

ANGLICANS TOGETHER

NEWSLETTER No.25 December 2004

ANGLICANS TOGETHER ONLINE: <www.anglicanstogether.org>

Chairman's Column

The celebration of Christmas enables us to focus upon the fact that God loves every one of us and was concerned for our welfare so much that God came among us to live in the world in which we live. God in the form of Jesus the Christ did not seek any special privileges. His life included fun and laughter, pain and sorrow, sickness and health. His life was as ordinary as each of our own, except in two important respects. He lived a sinless life, though he like all of us had to live with the consequence of the sins of others. The other important difference was that occasionally people would see, as the writer of John's Gospel said, signs that indicated his divinity. In living his life as a fully human person, he was able to ultimately give all humanity the option of living in God's Presence forever.

Every person who has lived, is living or will ever live, is loved by God and free to receive the Grace of God's acceptance. No wonder the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest and peace, goodwill among people". This is the Good News of Christmas and the Good News that we must tell everyone we meet, so that they too can live confidently, secure in the knowledge of God's acceptance. We cannot keep it to ourselves.

I was not at the recent Anglicans Together Dinner as Christine my wife and I were travelling overseas. I believe that it was a wonderful success and that Dr Muriel Porter's address was impassioned, brilliantly delivered and very insightful. I thank Muriel for her generosity in giving of her time so freely. I look forward to the next Dinner. I also wish to thank all the people who made the evening possible, in particular; Mr Doug Pearson and the Social Committee of Saint Alban's, my associate Mrs Denise Pigot and the Committee of Anglicans Together, without whose assistance the evening would not have been possible.

While I was away, I had the privilege of visiting many different Anglican Churches in England and in the USA. It was good to see our Anglican church in all its diverse forms. These ranged from

the Anglo-Catholic Parish of Saint Mary the Virgin Time Square in New York to a little country Evangelical parish in rural Britain in Inkpen in the county of Berkshire. Everywhere I went I was asked about what is happening to the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Sydney. Why is it taking such an unanglican approach to Christianity? Why is there such an aggressive attack on other parts of the Church? People cannot understand what is happening. They do not understand that one Anglican Church can be so unaccepting of other views. I was able to say that a vast number of people in Sydney also did not understand either. I did explain that as the Diocese was now under the control of one party that the traditional tensions that resulted for the Elizabethan Settlement no longer had any effect upon the direction the Diocese of Sydney is taking. The counter balancing effect of Anglicans from more traditional evangelical, liberal and catholic parishes no longer apply.

I also had the privilege of having an interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace on behalf of Anglicans Together. He indicated to me that he is concerned for the people of the Diocese of Sydney who wish to remain part of the traditional Anglican Church. I apologised on behalf of Anglicans in Sydney for the personal attacks that have rained down upon him of recent times, emanating from Sydney. I also met with the Reverend Dr Herman Browne who is the Archbishop's Officer for the Anglican Communion. Both said that their prayers were for the good of all Anglicans in Sydney.

In New York, by chance, I also met the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the USA. He too said that his prayers were for the people of Sydney. Again, I apologised to him for the personal attacks that he has had to suffer in recent times from Sydney.

Many people ask me why I speak out on Anglican matters in Sydney? I speak out, and I believe that Anglicans Together does too, because **speaking out for the Anglican Church is important.** Down through the years many people have been

courageous in speaking out on Church matters. Some have even paid for their lives for their witness. Here in Sydney, as elsewhere, the Christian duty is to stand for the truth as it has been revealed to each of us.

The church may be a frail and troubled organisation but it has and will remain the vehicle to bring God's unconditional love to all persons. None of us is perfect. None of us has all the answers. The Anglican Church needs people to speak out on all matters. A person with a closed mind withers up and dies. A church with a closed mind withers up and dies. I believe in variety so that we can get a full understanding of the great God in whom we believe and have our being. To this end over recent years, I have invited both the current Dean of Sydney and the Principal of Moore College to preach Saint Alban's Epping. Both have declined my invitation.

May the all-revealing light of the Christ Child shine in your lives at this holy time so that we all may come to know the God and Father of us and his redeeming love in all its fullness.

John Cornish



Fr Peter Bennie – A Two Day Seminar

Members of Anglicans Together, their friends and colleagues are cordially invited to attend all or some part of a two day Seminar, *to commemorate the life and work of Peter Bennie - noted Anglo-Catholic scholar*. Father Peter was Rector of All Saints Wickham Terrace, Brisbane (1953-63), Warden of St Paul's College, University of Sydney (1963-85) and sometime editor of the Australian Church Quarterly.

The Seminar will be held at St Paul's College, Sydney University - Friday to Saturday, **18-19 February 2005**. Programme and further details are available from Dr David Dockrill (02) 4952 1651, davidandkathdockrill@yahoo.com.au or Dr Ruth Frappell (02) 9489 3366, lfrappel@laurel.ocs.mq.edu.au.

JOURNEY OF A SYDNEY EVANGELICAL

Sydney evangelicals have gained a rather negative reputation amongst many Anglicans, in recent times. They are seen as narrow, arrogant, judgemental, closed-minded, power-hungry, and 'fundamentalist', with all that this term implies.

Yet I acknowledge myself as a Sydney evangelical, and very much value my heritage. Like a number of Sydney evangelicals, I was present at the founding meeting of *Anglicans Together* in the Chapter House, St. Andrew's Cathedral. I believe Sydney evangelicals have a significant contribution to make to *Anglicans Together*. I am concerned that *Anglicans Together* could regard Sydney Evangelicals more and more as 'the enemy', rather than as fellow Anglican Christians to whom we must relate in love - even when we feel sorely provoked!

