

# VOICE OF INTEGRITY

Spring 2000



λ INTEGRITY

A witness of the lesbian and gay community in the Episcopal Church  
and of the Episcopal Church in the lesbian and gay community



# Board Revises Mission Statement

by the President, the Rev. Michael W. Hopkins

Meeting in Atlanta in March, the Integrity Board revised Integrity's Mission Statement to reflect a greater inclusivity. Our initial intention was simply to decide to add the words, "bisexual and transgender" to "lesbian and gay persons." The result proved extraordinarily awkward and it became clear to us that this awkwardness was as much a function of the statement as it was the addition of words to it. We started from scratch and came up with a new statement that will begin to appear on all Integrity publications:

## ***Statement***

Integrity's mission is to be a witness of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in the Episcopal Church and to the world.

We understand fully that in making the claim for "bisexual and transgender person" inclusivity in our organization and in the Church, we are raising issues with which some of our own members may be uncomfortable, much less the larger Church. Certainly a great deal of learning and sharing experience needs to occur on all levels. We particularly encourage local chapters to engage these issues. Integrity has, of course, quietly welcomed bisexual and transgender persons on a national level and in many chapters, but our silence in our official publications and statements has been a participation in the very hypocrisy we seek to overcome in the Church. Your national Board believes the time has come to end the silence, and we have done so in the above statement. May God bless us as we seek to live into it.

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# FROM THE EDITOR

by Doug Ball

Yes, Virginia, there is a VOICE OF INTEGRITY magazine although you have not see one through the winter months! And to all of you out there in Integrity land, you have my profuse apologies. Change is inevitable in all persons and organizations, and Integrity, Inc. and its primary communication vehicle, the VOICE, have seen their fair share in the last few months. However, this editor and the officers of the national organization continue to promise you a quality publication which will come to you each quarter of the year.



With that said, be sure to check out the articles from our President, the Rev. Michael Hopkins; not only does he write a fine, reflective piece for his usual column but there also is an article on the Board's creating a new mission statement recently at their

spring meeting in Atlanta and an article in which Michael introduces new board members.

For those of you who perceive that world and national events in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion are happening at a feverish pace, I have included several press releases and news announcements that may assist you in keeping up with fast-changing events. We have articles from the Western Region in this issue, written by our new interim Director of Communications, Scott Larsen, and I have included some articles and blurbs about the national Integrity organization and its doings.

As promised earlier, your next issue will arrive this summer and be a pre-General Convention issue.

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

by The Rev. Michael W. Hopkins

## Silence = Death

The above equation came out of the midst of the AIDS crisis and, of course, had (and continues to have) a very pointed and urgent

meaning related to that pandemic. As slogans go, however, it almost immediately took on a larger life and has had some staying power. Certainly this is because it has a deep resonance with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, a resonance that is as much spiritual as it is anything else.



Our Church leaders very much need to understand this deep resonance, especially these days as they themselves are tempted to find ways to make sexuality issues in particular, the hallowing of same-sex relationships "go away" into a greater silence.

"The closet" (as we call this seduction) is indeed a real temptation with its promise of safety and a

more controllable and focused space within which to live and work. We can testify that it is anything but these things. It is stultifying to the point of death.

I am a busy parish priest. I would like nothing better but to pay rapt attention to the mission and ministry of my own congregation, and, as a gay man, I fantasize about the day when the burden of the lack of full inclusion in the Church for me and those like me is lifted off my

back. If it happened tomorrow it wouldn't be soon enough. So I am sympathetic with Church leaders at all levels who long for us to give up our seemingly endless fight about things sexual. Come Lord Jesus!

But to slip back into silence is not the answer. To do so would be, for us, to embrace death itself, the death of our spirituality and ministry and simple sense of being, all of which is wrapped together with our sexuality. We are sometimes criticized for this level of integration, as if it were somehow demeaning for spirituality and sexuality to be life-giving partners in our lives. Yet it seems to me this integration is one of our great gifts to the Church, a gift we cannot share in silence, a gift which, in fact, silence turns into a burden.

Simply put, we will not be silent. Our "tactics" may not be exactly those of Act-Up, but we can no more stop being who we are than we can stop breathing. And we can no more stop calling the Church to treat us within the Church in the full spirit of the Gospel than we can stop being baptized.

Let us continue to speak the truth.  
Silence=Death.

by The Rev. Michael W. Hopkins

# Introducing...

The Rev. Canon Elizabeth Kaeton, Director of Programs

Canon Kaeton is no stranger to Integrity folk, but she is relatively new on the national Board of Integrity, and in a new role created by the Board, Director of Programs.

Elizabeth is Canon Missioner to the Oasis in the Diocese of Newark, a post she has held since 1995. Prior to that time she served parishes and ministries in Newark, Baltimore, and New England, having been ordained in the Diocese of Maine in 1986. She and her partner, Barbara, have raised three children.

The Board created the appointed position of Director of Programs in order to facilitate the development of ministry resources for local chapters and members. Elizabeth is leading this work, which should begin bearing fruit soon. One primary area of resource development the Board has targeted is Evangelism.

Mr. Scott W. Larsen, Interim Director of Communications The President has appointed Scott Larsen to fill the remainder of the term of the Rev. Patti Ackerman, who served as Integrity's Director of Communications over the past year and a half. Scott will be eligible for full appointment in the fall.

Larsen, 41, is a freelance journalist and is the first religion editor at the Seattle Gay News, a weekly gay-oriented tabloid, who developed that paper's religion page, 'Faith and Devotion', in 1999.

A cradle Episcopalian, Larsen has worked in public radio, edited a paper in North Idaho and was publisher and editor of a small-town monthly, *Our Neighborhood*, in Snohomish, WA. He attended Spokane Falls Community College, majoring in communications, and Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA.

He is a member of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association and president of the Seattle/Puget Sound Chapter of NLGJA; Board of Governors representative from Province 8 for the Episcopal Life newspaper,, member of the Episcopal Communicators as well as the Religion Newswriters Association,

A native of Pasco, WA., and the Diocese of Spokane, he also is a member of Integrity/Puget Sound Chapter, edits their bimonthly

newsletter, *Soundspirit*, as well as *Journalist*, the Seattle/Puget Sound Chapter of NLGJA's newsletter.

"I am looking forward to serving Integrity" said Larsen in a prepared statement for *Voice of Integrity* "and working with its members, not only at the national, but local chapter levels as well."

Larsen, with this issue of *Voice of Integrity*, is its new publisher and editor-in-chief. His first goal is to reestablish it as a timely, quarterly magazine.

"I want to thank my predecessor, the Rev, Patricia Ackerman, who redesigned the *Voice of Integrity* last year. My only hope is to build on her leadership in making *Voice of Integrity* an even better voice for all gays and lesbians in the Episcopal Church.'

by The Rev. Michael W. Hopkins

## A Communiqué from the Primates of the Anglican Communion

[For those of you who have not seen the statement by the Anglican primates when they met last month in Portugal, please take this opportunity to read it below, paying special attention to the issues that concern Integrity. Our Integrity president's response to this communiqué follows. The Editor]



Portugal - 28 March 2000

We, the Primates of the Anglican Communion and Moderators of the United Churches, meeting in Porto, Portugal between 22 and 29 March 2000, give thanks to God for the opportunity which we have enjoyed to pray together, to study scripture and to reflect on some of the major issues facing the world and our Communion at the beginning of

the new millennium. We have been enriched by a study of Ephesians led by David Ford, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University, which explored dimensions of the mystery of the Church and the holiness of our vocation and ministry.

We have been challenged and moved by the experiences of Primates from every Continent: From the Philippines where the Province's missionary strategy is to be "a Church for the unchurched", seeking to empower congregations and communities through programmes of development, human rights and peace building.

From Madagascar where the Church, struggling with a sense of isolation and with few material resources, is responding to human need in the wake of recent devastating cyclones.

From Sudan where the Archbishop Joseph Marona, soon to be enthroned, assumes leadership of a Church in a nation where war has left over 2,000,000 dead and a people deeply divided.

From Canada where the Church is facing a crisis in relations with indigenous people as a result of a heritage from past missionary policies of assimilation.

From Bangladesh, beset by poverty, and natural disasters, where the Church strives to be a sign of hope against hope and tirelessly seeks "to wash the feet of the nation in the humility of our Lord."

In every place, God is speaking to us and challenging us and the Church is seeking to respond in faith.

