



ANGLICANS TOGETHER

NEWSLETTER No. 18 June 2002

The Chair of Anglicans Together writes:

The subject of '*church planting*' is one that has given rise to much discussion within and without the Diocese of Sydney. This year our **Annual Dinner** will be an interesting evening with the Assistant Bishop of Newcastle, the Right Reverend Graeme Rutherford, addressing us on the subject of '*Planting Churches on the Central Coast*'. Bishop Rutherford has responsibility for the Central Coast region of the Diocese of Newcastle. He will be assisted in his presentation by the Reverend Mark Watson, who has recently been commissioned, by the Bishop of Newcastle, as the Deacon Assisting the Bishop on the Central Coast, with specific responsibility for the Northern Central Coast Anglican Mission.

Please make every effort to attend and invite as many of your friends and acquaintances that you feel would be interested in hearing about this subject. It would also be a good opportunity to introduce Anglicans Together to those Anglicans who are not yet members but are concerned for the future of the Anglican Church in this diocese.

For further details see the Invitation to the Dinner in this Newsletter.

Future of diversity in the Church in Sydney is an important subject. The training of clergy for parishes that want a priest or deacon, different to those that are normally trained at Moore College is integral to that diversity. I am pleased to announce that the Archbishop has accepted Mr Cliff Stratton as a candidate for ordination in this Diocese. Cliff is a Master of Arts in Spirituality from Santa Clara University, California, USA; has a Certificate for Theology Graduates, Oxford, and is studying for a Master in Theology at Oxford University, having completed Part 1. He has studied at Saint Stephen's House in Oxford for the last two years. He also has qualifications in science, teaching and management. In addition to all this, Cliff will be required to undertake one year's study at Moore College, beginning in July of this year.

This is an important development. I invite you to encourage others who may be seeking ordination and training at other theological colleges, to consider this process. I believe that this process may assure parishes, labelled 'stole parishes' by the Diocese, will be filled by clergy acceptable to both the Diocese and those parishes themselves.

Continue to support Anglicans Together. Spread the word about our existence and the important role we are seeking to play. The future of Anglicanism is at stake. Remember the words of Saint Teresa:

"God has no hands but our hands to do his work today;

He has no feet but our feet to lead others in his way;

He has no voice but our voice to tell others how he died; and,

He has no help but our help to lead them to his side."

John Cornish

ANGLICANS TOGETHER

invites you to

A DINNER

Theme:

"Planting Churches on the Central Coast"

Guest Speaker

Bishop Graeme Rutherford,
Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Newcastle

WEDNESDAY 7th AUGUST 7.00 for 7.30 pm

ST ALBAN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH HALL
3 Pembroke Street, EPPING
5 minutes from Railway Station

COST:(incl. GST): \$15.00 Per Person; (BYO Drinks)

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL FOR CATERING

RSVP: Monday 29th July -

Tele: 9876 3362 - email: office@eppinganglicans.org.au

Cheques payable **Anglicans Together**
C/- PO Box 79, EPPING NSW 1710

A Shop in the Crypt has been opened by **St James' Church, King Street, Sydney**. There are books specialising in Anglicanism, prayer and spirituality, as well as CDs and many gift lines. An interesting and worthwhile resource for all Anglicans.

Contact Gillian Anderson,
St James' Crypt Shop Manager 9238 0075.

St Andrew's Cathedral, George Street, Sydney also has an interesting and well stocked shop in the northern entrance to the Cathedral, off Sydney Square.

In Praise of Debate

by *Michael Horsburgh*

The full text of this inaugural article can be read on *Anglicans Together Online (ATO)* at www.anglicanstogether.org (follow the links).

At each Synod, the Anglican Church League holds a dinner with a speaker. The 2001 dinner was addressed by the *Rev'd Phillip Jensen*, Rector of St Matthias', Centennial Park. Mr Jensen is a leading former of Diocesan opinion and an active promoter of the dominant view. On this occasion he addressed church planting and the plight of evangelical clergy in hostile environments.

