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# The Anglican Planet

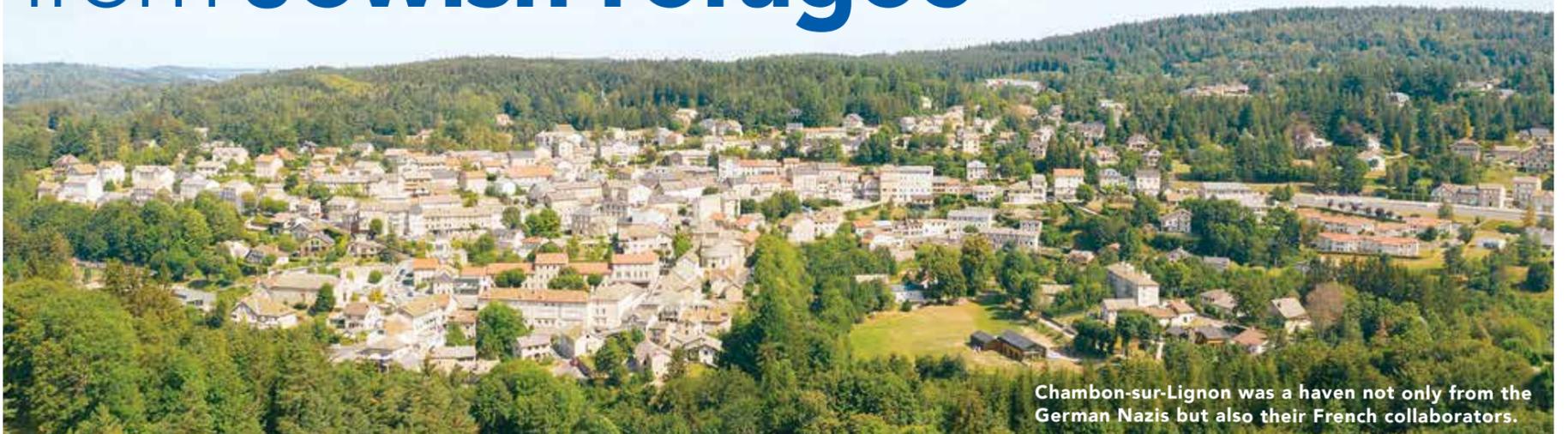
Canada's most read independent journal of Anglican news & ideas

Easter 2021 / Vol 16, No 2 \$3.50

France

## Protestant village left fortune from Jewish refugee

PHOTO: HAUT-LIGNON TOURISME



Chambon-sur-Lignon was a haven not only from the German Nazis but also their French collaborators.

(Staff) A JEWISH REFUGEE who fled the Nazis in Austria with his family during World War II has bequeathed a fortune to the French village whose residents hid them from persecution.

Eric Schwam, who arrived in Chambon-sur-Lignon with his parents and maternal grandmother in February 1943, is believed to have left around two million euros to the village in southeast France. The village was a haven not only from the German Nazis but also their French collaborators.

Schwam, who died at the age of 90 on Dec. 25, made his decision to make the village the sole beneficiary of his will in 'gratitude' for the welcome he received from the residents 78 years ago.

Schwam's father was a doctor, while his mother Malcie created a library in the Rives-altes Transit Camp in 1942, one of the many set up in France to imprison Jews.

It is thought that Friedal Reiter, a young Swiss social worker, helped the family move to Chambon-sur-Lignon after the transit camp closed in November 1942.

Schwam was placed in a children's home run by Secours Suisse, a sub-sector of the Red Cross of Switzerland which helped

children during the Second World War. His mother also worked there.

Le Chambon-sur-Lignon is located on a remote mountain plateau in south-east France that historically has a large Protestant community known for offering shelter to those in need.

"It's a large amount for the village," the mayor, Jean-Michel Eyraud, said. The village has only 2,521 inhabitants.

Eyraud said Schwam asked that the money be used for educational and youth initiatives, in particular scholarships.

He declined to specify the amount since the will was still being settled, but his predecessor, who told a local website that she met Schwam and his wife twice to discuss the gift, said it was about €2m (or over \$3m Can.).

The Chambonais hid Jews in their homes, hotels, farms and schools sometimes for as long as four years. They provided them with forged I.D. and ration cards, and guided some over the border to safety in neutral Switzerland.

The Schwam family arrived in 1943 and were hidden in a school for the duration of the war.

The Chambonais rejected any labeling of their behavior as heroic. They said: "Things had

to be done and we happened to be there to do them. It was the most natural thing in the world to help these people." After the round-up and deportation of Jews in Paris in July 1942, Pastor Andre Trocme of the Reformed Church of France had delivered a sermon to his parishioners in which he said, "The Christian Church should drop to its knees and beg pardon of God for its present incapacity and cowardice."

"Nobody asked who was Jewish and who was not," said Elizabeth Koenig-Kaufman, a former child refugee in Le Chambon. "Nobody asked where you were from. Nobody asked who your father was or if you could pay. They just accepted each of us, taking us in with warmth, sheltering children, often without their parents—children who cried in the night from nightmares."

Daniel Trocme, a young cousin of Pastor Trocme, sheltered some of these Jewish children. Tragically in June 1943 he and "his" children were arrested and deported to eastern Europe. Daniel Trocme died in Majdanek concentration camp in German-occupied Poland.

The Schwam family were far more fortunate. They all survived the war – and after 1950 Eric's parents returned to Austria. Schwam

studied pharmacy and married a Catholic woman from the region.

The residents of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon were honoured as "Righteous Among the Nations" by Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Centre.

Over the centuries the village has taken in a wide range of people fleeing religious or political persecution, from priests driven into hiding during the French Revolution to Spanish republicans during the civil war of the 1930s, and more recently migrants and refugees from the Middle East and Africa. TAP

—Sources: *The Guardian*, *The Daily Mail* and *The Holocaust Encyclopedia*

IN HER BOOK *Village of Secrets: Defying the Nazis in Vichy France* (2014), Caroline Moorehead estimates the Chambon villagers secured the survival of 800 Jewish refugees by hiding them and also enabled another 3,000 to get across the French border and secure safety in Switzerland. The figures involved represented the highest proportion of Jewish residents  
See **VILLAGE** p. 2

## UN against assisted suicide based on disability

BY ALEX SCHADENBERG

UNITED NATIONS experts have expressed alarm at the growing trend of countries enacting legislation that enables access to medically assisted dying based largely on having a disability or disabling conditions, including old age.

Their statement on Jan. 25 should cause the Canadian government to rewrite Bill C-7, which expands Canada's euthanasia law by eliminating the terminal illness requirement and permitting euthanasia for people with chronic illness or conditions related to disability.

In April 2019, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities expressed concern about Canada's euthanasia law. In March of the following year, the same UN Rapporteur expressed concern about the worldwide growth of euthanasia, assisted suicide and eugenics.

UN experts, Gerard Quinn, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; Olivier De Schutter, Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights; and Claudia Mahler, Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, stated that the rights of people with disabilities are being infringed by euthanasia legislation. They stated:

"We all accept that it could never be a well-reasoned decision for a person belonging to any other protected group – be it a racial minority, gender or sexual minorities – to end their lives because they experience suffering on account of their status. Disability should never be a ground or justification to end



someone's life directly or indirectly."

Such legislative provisions would institutionalize and legally authorize ableism, and directly violate Article 10 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which requires States to ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively enjoy their inherent right to life on an equal basis with others.

