

Rector's Annual Report - 2008

"Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God."

Misunderstood and often overlooked, the three Pre-Lenten Sundays, with their exotic and strange sounding names, provide a necessary preparatory interlude between Epiphany and Lent. *Septuagesima*, *Sexagesima*, and *Quinquagesima* are certainly vestiges of older patterns of the biblically based practice of the *Quadragesima*, the forty day period of fasting, penitence and prayer commonly known as Lent which marks our participation in the passion, death and resurrection of Christ. The pre-lenten Sundays point to different ways of marking the forty days of Lent. *Septuagesima*, the week of seventy days, *Sexagesima*, sixty days, and *Quinquagesima*, fifty days before Easter, these Sundays have coalesced to form a transitional season having its own intrinsic spiritual character.

They warrant our special attention. Displaced by radical changes in the ordering of the ecclesiastical calendar and the lectionary pattern of scripture reading in recent times, their educational, spiritual and practical significance has been largely ignored. SOGs – 'Save our Gesimas' – has been the nostalgic cry of a few, no doubt, dismissed as regressive liturgical 'nutters,' who refuse to get with the modernist programme. But prayerful attention to the spirituality of these Sundays is far from something retrograde and nostalgic. It is really about appreciating certain crucial and defining features of Christian moral doctrine and life. It has to do with the classical *and* the theological virtues, in short, with the rich interplay between nature and grace that shapes character.

The scriptural lessons on these Sundays both in the Offices of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer and at Holy Communion prepare us wonderfully for the journey of Lent. Ultimately, they ground us in the way of our journeying, at once presupposing and anticipating the way to Jerusalem. They prepare us by way of the forms of love. Lent, after all, is the pilgrimage of the soul in love. The love of God perfects and renews our loves. These pre-Lenten Sundays are all about the interplay of the cardinal virtues of *temperance*, *courage*, *prudence* and *justice* with the theological virtues of *faith*, *hope* and *charity*.

As such they offer a significant narrative of the power of perfecting love which engages critically with the assumptions of the therapeutic culture. They recall us directly to the moral discourse of Christianity with its rich legacy of terms and categories which speak profoundly to the nature of the soul in its desiring. In short, they belong to the theology of *amor*, love.

The four cardinal or classical virtues of *temperance*, *courage*, *prudence* and *justice* belong to the ethical discourse of the ancients with respect to the perfection of the natural man; our humanity, we might say, in its actions and activities with respect to worldly ends and purposes. They are transformed into forms of love by the theological virtues of *faith*, *hope* and *charity* that belong to a higher vision of our humanity that sees our end in God. Thus, the four cardinal virtues are put upon a new foundation, the foundation of grace, which seeks the greater perfection of our humanity through our participation in the life of God. We are being, as the great poet-theologian Dante puts it in the Paradiso of his Divine Comedy, "*transhumanised*," actually coining a new

word in Italian (“*trashumanar*”) to capture the profound and radical nature of the theology of *amor*, love. God is love and his grace catches us up into the way of love.

“*And I will show you a still more excellent way,*” St. Paul says at the end of the 12th chapter of his *First Letter to the Corinthians*. That “*more excellent way*” is the way of love celebrated in his wonderful hymn to love in the 13th chapter. It is the epistle reading for Quinquagesima Sunday, sometimes called Love Sunday because of that reading. “*If I have not love, I am nothing.*” Taken together with the Gospel reading from St. Luke where Jesus tells the twelve, “*Behold, we go up to Jerusalem,*” these lessons along with the readings for the two preceding Sundays underscore the nature of the Lenten pilgrimage. It is the pilgrimage of love in which we seek that greater perfection of our humanity through our participation in the divine love of Christ in his passion, death and resurrection. Charity, another word for love, is “*that most excellent gift,*” as the Collect for that day puts it, without which “*all our doings are nothing worth.*” And it is explicitly “*the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee.*” Strong stuff!

That journey is very much about our seeking God’s grace “*to amend our sinful lives; To decline from sin, and incline to virtue,*” as the prayer said by Priest and People together in the Penitential Service used on Ash Wednesday puts it (BCP, p. 614). To decline from sin and incline to virtue is part and parcel of the Christian way of life. Lent concentrates that pilgrimage for us into the span of forty days, but it extends into the whole of our life in Christ. Something of what is meant by virtue is shown to us in these pre-Lenten Sundays. Here are the four cardinal virtues as transformed into forms of love to become the powers and activities of our souls that radically change how we see and act in the world because of this new and higher orientation of our souls to God.

“*Every one that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things,*” St. Paul tells us, again in his *First Letter to the Corinthians*, chapter 9, which is the epistle reading for Septuagesima, but the striving is not for “*a corruptible crown,*” something which passes away; rather we strive, he says, for “*an incorruptible*” crown. We have an end with God; the meaning of our life is about something more, though not less, than what belongs to our quotidian lives. Temperance, the self-mastery of our desires and appetites, becomes a form of our love for God. This understanding is what underlies the meaning of fasting. It is not done for the sake of the body simply but for the good of the soul and to honour God.

