is foreign mission and the local outreach, it is scripture, and it is who I am.

This special issue of the Texas Episcopalian is an opportunity for you to see the many faces of Anglicanism within our diocese, to experience the many ways in which people live out their lives as Anglicans. This issue is an opportunity to raise our eyes above the chaos of daily living and see the great mission field that is before us. It is to look back at where our feet have trod and to look forward to where we are going.

*"Father of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name; through Christ our Lord. Amen."*

The Alternative Service Book 1980

The Rt. Rev. Don A. Wimberly



Bishop of Texas

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publishing, occasional services appear to be Prayer Book-like but are nowhere to be found in the Prayer Book or any of the works of the Standing Liturgical Commission. The mind reels. So, what is it in all this that makes our worship “Anglican.” In a Communion in which the Prayer Book is a large component of the glue that keeps us all together, where is the binding common understanding of our liturgical identity?

## Common Prayer

We know that Anglican history and experience have always been about being committed to the Liturgy, whether in our earliest beginnings, in the crisis of the Reformation, or in all the movements of renewal since. So being Anglican always means being faithful to the use of the *Book of Common Prayer* and other resources provided by the Commissions on Liturgy and Church Music. And if the Church decides on change, then we are committed to adapt – Common Prayer is always held in common, as the community’s treasure not our personal possession.

For the clergy who are charged by canon with responsibility for the conduct of worship in their cures, that means to take very seriously the ordination oath to “conform to the doctrine and worship” of the Episcopal Church. That oath has no conditions like “conform only to what I find agreeable” or “some of the time but not necessarily all of the time” or “rubrics are just suggestions.” We are free to be as imaginative, creative and innovative as we can be in the presentation of the Liturgy, but we are to be committed to the Liturgy.

Anglican Liturgy has always had at its foundations the things we share in common with all parts of Christ’s undivided Church, another meaning to the idea of “Common Prayer.”

## Sacramental, Biblical and Daily

First, Anglican worship is grounded in the sacramental signs of Baptism and Eucharist. So our worship should never lose sight of its goal: encountering Jesus Christ present with us, and finding ourselves present to Christ in our worship. The first question to ask in evaluating the way we do Liturgy is whether people find Christ through what we do in worship.

Secondly, the energy of Anglican worship is always centered on the Bible and enabling the Bible to be heard. Every valid criticism of our liturgical tradition has to do with being mechanistic or shallow in worship. We are rightly confident in the sheer amount of Scripture incorporated into the words of the Prayer Book text and the perpetual round of Bible reading the Lectionary prescribes. But we must always work to enable that richness of Scripture to be heard with power. This means that our presentation of worship should always lift up the reading of the Scriptures; our readers should do the very best job they can; our confirmation and parish education ministries should stress opening the Bible; our preaching should enable our people to encounter the faith the Bible reveals and the Creeds proclaim.

Thirdly, for us Anglican Christians, who were first formed in the faith by Augustine, Aidan and all those other monk-missionaries, Common Prayer is to be daily prayer. We are all in some sense still called to be Benedictine by using the gifts of daily Morning and Evening

Prayer, and the round of the liturgical year the Prayer Book provides. Part of our shared identity is the influence of that daily habit of shared prayer, through which the devotion of the Prayer Book forms people in their homes as well as in their churches.

Lastly, as Anglicans we always remember the principle of “lex orandi” -- “As we pray, so we come to believe.” The Prayer Book, after the Scriptures and the Creeds, is our distinctive teaching-statement of faith. When we make decisions about the presentation of Liturgy, in our music or ceremonial and all the other decisions and habits of liturgical house-keeping, we need to let the Prayer Book form us, not the other way around.

*Stein is Canon Precentor at Christ Church Cathedral, Houston.*

## Benedictine Spirituality

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Holy Eucharist and other pastoral and Episcopal services. The offices, (from the Latin for “duties”) come from the Divine Office, which is described by St. Benedict in his Rule and consists of prayer practiced seven times a day in roughly three-hourly intervals from dawn to dusk.

Recently I picked up my watch from being repaired. The sweet lady who helped me, knowing that I was a priest, told me a story about a friend of hers who wore a green dot on the face of his watch to remind him each time he looked at his watch to pray for someone. It made me realize that within the Anglican tradition, I am blessed with an ancient practice that not only includes prayer for others but is centered on my need to face God daily and to begin and end my day with the reminder of my total dependence on God.

Our *Book of Common Prayer* provides us with Morning Prayer, Rite I on page 37 and Rite II page 75; Noon-day Prayer page 103; Evening Prayer, Rite I page 61 and Rite II page 115 plus an Order of Worship for the Evening which may be used as an evening service or vespers as a complete service or may be used as an introduction to Evening Prayer or as a prelude to an evening meeting or other activity; and finally Compline, page 127 to be used as the close of the day. These can be read alone, with family or in community with others.