We recognize that as a Communion we face a huge challenge to become an effective force alongside other churches, faith communities and many people of goodwill to ensure that the sea-change in international development which has been achieved largely through the Jubilee 2000 campaign, is sustained and strengthened. During our meeting the Secretary of State for International Development in the British Government, the Right Honourable Clare Short, expressed her admiration for the churches' role in addressing these issues and her belief that they, with other faith communities, could form the core of an "international conspiracy" to insist on adherence to the UN targets to halve abject world poverty by 2015. We commit ourselves to this challenge.

We warmly received the Communiqué from the CAPA/World Bank Conference on the Alleviation of Poverty in Africa, held in Nairobi in March, and commend it for study and action in all our Provinces. We heard particular appeals for support from the Archbishops of Sudan and Burundi and wish also to express deep concern about the HIV/AIDS pandemic particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, and the failure of many governments to address this with the urgency it demands.

The search for world peace, justice and development of a healthy civil society is one in which we all have responsibilities and in which we can all engage. We look to one another to enter into that engagement with all the resources at our command.

A living Church conscious of its mission will always be seeking fresh ways of teaching the faith in a rapidly changing world. To develop a

strong sense of common mission in the Communion, and to avoid misunderstanding and division, we commit ourselves to engage in joint theological exploration. The proclamation of the Gospel must be pastorally and prophetically relevant to particular contexts on the one hand, and grounded in the wholeness of the truth which the Church throughout the ages has proclaimed on the other. We encourage the Archbishop of Canterbury, in collaboration with the Anglican Consultative Council and others, to support and encourage programmes at every level of the Church which deepen theological learning while nurturing a sense of unity and direction to the whole Church.

During our meeting two issues emerged as points of particular convergence. First, Primates reporting from around the world on their work and their hopes unanimously underlined the priority of evangelism for their provinces, together with a deep sense of their responsibility to and for the whole social environment in which they find themselves. All agreed in giving priority not simply to the proclamation of the gospel in words but to the 'holistic evangelism' that looks to transform the whole person.

Second, in a session on the use and authority of the Bible, there was an equally unanimous witness to the unique role of Holy Scripture in realizing such a transformation, and a shared acknowledgement of Scripture's decisive authority in the life of our Communion.

It was in this context that we approached the deep problems arising from conflicting teaching and practice in relation to sexual ethics in different Provinces or in parts of Provinces of the Communion.

For some, new life in Jesus Christ, the movement from darkness to light, necessarily involves the recognition that homosexuality is part of the brokenness of human life which needs to be healed by the power of the Gospel. Consequently, integrity and effectiveness in evangelism will require a clear stand on issues such as homosexuality. So, the differing views expressed or implied in the practice of other Provinces are experienced as actively hurtful to and undermining of mission.

For others, even if they share a traditional interpretation of Biblical ethics, this should not be identified as the question on which the Church's integrity depends. In their situations mission would be held back in a context where the Church is seen to be too concerned with sexual matters at the expense of other crucial issues.

We recognize the seriousness and sincerity behind both concerns, and the shared desire to be faithful to scripture and to strengthen our unity in Christ.

We believe that our call to faithfulness and unity makes demands on our life of interdependence in several ways:

We expect to see in one another a worshipping life, gratefully celebrating the sacraments given by the Lord Jesus and publicly proclaiming the Word of God in scripture.

We expect to see a passion to share the unique Good News of Jesus Christ.

We expect that, as we experience this worshipping life, we shall gratefully learn from each other aspects of the riches of Jesus Christ that no one local church could learn for itself in isolation.

We also expect that, when we see in each other what we believe to be failure or unfaithfulness, there will be freedom for plain speaking and "fraternal rebuke" (Mt 18.15ff; cf. Gal 2.11; Eph 4.25). We expect honesty and challenge from each other. But we also look for humility, self-examination and a willingness to preserve those bonds of communion that reflect the unity we share.

Within our ministry to each other and our learning from one another challenge and disagreement are not only made possible but can be life-giving because of our commitment to one another in the family of the Communion. As in any family, the assurance of love allows boldness of speech. We are conscious that we all stand together at the foot of the Cross of Jesus Christ, so we know that to turn away from each other would be to turn away from the Cross.

It is deeply difficult to balance the expectation of learning from each other with the expectation of honest challenge. But we recognize the freedom to call one another to account in the name of the Lord. This clearly poses the question of what would be sufficient grounds for a complete and definitive rupture of communion between Provinces in the Anglican family. We recognize that one Province's adoption of certain policies may result in severely impaired communion with some other Provinces or dioceses (as has already happened in relation to the ordination of women). We believe that the unity of the Communion as a whole still rests on the Lambeth Quadrilateral: the Holy Scriptures as the rule and standard of faith; the creeds of the undivided Church; the two Sacraments ordained by Christ himself and the historic episcopate.

Only a formal and public repudiation of this would place a diocese or Province outside the Anglican Communion. We believe that the disagreement over sexual ethics and differences in the reception of Lambeth Resolution I.10 that clearly exists within and among the Provinces does not necessarily amount to a complete and definitive rupture of communion.

However, it has caused very great concern in many parts of the Communion that the Lambeth Resolution I.10 which was overwhelmingly adopted by bishops at Lambeth '98 has been rejected in some dioceses of our Church. Such clear and public repudiation of those sections of the Resolution related to the public blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination of declared non-celibate homosexuals, and the declared intention of some dioceses to proceed with such actions, have come to threaten the unity of the communion in a profound way. We strongly urge such dioceses to weigh the effects of their actions, and to listen to the expressions of pain, anger and perplexity from other parts of the Communion. We urge all bishops to recognize that further public actions of the kind mentioned above strain the reality of mutual accountability in a global Communion, where what may seem obvious and appropriate in one context may be harmful and unacceptable in another.

Nevertheless, Resolution I.10 and the Section Report which accompanied it also calls on us all to listen to the experience of homosexuals in the Church. We endorse the Archbishop of Canterbury's concern in his letter to the bishops of the Communion (Feb 17th 2000) to encourage dialogue between those who hold that the Church's historic teaching on this matter is so clearly evident in scripture as to be fixed and final and those who are not convinced that the Bible speaks at all clearly to the questions currently before us. Such listening does not prejudge the outcome for the Church. But a careful, patient and pastoral process must be encouraged; it is not created by the demonising of opponents or by overheated, politicized and polarized language in our conflicts.

More than ever, in an age of rapid and abundant electronic communication, our engagement with each other must be of the highest quality. As Primates we have first and foremost the responsibility to foster this engagement and to exercise pastoral care and support towards each other. We were reminded in our Bible studies of the central spiritual importance of how we talk to each other - of "a holy communication". We intend our meeting, in the words of Archbishop Coggan, to be for thought, prayer and deep consultation. It is to help our mutual ministering of Christ's truth, so that witness, sharing of gifts, rebuke, conflict and encouragement may all alike be exercised freely in face-to-face relation, in the atmosphere of common prayer and Bible study, within what Professor David Ford described as defined by Jesus Christ.

It is precisely because of our commitment to this mutual and collegial ministry that we noted with deep concern the recent

consecrations in Singapore intended to provide extended episcopal oversight for Anglicans in the USA who, for various reasons, believe that their pastoral needs and theological commitments are not provided for by the Episcopal Church, and who consequently feel alienated from its life. Despite the strength and sincerity of these feelings, such action taken without appropriate consultation poses serious questions for the life of the Communion.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's letter of 17th February 2000 to the bishops of the Communion expresses a view that is endorsed by this meeting. We are grateful for this clear and decisive response. It is also our view that any issues of extended oversight should be fairly and openly dealt with within a Province's structures and procedures in the light of the Province's pastoral care for all its members. We believe that a rapprochement and reconciliation concerning any regularizing of the status of the bishops consecrated in Singapore must include discussion between the Primates of the three Provinces involved.

It is our firm hope that in future no steps, damaging to our mutual trust, will be taken. We have valued the opportunity in our meeting to discuss these issues openly and together. We are convinced that the practice of a collegial ministry requires that the Primates' Meeting become a more frequent occurrence, in which the challenges and opportunities of different Provinces can be discussed honestly and constructively, so that we may seek wisdom together.

We are grateful for the welcome we have received from Bishop Fernando Soares and the clergy and people of the Lusitanian Church which this year is celebrating 120 years since its constitutive synod. We have learnt of its courageous and sacrificial witness throughout years of isolation and difficulty. We rejoice in the signs of vibrant faith and life we have seen. We have been moved by the opportunities for worship and fellowship that we have shared. May God continue to bless the mission and ministry of this beloved part of the Anglican family in Portugal.

Porto, 28 March 2000

# Integrity Statement on Oporto Communique

Date: 03/30/2000

## Again, We're Not Going Back

At the end of the 1998 Lambeth Conference, Integrity issued a statement entitled, "We're Not Going Back." In reaction to the Communiqué from the Primates meeting in Portugal this week, we reiterate that statement.

