



ANGLICANS TOGETHER

NEWSLETTER No. 27 August 2005

ANGLICANS TOGETHER ONLINE: <www.anglicanstogether.org>

Chairman's Letter

Why do you belong to the Anglican Church?

There are many answers to that question as there are people who read this Newsletter, but ultimately the reason is God. Faith, ministry, Christianity, the church; it really is about God. It's not about you and me, not about what we believe or do or say, not about the causes to which we commit ourselves, the rituals in which we participate or the doctrines that we profess.

Why we belong is because of God and what God has done through the risen Lord Jesus. We may have lots of plans. Your parish may have a vision or mission statement. The mission of the church is simply to be the result of what God has done on the first Easter day. We, as individuals or as a denomination are not to focus on what we do for God, but what God has done for us. We are to celebrate the spirit that arises from what God did on Easter morning. Because of Easter we are given new life, forgiveness, and acceptance, no matter who we are or what we have done.

Today in the 21st century the church and the culture in which we exist are confused as to the church's identity and calling. Our culture is conditioned to respond to gimmickry, simple and easy answers to complex questions, and offers instant gratification. On the other hand, we have a deep longing for authenticity. The 21st century sees the main calling of the church as not a matter of more programs, more strategies for membership recruitment and more ways to meet people's needs.

It is a matter of authenticity. It is to bring light to age-old questions: Who are we? In what do we hope? What are we to do, and how shall we live?

The challenge that the Anglican church faces is that our unique gift to the world, the story of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen and the implications of that story, lies under a clutter of a very complex mixture of religious pluralism, market-driven realities and the symptoms of a church and culture both suffering from a hangover from the Constantinian takeover in AD 313. **Our future lies in our telling the story of the Resurrection from our Anglican perspective. Today the story when told transforms the listeners as it did transform the hearers on the very first Easter Day and has done ever since.**

The story comes to us in all its clarity when we gather for worship. The story tells us that God forgives. Our spouse, our fellow worker, our daughter may not be able to forgive us, but God does. Even when we cannot forgive ourselves, God forgives. **We participate in the continuing process of the history of salvation. The story and process that we are a part of is not our**

story but God's story. We are not to manipulate the hearer by putting conditions upon the one who comes into our midst to hear the story of salvation.

God's story tells us that we are inherently valuable, as we are at his very moment without condition. We do not have to improve ourselves. We may not be in charge of our lives but the story tells us that we are to live in the real world of uncertainty knowing that God can raise the dead. **The story that the church is to tell speaks of the rejected Christ being raised in glory.** If we trust

ANGLICANS TOGETHER ANNUAL DINNER – 2005

Friday, Evening 14th
October,

7.00 for 7.30 pm

St Alban's Parish Church Hall,
3 Pembroke Street, Epping

Speaker: The Rev'd Dr Andrew
McGowan,

Director, Trinity College
Theological School, Melbourne.

Cost (incl): \$30.00 pp

For Information: Tele. 02 9876 3362 –

Email: office@eppinganglicans.org.au

Cheques payable: **Anolicans Together**

in God we will see what mortals believe to be impossible happen and then the world will be astounded. We need to move away from the technical approaches to being the church, using the methods of the world, and focus upon the basic story of the church that we rehearse every time we celebrate the Christian family meal, the Eucharist.

The church to which Jesus calls us to enter is a wholly adaptive movement. Jesus did not come to meet our needs. **God sent Jesus into the world to raise up a community, the church, the Body of Christ, which exists to be a sign of God's redemptive activity in the world.** As Jesus said “... *I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.*”

At the end of the day, post-moderns, as we all are, do not know what is right for us. Our culture is not perfect. In many ways it is broken. From the outside many in our society seem to have it all together, but internally they are enduring lives of intense stress, meaninglessness and silent desperation. Many people come to church because something is missing. Our culture expects that if we remain in control of our lives we can heal ourselves. The stress under which many live is profound. The economic environment of our time places great stress on many people. A sense of community is sadly lacking in our highly mobile and fragmented culture. God offers membership of the community of the body of the risen and glorified Christ. This is true community.

Many in our culture exist in a vice made up of multiple issues and decisions that converge concerning their life. They are swamped. More and more we live in a society that demands perfection. We need to exist in a world that says that failure is not an option. I am led to believe that the four most frequently prescribed drugs in our society are for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, acid reflux and depression. The church's message is: **Jesus says, “Come to me all who are heavy laden and I will give you rest”.** By being a part of the story of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we can be healed, restored and given new life. This is what we should be offering to the people around about us. **This what we can offer as true Anglicans who display to the world our diversity that I believe reflects the universal acceptance that God offers all people through the crucified, risen and glorified Christ.**

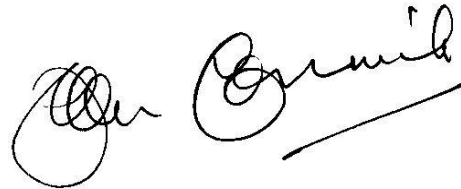
Led by the Spirit we are to tell the story of the resurrection, what God has done for all

people in Jesus Christ. The church's story is about new life not damnation and judgement. It is a new day. The story tells that God is a God of grace, love and mercy, a God who ushers forth joy and thanksgiving among his people. We are to discover the resurrected Christ again as Mary did in the garden. We are to bring new life out of the story of Jesus and under the guidance of God's Spirit, make our faith communities whose life together, passions and character are constructed from the authenticity and integrity of the story.¹

It is with great please that we welcome the Archbishop of Brisbane, Dr Phillip Aspinall, to the office of Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia. Archbishop Phillip will bring a youthful vitality and intelligence to a very taxing job. We wish him God's blessing and our support as he takes up this additional responsibility until the next General Synod in 2007. At that Synod the role and office of Primate will be reviewed.

