

Glad Tidings

Pentecost

October 2007

The Church of the Nativity, Cedarcroft

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Everyone has probably heard bits and pieces of the news that the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church was to have met recently in New Orleans. They met September 20th–25th. Part of the agenda for their meeting was to respond to the communiqué from the primates of the Anglican Communion who asked for clarification on the House of Bishops' initial response to the Windsor Report. Later in this newsletter you will find the text of the House of Bishops' response and the clarification points that they offered to the Primates. I strongly encourage you to read them closely. The House of Bishops worked very hard to respond to the concerns of the Primates of the Anglican Communion and to those of differing points of view within the Episcopal Church. As Bishop Rabb said in his letter to the clergy of our Diocese, some feel like we gave up too much in our response to the primates. Others are concerned that we did not give enough. However, what the bishops accomplished was quite significant. They drafted a statement around which the majority of bishops in attendance, from widely divergent theological perspectives, could reach consensus. I believe that this document, if adhered to by the Episcopal Church, has the potential to prevent some of the division within the communion. Our bishops worked sacrificially to reach, as they have stated, "not only common ground, but high ground on which we may all stand together." Our bishops are to be commended for the hard work they have completed together.

Part of what made the work of the House of Bishops successful is the fact that their meeting was held in New Orleans. Before they even began debating the thorny issues that were before them, the bishops and their spouses all went out and did hands-on mission work in the rebuilding effort in New Orleans and coastal Mississippi. Working together to try to alleviate the suffering of some of the people affected by Hurricane Katrina helped them put into proper perspective the differences that had divided them.

Contrary to news reports, the Episcopal Church is much healthier than you may believe. As I am writing this, I am returning from Alumni Convocation at Virginia Theological Seminary. While there, I met and talked with clergy and church leaders from all over the Episcopal Church. I saw students and faculty, priests, deacons, bishops, and lay persons with a broad spectrum of theological perspectives that are committed to living with one another in the tension of our differences. That, in my opinion, is one of the great strengths of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. It is the ability to struggle together as we attempt to reflect the image of Christ, recognizing that it takes the entire body, with its great diversity, to even begin to reflect His image.

As I read of the hard work of our bishops, as I watch those who are being formed for ministry, as I participate with those who are carrying out the mission and ministry of the church of Jesus Christ, as expressed in the diversity of the Episcopal Church, I thank God that I am a part of this vital and vibrant part of Christ's body. I pray that we may continue to celebrate our unity in the midst of our diversity.

Tom+

House of Bishops' response 'to questions and concerns raised by our Anglican Communion partners'

September 25, 2007 [Episcopal News Service]

House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church
New Orleans, Louisiana
September 25, 2007

A Response to Questions and Concerns Raised by our Anglican Communion Partners:

In accordance with Our Lord's high priestly prayer that we be one, and in the spirit of Resolution A159 of the 75th General Convention, and in obedience to his Great Commission to go into the world and make disciples, and in gratitude for the gift of the Anglican Communion as a sign of the Holy Spirit's ongoing work of reconciliation throughout the world, we offer the following to The Episcopal Church, the Primates, the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC), and the larger Communion, with the hope of "mending the tear in the fabric" of our common life in Christ.

"I do it all for the sake of the Gospel so that I might share in its blessings."
1 Corinthians 9:23.

Introduction

The House of Bishops expresses sincere and heartfelt thanks to the Archbishop of Canterbury and members of the Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates for accepting our invitation to join us in New Orleans. By their presence they have both honored us and assisted us in our discernment. Their presence was a living reminder of the unity that is Christ's promised gift in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Much of our meeting time was spent in continuing discernment of our relationships within the Anglican Communion. We engaged in careful listening and straightforward dialogue with our guests. We expressed our passionate desire to remain in communion. It is our conviction that The Episcopal Church needs the Anglican Communion, and we heard from our guests that the Anglican Communion needs The Episcopal Church.

The House of Bishops offers the following responses to our Anglican Communion partners. We believe they provide clarity and point toward next steps in an ongoing process of dialogue. Within The Episcopal Church the common discernment of God's call is a lively partnership among laypersons, bishops, priests, and deacons, and therefore necessarily includes the Presiding Bishop, the Executive Council, and the General Convention.