The Communiqué states:

"We urge all bishops to recognize that further public actions [the public blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination of declared non-celibate homosexuals] strain the reality of mutual accountability in a global Communion, where what may seem obvious and appropriate in one context may be harmful and unacceptable in another."

In other contexts, Archbishop Carey and others have described these actions as "unilateral." Yet they continue to support and participate in "unilateral conversations" that exclude the very persons about whom they speak and make decisions. Such was the "conversation" at Lambeth 1998 and such was the "conversation" in Oporto. Such conversations have very little credibility, even when engaged in by those in authority.

We appreciate the need for the primates to meet together and share their experience of ministry in their various contexts, seeking mutual support and guidance. Such support and guidance in the Spirit of Christ is the glue of our Communion. Increasingly, however, we see a move toward centralized authority (under the guise of "accountability") and decision-making removed from the participation of the whole People of God. This development is deeply troubling and, we believe, is changing the very nature of our Communion. One of the larger conversations that desperately need to occur among us (and not just our bishops) is the very nature of the Church and the diversity of polity among the Provinces.

The issues that divide us in the Communion are many and significant, including very different ways of approaching such matters as divorce and remarriage, end-of-life issues, pastoral approaches to those with HIV/AIDS, the role of women in the Church, not to mention simply how we use and interpret Scripture.

Lesbian and gay persons are becoming scapegoats for this broad range of division. This state of affairs is simply sinful.

We express the following additional concerns about the Communiqué:

- In the statement above we note an obsession with "public" acts. We have always been suspicious that many in the Church would be happy if lesbian and gay Christians would simply go back into silence. This obsession betrays the truth that this issue has little to do with theology and much to do with cultural bias and protection of some mythic image of the Church.
- We also note the seeming assumption that "bishops" are totally responsible for these "public acts." In the American context, at least, this simply does not reflect the realities of our polity. In truth, bishops have not been making "unilateral actions," but participating, according to their order, in actions that reflect the outcome of public processes that involve the whole People of God.
- The descriptions of the different realities in the Church reflect either a fundamental ignorance of the supporters of the full inclusion of lesbian and gay Anglicans or a fundamental bias against it. The Communiqué states "For some, new life in Jesus Christ, the movement from darkness to light, necessarily involves the recognition that homosexuality is part of the brokenness of human life which needs to be healed by the power of the Gospel. . . . For others, even if they share a traditional interpretation of biblical ethics, this should not be identified as the question on which the Church's integrity depends."

Nowhere in the Communiqué is it even implied that a positive, affirming stance toward

homosexual persons and their loving relationships is also one of the responses made to the Gospel by faithful people. Such an omission speaks against the credibility of a group calling for more dialog.

The truth is that new life in Jesus Christ necessarily involves the recognition that lesbian and gay people are not only children of God, but

that their expression of love—and the ministry that is supported by that love—is a reflection of the ministry of Christ that brings healing to a broken world.

Our question is: When will the primates “recognize the seriousness and sincerity” of this understanding of our lives?

- We support the calls for dialog within the Communion, but we are frustrated by the lack of it. To date such dialog has either been limited exclusively to bishops or has involved carefully orchestrated meetings that allow for little actual exploration and encounter of real life and ministry. That is what we call for. The primates themselves say
- “We expect to see in one another a worshipping life, gratefully celebrating the sacraments given by the Lord Jesus and publicly proclaiming the Word of God in scripture. We expect to see a passion to share the unique good news of Jesus Christ. We expect that . . . we shall gratefully learn from each other aspects of the riches of Jesus Christ that no one local church could learn for itself in isolation. We also expect that, when we see in each other what we believe to be failure or unfaithfulness, there will be freedom for plain speaking and ‘fraternal rebuke.’ . . . But we also look for humility, self-examination, and a willingness to preserve those bonds of communion that reflect the unity we share.
- We say in the strongest way possible, we expect these things as well. We expect these things as well in the discernment of our lives and ministries. Having not had these expectations realized, we will begin to take our own responsibility for them. Since Lambeth we have been engaging in our own efforts to meet across provincial lines and we will step up these efforts. If true encounters meeting the above expectations will not come to us in the places of our ministries, we will go to the places of others to share our lives. We assume we will be welcome as brothers and sisters in Christ and fellow Anglicans.
- We call on the primates and all bishops of the church to work directly with us and our partners in the Alliance of Lesbian and Gay Anglicans (ALGA) to ensure that this dialog and encounter happens. We believe our future ability as a Church to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world depends on it.

by Dr. Louie Crew

## The Seattle 22: Report on an ECUSA Reconciliation Initiative

### PRESS RELEASE

As a sign of the growing reconciliation movement in the Episcopal Church twenty-two clergy and lay leaders met at St. Alban's Parish in Edmonds, Washington November 8 - 11. Gathering under the theme "Searching For Solutions To Potential Schism" the group, which brought together a sample of key conservative, moderate and liberal leaders in the church, began by sharing their spiritual journeys with each other. Who am I and what does Jesus mean to me? They discovered a common Christ-centered piety amongst themselves and exploded myths on all sides that had caused stereotyping and demonization of each other.



Building from that spiritual and relational foundation the group began to share their perspectives on the conflicts in the Episcopal Church which seem to revolve primarily around the issues of the uniqueness of Jesus, the approach

and interpretation of the bible, abortion and the blessing of same sex unions. At one point in the discussion The Reverend Ed Bacon of Pasadena, California challenged the group, "Let's talk about authority of scripture and learn what one another means. Let's get beyond the code words on both sides." Some members of the group insisted on seeing the conflict as identity-based involving two essential communities with differing world views in the same institutional structure. Others disagreed with this analysis as not capturing the complexity of the conflict. The Reverend Canon Elizabeth Kaeton of Maplewood, New Jersey said, "There are not two distinct sides to the crisis in the church; indeed the crisis is multidimensional and complex. There is no consistent uniform "conservative", "liberal" or "moderate" approach. One can hold a conservative position on one issue while being quite liberal on another." Bishop Cate Waynick of Indianapolis pointed out that many people in the pews don't even understand why the conflict is taking place. They are puzzled as to why these particular issues are ones that threaten to cause a schism in the Episcopal Church.

As trust began to develop among the participants the discussion became candid, awkward, and at times, even painful and sobering. Feelings of anger, mistrust, marginalization and victimization were vented by both conservatives and liberals. One Generation X

leader, The Reverend Beth Maynard of Fairhaven, Massachusetts said, "Infighting has consumed most of the energy of the church all my life, and done immeasurable damage to our public profile. As a postmodern watching this conflict from outside, I'm reminded of the over 50% of my generation who are children of divorce. This feels like growing up watching Mom and Dad fight about issues that were real to them, but to us often seemed not to be worth breaking up the family over. I want the family to stay together." The Reverend Brian Cox of Santa Barbara, California, one of the organizers of the event noted, "By Wednesday afternoon it was so painful I felt in total despair in terms of any hope of reconciliation in the Episcopal Church. The differences seemed too deep and too profound. Yet, that evening the Holy Spirit broke through and brought us to a new depth of understanding and respect for each other." Perhaps the spirit of Wednesday evening was best articulated by Dr. Louie Crew of East Orange, New Jersey, another organizer of the event, "Why can't we fight with each other and hold onto one another tightly knowing that each is precious and loved by God?"

When the group asked, "What does reconciliation in the Episcopal Church look like?" they were able to move from defending their different positions to exploring what unites them. Such proposals as the Jubilee Initiative, the Cox Initiative and the Mollegen Report were shared with the participants although not discussed by the group as a whole. By the final morning most participants were cautiously optimistic that reconciliation was possible if conservatives and liberals were prepared to treat each other's fears, concerns and interests as legitimate and in the words of Dr. Stephen Noll of Ambridge, Pennsylvania, "On the part of liberals, it involves a willingness to let the present formularies and liturgies stand and to

allow conservatives to follow their sense of godly conscience. For conservatives, it means a willingness to live in a radically pluralistic church without continually acting and speaking defensively, but mobilizing churches to spread the gospel." As the meeting drew to a close there was no definitive plan for reconciliation agreed upon by the group. Nonetheless there was a strong sense among those present that acts, not just statements, of reconciliation need to be moved to a much higher priority on everyone's agenda. The gathering in Seattle did not model a solution, but did model a process of living together in love, bound together by our love for Jesus Christ.