The experts said that when life-ending interventions are normalised for people who are not terminally ill or suffering at the end of their lives, such legislative provisions tend to rest on – or draw strength from – ableist assumptions about the inherent 'quality of life' or 'worth' of the life of a person with a disability.

"These assumptions, which are grounded in ableism and associated stereotypes, have been decisively rejected by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Disability is not a burden or a deficit of the person. It is a universal aspect of the human condition.

"Under no circumstance should the law provide that it could be a well-reasoned decision for a person with a disabling condition who is not dying to terminate their life with the support of the State."

The experts said that even when access to medical assistance in dying is restricted to those at the end of life or with a terminal illness, people with disabilities, older persons, and especially older persons with disabilities, may feel subtly pressured to end their lives prematurely due to attitudinal barriers as well as the lack of appropriate services and support.

See **DISABILITY** p. 2

The Anglican Planet

Publication  
Mail Agreement  
No. 40047638

# 'Tolerated lawlessness'

BY SUE CARELESS

A RECENT EXCHANGE of letters between the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada and a theologically conservative group within that denomination would seem at first glance to be about the Marriage Canon, that is, the church law regarding marriage, but in fact relates to the much broader issue of good governance.

Both the Primate Linda Nicholls in her letter dated Feb. 11 and the Anglican Communion Alliance's letter, dated March 3, agree *not* to reopen debate on the Marriage Canon at this time.

The Primate wrote: "There is no desire at this time to open the discussion of the marriage canon or to engage in further discussion over whose interpretation of the canon is correct."

In their letter, ACA replied: "We agree...that reopening the debate on the Marriage Canon is not desirable. Nonetheless, we observe that your Letter does not address our core concern about the future treatment of our Canons and procedures in the Anglican Church of Canada."

Good governance can seem a boring topic until, of course, things go haywire, as the WE Charity fiasco has proven.

ACA wrote to express concerns about events that occurred at the last two General Synods, actions that they described as representing "a level of tolerated lawlessness that causes us serious concern for the future."

Late last summer ACA had sought the legal opinion of two leading international Anglican experts on Canon law, Professor Mark Hill, QC and Professor Norman Doe. The ACA wanted to know the validity of a memo issued in June 2016 by Chancellor David Jones Q.C., the top legal advisor to the Primate.

The group did so not knowing what the outcome would be.

For some time now several diocesan bishops within the ACOC have been allowing – and even sometimes personally performing – same-sex marriages and have authorized liturgies for such rites. In explaining their rationale some have relied on the Chancellor's Memo.

In his Memo, Jones had argued that the Marriage Canon does not actually prohibit same-sex marriage, and so it is therefore permissible (the so-called 'argument from silence'). Jones also claimed that the Marriage Canon does not contain a definition of marriage. And finally, that because there was a gap between church law and pastoral care, diocesan bishops may authorize same-sex liturgies.

Hill and Doe disagreed: "No Provincial Synod or diocesan bishop has the power to authorize a liturgy for the solemnisation of a same-sex marriage unless and until the Church changes its doctrine through proper process as prescribed in its governing instruments."

The 10-page Legal Opinion argues that the Chancellor's Memo is "inaccurate and misleading" and makes "disingenuous assertions."

On Dec. 21 and 22 the Hill/Doe Opinion along with a 7-page cover letter from the ACA was sent to the Primate and the other Archbishops of the Anglican Church of Canada, and the whole House of Bishops received it two weeks later on Jan. 6.

The Primate declined to comment to the Anglican Planet on the Legal Opinion saying through her Director of Communications on Jan. 13 that "we will not be providing any comment on this matter."

Then on Feb. 11, seven weeks after receiving the Hill/Doe Opinion, the Primate wrote to the ACA. Remarkably she doesn't discuss the Legal

Opinion itself, nor does she mention by name the two top canon lawyers who wrote it. Her letter speaks only once of "the opinion" and then only in lower case:

"Since receiving your letter of Dec. 21, 2020, the Metropolitan\* and I have reflected and prayed about the opinion and the requests made in it."

There weren't any requests *per se* in the Opinion, only in the ACA's cover letter. One key request was that the ACOC "consider creating a Task Force on Communion Across Difference, similar to the one that now exists in The Episcopal Church" comprised of members representing both sides of the marriage debate in equal number.

The Primate makes no mention of even considering such a taskforce.



Linda Nicholls

PHOTO: THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

ACA's March 3 letter continues: "Our point in sharing Mark Hill's assessment of the Chancellor's Memo is that we believe good governance is important. The record of the two most recent synods gives us grave concern." The ACA continued:

"One of the things many people respect about Anglicanism is that its processes are judicious and measured. Sadly, however, the way the Canons have been used recently diminishes this reputation. This is seen clearly in the Chancellor's 2016 Memo and its reception by the Church's leadership."

The Primate wrote that "Despite the desire for clarity, we have not yet discerned a resolution" to the "paradoxical tension" around the Marriage Canon.

She continued: "The authority for decisions in such matters is a balance between episcopal pastoral authority and the discernment of General Synod."

The ACA agreed – but cited a missing element:

"There is, however, a third element that must be addressed by both bishops and synods and it is the law of the Church. Bishops and Synods are not a law unto themselves but are rightly constrained by the Church's doctrines expressed in Canons, liturgies, and Creeds which together find their root in Scripture. In matters that are currently in tension, synods and bishops are, by the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Canada (Declaration of Principles), to be constrained in their actions. Why else would there be Canons at all or the Declaration of Principles?"

Then the ACA raised some 'what ifs': What if a majority at General Synod wanted to allow for a lay presidency at the Eucharist or a Binitarian Creed? Would the denomination be obliged to make such changes? They noted:

"Perhaps we would, except and unless we have decided as a Church to be constrained by our Canons, liturgies, Creeds and Scripture itself. The law of the Church matters, as does good governance."

The Primate wrote that while General Synod 2019 did not change the Marriage Canon, it did affirm 'A Word to the Church', which she described as "a statement naming where we find ourselves as a Church in this discernment." It consists of Five Affirmations.

ACA replied: "These Affirmations express a majority sentiment but they are not Resolutions of the General Synod and do not represent the law of the Church. In general, they uphold the values that we can all agree we share, but there is one notable exception."

The ACA was particularly troubled by Affirmation #2 which reads:

"Diverse Understandings of the Existing Canon We affirm that, while there are different understandings of the existing Marriage Canon, those bishops and synods who have authorized liturgies for the celebration and blessing of a marriage between two people of the same sex understand that the existing Canon does not prohibit same-sex marriage."

ACA responded: This second Affirmation acknowledges that there were some bishops and synods who proceeded with same-sex marriage on the understanding that the Canon does not prohibit same-sex marriage. This has now been shown [by the Hill/Doe Opinion] to represent a serious lapse from which the Church needs to distance itself.

"The reading of the Canon drawn from the Chancellor's Memo of 2016, quoted in Affirmation #2, can best be described as a convenient misreading. Its convenience explains why it is still accepted without question. Nobody would want convenient misreadings to become an operating principle in the Church."

The ACA letter continued: "You will recall that at General Synod 2016, when the first round of voting on the Resolu-

tion to change the Canon was taken, some bishops declared that they were not willing to wait for the outcome of the second round of voting in 2019. They signaled their intention to contravene the Canon regardless. When the Canon was preserved without change in General Synod 2019, several bishops and synods did just that, relying on the arguments in the Chancellor's Memo of 2016. These actions are seriously flawed and represent a level of tolerated lawlessness that causes us serious concern for the future."

