

ISSUES

2009

MONDAY JULY 13

The Consultation Platform for Baptismal Ecclesiology

*The Theological Logic of
The North American Prayer Books*

The baptismal theology established in the Books of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada led inexorably to today's opportunity for baptized gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons to participate fully in the Body of Christ. Once the revised prayer books were in place, it is due to their theological logic that the North American Churches could not ignore the challenge to include all baptized people – including children, women, and persons of minority sexual orientations – in the full life of the church. It is important to realize that the reforms of inclusion were not conjured up simply for the sake of conformity to society or for any other instrument of imagination, but they came first and foremost out of the internal life of the church, a result of the inexorable logic of re-forming and conforming our theology and practice to what the Episcopal Church considered generative for the Christian Church.

Gradually those who had been excluded by category are being welcomed to participation in all of the sacraments, offices of governance, and holy orders. Within a generation the reach of the movement in the United States has encompassed a gay bishop who lives with a partner in a life long commitment, the reception of communion prior to confirmation by a majority of baptized children, and a female Presiding Bishop.

Joe Doss, APLM

Malcolm Boyd's Poem on Torture

We've mainstreamed torture, haven't we, Jesus?
Turned it into just another word in the clutter of

everyday news. Not something to work up any sweat about. It seems to me our worst sin is to torture people who are already in our power as prisoners. Like people in our prisons. Like Bobby Dellelo.

The 33 years you spent with us here, Jesus, including when we nailed you, still hasn't taught us what we need to know about love and justice, has it? Our prison system seems an agonizing and endless system of crucifixion. Why don't we wake up, Jesus? Prison torture is torture of flesh and blood beings. It's not unlike our torture of you when you dwelt among us.

Please convert us, Jesus, to work against prison torture. Change us into community organizers for peace, justice, nonviolence and your love. Thank you, Jesus.

Malcolm Boyd
Author of "Are You Running with
Me, Jesus?"
from Ed Rodman

OPEN MEETING
of **The Consultation**
in **Pacific Ballroom A** in the
Hilton Hotel
from **12:45 to 1:45**
on **Monday, July 13**

Lunchtime Speakers

(1:00pm) in the Consultation Exhibit Area (next to the food service area) Each day deputies, bishops, exhibitors and visitors are invited to hear riveting talks from cutting edge Episcopalians speaking Christ' message of Justice and Peace. We will also have some afternoon speakers at 2:00pm.

July 13th - Ms. Marge Christie: Women's activist in the Episcopal Church and founder of the Anglican Women's Empowerment (AWE) project which has increased the number of women observers from 2 to 80 to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Woman (UNCSW), thus to deepening our Church's commitment to worldwide reconciliation, right relationships and shared work for peace and justice.

2:00 pm Dianne Aid, ENEJ Forum on immigration, where are we now looking towards reform, where can congregations step in as prophetic voices. Hear from those in the church involved with grass roots work in immigrant communities around immigration reform and pastoral concerns for families separated by raids.

July 14th - The Rev. Dr. Katherine Ragsdale: Newly appointed President and Dean of the Episcopal Divinity School

2:00 pm The Rev. Juan Oliver, Ph.D. Fr. Oliver is a native of Puerto Rico and has worked extensively in the development of Latino Ministry in the dioceses of California, New Jersey and Long Island. He most recently directed the Latino Program in theology at General Seminary

July 15th – Rev. Wilma Jacobsen:

Recycle EVERYTHING

ISSUES 2009 has finally gotten the word of recycling in the Convention Center. Los Angeles has single stream recycling. This means that all material for recycling can be put in the designated containers or waste bins around the center, including the Exhibit Hall. Look for the two color cans with an emblem which says Recycle and you can deposit cans, paper, plastic, etc.

It's not like we enjoy it, but we now know where to put copies of ISSUES which don't find individual readers

ISSUES Staff

Fix our Broken Labor Laws

Most employees in our country would prefer working in a job where they had union representation. Some 60 million non-union U.S. workers said they would join a union if they could, based on research conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates in December 2006.

But when workers try to gain a voice on the job by forming a union, employers have routinely responded with intimidation, harassment and retaliation. According to a survey by Cornell University, private-sector employers illegally fire employees for union activity in at least 25 percent of union campaigns, and employees are forced to attend group anti-union presentations in 92 percent of such campaigns. Also, one study revealed that 79 percent of workers believe that workers are "very" or "somewhat" likely to be fired for trying to form a union.