Justice, too, takes on a whole new colouring of meaning in the Gospel reading for Septuagesima in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, where “*whatsoever is right, that shall [we] receive,*” a parable which challenges our limited and linear view of justice to suggest the higher justice of God which is actually charity. We are to labour in the vineyard of creation with a view towards the *justitia dei*, the justice of God, which seeks the greater good of our humanity. It isn’t an argument for doing nothing and thinking that you will get everything; it is, once again, a reminder that God’s will and purpose for our humanity cannot be constrained to our view of things. As Portia puts it in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*, “*mercy seasons justice,*” which is another way of talking about how justice is perfected by love and becomes a form of love. This is all about God’s way of love ruling in our hearts and thereby overruling the forces of envy, hatred, and hard-heartedness that diminish and destroy our humanity.

The epistle reading for Sexagesima Sunday is taken from St. Paul's *Second Letter to the Corinthians* and suggests the transformation of courage into a form of love, the love that bears witness to the truth of God in Christ even in the face of hardship and persecution. He is "bold," he says, as bold as anyone can be said to be, but he is not boasting so much as calling attention to the necessity of bearing witness to Christ regardless of the circumstances. It isn't about calling attention to himself. "If I must needs glory," he suggests, then "I will glory in the things which concern mine infirmities," for the awareness of our weaknesses opens us out to the transforming power of God's grace. Christian courage shows itself in the face of trials.

It is not only wisdom to know these lessons but prudence itself must dictate the course of our lives in the world of God's creation. The Gospel reading for Sexagesima is St. Luke's parable of the sower and the seed. It challenges us about the prudent use of God's word in our lives. What kind of ground are we going to be? The prudent ground is "the good ground," namely, that of "an honest and good heart" which "having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." The practical wisdom of the Christian way is rooted in our attention to God's word and in letting God's word have its way in us. Here Jesus explains to the disciples the meaning of the parable for they are "given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God." "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," is a common and repeated biblical exhortation to be wise in the things of God.

Our going up to Jerusalem is a journey in love in which we might come to see and know God's love more clearly. The blind man on the wayside, in the Gospel reading for Quinquagesima, calls out persistently and incessantly to "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me," desiring that he might receive his sight. To what end? He receives his sight and "followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God." The end of our vision is found in the praise of God; God's love is something known! It requires our seeing and our hearing. These are the two biblical sense of the understanding; prudence is about our knowing the love of God. "For now we see" of course, "in a glass darkly," incompletely and without full clarity, "but then face to face," "know[ing] even as [we are] known" in the love of God.

It places us in a community of lovers, those who know the love of God. To know the love of God is to praise him and to be where that love is proclaimed and celebrated, where that love is lived intentionally and sacrificially. That is the meaning of our life together in the body of Christ as a Parish. It is the life of the Church.

The confusions about religion and about the Christian church are great. It is, perhaps, easy to become discouraged and despondent. The struggles are real. When haven't they been? Just consider the experiences of St. Paul. How many of those things exactly belong to your experience? No. Everything comes down to our attitude and approach to our life with God. Think of the parable of the sower and the seed. What kind of ground are we? As a Parish? As a Church? What kind of ground are you? How well have we acted upon what we have heard, seen and received? To reclaim the love which sets all loves in order is our constant task.

I have in my library over a dozen books that all deal with *the Seven Deadly Sins* - pride, envy, wrath, sloth, avarice, gluttony and lust. They are all relatively recent books. This, I think, is interesting and significant. It is just one way in which there is a growing recognition of the

importance and the need to recover an almost forgotten language about ethical life, particularly, the moral discourse belonging to the theology of amor. To my mind, it suggests an incompleteness about the categories of discourse in the current therapeutic culture with respect to the understanding of our humanity. In Dante's *Purgatorio*, for instance, *the Seven Deadly Sins*, which are about the forms of disordered love, are purged away. Part of that programme of renewal in love is through the four cardinal virtues reconstituted as forms of love through faith, hope and charity. "*The greatest of these*," as Paul reminds us, "*is charity*" because faith and hope, which relate to our knowing and our willing respectively, find their unity in love.

In other words, the lessons of the '*Gesimas*' have their place in our current culture. They are there for us to learn again. It isn't about a trip down memory lane. It isn't about tradition for the sake of tradition. It is about the thoughtful recovery of a way of thinking and being; in short, a way of love. The mistake is always about collapsing the things of God into the things of our world and day, letting the world set the agenda for the Church and letting the culture dictate the terms of our spiritual and moral discourse.

The year past has been remarkable for the Parish. Once again, *mirabile dictu*, we have achieved a modest profit which means that for the third year in a row we have actually been able to accomplish the financial objectives of our five-year plan! This is, really, a kind of miracle. It is testimony to the strength and determination of the Parish with respect to its mission and life. I am profoundly grateful for the continued steadfastness of the Parish and for the continuing commitment to our life and mission together. Once again, it has been a very busy year in which a number of events stand out.

