

David Jones - Given God's Grace

by Susan Fleming

How can a man who experiences the death of his wife and both his parents within six months walk on? Only by God's grace. There is saving grace, there is abundant grace, and there is sufficient grace. David Jones, rector of St. Paul's Church in Haymarket, Virginia, has experienced all three.

Saving grace came to a 10-year-old boy on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, who became aware of God's love and prayed, surrendering himself to Christ. Abundant grace came to an earnest college freshman, home for the summer, who prayed on his knees in his bedroom, "Lord, show me your reality in a deeper way." An Episcopal priest visiting Cape

Cod that summer shared his knowledge and experience of the Holy Spirit, and a young man returned to Amherst in the fall empowered to share his faith. Sufficient grace came to a priest who was called to walk alone as a celibate single parent following his wife's death in 1998.

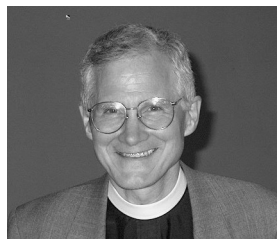
In 1996, David's wife Katy was diagnosed with an aggressive brain cancer. Her surgeon was not able to remove all of the tumor, and the rounds of radiation and chemotherapy began. Soon after the treatments were complete, the couple and their three children moved to Haymarket. But the cancer returned. Katy took more treatments, underwent more surgery, had special implants placed in her brain. She came home, but it was more difficult to stand and to communicate. On March 9-1998, David's father died. On March 10, Katy died.

"God's grace enabled me to maintain the family while she was incapacitated," David says. Although Katy couldn't converse near the end, she and David were able to read God's word and pray together each day. And through it all, the parish pastored their rector—praying for the family, bringing meals, taking the kids to school.

"I trusted the Lord knew exactly, precisely, what He was doing, that He was not deserting Katy or me or the children," David says. "He gave me a sense that his plan was bigger than my plan, his purposes deeper and more profound than my desire to see Katy—and my parents—healed. In the midst of intensely praying for healing, Jesus gave me a sense of trust, that his purposes were greater than what I could see in my limited understanding."

Today, David identifies with Philippians 4: 11b-13, "...for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, I can do everything through Him who gives me strength." And through God's grace, David has found wholeness in singleness.

"I trusted the Lord knew exactly, precisely, what He was doing."



GRACE

Do you have a story of how God has been a source of GRACE in your life?

Why not share it with us? Tell us your story below, and bring it to the AAC booth in the Exhibit Hall.

www.APLACETOSTAND.org

The AAC General Convention offices are located at:

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IN CONCERT

7:00pm, Central Lutheran Church Sanctuary
Tickets at \$7 in advance, \$10 at the door

Brought to you by TOUCH,
Compassion International & the AAC



ROMANS 3:23-24



TODAY'S EVENTS:

- 12:30p Legislative Briefing Lunch**
All are welcome!
Central Lutheran, Fellowship Hall
- 1:15p Prayer and Worship Service for the Persecuted Church**
At the Institute on Religion and Democracy booth, Exhibit Hall.
- 4:00p Unconventional Break**
Post-Abortion Testimony
Sponsored by NOEL
Central Lutheran, Fellowship Hall

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The AAC is a network of individuals, parishes, specialized ministries and Episcopal bishops who affirm Biblical authority and mainstream Anglican orthodoxy within the Episcopal Church. In response to the Lord's grace, we commit ourselves to proclaiming the Good News to every person and to working to reform and renew our Church.

THE DAILY ENCOMPASS

A WITNESS OF MAINSTREAM ANGLICANISM AT GENERAL CONVENTION 2003

Thursday, July 31, 2003

Integrity sermon blasts 'fear and intolerance'

by Douglas LeBlanc

These things are true about the Eucharists sponsored by Integrity each time General Convention meets: they occur in the diocesan cathedral, which is packed out with deputies, bishops, and friends of the caucus for gay Episcopalians; people sing their hearts out and respond to the liturgy with gusto; and the evening's preacher delivers a confrontational sermon.

Gayle Harris, suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Massachusetts, delivered the sermon this time, though she spoke in more subdued tones than Bishop Stephen Charleston did at Denver's cathedral in 2000. Members and supporters of Integrity filled St. Mark's Cathedral, located several blocks away from the Minneapolis Convention Center, on Wednesday evening.

Harris opened her sermon with a brief description of *Strictly Ballroom*, an independent film she described as one she watches every few months with her husband. In the film, an unlikely couple of a homosexual man and a woman team up and create "new steps, new steps, new steps," Harris said.

The final vision of the film is one of love conquering all. "Even the antagonists, the guardians of sterile tradition," are transformed, Harris said.