Current penalties for violating employees' rights are so ineffective that companies often treat them as a cost of doing business. For example, the penalty for threatening the jobs of union organizers is to post a notice promising not to do it again. And it often takes years of legal wrangling to resolve these cases.

The Episcopal Church supports the right of employees to organize unions and to bargain collectively for better wages, hours and working conditions. Resolution D039 "Fix Our Broken Labor Laws" puts the Church on record as supporting labor law reform currently being considered by the Congress. It contains three main points:

1. Streamlining the process of recognition to make it easier for employees to organize
2. Increasing penalties for violations of employee rights
3. Providing for mediation and arbitration of first-time contracts

Please vote to adopt D039.

Tim Yeager, EPF

Traces of the Trade, another viewing

In 2006 at the Columbus General Convention we were privileged to see rough cuts of this important video about one Rhode Island family's discovery and exploration of the fact that an ancestor was one of the major figures in the Slave Trade. Tuesday evening at 7:00 the final version will be shown in the Anaheim Marriott Grand Ballroom, Salon F. In light of Convention's continuing work on slavery and reparations this is an important opportunity to deepen one's understanding.

While you are reading this, it is also important to know about ***Repairing the Breach: The Episcopal Church and Slavery Atonement***. This is effectively Part Two of Traces. It shows the way in which General Convention 2006 adopted Resolutions A-123 and A-127 on slavery and reparations and some reactions. Saturday afternoon there was a showing and a very valuable discussion. There is a good treatment of how the process unfolded after Columbus and a significant portion of the Service in Philadelphia on October 4, 2008. It is another valuable source of information and inspiration which would be useful in parishes and dioceses which are beginning their work on the subject. It is included on the Faith-based copies of the Traces DVD and is well worth your attention.

The Anglican Covenant v. The Anglican Constitution?

There seems to be a growing recognition that one of the problems with the effort to develop a Covenant is an assumption that we do not already have substantial and standing agreements between Anglicans that have gathered us, sustained us, and holds us together. In fact, those understandings are so well established that a growing voice is calling for recognition that they form an integral part of an existing Constitution, in the same way that many countries have unwritten constitutions, such as Canada and England.

Bishop Stacy Sauls, holding a Master's Degree in Canon Law from the Communion's most prestigious institution for such study, has recently written about these constitutional principles. His identification of the three principles that were established in the Elizabethan Settlement is surely acceptable by the Episcopal Church as a formulation of classical Anglicanism, such that they cannot be left out of, much less contradicted in, any covenant: autonomy, toleration, and lay participation in church governance.

Six bishops who are also licensed attorneys (including Bishop Sauls) produced a paper on the unwritten Anglican Constitution in which they specifically identified seven articles (or, if you prefer, classic traditions) that must be maintained. Instead, the signers were concerned that the Covenant might be used as a way to remove these principles and thus to change the very identity of the Anglican Communion. I doubt that most Episcopalians are categorically against the idea of a Covenant, but I believe that if the following, or any one of the following, is not contained in the proposed Covenant the Episcopal Church will, as it must, reject it:

(1) *The interlocking traditions concerning Anglican Comprehensiveness, the Via Media, and Lex Orandi Lex Credendi.* If the Anglican Communion reduces its comprehensiveness to a conforming set of confessional doctrines, and discounts the uniting force of worship, it will be a different church.

(2) *The authority of Scripture, Reason, and Tradition.* If the Anglican Communion decides to read scripture literally or impose conformity to a single interpretation without attempting objective regard for critical scholarship, it will be a different church.

(3) *Episcopal Oversight.* If bishops are reduced to signs either of division or of conformity, rather than unity, it will be a different church.

(4) *Baptismal Bonds and Community as Communion.* If the Anglican Communion decides to allow Christians to refuse to worship and share communion with fellow baptized Christians, including collegial bishops, it will be a different church.

(5) *Jurisdiction and the Diocese as the basic and local unit of the Church* in relation to congregations, the Province, and the Anglican Communion. If the Anglican Communion creates jurisdictions that cross provincial and diocesan boundaries in order to satisfy those within a given jurisdiction who disagree with the episcopal authority and the majority decisions of the duly constituted decision-making bodies of and for that jurisdiction, or if it allows extra-jurisdictional episcopal authority to be exercised at personal whim, it will be a different church.