Our first commissioned paper by the *Rev'd Canon Dr James McPherson*, Rector of St Mark's, Granville, is an examination of the arguments Mr Jensen developed in his paper. (*See an Abstract in this Newsletter*)

In his inaugural Presidential Address to the 2001 Sydney Synod, our Archbishop, the *Most Rev'd Dr Peter Jensen*, touched on two significant themes. The first was the response of Christianity to the challenges of the modern and postmodern world. Dr Jensen distanced himself and, by implication, the Diocese, from two extremes of response, fundamentalism and liberalism.

In the middle ground that he sought to occupy, the Archbishop placed 'classical Christianity'. His claim deserves serious consideration. In the second half of 2002, the *Rev'd Dr Stephen Pickard* of St Mark's, Canberra, will present a paper examining the issues raised by the Archbishop in this part of his address.

In another part of his address the Archbishop discussed the debate on homosexuality at the General Synod meeting of 2001. He drew attention to differing views of the role of the reader in interpreting biblical texts. Thus the issue has more than passing interest. We hope to publish on this issue as well.

Other issues are also on the agenda. In the February 2002 issue of Southern Cross the *Rev'd Dr Robert Doyle* of Moore College discussed the doctrine of election, particularly insofar as it might be said to dampen our enthusiasm for evangelism. We hope to be able to contribute to this debate.

Whilst the promotion of debate should, in principle, not be contentious, why does Anglicans Together think a new medium is needed? Surely the Diocese is full of debate and discussion? From our point of view, however, the Diocese presents many obstacles to the kind of debate we have in mind.

The Synod of the Diocese of Sydney is often described as a forum in which there is lively debate. Members debate vigorously the issues before the synod: legislation, local policy and public statements. Some of the synod debates are, however, quite different and distinctive in character. These debates are often against an absent opponent.

A significant problem for theological debate within the Diocese is that most of the talk is carried on in code. The use of such codes allows those within the mainstream to identify each other and detect the unorthodox.

We launch the Electronic Journal **Anglicans Together Online (ATO)** in this context. We assert that there are respectable and alternative views to the dominant theology of the Diocese of Sydney. We assert that such alternative views are within the bounds of Christian orthodoxy as historically conceived. We know that many faithful members of the Diocese hold such views. This is their forum, but not theirs alone. It is open to all sides of the debate. It is open to outsiders as well as insiders. **We invite you to join us in promoting an alternative debate around the issues that arise in the Diocese of Sydney, the Anglican Church of Australia and the Anglican Communion.**

Anglicans Together

has launched an Electronic Journal
"Anglicans Together Online"
to stimulating debate on issues affecting
the Diocese of Sydney, in particular
and the Anglican Communion generally.

Visit www.anglicanstogether.org - follow the links.

For further information contact the Chair,
Anglicans Together, the Reverend John Cornish -
Telephone 9876 3362 or 0412 763 617 OR email
johncorn@zipworld.com.au

Building on a Rickety Foundation

by *The Revd Dr James McPherson,*
Rector St Mark's Church, Granville.

The Revd Phillip Jensen recently gave a "missionary" address to the Anglican Church League, titled "An Evangelical Agenda", which promoted and justified "church-planting". Mr Jensen's argument is that "the parish system" was working well, until damaged irreparably by the Tractarians, with the remedy to bypass those damaged parishes and restore authentic Anglicanism.

It is clear from his address that Mr Jensen is promoting competitive rather than collaborative church-planting. That is, this church-planting is not undertaken with the full knowledge and willing cooperation of an existing Anglican parish because the existing parish is judged to be defective and therefore should be challenged, exposed, and perhaps even extinguished, for the cause of the gospel.

I intend to show first that Mr Jensen's proposal bristles with practical difficulties; and second, that it is based on a theologically prejudiced reading of history. In the final section I examine Mr Jensen's address in the broader context of American fundamentalism, a milieu in which it sits comfortably for its defensiveness, its militancy, and its separatist tendency.