The Primate noted that "We also know that our history shows that some disagreements continue for many years before clarity is achieved."

The ACA agreed and added: "We note that this is a fruitful time for a careful consideration of the use of the Church's law, because the Council of General Synod is examining the role

## Timeline

Summer 2020	ACA seeks legal opinion from international Canon lawyers Hill and Doe
Oct. 1, 2020	Hill/Doe Opinion received by ACA
Dec. 21-22, 2020	Hill/Doe Opinion & cover letter sent to Primate and Archbishops
Jan. 6, 2021	House of Bishops receives cover letter and Opinion
Jan. 13, 2021	Primate tells Anglican Planet she will not comment "on this matter"
Feb. 11, 2021	Primate replies to ACA
March 3, 2021	ACA replies to Primate's letter

## FROM P.1 VILLAGE

saved out of all of France at the time. The villagers achieved this incredible feat at enormous risk to their own lives. At one point a convalescent home for wounded German soldiers was established in the region.

There was a long tradition in the area of Protestantism, including Huguenots, who themselves had suffered earlier persecution.

Former French president Jacques Chirac called Chambon "our country's conscience." Moorehead places the story in the context of the wider anti-Semitism of the Vichy government and the notorious paramilitary *Milice française*, arguing against what she perceives as a recent tendency to minimise collaboration between the French and the Nazi regime and asserting that by interning Jewish people, the Vichy regime had "made it far easier for the Germans to do their work." TAP –Wikipedia

## FROM P.1 DISABILITY

"The proportion of people with disabilities living in poverty is significantly higher, and in some countries double, than that of people without disabilities," they said. "People with disabilities condemned to live in poverty due to the lack of adequate social protection can decide to end their lives as a gesture of despair. Set against the legacy of accumulated disadvantages their 'architecture of choice' could hardly be said to be unproblematic."

The experts continued: "It is paramount that the voices of people with disabilities of all ages and backgrounds are heard when drafting laws, policies and regulations that affect their rights, and especially when we talk about the right to life.

of bishops in General Synod, and because Provinces have been asked to participate in a Communion-wide discussion about our Canons and procedures."

\*The Primate's letter was co-signed by Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop and the four Metropolitan: Gregory Kerr-Wilson (Rupert's Land), Melissa Skelton (B.C. and Yukon), Anne Germond (Ontario) and David Edwards (Canada). Both Letters are posted at: [anglicancommunionalliance.ca/primate\\_and\\_abps\\_and\\_laca\\_exchange\\_letters](http://anglicancommunionalliance.ca/primate_and_abps_and_laca_exchange_letters)

## Welby: Nigerian Primate's Statement 'Unacceptable'

BY KIRK PETERSEN

IN UNUSUALLY harsh language, the Archbishop of Canterbury has "condemn[ed]" as "unacceptable" a recent statement by the Archbishop of Nigeria on human sexuality – thereby raising the stakes in what started as a disagreement between the Nigerian primate and the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA).

Archbishop Justin Welby's comments on March 5 were in response to Nigerian Archbishop Henry Ndukuba's contention that "The deadly 'virus' of homosexuality has infiltrated ACNA. This is likened to a Yeast that should be urgently and radically expunged and excised lest it affects the whole dough."

"I completely disagree with and condemn this language," Welby stated. "It is unacceptable. It dehumanises those human beings of whom the statement speaks. I have written privately to His Grace The Archbishop to make clear that this language is incompatible with the agreed teaching of the Anglican Communion."

The relationship between Canterbury and Nigeria has been fragile for years. Nigeria was one of three African provinces of the Anglican Communion that announced a boycott of the decennial Lambeth Conference, which had been scheduled for the summer of 2020. The conference has been pushed back to 2022 because of the pandemic.

The Church of Nigeria is the largest member of GAFCON, the global orthodox Anglican movement that has been building an identity separate from Canterbury. With 18 million members, it is also the largest province in the Anglican Communion, aside from the Church of England.

ACNA is another influential member of GAFCON, even though at 130,000 members it is tiny compared to Nigeria and other GAFCON provinces. ACNA's Archbishop Foley Beach currently leads GAFCON's Council of Primates, and thus ACNA and the Church of Nigeria would appear to be key allies.

But Archbishop Ndukuba's statement accused ACNA leadership of being "palliative, weak, and unwilling to discipline the erring bishops and priests" who expressed disagreement with the recent pastoral statement by ACNA bishops on sexuality and identity. The carefully worded 3,700-word pastoral statement rejected the term "gay Christian," arguing that homosexuality is a temptation to sin, not an identity. The bishops proposed "Christians who experience same-sex attraction" as an alternate term.

The international controversy erupted after a bishop and multiple priests in ACNA signed and briefly posted online a "Dear Gay Anglican" letter, written by a celibate gay ACNA layman, that positioned gayness as an identity, while affirming ACNA's "continued commitment to a traditional sexual ethic."

In response, Ndukuba wrote "A Gay is a Gay, they cannot be rightly described otherwise," and fired a warning shot across ACNA's bow: "ACNA was formed by GAFCON, as a safe haven for faithful Christians who reject the apostasy and rebellion in TEC (the Episcopal Church). They should not now find in ACNA the aberrations which drove them from TEC."

Ironically, all parties to the dispute agree, at least officially, that homosexual acts are contrary to Scripture. Even Welby, while citing a 1998 Lambeth Conference resolution denouncing homophobic language, noted that it "restated a traditional view of Christian marriage."

All of this is in sharp contrast to the Episcopal Church, which now has five gay and lesbian bishops and authorizes same-sex marriage rites throughout the Church. TAP

–The Living Church Magazine

"Ensuring that people with disabilities and their representative organisations participate meaningfully in key legislative processes affecting them, including with regard to assisted dying, is a key component of States' obligations to promote, protect and fulfill human rights and respect everyone's right to life on an equal basis."

The time has come to challenge the euthanasia laws in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Canada at the United Nations. Clearly these laws are grounded in ableism and associated stereotypes that have been rejected by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. TAP

–Alex Schadenberg is Executive Director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition

# The Resurrection

## If it's true, it changes everything



PUBLIC DOMAIN

Christ Resurrected (1634) by Rembrandt.

BY TIM HAUGHTON

IF IT IS TRUE, it changes everything. At Easter we stand before an empty tomb. If it's true, it changes everything. Today cries of grief, turn to shouts of joy – He is Risen!! If it's true, it changes everything. Today death's sting springs to hope eternal. If it's true, it changes everything.

If the resurrection is true, then change and transformation in our hearts and lives means going back to look at it again and again.

Perhaps the best place to reorient ourselves with the truth and power of Jesus' resurrection is the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of Paul's letter to the church in Corinth. Here the early Christian teacher drills down into the resurrection. And he does not mince words but boldly declares that if it is not true, then preaching is useless, Christian faith is useless, we are still dead in our sins and the follower of Jesus is to be the most pitied of all people. But if it is true, it changes everything.

Paul is writing only 20 years after the actual events and begins by seeking to pile up the evidence of what he sees and knows to be historical fact. It almost seems to come in the form of a challenge. If you don't believe this, talk to Peter, talk to James, talk to the 500 people who saw Christ risen from the dead. This is no hallucination, no wishful thinking. This really happened.