We began 2008 with services still in the Church owing to the memorial service for King's-Edgehill student, **Brandon Smith**, held in early January. After that, we repaired to the Parish Hall for the remainder of the winter, returning to the Church on Palm Sunday for Holy Week and Easter. This pattern has served us well and in 2008 we extended it by moving to the Hall for November and December with the exception of Advent Sunday and Christmas. This is simply a matter of good stewardship especially in the light of the increased oil prices that we saw in 2008 as well as in the light of the economic downturn. The winter months continue to be a challenge with respect to regularity of attendance but that has been a long-standing issue.

The Sunday School has enjoyed a modest increase of numbers and we are most grateful to **Maggie Lindsay-Sangster** and her crew of teachers for the work that they are doing. One of the benefits of being in the Hall, is that there is a greater degree of intimacy and connection with everyone. We have been glad to welcome back to the Parish, **Mary Ann** and **Ken Dufour** and their two children after having been away in the wilds of outer Ottawa! It is has been a great pleasure to welcome into our Parish some new people, **Scott** and **Judy Gilbreath**, for instance. I am most grateful, too, for the hard, hard labours of the Sanctuary Guild – to **Aggie Langille**, **Jacoba Morash**, **Muriel Fraser**, and **Elizabeth Spurr**. They have done yeoman service, especially in having to deal with the transitions back and forth between the Church and the Hall.

The Parish continues to benefit enormously from the musical skills, virtuosity, and flexibility of **Owen Stephens**, our Choir Director and Organist. His dedication to the music for the services is simply outstanding. He is to be commended for his patience in having to deal with the pump

organ rather than the pipe organ to such an extent. Much thanks is owed to the Choir for their diligence and commitment and for their musical leadership not only with the hymns but with other sung parts of the service. The Choir's mastery of the gradual psalms either in plainsong or Anglican Chant is most commendable.

Our Sexton and Layreader, **Bev Morash**, is owed our great thanks for his incredible commitment and hard work as well as his devotion and dedication to the Parish's spiritual life. The students at King's-Edgehill who have served at the altar on Sundays have added much to our corporate life. They are **Sang Hoon Kim, Hyun Jun Kim, Tom Cho, Charles Li, Michael Kim, and Matthew Wei**. And I want to thank our servers at Christmas Eve, **Meghan** and **Brittany Balding**.

I want to thank as well **Emma Devenney** for being so faithful in acting as the greeter for the 10:30am services. The Men's Club continues to meet for the best high cholesterol breakfast in the County and we are grateful for their many labours with such things as the decorating of the Church at Harvest Thanksgiving and Christmas, their leadership with the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, their assistance with the Ham Supper and the Lobster Supper, and for the many other projects that contribute to the upkeep and mission of the Parish. I am grateful for their commitment to the Waterville Christmas Stockings Programme. **Brian Balding, Scotty Cameron, Darrell Beaver, Herb Phillips, Bert Galley, Jim Wilcox, Emerson Hall, Eric Nott, Ken McBrine** and **Bev Morash** have all contributed enormously to the many, many "little big things" that are part of the life of the Parish. I am particularly grateful for their vigilance at Halloween and for their assistance in crowd control at the Church Parade and the Lessons and Carol Service with King's Edgehill School.

The Kingston Guild continues to provide a valuable role in the area of hospitality in the Parish and for that we are most grateful. The commitment of the Parish to the ministry of the Deaf has been wonderful and I wish to thank not only the interpreters, **Nicole Veinotte** and **Mary Cunningham**, but the ladies who provide hospitality for this important aspect of the Parish's ministry and life: **Aggie Langille, Deani Hines** and **Helen Gibson**.

John and **Emma DeVenney's** leadership with respect to the Seniors' Drop-in is much appreciated as are their labours in organizing the two evenings of Irish, Newfoundland and Country musical entertainment. Those programmes have proved to be much enjoyed by the wider community and provide a wonderful performance venue for local talent. This year, too, marked the Tenth Annual Parish Variety and Talent Show; all credit goes to **Eric Nott** for his leadership that has resulted in achieving such a significant milestone.

John Edgcombe and **Pam McKay-Edgcombe, Gail Denman, Gail Hall, June** and **Rod Kershaw, Moira Burgess, Diana Oulton, Brian and Teena Balding** and **Meghan** and **Brittany Balding**, various students from King's-Edgehill School, and many, many others have played a major role in the success of the Parish dinners – the Ham Dinner and the Lobster Dinner.

Another significant "little" ministry of the Parish continues strongly and that is our modest Food Bank which operates out of the Parish Hall. We have benefited greatly from "Operation Clean-Plate" at King's-Edgehill which garnered funds for local food banks through better stewardship of their own resources. Their gift has helped us enormously with this aspect of the Parish's

ministry.

