



# ENCOMPASS

News and Events from the American Anglican Council • Second Quarter 2014

## Holiness of Life in the Anglican Communion

*“For we know that our old self was crucified with him [Christ] so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been freed from sin... Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.” Romans 6:6-7, 12-13*

BY THE REV. CANON PHIL ASHEY, CEO

In the Daily Office that I follow online (TheTrinityMission.org) my attention was drawn this morning to the verses above from the New Testament reading in Romans 6. I could not help but reflect upon them in the light of the time I have spent recently with the bishop and clergy of the Anglican Church in North America's Diocese of Quincy, as we met for a clergy leadership retreat at the Redemptorist Retreat Center (Roman Catholic) near Nashotah House. In the hallowed and holy places of the chapel and the retreat center, in the lives of the bishop and clergy with whom I was privileged to spend time, and in Romans 6, I am reminded that at the heart of following Jesus is the call to holiness of life.

We spent a week talking about the challenges of leading a local church as a rector (senior pastor), vicar, interim or church planter. We spoke at length about how churches grow— and how they move from incline (growth) to recline (plateau) to decline and even death. We shared at length about the kind of leader Anglican churches need to move from recline and decline to a new season of incline. As leaders, we shared at even greater length about the temptations to sin in the process— to live less than the holy life that Christ calls us to lead— by personalizing church conflict instead of staying focused on God's vision for our churches, in our communities, at this time for mission rather than maintenance. We ended our time thinking about the way that Jesus himself led in times of great conflict. His was a “holy” pattern of life for us to follow as we seek to lead others in his footsteps.

I'm realizing that the call to live a holy life, just as Jesus lived, is precisely what is at stake in the great conflicts within our Anglican realignment. Whether we are talking about church growth, church litigation, the promotion of varieties of sexual practice and expression outside of lifelong marriage between a man and a woman, or the crisis of false teaching

within the global Anglican Communion, we find common in all these conflicts the challenge of the Bible to live a quality of life that Paul describes in those verses above from Romans 6. We call it holiness of life— and it is quite simply living our lives with the same holy commitment to God and his purposes that Jesus lived.

In his commentary on Romans, John Stott poses the question “Have we never caught ourselves making light of our failures on the ground that God will excuse and forgive them?” I certainly have: how about you? Stott goes on to lay out the argument in Romans 6 that Paul makes regarding why we have no freedom to do so:

1. We died to sin— so how can we live in what we have died to? (6:2)
2. We died to sin when in our baptism we were united to Christ in his death (6:3)
3. We don't stop with sharing in his death— we also share in Christ's resurrection life! (6:4-5)
4. Our former self was crucified with Christ in order that we might be freed from sin's slavery (6:6-7)
5. Both the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ were decisive “once and for all” events: He died to sin once for all, but he lives continuously unto God (6:8-10)
6. We must realize as followers of Jesus Christ that we are also now what Christ is, “dead to sin but alive to God” (6:11)
7. THEREFORE since we are alive from death, we must offer our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness (6:12-13), AND
8. Sin shall not be our master, “because our position has radically changed from ‘being under law’ to ‘being under grace’”. And grace does not encourage sin— grace outlaws sin. (6:14)

*“Holiness” continued on back page*

## Our Job is Not to Look Backward

BY ROBERT H. LUNDY, EDITOR

The Anglican Church in North America's newest bishop has ambitious and challenging goals ahead of him. The Rt. Rev. Mark Zimmerman is the first bishop for the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest and began his Albuquerque-based ministry in February of this year. The bishop immediately faces the challenge of growing and expanding the ministry of the 14 small congregations that make up the new diocese. Zimmerman is simultaneously learning Spanish as his goals include reaching out to the large Hispanic populations in the area which includes Northern Mexico.

Bishop Zimmerman told the American Anglican Council he welcomed the challenge and was prepared for it by his years of service in smaller Episcopal and Anglican congregations. Specifically, the challenge of leading a congregation out of The Episcopal Church and into temporary buildings while at the same time positively responding to new ministry opportunities was formative and helpful to the 57-year-old new bishop. St. Francis-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church in Somerset, Pennsylvania was a special place for Bishop Mark. By 2008, he had spent nine years leading the parish and taking it from a small, 30-member congregation to nearly 100 on a Sunday. He also led the church to be free of debt for the first time in its history.

