

ISSUES

2009

TUESDAY JULY 14

The Consultation Platform for Baptismal Ecclesiology

Getting it Right

Though much has been accomplished at certain levels, for the most part, the designed effects of the Book of Common Prayer have been too little realized. At the last General Convention (Columbus) Louis Weil, Leonel Mitchell, and John Westerhoff, three of the scholars who were directly engaged in the writing of the BCP as passed in 1976 and 1979, appeared to testify that most of the Episcopal Church's parishes seemed to have missed the point. Parishes seem to have gotten the idea that the only significant change was in the use of "modern" language. With few exceptions, nothing significant was changed from the way the liturgies had been performed using the 1928 Prayer Book. The theological shifts in the present Prayer Book, as is evident in the dialogical language of the Eucharistic Prayer between creation theology and eschatological theology, seems to have gone unnoticed or been trivialized. Instead of relying on baptismal theology the church has returned to reliance on what may be termed "confirmation theology".

It is time to take another bite at the apple, time to offer an educational opportunity to the church to put the Book of Common Prayer into actual practice in the life of our worshiping communities. The Baptismal Consultation will produce educational opportunities beyond confirmation, minimal standards for membership, and new opportunities for effective worship in the culture of twenty-first century North America.

Joe Doss, APLM

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's message of Justice and Peace. We will also have some afternoon speakers at 2:00pm.

July 14th - The Rev. Dr. Katherine Ragsdale: Newly appointed President and Dean of the Episcopal Divinity School. Ragsdale is a 1997 graduate of EDS (D. Min.) and 1987 graduate of VTS (M. Div.). She comes to EDS from Political Research Associates, a progressive think tank. PRA's projects include: monitoring U.S. anti-terrorist policies to guard against infringement on immigrants' and citizens' civil liberties, and investigating anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim activity on college campuses. All the while she has served as vicar of St. David's Church in Pepperell, Massachusetts since 1996. Rev. Ragsdale's lunchtime topic is: "Theological Education For Us All In a Rapidly Changing World".

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. Fr. Oliver's new book, *Ripe Fields: The Promise and Challenge of Latino Ministry* has just been published by Church Publishing. Fr. Oliver's topic is the importance of Latino Ministry for the growth and development of the Episcopal Church and its witness to social justice

July 15th – Rev. Wilma Jacobsen: Born and educated in Cape Town, South Africa and currently Senior Associate at All Saints, Pasadena, CA.

The Consultation endorses

For Executive Council

Bishop – Pierre Whalon

Lay person: Sarah Dylan Breuer, Katie Sherrod,
Sandra D. Michael

Clergy: Silvestre Enrique Romero

For General Theological Seminary Trustees

Bishop: Stacy F. Sauls

Priest: T. James Kodera

Lay person: Marjorie Christie

Jesus Rocks—U2charist with Pavel Sfera,

Thursday, July 16, 7:30 pm

Hilton Anaheim – Pacific Ballrooms C & D

Offering to benefit Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation and ERD

***A Model Resolution for Religious
Institutions for Endorsing
U.S.-Sponsored Torture:
A Call for a Commission of Inquiry***

WHEREAS one of our core principles as _____ [insert faith or “people of faith”] is our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of all persons; and

Whereas torture violates the basic dignity of the human person, degrades everyone involved -- from policy-makers to perpetrators to victims -- and contradicts our nation’s most cherished values; and

Whereas torture is inherently wrong and immoral, because it is designed to break the human soul and the human body; and

Whereas reliable evidence available to the public has shown that the United States has engaged in torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment in response to the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001, including a report produced by the International Committee of the Red Cross and made known to the public in February of 2009 that concluded: “[T]he ill-treatment to which [detainees] were subjected while held in the CIA[Central Intelligence Agency of the United States] program, either singly or in combination, constituted torture.”; and

Whereas the full story on the scope, breadth and depth of U.S. sponsored torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment has yet to be fully revealed; and

Whereas public awareness, acknowledgment, and understanding of what the United States has done with respect to the use of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment are necessary in order to make sure that our nation never again engages in this conduct;

Therefore, be it resolved that the _____ (name of institution) endorses the following statement “U.S.-sponsored Torture Now: A Call for a Commission of Inquiry”:
Ed Rodman

Tuesday Night at the movies

7:00 **Traces of the Trade** in the Anaheim Marriott Grand Ballroom, Salon F.

