

Laity Saves Sydney from Decline!

Just over 150 years ago, Sydney Anglicans received their first evangelical Bishop. After being consecrated at Lambeth earlier, Frederick Barker arrived 25th May 1855, and immediately began to consolidate the work of the gospel for the sake of Australia's future. But, behind him, there is an even more important story to be told.

Dhe history of the laity in the Anglican Church of Australia is yet to be written. When this task is done, tremendous high points will be revealed as well as tragic low points.

The early colonial period must be one of the high points. Under the care of evangelical chaplains earliest NSW was also studded with prominent free settlers who were of the same mind and put time, money and energy into the cause of the gospel in this vast new colony. As Moore College celebrates its sesquicentenary this year, it is worth putting on record once again, that Thomas Moore, benefactor of the college, was one such Anglican layman. Although their story has been almost entirely neglected by historians, the influence of the Christian laity of the early colony should not be underestimated.

The arrival of the Tractarian bishops and clergy in Australia must be one of the low points for Australian laity. The lectures and addresses given to celebrate the sesquicentenary of the Oxford Movement (published in Brian Porter, *Colonial Tractarians* 1989) demonstrated that it was gospel-minded laity who were the casualties in Adelaide, Victoria, and Tasmania, as they battled with Tractarian bishops and clergy. In Sydney at the same period, William Macquarie Cowper reported that 'a wave of what was then known as Tractarianism [...] had found its way to these shores' introducing practices and doctrines which 'were strange and distasteful to the congregations which they were sent to minister, and much unhappy feeling was engendered'.¹ In Sydney, it was the strong evangelical laity who resisted changes in this direction, and, when Bp Broughton died, the evangelical Bishop Barker was appointed, largely because of their strong presence.

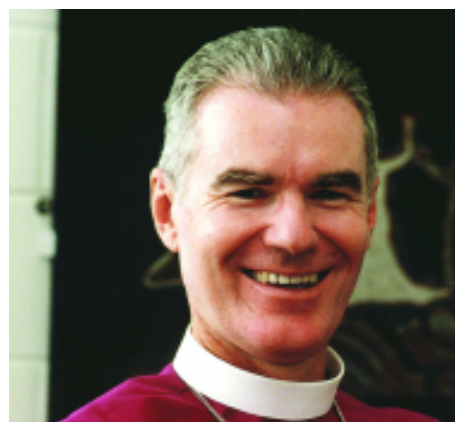
Sydney's laity have continued to stand up for biblical truth. The laity's strong resistance to the ordination of women to the priesthood when it was under intense debate bears testimony to this fact. Their resistance to this **Continued page 13**

Freier enters the Fray

Dn August, after a vacancy of 13 months and a fraught election Synod, Philip Freier was elected as the new Archbishop of Melbourne. His election was welcomed in secular and church press alike and the next step towards Melbourne's future now begins.

Bp Freier emerged from a final-round tussle between a local-boy evangelical, and two overseas candidates from the liberal end of Anglicanism, sympathetic to the gay agenda. A Queenslander before being Bp of Northern Territory, and an orthodox Anglican from the Anglo-Catholic wing, Philip Freier arrives under the shadow of being 'a compromise candidate' (*The Age*).

He is not daunted. He told the *ACR* that the filling of the office is the first benefit he brings, ending a lengthy period of uncertainty. He already feels a great



deal of good will towards him, and is 'keen to see the Diocese resourced for ministry and mission'. He views the youthful Northern Territory (average age under 30) as 'something like the future of Australia', and he hopes **Continued page 7**

The Australian CHURCH RECORD

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"Judeo-Christian culture and institutions shaped the colonial civil order until the 1860s, and did so with the consent and co-operation of the migrants themselves."

(G.P.Shaw)

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How good it is to be Christian!

John C Chapman



John Chapman told people about Jesus for many years as the Sydney Diocesan evangelist, and continues to do so now in his retirement.

Do you think it is possible to forget how good it is to be a Christian? It's a bit like breathing. You don't realise how good it is until you stop!

Paul tell us that to be "in Christ" makes us a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

Sins are totally forgiven

Again and again the bible re-assures us that we can be totally forgiven. Our sins are removed 'as far as the east is from the west'. God says: "Your sins and iniquities I will remember no more".

What an enormous relief that is. Guilt removed! Fellowship with God restored!

Such is the nature of the death of Christ that it is a 'full perfect and suffi-

cient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world". Sufficient for you and me.

The Presence of God's Spirit to Change us

Because I am 'in Christ' The Lord Jesus Christ has sent the Holy Spirit to dwell within me. His great work is to glorify Christ and as He dwells in us he begins to transform us into the likeness of Christ (Romans 8:29). We may feel that not

life's way we are not on our own. This is very re-assuring. We often don't know the wisest cause of action to take. He does and is committed to our welfare.

Certainty about Life after Death

Perhaps the best feature of being 'in Christ' is the certainty which Christ brings about our ultimate future. John 3:16 reminds us that 'whoever believes in him has eternal life'. It isn't that we will

Again and again the bible re-assures us that we can be totally forgiven.

much progress has been made in this direction but, in spite of ourselves, God will do it. That surely is a thing to be marvelled at!

God guides us through life

In Psalm 23 at verse 2 God assures us that he will 'lead us in the paths of righteousness for his name sake'. Through

have it one day but that we HAVE it right here and now. If so, we know that when we die we will be with Christ and part of the new creation.

If it is as good as this, we cannot keep this message to ourselves: we must share it with our friends. ●

Six tips for inviting friends to evangelistic events

Chris Jolliffe

At our churches, we've have many great chances to invite people along to hear of Jesus, especially when special events are planned. Here's my tips on how we should approach this:

1. Be deliberate in thinking about who you can invite, and then planning to do it. Pray about it first, and then take the plunge!
2. Be positive in the way you invite - tell them you'd love them to come, that you think they'd really like it.
3. Plan to go to the event together. If you're on a roster, try and arrange a swap with someone else, so that you can sit with your friend.

4. Be realistic - remember that for every person that comes, perhaps five or more have been asked. Don't be discouraged if your friends don't come. Keep praying, and work hard at your friendship. Why not say, 'Oh well, if you can't come to

Don't be discouraged if your friends don't come.

church, what about watching the footy with me?" (or something like that).

