



News and Events
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TRINITY 2005

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Bishop Stephen C. Reber, addressing the National Convention. Below: National Council



THE EIGHT TRIENNIAL SYNOD OF THE UNITED EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA Huntsville Alabama



**Office of The Presiding Bishop of the
United Episcopal Church of North America**
614 Pebblestone Court
Statesville NC 28625

Bishop's Schedule

September 10

Wedding at Boaz AL

September 11

Episcopal Visitation to All Saints Anglican Church

October

Visit to Ohio

November 5

Ordinations at St.Gabriel's, Springdale AR: Ordination of Rev.Rafael Carbajal to priesthood and Ken Hargis to Deaconate

November 6

Episcopal Visitation to St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church

November 12

Ordination at St. Joseph's, Branson MO

Ordination of Rev. Jim McTaggart

November 13

Episcopal Visit to St. Francis, Ava, MO

A hearty congratulations to our new clergy:

The Reverend Mr. John Ayers

The Reverend Mr. Philip Schafner

The Reverend Mr. Jeff Smith

The Reverend Mr. Wes Nolden

The Reverend Mr. Don Wilson

Congratulations to the birth of the third order of St. Benedict and to the Abbot Mason Paramore and the priors, Fr. Max Skipper and Fr. Leo Michael. Congratulations to new members.

Brother David Dennewitz took vows of a Novice. He will spend the next year learning the ways of the Order and the Religious Life. Four Novices took Solemn Profession of Vows: Father Max Skipper, Sister Sarah Riley, Brother Jim Green, and Sister Vincent Christian.

**MINUTES of the Eighth Triennial
Convention of the United Episcopal Church
of North America Held in Huntsville, AL
19 May 2005**

The Convention was called to order with a prayer, by the Bishop at 9:30 am. The secretary and the treasurer conferred and it was determined that a quorum was present. The Bishop then stated that, according to the Canons, the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies meet separately, but as there was only one Bishop he asked the Convention to be allowed to remain on the floor during the deliberations. A vote was taken, with no objections. The Bishop stated that

From The Shepherd's Heart

*The words from Psalm 133,
Ecce, quam bonum!*

"Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

These words really testify to what happened at our recent Eighth Triennial Convention & Synod.

I felt so proud to be your Bishop and so proud of the way most of you expressed your affection and brotherhood to all of our members and guests. A BIG thanks to all who worked so hard to make the event the success it was.

It's Trinitytide now. Time to relax a bit. Time to find some quiet moments. Time to deepen our commitment to Christ, both by keeping up our attendance and giving to our local parish. But also time to take that trip with loved ones, catch up on some reading, or just simply get away from it all.

Judy and I will again, God willing, be at the lighthouse in Bruce Minor, Ontario, Canada from July 9th to Aug. 14th. During that time, should the need arise you can contact Canon Michael Carr at 850-651-9800 at church or 850-455-5630 at his home. Should you need the service of a bishop, please call the Rt. Rev. David Huswick, 269-948-9327.

+ Stephen C. Reber, Sr.

The Presiding Bishop of the UECNA

the President of the House of Deputies, Carlton McKey, was unable to attend, due to the illness of his father. He had appointed Ray Turczynski as interim president until a replacement could be elected. The floor opened for nominations for President of the House of Deputies. After a decent interval, it was moved and seconded that nominations be closed. Ray Turczynski was elected by acclimation. The secretary asked that the minutes of the Seventh General Convention be accepted by title.

As there were no objections, they were accepted, as presented. The Bishop made note that, since the last convention, the treasurer, Ed Knox, had been ordained to the Diaconate. The secretary made a motion stating that, as there was nothing in the Charter and Canons to prevent a clergyman from serving as Treasurer of the UECNA, the Rev. Mr. Ed Knox should remain in that position. Seconded by Fish Herring and approved by acclimation, with a special notation by the Bishop that this was NOT setting a precedent that a clergyman was to hold the position of Treasurer. The National Council that normally contains twelve persons, has, in the past consisted of three (3) clerical and nine (9) lay members. With the expansion of the Church, the Bishop had asked for additional members to better represent the physical areas. He submitted the names of those persons who had agreed to serve on the Council, if elected. They were: The Rev. Canon Carr, Canon Ordinary of the UECNA and secretary of the council, The Ven. George McClellan, Archdeacon, the Ven. Leo Michael, Archdeacon. and The Fr. Glen Hartley, Dean of the Deanery of the Ozarks.

