



The Angelus

Grace & Holy Trinity Cathedral • Kansas City, Missouri

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Polity in the Episcopal Church

Polity is not a word used often in general conversation, but its meaning extends to include the way we are governed. So Church polity includes the mechanisms of government which a given congregation or denomination utilizes. There is no divine polity, but usually given our experience as Episcopalians or Roman Catholics, Presbyterians or Pentecostals we tend to like what we grew up knowing. Episcopalians have a very different way of governing themselves. As long as it is followed it works extremely well. When it is not followed, it becomes, by definition, dysfunctional.

There are three areas of polity important to the Episcopal Church—the bishop, the congregation, and the rector. We are governed by bishops and we take our identity as a church from our relationship with the diocese and the bishop. The bishop leads the diocese and assents to clergy in each place. But beyond his assent, we through the national and diocesan church determine our canons (or laws), we educate deacons and priests, and we carry out a world-wide mission. It is the bishop who represents the world-wide church for us and to us. While congregational members have limited contact with the bishop, your clergy have much more and much of what happens in a congregation has the blessing, often the advice, and sometimes the direction of the bishop. He or she is most involved with a parish when it is in conflict or transition between priests. The bishop is elected by lay and clergy delegates to Diocesan Convention so we all have that say in who the bishop is to be.

The congregation is made up of the people of God who have been baptized and usually confirmed, and have their membership recorded in the parish by means of baptism, confirmation and/or a letter of

transfer from some other Christian body. The primary function which the congregation serves in our polity is to elect the vestry at the Annual Meeting each January, and then to support that elected body by their prayers, presence in liturgy and by their pledged gift. The congregational members who are on the vestry are then required to make all other decisions, for which the congregation is responsible, including maintain-

ing the buildings and grounds, paying the obligations of the congregation and calling the rector. At the Cathedral, the vestry confirms the Bishop's choice of Dean and Rector.

Finally, the Dean and Rector once chosen by the bishop and vestry, becomes a partner of the vestry in a very unique manner.

He or she does not work for the vestry, but with them, actually becoming chairperson of the vestry. His or her responsibility is to manage staff, to oversee all programs, and to be pastor to the congregation. The Dean and Rector is called for life.

Polity is a strange beast. In all government, following polity closely is required or that organization will simply not function well. Understanding as much as possible about our polity is recommended. Many misunderstandings can be avoided, many relationships advanced when polity is understood and embraced.

The Governance Committee authorized by the vestry is working on bringing Cathedral practice and by-laws into conformance with Diocesan canons. They should be applauded and supported by every member in that work. Let us look forward to the Annual Meeting (see article by John Hornbeck on page 6) where all members participate in making our process work as it does so well when carefully observed.

- by The Very Rev. Dr. James A. Hubbard, Dean Interim



Practicing the Sabbath

Somewhat ironically, I was asked to lead one of the Advent Reading Series programs whose topic was Sabbath. I say "ironically" because I am probably a person who needs Sabbath as much or more than anyone else. Thanks to Wayne Muller's insightful and enlightening book "Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in our Busy Lives," I have begun to take the idea of Sabbath much more seriously.

Muller explains that all life requires a rhythm of rest. When we fail to take that rest, we "lose our way. . . . We miss the quiet that would give us wisdom. We miss the joy and love born of effortless delight." Sabbath, Muller contends, can be a day, but it can also be an afternoon, an hour, a walk. He views Sabbath as a refuge that nourishes and refreshes us so that we can be the people God wants us to be.

This quiet, easily readable book is divided into sections with titles such as "Rest," "Rhythm," "Time," "Happiness," "Wisdom," and "Consecration." Each section has several ideas for opportunities to practice Sabbath. The suggestions that Muller makes for Sabbath include ones that are easy and simple to do, such as finding a beautiful candle; saying a simple prayer or blessing; lighting the candle; and taking a few "mindful breaths." This is a Sabbath moment.

Another suggestion for Sabbath is to bless strangers. Offer a blessing, Muller suggests, "to people you notice on the street, in the market, on the bus. 'May you be happy. May you be at peace.' Feel the blessing move through your body as you offer it. Notice how you both receive some benefit from the blessing. Gently, almost without effort, each and

every blessing becomes a Sabbath."