Later in the chapter, Paul turns from the evidence for the resurrection to the benefits of it – to the change it brings – almost as if to say to the skeptic: Even if the historical evidence does not convince you, you actually want this to be true. And here is why, here is how it changes everything! It brings confirmation of forgiveness, a foretaste of eternity and liberation from death.

First, the resurrection is a confirmation of forgiveness. "If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied" (1 Cor 15:19).

Consider, says Paul, a Christianity without resurrection. What are we left with? Only one more moralistic

religion: a list of do's and don'ts from a founder who lived a perfect life, who called us to be perfect as he is perfect. We are to turn the other cheek, love our enemies, do good to those who persecute us, and live a life of self-sacrificial love. If we take that call seriously – devoid of resurrection – that's a one-way ticket to a life of guilt and condemnation. We'll have voices swirling in our head: "How can you know God loves you when you have done that wrong, when you are still doing it?"

Sadly, many of us live our Christian lives this way, consumed with guilt. And what do we do with that guilt? Some of us walk away altogether – "I don't need another guilt trip." Some of us deal with our guilt by comparing ourselves with others in self-righteous pride: "At least I am better than that person." And others limit their faith to achievable externals.

If there is no resurrection then that is all we are left with: one more demanding moralistic religion. But if it's true, it changes everything.

It's tax time and every year after I have sent in my return, I dread that brown envelope from CRA in my mailbox. You know, the one that says, "We want you to prove to us that you don't owe us this and that."

This year, however, I don't have that same dread. My receipts are a lot more organized and if that letter comes, I will know exactly where to go to pull out the relevant receipt and say, "I don't owe you a thing. Here is the proof; it has been paid in full."

How can we know that Jesus died for our sins? That we have been truly forgiven? That there is no debt owed? Because he rose again. Sin did not beat him on the cross. His resurrection proves he destroyed it; sin could not keep him in the grave. The resurrection is our receipt – God's "paid in full" across all of history.

Second, the resurrection is our foretaste of eternity – the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor 15:20).

Because most of us don't live in an agrarian society it is hard for us to grasp fully what Paul is saying here. In a farming community, all of its hopes and all of its wealth would literally be plowed into the ground. And when the first ear of corn or the first grain came it was a time of

great joy – for it was the first taste of an actual future, the guarantee that there was more to come.

In the wine world, on the third Thursday of November the LCBO begins to sell *beaujolais nouveau* – the first taste of the gamay grape, the first taste of the quality of that year's vintage.

Paul is saying that the resurrection is that first taste of God's future, the pledge of more to come, the guarantee of a future fullness.

If it's true it changes everything. It means that God's perfect future has broken into our present. That from the moment we place our trust in Jesus, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead comes into our lives to remake us and our world from the ground up.

But this transformation, this union with God in the here and now, is but a foretaste – a promise or guarantee. That means that the greatest moments of earthly connection with God, glimpses of his glory and beauty, are but a foretaste of what an eternity reveling in his love will be.

The joys of having his Spirit change our hearts, our character, are but a foretaste of being completely remade in his image. And there is no greater truth for dealing with both the joys and sorrows of this life.

We live in a secular culture that says this lifespan is all there is. I need to fill this life with as many beautiful things, experiences, joys as I possibly can. We spend incredible amounts of money, time, and energy as a culture pursuing the perfect vacation, orchestrating the timeless family Easter or Christmas, taking in that breathtaking vista, immersing ourselves in that exquisite art or music – and these are great joys – but are they ultimately satisfying?

How long after one moment of joy are we pursuing the next one, or trying to recapture the previous one, feeling crushed that what we expected from them doesn't last.

The one immersed in the truth of the resurrection can experience those joys – for what they are and no more – as foretastes of the joy that is before us in Jesus.

There is no greater truth than the resurrection for dealing with not only the joys of life but also its sorrows.

The one immersed in the truth of the resurrection is not plowed under when suffering hits, for they know that a future of infinite joy awaits them: a place of no more tears, no more sorrow, no more pain, no more grief. Where painful memories are wiped clean, broken bodies and minds are healed and where love and affirmation that has been withheld is replaced with love and affirmation overflowing.

If it's true, the resurrection changes everything.

But there is still more – the resurrection finally brings liberation from death (1 Corinthians 15:26).

We are a generation that fears death. For unlike countless generations before us, we do not have firm trust that there is something beyond the grave. We hope, but we are rarely certain and so the only thing we feel certain about is this life.

We have lost our confidence that there is something beyond where more joy, freedom, and peace could exist. And so suffering becomes so much harder to deal with because it robs us of the only joy that we think we will know. We need liberation from such fear.

We frantically cram this life full of as much as we possibly can, driving the engine of materialism and debt, holding tightly to our money in the face of deep need elsewhere that we could help alleviate.

If this life is all there is, then meaning and purpose is about what I look like, what I have, and what I do – heightening all our fears and anxieties about our success and significance. We need liberation from such fear.

If this life is all there is, then why not have throw-away relationships? When the going gets tough, life is too short to deal with someone like that, right? We need liberation from this fear.

If Jesus rose from the dead, we can know liberation from this fear – a liberation that leads to a changed life.

Paul is saying even if the historical evidence for the resurrection does not convince you, you actually want this to be true. For if it's true, it changes everything. **TAP**

*The Rev'd Tim Haughton is the Rector of Little Trinity Church on King Street East in Toronto.*

We are a generation that fears death. For unlike countless generations before us, we do not have firm trust that there is something beyond the grave.

## U.S. Supreme Court declines to hear Ft. Worth case

BY KIRK PETERSEN

IN A VICTORY for the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), the United States Supreme Court declined without comment on Feb. 22 to consider property and naming rights in Fort Worth. This leaves standing a Texas Supreme Court ruling that awards \$100

million worth of church properties to the group that left the Episcopal Church (TEC) in 2008.

Many of the affected properties are already occupied by ACNA congregations, but there are a handful of TEC congregations that apparently will have to vacate the buildings where they worship. The largest of these is

All Saints Episcopal Church, with an average Sunday attendance (pre-pandemic) of more than 400 people.

TEC and ACNA each has a diocese that has been calling itself "the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth." In 2015, District Court Judge John Chupp ruled that the ACNA faction is the

continuing "Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth," a decision that the higher courts have now let stand.

The case now goes back to Judge Chupp's court to work out the details of exactly what changes hands and when.

Fort Worth is one of five dioceses where the bishop and a majority of the congregations left the Episcopal Church a decade

or more ago, following disagreements over doctrine. This touched off property lawsuits in each diocese, with TEC maintaining that all of the buildings were held in trust for the Episcopal Church.

In Fort Worth, the ACNA diocese lists 55 congregations on its website, compared to 15 for the TEC diocese. **TAP**

–The Living Church

# Youth Ministry During



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Morgan Chu, left, with a Triniteen, at the youth group's pre-pandemic 'messy night.'

HIGH SCHOOL and college kids often get a bad rap these days for partying too much and needlessly spreading a deadly virus that leaves their own age group almost untouched. Yet teens and those in their early twenties need to socialize beyond their immediate family if they are to fully mature into adulthood and launch out into a career. **Sue Careless** talks with two youth pastors, one in Toronto and the other in Vancouver, to gauge how high school students are faring during COVID-19 and how their churches are reaching out to serve them.