To keep from changing the Canons and bylaws, the Bishop suggested Fr. George McClellan and Fr. Leo Michael receive 1/2 vote apiece. Then, from the laity: Ed Knox, Harold Herring, Ray Turczynski, Howard Baird, Elaine Dodson, Carole Turczynski, Frances Wilson and Matt Drachenberg. The secretary noted that Ed Knox, who had been elected treasurer, was now a clergyman, but was listed as laity on the Council. The Bishop stated that he would be filling the position as treasurer and not as clergy. The secretary called for nominations to the Council, from the floor. There were no further nominations. The slate was approved by acclamation. The treasurer presented the Treasurer's Report, copies of which were distributed to the Convention with copies to be filed with the Minutes. The basic premise of the report was that the UECNA was sound, financially. The treasurer explained several of the points of the report, answered questions. He reminded the delegation that it was important for each congregation, regardless of its size, should tithe. He also reminded them to encourage their respective congregations to make provisions to the church in their Wills and Insurance Policies and Grants. It was moved and seconded that the Treasurer's Report be accepted, as presented. Passed. Bishop Reber closed out the meeting by re-emphasizing the treasurer's comments on

the importance of individual and parished tithing. He also urged that each representative encourage their home church to initiate Legacies and Bequests to the National Church. Having no further business, the General Convention was closed with thanks to the host churches and a prayer for the delegates' safe return to their homes.

Respectfully submitted,

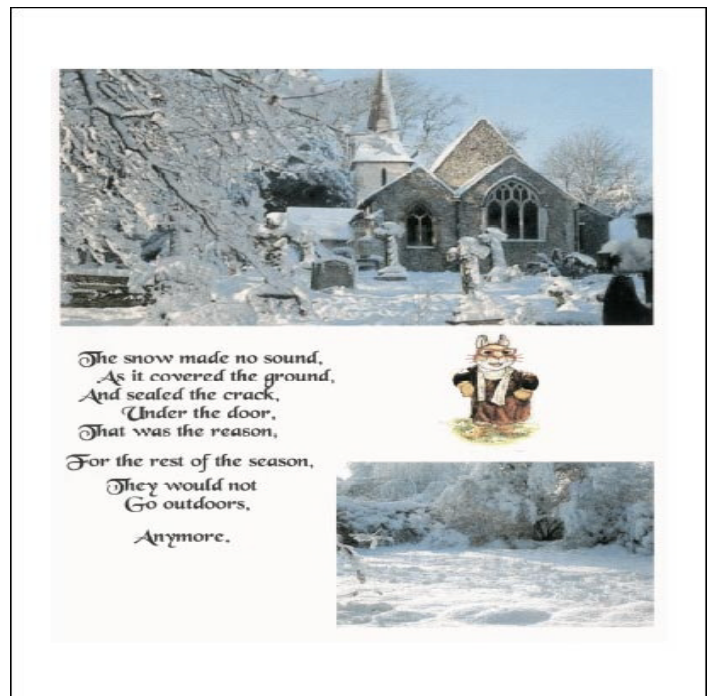
The Rev. Canon Michael G. Carr, Secretary



**DO YOU KNOW THIS
AUTHOR/
ILLUSTRATOR?**

Author, Illustrator, Father Mike, is otherwise known as the Reverend Canon Michael G. Carr, Canon Ordinary of UECNA and former editor of GLAD TIDINGS. While in this capacity, he began entering a regular cartoon

feature known as "Mus Ecclesia" which is the Latin terminology for "Church Mice." He was encouraged to put a collection of these cartoons in book form, but, instead, began writing a series of books for children, about one of his beloved characters, "Bartholomew." Father Mike was born in England and emigrated to the United States, following the end of World War II. Thanks Fr. Mike for your hard work over the years with Glad Tidings!



AROUND THE UECNA

St. Luke's Chapel

Pinellas Park FL

by the Rev. Robert P. Rolander, Vicar

We are getting ready for our summer vacation, when we close up the chapel for the month of July and do some recreational playing. We maintain throughout the year, a very busy schedule, taking care of the needs of five nursing homes, providing our musical entertainment in each place 2-3 times a month. We have Fr. Bob on the keyboard and two other fellows lending their voices. One is a former country band leader, and the other is a former barber shop tenor. We have a wonderful time and bring lots of joy to our nursing home folks. This activity closes down also for the month of July, but we get right back in the swing of things again in August. Have a lovely summer all our brothers and sisters, and stay close to the LORD at all times!!!

St. Thomas' Anglican Church Mountain Home AR

by Rev. Sam Seamans

Our benefit yard sale for the Bardin Family raised over \$250.00. The Bardin's are an adoptive family with 16 children. Another child in need is being adopted now. It was a wonderful way for St. Thomas to model servanthood and giving for others in our community.