Please make every effort to be present at our Annual Dinner at Saint Alban's Epping Hall on 14th October. Dr Andrew McGowan, the Director of the Trinity College Theological School in Melbourne will be the Guest Speaker. **Already nearly one hundred have booked. Places are strictly limited.**

May God's blessing surprise you in the most unexpected manner.



John Cornish

Rector, St Alban's Anglican Church, Epping

¹ For more information read the book, *A New and Right Spirit, Creating an authentic church in a consumer culture.* R Barger. The Alban Institute, Herdon Virginia, 2005

NOTICE

ANGLICANS TOGETHER SEEKS A PERSON TO HELP MAINTAIN ITS WEBSITE. THE TASK IS NOT ONEROUS, REQUIRING MATERIAL TO BE PLACED ON THE WEBSITE FROM TIME TO TIME, AND MAINTAINING A LIST OF MEMBERS. SOME EXPERIENCE IN UPDATING WEBSITES NECESSARY. The current administrator of the site will be available for support and assistance as long as required. For further information, e-mail Stuart Veitch: <nil_all@bigpond.com>.

A Sunday Quest

It was Whitsunday, 2005. My wife and I decided to attend our local church that meets in the community centre.

When we lived in an inner city suburb, Whitsunday - Pentecost - was a great occasion. We all wore something red, and processed into the service singing ‘Come Holy Ghost Our Souls Inspire’, or ‘Come Down O Love Divine’, or some well-known and rousing Pentecost hymn. And the sermon offered us examples of Holy Spirit at work in the world and in our lives.

For me, Pentecost has been the constant reminder that, after telling his disciples that they were to be witnesses to him at home and throughout the world, Jesus told them to ‘*stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high*’. (Luke 24:49)

So, off to our local congregation we went. We were delighted to see that a missionary couple supported by the congregation were to be there to tell us all about the work they were doing in a small European country. What better way to mark Pentecost!

You can imagine our extreme disappointment when the name of this Sunday - Pentecost or Whitsunday - was not once used. Nowhere was *Holy Spirit* mentioned nor given any credit for the excellent work our missionary couple were doing. None of the ‘songs’ contained much reference to *Holy Spirit*. The sermon - the first in a series from the Old Testament - was full of humour and empty of ways the *Holy Spirit* empowers us to obey the gospel imperatives outlined; and the absence of any benediction or blessing or sending us back into the world to serve our Lord and Master.

I am deeply saddened that the **Lectionary** has been abandoned and replaced by a few ‘hobby-horses’, resulting in a serious lack of balanced teaching and worship. **We Anglicans have a wonderful resource in our three-year Lectionary. We hear from the whole Bible every three years. Preachers can preach on the OT lesson, or the Epistle, or the Gospel, or the Psalm. Worshippers thus have the opportunity of a wonderful variety of scriptural input that encompasses every aspect of their daily lives.** I am also saddened when so many preachers begin with a prayer that begins with something like

Pentecost marks the launching of the whole Christian Mission.

‘Lord, as we listen to your word...’ Dear God! We’ve already heard Your Word read aloud! Is the sermon now a second Bible? It always reminds me of my one visit to Geneva. I went into the large once-Catholic church that Calvin used as his centre. There, right in the centre, is this long winding staircase that leads up to the pulpit - closer to the ceiling than to the floor. I imagined **John Calvin** up there preaching away while all the peasants stood with their faces pointed upwards, listening to the reformed infallibility.

I recall once attending a one-hour Communion Service squashed around a forty-minute sermon. When I was asked at the door if I had come to hear this one in a series of sermons prominently advertised on the outside notice board, I replied, ‘*No. I came to worship God.*’ ‘*But wasn’t the sermon an important one?*’ ‘*Maybe, but it is the word of man. I came to hear God speaking to me.*’ You can imagine the stunned look I received!

I am not for one moment denying the earnestness of the ‘de-Anglifyers’. God will use them, just as God uses all of us in spite of ourselves. I just wish that they would offer a more balanced ministry so that we can really be ‘**Anglicans Together**’.

In particular, please bring Holy Spirit back into our worship and preaching. After all, we are nothing without Holy Spirit’s inspiration and enabling.

The Reverend Ross Saunders

• * * * *

St James’ Church, Sydney held its latest ‘Anglo-Catholic Forum on Saturday 16 July 2005.

Over 200 hundred people attended to hear the **Reverend Dr Andrew McGowan**, Trinity College Theological School.

“**Andrew McGowan** traced the rise of an abstract or purely interior version of Christianity, removed from the historical and cultural specifics of sacramental life in particular.

He referred to 20th century writers **C S Lewis** and **Dietrich Bonhoeffer** who have sometimes been patron saints of this development. On closer examination their writings suggest even “mere” Christianity and “religionless” Christianity could be more sacramental than is often assumed.