8:00 **Renewal**, a look at environmental issues, Marriott Salons G & H

Support Education in Haiti

On Wednesday July 8th I testified on the resolution A036 about Haiti/International relations. From the second I read the resolution I felt it was important not only because I’m Haitian but I’m aware of the education in Haiti, and one of the EPF YAP staff was telling me about the National Association of the Episcopal Schools in the United States. How impressive is the work of this association.

Haiti is a poor country where only 20% of the population is well educated, so education is considered a luxury for many families. This is a sad situation because the only way we can hope for a better nation in the future is if we make sure that we create a balanced environment now for future leaders. What I mean by balanced environment is good health, strong education and peace.

So that’s why I really think it is a laudable idea if the General Convention urged the Association to partner with the Diocese of Haiti in supporting its 253 educational institutions serving over 80,000 Haitians students. And I also encourage the work of the EPF on non-violence training in Haiti, which will help the stability of all the positive work that people are doing to give hope for a better Haiti.

Nedgie Vixamar ,EPF-YAP
and the Diocese of Haiti.
Daily reflections on the EPF YAP blog -
epfyoungeadults.wordpress.com.

***Economic Justice: A Way to Embrace the
God of Life***

Central to Pauline theology are the categories of the principalities and powers. In biblical terms principalities and powers are idols. These categories are very helpful in understanding structural evil. Institutional racism in the United States is one such example of the principalities and powers; economic systems constructed and controlled by fallen human beings who often succumb to greed, power and self-preservation above all else are another example. We are presently living in a time in which the principalities and powers have failed us. We had written “In God We Trust” on our coins, but we had created idols out of our coins, putting our ultimate trust in our coins.

The present economic crisis is very real. People in our churches have lost jobs and houses, and have seen their retirement savings cut almost in half. On the international level the approximately one billion people living at the edge of survival, on

less than U.S. \$1 per day, can no longer pay the steep prices for even rice and beans. The economic crisis means death for many of them.

At this General Convention, the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice is urging the passage of six resolutions that address such issues as Economic Justice, Ministry with Lower Income and Working People, the Crisis of the International Financial System, and Immigration. The ENEJ is also supporting, with various other local church and worker organizations, a Prayer Vigil in solidarity with the Disney hotel workers on Tuesday, 14 July 2009 from 4:30 pm. to 6:00 pm. Your support of these resolutions and the Prayer Vigil is a concrete way to embrace the God of life.

Henry Atkins, Jr., for ENEJ
adapted from a longer article
by Dianne Aid



Susan Williams

Morse code in newsprint

There has been a great deal of justified angst about the proposal from the Episcopal Church communications director to eliminate Episcopal Life and the Episcopal Life printing partnerships with diocesan newspapers. Episcopal Life would be replaced with a glossy quarterly magazine with the same name. Episcopal Life online would continue.

The proposal was greeted by cries of outrage generated at least as much by the apparent lack of consultation with the Episcopal Life Board of Governors and the printing partners as by the proposal itself.

I confess to a great deal of affection for Episcopal Life as a monthly newspaper. It has been a literal lifeline for Episcopalians in Fort Worth.

Our former diocesan leadership worked for years to isolate the diocese from the larger Episcopal Church. One of the first things eliminated was Episcopal Life. There were many Episcopalians in Fort Worth who did not even know of its existence. Parishes were kept isolated from another and communication between parishes was actively discouraged. Parish directories were closely guarded. The bishop denounced Fort Worth Via Media as “thieves” when they began to share addresses out of their own members’ parish directories. No names or email addresses of diocesan leaders were available on the diocesan website.

So one of the ways those of us who intended to remain in the Episcopal Church found each other was with Episcopal Life. It became a signal in the dark from one Episcopalian to another-- a Morse code in newsprint from one freedom fighter to another.

The presence of a stack of Episcopal Life on a table in a parish hall signaled that this parish’s leadership was at least open to news about the Episcopal Church. Someone actually carrying a copy of Episcopal Life was a clear declaration of one’s intent, no matter one’s place on the progressive-moderate-conservative continuum.