I grew up at St. Andrew's Roseville, a strong evangelical church where my faith was nurtured, my gifts encouraged and developed, and where I came to appreciate the wonder of God's love shown to us in Christ, and the call to trust and follow him. I was involved in Beach Missions, Evangelical Union, and in two Billy Graham Crusades. My formal training for ministry was at Moore College. Over the years I came to value the Bible's message, to acknowledge its divine authority, to appreciate the humanity and the individuality of its writers, to recognize its variety and its unity, and to read it seeking to use my intelligence as well as my heart.

I see the two central characteristics of evangelicals as their understanding of the gospel, and their attitude to scripture. We respond to the gospel not simply through a general attempt to be 'good people' or through religious activity, but through faith, as we depend on the grace and mercy of the God who loves us. In relation to the Bible, as an evangelical, I seek to allow its message to be the test of my understanding and discipleship. What is contrary to the message of scripture, I reject. What is clearly taught in scripture I see as authoritative. There are other characteristic positions of evangelicals, but I see these as fundamental.

There is another side to my experience. Since my ordination, I have been in close contact with Anglicans and other Christians who would not describe themselves as evangelical. I served my curacy at St. Alban's Epping, whose churchmanship was 'high' by Sydney standards. I served at St. Andrew's Cathedral, where I came to love a style of worship - formal and traditional, and where music was taken seriously. There I met Anglicans from different traditions, whose Christian faith was genuine and committed. I

represented Sydney Diocese on the NSW Ecumenical Council and the Council of Christians and Jews. **In these groups I sought to be true to my understanding of the faith, yet ready to listen and learn from those whose background is different from mine.** As Chaplain at Concord Hospital I'm in contact with people of all backgrounds, including many ex-churchgoers who have taught me much about the church and its failings!

None of these experiences have caused me to change my fundamental convictions. They have forced me to be aware that I have my own theological 'blind spots', to check before assuming that a particular position does real justice to the Bible's teaching, and to remember that scripture does not directly answer every question I might want it to answer! I recognize that I come to scripture with certain presuppositions about its nature, and the way it should be read. An important question for me - and for all evangelicals - is how we respond in a godly way to those who do not share those presuppositions.

A real danger for Evangelicals is Pharisaism. The Pharisees were committed to the authority of the law and the prophets. They expected scripture to provide explanations of how to live every aspect of one's life. In fact, those answers were often not directly provided, and so they 'clarified' scripture with their detailed interpretations of how one should live. They took these standards as normative, and condemned those who did not live up to them. They, in effect, added to scripture, and then succumbed to the dangers of legalism and judgementalism. Jesus saw the hypocrisy. He questioned the Pharisees' attitude to scripture, in giving undue emphasis to minor issues, and bypassing issues which really matter. This is not far from the nature of a heresy, which starts with an emphasis on a neglected truth: this particular truth then receives such attention that important truths are ignored and a distorted position reached. The Pharisees had plenty of zeal: but zeal for truth and for the Gospel must always be expressed in love.

This points, it seems to me, to dangers for Sydney Diocese. There is an increasing narrowness of focus which is over-selective in the reading of scripture, and is becoming legalistic. **The heavy-handed reaction to members of Masonic lodges is a case in point, as is the 'approved' position on women's ordination: those who do not subscribe to that position are seen as not 'true blue', despite the reality that the Biblical evidence is not as clear-cut as some claim.** We see something similar in the 'redefining of the nature of church gatherings'. Many Sydney

church notice boards nowadays advertise 'meetings' rather than 'services'. Does the change of terminology actually clarify anything of significance for the passers-by? Formality, tradition and liturgy are seen as impediments to fellowship and edification, while 'worship' is seen as a misleading term, because our whole life should be worship. There are valid points being made, but they are not the whole truth, and there is more than one edifying way of 'doing church'! **There are a number of spiritually alive, outreaching Sydney churches where Christians are being built up but whose traditions are different from 'Sydney mainstream'.**

The hostile 'Sydney' reaction to some of Archbishop Carnley's ideas made it hard for some to form a balanced reaction to the things he was saying. There were statements which I strongly rejected (and did so from the pulpit!). However he was turned into a kind of 'hero' - experiencing a form of persecution from those Sydney sidlers!

I have sympathy and concern about the way Sydney Diocese is handling the issue of 'lay presidency'. Sydney has been trying to get the wider church to look at the issue for decades, and too often has got something of a 'shock-horror' reaction, as if priestly presidency was absolutely sacrosanct. It is obviously a matter of great importance to Anglicans and an issue of church tradition, even though there are significant theological issues involved. Like all traditions it must be open to examination. My hope is that when 'lay presidency' is put into practice in Sydney, clergy will show sensitivity. This issue need not destroy the unity of the Anglican Church.

I hope Diocesan leaders will remember the teaching of the 39 Articles, - that what is not clearly required by scripture is not required of Anglicans. I hope they will remember that being open to difference in style and understanding does not necessarily involve ungodly compromise. Churches that are different need to be encouraged, especially as they seek to reach out to those who are not attracted by the 'diocesan mainstream'. I hope they will see it is important to have some clergy appointed from outside the diocese, and trained at places other than Moore College: we need to keep a openness without letting go of Biblical truth. The New Testament describes churches that shared in Christ's unity without being uniform. May we all find the humility to respect and accept one another in Christ, to learn from one another, and to see that we all have our role to play in the purposes of God. *Paul Weaver*

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Opinions expressed are those of the contributors.
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NEWS – REVIEWS

on Books and Journals

Comedy and Irony in Anglican Polity.