The newest member of St. Thomas' Anglican Church was born Monday, June 13. Tomas Miroslav Seamans arrived at 8:48 am. He was 6lbs. 9oz. Both baby and mom are at home and are resting. Look for a baptism date soon for Tomas. Please keep Olus' and baby in your prayers. (It wouldn't hurt praying for Father Sam also!)

The Baxter Bulletin will be doing a news story on Father Sam's ordination service this Saturday. It was an Ecumenical effort that surpassed all expectations. Be watching for this wonderful opportunity to get the news about St. Thomas out into the community.

We will hold our one year anniversary celebration on Sunday, August 7. After the 10:00 service there will be lunch and activities planned to give thanks for our 1st year of ministry here in Mountain Home, Arkansas.

As always, we are prepared to welcome people to the United Episcopal Church of North America here in the Ozarks. As things continue to decline in ECUSA we need to be willing and able to meet the spiritual needs of Anglicans who are seeking a return to the biblical orthodox Christian faith. We are also ready to invite people who are unchurched from other traditions as well. Anglicanism has a unique and relevant message for Christians who are looking for a traditional, orthodox and catholic way to practice the faith.

Church of the Resurrection

Shalimar FL

by The Rev. Canon Michael G. Carr

We are proud to announce that, at the General Convention, two of our members, Ray and Carole Turczynski, were elected to offices in the United Episcopal Church. Ray was elected President of the House of Deputies and Carole was elected President of the Women of the Church. Since returning to the parish, they have assumed their local duties as Treasurer (Ray) and Secretary (Carole) of our Vestry. The only newsworthy occurrence since the Convention has been in avoiding, as yet, one more hurricane. Arlene followed the path of Ivan straight in to our area, and literally died at land-fall, leaving no damage to any parishioner.

St. Francis Anglican Church

Ava MO

by The Very Rev. Glen Hartley

Sunday, June 12, was our annual Spring Picnic at Rippee Creek Access, a local park tended by the MO Dept. of Conservation.

We always have a good time--plenty of parking, a huge grassy lawn area, great tall trees to give shade for the afternoon and a cool creek running alongside the picnic area.

A large number of the congregation attended and the youngsters headed almost immediately to the creek. They just had to get wet! While they were swimming and splashing in the water, a fire was lit in the fire ring and cooking commenced. Foods of all kinds were laid out on the picnic table and another table provided space for desserts. We had plenty to eat and we enjoyed eating almost as much as the visiting and fellowship.

In addition to our regular congregation, we had Jim Woods, Marty Figurski and son Dakota with us. They are former members who now attend St. Thomas Church in Mountain Home, Ark. Also visiting with us for service and picnic were Cheryl Ryans grandsons, Dillon and Trevor and a friend from Pennsylvania.

We ate, we talked, we swam and waded the creek, and late in the afternoon when the sun was getting a little too warm and the shade a little too small, we cleaned up our spot and headed for home. But next year we will be back. It's a tradition, you know.

All Souls Episcopal Church

Port Richey FL

by Sarah Riley

We are slowly building up membership (about 30 parishioner each Sunday now) after having to move three times

due to the hurricanes in our area. We are now worshipping in the DAV Hall, which, strangely enough, used to be a church! This was discovered when a new roof was put on the hall, and a cross was discovered on top of the old roof. Thanks to generosity and hard work of our members, we have obtained new altar linens, new backdrops for the worship space, and a new chalice and ciborium. We have had a van for three years now, to pick up parishioner that can't drive to church. This was donated by Fr. and Mrs. Skipper in memory of their daughter, Sandra, and helps us to be a real presence in the community. Our members are volunteering in the community at Gulfside Hospice and other locations, and we are putting together a flyer to be delivered by the local paper. We have a local web site and have received several calls and comments on it from people as far away as Massachusetts.

We are starting Men's and Women's Fellowships on Saturday mornings for Morning Prayer, Bible study, and service work for our church and community. God Bless all in the UECNA and thanks for your help and prayers, especially the opportunity to attend the Synod.

St. Joseph's Church Branson MO

by Rev. Mr. Jim McTaggart

It is the season and St. Joes' is advertising on the local vacation channel which is broadcast into every hotel room within 20 miles. In addition to TV advertising, we also have weekly ads in the local tourist paper. Fortunately for us we are listed under both Anglican Churches (we're the only one) and Episcopal, where we are one of three. We are getting double exposure. We are experiencing two to three new faces each week. Some return and some do not, but we are in a net gain position. Praise the Lord!

Thanks to Fr. George and the web site, we have also attracted several visitors from Springfield, MO that is host to five Episcopal USA churches. Asked how they met us, they replied they found us on the web and were searching for a replacement for the "other" church. We welcomed them with open arms, coffee and cake.