See www.anglicanstogether.org (PDF Format)

Women in Anglican Ministry:

Has the Job Description changed under Peter Jensen?

In the days of the 'Noble Deaconess' a woman could be employed by a parish to lead services, teach Scripture and Sunday school, run women's groups, organise special events, be a general factotum and an asset in every way.

In the event of the Rector becoming busy, indisposed or otherwise engaged she could also be found preaching at services, and her training included that aspect of ministry. There was no discussion about how capable women were in leadership or in preaching; just a tacit understanding that where there was a need. A deaconess could help in numerous ways, on pitiful pay. The nice thing about the era of Deaconesses was that there they were in parishes all over Sydney. They were appreciated, sought after and visible. They were all single. Such glaring inequalities existed in the conditions under which they worked that only now, in this changed climate,

has it occurred to any of us that those 'old days' could be called the 'good old days'.

The debates about changing to women deacons was initially no more controversial than those about allowing women to take their place on parish councils and be churchwardens of Parishes. But the debate about the priesting of women has been disastrous in Sydney. It has created a taboo in conservative parishes. Those women who were deaconed have found that the positions they hoped to fill have disappeared. Most Sydney parishes, who have wanted to employ priested clergy, are reluctant to employ women who may not be able to move to another priestly position after a few years. Moreover the theological 'debate' held in Sydney Synod has rewritten the conditions for women so that their leadership of group is now suspect, unless the group is exclusive to women only. Male headship is the new catchcry and so by definition to 'lead' one needs to be a man.

The Movement for the Ordination of Women was part of the debate from the seventies. However in the early years they misjudged their audience and introduced 'liberal feminist thought'. This was light years away from the thinking of many of the proponents of the priesting of women in this Diocese. They effectively walked into a trap and could be accused of abandoning a high respect for the authority of Scripture. Most deacons in Sydney would have nothing to do with this thinking. The basic issue remains the same though. What may women do in the Church,? What will be the limits placed upon them if they accept ordination in this Diocese?

Elaine Peterson, the present Convenor of MOW in Sydney, together with Judy Little, met with Archbishop Jensen to discuss with him his view of the future of women's ministry in the Diocese. He indicated proudly that many women are now training at Moore and that none of them wish to be ordained. He said that they plan to go back to their parishes and contribute there in an unpaid capacity. Furthermore he indicated that women will not be permitted to preach in church. The most alarming suggestion seems to have been that a person's position on the ordination of women is the defining issue of orthodoxy in this Diocese of Sydney. This is not a surprise. For a long time women at St. Matthias' have been warned about every aspect of their behaviour, dress and theology, and live under the shadow of fear that some aspect of these is not appropriate. Submissiveness, narrowly defined, has become the hallmark of the proper Christian woman. It provides a point of criticism and rebuke that is intended to tame and control. Leadership has become an unworthy ambition, and the

redefinition of what a woman can do in her life in church is, I suspect, not completed yet.

As things stand the encouragement for women to be deaconed has now been withdrawn, and men are encouraged to exercise leadership over women within the church and home. The apologetic used by the Islamic world about freedom for women within tight restraints amid a forest of rules is now being seen here in Sydney.

Rosemary Bradford



RETREATS

Two Retreats are being organised by St Alban's Parish, Epping.

A Women's Retreat will be held at St Joseph's Retreat Centre Kincumber. Weekend 15-17 November. Cost: \$130 for weekend. To be lead by the Reverend Val Tibbey. Bookings by 18 October. Information available from St Alban's Parish Office - Tele 9876 3362.

A Men's Retreat will be held at St Mary's Towers, Douglas Park. Cost: \$110 for weekend. Week-end 30th August- 1st September. Information available from St Alban's Parish Office

Tele 9876 3362;

Email: office@eppinganglicans.org.au

BOOKS

"Not Angels, but Anglicans: A History of Christianity in the British Isles."