5. At the event, be in prayer for every person who's come. Smile, act naturally, and pray like mad. Even if the person you invited has not come, pray for those who did!



Chris Jolliffe is the Associate Pastor, Holy Trinity Adelaide

6. Remember that for someone to become a Christian requires the whole way they look at the world to be re-written. It can happen quickly, but more often than not, a person needs to hear the gospel thirty times before they commit. Don't be disappointed if your friend doesn't become a Christian on their first visit! Keep bringing them along, and be patient. ●

Editorial

Synod Motion: Not Backwards, but Forwards

In the last hectic weeks before Synod, it has been revealed that a motion will seek to introduce a further debate on the introduction of women to the priesthood by promoting a General Synod Canon that has been twice rejected by Sydney Synod. The previous rejections were part of Sydney Synod repeatedly showing its commitment to uphold the biblical teaching that others have set aside in order to ordain women as priests.

A third attempt will provide a magnificent opportunity for further public discussion in which the biblical and theological issues can be rehearsed. Since God's Word is always best for us, this should be an occasion for great joy. This should be the outcome of any discussion of the proper Scriptural order that ought to pertain between men and women in family, church, and society. The clear differentiation between male and female, God's good gift for his world, enables a complementarity in ministry that ensures the world receives a fully human expression of the gospel. To promote women to the priesthood, against Scriptural authority, on the other hand, assumes a rather pallid view of God's good gifts to his world and his church. In a strange twist, it is a move that is actually an anti-female strategy. For to suggest that women need to be ordained (whether to the priesthood—or the diaconate) to do ministry, is to cater for the 'mote' while missing the huge raft of women's ministry alive and well in Sydney at the moment. And, of course, once we have enjoyed the opportunity to hear of the glory of complementary relations yet again, the Bill most certainly must be defeated on this occasion, just as it has been in the past.

And it should be dealt with as quickly as possible, for it should not be allowed to become a distraction.

The attempt at this time to reopen a box that the Synod of Sydney has so firmly closed could prove to be a further divisive distraction from the urgent work of mission that the Synod has committed itself to so firmly with one strong and united voice.

Apart from enabling the Scriptural teaching to be discussed, there is absolutely no reason to open the lid once again. Although some from elsewhere once declared that there were no biblical or theological reasons in the way of women priests, Sydney Synod has persistently disagreed. The principled discussions across the last thirty years have consistently argued on the basis of biblical teaching and core theological truths.

In the past, some have tried to say this is simply a question of order, not morality or truth. This cannot stand up to scrutiny. To set aside the plain teaching of Scripture or to go against

listen to him (1 Cor. 14:38). It is clearly *not* a matter that does not matter. Nor can it be isolated from the truth God has made known about himself, as Paul himself argues (1 Cor. 11:1–3). As an issue that deals with our core being (male or female) and our core relations (male and female), on the basis of the core relations of the divine being, this is one of the most significant matters of human life.

When the debate shifted to constitutional issues in the 80s, Archbishop Robinson exercised leadership for our own Diocese and elsewhere (including Lambeth), in arguing that the ordination of women would be a fundamental breach in the unity of the Anglican Communion. When Canberra's Bishop Dowling planned to ordain 11 women priests in 1992, in defiance of General Synod's persistent and repeated refusal to grant permission, the Sydney laity took the lead by challenging the constitutionality of his move. But, the basic issue for Sydney was still biblical-theological.

The debate has now moved to the rhetoric of personal identity.

core theological truths is clearly immoral. Even if ministry is part of the 'order' of the church, the apostolic testimony clearly spoke about this and showed the apostles had a definite opinion! The gospel of justification by faith begins to rightly order a person's life with respect to God and to other people. The same gospel rightly orders human relational life, including church life as well. On exactly the issue of male /female relations in the order of the church, Paul warns against the one who does not

The debate has now moved to the rhetoric of personal identity. By using the language of 'unity and diversity'—stressing the 'diversity' side of the equation—a powerful emotional force is introduced into the discussion. Our post-modern environment champions the margins, not the middle; and begs to differ, while being unable to find any real togetherness; it makes difference core, and commonality almost criminal. This potent mix makes for a volatile situation when such rhetoric is introduced.

But the rhetoric is as empty as it is dangerous. It is empty because it attempts to ride on the capital of biblical language, but deliberately avoids the true biblical teaching. The body image in 1 Corinthians 12 is about those who are united by the same gospel, apostolic teaching, and Spirit. The chapter does not talk about 'diversity' but complexity. There are many members, each with their own Spirit-endowed gifts. This is not a picture of a 'diversity' of beliefs over women's ordination or doctrine; still less is it a justification for allowing practicing homosexuals to be ordained to the priesthood.

Why slip the gay issue into this discussion? There are two very significant reasons. The first is that the rhetoric of 'diversity' has been a 'code-word' that evokes the spectre of homosexuality since a Kinsey Report in 1978.¹ Secondly, there is something that has changed in the last twenty years. In the 80s and early 90s it was pointed out that the hermeneutical arguments being used to overturn the NT teaching reserving the teaching office to males could also be used to overturn the biblical prohibition of homosexual behaviour. This was furiously rejected at the time. But this cannot be rejected any longer. Just like the 'feminist agenda' was quickly followed by the 'gay agenda' (using the same arguments) in society at large, so, too, the move towards the ordination of women has been quickly followed by similar moves for homosexuals.

The current crisis in worldwide Anglicanism over this issue is testimony to the reality of this observation. The President of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement in the UK,

Richard Kirker, in a press conference immediately following the English General Synod's vote in favour of the ordination of women made precisely this point. He asked which of the arguments used in the favour of the decision made that day could not be used to support the ordination of practicing homosexuals.

The hermeneutical 'juggling tricks' that attempt to set aside biblical teaching that is plain to the ordinary reader, just leads further and further into errors of doctrine and life.