A new Journal of ministry, mission and unity has just arrived in the post from England. It is “*Ecclesiology – The Journal for Ministry, Mission and Unity*” Vol.1 No.1 2004. The Editorial Convenor is Dr Paul Avis, General Secretary Council for Christian Unity, Westminster; an author of numerous books on Parish Ministry and a Parish Priest of an Anglican Church in England.

This edition of the Journal has seven articles written by eminent theologians and four Book Reviews..

An article I found both informative and entertaining, was entitled “*Joking Apart: Exploring comedy and irony in Anglican Polity*”. The author Martyn Percy is Principal of Ripon College, Cuddleston, Oxford, England and Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ministry at Hartford Seminary, Connecticut USA.

The article commences with an abstract putting Anglican Identity in a comic-ironic orientation which allows it to imagine its future whilst reflecting wryly upon its besetting crises.

The article starts with a quote from *Rose Macaulay’s “The Towers of Trezibond”*. “Take my camel, dear”, said my Aunt Dot, as she climbed down from this animal on her return from High Mass...”. The book is an absurd, comic and beautiful tale, which tells of *Aunt Dot, her niece Laurie and Father Chantry-Pigg*, and their expedition to Turkey to explore the scope for converting the Turks – not just to any old Christianity, but to ‘Anglicanism’. By establishing a High Anglican Mission, the trio hope to bring salvation and civilization to the country.

Despite *Macaulay’s* comic fiction there is ironically, a well-established Anglican presence in Turkey.

Martyn Percy introduces the reader to some interesting facts about world Anglicanism. Globally there are around 77 million Anglicans. **They are spread over 36 self-governing churches, comprising 500 dioceses, 30,000 parishes and about 65,000 congregations located in a total of 165 countries.**

Communion also evokes what Benedict Anderson describes as an “imagined community”. Most of its members have never met one another, and never will. Yet members will readily acknowledge a deep horizontal comradeship of belonging. The Communion is bound together by an ethos, codes memories and aspirations that allow it to evolve in

the minds of its members, but without that coherence necessarily being practiced at either a deep or extensive level. Dr Percy goes on to observe the behaviour of the different Anglican congregations. To understand the Anglican Church we need to look at the way it is. He poses three questions. The answers to which give an understanding of the congregational unit. Here are two:

1. (Q) How many Anglicans does it take to change a light bulb?
(A) Five: One to insert the new one and four to admire the old one.

2. (Q&A) The Archbishop of Canterbury sitting alone on the beach confronts a *genie* who asks the Archbishop to give him a problem he would happily solve. The Archbishop ponders and withdraws a map from his pocket. It is a map of the Middle East. The Archbishop draws a red circle around the whole area and tells the *genie* “I’d like you to bring peace to this region”. The genie does not reply for at least 10 minutes, then turning to the Archbishop says – “what you ask is beyond me; but if you have another wish I will grant that”. The Archbishop pauses and reaches for another map. This is a map of the world with 165 countries coloured in. “This is the Anglican Communion and all I ask is that the many different parts get on a little better.” The gene sits on the sand and thinks as he faces the sun. For ten minutes he says nothing. Then he stands up and turns towards the Archbishop “Your Grace”, he says, “Do you think I could have another look at the first map?”

There is another joke quoted, but they all tell something about Anglicanism – they remind us of the flaws in Anglicanism; the way we think and act.

The last section of the article is named “*Comic Endings*”. **The theologian, Robert Carroll once described the Anglican way of doing theology as “the Dodo’s incorporative principle, a means by which everyone wins”**. Anglicans in trying to sort out doctrinal differences always argue about the precise weight that should be given to scripture, tradition, reason and culture. In debates, everyone is accommodated; formal decisions are rarely reached. This is the ecclesiology that has made Anglicanism. It is like the Dodo – such a rare bird for several centuries. But is the rarity and novelty of Anglicanism about to slide into self-inflicted extinction?

The Archbishop of Canterbury has an unenviable task of trying to hold together some hotly held

competing convictions. **Leading the Church of England, it is often said, is like trying to herd cats. Precocious and unbidable creatures - they roam where they please.** The job of leading the Anglican Communion is many times worse. The Episcopal Church in America will go one way. Anglicans in Sydney and Nigeria will go another. Correspondingly, there is no shortage of prophets who are predicting that this is the beginning of the end.

What kind of future will this lead to? *Martyn Percy* believes all is not lost: **but the future will require the shared re-discovering of those values courtesies, conventions and cultures that made the Communion what it was in the first place.** With typical ironic-comic turn, *Dr Percy* prophesies **that the Anglican Communion will only re-discover itself through grace; it cannot make itself by law.**

The Journal is available from Orca Book Services, Stanley House, 3 Fleets Lane, Poole, Dorset. BH1153AJ or via the internet: journals@orcabookservices.co.uk

John Holle

BOOKS AVAILABLE AT S. Kieran Colenso Centre

Archbishop Rowan William may well be the greatest theologian in the Chair of St Augustine since St Anselm. He certainly is a profound thinker.