Just as the green dot helped to remind the man to pray, our ancient Benedictine spirituality remains relevant to us today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It continues to deal with issues facing us such as stewardship, relationships, authority, community, balance, work, simplicity, prayer and spiritual development. It offers a way of life and an attitude of mind rather than a set of religious prescriptions. It is rooted in the Bible for its inspiration which serves to guide our understanding of the meaning and purpose of life as beginning and being sustained in God alone.

Practicing this ancient spirituality may not be “fun,” yet it reminds us that God is the center of our life and reinforces our baptismal identity in Christ, even as we go about our daily routine which is not always “fun,” like taking out the garbage, going to the gym or practicing the violin. The benefits of this kind of work are summed up beautifully in an article by the Rev. Michael Anderson Bullock. Bullock writes, “The fruit of this prayerful and corporate rhythm, this “work” (*liturgy* means “the work of the people”), results in developing a strong spirit

and in possessing a reliable spirituality. Again, the spirituality developed in Benedict’s Rule echoes within the life of the Prayer Book, as well.”

Part of Cranmer’s genius was his insight into Benedict’s monastic rule and his ability to translate them into a useful form for those of us who live our lives in the secular world, so that we, like the monastics, could retain our identities as followers of Jesus Christ. How we are connected to God and the life of faith, which is our spirituality, can be summed up in two steps. First remember God and second, do regularly those things that remind us of God.

For those who “seek God and a deeper awareness and knowledge of God, there is a special and unique resource at their fingertips. It is ancient in its practice and Benedictine in its spirituality. *The Book of Common Prayer*, whose foundation is Scripture, is that blessed resource.

*Mizirl is college missionary at the Episcopal Student Center, Texas A&M University, College Station.*

## Accidentally Anglican

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the Church of England. Roman Catholic families lived under severe restrictions until the early 19th century.

## And so it goes

In recent weeks, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams has written about Anglicanism as a unique experiment in which the insights of Reformation and Catholic traditions are held together in a single church body. That has never been an easy marriage. For instance, ordained women are as apt to be Catholic as Protestant. The Evangelical wing of the Church, at the same time, seems to have produced some sort of biblical fundamentalism.

The great schism in Anglicanism at the end of the 18th century was not about the tension between Catholic and Reformed traditions. It was about the loss of the Methodists, led by John and Charles Wesley. One Roman Catholic writer has commented that John Wesley was the most Catholic of all the great Reformers. That schism was the result of a failure of nerve and imagination and vision among the bishops of the Church of England. They could not find a place for enthusiasm in the established Church.

But not only has our failure of nerve cost us the Methodists; it has also cost us working people, farmers, laborers and factory workers. There were times in the 16th and 17th centuries when it seemed possible that Rome might have imagination enough and vision enough to incorporate the insights of the Protestant reformers into its life. It did not.

Archbishop Rowan Williams has said that Anglicanism is a unique attempt to be truly Catholic and truly Reformed. It will not happen by accident, nor will it happen by manipulation, but only with vision, imagination, faith and love.

*Davis served for many years as rector of Holy Trinity, Clemson, South Carolina.*

# Anglican Communion

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to the conference, which was held in Canterbury. The next conference is being planned for 2008.

## The Primates Meeting

Since 1979, the Archbishop of Canterbury has also invited the primates (the presiding bishop, archbishop or moderator) of each of the 38 provinces, to join him in regular meetings for consultation, prayer and reflection on theological, social and international matters. These meetings take place approximately every eighteen months to two years.

## The Anglican Consultative Council

In 1968 the bishops of the Lambeth Conference requested the establishment of a body representative of all sections (bishops, clergy and laity) of the churches, which could co-ordinate aspects of international Anglican ecumenical and mission work. With the consent of the legislative bodies of all the provinces, the Anglican Consultative Council was established, and has met regularly since.

### ACC Meetings

Limuru, Kenya (1971)  
Dublin, Eire (1973)  
Trinidad (1976)  
London, Ontario (1979)  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England (1981)  
Badagry, Nigeria (1984)  
Singapore (1987)  
Lampeter, Wales (1990)  
Cape Town, Sough Africa (1993)  
Panama (1996)  
Dundee, Scotland (1999)  
Hong Kong (2002)  
Nottingham, England (2005)

## The Anglican Communion Office

There is a permanent secretariat, based in London, which serves the Instruments of Communion. The secretariat is responsible for organizing all meetings of the conciliar Instruments of Communion, as well as the Commissions and Networks of the Communion. Funding comes from the Inter-Anglican budget, supported by all member churches according to their means. They are also invited to contribute to special projects, such as the Personal Emergencies Fund and the Anglican Episcopal World Christmas Appeal.

The ACO is based at St. Andrew's House, London, under the leadership of the Secretary General, the Rev. Canon Kenneth Kearon. St. Andrew's House offers a small number of rooms as accommodation for pilgrims and visitors.