Nevertheless, un-biblical teaching, practices and leadership in the national church compelled him to make a decision of conscience. Zimmerman says he first announced his decision in front of the entire parish. "I simply got in front of the pulpit on a Sunday and told the congregation that I had to make a personal decision to leave The Episcopal Church.

*Below: Bishop Mark Zimmerman at his consecration as the first bishop of the Diocese of the Southwest. Below left and right: The people of Somerset Anglican Fellowship turned a former clothing store into a temporary worship space. (Photos courtesy ACNA and Cynthia Zimmerman)*



*"Zimmerman" continued on page 3*



I told them I would be preaching the next Sunday at the local mall in what used to be a men's clothing store and gave them the address." A week later, Father Zimmerman and 80 percent of the members of St. Francis-in-the Fields Episcopal Church met for worship at the local mall, effectively leaving their building and past behind them.

"For the Anglican church now, our job is not to look backward...It is to proclaim the truth of the gospel in its fullness and richness to a world that is in desperate need of it," says Bishop Zimmerman and that is exactly what he and the people of Somerset Anglican Fellowship did. In fact, instead of seeing a decline in gospel zeal, he says the time in the mall was a spiritual boon for the congregation. "We didn't have a big building so the congregation quickly grasped that they were the church and the building wasn't." Recognizing their responsibility to one another and their call to share the love of Christ, parishioners at Somerset Anglican Fellowship soon began reaching out to the mall community and began drawing in visitors and welcoming opportunities to serve the community.

It was during their three-year stay at the local mall that a nearby Presbyterian church which had also left its parent denomination for reasons of conscience began looking for new church facilities. St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Somerset, PA had outgrown its building but wanted to ensure that whoever bought it would preach the same gospel that they believed. Somerset Anglican Fellowship proved to be a worthy buyer and in 2011 they purchased St. Paul's building. Their days in the old clothing store were over, but there were some drawbacks to the move. Some mission opportunities available to them while in the mall went away as did some of those visitors that had joined them. But where opportunities to serve went away, new ones appeared.

Drawing from his nine years of prior experience in a parish in New Mexico, Bishop Mark encouraged the church to begin an outreach to the Hispanic community in the Somerset area. The parish now holds a Spanish-speaking service every Sunday.

As Bishop Zimmerman and Cynthia, his wife of 34 years, began discerning a call to ministry back in the Southwest and the soon-to-be Anglican Diocese of the Southwest, they had no idea what God had in store next for them and their current parish in Somerset.

"After I was elected bishop and about three months before I was to leave Somerset, the priest from the Presbyterian church who sold us our building gave me a call." That priest, Keith Fink, had some amazing and wonderful news for Mark. "He told me that God had blessed his church such that they were able to pay off the mortgage on their new building and do it quickly," said Zimmerman. He said, "We were

blessed and we want to bless you." The Presbyterian church forgave the quarter-of-a-million dollar debt that Somerset Anglican Fellowship still owed them, leaving the Anglican parish debt-free. Just like St. Francis-in-the-Fields, Mark Zimmerman would be leaving his congregation in a better financial position than he found it.

On February 28, the bishops of the ACNA consecrated Mark Zimmerman as the first bishop of the Diocese of the Southwest. The new bishop prays that through God's grace he will leave a lasting legacy on the new diocese as it moves forward in mission and proclaiming the Gospel. †

*Top: Bishop Zimmerman and his wife Cynthia are now based out of Albuquerque. Below: Anglican Church in North America Bishops consecrate Bishop Zimmerman.*



## Accountability is Needed

BY THE RT. REV. DAVID C. ANDERSON, PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Recently, I have been thinking about accountability, authority and discipline. Not discipline in a harsh sense, but discipline in the sense of having fences and walls that define distance and relationships, expectations and behavior, and that protect more than punish those concerned.

I have been blessed with an intelligent and perceptive wife. Throughout my preaching career she listened to what I said from the pulpit and occasionally would ask me about something I said. Her questions often helped me explore an idea further and better develop or drop it if necessary.

Only once did she bring up a particular sermon illustration and say to me, “You will never use that example again.” I never did, and in fact I have forgotten what it was.