She paraphrased the service's Old Testament reading, about Abraham being called to the land of Canaan, as his being called to "a land filled with strange-acting people," which prompted scattered laughter.

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My name is Bjisha Biju, and I live in India. I like to sing and play with dolls. Will you sponsor me?

To find out more about how to sponsor a child, visit the AAC booth in the Exhibit Hall.

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE AAC Legislative Briefing Lunch

Are you looking for a great meal at a great price, just a few steps away from the Convention Center?

Do you want the latest information on General Convention legislation?

Then come join us for lunch!

ALL ARE WELCOME!

12:30p Central Lutheran Church, Fellowship Hall
Just across 12th St. from the Convention Center

An Idea Whose Times Have Come:

The Episcopal Church Can Sponsor 4 Million AIDS Orphaned Children

by the Rev. Herb McMullan

You take \$2.00 US (roughly the cost of a latte), and you tuck away that amount, as a personal, spiritual discipline, each day of the 365 days of one full year (2 TIMES 365), and you invite two million of your closest Episcopal friends to participate with you in the discipline (TIMES 2,000,000). The result at year's end (2 X365X2,000,000) - four million plus AIDS orphaned children sponsored in a year's time. It's an idea whose times have come.

The problem needs no further defining. If you live on this planet with even a modicum of compassion coursing through your veins, you've already had your heart torn by the overwhelming numbers. By reputable last count, there were some 34,000,000 AIDS orphaned children in Africa alone, give or take a few million kids, with still more on the way. Someone made the decision, as these numbers first mounted, to call the children's plight part of a "pandemic" - an epidemic gone nuts.

Thank God, the responses are many. But many more, both theoretical and practical, are, without a doubt, still desperately needed. The problem is on a scale such that we may see entire countries implode under the weight of overburdened infrastructures. No single party or ideological persuasion can even begin to address the sum total of a pandemic, though many are taking up relevant and timely pieces of the challenge. For \$2.00 per day, in one year's time, the Episcopal Church could pick up the daily care needs of 4 million children. It's not the whole thing, but it's something and a lot better than nothing.

Prototypes for such an undertaking are already in place. One such prototype is TOUCH (Treasure One Ugandan Child), an AIDS orphaned child sponsorship partnership, which includes the mission group of one Episcopal parish, the child sponsorship program of Compassion International and the Anglican Diocese of Kigezi, Uganda. Begun three

In one year's time, through our constant prayers and a handful of personal letters, we could sponsor 4.3 million AIDS orphaned children.

years ago, TOUCH has recruited sponsors for 1,600 children out of one parish and into a diocese where 55,000 AIDS orphaned children reside. Compassion International serves as the conduit through which sponsors offer their personal interest in their sponsored child, their correspondence with their child, their faithfulness and prayers, and \$28 dollars per month (less than the cost of a latte a day). Ugandan Compassion workers, at the invitation and under the authority of Bishop George Katwesigye, translate sponsor's funds (lattes) into both material and support programs for sponsored children. Food, medicines, clothing, school fees, supportive groups and Christian mentoring become available to the children through the diocesan staff in designated villages. As the sponsored children are resourced through the local church, the entire village is

benefited. Life gets better where, for so long and on an outrageous scale, it's been getting worse. TOUCH - it's one example. There are others.

So there's the idea. Of course, it isn't "the answer" for which cranks and cynics always hold out. It is, however, a demonstrated response, within access, and eminently doable through the African dioceses of the Anglican Communion, involving the Episcopal Church as individuals and as a people, in a program which is already tested as viable. How it could be configured as a campaign of the whole through the Episcopal Church is short work if we had the will to do it. Presiding Bishop Griswold has called us to engage in God's mission in the world. George Werner, in his opening remarks to General Convention, challenged us not to leave this place uncommitted to substantive expressions of the tangible reality that we are being transformed by Jesus Christ as a servant witness to a broken and needy world.

One child sponsorship program, no matter what the scale, is not the full expression of such a reality. But it could be one vital part of such an expression. In one year's time, through our constant prayers and a handful of personal letters, as a spiritual discipline on our collective part, at the invitation of our brothers and sisters who are in the fire of pandemic, even as we speak and read, we could sponsor over four million AIDS orphaned children at the cost of a latte a day.

The Rev. Herb McMullan is Outreach Director at Truro Church, Fairfax, Virginia.

salads, sandwiches, fresh fruits, and sweet treats to end your meal where you can fellowship with your colleagues in a relaxed atmosphere.

Before eating, renew your spirit with a brief meditation presented by Rev. Doug McGlynn. While enjoying your lunch, you will review the day's legislative events with a presentation by Rev. John Guernsey, followed by Rev. Canon Martyn Minns, the self-proclaimed "spin-doctor" giving the American Anglican Council perspective on the day's activities.