**Morgan Chu** has been coordinator of Youth Ministry at Little Trinity Anglican Church in Toronto since 2014. Earlier she spent seven years directing the Leaders in Training Program at Ontario Pioneer Camp, and has spent many years investing in the lives of youth, both in camp and church settings. She and her husband have two little boys, 3 and 5 years old, which she says, "Keeps it fun!"

**TAP:** How many high school students are currently in your youth group? Has the number changed significantly during the pandemic?

**MC:** Our high school group called Triniteens consists of about 30 youth, and we were seeing 20 on an average Friday evening. When we went back to meeting in person in the fall, the youth were so hungry to be together, we had almost the whole group as well as a few new faces. In this second lockdown, there are often just 10-12 of us together.

**TAP:** Can you describe how your group met before the pandemic?

**MC:** We met in the youth space at the church every Friday evening from 7-10pm. We snacked, had worship

In the beginning of the pandemic, it was interesting to see that some youth were actually thriving in the lockdown.

time, scripture study, prayer and discussion, and ended with social time and some bigger games using more of the church campus.

We actually participated in a big youth retreat at the end of last February, less than two weeks before the world shut down. It was one we often go to up at Ontario Pioneer Camp, and it includes youth groups from all over the province, a few hundred of us. (In a usual year the camp runs 3 or 4 such weekends, and provides the speaker, worship and program so we can focus on relationships.) We usually attend one as well as our parish retreat. We also have some youth sleepovers at the church and sometimes some camping.

**TAP:** How do you meet now during lockdown?

**MC:** We meet almost exclusively on Zoom. It became apparent almost immediately in the pandemic that youth were being cut off from their other usual social connections – extracurricular groups and interactions with school friends – so we began offering three evening gatherings on Zoom each week. Monday and Wednesday were games, socializing and checking in, and Friday remained youth group (scripture study or devotional, sharing and prayer, as well as games). We dropped the Wednesday gathering when things eased in the summer, but we have continued with Monday and Friday calls throughout, and there is a core group who seem to depend on those gatherings. We also do small group discussions in breakout rooms on Zoom.

I made a point of making and delivering giftbags in June and at Christmas before we held large online parties, and have taken those opportunities to have distanced visits and write personal encouragement notes. There have

been a number of distanced walks as well – whatever we are allowed to do within current public health guidelines.

**TAP:** What do you think is particularly frustrating for teens during this pandemic?

**MC:** Youth desperately miss their peers and having face-to-face connection with friends. Some feel they haven't had a chance to make any friends yet in high school, and some don't even know their classmates' names as there is very limited peer interaction. They miss connection in so many ways. For some, they play online games together, night after night, over Zoom, just to be together. It isn't good enough, but it's better than being alone.

Youth are incredibly frustrated with online school (especially in full lockdowns), and they recognize all the painful limitations of it. Some are genuinely concerned about their education.

Youth miss their interests and getting to be individuals outside of their families. Usually, they would have extracurricular opportunities to explore their own interests, build skills, and even interact with peers and adults independent of their families such as coaches, music teachers, supervisors in clubs. Now they exercise at home, go for walks with family or a few close friends, and maybe skate or sled. Their options are even more limited than adults'.

We have an incredibly connected church community for the most part, so I have mainly left it to families to meet in unofficial settings as they are comfortable. Many of the youth have seen each other regularly and have 'bubbled' as families. A few have not been allowed to.

**TAP:** How have some of the usual needs and problems of youth been exacerbated by the pandemic?

**MC:** In the beginning of the pandemic, it was interesting to see that some youth were actually thriving in the lockdown. Especially those who struggled with social anxiety were suddenly finding school much more tolerable and the limited social expectations were manageable. Speaking with a youth counsellor friend, they mentioned that there wasn't that much to talk about with many clients because those anxieties had been mitigated. Fast forward a year, however, and even those youth are finding the solitude and monotony too much.

For youth it is a developmental reality that they often feel alone in their experiences and feelings, and they feel that they are always seen, as if the world is watching and judging what they are doing. For many, the pandemic has pushed them more into their own heads, onto social media, and away from the experiences that might help them empathize, serve others, experience other realities, have meaningful sharing conversations, etc. All the things that might help mitigate those feelings of hopelessness, aloneness and give another perspective.

Otherwise, they are just trying to survive school but without any of the positives of high school life, and any spare moment outside of school is spent in some form of entertainment or escapism. And who can blame them – limited autonomy and limited activity options means they default to watching movies and playing video games.

**TAP:** Have there been some gains with the pandemic for your teens?

**MC:** This year feels like one big brainstorming session with us constantly changing gears, adapting and reevaluating. My ongoing prayer request is for wisdom and discernment about where to spend our energy. We have had distanced beach days and online murder mystery parties. The silver linings have been interesting during this time. At an in-person youth event, the group would naturally divide, with friends or same grade or gender migrating to each other and ending up chatting on different couches or in different rooms. Over Zoom, however, we are all together unless we intentionally divide into breakout rooms or different calls. This means that some youth are unfortunately attending less because it's less comfortable to be all together. For others, we have spent far more time together than we ever would have in person. The boys have really bonded while playing games together and would call each other their closest friends, and the adults on the call are getting much more interaction than we would ever have had in person.

**TAP:** Tell me a little about how you find the younger youth are coping.

**MC:** Yes, I look after Campaigners as well, Grades 6 to 8. Campaigners has about 15 kids but we only see maybe five on Sunday morning Zooms. I'm working on getting them back out. They don't seem to be struggling as much as high schoolers. I think this is in part because they don't seem to dislike the online schooling as much, and they don't need their peers in quite the same way (or perhaps, don't push their parents away quite as much). It's like how the Grade 9s aren't minding being home as much as older youth – they haven't had a taste of high school freedoms yet and don't have relationships with their new peers.

**TAP:** While the vaccine offers some hope, teens may be one of the last groups to be vaccinated – which may cancel their hopes of summer camp and holidays. Does that discourage them?

**MC:** Yes, youth are terrified that their summer will be cancelled again. So many hopes hang on the camp pro-

See **MORGAN CHU** page 5

# the Pandemic

**Rev. Jeremy Graham** is Youth Minister at St. John's Anglican Church (ANiC) in Vancouver.

"My involvement with Youth Ministry at St. John's is definitely a COVID story! I never planned to be a Youth Minister this year. I've been filling in as interim youth minister since August 2020 when we found out that our newly hired Youth Pastor (an American living in Hong Kong) wouldn't be able to get a work visa for quite some time. He hopes to arrive this spring. I lead a youth ministry team of two staff and 15 volunteers."

**TAP:** How many high school students are currently in your youth group?

**JG:** High school in B.C. is Grades 8 to 12. We have about 100 grade 7-12 students. We divide into Junior Youth (Grades 7-9) and Senior Youth (Grades 10-12). It's pretty evenly split with about 50 youth in each group and an almost equal number of boys and girls.

**TAP:** Has the number changed significantly since the pandemic? No, not significantly. However, unfortunately we aren't seeing many visitors or newcomers during the last year.

**TAP:** Can you describe how your group met before the pandemic?

**JG:** Grades 7-12 met weekly on Friday evenings at the church for large group worship and then grade/gender-divided small group Bible study. On Sundays, youth attended either our morning or evening service, usually with their families. During the morning service a youth ministry with teaching and worship ran concurrent to the service.