Thanks to the generosity of the First Presbyterian Church, we continue to meet in the Old Stone Church. We are busy establishing a building fund with the hopes of our own building someday.

We continue to pray for the UECNA, St. Joseph Church, and our Deanery. May the Lord continue to smile upon us and reward us for our hard work.

All Saints Anglican Pittsburg KS

by Rev. Jon W. Hunter

God is doing great things in the United Episcopal Church these days, and All Saints Anglican Church in Pittsburg, Kansas is certainly receiving her share of blessings as well. For many months, All Saints had been praying for an organ-

ist and/or pianist to replace the sony Boom-box which provides the music for our hymns. Through the internet, Dwayne and Barbara Smith of Joplin, Mo., found out about our new parish in Pittsburg. Dwayne and Barbara are musicians by profession and Barbara just happened to be an accomplished organist and pianist. After visiting All Saints a few times, Dwayne and Barbara decided to make All Saints their church home. Furthermore, Barbara informed us that she could play the organ and piano and would be willing to become our church organist. Lord willing, upon Bishop Reber's next visit, he will officially receive them into the UECNA.

Thanks to Sister Anne Meyer, sisters of St. Joseph of Wichita has made it possible for us to offer a Wednesday 7 pm Holy Eucharist service at Cornerstone Assisted living

I would like to take this opportunity to send out a sincere thank you to each and every member of the UECNA who sent a gift to Miss Paula and me on the occasion of the birth of our first child, Jon Wesley Hunter II. I cannot begin to tell everyone how much we appreciate your thoughts, prayers, and gifts. We love you all and pray that God may Bless each of you richly.

St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church Springdale AR

by The Venerable Fr. Leo Michael

St. Gabriel's has been busy on all fronts--especially as of late, in growth and apologetics. Our Hispanic ministry is growing in leaps and bounds. The Rogers Police station offers Deacon Rafael Carbajal a room at their facility. Sometimes we are there until midnight, preaching, teaching, hearing confessions and ministering to this group of people who are seeking the Lord. We also have our Hispanic Eucharist Sunday at 1:30 pm and the pews are filling up with folks eager for God's word and receive the Sacraments.

We are also experiencing a time of apologetics--defining and standing for who we are and who we are not.

An email came to me from a local ECUSA rector, asking us to change the name of our church, taking off "Episcopal". St. Gabriel's has been in Northwest Arkansas for almost two decades and we wondered why he would choose this time to ask us to change our name. Very firmly, I let him know that we will not be changing our name. Apparently, this church is undergoing difficulties due to their decision to proceed with discussion about holding same-sex blessings in their parish. We then ran an ad welcoming Episcopalians home to St. Gabriel's.

We posted the emails on the Episcopblog and soon other sites linked ours and took on the discussion of an ECUSA church asking an UECNA church to change it's name. This prompted question in the Blog World about what UECNA was all about. In spite of the insanity of the request to change our name, it offered UECNA an opportunity to be the topic of many discussions in the Blog World.

ORDINATIONS



FELLOWSHIP AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION



Inside the Treasury - Part III

by Rev. Mr. Ed Knox

Previously, we have seen how incoming tithes and contributions are processed and where the money goes. The question now arises, "Who is accountable for our funds?" The answer is, the National Treasurer (as it should be) as he is the one handling the money and writing the checks.

As Harry once put it, "The buck stops here." But please know that safeguards exist in the form of checks and balances, and that several other persons are involved while 'looking over my shoulder' as follows:

1) No check is ever written without authorization of our Bishop and National Council.

2) Each quarter, a financial statement providing opening balance, revenues, expenses and closing balance is mailed to Bishop Reber and all National Council members.

3) Each year, a representative (usually, the treasurer) of each parish is mailed a revenue report which lists all funds that have been received. A cover letter encourages each representative to scrutinize their parish figures in order to verify that all submitted tithes have been received and accurately recorded.

4) Your cancelled checks endorsed 'For deposit into the account of the UECNA' provides assurance that funds are being properly deposited.

Because your treasurer is accountable for our funds, numerous records are kept to provide documentation of all transactions. Files are maintained for the tithes and correspondence of all parishes and individual contributors; a personal journal of over 345 pages of handwritten of handwritten notes provides a record of all mail, phone calls, statements, payments, etc: there are over 215 additional pages of financial entries; deposit slips and checks are numbered sequentially; figures are checked and double-checked; and bank statements are reconciled monthly to our check register to assure our account is accurate 'to the penny', which it has been for the past five years, as shown on a two-page document given to all delegates attending our May Synod in Huntsville, Alabama.