Liberalism has always claimed to have the ear of the world and the strategy for reaching the contemporary generation. That strategy has always been to give up on biblical teaching that has become uncomfortable and attempt to recast the debate in terms of justice, liberation, the need to be relevant or, more recently, to accommodate 'diversity'. The liberal threat has always been that unless we do this, our churches will die. The liberal weapons have always been a pretended intellectual superiority and a claim to be more culturally relevant and a-tuned. In the past we were told that ordination of women was necessary to grow our churches. Now we are being told the same about our response to homosexuality. The rhetoric of 'diversity' kicks in, saying that unless we are 'inclusive' and encourage 'diversity' then our decline is certain. This is often reinforced by the rhetoric of pain.

But the facts are now clearly against this rhetoric. The one thing liberalism has succeeded in doing all over the world, including Australia, is to undermine biblical faith and empty churches. And yet evangelical churches are growing (still with plenty more growing to do, we should

add). Liberal training colleges are struggling to survive and many are going under, and yet Sydney's colleges are booming. The promise that the ordination of women will increase the supply of ministry, has also proved to be a furry, and yet Sydney has just had the biggest ordination in our history, and we still have more women doing ministry in some kind of official capacity than anywhere in Australia.

It is time for Sydney Synod to be true to itself. Agree that the agreement has already been reached. Nothing has changed to overturn the series of good decisions already made. Nothing has changed to overturn the biblical and theological grounds for making them. The only things that have changed are further convincing proofs of where this error inevitably leads. And we don't want to go there.

Apart from the opportunity to re-examine the Scriptures on male-female relations in order to *vive la difference*, there is no reason to re-open this box. Instead it is time to move on. For the sake of the mission, we now need a whole series of motions that don't take us backwards, but seek to move us forwards. These motions should say, 'given that the bible, Christian theology, Christian history, and our own good track record of Synodical decisions all encourage us to maintain a clear difference in the ministry options for males and females, how can we act so that ministry is maximised for women in their own legitimate sphere?' Let these motions now begin! ●

ENDNOTE

1. A. Bell & M. Weinberg, *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1978).

The Australian Church Record

The Australian Church Record is an evangelical newspaper in the Reformed Anglican tradition of the historic creeds and the 39 Articles of Faith, and the standard of teaching and practice in the Book of Common Prayer. We accept the Scriptures as God's word written, and as containing all things necessary for salvation and the final authority in all matters of faith and behaviour.

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TABLE OF ACTIONS

1922

Women permitted to deliver an 'address' to congregations. This is carefully distinguished from a sermon.

1977

- General Synod Doctrine Commission opines that the 'theological objections ... do not constitute a barrier to the ordination of women to the priesthood'. Sydney's D.B. Knox and A.M Bryson add a carefully argued addendum dissenting from the majority opinion.
- Synod receives a Sydney Doctrine Commission Report on the meaning of ordination.

1983

Synod receives reports from Doctrine Commission, Legal Committee and Synod Committee. Synod resolved that ordination of women to the priesthood was 'not consistent with scripture'

1984

- Synod endorses ordination of women to diaconate.
- Synod receives another Doctrine Commission report and asks Area Deaneries to discuss ordination of women to the priesthood.

1985

- 21 Rural Deanery conferences held between March to June: 3.5 give outright support to ordination of women to priesthood; 18.5 do not support ordination of women to priesthood; 17 do not support ordination of women to the priesthood even if legislation prevented them from being rectors of parishes.
- Ab Robinson's presidential address comments on General Synod's urging the ordination of women as part of a 'tolerable plurality' and an 'agreement to differ'. Robinson told his Synod that this issue is not a matter of indifference, but a matter which is 'fundamental to catholic and apostolic order'. The proposal would produce 'a plurality that was intolerable' and threaten the unity of the denomination.
- Synod endorses 'practice of ordaining only male persons to the priesthood'. Ordination of women deacons formally approved.
- Ab Robinson supports a permanent diaconate for both men and women, but opposes the ordination of women to the present diaconate if this means an open door to advancement to the priesthood.

1993

Synod receives Committee's report (10/91) and agrees to a three year moratorium on discussing the issue.

1996

- As the three year moratorium ends, Sydney Synod rejects (for second time) *General Synod — Law of the Church of England Clarification Canon 1992*, which would have allowed the ordination of women priests. This decision comes after Ab Goodhew urges each person 'to decide on the basis of what we believe God says in Scripture'.
- Standing Committee receives report on the Ministry of Women prepared by Archdeacon Di Nicolios, suggesting that a Women's Advisory Council be established and women's ministry discussed within the Diocese.

1997

Ab Goodhew proposes a conference on women's ministry, which is welcomed by Synod.

1998

- Additional meeting of Synod at a day conference held in May, 'to discuss, not to debate' women's ministry. A five year experimentation with lay and diaconal administration of the Lord's Supper is proposed as a way of lessening tensions over the issue. Ab Goodhew disagrees.
- Ab Goodhew outlines four possibilities. Reminds Synod that the one allowing each parish to make its own decision is an exercise of liberty on a disputed point.

1999

- Sydney Doctrine Commission Report outlines the argument for order in male-female relations on analogy with the order within the godhead (cf. 1 Cor. 11:3).
- Synod debated procedural motions requesting the debate of a (modified) Canon resolving that it would not take priority over other business that year.

2000

The Chancellor's Bill to permit the ordination of women to the priesthood but with the restriction that such persons not be placed in charge of a parish failed to win sufficient support of Standing Committee to be put on the business paper.

... THE LAST 30 YEARS

1987

• Ab Robinson informs Synod that the ordination of women as presbyters elsewhere is at variance with the fundamental faith and order we derive from the apostolic church. At the same time he supports women's ministry, announcing that 'there is probably more authorized women's ministry in Sydney than in any other diocese in Australia'.

• Synod initiates a further Doctrine Commission report (which is received in 1991)

1988

Ab Robinson announces his intention to licence women deacons to preach, 'but to indicate that this does not include license to exercise the authority which the apostle forbids in 1 Timothy 2:12'.

2002

• In a display of great unity, Synod endorses Ab Jensen's Diocesan Mission, members personally signing their commitment to work towards the Mission goals. The '10% vision' begins to be widely talked about and adopted in the Diocese.

• Ab Jensen establishes Diocesan Women's Ministry Team.

1989

Ab Robinson ordains Sydney's first women to the diaconate.