Ed Henry Chadwick, Canterbury Press, 2000.
1-85311-352-2

Contributors to this outstanding book include Rowan Williams, Kenneth Stevenson, Diarmaid MacCulloch, Judith Maltby, David Edwards and

Margaret Bowker (an indication of the standard of scholarship).

Australia is barely mentioned, but we cannot possibly understand either the Australian Church or our Anglican faith without a knowledge of our Church's story in Britain. This work provides that. It is attractively presented and illustrated in a very readable fashion. One would love to see it read by every church leader, lay or cleric, in our Diocese.

Reviewed by JR Bunyan.

"Love's Redeeming Work: The Anglican Quest for Holiness".

Compiled by Geoffrey Rowell, Kenneth Stevenson and Rowan Williams, Oxford University Press, 2000.

0-19-122476-6

This marvellous collection of extracts from the writings of over 250 Anglicans since the Reformation will become a classic and an essential reference. (With almost 800 pages, to have included members of the pre-Reformation Church of England would have been impossible). Those chosen include many well-known, some almost forgotten, men and women, mostly European but some Asian, and with brief biographical notes accompanying each passage.

They include Bishop Ernest Burgmann, Archbishop Penman, Dr John Gaden and an Australian poet Gwen Harwood. The General Introduction especially relates to the diverse "traditions" of our Church. This is worth every cent!

Reviewed by JR Bunyan

"Hymns from the Heart" -

Composed by John Seddon, ThL DipRe DipMin

This collection of fifty hymns has just been published by John Seddon as he concludes almost 30 years of ministry at St Luke's Anglican Church, Mosman NSW.

They were written over more than 30 years; some for special occasions in the life of family or parish, others focussing on particular themes in the life of today's church. These are hymns that give new life to some well-loved old tunes, and to some newer ones. There are some especially effective hymns for children and young people.

Included is a splendid third verse for the National Anthem and an evocative Australia Day hymn set to 'Was lebet'. Direct, accessible language makes these hymns suitable for parishioners of all ages.

What makes these hymns special is that they come, as the title suggests, 'from the heart' - therefore they touch the heart with the unmistakable sincerity of lived experience. John's

gift for words may be described in the words of T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* -

" every phrase

Or sentence that is right (where every word is at home

Taking its place to support the others,

The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,

An easy commerce of the old and the new,

The common word exact without vulgarity,

The formal word precise but not pedantic,

the complete consort dancing together)"

This attractively-presented book will be a valuable resource for the contemporary parish.

Copies available from the Revd. John Seddon,

2 Langtree Close, Silverwater via Morisset, NSW 2264.

\$15.00 per copy.

Review by Jennifer Gribble, former Associate Professor, English, The University of Sydney

"Let us pray for the World - and act too."

A new book just out from 'Spirituality at St James'. What do religious organisations do to give "legs" to their prayers for the world? What is the state of the peoples we are called on to help? This book presents transcripts of talks by representatives of the Quakers, the Jews, the Bah-îls and the Council of Churches (NCCA)

Two informative papers, on the 'Drop the Debt' campaign, and Meeting Global Poverty.

Price: \$16.50 each (incl. GST) + postage/handling: \$3 for up to two books. Please enquire re terms for larger orders.

Enquiries and mail orders - contact St James' Church, King Street, Sydney.

A COURSE ON SPIRITUALITY

Macquarie Christian Studies Institute at Macquarie University is offering a course on Christian Spirituality:

'Knowing and Experiencing God'.

This introduction to the History and Disciplines of *Christian Spirituality* can be taken either for credit or audited at Macquarie University.

The two hour Lectures are from 7-9 pm every Tuesday. Beginning 30 July 2002 for 13 weeks.

Topics include the spirituality of David, Jesus, Monasticism, Celtic Spirituality, Francis of Assisi, Luther, C.S. Lewis, Bonhoeffer, Mother Teresa, journaling, lectio divina, prayer and meditation.