He is not always easy reading but I should commend especially the magnificent and thought-provoking chapter '*William Tyndale: The Christian Society.*' in his book "**Anglican Identities**" (publ.DLT). The Archbishop says "Tyndale above all 'sends us back to the foundation of our faith -especially those of us who, whatever our qualifications and queries, still stand in a reformed tradition'. Tyndale is one of the greatest and most influential saints of the Church of England.

Also, *David Daniell's* editions of Tyndale's translations, and his magisterial biography of Tyndale as well as his recent large and comprehensive work, "The Bible in English".

A New Book Out Soon - "Canticle Road and Celestial City: Seventy-Two Hymns and Songs"

by John Bunyan

Foreword by the Rev'd Canon Dr Charles Sherlock
Dedicated, by permission, to H.R.H. the Princess Royal

All proceeds to the 'Save the Children Fund'

Cost: \$35 plus \$3.00 p&p (unless picked from ABM Office, 91 Druitt St., Sydney).

COMMUNIQUE - a new 16 page newsletter from the Saint Kieran Colenso Book Depot & Library

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Listing On Sale

130 new & 2nd hand books on worship (with 100s of other Christian books on sale in the Depot

Freely On Loan

Some 100 or so books on worship and biography added to the library *this* year (with 1000s on other subjects including mission and evangelism).

Short Articles

Traditional BCP Morning Prayer and simple "all-age" BCP and hymn books

The BCP revival - latest news

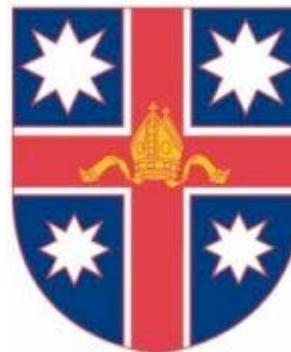
Details of the Prayer Book Society

Cost of Communique: \$5 payable to John Bunyan
PO Box N109, Campbelltown North, NSW 2560

Depot open by appointment

(02) 46.272.586 jrbpilgrim@bocnet.com.au

The Coat of Arms of the Anglican Church of Australia



The original Grant of Arms was made in 1836 to Bishop Broughton, first Bishop of Australia. It was four stars, the Crux Australis (or the Southern Cross without the fifth star), imposed on a blue field.

The General Synod grant has added to it the Cross of St George superimposed with a mitre. The Cross of St George is the emblem of the Church of England from which the Anglican Church of Australia is derived, and the mitre denotes the Church has an episcopal foundation. (i.e. Bishops).

The fifth star of the Crux Australis is omitted – no one knows what happened, heraldically. However at the time of the Eureka Stockade, Lator's flag had the Southern Cross also without the fifth star.

The description on the General Synod Grant of Arms reads: "Azure on a Cross Gules fimbriated and between four Mulletts of eight points Argent a Mitre Or".

VIRUS ALERT -

Hymns attacked

Viruses can threaten our lives. Computer systems can be destroyed by a 'virus'. The Christian Church over the centuries developed processes of "guarding the truth" that Jesus lived and taught, but in recent centuries hymns have come to be sung in worship with too little scrutiny. Some hymns that are most popular carry corrosive viruses.

I remember at Theological College being told that the Anglican Church had a Prayer Book and Lectionary (which sets out the week-by-week readings of the Scriptures) in order that ordinary worshippers did not have to depend on "the drip in the pulpit"! Through familiarity with the words of Scripture and the Liturgy, people could grow in Christ, however spiritually immature and dull the preacher was.

The same care has not gone into our hymn books. It is time that we examined everything we sing or say in the public worship. By "hymns" let us include our use of psalms, Christian songs, Gospel choruses, chants and responses.

What we sing can be a cause of many a conflict in congregations! There is an old French pun that gets lost in translation, "*One man's fish is another's poison*". When it comes to hymns, what some love, others find poisonous! Many of us cannot in conscience sing some of the ancient or modern words set to music. They are a problem to regular members and to visitors and enquirers.

I'm sure that we who lead Services often choose hymns because they have great tunes. It's the feel good factor. Joining lustily in singing together can help to build a sense of community.

An example of a hymn that needs examining is the popular, "*All hail the power of Jesus' name!*" What is a 21st century teenager to make of it? Or anyone who has not grown up using Christian metaphors? - With its imperative to "*extol the stem of Jesse's rod...Ye seed of Israel's chosen race*"; and its refrain from a bygone age, "*and crown Him Lord of all*". It must sound like gobbledegook. Today around the world only a tiny number of obscure kings/queens have any significant power, only nominal cosmetic, ceremonial prestige.

The celebration of The Feast of Christ the King is a modern invention, instituted by Pope Pius XI on 11 Dec 1925, when the last Sunday of October was allocated. From 1970 it has been kept on the last Sunday before Advent. Think about it! As a word

symbol trying to portray the role of Christ, the notion of "king" was already passé, obsolete by 1925 and even more clearly by 1970. Supporters of this anachronism will say the symbol "king" means 'more important than any human ruler'. However if symbolic words and actions need to be interpreted it is clearly an indication they are not connecting. No one with any real understanding of the changes that came with the 1914-18 World War, would chose the word 'king' as a viable symbol to express Christ's role.

Other examples from worship recently:

- (a) "**Hallelujah! Sing to Jesus.** *His the scepter, His the throne...*"
- (b) "**Crown Him with many crowns,** *the Lamb upon His throne... hail Him as thy chosen King...*"
- (c) "**Joy to the world ... let earth receive her King;**" and v.3 "*He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of His righteousness*"

- Oh, yeah! Tell that to the 10,000 who are dying today because we cosseted singers, numbered among the economically privileged, will not use our corporate capacity to improve methods of distribution of food, clean water and medical resources around the world. There are no signs that Christ "rules the world with righteousness". In honesty why must we sing such untrue hype. The phrase "[*God*] *makes the nations prove...*" is very questionable. God gives to nations and individuals the freedom to respond, or not to respond, to the Way of Christ.