Speaking about the quest for “fresh expressions” of Church such as those envisaged in the recent **Church of England report “Mission-shaped Church”**, **Dr McGowan** stated we cannot avoid the question of whether “Church” already has “cultural” content. There are distinctively Christian uses of time, space and objects that are not merely vehicles for ideas. He suggested we can embrace ‘**a blessedly, modestly, hopelessly religious Christianity**’.

COLLAR COMFORT

Some time ago I attended the Induction of a new Rector in a neighbouring parish. There were no instructions about robing beforehand, so I assumed, rightly, that no robes would be worn but even so I was a little surprised to find that I was the only clergyperson there wearing a clerical collar. **I felt a bit like the person who turns up at a wedding wearing a dinner suit when everyone else is wearing smart casual.** This was not the first time I had been in the minority when it came to clerical dress but a minority of one gets you wondering. It is good to question long held traditions so this is an attempt to think through why I persist in what is now an antiquated and unpopular practice in the Diocese.

I suspect the current abhorrence of wearing clerical dress is based on the view that it smacks of power or privilege. It marks you out and separates you from laypeople; it says *"I'm deserving of special respect."* If that were really the case then I would be opposed to it too. However, that has not been my experience.

I was ordained in 1987 and commenced work as a Curate at St. Mark's Darling Point with the late **Canon Jim Whild**. Jim was definitely old school and wore his clerical collar at all times. It was rumoured he wore it to bed but I think this may have been apocryphal. It was Jim's firm expectation that his curates would wear a collar too. In fact, I remember, soon after our arrival in the parish when a parish social function was about to be held Jim drew me aside and told me that for this function it would be permissible to wear mufti. Wearing a collar in the street was an interesting experience - I felt extremely uncomfortable at first and was convinced everyone was staring at me. This feeling gradually wore off and apart from being called *'Father'* by some shopkeepers and greeted by parishioners recognising the new curate most people took little notice. Being 'in uniform' gave me easy entree when visiting in hospitals and nursing homes and occasionally free admission to hospital car parks! (This quickly stopped).

Then we moved to the Parish of East Sydney where I was Assistant Minister to **John McKnight** and then **Bill Lawton**. Here I was free to wear what I chose, but habits instilled at Darling Point prevailed. The collar usually stayed on. But the streets of Darlinghurst proved very different to those of Edgecliff and Darling Point. Here I

encountered verbal abuse - one gentleman felt impelled to swear loudly and vehemently whenever I came into sight. I was often stopped and asked for money. **Walking past the strip clubs in Kings Cross on my way home from visiting patients at St. Luke's Hospital was always an interesting experience as the spruikers would often attempt to invite me in, notice the collar and then say, "Sorry Father".** On one occasion a dishevelled gentlemen, living on the streets accosted me outside the Commonwealth Bank. He asked me if I could work the Autobank for him as he needed money for food. With astonishing trust he gave me his keycard and pin number. I extracted the required money for him.

Darlinghurst taught me that people reacted to 'the collar' as an expression of their reaction to the Church.

If people had been hurt or disappointed by the Church then that was how they reacted to me. Others, like my friend with the

keycard, still thought a representative of the Church was a person to be trusted. I learnt that for some people a 'collar' marked me as 'available for advice on family problems or explanations of why I haven't been to church..' After two and a half years at *'never-a-dull-moment'* Darlinghurst, I was convinced wearing a **'collar' presented me with more ministry opportunities than it denied.** Yes, it marked me out, but rarely for special respect. The privileges it brought were those associated with showing compassion or service.

Moving to Paddington, a relatively small and defined community around Fiveways, I found wearing my 'collar' gave me a recognisable identity as the new Rector. This had obvious benefits as the Parish sought to improve its profile in the community. It also brought the occasional disadvantage. Knowing I was the local Anglican minister, the friendly Video Shop owner felt it his duty to monitor the type of video going into the rectory and would sometimes tell my children their choice of video was not suitable, much to their chagrin.

Everyone called to full-time Christian ministry has to work out their own style and way of operating. Wearing a collar may not be the best approach for everyone but **for me as an Anglican priest I'm comfortable with the collar and glad my old mentor, Jim Whild got me into the clerical 'habit'.**

Philip Bradford, Rector, Parish of Hunters Hill

A Prophet from Iona came in Word and Song

First a Question?

Which hymn-writer tops the list of entries for *Sources of Words* in *'Together in Song'* (Australian Hymn Book II)?

Yes - *Charles Wesley*. But do you know who comes in second?

It is *John Bell* of Scotland. Preacher, theologian, teacher, composer, collector, arranger, *John Bell* is all these and more. He is a well-known member of the modern-day Iona Community, situated on the Holy Island of Iona, originally established by St Columba. During May many people welcomed this itinerant member of the Iona Community. I was privileged to be able to take part in all of his presentations in Sydney.

The first occasion was when *John Bell* lead a group of pastoral care workers in an exploration of ministry with the elderly, focussing for inspiration on old people in the Bible - there are quite a few! The use of the Psalms was also considered in helping the elderly to tell and explore their life stories.

Pitt Street Uniting Church allowed John to share more personally in its "God and Me" series. He chose to speak on the theme "*where had he met God?*" Not surprisingly, one of the places was Holy Scripture. His comments were very engaging and worthy of repetition.

"In Scripture we hear the register of God's voice in different types of literature, and we listen, not in arrogance that we will understand Scripture with all its difficulties and questions, but so that we are engaged in a dialogue with our maker."

