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September 2008

# The Messenger

of St James' Church, Texarkana, Texas

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## From the Rector

Dear Parishioners & Friends of St James,'

It hardly seems possible that summer is nearly over, and soon we'll be in back-to-school mode.

**Summer worship.** Before I outline the program for next month, let me commend you for your faithful attendance at Mass throughout the summer. In so many parishes, people seem to adopt the curious custom of making Christ and his Church optional during the summer months – but not so among us! Week by week the people of God come together on Sunday – the Lord's Day, let us not forget – to hear the Word preached, and to receive the Body and Blood of our Savior in Holy Communion.

**Our Annual Instructed Eucharist** will take place on Sunday, August 31<sup>st</sup>. The always-popular instructed Mass provides a step-by-step commentary on the vestments and Order of Mass, explaining the words, actions and symbolism of our worship. If you've ever asked, "Why do we do that?," the instructed Mass will answer your questions.

**EPIC Sunday** is August 24<sup>th</sup> or "Every Person In Church," our annual Homecoming to welcome everyone back from their summer pursuits. As has become the custom for the past few years, a wonderful champagne brunch will be served after the 10am Mass. I know you will want to be here to give thanks for all that St James' has meant in your life.

**Christian Education** begins for adults and young people alike on September 7<sup>th</sup> at 9am. I encourage each of you to make a commitment to deepening your understanding of the faith by participating in some sort of ongoing Christian formation. Learning

is a life-long adventure because there is always something more to know about our faith, and frequently there is something to un-learn.

*If you are a parent*, I encourage to see that your children are in Sunday School, and EYC, and to set the example for them by your own class attendance. Our Christian Education program is designed to help you keep the solemn vow you made at your child's baptism to ensure that your child "is brought up in the Christian faith and life" (BCP, p. 302), and to help them become moral and spiritual beings. I am convinced that if we were to be as committed to Christian Education for our children and youth as we are to weekday schooling, our youth would be more fully equipped mentally, physically, and spiritually to truly make a difference in the adult world they will one day lead.

See you on E.P.I.C. Sunday, if not before.

Yours faithfully in Christ,

### WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ ST JAMES'

begins on September 17<sup>th</sup>

Mass at 6pm

Supper at 6:30pm

Adult Class & Faithweavers 7pm to 8pm

*In the adult class:*

Understanding the Theology of  
Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*

**MUSIC** is an absolutely essential part of worship in liturgical churches, and no less so here at Saint James'. We are blessed with a Rector and Vestry who heartily support and encourage good music, and with talented parishioners to populate the choir stalls.

Please consider the following ways for YOU to participate in the making of great liturgical music:

**PARISH ADULT CHOIR:** This Choir regularly provides anthems and motets, as well as support for congregational participation, at the 10 o'clock Mass on Sundays, and for major feasts. All singers from high school age and up are welcome. We can still use more singers in every section (Soprano, Alto, Tenor & Bass). Rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. First rehearsal of the new season is September 3.

**SAINT JAMES' BOY CHOIR:** This select group is unique in the entire Texarkana and East Texas area. Boys from age 8 (or having completed 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) through voice-change are auditioned, and then thoroughly trained in the English Cathedral Choral Tradition.

Due to the generous support of a benefactor, they are also compensated with a modest monthly stipend in return for their extensive rehearsal and performance schedule. Rehearsals are Tuesdays from 4:00 to 5:30 pm and Thursdays from 4:00 to either 5:30 or 7:00 pm, beginning September 2.

**SAINT JAMES' GIRL CHOIR:** This group was a new addition to our program last season, and we look forward to great things from them this year, as well. Open to girls of all ages, the Choir is under the capable direction of Ruth Hale. Rehearsals are on Sundays in the late afternoon: please watch for further information coming soon!

**THE BELL ENSEMBLE:** This group provides instrumental music for the church service, utilizing our 49 cast-bronze Whitechapel English handbells. Rehearsals have been on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 to 7:30 pm. Some prior musical experience and reading ability are necessary to the success of this Ensemble.

WE sincerely hope that YOU will be interested in participating in music-making during this new season! Please contact Choirmaster Fredrick Krieger at 903.794.9224 for further information.