**TAP:** How has that changed during lockdown?

**JG:** From March to June, our Youth Ministry pivoted quickly onto Zoom for weekly small group Bible studies. In September, a few groups were able to meet in person at the church each week on a rotating schedule. Other weeks they met on Zoom. Some of our youth leaders meet one-on-one for walks outside with youth.

We re-launched in-person Sunday services for 50 or fewer people in October and managed to have 3 (!) before stricter measures shut us down again. The youth program was taking place during those services. We had actually begun a lovely little unit on the Lord's Prayer. BC went back into stricter lockdown in November and Youth went back to 100% online.

We lost out on our annual All-In Spring 2020 retreat for grades 7 to university as well as two fall youth retreats. This was the hardest part of COVID for all the youth. We will also lose our spring 2021 All-In retreat on Anvil Island. It's called "All-In" because it was created as a long weekend retreat for all ages from newly-welcomed youth at the end of grade six all the way up to our oldest university students in our Eklesia ministry and happens every year. The younger ones are definitely intimidated! But mostly in a good way...as in an opportunity to be surrounded by older Christian brothers and sisters and witness their enthusiasm and love for Jesus. Intergenerational community is so important for growing in our faith!

**TAP:** What do you think is particularly frustrating for teens during this pandemic?

**JG:** Lack of freedom to go out with their friends and discover new things. Their favourite activities being closed or canceled such as movie theatres, camps, retreats, live shows, family holidays. Zoom fatigue. The same technology is used for school and for social gatherings.

**TAP:** Teens are very tech-savvy but even they must long for in-person contact?

**JG:** In our ministry at St John's we've found that seniors are the most excited and engaged about online meetings and high school and university students are the least excited and most disengaged.

**TAP:** Teens have tremendous energy to burn but can you play any sports or games now?

**JG:** We have no in-person games or sports at this time. Many board games still work on Zoom.

**TAP:** What is your greatest challenge ministering to them?

**JG:** Even as their Youth Pastor, I have so very little contact with the youth right now. My role is to pastor, mentor and support our team of 15 youth leader volunteers who meet with the small groups online. I only hear second hand either from youth leaders or parents about how the youth are really doing. We've lost all of the "informal" casual fun

conversations that we have on a Friday night while hanging out or on a Sunday after church.

**TAP:** How has your group adapted and tried to think outside the box?

**JG:** For Lent we've created a daily devotional written entirely by high school and university students from our youth and young adult ministry.

We can't be together in person or hear each other's voices, but our entire community will share in daily scripture readings and short devotional reflections on the passages so that we can recover some of what it means to be the body of Christ gathered around God's word even while we're apart. We'll fix our eyes on Christ together as we rehearse God's story, preparing to celebrate Easter.

**TAP:** Have there been some silver linings with the pandemic for your teens?

**JG:** Our team of youth leader volunteers has been incredible. I pray that our teens will look back in a few years and thank God for the love and support they had from their leaders during this tough season.

**TAP:** Have you been able to encourage the youth to connect with and serve others in your church or community?

Inter-generational ministry has been one of the greatest losses during the pandemic.

**JG:** This has been almost impossible. Inter-generational ministry has been one of the greatest losses during the pandemic.

**TAP:** Who is supporting you as you try to support your young people?

**JG:** I'm grateful for fellow partners in the gospel at St John's and other churches who I can pray with, laugh with, share inspirations and frustrations with.

**TAP:** How has your faith held you up during this ministry?

**JG:** We've been studying Ecclesiastes as a parish. This remarkable book has been just what I needed during this pandemic. I'm struck by the Preacher's very modern-sounding frankness about the realities of living in a fallen world! We try to grasp onto something solid and lasting, but it's all vanity – mere breath like a wisp of smoke. There is tremendous freedom in releasing control and recognizing that I'm not the creator of my own destiny. I'm not the saviour of a generation of young people at St John's either! God invites me to take joy in the little gifts of each day, to fear him and obey his commandments. This little book of wisdom has led me into the arms of Christ in a way that few other books of the Bible ever have! **TAP**



COVID led Rev. Jeremy Graham into youth ministry.

PHOTO: ST. JOHN'S VANCOUVER

## FROM P.4 MORGAN CHU

grams, freedom of movement, and life-giving time with friends that summer promises.

**TAP:** Have you stayed more connected than usual with your spring high school grads as they began college this fall?

**MC:** We only had two grads last spring but we surprised them by decorating the outside of their homes to celebrate with them. Both are doing well. One is in school in the Maritimes where they haven't had lockdowns to the same extent, so her university journey has been closer to normal.

The other is in Toronto with her family but she is really loving her studies and has a good support system.

Interestingly, it seems to be some of the grads from the previous year who are struggling more. The dream of university life that was sold to them did not have time to come to fruition. They said goodbye to their high school relationships and instead of new friendships, new independence, new communities, they are stuck in parents' basements doing university online.

**TAP:** Who is supporting you as you try to support your young people?

**MC:** I am very grateful for both the pastoral team and the volunteers who faithfully show up to disciple and play with the youth. These two groups have utterly sustained me and made me feel that I am not alone or running a siloed ministry.

**TAP:** How has your faith held you up while you have ministered to them?

**MC:** I have certainly faced my fair share of Zoom fatigue, discouragement and frustration, mourning, struggled to balance family and working from home, and many other challenges in the last year. But through it all, I have been reminded of the

grace and hope we have in Christ, the rich spiritual family he has provided (which has been nothing but supportive), and have enjoyed seeing the many silver linings this year. Even in the mourning, there is celebration – it's a beautiful thing to acknowledge that all the bells and whistles are unimportant, and all we really want is to be together, worship together, be close, share food. True community. Longing for a time when all these things can be true again makes the bits of genuine connection all the sweeter.

It seems that that is part of the balance that comes with leading

in this time: to be able to deeply acknowledge how utterly incomplete the picture is while also pointing toward the hope and peace we can only find in Christ. **TAP**

Listen to what some youth are saying about how the pandemic has skewed their year at [www.anglicanplanet.net](http://www.anglicanplanet.net).

# Canon Law & Anglican Identity

BY DR. GARY GRABER

IT IS NOT an exaggeration to say that law is the foundation of Anglicanism. The Church of England's doctrine and liturgy have, since the Reformation, drawn legitimacy from the Church-State establishment provided by successive Acts of Uniformity. Ministers the world over operate within bounds set by various canons and liturgies; no one acts with unfettered freedom. After breaking with Rome, the rule of law was baked into the DNA of the Church of England so that nothing and no one – Bishops, Archbishops, Convocations, Synods, individual conscience – could supersede the law of the land.

In the modern, expanded Anglican Communion, it has been suggested that the diocesan Bishop is the final arbiter and highest authority in a diocese and, as such, canon law governing a national Church may be set aside, depending on episcopal convictions and circumstances. This may be seen in the Anglican Church of Canada's Marriage Canon controversy. Are Bishops subject to the Canons, or is it the other way around? This is the central question that this short article will explore.

As late as 1906, a Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline – chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury and featuring a cross-section of top legal as well as ecclesiastical and liturgical experts – produced a unanimous Report that, among other things, rejected the claim of inherent episcopal authority, stating that all Church leaders (including Bishops) had no right to ignore or reject authorized Church law. Laws might be reformed, they said, and expected to have reasonable elasticity; but above all it was necessary that they should be obeyed. Clergy who, whatever their good intentions, “conspicuously disobey the law,” were “a scandal to religion,” and “a cause of weakness to the Church of England.”