There is a place for robust hymns. We can wholeheartedly adore and wonder and thank God for all we have received; for the challenging opportunities we have. We can unite in pledging ourselves in the service of Christ's Way of righteousness, peace, compassion and justice for all. **Music can be a help toward that commitment, but let's have done with shallow hymns that make us feel-good.**

My illustrations have been drawn from the almost obsessive use of the image of "king" in hymn books. There are, I think, more dangerous viruses we need to expunge.

Difficulties arise when the hymns chosen emphasize unduly one image or metaphor, ignoring the vast diversity to be found in Scripture. Or, when a hymn reinforces obsolete ideas, e.g. about the earth and the cosmos: "heaven" or God being 'up there', like the Carol, "**Love came down at Christmas**". Or, when hymns infer that for

forgiveness to take place there has to be “shedding of blood” - Or when a mixed congregation including enquirers is expected to stand and sing words which require them to affirm what is beyond their honest position; this can amount to psychological pressure and manipulation That was not the way of Jesus. Also there is still the over-use of exclusively ‘masculine language’, which people of both sexes find offensive.

Another problem today is the many people are not familiar with the Bible. So many hymns refer to ‘Israel’, ‘Zion’, ‘Jerusalem’ all of which carry very different connotations today. They speak about largely unknown persons or titles: ‘Abraham’, ‘the Lord Sabaoth’ (Lord of hosts or armies), ‘David’s royal Son’, ‘the Lamb that died’ etc. **Suffice to say, we need to start talking and pruning, to clarify what is to be sung and said.** If we do not, *St Paul* might well ask, “*If...outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your mind?*” (1 Corinthians 14:23) **Our task is to speak to each generation in words/symbols which are meaningful to them.**

I commend a creative initiative taken by a regular worshipper and Professor of Engineering. He and his family started writing a short critique of the hymns we had had the previous Sunday; it was published in the Parish Weekly News. It loosened people up to discuss and challenge the content of Services. This was an important step on the way to becoming a more “alive” congregation. It helped all of us to think through our understanding of God and how we are called to act in our own lives and in the world. How about readers of A T Newsletter writing their own critiques and where possible sharing them?

This article is designed to open up discussion about hymns and other aspects of Common Worship. Readers are invited to send their thoughts and any examples of hymns or songs they would recommend or others which contain questionable, misleading or inappropriate words to:

Clive H Norton, 7 Dulwich Rd., Chatswood, NSW
chnorton@bigpond.com

JOKES ANGLICANS TELL ONE ANOTHER

Have you heard the one about....

One day, the queues of people to get into heaven are so long and thick that the Angels guarding the Pearly Gates begin to panic. They fly off to see Jesus and ask for advice. Jesus suggests that potential entrants are graded. He will ask a question of everyone seeking entry, and depending on how they answer they will be placed either in the slow track, or granted immediate entry. The question Jesus proposes to use is the same question he once put to the disciples: ‘*Who do you say that I am?*’ The first person Jesus encounters at the gates is a

Methodist minister. Jesus asks her, ‘Who do you say that I am?’ The minister hesitates, and then answers. ‘Well, at Conference last year....’ But Jesus interrupts her immediately. ‘I am sorry’, he says, ‘but I asked you for your opinion, and not for your denominational line. Would you mind going to the back of the queue? Thank you.’ The next person to step forward is a Roman Catholic monk. Jesus poses the same question, to which the monk replies, ‘Well, our Pope says’ But Jesus again interrupts, and points out that he wanted the monk’s opinion, not the Pope’s. Third a Baptist minister approaches. His response to Jesus’ question is emphatic: ‘the Bible says...’ But Jesus again interrupts, and reminds the minister that he wanted his opinion, not his knowledge.

Finally an Anglican priest approaches. Jesus regards the minister somewhat quizzically, but puts the question to him nonetheless. The Anglican replies categorically: ‘You are the Christ – the Son of the living God.’ Jesus is slightly taken aback by such an ardent response from an Episcopalian, and is about to let the Anglican priest in, when the priest adds ‘But then again, on the other hand

Visit by Australian Scholar, Theologian and Feminist.

Val Webb (BA, Bsc (Hons), PhD), is an outstanding Australian.

However she has yet to receive honour in her own country (or at least in Sydney). Born and educated in Brisbane, she and her husband, Maurice, settled in the USA in 1971 when he joined the famous Mayo Clinic. Now semi-retired, they spend part of the year overseas and part in Australia.

Val is the author of “*Why We Are Equal: Introducing Feminist Theology*”, “*John’s Message: Good News for the New Millennium*” and “*Florence Nightingale: the Making of a Radical Theologian*”. Her theology books cover a wide area of interest with special reference to women’s ministry. She says her writing goal is to make contemporary religious thought accessible to thinking, often disenfranchised lay people; bringing the academy to the marketplace and the pew.

The Sydney Movement for the Ordination of Women

will sponsor:

A Public Meeting

Saturday 26th February, 2005

1.30 pm for 2.00 pm

Dr Val Webb’s address is titled:

“The Career and Consequences of Eve”

She will look at Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions of Eve and how these traditions have affected the way the Church has treated women.