AAC Luncheons Offer Food and Facts

by Vivian Leinio

Hungry? Follow the American Anglican Council signs to a family-style lunch at Central Lutheran Church prepared daily by Chef Greg Malley. Here you will find delicious

Rev. John Guernsey gives the straight facts on legislative action on the first day of Convention.



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"God can be trusted in a new place, in a new day, doing new things," Harris said. "To claim a blessing, to be a blessing, Abraham had to take risks."

After Abraham, however, came the law and guardians of the law. "Law became a way of keeping chaos at bay," she said, "a wooden system of thinking," and a habit of keeping "catalogs of prohibitions and regulations, where holiness becomes a commodity."

Then Harris finally tied into the gospel reading of the evening, an extended passage from Luke in which Jesus rips the bark off the Pharisees of his day. Without naming names, Harris described what she saw as intimidating behaviors and the reasons behind those behaviors.

"Today we still hear the voices of Pharisees—voices of fear," she said. "We hear fear and threats."

'God will call whom God will call'

But God is not restricted to human boundaries and prejudices, and will transcend them in

time. "God will call whom God will call to the episcopate," Harris said, prompting the first thunderous and sustained applause in her reference to New Hampshire's bishop-elect, Gene Robinson.

Harris began an adjective-filled sentence about Robinson, but said "gay men" instead of "a gay man," prompting more scattered laughter as people thought of bishops who may be homosexual but keep quiet about it.

"Well, maybe men too," she said. "There are no Freudian slips, right?"

Robinson, Harris said, "is helping us live into this radical vision of God's kingdom, where there are no barriers."

People may ask in tones of sarcasm or cynicism why Integrity members and their supporters attended this Eucharist, she said.

"Tell them we were here for them and for ourselves," Harris said. "We are here to claim the blessing of God," even for self-loathing gay people accept the condemnation of fear-mongers.

"I call it the C.T. Syndrome—the Clarence Thomas Syndrome," Harris said to whoops and vigorous applause.

COME JOIN US FOR AN

UNCONVENTIONAL BREAK

Post-Abortion Testimony sponsored by the National Organization of Episcopalians for Life

Thursday, July 31, 2003, 4:00pm Central Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall

"We are here to refute those terms of abomination that come from intolerance," Harris said. "We are here to claim the blessing of God, wherever it is, however it manifests itself."

AAC Spiritual Needs are Joyfully Met

by Shay Mason

This may be Rev. Shari Hobby's first Convention, but her job as Spiritual Life Team Coordinator for the AAC General Convention team is one for which she is well prepared. As the Member Care Director for EWM Global Teams, Shari provides spiritual support to church missionaries. However, the missionaries Shari will be caring for during the next 10 days are not those who are traveling to all corners of the earth, but those who have come to Minneapolis to serve their church as part of the American Anglican Council Team.

Following General Convention 2000 in Denver, AAC team members realized that there was a great need for someone to organize a spiritual life ministry to serve the many people who come to serve our church.

According to AAC Media Officer Bruce Mason, General Convention can be a difficult mission field. "Just because we're not traveling to some foreign country doesn't mean the job is any easier. I experienced this first-hand in Denver, and I knew we needed some extra support this time around."

Shari is glad to be able to provide that support. "It's a privilege to be here, and I'm

delighted to be a part of what God is doing," she said.

Shari has put together a team to oversee pastoral, prayer, and worship activities at General Convention. There are approximately 15 members of the team who work directly with pastoral care or worship and numerous others involved in intercessory prayer, both on-site and around the world.



Rev. Shari Hobby is the Spiritual Life Team Coordinator for the AAC General Convention Team.

The worship team leader is Jeff Brown, a church musician from St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Fairborn, OH. This is Jeff's first Convention. "I am amazed at the organization ... being able to bring this many people

to work together," said Jeff.

The worship team opened the week with a Eucharist service on Sunday and is continuing to lead daily worship activities at noon in the fellowship hall at CLC and at other times throughout convention.

The intercessory prayer team is involved in praying for all aspects of Convention. Of special interest are daily prayer walks at 2 p.m. Volunteers and staff are invited to participate in praying in and around the Convention Center. Gail Scott and Carol Updike of SOMA have organized these walks. Gail emphasizes that prayer walking is only for the purpose of praying blessings on the convention. "God is a God of blessings. He is always life giving...we never speak judgment when we pray."

A pastoral care team headed by incoming Nashotah House professor Rev. Doug McGlynn is available to meet the needs of all staff and volunteers and can be found in the volunteer "family room."

It is Shari's prayer that during this Convention, "people would be as committed to the Lordship of Christ as they are to their issues."