The Seattle 22 included: The Reverend Billy Alford of Augusta, Georgia, The Reverend Edwin Bacon of Pasadena, California, Mr. Roger Boltz of Dallas, Texas, Bishop Bill Burrill of Rochester, New York, The Reverend Paul Collins of Seattle, Washington, The Reverend F. Brian Cox of Santa Barbara, California, Dr. Louie Crew of East Orange, New Jersey, Bishop Robert Duncan of Pittsburgh,

Pennsylvania, The Reverend John Guernsey of Woodbridge, Virginia, The Reverend Canon Mary Hays of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, The Reverend Michael Hopkins of Greenbelt, Maryland, The Reverend Carolyn Jones of St. Louis, Missouri, The Reverend Canon Elizabeth Kaeton of Maplewood, New Jersey, The Reverend Richard Kew of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Bishop-Elect Edward Little from Bakersfield, California, The Reverend Beth Maynard of Fairhaven, Massachusetts, The Reverend Dorsey McConnell of Edmonds, Washington, Mr. Ted Mollegen of Glastonbury, Connecticut, Dr. Stephen Noll of Ambridge, Pennsylvania, The Reverend Jan Nunley of Providence, Rhode Island, Bishop Onell Soto of Birmingham, Alabama, Bishop Cate Waynick of Indianapolis, Indiana.

# New Commandment Task Force Announced

The New Commandment Task Force, a group designed to promote reconciliation in the Episcopal Church, has just been formed. The Task Force is chaired jointly by the Reverend Brian Cox, of Santa Barbara, California, and Dr. Louie Crew of Newark, New Jersey. The Task Force will promote reconciliation by (a) teaching the members of the Church to be more loving in their words and actions toward each other as they deal with their disagreements, and (b) conducting four regional reconciliation meetings designed to find reconciling ways to deal with the Church's internal disagreements over issues related to homosexuality. The group derives its name from two biblical passages:

- John 13:34ff: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
- John 15:12ff: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you."

The Presiding Bishop, the Most Reverend Frank T. Griswold, says that he welcomes this initiative, noting that, as the Catechism teaches, "the mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."

The Task Force will sponsor four regional meetings which will occur one each in May and June, plus two meetings in the early autumn. The task of the meetings will be twofold:

- To craft guidelines for all members of the Episcopal Church to follow in debates and discussions of potentially contentious topics. They will be proposed to apply not only in legislative sessions, but in all public debate and public pronouncements.
- To craft proposed legislation which will provide a safe place in the Church for those of differing theological persuasions, without compromising the direction given in Jesus's New Commandment.

The regional meetings do not themselves have any legislative authority, but it is hoped that the work produced by the meetings will be helpful to the diocesan and national legislative bodies of the Episcopal Church, including the national General Convention, which meets in July 2000 and triennially thereafter, and the legislative bodies of the Episcopal Church's 108 dioceses, which meet annually.

The concept of the New Commandment Task Force came out of the experience of "The Seattle 22," a group of 22 Episcopalian laity, clergy, and bishops who met in Seattle last November to work on the issue of "Searching For Solutions To Potential Schism." While that group did not complete the task of finding agreed-upon solutions, the Seattle 22

experience convinced the participants that better ways of dealing with serious disagreements were possible, because Episcopalians have far more in common than what is in dispute. The Seattle 22 effort was itself based on the reconciliation and group process principles taught by The Reconciliation Institute, located in Santa Barbara, CA. The Reconciliation Institute was founded by and is led by Rev. Cox.

Bishop Griswold said, "When disagreements are deeply felt, the evil one can take hold of our feelings, and use them in ways that created mistrust and division. No human being has an infallible perception of what God wants, and we are called to exhibit both humility and love as we strive to discern what our Lord is calling us to do. This team will help us learn to conduct ourselves in a more loving manner as we are doing that. I also believe that its regional meetings will contribute new ways of approaching our potentially divisive issues in a manner that will build up the body in love and minimize the sense of frustration and loss felt by those whose points of view are not fully realized." Bishop Griswold has offered some financial assistance to help the Task Force get started.

Other members of the Task Force are: The Rev. Ed Bacon, Rector of All Saints in Pasadena, CA; The Rev. Mary Hays, Canon Missioner of the Diocese of Pittsburgh; The Rev. Elizabeth Kaeton, Canon Missioner of the Diocese of Newark; The Rev. Richard Kew, The Anglican Forum for the Future; The Rev. Dorsey McConnell, Rector of St. Albans in Edmonds, WA. and Ted Mollegen, lay deputy from Connecticut.

The Task Force invites nominations for participation in the four regional meetings. Nominees should be Episcopalians who hold - or who have held within the last seven years -- elective church positions which involve them in regular Episcopal Church activities beyond their parishes. Nominations should contain the person's qualifying characteristics, including a statement as to whether the person has a heart for reconciliation, and identifying the required elective office(s). Nominees should also state whether they consider themselves to be liberal, conservative, or moderate on the subjects of (a) ordaining homosexuals who are in life-committed relationships and (b) the blessing of same-sex unions. Each regional meeting will be made up of approximately equal numbers of people from each of these three categories. Nominees should be willing to serve all four days of their particular meeting, and to pay their own travel and subsistence for the meeting. A very limited amount of money is available to assist with expenses for persons who cannot pay all of their own costs. Individuals may volunteer by nominating themselves. Letters of nomination addressing all of the particulars should be sent to by hard or electronic copy to:

New Commandment Task Force  
c/o A. T. Mollegen, Jr., [tmollegen@alliedr.com](mailto:tmollegen@alliedr.com)  
49 Millstone Road  
Glastonbury, CT 06033  
FAX 860-652-9356

In a jointly prepared statement, Cox and Crew said, "We hope to be of useful service to our Lord and our Church in this effort. We ask all church members to pray for this work, to treat each other with love, and to help the Church become better united in doing what God is calling the Episcopal Church to do."

According to the Book of Common Prayer, "The ministry of lay persons is to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church." (BCP page 855.) The Book of Common Prayer is part of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church.

The Northeast regional meeting will be held at Christ Church in Short Hills, NJ, May 15-19. The second regional meeting will take place June 12-16, and two more regional meetings will be held in the early autumn, at places yet to be determined. Members of the Task Force are also available to assist any dioceses that want to conduct diocesan meetings of a similar nature.

For more information, contact:  
The Rev Brian Cox, [briancox@rain.org](mailto:briancox@rain.org)  
Christ the King Episcopal Church  
Santa Barbara, CA 93111  
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(973)-395-1068

by Scott Larsen

## A new dean for a new time

It has been nearly five months since the Very Rev. Robert Vincent Taylor took over the reigns as dean of St. Mark's Cathedral. By all accounts this 'honeymoon' period between this new dean and Seattle is continuing.



As the first openly-gay dean selected to lead an Episcopal cathedral, (there have been other gay deans but they came out, or were outed, after being chosen as dean) Dean Taylor has received a plethora of media attention. Let alone attention from the Seattle civic community in making the Emerald City along with his partner, Andrew Esham, their new home.

In addition to this, St. Mark's has noted an increase in interest from gays and lesbians who want to find out about this cathedral church who tapped an openly-gay priest as its new spiritual leader. Maybe, some gays and lesbians say, that box-like, unfinished cathedral on the north end of Capitol Hill, can be my spiritual home too.

"There has been an array of positive welcomes" said Dean Taylor last year. "On my first Sunday (Nov. 28), sustained standing ovation at both the nine and the 11 o'clock services. Almost embarrassing...I was totally unprepared for that generosity of the welcome."

Before coming to St. Mark's Dean Taylor was rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Peekskill, N.Y. A contingent of members from St. Peter's came to Dean Taylor's February 12 installation, along with a St. Peter's banner which included diversity like people of color and GLBT people -as part of its mission.

The hiring of Dean Taylor has had other positive results as well. St. Mark's stewardship campaign last fall saw pledges increase to an unheard of 45 percent from the year before. And while St. Mark's isn't tracking the number of gays and lesbians who are members, people privately have said the cathedral has been getting new members and interest from the gay community.

But the biggest challenge facing this 41-year old native from South Africa may be this: Finding his stride.

Dean Taylor is in big demand with meetings, parties, functions and receptions. It took this reporter until December to finally have a one-to-one interview with Dean Taylor even though the request was made in August. It may have something to do with an individual or individuals at St. Mark's trying to control his schedule. Or that Taylor HAS been very busy. Like spending 11 nights in a row attending to cathedral work and Episcopal Church functions instead of being at home.

Don't play up the gay angle...