Summary

- We reconfirm that resolution B033 of General Convention 2006 (The Election Of Bishops) calls upon bishops with jurisdiction and Standing Committees "to exercise restraint by not consenting to the consecration of any candidate to the episcopate whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church and will lead to further strains on communion."
- We pledge as a body not to authorize public rites for the blessing of same-sex unions.
- We commend our Presiding Bishop's plan for episcopal visitors.
- We deplore incursions into our jurisdictions by uninvited bishops and call for them to end.
- We support the Presiding Bishop in seeking communion-wide consultation in a manner that is in accord with our Constitution and Canons.
- We call for increasing implementation of the listening process across the Communion and for a report on its progress to Lambeth 2008.
- We support the Archbishop of Canterbury in his expressed desire to explore ways for the Bishop of New Hampshire to participate in the Lambeth Conference.
- We call for unequivocal and active commitment to the civil rights, safety, and dignity of gay and lesbian persons.

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Discussion

Resolution B033 of the 2006 General Convention

The House of Bishops concurs with Resolution EC011 of the Executive Council. This Resolution commends the Report of the Communion Sub-Group of the Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates of the Anglican Communion as an accurate evaluation of Resolution B033 of the 2006 General Convention, calling upon bishops with jurisdiction and Standing Committees "to exercise restraint by not consenting to the consecration of any candidate to the episcopate whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church and will lead to further strains on communion."^[1] The House acknowledges that non-celibate gay and lesbian persons are included among those to whom B033 pertains.

Blessing of Same-Sex Unions

We, the members of the House of Bishops, pledge not to authorize for use in our dioceses any public rites of blessing of same-sex unions until a broader consensus emerges in the Communion, or until General Convention takes further action. In the near future we hope to be able to draw upon the benefits of the Communion-wide listening process. In the meantime, it is important to note that no rite of blessing for persons living in same-sex unions has been adopted or approved by our General Convention. In addition to not having authorized liturgies the majority of bishops do not make allowance for the blessing of same-sex unions. We do note that in May 2003 the Primates said we have a pastoral duty "to respond with love and understanding to people of all sexual orientations." They further stated, "...[I]t is necessary to maintain a breadth of private response to situations of individual pastoral care."

Episcopal Visitors

We affirm the Presiding Bishop's plan to appoint episcopal visitors for dioceses that request alternative oversight. Such oversight would be provided by bishops who are a part of and subject to the communal life of this province. We believe this plan is consistent with and analogous to Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight (DEPO) as affirmed by the Windsor Report (paragraph 152). We thank those bishops who have generously offered themselves for this ministry. We hope that dioceses will make use of this plan and that the Presiding Bishop will continue conversation with those dioceses that may feel the need for such ministries. We appreciate and need to hear all voices in The Episcopal Church.

Incursions by Uninvited Bishops

We call for an immediate end to diocesan incursions by uninvited bishops in accordance with the Windsor Report and consistent with the statements of past Lambeth Conferences and the Ecumenical Councils of the Church. Such incursions imperil common prayer and long-established ecclesial principles of our Communion. These principles include respect for local jurisdiction and recognition of the geographical boundaries of dioceses and provinces. As we continue to commit ourselves to honor both the spirit and the content of the Windsor Report, we call upon those provinces and bishops engaging in such incursions likewise to honor the Windsor Report by ending them. We offer assurance that delegated episcopal pastoral care is being provided for those who seek it.

Communion-wide Consultation

In their communiqué of February 2007, the Primates proposed a "pastoral scheme." At our meeting in March 2007, we expressed our deep concern that this scheme would compromise the authority of our own primate and place the autonomy of The Episcopal Church at risk. The Executive Council reiterated our concerns and declined to participate. Nevertheless, we recognize a useful role for communion-wide consultation with respect to the pastoral needs of those seeking alternative oversight, as well as the pastoral needs of gay and lesbian persons in this and other provinces. We encourage our Presiding Bishop to continue to explore such consultation in a manner that is in accord with our Constitution and Canons.

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The Listening Process

The 1998 Lambeth Conference called all the provinces of the Anglican Communion to engage in a "listening process" designed to bring gay and lesbian Anglicans fully into the Church's conversation about human sexuality. We look forward to receiving initial reports about this process at the 2008 Lambeth Conference and to participating with others in this crucial enterprise. We are aware that in some cultural contexts conversation concerning homosexuality is difficult. We see an important role for the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) in this listening process, since it represents both the lay and ordained members of our constituent churches, and so is well-placed to engage every part of the body in this conversation. We encourage the ACC to identify the variety of resources needed to accomplish these conversations.