## Communications

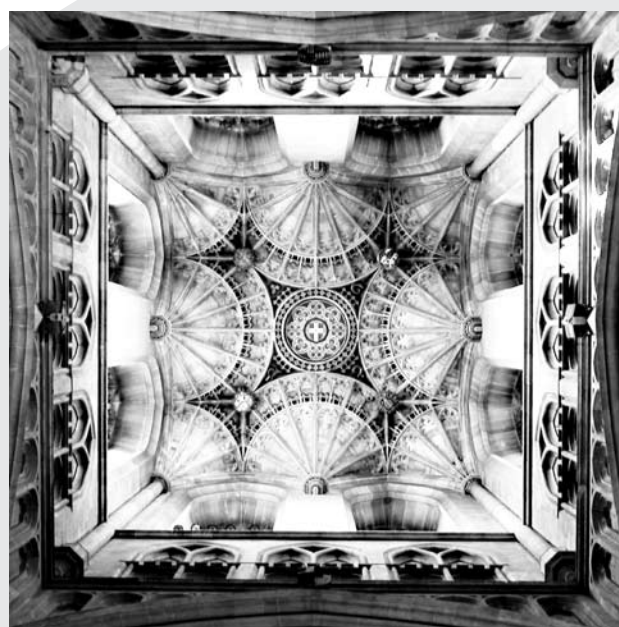
The ACO publishes Anglican Episcopal World – a

regular magazine containing articles and news from across the Communion – which is produced in print and on the Anglican Communion website. Updates to the Anglican Cycle of Prayer (daily prayer intentions for the Communion) can be found in the magazine and also on the Anglican Communion website.

ACNS is the electronic Anglican Communion News Service, available by e-mail subscription and on the website at [www.anglicancommunion.org](http://www.anglicancommunion.org).

## Canterbury Cathedral

The Cathedral Church of Christ, Canterbury, England, is the mother church of the Anglican Communion.



Daily prayer and celebration of the Eucharist stand at the heart of its ongoing ministry, and the Archbishop is present at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. The work of the Cathedral was recently extended with the development of the International Study Centre, which welcomes pilgrims and students from across the world. The ministry of the Cathedral is led by the Dean (the Very Rev. Robert Willis) and Chapter of Canterbury. [www.canterbury-cathedral.org](http://www.canterbury-cathedral.org)

The Anglican Communion Office  
St. Andrew's House, 16 Tavistock Crescent  
Westbourne Park, London W11 1AP, UK  
[www.anglicancommunion.org](http://www.anglicancommunion.org)

## The Anglican Communion Provinces

The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia  
The Anglican Church of Australia  
The Church of Bangladesh

The Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil  
The Province of the Anglican Church of Burundi  
The Anglican Church of Canada  
The Church of the Province of Central Africa  
The Anglican Church of the Central America Region  
The Anglican Church of the Congo  
The Church of England  
Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui  
The Church of the Province of the India Ocean  
The Church of Ireland  
Nippon Sei Ko Kai – The Anglican Communion in Japan  
The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East  
The Anglican Church of Kenya  
The Anglican Church of Korea  
The Church of the Province of Melanesia  
The Anglican Church of Mexico  
The Church of the Province of Myanmar (Burma)  
The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)  
The Church of North India  
The Church of Pakistan  
The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea  
The Episcopal Church in the Philippines  
The Episcopal Church of Rwanda  
The Scottish Episcopal Church  
The Church of the Province of South East Asia  
The Church of the Province of Southern Africa  
The Anglican Church of the Southern Cone of America  
The Church of South India  
The Episcopal Church of the Sudan  
The Anglican Church of Tanzania  
The Church of the Province of Uganda  
The Episcopal Church (United States of America)  
Includes overseas dioceses in Taiwan, Haiti, Columbia, Honduras, Dominican Republic and Ecuador  
The Church in Wales  
The Church of the Province of West Africa  
The Church in the Province of the West Indies

Extra-provincial dioceses and other churches  
The Anglican Church of Bermuda  
The Anglican Church in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)  
The Episcopal Church of Cuba  
The Lusitanian Church (Portugal)  
The Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church  
Falkland Islands

Churches in Communion  
The Mar Thoma Syrian Church  
The Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht  
The Philippine Independent Church

The Church in China is a “post denominational” Church whose formation included Anglicans in the Holy Catholic Church in China. Anglicans/Episcopalians, in certain parts of the Communion, are in full communion with some Lutheran Churches.