One unresolved issue with St. Mark's with the media is how they play the gay angle. When St. Mark's circulated its press release announcing the cathedral had hired a gay priest as its new dean, St. Mark's didn't mind all the media attention. However, when a reporter would ask about Taylor's sexual orientation, more times than not, they were told to stop focusing so much on the gay angle.

Even Dean Taylor addressed the issue last August stating when he first came to the U.S. he was known as the 'South African priest.' "Now I am known as the gay priest" he said.

"I hope the media will soon move beyond (covering my sexual orientation)" said Dean Taylor last year in a Seattle Gay News interview. "Certainly, if they want to talk about my sexual orientation it will be a fairly uninteresting conversation. He added he would love to have conversations around civic issues, ethics and the Christian Church, race and cultural differences.

If Central Casting...

Lawrence Greene, treasurer of St. Mark's, feels Dean Taylor's honeymoon period with the St. Mark's community will last at least a year.

The way Dean Taylor is still in demand in and around St. Mark's and Seattle the one year anniversary may continue after his Nov. anniversary date.

If Central Casting wanted to cast someone as dean of an Episcopal cathedral they might have looked to Dean Taylor. The telekinetic and personable dean talks in a slightly clipped accent where his A's could be mistaken for a Harvard accent rather than from his native South Africa.

Last December, Dean Taylor told the good and the bad when asked what attributes people compliment or criticize him.

"People talk about me in terms of both leadership and teaching. They talk about me healing and reconciling," he said. For a negative, he offered his tendency "to be impatient. I really want people to move along in their journey. (But) I know we only all do it at our own pace."

Three highly-qualified candidates...

The Search Committee of St. Mark's last year came up with three highly qualified candidates as nominees for dean to replace the Very Rev. Fredrick Northup. Northup had been dean for over eight years, but resigned last year and moved to Atlanta with his wife.

Of the three dean candidates, Dean Taylor, then rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Peekskill, N.Y., is said to have qualities people on the search committee felt St. Mark's needed as it readies for the new millennium: a more pastoral dean willing to challenge the members of St. Mark's, around 1,800, who attend the unfinished 1929-era cathedral. And a spiritual leader who will help his congregation look beyond the environs of Capitol Hill, Seattle, or even the United States.

"Robert has brought a renewed sense of vigor at the cathedral" said Scott Webster, a parishioner at St. Mark's. And a "vision which for a variety of reasons weren't as focused before he came" to Seattle.

"Dean Taylor has the intelligence and sensitivity" said Webster, a 42-year-old gay man. "And he asks us the big questions to see whether we are content to stay in the box or search for a deeper understanding of God."

On March 31, Dean Taylor attended a St. Aelred's observance (patron saint of Integrity) at Epiphany Parish of Seattle. Also in attendance was the Very Rev. Armand J. Kreft, 51, the Episcopal Church's second openly-gay dean of Trinity Cathedral in San Jose, CA.

It was a rare opportunity for Seattle Episcopalians to see these new deans - Dean Taylor was installed Feb. 12 while Kreft's

installation was on Feb. 22 - banter and cajole with one another in a casual 'Conversation with Two Deans' reception.

Dean Taylor's answers to questions were sometimes different from Dean Kreft's. Not only their answers (Dean Taylor feels gay people should be allowed to marry. Dean Kreft, however, has been reading the tea leaves of realpolitik noting the passage of anti-gay marriage legislation around the U.S. The California dean feels gay people should come up with their own institution of commitment) but their tone.

One person that night originally from California said Dean Kreft's "in-your-face" style is perfect for living in the Golden State. Dean Taylor's conciliatory, smooth demeanor responses, on the other hand, matches the cool but polite Northwest's style. Another marked difference is Dean Taylor's deliberate way in answering a question. Sincere but halting. A sign this dean wants to give a questioner a clear yet well thought out response.

Church may approve liturgies...

"I think there's a pretty reasonable chance of the (Episcopal) Church approving some liturgies for trial use in some way for the blessing of same-sex unions" said Dean Taylor to the Seattle Gay News.

The other difference between these two deans is their take on how the General Convention in Denver in July is going to play out between the conservative and traditional Episcopalians and the rest of the Church.

Dean Kreft thinks a schism is in the making and thinks that after years of this wing threatening to leave the Church, first over allowing women to become priests then over the revision of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer, maybe it is time for them to leave the Episcopal Church. Or in the words of a Seattle-area priest, "Go. Go with God, but just go."

Dean Taylor, on the other hand, doesn't think there will be the fireworks in Denver.

Taylor freely disclosed his sexual orientation and that he was living in a committed relationship with his partner last year when the St. Mark's Search Committee interviewed candidates. While St. Mark's members said other Taylor attributes (such as his pastoral and reconciliation work) gave him high marks, his revealing that he is gay may, in fact, have tipped the decision in his favor. Member after member have said subtly and not so subtly that Dean Taylor wasn't chosen because he is gay. But the fact remains that Dean Taylor was honest and open about his sexual orientation and having a committed relationship over 14 years. Certainly, less than a decade ago such frankness would have jettisoned such a candidate.

Coming to America...

Dean Taylor was put on an airplane by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in 1980 when it became apparent Taylor would go to jail for not serving in the South African army. While Taylor was willing to go to jail, Tutu convinced him otherwise saying there was another way for Taylor to stand-up for life's inequities.

Dean Taylor enrolled in seminary school in New York City under a student visa and was graduated with a divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in the early 1980's.

In 1985, then Fr. Taylor was planning a trip to Seattle and the Pacific Northwest but his immigration lawyer (Fr. Taylor was still a South African citizen) advised him to stay closer to NYC in case Fr. Taylor needed to get return to Manhattan quickly. So instead of vacationing out West Fr. Taylor headed Northeast to Maine. "To a little town" he told this reporter where he met Andrew who also was on vacation. "We met and went for walks on the beach, had dinner. And the rest is history they say" said Dean Taylor.

In 1998, Dean Taylor did become a U.S. citizen. "I came here (in 1980) as an exile with two suitcases, not knowing a single person in the entire land." remarked Taylor.

On the night of Dean Taylor's installation one of the biggest and sustained applause came after Taylor's mother and Andrew were introduced. You could see in the eyes of many in the cathedral that night that they were witnessing history being made with that one introduction.

Last year, Dean Taylor was asked his favorite Biblical passage. "I've got several" said Taylor pausing to collect his thoughts. "One is John's Gospel where Jesus washes the feet of the disciples and then he tells them to love one another as He loves them.

"The second is from Ephesians, Chapter 5, where Paul talks about walking in love as Christ loved us."

A new spirit...

On the steps of St. Mark's last August Dean Taylor held his first Seattle press conference. After painting a vision in how he would like St. Mark's to be - strengthen it numerically and spiritually; broaden what it means to be a cathedral church including "thoughtful scholarship, spirit-filled liturgy" and the arts; social ministry, a voice for justice and a vision to include global work beyond Northwest - he answered a gay religion reporter's question:

'What positive message would you send to gay and lesbian Christians?'

"At my church" answered Dean Taylor "There is a sign which says 'The Episcopal Church welcomes you.' That is the message I would send."

St. Mark's parishioners and staff, who were at the press conference, broke into applause after hearing this response.

"The hope of new creation and the joy of resurrection are part of the gift of God's longing and love for you, for each of us" wrote Dean Taylor in the April edition of The Rubric, St. Mark's monthly newsletter.

Maybe, just maybe, all the resolutions and open and affirming positions Christian Churches take to entice gays and lesbians through their doors are secondary. Secondary when a church or cathedral chooses an openly gay or lesbian as its spiritual leader.

As St. Mark's Cathedral has found out, the naming of Robert V. Taylor as its new dean has created a new spirit. A spirit gays and lesbians can embrace as the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Olympia opens its doors a little wider.

Scott Larsen is religion editor at the Seattle Gay News and member of Integrity/Puget Sound Chapter

# Style, Outlook on Faith, Sets This California Dean Apart

by Scott Larsen

(Originally printed in the Seattle Gay News on Feb. 25, 2000)

SAN JOSE, CA. - The second installation of an openly-gay dean of an episcopal cathedral shows a telling chapter in how one mainline Christian Denomination, The Episcopal Church, is opening its doors wider to gays and lesbians.

The Very Rev. Armand J. Kreft was installed as dean of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, located in downtown San Jose, on February 22, ten days after Seattle installed its openly-gay dean, the Very Rev. Robert V. Taylor.

But to think that each of these men are cut from the same cloth, so to speak, because they happen to be gay men is wrong.

Dean Kreft, 51, is from the Bay Area and comes from a marketing background. He is gregarious and wants people to freely express their acceptance and love of Jesus Christ unashamedly.