Tithing: A Biblical Approach-Part I

by Holly Michael

This series will continue in future editions of Glad Tidings. It is an excerpt from my editing/script writing project "God's Plan for Financial Success: A Biblical Stewardship Series compiled by Arthur Ally, founder and President of the Timothy Plan, the nation's leading Biblically based, pro-life, pro-family mutual fund group. (www.timothyplan.com)

Holy Scripture offers more than 2,300 verses regarding money. Jesus devoted more than 15% of His recorded words to this one subject. Why did the Saviour of the world say more about how we should handle money and possessions than any other single thing? What did He know about money

and possessions that we don't?

Richard Halverson, former chaplain for the U.S. Senate, offers a good response with this quote, "Jesus Christ said more about money than about any other single thing because when it comes to a man's real nature, money is of first importance. Money is an exact index to a man's true character. All through Scripture there is an intimate correlation between the development of a man's character and how he handles money.

God expects us to use the resources he gives us to best carry out our responsibilities. A steward's primary goal is to be found faithful by his master as the steward uses the master's resources to accomplish the tasks delegated to him. "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful." (1 Corinthians 4:2)

But in the Christian community today, there is more blindness, rationalization, and unclear thinking about money than anything else. Our learning comes from the world's perspective-- a perspective that is nearly always in direct opposition to God's perspective. In fact, God's Word admonishes us: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Rom. 12:2)

Consider St. Matthew 19:21 where the rich young man asked Jesus how he can obtain the Kingdom of Heaven. In today's world, first we would probably commend him for his interest in spiritual things. Then we might tell him, "just believe, that's all; simply ask Jesus into your life-- you don't really have to do anything else." When he said, "Okay, I believe" (which no doubt he would since it cost him nothing), we would consider him a follower of Christ.

But Jesus didn't tell him to give 10% to the poor. Neither did Jesus say, "Set up a trust fund, keep the principle intact, and give the interest to the poor." The young man would have gladly done that. Instead, Jesus stopped him dead in his tracks by telling him to give up everything and follow Him. Jesus knew money was the rich young man's god. He also taught that none of us can enthrone the true God unless in the process we dethrone our other gods. If Christ is not Lord over our money and possessions, then He is not our Lord.

I'd like to focus this article on tithing, since at our National Synod our Bishop encouraged our parishes and our members to tithe. So what does God say specifically regarding tithing, "A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord." (Lev. 27:30).

The meaning of the word "tithe" means a "tenth" part. You can donate 2% or 4% or 6% of your income, but you cannot "tithe" it.

St. Augustine said, "Tithes are required as a matter of debt, and he who has been unwilling to give them has been guilty of robbery. Whosoever, therefore, desire to secure a reward for himself, let him render tithes, and out of the nine parts let him seek to give alms."

When we as New Testament believers, living in a far more

affluent society than ancient Israel, give only a fraction of that given by the poorest Old Testament believers, we surely must reevaluate our concept of grace giving. And when you consider that we have the indwelling Spirit of God and they didn't, the contrast becomes even more glaring. The pro-grace or anti-legalism trump card rings hollow when it attempts to normalize wealthy Christians giving less than the poorest Israelite.

One study showed that typically, in American households with incomes under \$10,000, 5.5% of their income was given to charities, whereas those earning more than \$100,000 gave only 2.9%. This disparity shows that true sacrifice in giving typically decreases, not increases, as people make more money.

R.G. Le Tourneau understood God's purpose for blessing him financially. An inventor of earth moving machines, LeTourneau reached the point of giving 90% of his income to the Lord. As he put it, "I shovel out the money, and God shovels it back--but God has a bigger shovel."

God says, "Test me in this, and watch me provide." (Mal. 3:10). Jesus said, "Give and it will be given to you...For with the measure you use, it will be measure to you." (Lk 6:38)

The End of Religion?

Brushing Off the Most Important Question

by Stuart Buck, member of St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church in Springdale, AR. Buck is a graduate of Harvard Law School, an accomplished classical guitarist, and well-known blogger (<http://stuartbuck.blogspot.com>).

Apatheism. It's not exactly a religion, per se. It's a mindset of apathy towards religion. And it is to be praised and encouraged.

So says Jonathan Rauch, a respected social thinker writing in the May issue of the Atlantic Monthly. He coined the word apatheist on the spur of the moment when recently asked what was his religion. The term means "a disinclination to care all that much about one's own religion, and an even stronger disinclination to care about other people's."

According to Rauch, the "modern flowering" of apatheism, "particularly in ostensibly pious America, is worth getting excited about." Rauch's excitement arises because he believes that religion, generally speaking, "remains the most divisive and volatile of social forces." (He points to the tragic events of September 11 as a demonstration.) Yet he is evenhanded with the blame, also mentioning the "tyrannical secularism" of China. Given that too-fervent beliefs, whether religious or anti-religious, are so dangerous, the rise of apatheism is a proud achievement, the "product of a determined cultural effort to discipline the religious mindset" and to "master the spiritual passions."