# Trinity at the Heart

continued from p. 11

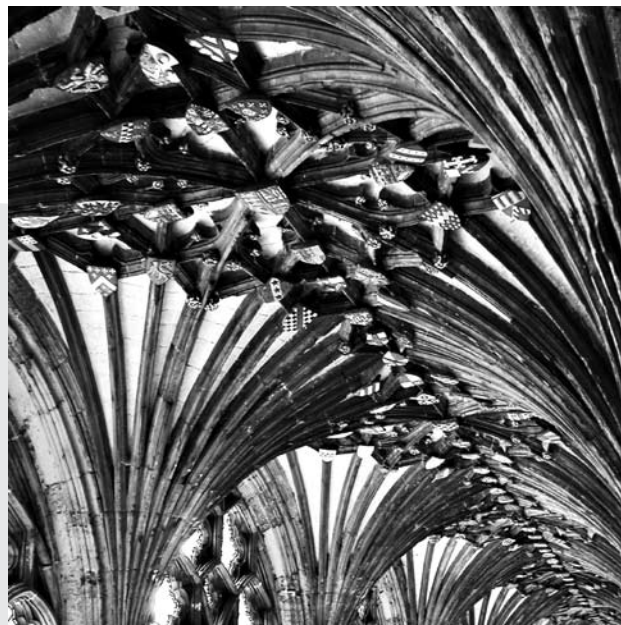
century by churchmen such as George Herbert and John Donne. Many poems of this age are now found in our hymnals set to music which we still enjoy in our worship. Although the main spiritual life shifted from the

monastery to cathedrals and parish churches, the Church of England had preserved the richness of catholic spirituality in its liturgy, choral tradition and the English Bible.

Many other chapters from the eighteenth century to the present day can be added to describe Anglican Spirituality. One has to mention the preaching of John Wesley and the hymns of his brother, Charles. Although not many of John Wesley's sermons are studied today, we sing many of Charles's hymns. Some of the best known are: "Hark! The herald angels sing" and "O for a thousand tongues to sing," John Newton who experienced a dramatic conversion to Christ became an Anglican priest and composed the widely popular hymn known to us, "Amazing Grace."

The Anglican divines (theologians) such as John Keble, E. B. Pusey and John Henry Newman are noteworthy for their contributions during the Oxford Movement. The Catholic revival led to many changes in church architecture, liturgy and music, but spiritual direction and religious orders were reintroduced in the life of the church. During the twentieth century many women join the company of men such as Evelyn Underhill with her work on mysticism and Dorothy Sayers with her novels and essays. T. S. Eliot and C.S. Lewis are two literary giants who contributed volumes in the areas of poetry, apologetics and fiction. Eliot's poems spoke to a generation disillusioned by the ravages of World War I while Lewis's radio

broadcasts on "Mere Christianity" gave hope to the British people during World War II. Among Lewis's numerous academic and apologetic works, "The Chronicles of Narnia" will continue to draw readers into the spiritual realities of heaven



and earth.

The heart of our spirituality will always be found in the use

of the primary texts of English translations of the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer and the hymnal. The practice of our piety is largely witnessed through worship and the centrality of the Eucharist. Wherever one travels throughout the Anglican Communion the experience in spirituality will vary greatly, but there will always be the common origin of the Prayer Book, the reading of Scripture and the great hymns of our church.

*Crawford is associate rector at Palmer Memorial, Houston*

## For Further Reading:

A Study of Anglicanism. Ed. Stephen Sykes, et al. London: SPCK, 1988.

A Brief History of the Episcopal Church. David L. Holmes, Harrisburg: Trinity, 1993.

Anglicanism. S.C. Neill. London: Mowbrays, 1977.

English Spirituality. Martin Thornton. Cambridge: Cowley, 1986.

Not Angels, but Anglicans, A History of Christianity in the British Isles. Ed. Henry

Chadwick. Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2000.

# Anglican Structure

continued from p. 13

and to testify to Christ's sovereignty as Lord of lords and King of kings."

Our bishop is The Rt. Rev. Don A. Wimberly, he is the eighth bishop of Texas. His episcopate is historically tied to Bishop Gregg but it is also connected through the see of Canterbury to the see of Rome. He was elected by the Diocese of Texas to serve as Bishop Diocesan. We have two other bishops who serve the mission of the church as regional executives; they are called bishops suffragan. Their names are The Rt. Rev. Rayford B. High and The Rt. Rev. Dena A. Harrison.

## The Diocese

In our Anglican structure a diocese is the companion to the bishop in the missionary work of the church. A "diocese" is a geographical area, like a state or a county. Each diocese has at least one bishop who leads its many member churches. These churches are called congregations, parishes or missions.

The hands and hearts of the diocese are the individual congregations. The priest who leads a parish is called the rector; a priest who leads a mission is called the vicar. The lay council of people who make decisions for a congregation/parish is called the vestry. With the rector, these people take care of the mission of the church in the particular

vineyard in which they are planted: Matagorda, Houston, Austin, Navasota, Tyler, Beaumont or other cities and towns throughout the geographical confines of the diocese. The Diocese of Texas has 158 congregations.

Each diocese has an annual convention that does the business of the diocese. The clergy and other lay and elected church members make decisions at these conventions. In the Diocese of Texas we call this convention Diocesan Council and it meets in February of each year.