Dean Taylor, 41, on the other hand, set his sights on becoming an Anglican priest as a young man growing up in South Africa. He is more reserved some have said because of his South African background.

Hymns like "In Your Mercy" and "Blessed Assurance" that night came from the Baptist Hymnal rather than the Anglican said Dean Kreft jokingly. Clearly, these Christian songs resonate with



this new dean, and he was tickled that they would be part of his installation service.

"My heart is full this evening," said Dean Kreft, adding "words fail me" in expressing how he felt that night.

Both his former and present parish families showed up to celebrate this new ministry. Like former parishioners from Holy Innocents where Dean Kreft was before being named dean and friends from around the Bay Area.

Dean Kreft told an amusing story

about the San Francisco bishop calling him and inquiring how his new charge, a woman priest, was working out at Holy Innocents. "Great" answered the then Vicar Kreft; "She's downstairs tending to the toilets while I am sewing vestments."



Two deans and two cakes at their 'Conversation with Two Deans' reception.

That woman was the Rev. Karen F. Siegfriedt, now rector at St. Jode's Episcopal Church in Cupertino, CA. It was the Rev, Siegfriedt who delivered the sermon at Dean Kreft's installation.

"We never claimed them for ourselves." Said Kreft before the installation in how progressives in the Christian Church have allowed the Christian right to appropriate terms like "family" and "family values." "It saddens me a lot," he said.

But "there are oases" for gays and lesbians to come to and find spirituality said the dean. "There are places you will be welcome." Dean Kreft hopes to make Trinity one of those places.

"Trinity is a place where miracles happen," said Dean Kreft. That Christians of the liberal and progressive persuasion (religiously speaking, Dean Kreft calls himself a conservative and freely admits to voting Republican.) shouldn't be embarrassed in calling themselves Christians. Or love Jesus or sing songs typically associated with the evangelical wing of the Christian Church.

February 22 was a day where Dean Kreft was seemingly bouncing off the walls. Putting smiles on the faces of his cathedral staff, hurrying around to get ready for the special service that night. He was enjoying every minute.

Dean Kreft freely admits that he will have to keep outside interests and commitments to a bare minimum. His overriding interest now is Trinity Cathedral and the people of this cathedral parish.



Sign of the Cross—Deans Taylor and Kreft show the Celtic Crosses Integrity/Puget Sound Chapter gave to the two men at their Feast of St. Aelred observance and reception.

# Integrity/Puget Sound Chapter:

## In Seattle, faith is put into practice at a weekly Eucharist

by Scott Larsen

Every Sunday evening, between 10-to-25 Episcopalians and visitors attend a 45-minute Eucharist service in Seattle. Held in Thomsen Chapel at St. Mark's Cathedral, it is unique in that it is the only weekly Eucharist service sponsored jointly by an Integrity chapter and a cathedral.

Since 1983, Integrity/Puget Sound has been the co-sponsor of this service in the side chapel of this unfinished, 1929-era cathedral. Sometimes known in Seattle as the 'Holy Box' on Capitol Hill.

The service, said Alan Quigley of Renton, convener of Integrity/Puget Sound, is a way for people who have been away from the Church or don't have an Episcopal Church background to come for community and worship. A bridge, if you will, to help gays and lesbians into their spiritual home.

New found interest has also come about in Integrity/Puget Sound Chapter with St. Mark's hiring the Very Rev. Robert V. Taylor as its dean. While the openly-gay dean doesn't attend the Integrity/St. Mark's 7 pm Sunday service, knowing that the cathedral parish of the Diocese of Olympia has someone like Dean Taylor at the helm has given local Integrity members a feel-good attitude about being gay and lesbian in the Church.

Like the St. Aelred's Observance and dean's reception.

On March 31, Epiphany Parish of Seattle played host and co-sponsor along with Integrity/Puget Sound Chapter for a St. Aelred Observance. A choral even song was held with choir members from Christ Episcopal Church from Seattle's University District along with Epiphany's choir setting the tone for the evening.

The rector, The Rev. Dr. Robert H. Williams, Retired Captain of the Chaplaincy Corps of the U.S. Navy, gave a moving homily about what integrity is and means to him.

St. Aelred of Rievaulx was a 12th century saint who lived in northern England. He was known for his close friendships with his fellow brothers at the Cisterian monastery at Rievaulx where he was abbot. St. Aelred is also known for his writing on 'Spiritual Friendship' and is Integrity's patron saint.

Following the even song a reception called 'A conversation with the two deans' had two special guests: The Very Reverends Taylor and Armand J. Kreft, dean of Trinity Cathedral, San Jose, Ga. Both men are openly gay and were installed 11 days apart in February as the, West Coast's newest deans.

The Seattle Integrity chapter presented both Deans with Celtic crosses as thank you gifts for their visit and participation.

But like many Integrity chapters around the country gay and lesbian Episcopalians are usually committed to their own parishes.

"I don't remember there was any big to-do about it" recalls Diane Stipp about starting the weekly Eucharist service at St. Mark's. Stipp is one of the founding members of Integrity/Puget Sound Chapter when it was formed in 1977. It first met at Trinity Episcopal Church, a stone downtown church long known for its sign 'The mother parish of Seattle' because it helped start so many other Episcopal parishes. A Eucharist service was held when there was a priest said Stipp or evening prayer if there was not followed by a discussion. Speakers from outside groups were sometimes part of the discussion like Chicken Soup Brigade, a home delivery meal service first begun to serve people with HIV/AIDS.

But today, the chapter does one thing consistently and uniformly: A weekly Eucharist.

The chapter moved to St. Mark's in 1982, gathering around a library table. One year later, they began holding their Eucharist service in Thomsen Chapel.

Stipp, a co-convener of this chapter, likes to refer to herself as the 'token lesbian in the Diocese' of Olympia. A diocese which stretches from the Canadian to the Oregon border, the west side of the Cascades to the Pacific Ocean. A diocese created in 1880, nine years before Washington became a state, now made up of around 27,000 Episcopalians who are spread out among 110 parishes and missions.

She has served on an array of different commissions and committees as well as held membership at both St. Mark's and St. Stephen's, her childhood parish located northeast of the sprawling University of Washington campus. Like the Bishop's

Commission on Youth Ministry, Diocesan Commission on the Aging, the Social Action Commission of the diocese and Commission on Alcohol and Substance Abuse. Not to mention her liturgical involvements and activities in the local Church.

Integrity's service is "a place people can come to come back into the Church" says Stipp, including "people who have been alienated."

Integrity/Puget Sound, year after year, has had a table at the diocesan convention. Putting a name and face on gay and lesbian Episcopalians to the rest of the diocese.

At last year's convention, Integrity/Puget Sound handed out two kinds of buttons: 'I Remember Matthew...' for Matthew Shepard's death and 'The Episcopal Church welcomes ME!' It was another way of making their presence known throughout the sprawling convention hall.

"We have to remember there are still parishes terribly unhappy" about the direction the Church is headed even in the nominally quiet Diocese of Olympia said Quigley.

One often repeated story is about a gay man attending a Sunday morning service at an Episcopal church in South King County, a conservative suburban area south of Seattle. A member of the parish, a woman, came up to the man and asked him in the most polite yet covered Anglican tone, 'Did you know there is a service for your kind on Sunday nights at the cathedral?' Right away the man knew, at least in this woman's eyes, he wasn't welcomed.

That is why Integrity/Puget Sound's service is still important. Many gays and lesbians have been hurt by the Christian Church and in particular, its members. And they are sometimes rebuffed by Episcopalians because we are different in their eyes or it is THEIR church, not our's too.

"The whole point of Integrity" said Quigley "is to be there, week after week, year after year" in a small, quiet environment such as Thomsen Chapel.

Currently, plans are under way to have not only Integrity/Puget Sound Chapter members but other Episcopal parish members (especially St. Mark's) march in the Seattle gay Pride Parade held on the last Sunday in June. Unfortunately, Dean Taylor will be out of town. But organizers hope to play off all this media attention and interest from the Seattle gay community and work closely with St. Mark's for participation during Gay Pride Week.

Last December, it was Integrity/Puget Sound who spearheaded a half-page ad in the Seattle Gay News where 11 Episcopal Churches and missions in the Seattle-Tacoma area welcomed people to church. This Easter, a full-page ad has been planned to accommodate more Episcopal Churches who want to be a part of

this PR campaign. Yet another way to open the door a little wider to gays and lesbians.

Consistency has been the key to Integrity/Puget Sound Chapter. Be it from Larry Meyer or Sue Tate in helping set up or assist during the Eucharist, Don Slater or Barbara Decker reading the lessons, to Lucas Wickstrom and other organists who, like visiting priests in the diocese, are on a rota schedule for the service.