1990

After 1989 Canberra-Goulburn ordinance giving permission, Bp Dowling announces plans to ordain women priests and puts questions to Appellate Tribunal.

1991

• Although 4/7 members rule a local diocese cannot ordain women without General Synod Canon, Appellate Tribunal decides question is 'indecisive' (December). Bp Dowling sets the ordination date to 5th February 1992.

• Committee established (resolution 10/91) to outline 'points of agreement, points at issue, and reasons for disagreement' in regard to the ordination of women to the priesthood. Report received in 1993.

2004-2005

After several rather public attacks which accuse Sydney Diocese of Arianism, because of 1999 Doctrine Commission report. New Doctrine Commission re-examines 1999 report and dialogues with Primate Peter Carnley. Sees no reason to change the report. Discussion is consistent with, and supported by, Church Fathers and orthodox theologians. Several publications arise from the dialogue, one arguing the attack on Sydney was a model of how *not* to conduct Christian debate.

1992

• Standing Committee notes that 'somewhere in the 80s the constitutional issues became paramount'. The transfer of debate from theological to constitutional matters was complete when Bp Dowling announces plans to ordain 11 women priests on 2nd February 1992 against General Synod's advice. A NSW Supreme Court injunction causes ordination to be postponed. Court later sets injunction aside.

• In a letter to his clergy (5 February), Ab. Robinson said that 'the theological issue remains unchanged: whether it is in accordance with Christ's teaching and the principles of Church life laid down in His name by the apostles, for women to exercise the oversight of the congregation in the ministry of the word and sacraments' and argued that 'for some it remains a fundamental question ... linked as it is with sexual differentiation in God's purpose and the distinct nature of man and woman'.

• After WA Supreme Court refuses to grant an injunction, Peter Carnley ordains 10 women priests in Perth (7th March).

• Standing Committee reports that after 'extensive review over several years' Sydney Synod rejected ordination of women to the priesthood as inconsistent with Scripture and supported the current practice of ordaining only male priests. They also noted that 'the substantial issues have not been debated by the Sydney Synod since 1985'.

• Conference on Ordination of Women to the Priesthood held 27th June. Standing Committee itemises various problems with report, and so committee given leave to keep meeting and report in the following year.

• Standing Committee publishes report: Constitutional/Theological Issues: Ordination of Women which stated, 'After extensive review over several years', the Sydney Synod resolved to reject proposed changes to the constitution to facilitate ordination of women to the priesthood 'as this Synod is not convinced that the proposal is consistent with Scripture'.

• Doctrine Commission publishes report on 'Language, Gender and God'.

• Ab Robinson urges Synod to continue 'to search for the mind and will of God, and to a willingness to submit our minds and spirits to the guidance of God by His Spirit through His Word'. He announces the appointment of Rev. Dianne Nicolios as Sydney's first female Archdeacon with special responsibilities for women's ministry.

• Ab Robinson declares to his Synod: 'the issue confronting us is a theological one, an issue of our commitment to the teaching of the Scriptures. [...] We are not dealing with matters of indifference, where plurality is tolerable. We are dealing with matters of theological truth. My own examination of the Scriptures leads me to believe that the evidence is inescapable. To ordain women as priests is contrary to the teaching of the Bible. A church which puts women into this role is ordaining what is "contrary to God's word written" and acts unlawfully according to Article 20'.

• Synod withholds assent to General Synod's *Law of the Church Clarification Canon 1992 (no. P1 of 1992)*, thereby rejecting the ordination of women to the priesthood. The next month General Synod passes a canon in the same terms (Canon 18 of 1992). Given the Synod's rejection of the provisional canon, Sydney Standing Committee does not promote Canon 18 for adoption.

• By the end of the year, 92 Australian Women had been ordained as priests.

The Case for a Differentiated, Complementary Ministry

- The foundation of any discussion of this issue must be our confidence that God is good and that his word to us is a good word which secures our welfare.
- Of equal importance is the insistence that God is an effective communicator who is able to make his mind known to men without distortion, by means of human language (which is his gift after all) and through human beings located in the midst of particular historical situations (over which he remain entirely sovereign).
- God has created human beings as male and female, completely equal in dignity and together constituting the image of God (Gen. 1:26–28). Alongside and reinforcing this unity and equality is an order which God establishes in the relationship between men and women. This finds its most obvious expression in marriage but all the activities of God's people are to respect the sanctity of this gift of God.
- The God of whom we are a true image is triune, one God existing in three equal persons. The relationships between the Father, Son and Spirit are characterised by unity, order and mutual love. They are not interchangeable even in eternity and are properly reflected in the earthly life of Jesus, the eternal Son. Precisely because he is the Son, Jesus makes clear to us what God is like (John 1:1–18). Jesus not only commands the wind and the waves, he is obedient to his Father's will.
- Within the relationship of a man and a woman, the exercise of headship and the willing acceptance of the headship are both to be modelled upon Christ (1 Cor. 11:3). As Christ exercises his headship over the church by self-sacrificial service, so male headship is a commitment to take the initiative in service

despite any personal cost. Similarly, as Christ willingly submits to the will of his Father, so a woman's submission is born of trust and a common commitment to honouring Christ.

- There is no distinction between men and women when it comes to access to God (Gal. 3:28). Men and women are equally saved by what Jesus has done and equally enjoy all the benefits of life with God in fellowship with other believers. We serve each other as brothers and sisters born of the same heavenly Father.
- In Christ men and women are both gifted by God to serve others. Not all gifts are the same but they are all directed to the welfare of others rather than our own status within the Christian community (1 Cor 12:7). Nor is the possession of a gift in itself a mandate for its use (e.g. 1 Cor. 14:26–28). Gifts are to be used in service of others, for the edification of the congregation and in a way that is appropriate according to the word of God.

himself has established in personal relationships, something which brings harm to the congregation, to families, and to individuals. This is God's good word for the welfare of his people until Jesus returns.

- This teaching is explicitly grounded in the purposes of God in creation and redemption. In neither of these passages does the apostle Paul explain these instructions in terms of the particular needs of individual congregations or the cultural norms of his time.
- In our Anglican setting, the presbyter (priest, elder) is one authorized to exercise such a ministry in the congregation. Whatever else is involved, this person is recognised as an appropriate person to exercise the responsibility for leading a congregation in its life under the word of God. In the light of the teaching of Scripture, it would be inappropriate for a woman to be ordained to such a responsibility.
- It is important to emphasise that the basic issue in the debate is not the complete

The real issue is our willingness to rejoice in the word of God as a good gift to us.