The Diocese of Texas belongs to The Episcopal Church. We are formed under their canons and structure. There are 111 dioceses that are apart of The Episcopal Church from the United States and 14 foreign countries.

## A National Presence

Every three years, there is a national General Convention. The Diocese of Texas elects deputies to attend this General Convention. Elected clergy and lay deputies from each diocese form the House of Deputies who together meet with the House of Bishops to make decisions for the whole of the Episcopal Church.

The House of Bishops also meets annually and consists of bishops from each diocese. When first created, the House of Bishops was convened and presided over by the senior active bishop in the House. Today the House elects a "Presiding Bishop" who leads and serves the Church. The

House of Deputies confirms the election.

Our presiding bishop is The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schorri. She is our primate (head of The Episcopal Church). Bishop Jefferts Schorri participates with Primates from 38 autonomous Anglican provinces (165 countries) around the globe in the work of the Anglican Communion.

## The Anglican Communion

The Windsor Report, which was published on October 18, 2004, has laid out a clear path for greater structure at the global level. After the Primates meeting in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania in February of 2007, we are seeing the Windsor Report proposals come to life in a historic structuring of our communion. While this work is in process it is essential to the life of the Communion. The four Instruments of Communion that serve to discern our common mind in communion issues, and to foster our interdependence and mutual accountability in Christ. Each member Church, like the Episcopal Church in the United States, orders and regulates its own affairs through its own system of government and law and is therefore described as autonomous, each church recognizes that the member churches of the Anglican Communion are bound together, not juridically by a central legislative or executive authority, but by the Holy Spirit who calls and enables us to live in mutual loyalty and service."

Of these four Instruments of Communion, the Archbishop

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of Canterbury, The Most Rev. Rowan Williams, with whose See Anglicans have historically been in communion, is accorded a primacy of honor and respect as first amongst equals (*primus inter pares*). He calls the Lambeth Conference, and Primates' Meeting, and is President of the Anglican Consultative Council.

The Lambeth Conference, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, expressing episcopal collegiality worldwide, gathers the bishops for common counsel, consultation and encouragement and serves as an instrument in guarding the faith and unity of the Communion.

The Primates' Meeting, presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, assembles for mutual support and counsel, monitors global developments and works in full collaboration in doctrinal, moral and pastoral matters that have Communion-wide implications.

The Anglican Consultative Council is a body representative of bishops, clergy and laity of the churches, which co-ordinates aspects of international Anglican ecumenical and mission work. Covenant Draft, February 19, 2007

These four instruments help us to organize our work as a global church. As I said in the beginning... structures, whether they be local or global, are essential for Anglicans as we seek to carry out the work of the Gospel.

We are the Anglican Communion. Your congregation, our diocese, our national church is part of an ever growing global church. In a recently published document describing the proposed global covenant, the authors wrote of our communion and our mission:

... Communion is a gift of God: that His people from east and west, north and south, may together declare his glory and be a sign of God's Kingdom. We gratefully acknowledge God's gracious providence extended to us down the ages, our origins in the undivided Church, the rich history of the Church in the British Isles shaped particularly by the Reformation, and our growth into a global communion through the various mission initiatives.

As the Communion continues to develop into a worldwide family of interdependent churches, we also face challenges and opportunities for mission at local, regional, and international levels. We cherish our faith and mission heritage as offering us unique opportunities for mission collaboration, for discovery of the life of the whole gospel and for reconciliation and shared mission with the Church throughout the world.

We commit ourselves to answering God's call to share in his healing and reconciling mission for our blessed but broken and hurting world, and, with mutual accountability, to share our God-given spiritual and material resources in this task.

In this mission, which is the Mission of Christ, we commit ourselves:

- to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God;
- to teach, baptize and nurture new believers;
- to respond to human need by loving service;
- to seek to transform unjust structures of society; and
- to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to

sustain and renew the life of the earth.

We are people of Jesus Christ in communion with brothers and sisters globally for the sole purpose of proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom of God and acting in a manner such as to be a part of God's transformational work in the lives of our neighbors, whether our neighbor resides in Matagorda, Texas, London, England, or in Taipei, Taiwan.

Our own baptismal covenant from the Book of Common Prayer, echoes our global mission of Good News:

*Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?*

*Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?*

*Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?*

*Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?*

*Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?*

The structures of the church should not get in the way of this mission. Vincent J. Donovan wrote a book in 1978 called *Christianity Rediscovered: An Epistle from the Masai*. Donovan was a Roman Catholic missionary to the Masai in Tanzania. In a reflection about the ministerial offices of the church and the difficulty between maintaining the life of baptized Christians and discipling potential new Christians he wrote the following words.

We have condensed all the hope and dignity and power and glory of Christianity into the narrow confines of a single individual [clergyman]. This is an obvious distortion. To remedy that distortion of Christianity we simply must move in a different direction, without abandoning the substance of Christianity in the process. All and everything we believed about [clergy] is true – as true of the Christian community as it is of him. It is not so much that priests must decrease, as that Christians must increase.