The diligence and commitment of the Parish Council to the welfare and well-being of the Parish cannot be gainsaid. I am very grateful for the counsel and support of **Mrs. Barbara Hughes**, who was Warden for half the year before accepting the position of Honorary Warden, the counsel and support of **Eric Nott**, Warden, **John Edgecombe**, who replaces Mrs. Hughes as Warden, **Rod Kershaw**, our dedicated Parish Treasurer, **Beth McBrine**, our stalwart Parish Secretary, **Trevor Hughes**, our Parish Financial Advisor, and the other members of the Parish Council for 2008: **Ken McBrine**, **Allen Fraser**, **Bev Morash**, **Pam McKay-Edgecombe**, **Penny Taylor**, **Calvin Guy**, **Greg Schofield**, **Scotty Cameron**, **Teena Balding**, **Brian Balding** and **Alex Jurgens**.

The Parish Council has continued to uphold the integrity of the corporate status of the Parish of Christ Church and to advance the mission and work of the Parish in a responsible manner. With respect to the conflicts and confusions within and between the Churches of the Anglican Communion; to wit, the jurisdictional disputes arising from the presenting issue of same-sex marriages, the Parish has stated its theological position, namely, its commitment, via *The Solemn Declaration of 1893*, to the Anglican Communion. This is included, along with the Parish's earlier theological position on the matters of sexuality, in Appendix A. I also include, in Appendix B, a little article of mine that examines some of the problems that Canadian Anglicans confront. What I wrote in last year's report (2007) bears repeating, I think.

... the theological position of the Parish of Christ Church is a proper and legitimate way to deal with the moral and pastoral questions surrounding human sexuality. I have also consistently argued that I am committed to the formal and foundational documents of our Anglican polity, particularly, *The Book of Common Prayer*, *The Ordinal*, and *The Thirty-Nine Articles*, and to the form in which those teachings are understood in Canada to connect Anglicans to the Universal Church as stipulated in *The Solemn Declaration of 1893*. That Declaration commits us to what I have sometimes called *the Canterbury Connection*.

That is what I have signed up for, as it were, and I have no intention and cannot be required to sign anything else. ...

The Archbishop of Canterbury has no legal or canonical jurisdiction in the affairs of the national and local churches of the Anglican Communion, but it is his role to state the mind of the Communion. He has done so. It may be necessary to find, as he has indicated, "*ways in which others can appropriately distance themselves from decisions and policies which they have not agreed.*" There is no point in tiptoeing around this. I have long been pondering the idea of a Canterbury passport in the face of schismatical actions by the local and national synodical church!

Our classical polity commits us to a clear body of teaching on matters of fundamental doctrine, on matters of morality, and on matters of polity. There is a hierarchy of principles at work in these things. Some things are more important

than others, which is not to say that some things aren't important. I have longed ago reconciled myself, as I think I must, to the idea of living within a fallible church where "*councils may... and have erred*", as the Articles put it (Art. XXI). What we now face at the local and national level in Canada are attempts to coerce in matters of polity and to compromise catholicity by decisions on the part of local synods that openly contradict the consensus of the Communion in matters of moral doctrine, not to mention the *consensus fidelium* of the wider Church. There is the further irony that the claims for the autonomy of the National Churches have unleashed the claims for local autonomy on the part of individual diocesan synods, notwithstanding the constitutions of Synods which clearly state that matters of doctrine and worship do not lie within their purview.

With respect to our relations with the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, the Parish attempted, yet again, to effect a reasonable resolution. A letter to Bishop Moxley in August led to a meeting with her in November, ostensibly to deal with certain financial concerns that touch upon the corporate integrity of the Parish. There is little point in my rehearsing the ups and downs of that whole venture. There is every reason, however, *for the sake of the record*, to include the documentary evidence which, of course, has been available to you before. This is found in Appendix C. We had been promised a letter from the Bishop by December 31st, 2008 with regard to our five-year plan which included provision of monies to the Diocese, pending the successes of the plan and without jeopardy to the existence of the Parish. To date, we have not heard from the Episcopal office. Once again, I must commend the Parish Council for its patience and steadfastness throughout this whole sorry business.

A long-standing issue for the Parish has been the maintenance and upkeep of the Rectory. In many ways, the refusal of the episcopate to allow the Parish to lease or sell in 1997/8 has contributed greatly to our present situation. This matter has been well-rehearsed and the Parish as a whole is well acquainted with this history. Parish Council has begun the hard task of planning for the future of the Parish of Christ Church and realizes the burden of property, particularly the Rectory. A letter was sent to the Bishop in December by the wardens requesting Episcopal permission to sell or lease the Rectory and adjacent lands. To date, we have not heard from the Episcopal office. Once again, I commend the Parish Council for its patience and forbearance.