The Lambeth Conference

Invitations to the Lambeth Conference are extended by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Those among us who have received an invitation to attend the 2008 Lambeth Conference look forward to that gathering with hope and expectation. Many of us are engaged in mission partnerships with bishops and dioceses around the world and cherish these relationships. Lambeth offers a wonderful opportunity to build on such partnerships.

We are mindful that the Bishop of New Hampshire has not yet received an invitation to the conference. We also note that the Archbishop of Canterbury has expressed a desire to explore a way for him to participate. We share the Archbishop's desire and encourage our Presiding Bishop to offer our assistance as bishops in this endeavor. It is our fervent hope that a way can be found for his full participation.

Justice and Dignity for Gay and Lesbian Persons

It is of fundamental importance that, as we continue to seek consensus in matters of human sexuality, we also be clear and outspoken in our shared commitment to establish and protect the civil rights of gay and lesbian persons, and to name and oppose at every turn any action or policy that does violence to them, encourages violence toward them, or violates their dignity as children of God. We call all our partners in the Anglican Communion to recommit to this effort. As we stated at the conclusion of our meeting in March 2007: "We proclaim the Gospel of what God has done and is doing in Christ, of the dignity of every human being, and of justice, compassion and peace. We proclaim the Gospel that in Christ there is no Jew or Greek, no male or female, no slave or free. We proclaim the Gospel that in Christ all God's children, including women, are full and equal participants in the life of Christ's Church. We proclaim the Gospel that in Christ all God's children, including gay and lesbian persons, are full and equal participants in the life of Christ's Church. We proclaim the Gospel that stands against any violence, including violence done to women and children as well as those who are persecuted because of their differences, often in the name of God."

[1] The Communion Sub-Group noted that "the resolution uses the language of 'restraint', and the group noted that there has been considerable discussion since General Convention about the exact force of that word. By requiring that the restraint must be expressed in a particular way – 'by not consenting ...', however, the resolution is calling for a precise response, which complies with the force of the recommendation of the Windsor Report." The group also noted "that while the Windsor Report restricted its recommendation to candidates for the episcopate who were living in a same gender union, the resolution at General Convention widened this stricture to apply to a range of lifestyles which present a wider challenge. The group welcomed this widening of the principle, which was also recommended by the Windsor Report, and commend it to the Communion."

Presiding Bishop to Host October 16 Webcast

A live webcast, co-produced with Trinity Church Wall Street, will begin at 3 p.m. Eastern time on October 16. Plans call for the Presiding Bishop's responses to questions asked via telephone and e-mail during the program. Access will be available through both the websites of the Episcopal Church (<http://www.episcopalchurch.org>) and Trinity Wall Street (<http://www/trinitywallstreet.org>).

Nativity Parish Library

I am still looking for another person to help in the library on Tuesday mornings from ten to twelve. The work is largely clerical and includes the following:

- Filing cards in the catalog. You will learn the specifics of library filing and will file cards above the rod until you get the hang of it.
- Preparing books for the shelves. This includes pasting in bookplates and pockets, and adding plastic covers to book jackets.
- Shelving books. Our shelves are filling up and we are now using both top shelves and bottom ones so that you need to be able to climb a ladder and crawl around on the floor.
- Filing weekly bulletins, *Glad Tidings*, and other newsletters in notebooks.
- Printing catalog cards and labels through a computer program and sorting them for filing.
- Keeping track of overdue books and sending out notices to the borrower.

These are obviously not very glamorous jobs, but they need to be done in order for the library to function efficiently. If you are interested, please see me any Sunday after the 10:30 service or call me at (410) 435-9569.

Catherine Bishop

Mending Creation Training

Sunday, October 7, 12:45-2:45 p.m.
2216 Epiphany Episcopal Church, Pot Spring Road, Timonium

The second session of *Mending Creation*, the diocese's training in the care of children and youth and in policies relating to sexual abuse, is scheduled as indicated above. All vestry and paid staff are required to take this training. All volunteers who work with youth, regularly or occasionally, are urged to take the training as well. For those who might have missed these sessions at Nativity, this is an opportunity to correct that omission.

Sarah Knowles

Fall Trivia Challenge

The Montis will be hosting their Fall Trivia Challenge on Saturday evening, November 3, 2007. The time will be 7 p.m. in the Great Hall. For our last two matches, we have had 3 and 5 teams playing. We are hoping for at least 7 teams this time. Teams can be made up of from 1 to 3 people, and all are encouraged to bring snacks to share. The prizes for the top 3 teams will be a treat made by Nancy Monti.

This is a 20-question written challenge game. It is not Trivia Pursuit.