As one stands and gazes to the far horizon of the church, to that cutting edge of the church out there in the midst of the world that is not Christian, to that church that is yet new and young and particular, one wonders if that increase will ever be allowed to happen.

Anglican structures serve the people doing the local missionaries in their field. Just as it was for the first Texans, so it is today. The bishop and his office, the structure of the diocese, the structure of the greater Church and the Anglican Communion, exist to serve Christ Jesus by serving the laborers who are called into the field to proclaim the Good News. We must never forget that out on the cutting edge is a church that is new and young and particular and it requires support by the structures of the church that it may grow and flourish transforming the lives of all who come within Christ's saving embrace.

*Doyle is Canon to the Ordinary in the Diocese of Texas.*

## Why Claim to be Episcopalian

by Charles Bolden

It is not infrequently that I am asked about my faith. It usually comes in the context of people wondering if I experienced any "spiritual" change when I first flew in space. For me, this question is a God send because it opens the door to a discussion of who I am spiritually and why I believe what I believe about God and the universe. A question I get less frequently is "Why are you an Episcopalian?," so when I was asked [to write about it], I found myself struggling to provide a quick answer with any real meaning and substance.

To be perfectly honest, I don't feel that I am as strong an Episcopalian today as I was as a teenager and young adult. Perhaps this comes from my belief that God has inspired all people, regardless of faith or creed, to love one another and care for each other. I have come to this belief in no small part due to my years of travels around the world and my interactions with people of many faiths who all seem to hold dear basic beliefs about life as do I – that there is some supreme being; that all things come from that being; that we are made in the image of that being; and that we should love each other and care for each other in spite of our differences.

A very good friend and counterpart of mine who served in the Japan Air Self Defense Force during our tour in Tokyo, once took my wife, Jackie, and me to his home town and to the Shinto shrine where he had grown up, been taught the tenets of his faith and had been formed as a human being. As he told us of being taught by the priest in the shrine, we both were struck by how much he seemed to be relating a story of spiritual upbringing very similar to what we had experienced growing up as Baptist and Presbyterian, respectively. He spoke of his belief in the goodness of man and our tendency to sin in spite of knowing what is right, and of the importance in serving others in spite of our tendency to become selfish and expect others to constantly serve us. At times as he talked, I felt as if I were receiving a lesson in the faith taught through the Catechism when I finally decided that I wanted to become an Episcopalian at the age of twelve. Of course there are distinct differences in his religion and mine! But the way he lived his life would cause someone from Houston, not knowing him to think that he was a practicing Christian in good standing.

I grew up in the Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina where I attended church and Sunday school every week with my mom, dad and younger brother. I could never really come to accept the concept of predestination, but other than that, everything about the Presbyterian Church was "cool." At the age of twelve, however, something happened and I began



Charles Bolden

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## Why Claim to be Episcopalian

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to have a desire to participate more personally in the service, to do more during the week with the church than I seemed to be offered at my parents' church. I thought it was really neat the way my friends in the Catholic Church could don their vestments as acolytes and take an active role in the mass, but there was just something about the Catholic doctrine and dogma that didn't turn me on.

My mother grew up as an Episcopalian and she frequently talked about her experiences in the church, especially her childhood days traveling around South Carolina with her aunt and uncle who were Episcopal missionaries.

The priest at the local Black Episcopal church, St. Luke's, (this was the segregated south in the fifties) was a distant cousin of my mom and he had all kinds of youth activities going at the church. The big activity that really caught my fancy was that he recorded the main service each Sunday morning for replay on the local Black radio station that evening.

When I asked if I could help, he made me responsible for the recording and narration of the show each week. Not only that, but he allowed me to join the acolytes so that I could serve during the services from time to time. The only potential stumbling block to joining St. Luke's and getting to do all these great things was mastering the challenge of confirmation classes and learning the Catechism so that we would be prepared for the bishop's questions when he came for his visitation and confirmation. What is the Church and who are the ministers of the Church?

What are the sacraments and what is Christian hope? These were just a few of the questions we pondered as we studied the Catechism each week in preparation for our confirmation. Although I am no longer able to recite verbatim these teachings, I still remember the basic concepts and still believe strongly in the role of the laity as ministers "...to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to Him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church."

So back to the original question – why am I an Episcopalian? I am because I love the liturgical services; I love that fact that we are One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic church. I love the fact that the laity is ranked first in the order of ministers in our Catechism. I am because we are an open and affirming church; I am because we practice inclusiveness and tolerance; I am because in God's time and in His own way he has brought me to this church to do his will and live life such that others will see his face in mine every day. I am because God has richly blessed me and allowed me to be an Episcopalian.

God's Peace!