## THE ORGAN CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

**GREAT NEWS!!!** After many months of research and negotiations, Saint James' Church has now signed a CONTRACT with the REUTER ORGAN COMPANY of Lawrence, Kansas, for the building of a NEW PIPE ORGAN for the church. It will contain 22 voices and 28 ranks (rows) of pipes (nearly 1,800 individual, hand-made pipes). A 10% down-payment has been sent, and the chief design engineer from Reuter will be here very soon to take final and exacting measurements and photos for use in the project. When blueprints are ready, the company can take the first exciting step in creating our custom-built instrument: the casting of metal (various alloys of tin, copper, lead and zinc) for the pipes.

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE PLEDGED AND DONATED, this is indeed a long-awaited moment. If you have NOT yet pledged or donated toward this monumental project, please consider doing so now! It is NOT TOO LATE to make either a one-time gift, or to make a pledge for the balance of our three-year campaign. This is also an ideal MEMORIAL...one that will last, and be a visible and audible reminder at every worship service and concert.

WE WILL KEEP YOU POSTED with news from the artists at Reuter, as the creation of this work of art progresses toward its early-Spring 2009 completion. Please watch the weekly Bulletin and the monthly Newsletter! On the internet, [www.reuterorgan.com](http://www.reuterorgan.com) will allow you to find out more about this great company and its instruments. □

## What Happened at Lambeth this summer?

*abridged from an article by The Rev'd Dwight Longnecker.*

**S**t. Peter, as the legend goes, was fleeing the persecution in Rome when he met Christ going the other way. The Lord asked him, "Quo Vadis?" -- where are you going? He might well be asking the members of the Anglican Communion the same question. Their reply would be, "We're not quite sure, Lord, but we think we're going in about five different directions right now."

It is worth taking a moment to understand the nature of the Anglican Communion. The Anglican Communion is a confederation of national churches that have a shared heritage of worship and tradition from the Church of England. Its geographical makeup reflects the British Empire, as English missionaries went out to the colonies and established churches. However, they did not establish a church with canonical and formal links with the Church of England; instead, each national Anglican church enjoyed independence and autonomy of governance. Because the Anglican Communion is a voluntary confederation of these churches, no one has overall authority over anyone else. Each national province has its own rules, its own hierarchy, and its own particular character.

Added to this is the theological complexity of Anglicanism. Since the Act of Settlement under the reign of Elizabeth I, Anglicans have agreed to disagree about matters of theology. They can be subdivided into three basic groups, with three very different theological perspectives:

- The Evangelicals are the heirs of the Protestant Reformation. Their perspectives and practices are Protestant.
- The Anglo-Catholics are the product of the 19th-century Oxford Movement, which sought to return the Anglican Church to her catholic and apostolic roots. Their beliefs and practices are very "catholic." They use the Roman liturgy, venerate the Blessed Virgin, practice confession, and profess to be "catholic within the Anglican Church."

- The Liberals are essentially modernistic. They believe the Church needs to adapt to the age and culture in order to be relevant.

To complicate things further, for historical reasons the three theological groups have geographical territories throughout the communion. Because certain African provinces were evangelized by Evangelical missionaries, they tend to be Evangelical. Certain other provinces were evangelized by Anglo-Catholic missionaries, and they tend to be catholic. So the Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea is very Anglo-Catholic, while the Anglican Church in Nigeria is very Evangelical. The Liberals have control of the old established churches in Great Britain, Canada, and the United States.

These tensions were tolerated for many years. Anglicans prided themselves on the breadth of their church, their tolerance, and the fact that Christians from such a wide range of opinions could find a home in the Anglican Church. This was very pretty wallpaper covering very nasty cracks in the load-bearing walls of Anglicanism. Now the paper is faded and falling. The cracks are apparent, and turn out to be widening every day.

**T**he crisis this summer was brought on by two events -- the first crisis within the Church of England itself. Since 1994, the Church of England has ordained women as priests. Anglo-Catholics have always been opposed to this innovation in apostolic orders. For the last 15 years, English Anglo-Catholics were permitted to dissent from the decision, and their parishes were allowed to opt out of women's ministry. They had their own "Episcopal Visitors" -- bishops who came in to minister to dissenting clergy and parishes.