Come one, come all, and see how much you can call forth from your Random Access Memory.

Nancy Monti

Nativity Book Club



Sunday, October 21,
2:30 p.m.
Home of Pat Brain

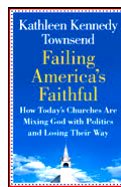
The book for October will be *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini. This novel was a *New York Times* bestseller in 2003 when it was first published, and it is Mr. Hosseini's first book. The author was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1965, and in 1980 his family sought political asylum in the United States, where they made their residence in San Jose, California. Mr. Hosseini is an M.D. as well as a novelist.

The novel is laid in Afghanistan during the past forty years and reflects the culture of a fairly well-to-do family during that period. It includes the uneasy relationship of a widowed father with his son, the childhood relationship of a boy with a friend of different ethnic background, the betrayal of that friendship, and the redemption of the guilty person many years later. There are many levels on which this story is based, and it is a real page-turner.

If you enjoy reading and discussing books, we invite you to read the book and join us at that time.

Catherine Bishop

Book Event



Thursday, October 25
7 p.m.
Church of the Good
Shepherd
Ruxton

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend will discuss her latest book, *Failing America's Faithful: How Today's Churches Are Mixing God with Politics and Losing Their Way*.

Outreach

Three BIHN Fundraisers

Macy's Saturday, October 13

Like to shop? BIHN is registered for Macy's "Shop for a Cause." A shopping pass gets you up to 20% off all purchases! At ANY Macy's NATIONWIDE! BIHN gets 100% of each pass sold! Great gifts for cards, friends, and volunteers alike! Shopping passes are \$5. Call Debby Tupper today!

Ten Thousand Villages Sunday, October 21 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Ten Thousand Villages in Kenilworth will donate 10% of all sales to BIHN! This event has raised \$500 and supports not one, but TWO great causes!

Museum of Industry Saturday, November 17 8 to 11 p.m. 1415 Key Highway Inner Harbor South

Join us for a memorable Baltimore Inner Harbor Night. Enjoy great food, dancing, silent auction, and a cash bar. Tickets are \$65 per person. All proceeds to benefit BIHN to help homeless parents and their children.

We invite you to celebrate our third year of helping families with children. Baltimore Interfaith Hospitality Network (BIHN) is a local nonprofit 501 (c)(3) that provides 24-hour accommodations for homeless families in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. BIHN unites interfaith congregations, a day center, and social service agencies to help families in crisis. BIHN is an empowerment program, enabling families to take action steps to obtain and sustain affordable housing.

Debby Tupper

Mission to Seafarers



Christmas at Sea Wish List 2007

Please include the following in each box:

- A paperback Bible or New Testament, in a modern translation (readable by those whose first language is not English).
- A greeting or a piece of paper with the name and address of your church, in case the seafarer is able to send a thank-you note. (Most can't, but a few do.)
- Toiletries, sealed (no unwrapped soap or tooth-brushes, etc.; and please remember that almost all our seafarers are male).
- A warm hat, socks, gloves, or scarf.
- And some of the following: pens and pads, playing cards, post cards of Baltimore, word puzzles, etc.



It's hard to imagine Christmas in this beautiful fall weather, but we know that many of our Christmas at Sea donors are already at work. We are deeply grateful to all the churches and individuals who have participated in our annual gift distribution to ships' crews of all nationalities and faiths. Many crew members earn less than \$1,000 a month, so a box of sundries makes a big difference in their lives. Crews returning to Baltimore in February or March often thank us all over again for these gifts. Also, due to new US security regulations, many seafarers can't leave the ships to do their own shopping or even to telephone. Your gifts brighten their lonely lives.

At the Church of the Nativity, we are already gathering shoe boxes now and are putting them under the card table just inside the side entrance to the nave. Tentative plans call for a shoebox stuffing and wrapping party in mid-December.

Should you choose to participate: Please use a medium shoebox because it is awkward to bring a crew 10 large boxes and 10 smaller boxes!

Please also use our Christmas at Sea Wish List at the left to help with selecting items to fill the boxes.

The Baltimore International Seafarers' Center is located near the Fort McHenry terminal. Center volunteers visit ships regularly to check on needs, welcome crew members to the Center, and provide transportation. To learn more, call 410-685-1240 or write baltseafarers@aol.com.

The Rev. Mary Davisson
Linda Hollis

YAC Times

Hello Everyone!!! The Young Adults in the Church (YACs) would like to wish everyone great success this year in all their endeavors, whether worshipping during the services at the church of the Nativity or worshipping in a church near your school (Jessica we miss you).