One of the most significant events in the Parish in 2008, however, has to do with the initial steps by the Christ Church Foundation towards launching a capital campaign which we hope to do in the spring of 2009. As indicated in the parish bulletin, every member of the Parish will be approached, realizing, of course, that people can only do what they can. The important point is that everyone be included. The capital campaign is very significant for the future of the Parish. As part of those plans, we have applied for Heritage recognition municipally and provincially for the Church building. We were granted municipal heritage designation in 2008 and are waiting on the disposition of the Province about provincial designation which we hope will be achieved in 2009.

Another significant milestone in the Parish is the publication of the first of the *Christ*

Church Chronicles which will serve as an important vehicle of communication with the friends and family of Christ Church. Looking back on the year, I note that the number of parishioners in the various nursing homes has increased. I continue to go to Dykeland Lodge, Windsor Elms, and the Gladys Manning Home on a monthly basis and to Haliburton Place weekly. We are aware of the need to bring up-to-date the Parish list and have started on this.

The year was marked for me with the usual if not greater litany of teaching and preaching and writing within and without the Parish: at St. George's, Hfx, at St. John's, Port Williams, at the Little "Dutch" Church on Brunswick Street, Hfx., and at the University of King's College Chapel, Hfx. A highlight of the year for me personally has to do with something that I was closely involved with more than a decade ago in another parish. On May 29th, 2008, a National Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act was passed, having finally wound its way through the Senate and the Parliament of Canada. As the originator and initial promoter of this idea, I was invited to speak at a celebration in early June at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. The event was literally overshadowed by the clouds of smoke from the devastating forest fires in Porter's Lake. Nonetheless, the whole experience is a salutary lesson in perseverance and patient steadfastness. It took over ten years for this to be achieved. Not every thing can be done in a day or overnight!

The greater point is that *"here is something which has come out of the Maritimes, out of Nova Scotia, out of the almost voiceless communities of rural Nova Scotia, which is for all Canadians. It is a parable really of the triumph of light over darkness."* I can only hope that the same may be said about the struggles of our parishes in the contemporary landscape of the Canadian Anglican Church.

There have been other speaking engagements and publications: a talk on Flora MacDonald to the Clan Donald, a talk to the West Hants Historical Society about the Lights, a review of Peter Jenkins' *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam and Europe's Religious Crisis*, an article on Fort Edward and so on. Within the Parish, there have been the Lenten series on the Love-stories of the Scriptures, the Advent series on Isaiah, the Prophet of the Advent and there was a quiet day on John Pearson's work entitled *"On the Creed"* for a society of Priest's which I conducted. And of course, I continue with the Chaplaincy and teaching at King's-Edgehill. All of the things that belong to the teaching ministry and which you have been so kind to support, encourage and allow. There is as well my involvement in the community. In May 2008, I was elected President of the West Hants Historical Society.

Our children are away but well. **Elizabeth** is at St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, England finishing her second degree. We hope to get to her graduation in June. **Joel** is finishing up in Ottawa at Carleton and is considering various plans for the immediate future. **Madeleine** is having an excellent year, her third, at the University of Ottawa. **Marilyn** is busier than ever but enjoyably so at King's-Edgehill. Argus keeps house!

The year, of course, has been marked with certain sadnesses. We were sorry to lose **Donnie Currie**, one of the stalwart members of the Choir, as well as **Edith Poole**,

Barbara Cochrane and **Edna Strum**. There were other sadnesses as well such as the funeral of **Tara Lee Elaine Arenburg**, a young mother whose husband and young son I baptized at Christ Church a number of years ago. Such things of course all belong to the very being of the Parish. They remind us of the importance of Word and Sacrament, the forms of our participation in the love of God, “*now in a glass darkly but then face to face.*” Such is our hope for them and for ourselves. It is the wonder of our life together that “*unto [us] it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God.*” Only so can we commend them and ourselves to God’s gracious care and keeping, in the sure and steadfast knowledge of the love of God. May God bless us in the year that lies before us and may we give him thanks and praise for all his many blessings in the year past.

Fr. David Curry
Annual Rector’s Report for 2008
February 15th, 2009

Appendix A

1 Theological Position of the Parish of Christ Church
Windsor, Nova Scotia in the light of the current controversies about sexuality

In the light of the present controversy within the Anglican Communion, particularly about the blessing of same-sex couples, **The Parish of Christ Church** states the following theological position:

that, The Parish of Christ Church upholds the classical understanding of Christian marriage as articulated in *The Book of Common Prayer* (Cdn., 1962); in particular, that marriage is the sanctified union of a man and a woman;

that, The Parish of Christ Church recognises that friendships are a blessing but finds no warrant in Scripture or Tradition for any equivalence between the blessing of friends and Christian marriage;

that, The Parish of Christ Church welcomes all people to the Church as the refuge of sinners regardless of any particular form of self-definition but without requiring the acceptance of any other category of definition about our humanity than what clearly belongs to the doctrines of creation, redemption or sanctification, namely, as male and female, as sinners seeking redeeming grace, and the sanctified states of life as single or married, lay or ordained.

Passed unanimously by the Parish Council of the Corporation of the Parish of Christ Church on Tuesday, October 14, 2003.