- Through Christ's apostles, God has given instruction about the appropriate exercise of gifts within the Christian congregation. These instructions concern godliness, giftedness and an appropriate reflection of our gender differences. Just as our gender is not incidental to who we are, neither is it irrelevant to the way we serve others (1 Cor. 11:3–16).
- God's word makes clear that it is inappropriate for a woman to exercise the authoritative teaching role in a congregation (1 Tim. 2:11–15; 1 Cor. 14:33–35). To do so would be to overthrow the order which God

equality of men and women before God. That truth is undisputed. Nor is it the giftedness and competence of individuals. Many women are very skilled teachers of the word of God and there are a plethora of opportunities to exercise this gift in ways that are consistent with the teaching of Scripture. Rather the real issue is our willingness to rejoice in the word of God as a good gift to us which secures our welfare and therefore to obey it. It is a matter of acting appropriately in the light of all the gospel reveals to us about God and about ourselves. ●

Freier enters the Fray [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

to bring to Melbourne his experience in seeking to 'cut through to people outside the church who genuinely struggle to see that we are bearers of good news'. Bp Freier looks to her many talented people as a sign that Melbourne ought to 'make a strong contribution to the things that God has tasked us to do'.

As the ACR sees it, if the voting of the election synod indicates anything about the diocese, Freier may have some work

to do to encourage a greater orthodoxy amongst the laity, who rather strongly supported the more liberal candidates in the early rounds (at one stage, 70%!). Nevertheless, the final vote, if anything, sends a strong signal to the liberal end of the spectrum, which had two candidates in the ring, and both were defeated.

What about being the 'compromise candidate', entering the territory of previously warring factions? 'It is a great

privilege to be given spiritual leadership amongst God's people. The second coming puts a lot of our worries into perspective. We seem to get caught up in our present disputes and personality clashes rather than look to the coming Kingdom when Christ will make a new heaven and earth. I think that this needs to be the defining reality for us'. 'Pray that I stay close to Jesus, remain open to the Holy Spirit and faithfully serve God's church'. ●

From Clarkson to Corinthians

Liz Cox



Liz attends rock concerts as a family and children's worker in Derby, UK.

"Because of you, I'm ashamed of my life because it's empty".

Kelly Clarkson's recent hit was written about her own experiences growing up in a home where her parents battled. A powerful song which voices the hurt inflicted on many in her generation by their parents.

At her concert in Nottingham recently, I heard Kelly speak to her audience: "I'm not glad that you can relate to this song, but sometimes God sends things to you so that you can help others". As I looked around the thousands in that auditorium I felt very moved: these kids with empty lives need Jesus! They need to know the

One who gives life in all its fulness! I prayed the burning questions: "How can I tell them? How can I help them to understand? And what do they need to hear?"

It's very easy to feel insecure about our message. It's easy to think that when we talk to young people it needs to be always exciting, always interesting. We're told that to a media savvy generation the old methods and message are ... well ... old. It's very tempting to look for the new and exciting ways to catch attention.

On the website for a recent women's conference I read the theme: "Tell them there's a God in heaven who believes in them." Is that our message? I don't think so! I thought that the God in heaven called us to believe in Him! Does God believe in me? Yes! He believes I'm sinful and without hope apart from Jesus!

That's when I was reminded of a different perspective. I read 1 Corinthians 1.

When some look for signs and others look for wisdom, preach Christ Crucified. It's the old stumbling block; the weak and

stupid way. But it's God's way: the power and wisdom of God. That was the message to the Corinthians and it's the message for hurting people today. They need Christ crucified. So, I say to myself: "Keep teaching it!" In every possible way!

They need to know the One who gives life.

And God does give me opportunities. Last Easter a year 3 teacher asked me "Do you think we could bring 55 children to church on Friday? We've been learning about crosses. Oh, and would you talk to them about what the cross means? And about Easter too?" As I smiled I thought "Let me think ... hmm ... yes! I might be able to do that!"

At least God still remembers what people really need to hear! ●

Love Hurts

Simon Gillham



Simon is the pastor of Maitland Community Church

Love our church. We began nearly four years ago with just a handful of families and God has blessed us by drawing many other people to come and join us, and I love it. Most of my best mates and dearest friends are from church. I love getting together with them Sunday by Sunday, we open the Bible together and pray together and spur one another on, and I love it. I also regularly spend other time with some of them each week, in small groups and one to one. I play golf with some, go camping with others and some of our kids have

joined the same soccer team. We share one another's lives and try to look after one another, and simply enjoy one another. I love it.

But I've also got to say that most of the significant pain and heartache and conflict and loss of sleep that I suffer, also comes

It hurts because we invest so much in our relationships.

from this church. There are disagreements and tensions between people, and that is always painful. One of the things that I find hardest is saying goodbye to people from church. People move, people die, people drift away, people leave to go to another church, relationships break down ... and it is all painful.

It all hurts. But why?

It hurts because we invest so much in our relationships with each other at church. Church is not like a business or sporting club where people are bought and sold to the highest bidder. We get together to encourage one another, spur one another on to love and good deeds, to speak the truth in love. Of course it hurts when those relationships are broken.

*Love hurts, love scars
Love wounds, and marks...*
(Roy Orbison sang it... it must be true!)

What is the answer? To stop loving? Well, no. The answer as always is the love of the Lord Jesus on the cross.

We press on, and remember Jesus' love: the pain he bore, to free us from pain forever.

Love hurts. But only for a little while longer! ●

The Episcopal response to Windsor – a win for pragmatism

Gavin Poole



Although back in Oz, Gavin Poole keeps a watch on things American.

The 2006 Episcopal Church's General Convention had to come up with something. The Windsor Report calls for a moratorium on the blessing of same sex couples and any further consecration of bishops living in same gender union. To walk away from the convention with no resolution would have been a clear snub to the Anglican Communion, but who can be happy with the final outcome?