It is true that this was an English Royal Commission, and it may be tempting to think its findings only applied to the Church of England and not the autonomous Provinces of the Anglican Communion. However, this would be misleading. To take a Canadian example, even after Confederation, strong constitutional ties remained between Canada and Great Britain. When Britain declared war in 1914, the automatic and unquestioned response in this country was that Canada was at war as well. Similarly, the Church of England in Canada was strongly linked with the Mother Church and, in spite of possessing an independent General Synod, in its Solemn Declaration (1893) vowed to hold and maintain the doctrine as received by the Church of England. So, when the Royal Commission reiterated there was no inherent power of a diocesan bishop to set aside specific provisions of the law, this judgement extended to and embraced Canadian Anglicanism as thoroughly as it did the home country.

But the passage of time brings change, and after the upheaval of the Great War, dramatic shifts came to grip the English Church and Anglican jurisdictions around the world.

There was, in England before the war, a desire to update the prayer book, which had not been fully revised since 1662. Revision work started before World War I, was suspended during that conflict, but resumed shortly thereafter, taking over two decades to complete. By the late 1920s, the proposed new prayer book, in spite of some controversial modifications, was passed by the National

Whatever one's convictions about any particular issue, ignoring lawfully enacted canons is problematic. If one can pick and choose which ones apply and which do not, on what basis can one deny this ability to others?

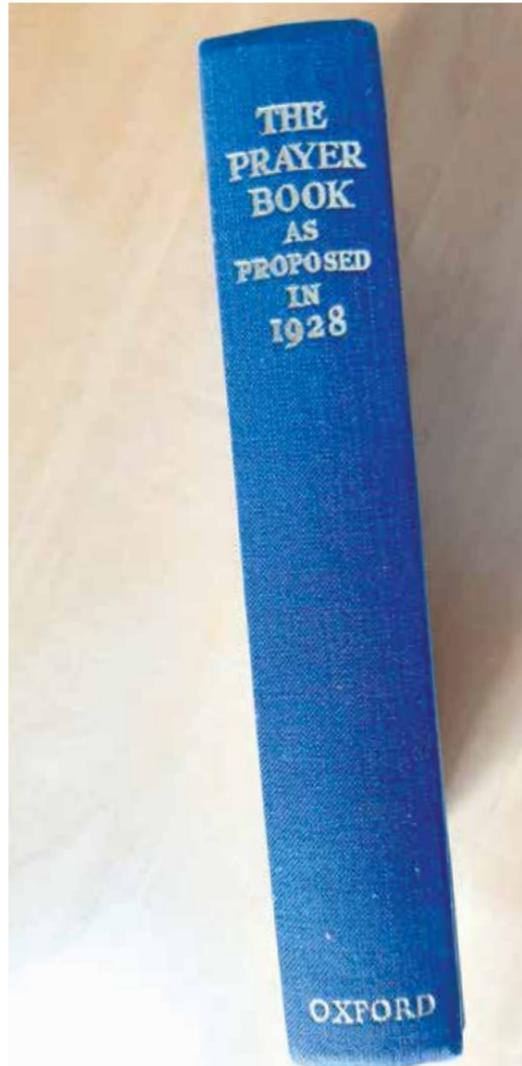


PHOTO: SUE CARELESS

Church Assembly (which functioned as a General Synod), and the English House of Bishops. However, this proposed book ran into trouble in Parliament (which had legal jurisdiction over any changes), and the measure was defeated – twice – in the Commons. This presented quite a problem. The Bishops could acquiesce to Parliament, accept its decision, and dispense with prayer book revision for the present or, if that was too humiliating, they could press for Disestablishment, and unshackle the Church from the authority of the State once and for all. But the Bishops decided, “in the present emergency,” to opt for something else: they simply disregarded Parliament and accepted the use of the proposed prayer book, even though they lacked the legal authority to do so.

The majority of the Bishops thought that their position was so correct – the Church should be ruled by spiritual authorities, not civil ones – that they rationalized winking at priests who used the proposed prayer book, even though technically this was against the law. This was quite the reversal from the position stated in 1906. How could the Bishops, who laboured under lawful authority, pick and choose which laws they would enforce, and those they

would not? This was a problematic policy. Stephen Neill said that normalizing illegalities within the Church created “an impossible, intolerable and humiliating situation [that has] lasted for thirty years.” He wrote this in 1958. (The situation was only relieved in the mid-1960s when new legislation sanctioned “alternative” liturgies for the Church of England. This same rationale was followed in Canada when, after years of research and experimentation, the Book of Alternative Services received authorization and was published in 1985.)

Two observations may be made at this point. First, contemporary controversies revolving around episcopal authority are not new; there are similarities to issues broached decades earlier. Second, much has changed within Anglicanism and its autonomous Provinces. As a result, a consensus regarding how the Church should be run has proven increasingly difficult to reach.

In Canada, an autonomy now exists that would have been unimaginable before World War I. Exemplifying this movement, in 1955 the “Church of England in the Dominion of Canada” became the “Anglican Church of Canada.” In recent years, claims to autonomy have reached the diocesan level, with assertions that Bishops have an inherent right to determine liturgical and doctrinal questions in their diocese, even if contrary to national canons. One is free to advance such ideas, whatever their merit; what one cannot do is claim this is representative of traditional Anglicanism. This is demonstrably not the case. It must be said that disregarding lawfully enacted national canons today remains as controversial and technically lawless as the English Bishops' emergency decision of the late 1920s.

This may sound strange in an era accustomed to emphasizing the freedom of the individual, and the separation of Church and State. Nonetheless, the rule of law (whether canonical or legislative) remains central to Anglican identity.

For once the dam is breached, it is difficult to stem the surge. Whatever one's convictions about any particular issue, ignoring lawfully enacted canons is problematic. If one can pick and choose which ones apply and which do not, on what basis can one deny this ability to others? Unless the rule of law is respected, we should not be surprised to hear of synods, dioceses, or chancellors promoting increasingly bizarre decisions and judgements. The Rubicon is crossed if Bishops say, “If a national canon suits my preference, I shall enforce it; if it does not, I shall not.”

Canon law should always seek to serve the good of the Church, and its people. Changes are always possible, and revising national canons remains a viable option. But it is ultimately self-destructive for a national Church to deliberately break them. No one could have blamed the Bishops in the 1920s had they sought Disestablishment, and no one today could fault anyone so aggrieved by specific canons that they felt unable to comply with them, and had to depart. What should not be condoned is the willful breaking of canons because they do not suit us, and rationalizing this policy as acceptable or commendable.

Anglican reliance upon the rule of law has been one of its foundational characteristics. Far from being merely an object of academic curiosity, a national Church that sets this aside does so at its peril. TAP

*Dr. Gary Graber teaches Church History & Anglican Polity and is Advisor to the Bishop on Theological Education (ANiC). He and his wife Lynne attend St Peter & St Paul's ANiC Church in Ottawa.*

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# David Nguyen-Stone



PHOTO: INTERVARSITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

**Dave Nguyen-Stone is Staff Director for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship in British Columbia.** He oversees InterVarsity's province-wide undergraduate campus ministry at UBC, Simon Fraser, University of Victoria, Emily Carr University, Langara College, University of Northern British Columbia, and College of New Caledonia. Here he talks with **Sue Careless** about some of the challenges for college students during COVID-19 and how InterVarsity is adapting to help them.