**The meeting will be in All Saints Church Hall
 2 Ambrose Street, Hunters Hill.**

Cost \$10 Afternoon Tea included

Enquiries: Elaine [9747-3276]

Also on **February, 25th 2005**, Val Webb will speak at the Eremos Institute with special reference to her book, “*In Defence of Doubt: an invitation to Adventure*”. This meeting will be held at the **Uniting Church, Gordon**. Enquiries [9683-5096]

SYDNEY SYNOD - Some After Thoughts

In relative terms I am a newcomer to Synod. My first experience was in the time of Archbishop Goodhew when debate was rigorous, speakers were many and the end of the business paper was never reached.

Times have changed. The 2003 session reduced the time for debate. Synod 2004 shrank discussion even further to the extent that we were given an early mark and a night off!

One could expect that, with 35 resolutions passed, there was great opportunity for rigorous debate but 24 fell within the category of 'giving thanks' or 'noting' or 'recording appreciation' – all worthy but non-contentious. ***A further six matters were referred to Standing Committee.***

Before reviewing the remaining five motions generating any debate, remember that the 'hot issue' listed for the opening night, **Lay and Diaconal Administration of Holy Communion, was a late scratching.** In 2002, Synod had referred this contentious issue back to *Standing Committee* to determine if there was any *legal* way that Sydney Diocese could sanction Lay Presidency without consent of General Synod.

Not surprisingly to many of us, *Standing Committee* has not been able to report a legal solution. In 2003 Synod repealed section 10 of the 1662 Act of Uniformity. Despite being questioned as to the purpose of this repeal, none of its supporters could articulate a clear reason.

In August 2004, *Standing Committee* circulated a report of its resolve '***that no legislation for the authorisation of lay and diaconal administration of the Lord's Supper be promoted at this time***'. Rather it was proposed that Synod adopt a declaration to '***discourage any disciplinary action against those involved in such administration***'. The report noted that if a complaint were made against an incumbent, then due process of law would take its course. Before the withdrawal of this amazing proposal, the Rev'd Dr James McPherson, Rector St Mark's Granville, asked whether financial or legal assistance would be provided to an incumbent, the subject of such a charge. **Have no doubt; Lay Presidency will be back on the agenda next year in one form or another.**

What of the five remaining motions? Probably the most important was Garth Blake's suite of 'Child Protection' Resolutions. Fortunately, they

were passed unanimously. Although, rather surprisingly, Robert Tong recommended that they be referred back to *Standing Committee*. Garth and his team are to be congratulated for the effort they have put into developing the '*General Synod Children Protection Resolutions*'. Each parish is urged to review the *Safe Ministry Policy Statement* and *Faithfulness in Service*. **The Rev'd Chris Albany's resolution for *Angli care* to prepare a response to the Senate's *Inquiry Into Children in Institutional Care* was similar good sense..**

Despite *Standing Committee* not proceeding with any legislation for Lay Presidency, Dr Barry Newman felt compelled to move that the Diocese should be encouraged to 'vigorously deny' the view that endorsing lay administration would be equivalent to the consecration of an active homosexual. Not surprisingly, it was carried. I'm still trying to work it out.

The last two motions do cause concern:

Structural Change in Ministry.

Synod, despite objections from some 'Anglicans Together' members, has requested that the Archbishop, by licence broaden the range of ministries for which people may be made deacons and put in place whatever additional arrangements are necessary to create a permanent diaconate. Not all speakers against the motion were given the call to speak. This topic will need to return to Synod next year.

Use of the word 'Priest'.

You wouldn't believe how many people are totally confused by this word!

Our good friend from Christ Church St Laurence, ##,

In a most articulate and amusing manner explained that most people understood the word. But the good men and women of Synod resolved that the continued use of the word may be confusing and *asked Standing Committee* to report on the practicality of replacing the word with 'presbyter' or 'senior minister'. Any less confusing??? The only encouragement was that although the motion was carried, there was very strong opposition.

How to get more debate?

We submit motions and have people prepared to speak.

A final word of thanks to Michael Horsburgh, representative for St James' King Street who has retired from *Standing Committee* and Synod. Michael's valuable contributions will be missed.

Susan Hooke
St Peter's Cremorne

CHILD PROTECTION AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Background

In July 2001 the 12th General Synod passed a resolution requesting the Primate to establish a committee to consider the issue of child protection in the Church. The Child Protection Committee (Garth Blake S.C., Sydney (Chairperson); Helen Carrig, Adelaide; Bishop David Farrer, Wangaratta; Philip Gerber, Sydney; Marilyn Redlich, Brisbane) was established pursuant to this resolution.

By July 2001 there had been little internal and public attention given to the adequacy of the Church's systems for child protection. By October 2004 the situation had changed with the failure of the Church to adequately protect children having become widely known. In the intervening three years there had been criminal convictions, civil litigation, inquiries, church discipline and resignations. The cost had been high – personally for some individuals, financially for some dioceses and in reputational terms for the whole Church.

The Report of the Child Protection Committee

The work of the Child Protection Committee was limited to the issue of prevention of child abuse and involved extensive consultation throughout the Church. The Sexual Abuse Working Group and National Abuse Protocol Working Group established by the Standing Committee of General Synod considered the Church's response to sexual abuse.

In its report *Making Our Church Safe: A Programme For Action* the Child Protection Committee recommended a comprehensive uniform approach to child protection and the prevention of sexual misconduct within the Church; *comprehensive* because no single strategy would be effective and *uniform* because it is only through a common approach that the culture of the Church would be changed. Underpinning the report was the conviction that making the Church safe for children was not just a legal responsibility, but a matter of obedience to the commands of Christ (see Matthew 18:5-6).