After nine days, an emergency resolution was passed in the final hours. It asks standing committees and diocesan bishops, "... 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."

Ironically, many conservatives and

liberals agreed that the resolution was a failure. Conservatives generally considered the resolution an inadequate response to The Windsor Report. The conservative Dallas diocese's Standing Committee wrote, "This General Convention of the Episcopal Church has not, in our view answered The Windsor Report recommendations with sufficient clarity." Dr Kendall Harmon from the diocese of South Carolina complained that the resolution is, "... unclear and fails to adequately respond to The Windsor Report."

On the other side of the debate, Louie Crew, lay leader and founder of the gay and lesbian organisation, Integrity, spoke against the resolution, "... because it attempts to cut out the tongue of the Holy Spirit." Rev. Susan Russell, President of Integrity wrote that the resolution contained, "... veiled language calling for the discrimination against gays and lesbians in this church."

from the conservative side the resolution lacks clarity, repentance and regret.

You might not agree with their position but *they* cannot be accused of lacking clarity.

It seems that conservatives and liberals



PHOTO • EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

The Rt Rev Katherine Jefferts Schori, The 26th Presiding Bishop-elect of the Episcopal Church. Episcopal News Service.

have in common a desire for clarity and honesty. From the conservative side: the resolution lacks clarity, repentance and regret. From the liberal side: it is a veiled betrayal of gay and lesbian rights. It seems that if the conservatives and liberals had their way, this resolution would not have passed.



TFOAD: Understand the Windsor threat intelligently

This collection of essays not only critiques Windsor, but moves beyond critique to offering an evangelical understanding of church, churches, and denominations, and a perspective on the current crisis that seeks to move outwards from the gospel of Christ. Although helpful in the current discussions, these essays therefore have abiding interest in assisting people to think about church life in the context of denominational issues. Printed copies are available for a mere \$10 from ACR.

PO Box 218, Camperdown NSW 1450 • email: editor@australianchurchrecord.net

Comments on this book? Comment on Windsor Report?
letters@australianchurchrecord.net

Only days after the resolution was passed, the diocese of Newark released its list of nominees for a new bishop. The list includes Rev Michael Barlowe, reportedly an openly gay minister. If he is elected at Newark's special convention in September, the General Convention's resolution will be put to the test.

It would be wrong to think that the Episcopal Church's conflict is simply an argument between conservatives and liberals. Pragmatism is to blame for this inadequate resolution. Its sole purpose is to maintain the Episcopal Church's membership in the Anglican Communion whilst holding their position.

There will be times when we will be asked to compromise truth for the sake of 'getting along'. We may be asked to retract on an important truth for fear of 'presenting a challenge to the wider church'. How should we respond? Vague language is a tell tale sign of shame. Only the pragmatist will be happy with that.

Arthur Malcolm: Australia's First Indigenous Bishop

Book Review — Jonathan Lilley

Jonathan Lilley is currently wrestling with his studies at Moore College and serves God amongst indigenous Australians.

his is a story of an Indigenous man growing up on a Church Mission Station called Yarrabah situated near Cairns in North Queensland. Traditional culture was slowly being pushed aside, although remnants of it remained. From an early age, Malcolm had the desire to become a missionary and at the age of 18 moved from the mission away from family and began a journey that would see him serving in the Church Army (which is an evangelical outreach arm of the Church of England founded by Wilson Carlile of Brixton, England) in Sydney, western New South Wales, Gippsland in Victoria and Tasmania. He travelled the world meeting with various cultures and sharing his life and the love he had for Jesus Christ.

While in the Church Army, Arthur met Coleen, later to become his wife. Together they tackled many obstacles while serving the Lord, none greater than wanting full participation in church affairs by Indigenous people. He didn't want a puppet ministry but wanted to be seen as equal, and work at reconciliation. He wanted his people to have a voice in the church family they were apart of. Arthur and Coleen returned to Yarrabah where Arthur served as a curate, priest and then bishop.

Arthur Malcolm earned respect and adoration.

Arthur served on the board of Nungalinga Aboriginal Theological College and assisted in the establishment of Wontult,

a sister college in Cairns, both of which train Indigenous people in preparation for God's service. He had come from simple beginnings, a young boy growing up on a mission with little significance, to being wanted all over the country to speak on issues concerning Indigenous people.

This is a story of a man who fought against huge odds and earned the respect and adoration of the church and wider community, both Indigenous and non Indigenous. Arthur Malcolm will be remembered by not only his Yarrabah community, but many other communities as a man who served the Lord at all costs.

One of Arthur's favourite verses is Isaiah 6:8, which says, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here I am, send me.' ●

The book can be ordered from Mr Clive Morton, PO Box 166, Gordonvale Qld 4865

Why Christians Should be Realists

Rory Shiner



Rory Shiner is a staff worker with the Christian Union at the University of Western Australia.

In everyday conversation telling someone to be a 'realist' normally means calling them away from some hare-brained scheme. The noise associated with this call to realism is 'thud!'—the sound made when the person comes crashing back to earth.

However, the word 'realism' also has a more technical sense—a sense whose opposite is not 'optimism' but 'voluntarism', and it is this more technical sense of realism that I wish to commend here.¹ Let me explain.

The word 'voluntarism' comes from the Latin word *voluntas*, the will. In the

context of Christian thought, to be a voluntarist is to locate your ethics and your theology in the *will* of God. For example, murder, sexual immorality and greed are not right because God has *willed*, has decided, that they are not right. He might have decided otherwise.

A Christian realist, on the other hand, sees that God's commands (the expression of his will) are more than expressions of an arbitrary will, but are in fact signposts to *reality*. Thus, sexual immorality and greed are wrong not simply because God has declared it to be so, but because God's declaration is based on reality itself. Christian ethics are realist.

Our proclamation of the gospel is also realist, for the gospel is an invitation back to reality. In preaching it, we are not attempting to impose a relationship with God onto people for whom such a relationship is utterly foreign to their natures. It is a call to people who are *in fact* made

to glorify God and enjoy him forever. And it calls on them to confess what is *in fact* true about the Lord Jesus—not an imposition on what is not there, but a humble recognition of what *is* there.