Other powerful places of encounter with God for John have been in 'the other'; in failure; significant women in his childhood and in the Incarnation.

John was then the Key-Note speaker at the *Uniting Church Worship Expo*, held at Turrumurra. Here he made the provocative observation that: 'God will not give our churches true worship unless people belong'.

"Are we a collection of strangers who come to be spiritually entertained? If so, where is the body of Christ? If the body is not a 'joined-up-body', we will have entertainment not worship."

John Bell was sympathetic to the difficulty of creating balanced parish worship, commenting that many people today come to church expecting to experience what can only be properly provided in either private devotions or the cathedral.

Paddington Uniting Church was the setting on a Sunday afternoon for John in his best known rôle as the leader of congregational song. Here we sang in 3, 4, 5 and 6! parts songs from Africa, Asia and the Americas, as well as songs he had composed.

Following a quick trip to Bathurst, John was guest speaker on Thursday May 12 at a packed Dinner at the Pennant Hills Golf Club. This was under the auspices of M.I.A.T. (Major Issues and Theology Centre Inc. - The Beecroft Forum). No singing on this occasion! John presented a scholarly address on the serious subject of the 'hidden humour in Holy Scripture'. His capacity to dig below the surface of the biblical text was shown to full advantage as he made a searching analysis of various stories in the Gospel of John, as well as numerous Old Testament passages.

John Bell is more than a great musician. He is a holy person who links us in spirit (through the Iona Community) to the Holy Island of Iona - to the pioneering Celtic spirit of Columba, his missionary monks, preachers, teachers, and worshippers in community.

Clive Watkins - Hunters Hill

(The Iona Community publishes varied liturgical resources as the 'Wild Goose Worship Group'. available in Australia through *Willow Connection* - Phone 9948 3957 or email info@willowconnection.com.au)

John Bell's music immediately reveals his celtic origin and his closeness to the spirit of Iona.

From *'Together in Song'* No. 418

*"She sits like a bird, brooding on the waters,
hovering on the chaos of the world's first day;
she sighs and she sings, mothering creation,
waiting to give birth to all the Word will say.*

*She wings over earth, resting where she wishes,
lighting close at hand or soaring through the skies;
She nests in the womb, welcoming each wonder,
Nourishing potential hidden to our eyes.*

*She dances in fire, startling her spectators,
waking tongues of ecstasy where dumbness reigned;
she weans and inspires all whose hearts are open,
nor can she be captured silenced or restrained.*

*For she is the Spirit, one with God in essence,
gifted by the Saviour in eternal love;
she is the key opening the scriptures.
enemy of apathy and heavenly dove."*

John L. Bell & Graham Maule

Ministering in Roseville

It was one of saddest phone calls I have received. Dear parishioners had lost their son aged 42 to suicide. Although having grown up in the church and attending a church school, the fact that he had a long term male partner meant he no longer felt welcome in church. His parents had confided in me three months earlier that their son was gay. They had always been concerned that people would stand in judgement on him and them.

The parish surrounded this lovely sad couple with great care and prayer. We had a moving service at St Andrew's; the deceased's partner giving the eulogy. It was probably the toughest funeral I have conducted: neither condoning nor condemning; proclaiming God's grace yet not denying his justice; and most of all, showing the Father's compassion for those in great pain.

A distraught lady rang one afternoon. "My husband's dying and I think we need your help". Her boys had attended CEBS years ago, and St Andrew's was her only point of contact for church. I visited John and Noelene that afternoon and shared with him how, by trusting Jesus, he could be certain of a welcome into His presence. We prayed - a prayer of repentance and trust. John died two months later, at peace and with great assurance.

The phone rang at 6 am. Phil had asked to see me. His wife Deirdre had always been at 8.30 a.m. Phil came at Christmas and Easter. I had been seeing him regularly for two months - once they found out he wasn't going to get better. But that morning was the first time he had asked to see me. His wife said, 'he wants to die a Christian'. I put my collar on and headed for Neringah hospital. He could barely talk, but what he wanted was clear. I reminded him of my favourite parable - that of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector which I had read to him the week before. He said after me 'God, have mercy on me a sinner'. He was at peace. His family and the Church family rejoiced. Two days later, he was with the Lord.

These are three of many stories - such stories are why I am in ministry.

I have been privileged to serve God's people at Roseville for 14 years. God has blessed us abundantly and I have so much to be thankful for.

The demography of the suburb was beginning to change when Susan and I arrived with our 9

month old Philip. Retirees were moving on. Young professionals were buying and renovating. What a step of faith those nominators and the Archbishop (Donald Robinson) had taken! I was just 32 years old ("younger than my youngest grandchild" commented one parishioner!). But the nominators had wanted someone one who could reach the new young families.

The three services were traditional when I arrived: 8 am - BCP Communion, 10 am - AAPB Morning Prayer and 7.15 pm Evening Prayer. I love tradition and liturgy, so fitted in well. Over time though, I began to see the need to reflect something of the culture of the day. We kept the traditional services, and introduced a new family service - still Anglican, but less formal but welcoming to families with young children.

Now we have one strongly liturgical, formal and traditional Service at 8.30 am, (often my favourite of the day), two family Services (10.15 am and 5 pm) and a vibrant evening Service full of young people. (We also revel in our Choral Evensong once a quarter!)