The report contains 26 recommendations covering safe ministry policies and structures, recruitment, standards of behaviour, formation for pastoral ministry, safe ministry training, pastoral support for

the abused, pastoral support and supervision of abusers, ministry support for clergy, General Synod action, joint church action, government action, and Anglican Communion action. Critical to a national approach to child protection are the recommendations for the adoption by the General Synod of a *Safe Ministry Policy Statement*, the *Safe Ministry Check* (the national applicant and referee questionnaires for the selection of ordination candidates and for the screening of clergy and church workers who have contact with children in their ministry) and *Faithfulness in Service* (the national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers), and for the establishment of a Professional Standards Commission. This Report can be found online at: <http://www.anglican.org.au/gs2004.cfm?SID=32&SID=110>

The 13th General Synod

The General Synod in October 2004

overwhelmingly endorsed the recommendations of the Child Protection Committee. Four detailed resolutions, an apology to victims and a canon providing for the establishment of the Professional Standards Commission were passed. These resolutions and this apology can be found online at:

<http://www.anglican.org.au/gs2004.cfm?SID=34&SSID=122&PID=214>

Most debate focused on *Faithfulness in Service*. An amendment that would have resulted in its further consideration by the dioceses was defeated. A procedural motion to enable it to be amended (particularly clause 6.4 *You are to be chaste and not engage in sex outside of marriage*) was defeated. There was also some debate around the recommendation that screening for ordinands include a psycho-sexual assessment.

Canons providing for episcopal discipline and standards, the creation of a National Register of all clergy and certain church workers, as well as to facilitate the relinquishment of the exercise of, and the deposition from, Holy Orders, were also passed.

The Future

While a momentous step was taken at the recent General Synod, it really marks the beginning of a long and much harder process to change the culture of our Church. Implementation of the General Synod's recommendation in all dioceses will take ecclesiastical will and financial resources. Much is likely to depend on the work of various General

Synod Commissions, as well as the approach of the Bishop and Director of Professional Standards in each diocese. The Professional Standards Commission when established will have the responsibility of continuing the unfinished work of the Child Protection Committee. Already it has 13 different matters to consider including model systems, guidelines and curricula). The Doctrine, Liturgy and Ministry Commissions also have specific matters to deal with.

Whether the Church can rebuild trust with victims and their supporters, members of the Church and the wider community is likely to depend whether its commitment expressed at the General Synod is matched by ongoing sustained action. **All Anglicans must not rest until effective systems are in place to ensure that the Church becomes a safe place for everyone.**

*Garth Blake S.C.
Sydney Diocesan Representative on General Synod*

A D V E N T

*“Sing and rejoice, O daughter, Zion! For lo, I will come and dwell in your midst, says the Lord.”
Zechariah 2:10*

When we celebrate the advent of Jesus into our world, we remember the generosity of God. For Jesus strips himself; he leaves behind the glory of heaven and embraces our humanity in its fullness. He is our example for he teaches us not to be afraid of our humanity but to embrace it in our turn.

*Lavinia Byrne
The Rhythm of the Hours*

God of tenderness and compassion, open our hearts to reach out to all who have been created by you, giving them courage hope for peace. Amen

**give Courage
give Hope
give Peace**

**Give to the
Christmas Bowl**

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Living on the Edge

This was the title of Muriel Porter’s Address at the Anglicans Together Dinner.

She commenced her address as follows:

“People have been asking me whether I have recovered from General Synod. The answer is “no”. This was my seventh General Synod, and it was easily the worst, despite what some have claimed was a less obviously adversarial tone. That might be so, but for any with eyes to see, the underlying enmity was stronger than ever. It is our national church that has not recovered, and I am not sure it is going to do so in the short-term.”

It is not possible to do justice to the address by giving short quotations. However here is one paragraph.

“So although we had a clear majority in favour of women bishops in Perth this year – 61 per cent overall, a fairly healthy majority by most legislative standards – we lost. **Those of us who support women bishops are the “oppressed majority”, - Bishop Bruce Wilson’s famous phrase.** And we are in danger of losing more than just this bill. There is a more sinister undertone. In his address to Sydney synod this week, **Dr Jensen** called for Sydney theologians to give more energy to arguing the Sydney case against the ordination of women generally.”

The address can be read in full on the **Anglicans Together** website: www.anglicanstogether.org Although much of Muriel’s address followed in the vein of her opening, she concluded in this way.

“Throughout the 20 years of the women’s ordination struggle, one psalm has become central to my prayer. It is Psalm 126:

“ Turn again our fortunes, O Lord:

as the streams return to the dry south.

Those who sow in tears:

shall reap with songs of joy.

They that go out weeping, bearing the seed:

shall come again in gladness, bringing their sheaves with them.”

Yes, we may go out weeping, but go out we must, and we must carry the seed for the sowing.

Or in the words of the **Brian Wren** hymn (679 in Tis): *We will praise the grainy granite of the Law’s demands, and the Life-creating,*

Lover-God with wounded hands; we will spin your storyline to an empire in decline, and in exile or in honour, we will sing your song.”

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s

good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32)

Christmas message from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Anglican Communion

A few weeks ago, I took part in a discussion that involved a number of people working with children and young people who suffer from different forms of 'autism' - the kind of disorder that seems to cut people off from ordinary communication and shows itself in strange repetitive behaviours and sometimes in violent outbursts. We watched a video showing the work of one of the most experienced therapists in Britain, and then heard her talking about what she is trying to do with her methods.