*Bolden is a member of St. James', Houston and a former astronaut.*

## Why I'm an Anglican

by Meredith Holt



Meredith Holt

In part, I am an Anglican because I was raised Anglican and it has been part of my identity since I can remember. I come from a long line of Anglicans who likely date back before the formation of the Episcopal Church. But as many in my generation can attest, legacy and loyalty are not always enough. My time in a secular liberal arts college stripped me of those reasons and helped me refine why I am a Christian. Meanwhile, my involvement in an ecumenical college fellowship led me refine why I am an Anglican. Much of my spiritual development occurred when God met me in that college group. Through it, I developed a deep loving respect for all the members of the Body of Christ. To borrow an idea from C.S. Lewis' *Mere Christianity*: although we may be in different rooms, we belong to a common house of God, whose cornerstone is Jesus Christ. And yet, there is a reason why I find myself in the Anglican room.

As Anglicans, our focus on the sacraments, unique blend of Catholic heritage and Protestant thought, value for the prayer book and approach to interpreting scripture speaks to my heart and guides me toward a deeper relationship with God. Often absent in my ecumenical circles is Eucharistic worship, where corporately across time and all notions of space we remember and give thanks for the life, death and resurrection of our savior Jesus Christ.

I am an Anglican because I recognize the mysterious presence of God in the Eucharist but do not go so far as to call it transubstantiation. I like the concept of *via media*: that Anglicans preserve parts of the beautiful Catholic liturgy while allowing the freedom to protest aspects of doctrine and dogma. Meanwhile, our prayer book reminds me that Anglicanism has roots in the Church in the England and branches worldwide. Whether in Canterbury, Kumasi or College Station, the global communion is bonded by common worship through the prayer book. I appreciate that Anglicans are eager to admit that we read the Word of God through the lens of our traditions, rational minds and personal experiences. As we continue to come to terms with our diversity, I love that we do not shy from admitting our limitations, embracing mystery and meeting God in the muddle of our questions. Within the common house of God, I am Anglican.

*Holt is a member of St. Thomas, College Station.*

## Anglican Faith: The Dynamic of Tradition

by Leslie A. Hay



Leslie A. Hay

Pondering why I am an Episcopalian, and thereby a member of the Anglican Communion, has entailed a pilgrimage of prayer and self-reflection before arriving at what I hope to be a reasoned response. During this exercise, I realized that I practice the Anglican Faith because I was called to do so. I was not born into the Anglican faith tradition, but rather accepted a childhood invitation to "come and see," and have thus stayed for forty-five years. But why have I stayed? It is, I believe, because of "the dynamic of tradition" as the internationally known scholar, A. M. Allchin describes in his book of the same title (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1981). For some, it may seem incongruent to use "dynamic" to describe tradition. But as Allchin clearly conveys, the living God is active, and always has been, through the ages, irregardless of time and space. And it is this irrefutable connection between the Risen Christ and my twenty-first century experience of the Mystery of God through the liturgy of Word and Sacrament in the Anglican tradition that keeps me a member of the Episcopal Church of the United States.

While my parents took my younger siblings and me to church as children, it was not until I was a young teenager and accompanied a childhood friend and her family to the local Episcopal church that I found a new, highly structured form of worship. While a bit confused with the order of worship, the use of the Book of Common Prayer and Hymnal, I was mesmerized by the likewise structured beauty of the service: the lovely hymns accompanied by an organist; the drape of pure, white linen; gleaming brass cross and candlesticks, a silver chalice and paten polished to mirrored perfection; the fragrant hint of fresh altar flowers; and people dressed in "church clothes"—jackets and ties for men, hats and gloves for women, and children attired similarly. Each element surrounded me like vapor and drew me deep into the prayers, the responses, the listening of the Word and the words of reflection uttered by the priest in his homily. In short, I was captivated by a religious tradition spanning decades. But this is not the "tradition"—with all its stagnant, unchanging rules that Tevye, the patriarch in "Fiddler on the Roof" sings, but rather the life giving "dynamic of tradition" of which Allchin writes.

### The Essential Guide to the Anglican Communion

The worldwide Anglican Communion, with more than 76 million members, is the third largest denomination in the world. Nigeria has 17.5 million practicing Anglicans, more than Canada, England and the United States combined.

The typical Anglican is no longer a privileged and educated, white, Anglo living in the industrial West. She is a poor woman of color between 20-30 years of age, in the developing southern hemisphere (Africa, South America) and is biblically and socially conservative, evangelical and charismatic.

# Canterbury Pilgrimage

“[T]o Canterbury they wende . . .”

Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*

by Robin Smith

For centuries Canterbury Cathedral has been a destination for pilgrims in search of the holy. I have had the privilege of visiting Canterbury three times, once on my honeymoon in 1961, once on vacation in 1998, and once again in 2001 on photographic assignment.

For me, Canterbury Cathedral is both sacramental and iconic—sacramental because the structure itself is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. I am awed by the fact that those who started construction of the cathedral did not live to see its completion. I am further awe-struck that the cathedral was built before the time of power tools, computers, and other technological advances and stands today as a beacon of hope to a spiritually starving world.