2 Theological Position of the Parish of Christ Church,
Windsor, Nova Scotia in the light of the current jurisdictional concerns and controversies about
the Anglican Communion

The Parish of Christ Church affirms its commitment to the wider Anglican Communion in accord with the words of the Solemn Declaration of 1893 that declares “this Church to be and desire that it shall continue, in full communion with the Church of England throughout the world.”

Passed unanimously by the Parish Council of the Corporation of the Parish of Christ Church on Tuesday, June 10th, 2008.

Appendix B

Charter or Sharia for Canadian Anglicans?

The real story is not the Anglican ‘schism’ in Canada of the parishes who have ‘left’ the Anglican Church of Canada. The real story is how the Anglican Church of Canada is in contradiction with itself and in conflict with the Anglican Communion.

After all, notwithstanding the controversy surrounding his musings on Sharia law, the Archbishop of Canterbury has made it very clear what the mind of the Anglican Communion is in his Advent 2007 letter. *“Insofar as there is currently any consensus in the Communion about this, it is not in favour of change in our discipline or our interpretation of the Bible”* on these matters of moral order and teaching and, as a result, *“it becomes important to clarify that the Communion as a whole is not committed to receiving the new interpretation and that there must be ways in which others can appropriately distance themselves from decisions and policies which they have not agreed.”*

This is, perhaps, what some parishes, like those in New Westminster and elsewhere, have done. They have decided to stay with the wider communion in the face of the actions of diocesan bishops and their synods who are requiring priests and parishes either to embrace this *“new interpretation”* or to allow others to enter into their parishes to bless same-sex unions, pending episcopal permission. So much for toleration. Perhaps, a kind of Sharia law for traditional, orthodox Anglicans might be the counter to such bishops and their synods! And maybe that is what is happening by parishes seeking the oversight of the Primate of the Southern Cone as a way to remain faithful to the Anglican Communion. They have had to *“distance themselves from decisions and policies [to] which they have not agreed.”*

The Archbishop of Canterbury, of course, can no more condone the jurisdictional incursions of bishops than he can admit that there is a new understanding of Scripture that all must willy-nilly accept. But, then, what are the *“ways”* for parishes in these situations?

The General Synod of Canada in 2007 noted that the matter of same-sex blessings was (a) a matter of doctrine or church teaching; (b) that it was not a matter of core doctrine, in the sense of being creedal (sex, marriage, and moral matters in general are not explicitly named in the Creeds, of course); and (c) that there was to be no local option with respect to dioceses acting on their own. Some, of course, were greatly dismayed at the last motion, thinking that if it is not a creedal doctrine then they are good to go with whatever they want, (echoes of the Righter debacle in the States). Others were relieved that no action had been taken that formally affected the standing of the Anglican Church of Canada in the Anglican Communion.

Others were dismayed at marriage not being seen as a core doctrine; it is, but in the area of moral doctrine, not creedal doctrine. Theologically, of course, this begs the question about the formative nature of scripture and creeds with respect to moral teaching and pastoral practice.

To be sure, nothing was done to stop the Diocese of New Westminster from continuing on its own unilateral course of action, hence the situation for parishes there. But the motion forbidding local diocesan option has been cavalierly ignored by three other dioceses to date, namely,

Montreal, Ottawa and Niagara, who have decided to advise their bishops to go ahead with what the General Synod proscribed. And not a whisper of regret, let alone a rebuke, from the Primate Fred Hiltz. And the press seems oblivious, too.

Leaving aside whether the General Synod has any authority to determine new doctrine of any sort, the issue here is about the integrity of the Anglican Church of Canada with respect to its own foundational principles, such as the Solemn Declaration of 1893 which commits the Church in Canada to the Communion. At issue, too, are the vows of ordination that priests have taken which commit them to the '*Canterbury connection*'. None can be required to subscribe to this "*new interpretation.*"

Property issues will play out differently in different parts of Canada depending on whether parishes were the creations of diocesan synods or predate synods, and depending on the nature of their legal incorporation. Who holds title? But in the matter of ordination, clergy cannot be required to subscribe to a new interpretation that runs counter to what they signed up for and which commits them to the wider church. But if coerced, what are the options? Charter of Rights cases or Sharia Law? Or something more mundane like 'constructive dismissal'?

And will 'progressive' bishops in Canada, on the other hand, decide to make complaints to the Human Rights Commissions about recalcitrant priests and parishes who refuse to endorse the same-sex agenda, alleging hate crimes? The ironies are huge. Secular courts and law might be used to protect or attack traditional orthodox Anglicans because of the church's embrace of a secular agenda that lacks the clear warrant of scripture and tradition and that flies in the face of the Anglican Communion as a whole.

(Rev'd) David Curry
Christ Church, Windsor, NS
April 2008

Appendix C:

August 6th , 2008 Letter to Bishop Moxley

The December 5th letter from Bishop Sue;

The November 25th letter from me to her, reporting on behalf of the Executive and the Parish Council;

A copy of the bulletin notices about the meeting;

The December 12th letter from the Parish Executive to her with copies to the Diocesan Chancellor, Solicitor, Archdeacon, Regional Dean.