In Seattle, there are men and women committed to this space and time each Sunday evening. A place where they can come together in community and worship. Either with their long-held faith. Or a newly found one.

## Women for Women

by Loudene "Gil" Grady

Integrity is privileged to be among the women's organizations that are convened annually under the aegis of the Council for Women's Ministries. Two members of each of the women's organizations are brought together to exchange ideas, to discuss women's place in the Episcopal church and to have visions for the future. Dorothy Fuller and Loudene "Gil" Grady have been Integrity's representatives for the past few years and have shared women's role and needs in an organization designed to serve gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender persons.

At the Council's last meeting in November, 1999, we talked a lot and dreamed a big dream -- "Why do we limit the gathering to only two representatives?, we mused. Why not open the gathering to all women of the church regardless of organization affiliation? Why not? WE WILL!!"

"Episcopal Women Uniting in Christ" will be held November 30 through December 3, 2000, at Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, NC. The basic theme for this gathering will be Our Lives Revealed, Nurtured, Celebrated. Topics for exploration might include such items as "Global Home Economics" which

would explore ways in which US women and men can support efforts to improve the status of workers in poor countries through responsible consumerism and advocacy.

Another area of concern could be a unified vision of women's ministries. Outstanding leaders from within the church and the greater community will meet with us and give leadership to our work.

Members of Integrity need to be involved in this major gathering of women in the Episcopal Church. Our voice is needed and desired. Plan now to be a part of this special event. As the plans develop more information will be found in The Episcopal Life, or can be secured from The Council for Women's Ministries, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017-4594, or you may contact "Gil" Grady at GILGRADY@AOL.COM.

# Why is Same-Sex Marriage such a Hot Button?—

by The Rev'd Eleanor McLaughlin, Ph.D.



Why is Same-Sex Marriage such a Hot Button?—and why, for just this reason, must it be achieved?

Because, as Mary Douglas the noted anthropologist has said, “Religious disagreement is the richest material for cultural analysis”, because what is at stake is the community’s understanding of the “right model” for organizing human society. So, we’re not talking here simply of fairness to gays, or of ‘family values,’ but of a challenge to the essential structure of the ‘good society’ as received by tradition, memory, holy books, religious rituals, common law, popular culture, elite philosophies. Only if we understand, both intellectually and viscerally what most people in their gut feel to be at stake, can we make a cogent argument for this next step in the realization of a more just and holy human community.

The “right model” for the organization of society which we all have received, is that roughly suggested by the buzz word, “patriarchy”. It’s so hard to describe this, ‘what is’, for we are swimming in it, and how can the fish describe water, when nothing else is known? With the shorthand designation “patriarchy” I mean not so much the control and making invisible of women and their accomplishments, but the more pervasive ways in which all language, conceptual schema, thought patterns, and the values given by naming, such as the seemingly ‘natural’ understanding of our world in terms of binaries—light/dark, hard/soft, sacred/profane, public/private, male/female—reflect a masculinist world, made by, and generally in the service of men and the public/private order which has evolved over the millennia of human history. We are not talking about oppressions but rather how our world is viewed, and where the power lies, in every aspect of social and familial organization. Furthermore, we are dealing with our understandings of self-hood...what it means for us to ‘know’ our selves as male or female and how we live out that gendered self. For “masculinity as we have known it” in the main partakes of the invisible privilege of being a “top” and being clearly distinguished from the “other”, that is, not permitting behaviors or roles which insinuate femininity, the soft, the recipient, the passive, the affective, the acted upon and not the actor. To be a man, is above all, to be not a woman or ‘womanish’, or ‘effeminate’. The duality must remain clear, as the 20th c. leading Protestant theologian Karl Barth

put it, woman is “B not A”. And the ‘unmarked’ “A” is presumed male.

How does same-sex marriage impact upon this system, especially at the symbolic level, which is the discourse of religion, and which so touches the feelings and subliminal fears of the community? In a very real sense, the revolution has already occurred, with the ordination of women to the priesthood in the catholic tradition of the Anglican Communion. That is, the man’s ontological place as Presider, as one who stands as an alter Christus—in the place of Christ—in the midst of the People, representing the Bridegroom to the Church who is the Bride; representing the Logos, the Head, to the Body of Christ, in its material and obedient femininity. At the time of the ordination struggle, I argued strongly against the Liberal position, that the Ordination Question was not a matter of ‘rights’ or liberal ‘fairness’, but a central theological issue, which goes to the heart of our faith. Is masculinity part of the Godhead, essential to the saving work of Christ, and therefore Jesus as Priest and Offering can be represented only as a man, the icon of both full humanity and incarnate deity? The proponents of women’s ordination only rarely broached these symbolic issues, for it was easier to argue, and to win, on the basis of American enlightenment rationalism. The way in which “a woman at the Altar threatens the authority of the husband in every family” as one British theologian truthfully warned, was generally ignored. Why frighten the horses?

But now, with the homosexual matter, especially in the form of same-sex marriage, the symbolic and theological issue of the status of maleness in our religion and culture is forced. We can no longer ignore the gendered character of the symbols, religious and social which order our world. If the family, as our Puritan ancestors maintained, is a Little Commonwealth, then the gendered hierarchy of the family is the model of the larger social order, the reflection, of how an

# and why, for just this reason, must it be achieved?

ordered society is and how it ought to be. Indeed the Marriage Service in the Book of Common Prayer reminds us that the union between man and woman is a reflection of the union between Christ the Bridegroom and His Church. Heterosexual marriage in its liturgical and theological sinews, is unmistakably hierarchical in the priority and agency of the Husband, a 'little Christ' to his wife. This implicit definition of maleness, the association of masculinity with the Fatherhood of God and the Kingship of Christ, is imbedded in the very fabric of the Christian understanding of the cosmos as well as the processes of salvation. One may object, this archaic structure is of import only to the believer. Not so, for male headship characterizes most contemporary marriages in fact, even when not articulated, and who can debate the fact of male headship in the rest of civil and religious society, now that we have 3 women and 497 men as CEO's in the Fortune 500 list of top US companies, and in the Episcopal House of Bishops, as of last counting nine women amongst close to two hundred men!

In this context, what kind of symbolic spectre does same-sex marriage raise, and why, on that very account is the legitimation in law and blessing by the Church of the life-long faithful marriages of couples of the same sex necessary? What will be accomplished?

The threat. Same sex marriage deconstructs hierarchy. In a same sex couple there is no symbolic headship, no icon of hierarchy, there are no 'tops' and 'bottoms' given by gender, there are no roles imbedded in biology, there are no 'givens' enforced by bodies—there is no A and B, no His and Hers! This absence of a 'naturally' in-charge person is profoundly unsettling to those unreflectively shaped by the past. It is like the taboo response to regicides of the 17th and 18th centuries...suddenly there is no order in society if there is no ascribed headship. We have managed in the US during the last two hundred years to get over assuming that without a King, society will descend into a war of all against all. And there are already numerous younger couples who seek, against cultural norms to live out a truly partnered marriage. Therefore, this aspect of same-sex marriage will be the easiest to assimilate. What is however, sticking in our cultural craw, is the deconstruction of masculinity. In a committed, life-long, faithful, monogamous union of two men, there is a public representation of maleness as not inevitably 'in charge', as not essentially 'head', as not always, 'on top', or to be graphic, not inevitably the 'penetrator'. Because marriage has always been seen as a union of man and woman, one of these two men, perhaps by turns, or in temperament, permanently, is seen playing the role of the woman, the done-to, the cared-for. This cultural construction of gay male

unions as involving the inevitable feminization of the male, in traditional understandings of that term, seems to be a prime cause of cultural panic for women as well as men. Many women in our masculinist culture are as committed to "masculinity as we have known it" as are the preponderance of men.



The situation with two women is both more threatening and hardly worth mentioning! First, unremarkable because traditionally and culturally, women have not a sex. The phallus is the instrument of sexual agency and the woman is therefore incapable of sexual agency. She literally cannot 'do sex'. Women also are the 'other' and of less cultural significance than men both symbolically and in terms of social power. Therefore what women 'do', especially if they are discreet, is of little public import, is often not even seen. "Oh that's the house where 'the girls' live." Women have lived together as couples in many cultures for millenia without much notice.

On the other hand, the autonomous woman, who follows her desires, and seeks her needs for intimacy not with a man but with another woman launches, albeit unconsciously, another deconstruction of masculinity. Women have culturally been defined in relation to their men, taking his name, valued for her capacity to bear and mother his children, until recently without her own rights to property, control over her children, and to this day, without clear legal control of her own body. Men, conversely understand their masculinity to be confirmed and displayed by the acquisition and charge of

a wife...hence our acknowledgement of the power of the "trophy wife".