Aside from the political struggles of the day, the craftsmen and artisans had one goal—excellence in their craft and creating an offering worthy of God’s call. All of their work was done to the glory of God, and when one is building to God’s glory there is a different perspective that provides opportunities for the Holy Spirit to inspire stonecutters, window makers, woodcarvers, fabric makers—all working together to build and equip the finest structure of the time. All so the word of God can be proclaimed and passed down for generations.

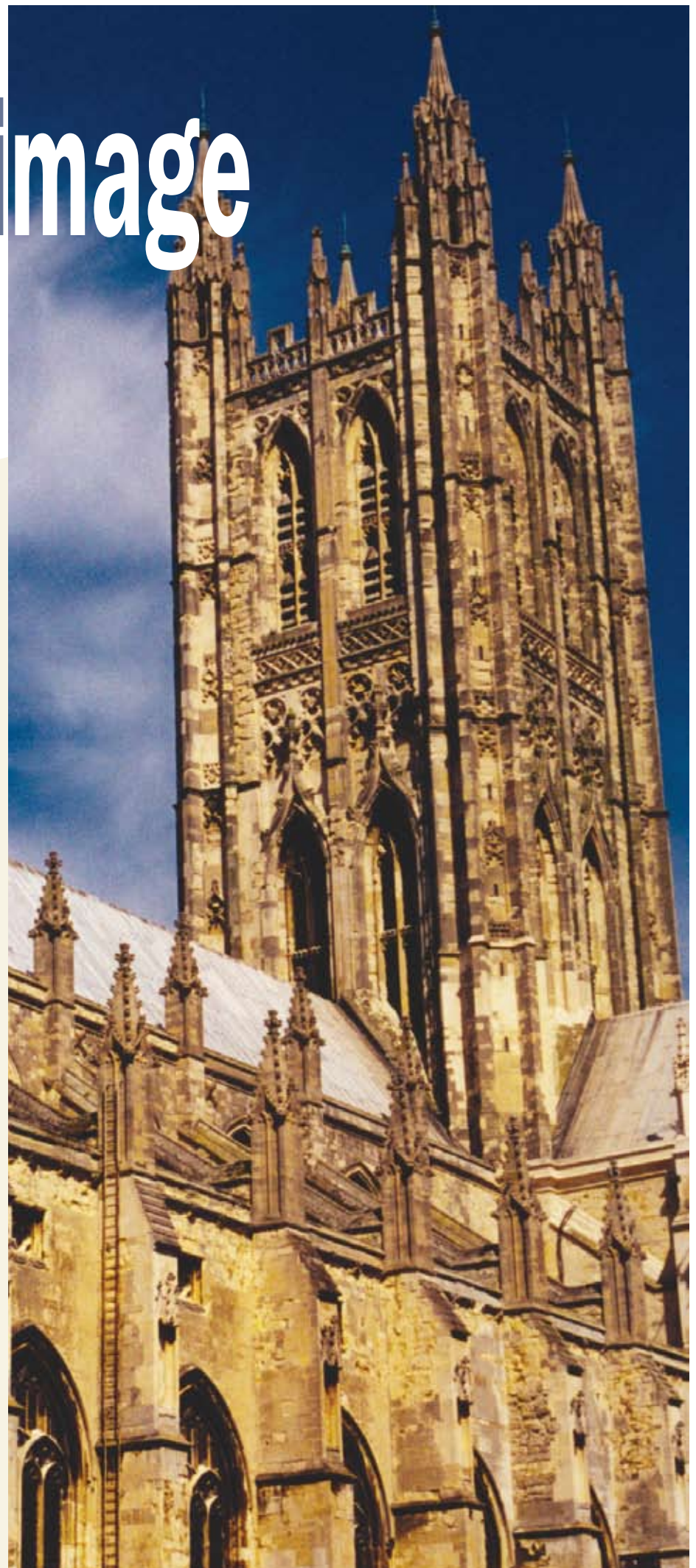
Centuries later it would serve us well to step back from our computers and instant gratifications and relearn the goals of excellence, quality and artistic craftsmanship, using technology as an aid rather than as the producer of the product.

I feel that Canterbury Cathedral is iconic because it is a window into the presence of God. Iconic because in icon writing, every brush stroke has meaning and at Canterbury every stone, every stained glass, every stitch on the fabric and every piece of carved wood has meaning and depth, all drawing us closer to the presence of God.

I feel comforted that the Anglican Communion has a place like Canterbury Cathedral, built by the talents of so many, steeped in prayer and surrounded by music, as the locus for mission and outreach for the Church at large.

So, as in *The Canterbury Tales*, I invite you to make a physical or mental pilgrimage to Canterbury to be renewed in spirit and challenged with the opportunities of excellence that the Church offers for God’s work in the world today. That is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

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Canterbury Cathedral Photo: Carol E. Barnwell