Our motto is '*Following Christ for good*', with an intended double *entendre* implying both 'for all time' and for the good of others and the ultimate good of the glory of God.

Our three foci at present are worship, service and mission. We pray that we might be a people who live to worship God in everything, serve one another and our community in sacrificial love and promote the gospel in all we do.

Mark Calder. Rector

www.rosevilleanglican.org

THE CABLE LECTURE

Friday 9 September 2005 - 6.30pm

St James' Church, King Street, Sydney.

The lecturer is **Justice Keith Mason AC**

"Believers in Court: Sydney Anglicans going to Law.

An historical and critical analysis of public litigation involving the Diocese of Sydney"

The lecture is free and all are welcome.

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**Anglicans
Together**

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God's Willing Workers

Women and religion in Australia.

Anne O'Brien, (UNSW Press, Sydney, 2005). rrp \$49.95;
Available at: normal booksellers

The story of religion in Australia seems to have dropped well below the academic horizon, but this wide-ranging study of women's engagement with mainstream churches since 1788 revives my hope that women's stories continue to be gathered and examined. *Anne O'Brien's* project is ambitious in its scope. She provides an extensive account of women teachers, home missionaries, deaconesses, mothers and carers, and more recently ordained clergy.

Readers of this Newsletter will no doubt have a special interest in the story of Anglican women. As a relic of 1970's feminism, and now among the older clergy in Melbourne, **I have become very aware that younger women priests have little knowledge of the struggle which still divides the Anglican Church nationally and, in some dioceses, internally.** *O'Brien* rightly tracks that story from the days when deaconesses worked in parishes alongside male clergy, or in social welfare ministries. She brings to light a little known reality that in **Gippsland Diocese** in the 1920's, an enlightened *Bishop Cranswick* considered deaconesses to be in holy orders and sanctioned them using the title 'reverend'. *Cranswick* had been a member of a committee that recommended to the **1920 Lambeth Conference of Bishops** that women be admitted to the same diaconate as men. **However in 1930 the Lambeth gathering declined to adopt this recommendation.** Readers will discover that *Cranswick* was still a man of his time and lauded the women for being dependable and never thrusting themselves forward unduly!

Ominously for Sydney, when the deaconesses met in conference there in the 1940's *Archbishop Mowll* declined to attend. He sent an archdeacon with instructions to chair every session, a humiliation and supervision of their activities these women had not experienced elsewhere in Australia.

The late *Mary Andrews* sought to raise the status and conditions of Sydney deaconesses in the 1960's but faced the prejudice of *Archbishop Gough* who set about making it harder to gain

full recognition by increasing the probation period after training.

The more recent history, which bears on the plight *Sydney Anglicans* still face, is told in Part IV. Having been part of some of this ferment, I found these chapters affirmed the value of those years and help to make sense of both the progress women have made and the continuing resistance to women's equality so endemic in parts of the Church but primarily in Sydney Diocese. ***O'Brien* documents the various activities of the 1970's - a time when many church women came of age and insisted on an adult voice in decision making.** It was a time of ecumenical energy as women joined one another across old denominational divides to disseminate the new feminist theology emerging from North America. I recall the packages of photocopied papers that assisted women (unskilled in theological categories) to learn for themselves the basics of biblical studies, and the unpacking of the patriarchal bias in historical theological formulae.

They were exciting times, when lasting change seemed imminent, but as *O'Brien* shows, opposition was real and increasingly serious. The unlikely alliance between *rural*

Anglo-Catholics and Sydney Evangelical, (still a strong relationship today) was first formed in those years as debates on the ordination of women dominated General Synod.

There is so much more in this extensive survey of women in the churches. This is a book to pick up and read in parts, as various chapters and sections tell the stories of nuns, deaconesses, missionaries, indigenous women and women's organisations such as the *Mother's Union* (of special interest to Anglicans). **It is a book from which to take heart.** I appreciate how bleak the future in Sydney can seem, but this survey sets the story of women in Sydney within an historical and feminist perspective. **That perspective takes the long view and *O'Brien* urges her readers to do likewise and remain hopeful that the church can learn to be inclusive and grow beyond hierarchy.** As one who attempts to live that hope, first forged in the hostile Sydney Diocese, I would urge *Anglicans Together* to take heart from *O'Brien's* comprehensive survey of the story to date.

(Revd Canon Dr) Colleen O'Reilly
Vicar, St Faith's Anglican Parish, Burwood, Vic.

Books, Media and Mission

In retirement, Sunday church crawling has made me more aware how vital it is for churches to be truly welcoming. *St Swithun's, Pymble, St James', King Street and St Luke's, Enmore* are among those that score well. (*And St Mary's, Waverley and St Philip's, Church Hill* have the best food!). Churches wanting to be more user-friendly could begin by studying *The Welcoming Church*, by Melbourne evangelical *Peter Corney* (\$8.95).