A weekend retreat will be held at the beautiful Chapel Hill Conference Centre in Berambing in the Blue Mountains

Lecturers: Stuart Piggin, Master of Robert Menzies College and author of 'Firestorm of the

Lord' and **Annie Cooper** who studied spirituality at Regent College, Vancouver.

You do not have to be a Macquarie University student to attend this Course. Fee for the Course is \$200.

Enquiries to: Jan McEvoy (9850 6133) or Stuart Piggin (9936 6026)

A FREE SYNOD FOR SYDNEY

by **The Revd Dr John Bunyan**

The "Memorialists" of the 1930's were concerned to maintain **traditional Anglican diversity within Sydney Diocese** (a diversity grounded not least in the Scriptures). This has been an aim of *various* groups since then, including Anglicans Together. It is hope that this achievement of diversity will be assisted by Anglicans Together with its new Web-site, Newsletter and Public Meetings - as it has been assisted also by other organisations, such as the Anglican Historical Society, RSCM, the Anglican Parishes Network and the Prayer Book Society.

However, such an achievement, in these more difficult days, will be very limited without more independent institutional bases. I have recently suggested one such base - **a free or Open Synod**. One precedent is the *Free Synod of the Church of Sweden* which gives a voice there today to conservatives in that Church.

I believe such an unofficial body need not deepen division nor provoke unnecessary confrontation. It could give a much more public voice to the growing number of church people in our Diocese - those who feel alienated or ignored, with few opportunities for their gifts to be used by the Diocese; those often repelled by the narrow creed preached and the un-Anglican forms of service found in many 'Anglican' places of worship. I would see a **Sydney Anglican Assembly** or perhaps *preferably* a **Sydney Anglican Convention**, led by a lay moderator and lay vice-moderator (I'd like "synod" and "president" but these terms might suggest unholy competition!). "Convention" was the term used by Bishop Selwyn in New Zealand in 1857 and is the term for *synods* in the US Episcopal Church. It would be a meeting sponsored by a *simple* Sydney Anglican Assembly (or Sydney Anglican Convention) *Association*, held annually (but not on diocesan property).

Its membership could be open to:

- (1) lay people (at least 2/3rds?) - not more than (say) 5 members from any one parish, elected at a parish meeting or else applying for membership, with up to another (say) ten lay persons invited on the basis of special expertise or experience; and
- (2) all ministers holding the Archbishop's Licence (including assistant curates, chaplains and retired

clergy) and all ministers resident in Sydney (say) for 5 years and holding the Archbishop's Authority or Permission to Officiate.

Members would be baptised and confirmed members of the Anglican Church or a Church in Communion, at least 16 years of age, *accepting the Aims of the Association*.

I suggest 10 aims including -

- * the upholding within the Diocese of Sydney of the historic comprehensiveness of the Anglican Church since the time of the Reformation...;
- * the seeking of recognition of the spiritual gifts of members of the Church and the enabling of them to be better used...;
- * the maintaining and strengthening of official and unofficial links between the people of the Diocese of Sydney and the wider Anglican Church of Australia and the Anglican Communion.

Other suggested aims might refer to the Church's Constitution and Canons, the deepening of the spiritual life, free and open discussion, worship, vocations, and, not least, evangelistic, pastoral and sacramental ministries among Sydney people.

The purpose of the Annual Meeting would be simply discussion in the Assembly (or Convention), passing of non-binding motions on matters relating to the work and well-being of our Church (a 2/3rds majority required?).

It could meet on a Friday evening for Holy Communion, Moderator's address and supper. Saturday would be devoted to discussion in the Assembly (in some cases with prior small-group discussion) of motions proposed. The Moderator and other officers could be elected annually. Publicising of the Meeting and of motions passed would be of great importance.

Such a simple Assembly or Convention could, I believe, serve a very good purpose and I should be pleased to provide more information to receive ideas and comments *and* to hear from anyone interested in forming such an Assembly.

*The Revd John Bunyan,
PO Box N109, Campbelltown North 2560*



Discerning God at work

Some thoughts from Clive H. Norton

Anglicans Together was formed ten years ago by two Open Meetings held in the Cathedral Chapter House on 10th April and 24th July 1992.