But let's not break out the celebratory wine just yet. For one thing, apatheism is next to impossible to maintain with

any consistency. Rauch himself appears to violate his own apatheism by expressing dislike for the Al Qaeda brand of Islam. He tries to escape self-contradiction by saying at one point that apatheists are not "concerned about the (non-violent, noncoercive) religious beliefs of others." (Emphasis added.) Since Al-Qaeda-style Islam is violent, Rauch allows himself the freedom to dislike it.

But the term noncoercive is quite a bit wider in scope. Almost any religious belief could be described as "coercive" if it affects public policy. Does Rauch care whether his fellow citizens are religiously opposed to abortion, for example? If the answer is, "No, as long as the pro-lifers keep their beliefs to themselves and don't try to coerce anyone else," then this much vaunted apatheism is close to meaningless. Pro-lifers are not going to keep their beliefs to themselves; nor would anyone else who believed that millions of human lives were being wrongfully ended. If Rauch reserves the right to "care" about any religious beliefs that affect public life, then his "apatheism" will rarely, if ever, be called into action.

More than that: Arguing for apatheism amounts to arguing against any religion that is evangelical in nature. When Rauch says that we should all be apatheistic, he is necessarily setting himself in opposition to all the Christian denominations who take seriously Christ's charge to go unto all the world and preach the Gospel.

So it seems that self-contradiction is almost built into the notion of apatheism. Only a non-apatheist could argue, as does Rauch, that millions of people should change their religion and become apatheistic.

Rauch does hit on a partial truth in praising his "Christian friends who organize their lives around an intense and personal relationship with God, but who betray no sign of caring that I am an unrepentantly atheistic Jewish homosexual." One is thankful that some devout Christians are willing to set aside any personal disagreements they might have and befriend Mr. Rauch. After all, Christ said that we should be known for our love, after all, not for our readiness to berate and condemn.

On the other hand, perhaps Rauch's Christian friends are not acting out of Christian charity and kindness, but instead have fallen prey to the modern misconception that beliefs about God are not really capable of being "true" or "false." Perhaps the real reason that they do not challenge his atheism is not because of politeness or charity, but because they don't have a solid commitment to their own belief in God.

The fact is, many Christians fall into spiritual relativism, and thereby simulate tolerance and love for others. It may look the same from the outside—in either case, an atheist like Mr. Rauch may think what nice people these Christians are—but there is a vast difference between a Christian who befriends atheists out of love and a Christian who befriends atheists out of a squeamish uncertainty in his own faith. The first type of Christian might struggle with the natural

human tendency to reject other human beings who are different in some fashion, and instead rise above that tendency by the power of God's love and grace. The second type of Christian might never have had the struggle in the first place, because his own faith in God is so ephemeral that it would never occur to him to think that atheism was any different.

Unfortunately, Rauch seems to suggest that the second type of Christian is what he is looking for. He notes approvingly that many of the "softer denominations in America are packed with apatheists," and suggests that such apatheists may attend church services "to connect with a culture or a community, to socialize, to expose children to religion, to find the warming comfort of familiar ritual." Notably absent from that list is the most important function, the one that distinguishes a church service from a meeting of the Rotary Club or the PTA: worshipping God.

And there's the rub. Rauch, perhaps because he writes from the atheist's limited perspective, completely misses that the whole purpose of religion is to seek after God. In this he is not alone; it is a well-known paradox that academic sociologists tend to discuss every possible aspect of religion except what it teaches about God. Yet this is missing the point in the most spectacular way. Surely the question of how we human beings can come to know God is the most important question any of us will ever face.

That being the case, it is difficult to see how apatheism, in Rauch's sense, can ever take root, except to the extent that people stop truly believing in God. Look at how we human beings act: We care about whether our friends like the right kind of music, read the right kind of books, associate with the right people, wear the right clothes, cheer for the right sports teams, drive the right kind of car, or vote for the right candidate. While we can always grow in love and charity towards others, how can we—without sapping our own faith—stop caring whether our friends have reached the right conclusion about the most important thing there is?

Journey to Anglican Tradition

Part I

by Fr. Sam Seamans

St. Thomas Anglican Church, Mountain Home AR
(A series that will feature the testimony of clergy who have joined the UECNA. This is the first part of Fr. Sam Seaman's article)

Many Anglicans today come from different denominational backgrounds and I am one of those Anglicans. I was raised in the Southern Baptist tradition in south Louisiana. Most of the area where I grew up was Roman Catholic. Baptist boys were the minority. Being raised in such a climate prejudiced me against things "catholic." I was very suspicious of traditions of the Church that weren't included in the traditions of my parents church.