In contrast, a lesbian couple announces publicly that it is possible to be a fulfilled, contented, successful, 'womanly' woman without intimate connection to a man. A woman could celebrate what men take for granted, the human autonomy--in a female body!. In the Christian Tradition, this possibility for woman, on her own, 'in God's Image', was celebrated, but only for celibate women, whose Bridegroom was Jesus, less dangerous than yearly childbearing or life according to the "Rule of Thumb"—the legal permission to beat one's wife into obedience as long as the stick was no larger than a man's thumb. Today, the Christian lesbian couple takes this 'feminism' of the Tradition one step further, into a sacramentalizing of an erotically realized union of two faithful women. All that is missing is the public acknowledgement of what the couple's love sacramentalizes, in the Blessing of Holy Matrimony.

But, this will be hard for the Church and the world to move towards, because it requires as radical a revision of Christian theological anthropology, doctrine of God and of ecclesiology as the regicidal, mercantile class and laboring class revolutions of the 17 - 20th centuries required for the political scientists and the moralists of the social order. If Friendship rather than Headship is to become a guiding metaphor for our relationship with God, as bid by the Tradition represented by the Gospel of John, "I call you not slaves, but friends" could this not authorize a non- hierarchical, equilibrated friendship as the guiding metaphor for the love relations between people? Gay and heterosexual couples both have a stake in moving away from the Tradition's sex-negative moralisms--together we may rediscover the integrated trinity of the Love with which God loves us, agape, filia, eros....free of the dualisms which have blighted all our relationships. Tradition contains the theological and spiritual resources to bless same-sex faithful life-long unions, for in practice and in symbol, gay couples can re-present a healthier and holier model of human family....mutual, equilibrated, and respectful of the Mystery of the human person. But those of us who are Believers must do the work to reread the texts and re-imagine the symbols.

I am not optimistic. I do not hear the mostly male gay voices within the Church asking that this foundational theological and ethical work be done. Many gay people, women and men, are still reveling in a shame-free sexuality and are not interested in seeing our partnerships as the Tradition has for two millenia regarded Holy Matrimony, a sacramental participation in God's faithful and loving union with humankind. I am sympathetic with their position, though it is not mine, for it will take some generations before human sexuality is freed from the guilt-and-shame- burden of Classical Christianity which so fires the dehumanizing commodification of sex that drives market capitalism...the real threat to civic and personal virtue.

Therefore, I do believe that Betsy and I will not soon seek to have our Christian life- partnership and Holy Friendship blessed in the Church. The meanings of that public sacrament would be too obscure. And I don't wish to be giving a theological lecture at my wedding!

But those who care about Christian Marriage, heterosexual in particular, should be doing the theological work and looking to the examples of faithful same-sex couples, if the parlous state of Christian marriage and relationships in general between women and men is to be addressed. All the statistics tell us that women are expecting partnerships, friendships, genuinely equilibrated relationships in which sexual pleasure is integrated into and sacramentalizes the lived reality of marriage and family life. In contrast, young men are with very few exceptions still being raised to hierarchical male privilege, still presuming that parenting defines women, power reveals the man. If the Church could reflect theologically and pastorally upon what same-sex couples have to teach us—about a re-formed masculinity and a new feminine which does not define herself in terms of male needs and desires, as well as re-visioning how people might live together in genuine reciprocal and yes, at times, sacrificial friendship—heterosexual couples would have as much to gain as gay folks by the articulation of a new, non-hierarchical, understanding of committed human love. I invite those for whom the blessing of same sex unions seems not to be their personal issue, to consider the well-being of all families—men, women and children—which will surely be served by the new paradigm gay couples and their families can represent. It is this larger framework for renewal that is my 'Gay Agenda'.

The Rev'd Eleanor McLaughlin, Ph.D.

Vicar, Christ Church, South Barre, PA

# COALITIONAL VOICE

by Scott Larsen, Religion Editor, Seattle Gay News

## National Religious Leadership Roundtable... a coalition on faith

GLBT people of faith have been a living witness in their particular denomination or faith group for a very long time.. Some groups like Integrity, Dignity or the United Church Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Concerns have been working for the full inclusion of GLBT people for over twenty-five years.

What has been missing for all this time however, has been a way for the thirty or more of these GLBT faith groups to communicate and share their experience with each other. While there have been a few attempts to form a coalition in the past, it was with the vision and support of the Policy Institute of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, under the leadership of Urvashi Vaid that a successful partnership was created.

The National Religious Leadership Roundtable is composed, at the present time, of some forty different groups. Four categories of members include: denominations with a specific GLBT membership like the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches; GLBT networks within denominations, like

- Integrity, religious organizations with an outreach to GLBT people of faith like CLOUT (Christian Lesbians Out Together), and supportive organizations;
- People for the American Way, or PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

The Roundtable is always looking to welcome additional groups to broaden the table of participation. The Roundtable meets twice a year in different locations across the United States. While the first two meetings were held in Washington, DC in July of 98 and January of 99, the third meeting held this past August was conducted in Colorado Springs, CO, in the backyard of the religious right.

NGLTF's Policy Institute provides the staffing and logistics for the group. The Roundtable Steering Committee, elected by the members, is charged with program planning and speaking for the Roundtable between its meetings .The Roundtable fulfills three major functions: It provides an opportunity for faith leaders to network, gain support and learn from each other. The gatherings themselves are also a living witness to the general public of the vibrant ministry of its member groups, and the Roundtable speaks prophetic truth to power. It provides a clear message that tens of thousands of GLBT people of faith exist, do not need the religious right to interpret the scriptures for them, and will continue to speak out against injustice.

For more information about the NRLR contact: Rev. Ken South, ksouth@nglrf.org.

## Changes to the Bylaws

Summary of the Balloting for Changes to the Bylaws Last Fall

A total of 529 ballots were cast; of those, 445 ballots were in favor of all the amendments proposed, and 84 ballots had at least one negative vote for a proposed change. (Note: four ballots were all negative votes.) Needless to say, all of the proposed changes to the bylaws passed. The following is the breakdown of the negative votes for each amendment.

Amendment A: 33 votes against this change.

Amendment B: 20 votes against this change.

Amendment C: 21 votes against this change.

Amendment D: 15 votes against this change.

Amendment E: 13 votes against this change.

Amendment F: 25 votes against this change.

Amendment G: 22 votes against this change.

Amendment H: 17 votes against this change.

Amendment I: 21 votes against this change.

## Women's Uncommon Prayers

from Loudene "Gil" Grady

A collection of prayers and meditations by Episcopal women published by Morehouse will be available at the General Convention. Proceeds from the sale of "Women's Uncommon Prayers: Our Lives Revealed, Nurtured, Celebrated" will benefit programs that assist victims and survivors of domestic violence.

### Integrity, Inc. Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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I want to share in Integrity's work for justice for lesbians and gay men. Please enter my membership as checked below and begin my subscription to Voice of Integrity.

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- Couple Annual Membership \$40
- Low Income/Students/Sr. Citizen \$10

Please mail your check or money order to:  
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All contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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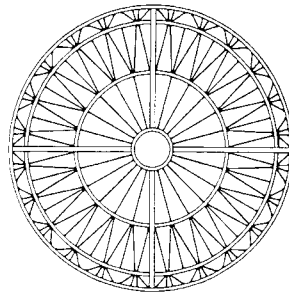
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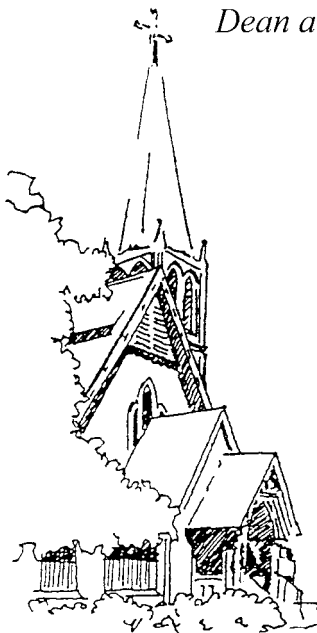
## A Celebration of New Ministry

The installation of  
Robert Vincent Taylor  
as the Sixth Dean  
of St. Mark's Cathedral

Saturday  
February 12, 2000  
7:00 p.m.

### THE INSTALLATION OF

The Very Reverend Armand John Kreft  
*as*  
*Dean and Rector*



Trinity Cathedral  
San Jose, California

February 22, 2000  
7:00 p.m.



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