As a father of a family, I believe the man should take the leadership role in consultation with his wife and, to a lesser degree, everyone else who is affected. Since all five in my family have dominant personalities, there was never really a loose football; everyone was willing and ready to lead. For this reason, decisions were nearly always by consensus. Our family was part of a larger, intact, functional family, and so there were aunts, uncles and cousins who all played a part in a system of accountability. Unfortunately, not everyone has this advantage. Where it is lacking, a family should try to create a system of support and accountability, sometimes to protect themselves from themselves.

As a priest now in my 43rd presbyteral year, 8th episcopal, I have found that being under authority is absolutely necessary for me to be able to function well. This is especially true as I am in a position of authority. Most of us have creative minds, able to rationalize many things that would be inadvisable if more carefully examined. Left on our own, if we really want to have something or do something, our minds set to work “rationalizing” the endeavor. I’m sure that as King David viewed beautiful Bathsheeba on a neighboring rooftop his mind began to rationalize a course of action, and no one present could tell him “no,” or ask him about collateral damage or possible worst-case outcomes. You know the sad story that led to adultery, murder, and the death of a small child. It was only after the fact that a prophet of God, Nathan, came before King David and told him he was under God’s judgment. I personally want wise counsel in advance so that no prophet ever has to tell me that I am under God’s judgment. In fact,



if we don’t already have an accountability system in our private life as well as our business, public, and ecclesiastical life, we need to find one. A very small covenant group of mature Christians, usually gender specific, with permission to speak into very private areas of your life can provide this. If you are in Holy Orders, the church has a structure for accountability and authority. I encourage clergy to create a positive relationship with their church board and have lines of feedback that can report early and often, while relationships can still be repaired, and while decisions can still be reconsidered. A clergy person’s relationship with his or her bishop should also be kept in good repair, for the sake of both, for we all can go astray.

I am reminded of the Scripture from Romans chapter 3 that says, “For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” God has called us and placed us in his church, and has expectations of what we are to be doing for his kingdom’s sake. We need each other in the church to stay on target, to be encouraged when we are down, to be redirected when we are off, and cautioned when we are doing or saying things unwise.

In the midst of the re-alignment within Christianity today, many church bodies have pulled away from their parent denominations who have gone astray, and in pulling away faced the question of where to go. Some form a new church body or province, some join existing, more orthodox Christian churches, and some for a season stay independent. I would urge those who are independent to consider the issues of accountability and authority from a positive standpoint, providing additional brothers and sisters in Christ to stand with them in truth, to come to their aid in need, and to counsel them in perplexity or error.

This is the season of Lent, a time to reflect on our lives. During this season, reflect on your accountability system, whether you have one or not, whether it is working or not, and who you would be willing to be accountable to, and receive counsel from. †

## Gay Marriage and the Church of England's Response

BY THE REV. ANDREW SYMES,  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, ANGLICAN MAINSTREAM

As the Archbishop of Canterbury has reminded us more than once, we are experiencing a cultural revolution in the area of public attitudes to sexual morality. The pace of change has been rapid. I am not yet 50 years old. When I was born, homosexual sex was illegal; now, in two weeks time, people of the same sex will marry, accompanied by celebrations all over the country here in the UK. The change has not evolved gradually, but has happened as part of a deliberate campaign. The change has been carefully controlled, by using media, the law and even science to promote the new ideas.

The changes have been rapidly accepted: importantly by people with power and influence, and then filtering down to the general population. The message has been imposed through a combination of relentless teaching and threats of punishment for resisting. There is a real belief that the changes are wholly positive and part of the progress of civilisation.

In the face of this remarkably successful campaign, how has the church responded? By and large, we have seen targeting, analysis, paralysis, and division.

It is a paradox that though one of the tenets of the media narrative about the church is its irrelevance, it is deemed relevant enough to be relentlessly targeted in the campaign for full 'gay rights'. Why should it matter to the majority of gay people and those who support the successful campaign for full 'equality' what the church believes or does? And yet it clearly does matter, as these articles in today's Daily Telegraph and Guardian show, together with the stream of comments.

Why have the newspapers found space for these opinions? Because a church which conforms to secular humanism's dictates remains usefully irrelevant and is a poodle rather than a lion. Would they print an article with the opposing view? A church which says "there is a higher authority than Caesar" is a counterrevolutionary threat, so if this view is given space, it is in order to ridicule and criticize it.