Episcopal Life helped us locate one another and communicate with one another. I know of no better definition of a newspaper’s purpose.

Episcopal Life continues to play a vital role as we in Fort Worth work to reconnect with Episcopalians across our geographically large diocese and with the larger church. I understand the budgetary realities facing the staff at 815, but I do know that our work of reconnecting will be made more difficult if the monthly Episcopal Life goes away.

Katie Sherrod

Environmental Gathering Tonight

Mike Schut, Economic and Environmental Affairs Officer for the Episcopal Church, invites you to gather with those passionate about connecting faith and care for all creation. Tonight will be an excellent opportunity to meet with others at General Convention who are interested in environmental issues. We will also watch portions of *Renewal*, a documentary highlighting the work of religious-environmental activists of many

different faith traditions. *Renewal* inspirationally highlights the fight for environmental justice after Hurricane Katrina, efforts to bring healthier food to neighborhoods in Chicago, the work of Interfaith Power and Light, and many other stories. For more information and to watch a trailer, visit <http://renewalproject.net>.

We will watch one hour of the film, then have time for discussion, and especially provide an opportunity to network, develop friendships and get connected. We need to know one another!

Date: Tonight, July 14

Time: 8-10 PM

Location: Marriott Hotel Salons G and H

This event is hosted by Mike Schut, Economic and Environmental Affairs Officer for the Episcopal Church, with the support of the Episcopal Ecological Network and the EPF Young Adult Presence.

Anson Stewart, EPF YAP

The Church in the future will be like this

One of the interesting and notable characteristics of the hearings on rites for same-sex couples and ordination to all the orders for LGBT has been the number of young people testifying. In 2006 there were high school students in the Official Youth Presence, but this year there are far more articulate and confident young deputies who are speaking up for LGBT rights and LGBT rites.

Acceptance of LGBT is much more prevalent among young people. At this General Convention (according to Louie Crew's unofficial statistics) there are 25 deputies who are under thirty and another 51 who are thirty-something. Those who rose to testify in the hearings on marriage equality and B033 talked about trying to explain the church's position to their uncomprehending friends, and about their own reluctance to try to introduce friends to a church that did not fully welcome LGBT people.

Dean Shambaugh of St Luke's Cathedral in Portland, Maine testified that he has many LGBT couples and families in his congregation and 'their patience has run out'. One of the realities of the Episcopal Church is that we have not done an excellent job of attracting young people. The message of this convention is perfectly clear: LGBT inclusion is more important for younger people, and if we want a vibrant church tomorrow, we need to make sure we really welcome all of the baptized today.

There are interviews with young people available from the Episcopal Peace Fellowship on the blog of Bishop Marc Andrus (<http://bishopmarc.vox.com/library/posts/>) and IntegriTV (<http://sites.google.com/site/allthesacraments/Home/videos>) Day 5 includes interviews with youth leaders from Utah who are visiting Convention.

Caro Hall, Integrity

ENEJ presents Disney workers' stories

Gloria Pena, 26 Years, Housekeeper, Disneyland Hotel: "After working as a housekeeper all my life, I have been diagnosed with arthritis and osteoporosis. I continue to work at Disney because of my Union health insurance benefits. With Disney's proposal, I won't be able to afford health insurance. Why is Disney doing this to us? We can't let this happen!"

Russell Maitland, Bellman, Disneyland Hotel: "Many weeks I don't get 40 hours. With the company's proposal I am sure to become a 'Casual Regular' even though I have 10 years of seniority and will be sure to lose: Hours-- Health Benefits -- Holidays. This can cost me thousands of dollars every year, putting my family in danger."

Jean Bustamante, Server, 15 years, Yamabuki Restaurant, Paradise Pier Hotel: "I am a single mother of two children. My 7 year old son has cerebral palsy as well as many other disabilities. With the company's proposal of 'Casual Regular,' he would surely lose his much needed health insurance. As a 15 year employee, even when I work 6 days a week, I still don't average 30 hours. How can Disney deny how much this proposal will hurt my family?"

Dianne Aid, ENEJ

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 the blog, ISSUES-TheConsultation.blogspot.com or at The Consultation area in the exhibition hall. Or ask a friend.