In my wanderings, the best 'reading of the Scriptures' was at *St Andrew's, Roseville* done by a young Moore College graduate, trained by *Clifford Warne*. *Warne's* (out of print) 'How to read the Bible aloud' is worth searching out. *Harry Cotter's Reading the Bible Aloud* is based on it - just \$2 from *Youthworks!*

Re **Scriptural preaching** - little is heard from the Prophets about social justice. The most important recent book in this field is **God's Politics** by distinguished US evangelical, *Jim Wallis*, associated with Sojourners (Harper 2005, \$45)

ON EVANGELISM –

For those wanting something more than our diocese's (hardly adequate or even elegant) "Mission Statement", there are **Secular Lives, Sacred Hearts - Alan Billings** (SPCK 2004, \$32.95) *Billings* criticises three current tendencies -

- (1) drawing a clear line between "the Church" and "the world";
- (2) assuming that God wants everyone to become an active church-member, and
- (3) regarding buildings as of secondary or no importance in sustaining spiritual life.

He contrasts three alternative principles -

- (1) recognizing that not all Christians are linked with the institutional Church,
- (2) seeing active Church membership as a particular vocation of some Christians for the sake of others, and
- (3) recognizing the vital role played by **sacred buildings** in sustaining the spiritual life of those who attend (and those who do not).

Three related and readable studies are - *Richard Thomas' Counting People In: Changing the way we think about membership and the Church* (SPCK \$38.95), *Philip Richter* (minister-sociologist) & *Leslie J. Francis* (priest-psychologist), **Gone but not Forgotten: Church Leaving and Returning**, (DLT \$38.50), *Alan Jamieson, A Churchless Faith: Faith*

journeys beyond evangelical, Pentecostal & charismatic churches - well researched and inexpensive. (\$NZ29.95 from O.C. Books, Dunedin).

ON WORSHIP

Paul F. Bradshaw **The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship** (OUP, 2nd ed., 2002, about \$20 from abebooks) shows how dubious are *some* of the dogmas of Dom Gregory Dix and how diverse Christian worship was in the early centuries. In this context I recommend three good works -

Neither Archaic nor Obsolete : The Language of Common Prayer by orthodox Anglicans, *Peter Toon* and *Louis R. Tarsitano* (Edgeways Books, only \$12) in defence of traditional liturgical language. Now more important than ever (alongside *good* contemporary language); "thou" is appropriate today in addressing the unique Reality of God.

Discovering the Book of Common Prayer, Vol.1 - a refreshing new commentary on the 1962 Canadian Prayer Book's Mattins and Evensong - introduced by *J.I. Packer* and novelist *P.D. James*.

(jointly published by the Canadian Prayer Book Society and the Church's official ABC Publishing, (2003 \$C19.95).

For those attending "modern" Communion Services, I commend **Praying the Eucharist : Prayers for personal use**, by *Richard Harries*, Bishop of Oxford (SPCK 2004, \$23.95). Used in "spare moments" before, during, or after the Communion Service, this could deepen devotion and foster reverence in what the Homily calls "the house and temple of God".

For background material: **Living the Eucharist : Affirming Catholicism and the Liturgy** (DLT 2001), its essayists include *Rowan Williams*, *Frances Young* and *David Stancliffe*.

Finally, *Colin Podmore's Aspects of Anglican Identity* (Church House Publishing, 15 pnds, 2005). *Podmore*, writes clearly and simply, about the origins and continuity of our Church, the "Anglican Communion" - Good reading!

John Bunyan, Campbelltown

Books listed above (except "Sacred Places") can be borrowed freely from the **Bishop John Colenso Library**, 7 Richard Avenue, Campbelltown (mail : *PO Box N109, Campbelltown North, NSW 2560* ; email : jrbpilgrim@hocnet.com.au).

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Reviewing “*The Chosen Ones*”

Chris McGillion’s *The Chosen Ones* is the most detailed book about what some still refer to as the Anglican Diocese of Sydney since publication of Cable & Judd’s *Sydney Anglicans* in 1987. The sub-titles show the purposes of the two books differ. McGillion’s has the grandiloquent handle “*The Politics of Salvation in the Anglican Church*”. Judd & Cable’s is the more prosaic but accurate “*A History of the Diocese*”. Two other points of difference should also be noted. Whereas Cable and Judd were both trained as historians, and Cable practised as one for the whole of his working life, McGillion is a journalist. Further, while Cable and Judd were both Anglicans (albeit of different traditions), McGillion is not. **It might be these matters have led to McGillion producing a book that is not as good as it might have been.**

To understand the point I am trying to make it is necessary to note the essential purposes of McGillion’s book. First, it is to trace the post-1990 events that culminated in the election of the current Archbishop of Sydney. Secondly, it is to examine events that pre- and post-date that election with a view to showing that we are witnessing “nothing less than a new Reformation” at the hands of those who now control the Diocese.

Perhaps because he is not an historian, McGillion fails to deal with a point of nomenclature that seems to me to be of critical importance. Judd & Cable demonstrate that during the episcopate of Wright (1909-33), the Sydney Diocese moved from having a liberal evangelical character to having a conservative evangelical character, and that change was cemented with the election of Mowll as Archbishop in 1934 and Hammond as Principal of Moore College. Both are correctly described as ‘conservative evangelicals’. **The point here is that McGillion uses the same religio-political label that was used to describe Mowll, Hammond and their fellow travellers to describe those who, he quite correctly contends, are creating a Diocese quite different from that over which they presided. The result is that the label that McGillion uses to describe those now in control of the Diocese will not do.**

Maybe because he is not an Anglican, McGillion does not attempt to define what ‘Anglicanism’ means. **The lack of such a definition is important, as it seems to me that there is not much point in cataloguing what has been happening in the Diocese since about 1990 without having an understanding of what we**

mean by the term ‘Anglicanism’. Without that understanding, it is not possible to understand or assess in qualitative terms what is currently occurring in the Diocese.