In the face of this, there has been a lot of analysis, including from this column. Much has been written, lots of coffee has been consumed in meetings. There has been hand wringing, petitions have been signed, letters to Bishops have been sent and statements have been made in response. But the short term future is 'conversation', of which the aim appears to be mutual respect and learning to live with difference. Of course analysis is useful in exposing wrong ideas, but talk must eventually result in decision and action. This is not happening, because of division (see below).

The focus on analysis has led to (or perhaps is because of?) paralysis among church leaders with traditional beliefs. Typically, there is no urgency. Marriage has been redefined with huge implications for the spiritual and moral health of the nation, and yet many otherwise biblically orthodox clergy

are not sure there is a problem – especially since the Bishops have at least for the moment appeared to hold the line. There is little prayer, because of the influence of secularism which teaches us to rely on our management techniques rather than on God, because of the upsetting nature of the topic, and because of a lack of understanding about spiritual realities. "Oh yes, I will pray in general for the nation", I have been told, "but not specifically about gay marriage". There is no courage. Clergy tell me privately that they believe in what the Bible says about sex, but their priority is for hassle-free pastoral care, for unity in the congregation, and ultimately for their own livelihood. As a result there is a lack of good teaching in the congregations on this topic, and no action at local or national levels or support for others taking such action.

Of course not all churches in England have capitulated. Many are wanting to stand firm – and this brings division. The church is now irredeemably divided over homosexuality. The Gospel should be truth lived out in experience, but today 'my story' is ranged against propositional truth and right principles. Churches which should be based on the Word and oriented towards their communities are now choosing 'community' over against the Word. 'Witness' seen as cutting the cost of discipleship to get people into church is increasingly opposed to bearing witness to Christ at any cost. Words such as sin, the need for repentance and transformation are now applied more to people who do not approve of same gender sexual relationships, than to people in those relationships.

But also among those holding to a conservative position there are divisions. Should Christian sexual ethics be explained outside the community of faith? Should Anglicans protest against gay marriage outside registry offices, or the teaching of homosexual practice in schools? Could it ever be right (even if not canonically appropriate) to refuse sacraments to those who have entered a same sex marriage against pastoral advice? Should people with same sex attraction be enabled to seek skilled help to change if they so wish? What about the future of the Church – would it be a good thing to participate in facilitated conversations? Are there any circumstances in which it might be the best thing to form a separate Anglican administration, either linked to the Church of England (C of E) or not? Is GAFCON the solution? All of these questions separate the confessing C of E Anglicans.

The 'signs of hope' are pretty thin when ranged against the power of the revolutionary forces. But the Church of England still officially says "no" to same sex marriage, the message of God's plan for sexuality is being taught from pulpits, and communities of believers are looking to God and one another to help them live holy lives.

*Anglican Mainstream is an orthodox Anglican advocacy group based in the UK.*



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In other words, as followers of Jesus Christ, baptized into his death AND resurrection life, you and I actually have a choice— we can actually choose NOT to sin! We can actually choose “to offer our bodies [our mouths, our minds, our will to every action] as instruments of righteousness.” In other words, we can actually will to choose to live our lives as Jesus Christ would in every situation we find ourselves. Period.

It's a stunning invitation and challenge isn't it? But this call to holiness of life is truly at the heart of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. And there is certainly no room for

boasting or self-righteousness, for it is a call that can only be lived out in and under the grace and transforming love of Jesus Christ.

No wonder we have such conflicts in the Anglican Communion today over what the Bible means by “sin” and “baptism” and who Jesus really is. For it is this quality of life in Christ, holiness of life, that is at stake.

As we are in Lent, may we recommit ourselves to the call to a holy life— to life IN Christ alone— both as a church, as followers of Jesus Christ, and as leaders who have been called to lead others in His footsteps. †

**T**he American Anglican Council is a network of individuals, dioceses, parishes and ministries who affirm biblical authority and Christian orthodoxy within the Anglican Communion. By the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, the mission of the American Anglican Council is to build up and defend Great Commission Anglican churches in North America and worldwide through advocacy and counsel, leadership development and equipping the local church. *Encompass* is a quarterly publication of the American Anglican Council.

Publisher: The Rt. Rev. David C. Anderson  
Editor: Robert H. Lundy

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