In July, however, the Church of England's General Synod voted to accept women in the episcopate, while simultaneously ruling out any special provision for those dissenting. To be blunt, the Anglo-Catholics were told, "Women clergy are here to stay. If you don't like women bishops, there's the door."

This prompted a letter from 1,500 Church of England priests threatening to leave. At the same time, the Vatican was pondering how to reply to an interesting proposal from the Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC). Claiming to represent 70,000 Anglicans worldwide, the TAC is a confederation of catholic-minded Anglicans who, over the years, have broken away from the Anglican Communion to form their own churches. Last autumn the leaders of the TAC wrote to the Vatican asking to be received into "sacramental communion." Exactly what they were asking for is unclear, but last month Cardinal Levada sent a response asking the TAC to wait for a more full reply. Many people hope that the Vatican will devise a way toward unity that will not only include members of the TAC but also the disenchanting Anglo-Catholics in England.

If the Anglo-Catholics are furious about the feminist agenda of the liberal Anglican establishment, the Evangelicals are just as mad about the homosexualist agenda. When the Episcopalians consecrated Gene Robinson as the bishop of New Hampshire in 2003, there was open revolt: Bishop Robinson was not only a practicing homosexual, he divorced his wife in order to live with his boyfriend.

The no-nonsense Evangelicals from the developing world joined forces. Soon, parishes in England and America were voting to pull out of allegiance to their dioceses and form new non-geographical alliances with African bishops with whom they shared Evangelical, Bible-based theology and a rejection of homosexual behavior. Lawsuits started to sprout as wealthy and powerful parishes (and even whole dioceses) tried to pull out of the Episcopal Church and take their property with them.

Which brings us to the second big event this summer -- the once-a-decade Lambeth Conference. This conference gathers the world's Anglican bishops in Canterbury to discuss the needs and mission of the Anglican Communion. But this year the Evangelical bishops mounted a counter-conference in Jerusalem the week before Lambeth. Furthermore, even though Bishop Robinson was not invited, over 200 bishops (nearly a quarter of the world's Anglican bishops) boycotted Lambeth.

The Archbishop of Canterbury attempted to come up with a "covenant" that everyone would sign,

basically agreeing to disagree. The Episcopalians would promise not to consecrate anymore homosexual bishops and stop performing homosexual weddings, while the Evangelical conservatives would agree to stop poaching parishes and dioceses. But the only ones who would agree to such a covenant were the wishy-washy bishops caught in the middle who wouldn't take these drastic steps anyway.

**I**t's hard to see the silver lining in this cloud, but there is some good coming out of this year's Anglican wars. First of all, the battles are taking place because people actually not only believe something passionately, they are prepared to fight for it. The Evangelicals really *do* believe the Bible, and that God disapproves of homosexual behavior, no matter what Western society says. Anglo-Catholics really do believe in the apostolic church, and that women priests are an impossibility. Likewise, Liberals really do believe that it is God's will for the church to liberate women and homosexuals. In this relativistic age, the fact that Anglicans believe anything at all is encouraging.

This summer may well go down in Anglican history as the summer of clarity, for the present crisis has helped all three groups to see both themselves and their fellow Anglicans more clearly. Liberals are starting to realize that the Anglo-Catholics and Evangelical conservatives are a very different sort of Christian, and not just because they have a different taste in worship. Likewise, Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics are realizing that they and the Liberals are operating from totally different philosophical and theological assumptions. As one Evangelical bishop said as he came out of yet another "dialogue" with Liberals, "The discussion was like trying to play tennis with someone on an adjacent court."

This realization has also led to the acceptance of an even starker reality: that the Anglicans' historic attempt to make room for everyone has reached its end. The elastic has been stretched as far as it will go, and the only thing left is division and formal schism. The senior Church of England bishops of Winchester and Exeter actually proposed that the Lambeth Conference should end with a formal declaration that a split was happening, giving traditional Anglicans a way forward.

Finally, as Anglicans view themselves and their church more clearly, they must also start to see the larger issues more clearly. Liberals, Anglo-Catholics, and Evangelicals are all beginning to acknowledge the mammoth in the chancel: the question of authority in the church. All three groups are asking,

"How do we decide these issues? Where is the authority to exercise discipline? Where is a structure or an institution that can bring us to unity of belief and practice?" □