As for this year in our Christian education, the YACs welcome everyone between the ages of 16–28 or above to come and join us every Sunday between 9:15 and 10:30 a.m. for our meetings. We have a relaxed atmosphere where everyone is given a change to express their views and an opportunity to discuss ways in which young adults can participate in the Christian life.

Upcoming events

4th of November—The YACs will host a bake sale after the 10:30 service, so save your sweet tooth for that day and bring along a few to church and for joining us after church.

8-11th of November—Maryvale Preparatory School will be showcasing their Fall play, “Babes In Toyland.” Our own Kathleen Van DeWille will be performing on the 9th and 11th. For ticket purchases, contact Kathleen Van DeWille (410-377-6944) or email kathleenvdw11@aol.com.

18th of November (tentative date)—The YACs will have our first of two youth services for this coming year. The sermon will be given by Sarah Kanwisher. Zoraa Gbeintor and Kathleen Van DeWille will provide music for this service, so we invite everyone to come to the 10:30 service to support the young adults in the church.

For more information on any events listed above, please contact the YACs through Justin Dowding (917-693-1854) or email yacnativity@gmail.com.

Justin Dowding

Excerpts from a Letter from Isabel

Dear Friends at Nativity,

It was so good to see you on September 9th!



I’ve been very busy—not with cooking because I did have a young woman here to do that, but last Wednesday I had 20 people here for lunch—10 in the dining room, 6 at the kitchen table, 4 at a card table in the living room. They were all from St. Peter’s, except for Fr. Michael Fill who drove up from Philadelphia. He took care of us when we were between rectors at our church, which first was flooded and then demolished.

[I am reminded] of one of my mother’s stories about her father. He saw an elderly acquaintance one day and asked her how she was doing. Her answer was, “Well, I do feel better than I have, but I have felt better than I do, and if I did myself justice, I’d be in bed this minute!”

There is a film festival going on at the Dietrich Theater at the moment. There are films and live performances. I expect to see “Trial by Jury” (which is not being given at the theater but by an amateur group performing in the courthouse.) One of the films I expect to see is “The Hollywood Librarian,” which contains clips from movies where librarians from various films will be shown, along with real live librarians currently working, including OURS from Tunkhannock! (This film had its first showing at the American Library Ass’n’s annual meeting in Washington, DC, during the past summer.) My cousin, a retired librarian from Chicago, is now the theater’s Cultural Director. She says it’s the most exciting job she’s ever had. ... Love to everyone I know! *Isabel Wilner*

From the Diocesan Parish Mailing

The Festival of Flowers

October 18-20
Church of the Redeemer
5603 North Charles Street

The public is invited to learn the secrets of “making art with flowers” at this event to benefit the National Cathedral in Washington. This event includes “how to” demonstrations, a display of altar hangings and clerical garments created by fiber artist Martha Gilbert, and plenty of specialty shopping. Tickets for the demonstrations are \$25.00 and for the October 18th Evening Preview Party, \$35.00. Regular admission to view the 40 artistic arrangements and displays throughout the church is \$10.00. Presented by the Maryland Committee of the National Cathedral.

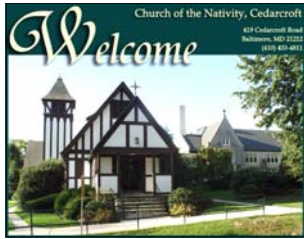
Lecture on Jesus and Judaism

Monday, October 22, 7:30 p.m., St. Mary’s Seminary

Church Club of the Diocese of Maryland

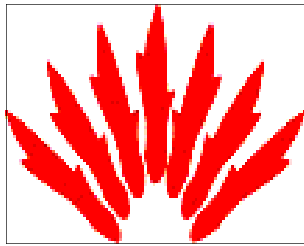
Wednesday, October 24
Trinity Church Towson
120 Allegheny Avenue

The honor of your presence is requested as the Church Club opens its 109th year with a Fall Dinner Meeting. Social hour begins at 6 p.m., with buffet dinner at 6:45 p.m. The Guest Speaker is The Rt. Rev. Michael Creighton, Assistant Bishop. For reservations, please call 410-823-3588 before October 17th. Cost for first-time guests: \$32.50.



The mission of the Church of the Nativity is to faithfully love and serve Jesus Christ by embracing all people through worship, outreach, and fellowship in His name.

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October 2007**

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