I want to be clear that I am very thankful to the ministry of

the Southern Baptists for it was due to their efforts that I came to know Christ as a little boy of 11 at Vacation Bible School. I also want it to be known that I love and respect baptist Christians today and most of my family, save my mother and I, remain baptist. The reflections I offer in this article should in no way be read as condescending or judgmental to those who remain true to Christ and his teachings in the Baptist tradition. These experiences are my own and it is from my own heart and journey that I share them with you.

So, why did I become Anglican? The Southern Baptist Church is definitely a christian church and many come to know Christ through their ministry, and while this is true, there was something in the tradition of my parents that was missing. What was it? How did God lead me to a Church that practices the faith Catholic in all of its richness and connectedness to the past?

As a Baptist teen, suspicion began to arise. I was taught that "the catholics" had it all wrong with their Saints, Popes, Rosaries, and so on. Liturgical worship, the Sacraments, and redemptive theology (how one is saved, born again, converted, and all the other terms used for becoming a Christian) were at the top of the list. After all, doesn't scripture tell us that it is wrong to follow "the traditions of man?" What was it in my experience that made me so wary of how the Church had practiced the faith for 2000 years? (I was unaware that North American fundamentalism was a fairly new thing). Weren't Catholics and Episcopalians just "going through the motions" with all of their rituals? Why did they talk more about baptism than "getting saved"?

One thing I am certainly thankful to my baptist brothers for is my knowledge of the Bible and for biblical teaching. But my former tradition lacked instruction in Church history. When I graduated from High School at the age of 17, I had never heard of the Nicene Creed. I had no idea who Constantine was or what role he played in the development of Christianity. I did not know how the Bible was put together in the assembly of books that we refer to as Canonical. I was unaware of how the early church functioned before the New Testament was a reality. I had sat through years of solid expository preaching but history outside of the canon was rarely mentioned. We had Bible for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and everything we did or learned had a biblical citation to go with it. That in itself was not bad, but it did not give the whole story either.

While it would take a book to discuss everything in detail I'd like to touch on the areas I mentioned and how my thinking was eventually changed.

Let's take liturgical worship first, for it was one of the main things that gave me such a mental block. After all, in my mind liturgy meant "putting on a religious show" or "being ritualistic" instead of reflecting the real meaning of liturgy to which I was totally ignorant. A good place to start when discussing something is to define what it is

you are talking about. The definition of Liturgy is quite simply “the work of the people.” Every church has a liturgy though many would not refer to their worship styles using that word. As a kid I knew exactly what was coming next in the service because the liturgy was laid out in the bulletin. Words like “Invocation and Benediction” were used, as was “special music” and the closing “invitation”. As Anglicans we use a set liturgy in our services found in the Book of Common Prayer. As a youth I would have criticized such forms as too “wrote and rigid,” not realizing of course that my very own Baptist church used a more or less fixed “order of service”.

Having a set liturgy has a way of giving stability and strength to a service. Before I became an Episcopalian at the age of 30 I had attended some churches that bragged of a “more free style” of worship. Often times there were eight to 10 people in the sanctuary, each with a microphone singing praise choruses that appeared on an overhead projector. Was this inherently wrong? I don’t think so, but it did not touch me in the way the traditional Anglican liturgy did the first time I truly experienced it. For some personality types, worshiping with drums and clapping touches them. For myself, I longed for a more reverential, quiet, and sacred form of encountering God that honored silence and stillness.

Another thing that I noticed about the Anglican Church was the layout of the nave (which is often referred to as “the Sanctuary” by baptists. Anglicans have a different understanding of this term)

At my old church the pulpit was front and center. As you entered the church if you looked straight ahead you would see this large piece of wooden furniture. Preaching was the central part of the worship service, followed by the invitation (the time where the pastor would stand in the front of the pulpit waiting for those who make decisions for Christ to come forward). In the Anglican Church the pulpit is found to the side, and the altar or holy table is found front and center. This had an obvious symbolic meaning to me for we approach the altar of God when we worship and he is the focal point of our coming together. Though God does use the foolishness of preaching, it is not the primary reason that we come together and whether or not the sermon was good does not determine if we “had a good service” or not.

Another good reason for the pulpit to be to the side is for all to remember that in a sermon you are hearing one man’s rendering of the Word of God. Men, though ordained and qualified, can and have been wrong on a number of things theological. When the sermon is done, all eyes go back to the center, the altar of God, where we commune with him directly in the Eucharist. The preacher and his sermon is only one element of a worship service and shouldn’t be the central focus of a service in itself.