Because of its origins in Henry VIII’s break with Rome and the various religio-political compromises that have occurred since that time, it is not easy to define Anglicanism. This problem is complicated by the fact that Henry’s break and its sequelæ did not happen in a vacuum, but in the context of the Reformation. However, it seems to me that it is a mistake simply to equate ‘Anglicanism’ with all that came out of the Reformation, especially the more extreme ideas and doctrines.

I am not a theologian. Perhaps because he is not one either, McGillion does not stray much into this area. When the line of correct doctrine is crossed, we are in the territory of false teaching or heresy. In this context McGillion mentions, without really developing (pp. 116-17), Archbishop Carnley’s argument that a 1999 report of the Sydney

At the most basic level, ‘Anglicanism’ may be defined as a distinctive religious denomination. The question that then arises is: what are the characteristics that make ‘Anglicanism’ a distinctive denomination? Here, it seems to me that there are perhaps three threads that cannot be entirely separated: doctrine, liturgy and polity.

Doctrine Commission wrongly interpreted the relationship between the three persons of the Trinity.

As to polity, on one level there are the three orders of ministry: bishop, priest and deacon, each having clearly delineated functions. These delineated functions extend to liturgy. On another level there is what might be described as the geographical organization of parish, diocese and province. One of McGillion’s themes is the way in which a cart and four is being driven through these features of Anglicanism. So far as the threefold orders are concerned, there is the relentless pursuit of lay presidency. This intersects with liturgy. The parish structure is being subverted by church (or more accurately congregation) planting, and acceptance of parishes without property. At the diocesan level, bridgeheads are being established in other dioceses, both within and without the Province of New South Wales. Although, with refreshing candour, these congregations are not described as Anglican Churches. **Given that at the time when deliberations over a constitution for the Australian Church were taking place, Sydney wished the diocese to be the fundamental structure (in order to preserve what Mowll was pleased to call Sydney’s freedoms), there is some irony that this invasion of other dioceses is coming from Sydney.**

In this context it is worth noting that in speaking of **Archbishop Goodhew, Canon Ballantine-Jones** is reported as saying “*I perceive that Harry was trying to bring the Diocese back into the Anglican fold*” (p. 41). What inferences does this comment allow us to draw? Again (p. 69), the Canon is quoted thus, “*The threat is denominationalism, which was represented by Harry and his people.*” Comments of the current Archbishop are also quoted, “*The church is not a bank ... the branches are what matter, not the head office*”. And again, “*The local congregation is what matters, and authority and ministry must evolve to local congregations*” (both at p. 74). His Grace also offered this view as to the role of a bishop, “[*I*]’s a servant role, a servant’s role which involves the preaching of God’s word, and encouragement and strengthening of the local churches, which is really where the Church of God is to be found” (p. 95). Of the desire to mobilize 10% of Sydney’s population into Bible believing congregations we have the following, “[*W*]hat we’re talking about is small fellowship groups of people. Many of these fellowship groups may not even be conscious of belonging to something called the Anglican Church”. (p. 145). I’ll bet they wouldn’t. Moreover, I wonder whether members of these fellowship groups have ever experienced Anglican services so that they have a vehicle for comparison.

Further, in the *Weekend Australian Magazine* of 14-15 May, the Archbishop is quoted thus, “*I am an evangelist first and an Anglican second.*” There are layers of meaning in these remarks of a man, who, it must be admitted, was baptized in an Anglican church, confirmed in an Anglican church and consecrated in what was then recognizable as an Anglican cathedral.

For the most part **McGillion’s** book is chronological. While I found that his introductory historical sketch was not a competent attempt to digest secondary sources referred to in the bibliography, the treatment of more

recent events that drew on the secular and religious press and interviews with participants and observers of the events was significantly better. There is the odd typo. For example, on page 149 “whit” ought to be “wit”. **Notwithstanding these relatively minor criticisms and the more significant ones noted above, there is much that is worthwhile in McGillion’s book, and it is essential reading for those wishing to understand the present mayhem.**

David Galbraith, Parishioner, St Peter’s Cremorne, He holds the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Law from the UNSW for his thesis “Just Enough Religion to Make Us Hate – an Historico-Legal Study of The Red Book Case.”

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‘A cordial for drooping spirits’

History and Australian Anglicanism

Not the least of the problems confronting the present-day Anglican church in Australia is the fact that it has allowed theological disputation a larger place in its life than history. It is true that a number of clergy, starting with the Reverend Bertie Boyce in the early 20th century, endeavoured to interest the church in its past and since then valuable works on numerous aspects of Anglican history have been published by church leaders.

It was not until 2001, more than two centuries after the church arrived in Australia with the First Fleet, that the first comprehensive history of Australian Anglicanism (*Anglicanism in Australia: a history*), edited by the **Reverend Dr Bruce Kaye**, appeared.

One consequence of the failure of such works to materialise earlier is that generations of Australians have grown up with little or no knowledge of how their church developed and what contribution it made to Australian society. Nor has the church made any worthwhile attempt to ensure that the role of Anglicanism features in the school syllabus. Whereas in England the church is seen as a creative force that has done much to shape the nation, in Australia it has been pushed to one side, allowing mainstream historians to depict Australia largely as the product of secular forces.