The first thing we saw on the video was a young man, severely disturbed, beating his head against a wall, and then walking fast up and down the room, twisting and flicking a piece of string. The therapist's first response was strange: she began to twist and flick a piece of string as well. When the young man made a noise, so did she; when he began to do something different, like banging his hand on a table, she did the same.

The video showed what happened over two days. By the end of the two days, the boy had begun to smile at her and to respond when touched. A relation had been created. And what the therapist said about it was this: Autism arises when the brain senses too much material coming in, too much information; there is a feeling of panic; the mind has to regain control. And the best way of doing this is to close up on yourself and repeat actions that are familiar; do nothing new, and don't acknowledge anything coming from outside. But when the therapist gently echoes the actions and rhythms, the anxious and wounded mind of the autistic person sees that there is after all a link with the outside world that isn't threatening. Here is someone doing what I do; the world isn't just an unfamiliar place of terror and uncertainty. And when I do this, I can draw out an answer, an echo; I'm not powerless. And so relationship begins.

To see this sort of thing in action is intensely moving. This is real mental and spiritual healing at work. But it gives us a powerful image of what it is we remember at Christmas. Human beings are wrapped up in themselves. Because of that great primitive betrayal that we call the Fall of humanity, we are all afraid of God and the world and our real

selves in some degree. We can't cope with the light.

As John's gospel says, those who don't want to respond to God fear and run away from the light. But God acts to heal us, to bring us out of our isolation - which is as bizarre and self-destructive as that young man beating his head against the wall. And he does this in a way that is just like the therapist in the video. He does what we do; he is born, he grows up, he lives for many years a life that is ordinary and prosaic like ours - he works, he eats, he sleeps. Here is ultimate love, complete holiness, made real in a back street in a small town. And when he begins to do new and shocking things, to proclaim the Kingdom, to heal, to forgive, to die and rise again - well, we shouldn't panic and run away because we have learned that we can trust him. We know he speaks our language, he has responded to our actions and our words, he has echoed to us what we are like.

Christ does not save the world just by his death on the cross; we respond to that death because we know that here is love in human flesh, here is the creator's power and life in a shape like ours. As we read the gospels, we should think of God watching us moment by moment, mirroring back to us our human actions - our fears and our joys and our struggles - until he can at last reach out in the great gestures of the healing ministry and the cross. And at last we let ourselves be touched and changed.

That's what begins at Christmas. Not a doctor coming in with a needle or a surgeon with a knife, but a baby who has to learn how to be human by watching; only this baby is the eternal Word of God, who is watching and learning so that when he speaks God's transforming word we will be able to hear it in our own human language. He is God so that he has the freedom to heal, to be our 'therapist'. He is human so that he speaks in terms we can understand, in the suffering and delight of a humanity that he shares completely with us. And now we must let him touch us and tell us that there is a world outside our minds - our pride and fear and guilt. It is called the Kingdom of God.

May the blessing of Christ our incarnate King be with you all at this Season.

+Rowan Cantuar

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

(John 1:14)

THE WINDSOR REPORT

The Windsor Report, released in October 2004, will prove to be one of the most important and influential documents for the Anglican Communion since the declaration of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadralateral - 1886/1888.

The Report comes from the **Lambeth Commission on Communion**. This Commission was set up following two particular events that could have the potential to cause a very deep rift between various member dioceses of the Anglican Communion.

The Report, almost 100 pages in length, covers far more than the matters that triggered great division and bitterness between different Anglican dioceses ie the consecration in the Diocese of New Hampshire, USA of Gene Robinson (a priest living in an open and stable homosexual relationship) and the passing in the Diocese of New Westminster, Canada of an ordinance authorising public Rites for the Blessing of Same Sex Marriages.

The Chairman of the Commission, *the Archbishop of Armagh, Dr Robin Eames*, sets the out the broad scope of the Commissions work in the first sentence of the *Forward* to the Report:

“What do we believe is the will of God for the Anglican Communion?”

“That question has never been far from the minds of the members of the Lambeth Commission during the exacting work they have undertaken in the past year.”

The scope of the Report is extensive. It covers in depth many aspects of Anglicanism, past and

present.

The Mandate given by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Lambeth Commission is set out clearly in four paragraphs at the beginning. The fourth paragraph states: “In its deliberations, to take due account of the work already undertaken on the issues of communion by the Lambeth Conferences of 1988 and 1998, as well as the views expressed by the Primates of the Anglican Communion in the communiqués and pastoral letters arising from their meetings since 2000.”

The four Sections in the Report deal with:

- A: “The Purpose and Benefits of Communion;”**
 - B: “Fundamental Principles”;**
 - C: “Our Future Life Together”;**
 - D: “The Maintenance of Communion”.**
- Then follows four Appendices:
1. “Reflections on the Instruments of Unity”
 2. “Proposal for the Anglican Covenant”
 3. “Supporting documentation”
 4. “List of published works referred to in the Report”.

This document will be read, studied and appreciated by those within the Anglican Communion who have a deep love for a Church that has nurtured them in their Christian faith; a Church that over many centuries has risen above the imperfections of its members to be a witness to the love of Christ in the world.

In the conclusion the Report says:

“to turn from one another would be to turn away from the Cross’ and indeed from serving the world which God loves and for which Jesus Christ died.”

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