Parish of Christ Church

543 King Street, PO Box 2664, Windsor, NS B0N 2T0
Rectory (902) 798-2454 Office (902) 798-2911

Rt. Rev. S. Moxley
Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island
Anglican Diocesan Centre
5732 College Street
Halifax, NS
B3H 1X3

August 6th, 2008

Dear Bishop Moxley,

Statements dated June 30th, 2008 from the Finance Department of the Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island, purportedly covering payroll, allotment and insurance, were received by the Parish of Christ Church, although addressed to Parish of Windsor #39 with the name of The Rev. D. Curry appearing thereunder.

Christ Church is one of the oldest parishes in N.S. It is discouraging that the Diocese does not know the name of Christ Church, despite requests to the Diocese that records be amended to show the correct name.

As for the amounts claimed in the statements, Christ Church has no record of owing amounts for insurance or for payroll and requests the Diocese to send information to prove the amounts claimed. As for the matter of allotment, we reiterate that the Parish of Christ Church has long disputed the validity of allotment claims as being a legal obligation. We reasserted that position in our letter to the Diocese from the Treasurer of Christ Church, dated October 24, 2007, which was written in response to Elizabeth Seymour's Memo dated September 30, 2007. A copy of our letter is enclosed.

We have been meticulous in our filing promptly what is required of us by the Diocese but often find a further request a short time later for the same information from which we have formed the opinion that the Diocese neither reads nor knows what it has received.

The cost of maintaining a large church building, Parish hall and a huge Victorian rectory was greatly compounded when Bishop Peters at the time of the retirement of the Rector, the Rev. E Hill, insisted that the Rectory be substantially repaired, and, in consequence, saddled the Parish with debt of \$80,000.

Unlike western Canada, and parts of Ontario, title to Christ Church lands and property is vested in the Parish (Rector and Wardens). The Diocese does not own the Parishes in Nova Scotia and this is the case in the Maritimes generally. It is therefore incumbent on the Parish through its Rector and Parish Council to act in a fiduciary capacity at all times in managing the assets of the Parish.

Christ Church desires to contribute to the work of the wider Church and has consistently and repeatedly made this clear to various Diocesan officials. As a result of meetings with Bishop Hiltz in 2006, the Parish developed a 5 year Financial Plan as proof of its financial responsibility and desire to create surpluses to enable it to pay its share in support of your office and of the wider Church.

Targeted surpluses were attained in the first two years of the Plan and we are hopeful that we shall meet our third year target. While struggling to achieve this, the absurdity of the position of the Diocese has been clearly revealed, as we wrestle with fuel costs. It appears that for every dollar of increase in the cost of oil, the Diocese demands that an additional 20.5 cents be paid to it as increased allotment. We remain committed to the long term existence and well-being of the Parish.

We were very disappointed when Bishop Hiltz failed to approve our 5 year plan which we thought was a responsible plan and offered a way forward both for the Parish and for the Diocese.

We hope that you will look more favourably on our efforts and give both your encouragement and approval to what we are doing at Christ Church so that we can look forward to establishing good relations with the Diocese in the future.

Yours sincerely,

The Reverend D. Curry (Rector),

E. Nott (Warden),

R. Kershaw (Treasurer),

B. Hughes (Honorary Warden)

cc.

The Rt. Rev. Ronald Cutler, Suffragan Bishop
Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island
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November 25th, 2008

Dear Bishop Moxley,

Thank you for your visit to the Parish of Christ Church on Tuesday, November 18th. The following is a summary of the meetings with the Executive, the Parish Council and you.

At a meeting with the executive of the Parish of Christ Church with Bishop Sue Moxley at 7:00pm on Tuesday, November 18th, 2008 at Christ Church, there was agreement on the following points: the acknowledgment that the allotment is not a legal obligation; the recognition that parishes could not and should not be required to enroll in the Diocesan Insurance programme and/or the payroll programme; the realization that in the Maritimes, Anglican parishes are their own corporations entrusted to do what they can and must to maintain themselves; and that the canons have no coercive power, no binding force.

The Parish Executive reiterated its request to have the Bishop's blessing on its five-year plan which would allow the Parish to make reasonable contributions to the diocese and the wider church but without jeopardising the existence of the Parish. Questions were raised by the Bishop about the legal status of the Christ Church Foundation with respect to charitable status and Canada Revenue regulations, legal matters in relation to which the Executive felt that things were entirely legal and proper.

The Bishop promised to get back to the Parish about the five-year plan and to direct the synod staff to provide clarification about the matter of the invoices, particularly for insurance and payroll.