One consequence of this neglect has been a weakening of the church’s capacity to challenge the views of those who nowadays depict it as being bent on suicide. Its popular image is of an institution riddled by seemingly irreconcilable differences and challenged, both by an extreme form of evangelicalism and by the growth of a liberal theology, recently trenchantly depicted by **Edward Norman** (*Anglican Difficulties: A New Syllabus of Errors*) as largely secular in inspiration. There is some truth in this view and there can be no doubt that the church in Australia, as well as elsewhere, does face serious problems that threaten its unity. Yet, as anyone familiar with the history of Anglicanism in Australia is aware, there is nothing new in these threats. One

has only to call to mind the vigorous and sometimes bitter disputes between evangelicals and ritualists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, or the sixty year struggle over the question of whether the Australian church should sever its legal ties with the English church, to realise that it is well accustomed to handling internal disputes.

Nor should one inflate the strength of the elements making for disunity. Here again the importance of adopting an historical

perspective becomes evident. Some time ago the distinguished historian of Australian Anglican, **David Hilliard**, cogently demonstrated (*Pacifica*, 11, 1998) how the forces making for unity have consistently proved stronger than those resulting in diversity.

Certainly it is the case that although schism has sometimes threatened, it has always been averted. **By and large Anglicans have found it possible to place loyalty to their church above attachment to party and throughout there have been many who reject the idea of party and treat issues on their merits.**

In this context it is important to remember that the Anglican church embodies cultural values as well as religious beliefs and it is the latter, not the former, that have been the major source of division.

For the greater part of its history in Australia the Church acted as a vehicle for the diffusion of values derived largely from its experiences in England. Members worked together to help build in Australia a nation founded on democratic principles and social justice. These principles are still dear to its heart and they underly its capacity to embrace the more recent emergence of a multi cultural society that seeks freedom from all forms of discrimination, particularly those relating to race and gender.

Originally staunchly Anglophile the Church has pushed its British heritage into the background and is now recognisably

From the standpoint of the present day the differences within the church may appear irreconcilable, but history suggests otherwise and points to the fact that Anglicans have a proven capacity for working their way through difficult problems and accommodating extremism.

Australian, thus mirroring and strengthening changes that have occurred in society. Anglicans may disagree among themselves on some features of these changes, but in general the church has worked together, thus strengthening the bonds of underlying unity.

Viewed solely in the perspective of the present day the Anglican Church may appear in turmoil as it wrestles with seemingly insurmountable differences associated with lay presidency, sexuality, and the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopacy. Those Anglicans who devote their energies solely to the present are, however, doing the church a grave disservice. All of the current issues need to be considered against the background of a church that has not only overcome formidable obstacles in the past, but has and still is, making a contribution to Australian society.

The Australian Church has a rich and quite fascinating history - not unmarked by blemishes. Knowledge of this history is important, not only to Anglicans, but also to any member of the community who seeks an understanding of how Australia has evolved.

History provides a means of helping the Church through its current difficulties. What above all needs to be kept in mind, is the fact that alongside disagreement has been an acceptance of

that diversity which has been a core feature of Anglicanism since the time of the Reformation. *Anglicans Together*, successor to a earlier Sydney based movements devoted to a similar cause, has rightly done much to affirm and promote belief in the via media. Perhaps the movement would accomplish even more for Anglicanism if it ensured that history, described by *Francis de Witt Batty*, the former Bishop of Newcastle as *'a cordial for drooping spirits'*, features more strongly in the church's life.

*Emeritus Professor Brian Fletcher
St Alban's Church, Epping*

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NEW ANGLICAN PRIMATE ANNOUNCED

The Most Reverend Phillip Aspinall, Archbishop of Brisbane has been elected Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia.

The 'Board of Electors of the Primate' comprising diocesan bishops, and representative clergy and lay members of the General Synod elected Archbishop Aspinall on the third ballot. The final ballot was between Archbishops Aspinall and Jensen.

Dr Aspinall will hold office for only two years - until the next meeting of General Synod in 2007. At that meeting, General Synod will consider a proposal for the position of Primate to be full-time. Phillip Aspinall was consecrated on 29 June 1998 to be Assistant Bishop in Adelaide. He served there until elected Archbishop of Brisbane in December 2001.

Born in Hobart in 1959, Phillip Aspinall began his working life as a computer programmer for the Tasmanian Education Department on a project developing the use of micro-computers to improve numeracy and literacy.

Before being made deacon in 1988, he worked with young people as Tasmanian Diocesan Field Officer for the Anglican Boys' Society. After being ordained priest in 1989, Phillip served in parishes in Launceston and Hobart, including Bridgewater-Gagebrook Special Area of Ministry - a large public housing estate.

In 1994 he was appointed Director of Anglicare, Tasmania. and then also Archdeacon for 'Church and Society' with oversight of all chaplains.

When Phillip Aspinall became Archbishop of Brisbane he was **faced with major issues of sexual abuse.** In replying recently to media questions he said "The Church must continue to put proper processes in place to deal with complaints, but beyond that it must be more **proactive in educating its clergy and its workers.**"

Archbishop Aspinall said that his first priority was "to work with Anglicans throughout the country to focus on mission issues, communicating the riches of the Anglican tradition and the good news of the Gospel".