The purposes of Anglicans Together are set out in twelve 'Objects of Anglicans Together', that have become even more pertinent over the last decade.

We want to see our Diocese grasp the new opportunities of our times and move forward - but not to 'throw the baby out with the bath water'. We want to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The Revd A.J.A. Fraser was Rector of Haberfield during the years of the 1930s Great Depression. He ministered both to the spiritual and physical needs of people, and was not afraid to be involved with trade unionists and politicians on behalf of those who were suffering. He was also one of a group representing more than a quarter of the clergy of the Diocese who sixty-six years ago addressed 'A Memorial' to Archbishop Mowle in 1938 called 'A Plea for Liberty'. That was an earlier stage in the struggle to keep the Diocese open, inclusive, supportive of diversity, and part of the wider Anglican Church.

A.J.A. Fraser in 'The Challenge of Industrial Change' (booklet 1934) said, *"Men see in the Bible what they have been taught to see. When dealing with the Bible, there are folk like a certain botanist who is said to have gone through a wood in spring seeing nothing of the birds that filled the trees, but only the plants which he was interested in."*

That is an apt parable. By our human preoccupations we too often reduce the wonder of the Gospel that Jesus lived and taught. Jesus

spoke in evocative stories to indicate what living in 'the Kingdom of God' is like. Jesus did not give 'simple' answers that would score points in a Trivia Quiz or Multiple Choice exam. He challenged those listening to 'hear' and work it out for themselves.

We easily become obsessed with 'getting it right' - with the 'right words', the 'right theory' eg. of how the Atonement works, with re-defining 'what the church is', who is 'in' and who is 'out' of the church; with precedents and 'authorities'; with not doing anything that cannot be 'proved' conclusively from Scripture (like allowing women to be priests or lead men). I am puzzled about where the Holy Spirit is in this increasing trend to define and erect a closed system to defend God or the church from the secular world.

It makes me wonder whether the Diocese has not become tainted by Binitarianism, the belief that there are only two Persons in the Godhead instead of the three of the Trinity. Of course, the Holy Spirit is regularly invoked in prayer, but seldom seems to figure in the real world of sermons preached, theology taught and actual conduct before, during or after Synods. Meetings and strategies are meticulously planned to get certain outcomes. From what is said and not said the active influence of God in life seems to be restricted to the hearts and minds of Christian

believers or party-members. Is not God always working in and through everything, influencing and inspiring all of God's Creation - including non-believers, people of other faiths, secular movements and institutions, and even 'enemies'? A major task for us is to try to discern where and how the Spirit is at work, and to cooperate with God in the initiatives of others. The temptation is to retreat into our churchy box and lob grenades out onto the unbelieving world. Such spiritual discernment requires humbly listening and being open to God's Grace. It requires, NOT wading into the public arena with broad generalisations and condemnations.

For 70 years now the Diocese of Sydney has been pruning out diversity. Anglicans Together and many others, see diversity as strength and a gift of the Spirit. Let's drop the arrogant claims that any Diocese or group has 'the faith once delivered to the saints' and heed the wisdom of the Pharisee Gamaliel, when his religious institution was intent on stifling the apostles of Jesus (Acts 5:39), *'if it [this movement] is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them - in that case you may even be found fighting against God.'*

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ANGLICANS TOGETHER
APPLICATION FOR NEW OR RENEWED MEMBERSHIP

TO: Hon Treasurer, **Anglicans Together**, C/- P.O. Box 429, GLEBE NSW 2037.

- * INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP (New) - enclosed Subscription (for 12 months) **\$20** _____
- * INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP (Renewal) - enclosed Subscription (for 12 months) **\$20** _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode _____ Telephone _____

Synod Member (tick if applicable) _____ Parish of _____

- * PARISH MEMBERSHIP (for 12 months) **\$100** _____
Name of Parish: _____

Address/Tele No. _____