At the 7:30pm meeting which followed with the Parish Council, the Rector presented Bishop Moxley with a signed copy of *Gates of Heaven: Sweet Love Remembered*, a book chronicling the

history of the Parish and written to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the building of the present structure. Questions were asked by the Bishop about the mission and activities of the Parish to which the members of the Parish Council provided answers and illustrations. The meeting ended with the Bishop giving a blessing.

I enclose a copy of the Parish Newsletter for your interest.

With every blessing in the Advent of our Lord,

Yours in Christ,

(Rev'd) David Curry

Notice in Parish Bulletin: November 30th and December 7th

Meeting with the Diocesan Bishop: Bishop Sue Moxley met with the Parish Executive and Parish Council on Tuesday, November 18th, 2008. There was agreement on the following points: the acknowledgment that the allotment is not a legal obligation; the recognition that parishes could not and should not be required to enroll in the Diocesan Insurance programme and/or the payroll programme; the realization that in the Maritimes, Anglican parishes are their own corporations entrusted to do what they can and must to maintain themselves; and that the canons have no coercive power, no binding force. The Parish Executive reiterated its request to have the Bishop's blessing on its five-year plan which would allow the Parish to make reasonable contributions to the diocese and the wider church but without jeopardising the existence of the Parish. Bishop Moxley was presented with a signed copy of "*Gates of Heaven: Sweet Love Remembered.*" We hope that the meeting will result in improved relations with the Diocese and encouragement and respect for the many and great efforts of the Parish.

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December 12th, 2008

Dear Bishop Sue,

We have received your letter of December 5th in response to the letter of our Rector to you summarizing the meetings between the Parish Executive and Parish Council with you on November 18th, 2008.

Greatly encouraged by the meetings, we are now greatly dismayed by your letter.

We stand by the summary of the meeting with the executive as conveyed in the November 25th letter. You speak of incorrect comments but only item # 1 of your letter identifies an area where you claim disagreement. The other items you enumerate touch upon matters that do not substantially alter the understanding of what transpired.

But to be clear, the matter of the legality of the allotment was critical to the discussion about the matter of the invoices, item # 1 & # 2 of your letter. If they are requests and not invoices, as you termed it, then it is because they are not legal obligations. You were very clear, too, about the reasonableness of parishes securing insurance locally, suggesting that we might advance such a view for the consideration of synod. We said we would take that under consideration.

With respect to item # 3, there was no suggestion that the Parish was not a part of the diocese. As was admitted, you are, as Bishop, a corporation as are the parishes and the Synod. The discussion was about the respectful ways in which these three corporations relate to one another. You remarked that things are different here in the Maritimes than elsewhere in Canada with respect to the corporate status of the Parishes. Our point precisely.

With respect to item # 4, the Parish understands itself to be committed to the Anglican Communion but cannot subscribe to requirements that might jeopardize its own existence through fiscal demands that are without legal force. To do so would be to compromise the corporate status of the Parish and its mission. At the same time, we reminded you that the Parish was committed to finding ways to contribute financially to the diocese and the work of the wider church; hence our five-year plan which you graciously agreed to consider.

Item # 5 of your letter refers to the questions you raised about the Foundation with respect to

Revenue Canada and Charitable Tax status in particular. The two lawyers on our executive responded that these were legal questions and ones which, in their considered opinion, are not at issue.

Item # 6 refers to a further desiderata of the Parish already mentioned, namely, that you give your blessing to our five-year plan which shows the Parish contributing monies to the diocese, without jeopardy to its own existence. It gives us some encouragement that you have indicated again your willingness to consider this request and that you intend to respond by December 31st, 2008.

With respect to item # 7, we stand by the summary of the meetings conveyed to you by letter and to the Parish in the Sunday bulletins. All the members of the Parish Executive present at that meeting concur. We note your direction to publish your letter in the bulletin. Unequivocally and without reservation, we regard the letter and the bulletin notices as a faithful record of the substance of the meetings. While we believe that publishing your letter in the next Sunday bulletin is not in the interests of the parties concerned, we will accede to your request.

We remain committed to the hopes of reconciliation even in the face of disappointment.

Sincerely,

Eric Nott, Warden,
On behalf of the Parish Executive:
Rod Kershaw, Treasurer
Barbara Hughes, Honorary Warden (QC)
Trevor Hughes, Parish Financial Advisor
(Rev'd) David Curry, Rector

c. Mr. Anthony Chapman, Q.C., Diocesan Chancellor
Mr. John Cooper, Q.C., Diocesan Solicitor
Archdeacon Lynn Uzans
Regional Dean David Garrett
Members of the Parish Council, Christ Church

Nominations for Parish Council - 2009

Allan Fraser
Scotty Cameron
Calvin Guy
Bev Morash
Ken McBrine
Pam McKay-Edgecombe
Trevor Hughes - Financial Advisor
Penny Taylor
Greg Schofield
Alex Jurgens
Brian Balding
Teena Balding
Eric Nott - Warden
John Edgecombe - Warden
Barbara Hughes - Honourary Warden
Rod Kershaw - Treasurer
Beth McBrine -Secretary