(6) *Provincial Autonomy.* If the Anglican Communion creates a Communion-wide teaching office (magisterium) requiring and perhaps enforcing doctrinal conformity without regard to cultural and experiential differences among provinces, enabling it to overrule decisions duly made by a province, it will be a different church.

(7) *The Mission of the Church,* especially in terms of justice. If Anglicanism separates love of God from love of neighbor, separates spirituality, religious observance, and doctrinal adherence from the mission for justice, and separates vocation to creation from vocation to kingdom, it will be a different church.

Joe Morris Doss, APLM

Voices of Witness Africa, Copies of the DVD are available at the Integrity booth in the Exhibit Hall.

ISSUES 2009 can also be found on the web at www.theconsultation.org/ISSUES-2009. There is an ISSUES blog available at ISSUES-TheConsultation.blogspot.com and an RSS feed is available at that site. You are encouraged to add your comments to the blog on that same site. They will be moderated.

“un-Convention-al Quotations”

On Resolution A111, Economic Justice Ministry for and with Lower Income People: We are seeking to overcome and outmaneuver the "economic doom" brought upon us through traditional

economic practices. -- John Hooper, Episcopal Network for Economic Justice

On community loan funds and business social responsibility: The church serves as an "ethical prompting source" for investments in loan funds and administration mechanisms. -- Unknown, Committee for National and International Concerns

On why the church's inclusive disposition needs to be picketed, for the sake of patriotism: "You got a homosexual, Barney Frank, in charge of the Finance Committee, that's why our economy's gone to s**t!" -- Bob Bible (the guy with the cross on a chain and mohawk standing outside the Convention Center on Wednesday)

On Resolution A148: Necessary support for North Dakota, South Dakota, Alaska and Navajoland is crucial to continue funding because it supports a "non-colonial mix" for ministry and outreach. -- Unknown, Churches in Small Communities Committee

On technology and the church: It is innovative and important to combine media and prayer through "respect[ing] the media as a form of art." -- Eric Law, Kaleidascope Institute

On the church's role in the global economic crisis: Now is the time of opportunity, we want and need to be working towards an "economy of salvation." -- Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams

Allison Voglesong, EPF-YAP

Friends don't let friends miss ISSUES

ISSUES and other publications than the Convention Daily are restricted by Convention and City of Anaheim policy to be distributed in front of the main Convention Center entrance, on a table near that entrance, and in the Red Lion, our Hotel. Look for ISSUES in our hotel lobby, on the Convention Center literature table, on line at www.theconsultation.org or at The Consultation area in the exhibition hall. Or ask a friend.

Why propose a resolution on Torture

Ed Rodman, of EDS and the Consultation is presenting a draft resolution on the US government an torture. We will carry the resolution tomorrow. Here is his explanation which is being included today for your contemplation.

The United States must never again engage in torture. Torture is immoral, illegal and counterproductive. It causes profound and lasting

harm, especially to its victims but also to its perpetrators. It contradicts our nation's deepest values and corrupts the moral fabric of our society.

We call for an impartial, nonpartisan, and independent Commission of Inquiry. Its purpose should be to gather all the facts and make recommendations. It should ascertain the extent to which our interrogation practices have constituted torture and "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment". Understanding the causes, nature and scope of U.S.-sponsored torture is essential for preventing it in the future and eliminating it from our system without loopholes. U.S. law will determine the extent of any criminal culpability.

As people of faith, we know that brokenness can be healed – both in individual lives and in the life of the nation. All religions believe that redemption is possible. Learning the truth can set us on a path toward national healing and renewal.

The United States must never again allow itself to be driven by blinding fears and bitter resentments in responding to national tragedy. The use of torture only serves to undermine our security in a dangerous world.

Nothing less than the soul of our nation is at stake in confronting U.S.-sponsored torture and completely renouncing its use. Let the U.S. reaffirm its values by establishing a Commission of Inquiry.

Ed Rodman, EDS and the Consultation

His resolution will be included in Tuesday's edition.

An early thanks!!

Our friend and fellow editor, Mike Shirley has departed for home due to commitments in his life. Mike has shared in editing the previous editions, particularly using his extra-sharp proof-reading eyes to catch many of our potential flubs and has worked to get the kinks out of the distribution process. Some of us may see him during the summer, but it wouldn't be right to have him depart without an acknowledgment of his contributions.

Ron Miller, ISSUES Staff