**TAP:** What do you think is particularly frustrating for first-year college students during this pandemic?

**DNS:** Missing out on the first-year experience, like moving into resi-

dence, making new friends, growing in independence from their family. The same tuition fees without in-person teaching. Professors are squeezing margins with increased

coursework and prolonged lectures that give little time to prepare for the next Zoom class.

**TAP:** How have some of the usual issues that trouble first-year college students been

exacerbated by the pandemic?

**DNS:** The adventure of first year can often be finding belonging in a new community on campus. This year's cohort is more isolated, making for a stagnant or prolonged process of community formation.

**TAP:** College students are very tech-savvy but even they must long for in-person contact?

**DNS:** Absolutely! Their ability to master and navigate new technology is one of this generation's gifts, but they are also reckoning with limits to screen-time and a hunger for in-person relationships.

**TAP:** Can you play any sports now?

**DNS:** Athletic centres have been shut down, and Vancouver, in particular, is rarely cold enough to enjoy outdoor winter sports. So unless someone likes playing in the cold rain, they are likely stuck inside for months at a time.

**TAP:** How do your InterVarsity groups meet now during lockdown?

**DNS:** Most of our meetings are through Zoom rooms. When health regulations allowed and people felt safe, we had some nature hikes that were well attended. We've also experimented with new ways of connecting large groups, like livestreams, study music hours, online spiritual disciplines (like examen) and podcasts. We've encouraged people to meet in online small groups as much as possible.

**TAP:** How have your groups adapted and tried to think outside the box?

**DNS:** We've taken this season as a chance to disrupt our previous ways of ministering, and have really explored creativity and ingenuity. We have expanded our reach by moving from campus-specific ministry to province-wide ministry now that we aren't bound by geography. Our students are engaging with many resources that we are creating for the first time such as podcasts and art workshops. Whenever we are able to meet in-person again, we are going to have a well-developed toolkit of skills and resources that I think will aid our ministry long-term.

**TAP:** Has pandemic fatigue set in for these students?

**DNS:** Yes and no. We have had a minor drop-off in ministry-wide participation with each passing week,

but a growth in more focused participation. For example, a leadership training time that we had expected ten people to attend was attended by 35 people who want to grow in their leadership on campus.

**TAP:** Have any of your youth had family or friends become seriously ill or die because of the virus?

No deaths that we are aware of, but a few illnesses.

**TAP:** While the vaccine offers some hope, college students may be one of the last groups to be vaccinated. Does that discourage them?

**DNS:** I'm not sure that reality has sunk in yet. I think there is still a

Students are reckoning with limits to screen-time and a hunger for in-person relationships.

hopeful perspective that normalcy will return with the next reduction of restrictions. I'm not sure students have reckoned fully with the long-term delay or the possibility of variants making this last for a few years. What seems more exciting is that spring is coming.

**TAP:** What is your greatest challenge ministering to them?

**DNS:** Cultivating connection and relationships, both with students who are fatigued, and with new students we haven't connected with before.

**TAP:** Who is supporting you as you try to support your college students?

**DNS:** InterVarsity has done a fantastic job of supporting their staff, and setting very gracious standards for ministry in this season. My supervisor, and the national leadership, has been very hands-on in caring for the immediate needs of campus workers in this season.

**TAP:** How has your faith held you up while you have ministered to them?

**DNS:** Very early on in the pandemic I was leading a study on Mark 13 (the Olivet Discourse) with students. The destructive imagery is frightening and confusing for many, but within that passage is the reminder of destruction as birth pangs for the new thing that is to come. Since then, I have held this entire season as a moment to search for the new birth that comes with the painful birth pangs—or painful inconveniences and upheavals—of this time. I'm constantly asking "What is the new thing that Jesus is bringing to life in this season?" This perspective has given me a healthy dose of wonder in the midst of COVID-19. TAP

## TAP Book Review

### Jack

By Marilynne Robinson

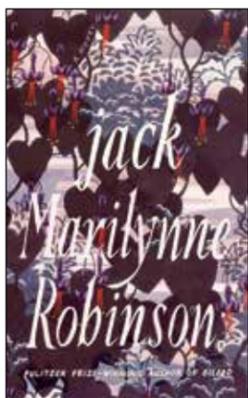
McClelland & Stewart, 2020, 309 pages

REVIEWED BY MAXINE HANCOCK

*Jack* is Marilynne Robinson's fifth novel, and the fourth in which characters introduced in *Gilead* are more fully developed. If you have already entered the world of Robinson's mythical town of Gilead, with its follow-up novels, *Home* and *Lila*, you will not be surprised to find yourself again reading about a character who first came into our reading lives alongside the Rev. John Ames. If this novel is your introduction to the series, you will be intrigued and challenged as you move ever deeper into the story of Jack, the beloved prodigal son of Ames' dear friend and fellow-minister, the Rev. John Boughton.

In *Gilead*, a visiting Jack Boughton disturbs the peace of John Ames' garden – and causes the old pastor to discover that the real "snake in the garden" lies in his own heart in the form of the sin of jealousy. In *Home*, Jack is the prodigal son who comes home to the welcome of his family, but does not stay. In the final pages of that novel, there is a cameo appearance of his wife and son.

In this novel, the story of Jack Boughton's marriage is



explored as a complex romance unfolds. We find Jack to be a self-confessed and alcoholic "ne'er-do-well" white man loved by—and in love with—a thoughtful, intelligent black woman high school teacher who holds a position of esteem within her separatist black community. Both are children of clergymen: Jack is the son of the Presbyterian minister in Gilead. Della Miles is the daughter of a bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal church.

They meet in St. Louis, Missouri, where most of the story is set, but each comes from a different state—not only of the Union, but also of race relations. Jack is from Iowa, in 1851 the earliest of the states to abolish anti-miscegenation laws prohibiting marriage between white and black people. Della, on the other hand, is from Tennessee, where such laws continued to be on the books until 1978. The story, set in the late 1940s, shows love achingly reaching across the social chasm of discrimination and separatism.

The point-of-view of the novel is almost entirely Jack's. His name becomes increasingly important as the story progresses: at first, he is just any "jack" – a general nomenclature for a nobody. He is merely the shadowy and shifty prodigal of the earlier novels. Gradually, as the story progresses, the reader

discovers Jack as a real person: intelligent, morally sensitive and lost. He attempts to counter "his old compulsion to do damage as chance offered" by living in a way that is entirely harmless, only gradually realizing that to be human is to possess the power of hurting others, and that one cannot live in relationship without that being a corresponding possibility.

Robinson takes sin very seriously. In this book, she demonstrates, both through Jack and through the social situation of the novel, that the nature of sin is not tied up merely in individual acts – Jack acknowledges that he is a thief and a liar – but in the deepest sub-strata of human nature. Jack is less aware of the underlying sin of pride that keeps him bound in hopeless attempts at self-reformation. Sin, according to Robinson, is bound into our lives at both the individual and societal levels. The only solvent that can take away the stain of intrinsic sinfulness is costly, self-sacrificing love. In this novel and others of Robinson's series, God's love and grace are poured out at great cost through faithful people.

After a brief prelude, the novel begins with a long night's dialogue in a city cemetery, a fitting opening to a

See **JACK** page 7

We are updating our confidential contact list for TAP. Please email [office@stpeter.org](mailto:office@stpeter.org) with your current email address. Thank you!