And so, in our ethics, in our worship and in our proclamation, let's be realists. I trust the word for that kind of realism is not 'thud', but 'Amen!' ●

FURTHER READING

O'Donovan, Oliver. *Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics, Second Edition* (Leicester: Apollos, 1994)
Torrance, Thomas F. *Reality and Evangelical Theology: The Realism of Christian Revelation* (Illinois: IVP, 1982)

ENDNOTE

1. More technically, what I am describing is a position called *critical realism*. The word 'critical' recognizes that, while there is a reality 'out there', our subjective grasp of it is problematic, and should therefore be subject to *critical* examination.

The Liturgical Holiness of God and the Chameleon Church

Jason Hobba



Jason is keen to see lives changed by the gospel of Christ in Melbourne's south-east.

In recent times, in the Anglican Church in Australia—and Melbourne in particular—there has been a rush to claim the ‘middle ground’ of Anglicanism—to declare oneself and one’s more liberal theological views as at the core of Anglicanism. Yet those who would seek to claim the middle ground rush to it, liturgy in hand, “forever praising [God] and saying,” (in the Holy Communion service):

“Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.”

Is this thrice holy God, the ineffably holy and sublime God, just a ‘liturgically holy’ God—the God we like to proclaim as ‘holy’ because it makes for good liturgy? Or is God *really* holy?

For it seems that the recent disputes and debate in the Anglican church over gay unions and marriage, and the support

for the ordination of sexually active gay members of the church, are not just disputes and debates over the authority of Scripture, but also disputes and debates that concern the holiness of the God of Scripture. And it is this debate that some regarded as the unspoken sticking-point in the recent election synod for the new archbishop of Melbourne. Yet, if God *really* is holy, not just ‘liturgically holy’, then God’s people must also be holy. For it’s on the basis of his own holiness that

to the core of the faith as the response of an obedient people to an holy God. At worst, the holiness of God is sullied, redefined in terms of a non-judgmental, all-embracing ‘love’—an unholy love with no real responsibility or accountability. In effect, the church of the ‘middle ground’ is a chameleon, blending into the culture around it in theology and morality.

However, the church of Christ is a cross-shaped church, and, hence, an holy church. God’s love, displayed in the death

If God really is holy, then God’s people must also be holy.

God calls his people to be holy (Lev 19:2; 20:7; 1 Peter 1:15-16). Those who advocate gay relationships, and the ordination of sexually active gay church members appeal to a distorted view of ‘justice’ which is largely abstracted from God; they exalt experience to an interpretive principle through which biblical morality is read. And the result? At best, biblical morality has been relegated to the realm of *adiaphora*—a matter which is peripheral to the gospel of Christ and practice of the church, whereas, in truth, it clearly belongs

of Christ, is at once merciful, forgiving, and welcoming. Yet God’s love, deals with sin and the sinner, in Christ giving himself over to death—so that we might be holy (Eph 5:25-26). That is, God’s holy love is *reforming*—it never allows a sinful person to remain as they are (1 Cor 6:9-11).

It is only in embracing this holy love of God that the chameleon church, the church of the ‘middle ground,’ will ever be a truly holy and missional church. ●

Top three reasons why Cranmer should still be of interest today

Ashley Null

Ashley Null, one of the world’s leading Cranmer scholars, visited Sydney earlier this year.

1. Cranmer has left us a unique, wonderful, theological legacy of biblical faithfulness and pastoral acuity that helps us understand God’s answer today for the human condition.
2. The Anglican Communion is at a time of reassessment. On one hand, the

Archbishop of Canterbury is seeking to lead the Communion to find the Anglican Way of theology. On the other hand, the Windsor Report has challenged us not to be content to read the Bible through past interpretations but ensure we are reading the Bible afresh. Therefore it is not only interesting, but actually essential, to revisit the origins of Anglicanism. So much of Anglicanism of the last 100 years has been labouring under a misapprehen-

sion that Anglicanism from the beginning was intended to be a *via media* between Rome and Geneva. But the best current research suggests that, if it were a *via media* at all, it was between Wittenberg and Geneva. Therefore studying Cranmer can help evangelicals, as heirs of the Reformation, see why they have a place in the modern Anglican Communion.

3. Cranmer believed the Bible, so why shouldn’t Anglicans today? ●

The Rhetoric of Understated Disdain

Peter Bolt



She thinks women shouldn't preach to men.

He thinks practicing homosexuals shouldn't be clergymen.

They are liberal voters.

You drink earl grey tea.

The external beauty of the rhetoric is rose-red. There is no caricature here.

the complete baldness of the way in which the fact is simply stated, pricks the skin.

'... so what is wrong with that?' (they think).

The only sound in the air is the sound of their own dearly-held opinion. No judgement. No condemnation. Nothing. Nothing—but their own belief.

Sometimes the skill of the put-down lies simply in adopting the right tone. At other times it is more effective to have no tone at all. Such understated disdain is as beautiful an instrument of destruction as the prick from a poisoned thorn on a red Valentine's Day rose.

Understated disdain has two crucial features. First, a clear statement of your opponent's belief. Secondly, there must be absolutely no 'loading' of emotion one way or the other. This has to be a statement, no, less than a statement, it has to be an understatement.

The only sound in the air is the sound of their own dearly-held opinion.

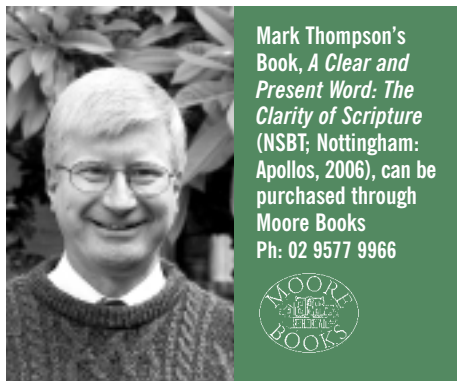
No mis-representation. No sneering. No expression of disagreement. None of the usual weapons of argumentation, so often present and bristling for a fight. Your opponent is completely disarmed, because they simply have themselves reflected back upon them. 'Yes, this is what I believe'.