Blogging and the Church

by Matt Drachenberg

St. Gabriel’s Episcopal Church
National Council Member

The internet has seen an explosion in online personal journals, better known as “weblogs” or “blogs.” Blogs can be individualized to cover every topic imaginable. Blogging is “freedom of the press” at its finest, and owning a weblog is very inexpensive.

In addition to covering an endless range of topics from personal opinion to politics to cooking, blogs have become a necessary tool for evangelizing online. Formal religious organizations, clergy and laymembers of many denominations already have an online presence of some sort. Traditional Anglicans also have a very active presence online, disseminating news and connecting with each other through sites such as www.virtueonline.org and www.classicalanglican.net. Blogs are heavily used by Continuing Church members, as well as disaffected members of ECUSA and the Anglican Communion, to voice not only their dissent of post-modern “theologies,” but also to create a global awareness that there does indeed exist a traditional Anglican presence within which one may embrace orthodoxy.

Not only can we bloggers express our beliefs and practices online, but through reader comments left on our blogs, and through citations of our writings by other bloggers, we are able to reach to an even wider audience, disseminating important information and receiving instant feedback.

As a Continuing Episcopal Church, the UECNA recognizes the potential of the use of blogging by both clergy and devoted laymen. We invite UECNA members, especially clergy, to research online journals (weblogs) as a tool to assist in evangelization and parish growth. The UECNA, in good faith, offers to establish church clergymen their own weblogs for a nominal fee.

For further information and examples of existing weblogs owned by priests, deacons, seminarians and laymen of different denominations, please send your name, parish, email address and phone number to Matthew at drachenberg@gmail.com. You can also check out Fr. Leo Michael’s weblog at www.episcoblog.stgabrielsuec.org/

In Defense of the 1928 BCP: Part I Drastic Doctrinal Deviations in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.

by the Reverend Jerome F. Politzer (printed with his permission)

The alteration of the traditional language of worship has earned the disapproval of two-thirds of the membership of the Episcopal Church. Equally unacceptable to orthodox Episcopalians are the many doctrinal changes which have been made in the 1979 revision of the Book of Common Prayer.

SACRAMENTS

Holy Baptism--The service of Holy Baptism in the 1979 revision of the Prayer book teaches erroneous doctrine. The biblical and orthodox teaching on Christian baptism has been changed. The essential doctrines of Original Sin and Baptismal Regeneration have been abandoned. In their place the heretical and gnostic doctrine that mankind is liberated from an evil environment by initiation into the Christian Church is taught. Episcopalians should insist that the service from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer be used whenever possible.

Holy Confirmation--The sacrament of Holy Confirmation in the 1979 Prayer Book is invalid. For a sacrament to be valid it has to be administered with the proper Form. The proper Form for the sacrament of Holy Confirmation is an invocation prayer for the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit. The invocation of the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit has been removed from the Confirmation Service in the New Prayer Book. Orthodox Episcopalians should insist upon the use of the Holy Confirmation service from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer.

The Eucharist--The New Eucharist rites no longer emphasize the essential doctrine of the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the Cross, once and for all, for our salvation. Other than in Rite I, (the first communion service) the centrality of the Cross is diminished. The consecration prayers in Rite II, Eucharistic Prayers B,C, and D, and Forms 1 and 2 do not even mention the Cross. The doctrine of the real presence of Christ is made ambiguous and subjective in the New Eucharistic Rites. The optional use of the confession and absolution and the passing of the peace disrupt the deep penitential and devotional mood of the Communion Service. The revisers have turned the Eucharist into a man-centered fellowship rite rather than a God-centered commemoration of the Cross and passion of our Saviour.

Holy Matrimony--The service of Holy Matrimony in the 1979 Prayer Book reduces marriage to a covenant. It is no longer considered to be a sacrament "according to God's holy ordinance." The denial of God's holy law is the fundamental cause of the breakdown of the Church's teaching today in the area of human sexuality. The 1979 Prayer Book is antinomian in its teaching concerning human behavior.

Holy Unction and Penance--Provision in the 1979 Prayer Book for laymen to administer the sacraments of Holy Unction and Penance under certain circumstances blurs the necessary distinction between the Ordained Ministry and Lay Ministry. The Holy Unction can be ministered by the deacon and the penance must be ministered by a minister or priest to be consider valid.

We regret to announce the demise of Mrs. Elizabeth Knox, the mother of our National Treasurer and Senior Warden Rev. Mr. Ed Knox and Rev. John Hartman of Huron Ohio. Eternal Rest Grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen . Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaving families.

Mus Ecclesia



I'm Playing "Amazing Grace" or
"In the Garden" - - What'ver 'tis
Yer bein' a-singing!

Fr. Mike+



Glad Tidings

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