But then, the lack of embellishment,

Then the poison enters the blood stream. Isolation. Aloneness. Apparently no argument is needed. No tone of voice. No emotional investment from the attacker. The opinion simply needs to be stated. And as it hangs in the chilled air in all its isolated aloneness, it is self-evident that it is met with the disdain—of the entire world. ●

A Clear and Present Word: Review

Nigel Fortescue



Mark Thompson's new book, *A Clear and Present Word: The Clarity of Scripture* issues a resounding YES—we can be certain! In this fantastic book Thompson contributes to a 2000 year old discussion by providing a robust theological exposition of the clarity of Scripture in response to various historical, literary and philosophical beliefs about the Bible. He keeps a keen eye on postmodernism and the influence of Karl Barth and his indebtedness to both Martin Luther and Peter Jensen can be seen throughout.

sophical movements into novelties. He clearly and carefully helps the reader to understand both his argument and those who would oppose it.

Perhaps most helpfully, Thompson deals with the human experience of reading the scriptures; not denying the way they can be difficult to understand, nor the way Christian people have shifted on issues such as slavery, women and homosexuality. On these issues he is particularly pastoral and personal.

I wholeheartedly recommend this

Dhe more I do evangelism, the more I discover that people are craving a world view they can believe confidently and boldly. When I introduce them to the gracious and loving God of the Bible, most are not troubled by the atonement or the historicity of the resurrection. They are troubled by my confidence in these things. People ask "Isn't this just your interpretation?" They want to know if we can be certain about what the Bible says and means.

Thompson provides a robust theological exposition of the clarity of scripture.

It is not a difficult book to read. Thompson stridently answers many questions posed by opponents to the doctrine without being overly technical. He neither ignores historical considerations, nor turns the modern theological and philo-

book to anyone who either needs convincing or who has their heart set on convincing others that God speaks in a clear voice through the Scriptures. ●

Women and the Word



Jane has recently begun women's ministry in the City of London.

Hospitality for Christ

Jane Tooher

God's Spirit is at work in the everyday, simple things we do. Most of us feel fine about having a woman over for a cup of tea (or meeting someone at a cafe if that is more appropriate) and if we chose to be godly in these times, they have the potential for much good. It is a ministry that most of us can be involved in, and Jesus, Peter, and Paul expect all Christians to be hospitable. Hospitality is not the same as entertaining. Hospitality does not seek to impress, but seeks what is best for the other person. What do you think about this quote? "Perhaps the most powerful tool in Christian social involvement [...] is the humble teapot. Let me explain. Within a short walk of the average town church in the UK there are likely to be 10,000 people, including: 1200 people living alone, 580 of whom will be of pensionable age; 1500 people who talk to their neighbours less than once a week; 50 people who have been divorced within the last year; 375 single parents; 18 pregnant teenagers; 150 recent or contemplated abortions; 250 people who are unemployed; 1700 people living in low income households; 1100 people with some kind of mental disorder; 100 bereavements within the past year; 2700 people living in households without a car; 60 people in a residential care home; 1280 people who have been victims of crime in the past year; 40 homeless people in temporary accommodation; 15 asylum seekers. The most striking thing about these statistics is how many of these problems can be met in some measure by simple human contact. It can simply involve sharing a cup of tea." (Tim Chester)

Training topic idea:

1. How do you feel about having women over in your home?
2. Do you feel pressure to make it a big deal?
3. What are some guidelines to ensure you can keep being hospitable?
4. What are some simple things to make the time distinctively Christian? ●

Bizarre about Bishops

One of our beloved bishops responded to an idea in the editorial of our previous issue, by saying it was 'bizarre'. The idea in question was that the present regime of bishops should declare their intention not to stand in the next archepiscopal election (whenever that moment should arise). Rather than the conventional wisdom of seeking to limit the potential damage of an Archbishop by electing someone with limited time to serve, the Synod ought to find other ways of 'controlling' the one in office, and then seek to elect someone who has a good many years to serve in this important office. The call for the present bishops to decide not to stand themselves was a call for them to step aside for this potentially long-serving chief servant (under the greater constraint of the synod). This is, apparently, 'bizarre'.

We have to take this as a compliment.

Those in the 'mainstream', of course, are in the mainstream. The tracks they are running on, they like running on. The centre is not the periphery, by definition. The periphery is, well—out there.

We need more bizarre ideas about everything. One tried and true track is not enough. Conventional wisdom is not always the best thing for the future. Previous ways of politics may not be the way for politics in the future. Change for the better may come from bizarre ideas in the present.

So, ACR would like to call for more bizarre ideas. How can we ensure the future will retain the good things of our evangelical past, and yet move further into an even better evangelical future? To stay mainstream may ensure the first, but will it secure the second? Perhaps, in order to do that, we may have to generate more things bizarre, even bizarre things about (arch) bishops. Let the games begin! ●

Laity Saves Sydney from Decline! [CONT. FROM PAGE 1]

particular pressure also spoke loudly of the importance of the laity: a person doesn't have to be ordained to exercise ministry. The very presence of Sydney's many lay assistants, both male and female, eloquently proclaims the same message. Ordination is not necessary for ministry—not even to the diaconate! The more than thirty year drive towards the removal of barriers to suitable lay people presiding at the Lord's Supper shows that our laity still have a voice that wants to be heard and, God willing, will be heard.

The long tradition of lay involvement both in ministry and in diocesan decision-making is something to thank God for. Lay people with a gospel heart read their Bible and often read the plain message, without the 'juggling tricks' of the scholars! Lay people with a gospel heart can often sense when something doesn't sound like it breathes the same air as their New Testament. Lay people certainly feel the

pull of the world—they are very much in it—but this trains their spiritual muscles, for they must learn to stand up for God's Word in a whole range of ways, almost on a daily basis. They don't want to spend all that time holding the line, and then to see their own denomination throw away biblical truth under the same worldly pressure.

The lay people of Sydney once saved Sydney for the gospel, insisting that their bishop should be a Bible believer, preacher, and teacher. As a result, Barker came and the gospel work was consolidated. As Sydney Synod continues to hold the biblical line when so much of Australia and the rest of the Communion is capitulating, let's hope that the future headlines can proclaim the same message: The laity saved Sydney from decline. ●

ENDNOTE

1. W.M. Cowper, *Autobiography & Reminiscences*, 47–48.

Ladies, used Jane's training ideas?

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