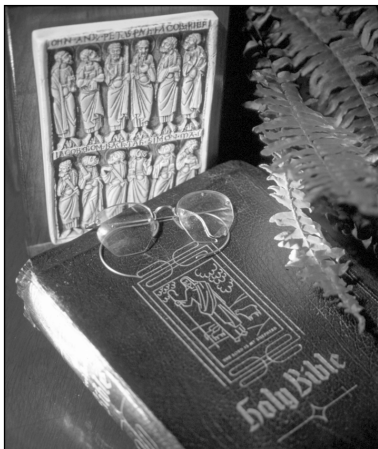
Other ideas for Sabbath take a little more time, such as creating a space for an altar. This might be a table or even a box. "Sit quietly, perhaps in meditation, for a few moments, and imagine what belongs there. Allow images to arise, people, sacred objects, things that hold meaning or great love. Then place these things, one at a time, on the altar, noting how you feel to see them so honored. You may want to light a candle, say a prayer. Let this be a place you come to, a Sabbath in your home, whenever you need to remember something precious you have forgotten.

Since studying Muller's book, I have become increasingly conscious of Sabbath and of Sabbath moments. Holding a baby in my arms and asking God's blessings on this new birth is a Sabbath moment. Listening to the William Jewell Christmas musical program was a Sabbath hour for me. Watching, in the dark, the candles on our Advent wreath twinkle was Sabbath time. Taking a quiet walk on a snowy morning is Sabbath. Sabbath is music; it is prayer; it is talking to a friend; it is taking a walk; it is planting a garden; it is taking a bath.

Maybe we have more Sabbath than we realize. By becoming aware of these Sabbath experiences, I believe that we begin to place more value on them, to yearn for more of them. "The world seduces us," contends Muller, "with an artificial urgency that requires us to respond without listening to what is most deeply true." Let us, in this time of new beginnings, look for and practice Sabbath.

- by The Rev. Linda Yeager, Deacon

Thursday Evening Bible Study to Begin



For some time now, the Cathedral has been blessed to have two Couples' Bible studies. Beginning in January, the group which meets on the second and fourth Thursday nights of the month will become the *Thursday Evening Bible Study*. We hope that those unable to make it to the many other Bible studies the Cathedral offers, will find this one convenient.

Regardless of your domestic status, please consider joining us at 7:00 p.m. on January 8th and January 22nd in the Multi-purpose room, located on the lower level of Founders' Hall.

These first two meetings will be important as we plan our focus of studies for the upcoming year.

- by The Rev. Bryan England, Deacon

Lay Academy

The first *Regional Gathering* of the West Missouri Lay Academy will be held Saturday, January 10 at Church of the Redeemer in Kansas City. The subject matter for the day is Holy Scripture, and the presenter will The Rev. Cathy Cox, Vicar of St. Alban's, Bolivar.

Who should attend? Anyone desiring to deepen their knowledge and understanding of God's Holy Scripture. Most especially this would include Church School teachers, LEMs and Lay Readers, Lay Preachers and Lay Catechists, and priests and deacons. Those who attended the Lay Academy seminars at the Diocesan Gathering are especially encouraged to participate.

This day-long class also fulfills the basic Scripture requirement for laity who wish to complete all the requirements of the West Missouri Academy in preparation for commissioning by Bishop Howe at next year's Gathering and Convention.

Check-in begins at 8:30 a.m. The session will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will conclude at 4:00 p.m. Participants should bring lunch. There is a \$10 fee which may be paid at check-in. Both clergy and laity are warmly welcome.

To register: Contact Mother Susan McCann at MotherMcCann@prodigy.net or at Grace Church, 520 S. 291 Highway, Liberty, MO 64068, to reserve a place. Advance registration will ensure that we have adequate material available for all participants.

-from the Diocesan Office
www.diorwestmo.org

The Angelus

A laypersons' newspaper published in the interest of Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral.

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Submissions from parishioners and small groups are welcome and encouraged. All entries are requested by the 15th day of the month prior to publication via fax: (816) 474-5856 or e-mail: communications@ghtc-kc.org

Story About New Year's Resolutions

"Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do." James 2:18

Although a new church year begins in December, the beginning of the calendar year occurs on January 1. Along with the onset of a new year, there comes a time when we all evaluate our lives and decide to improve ourselves in some way.

It has been my experience to always promise myself that I will improve in some physical way: to work out or to eat better, for example, have always been my intentions. I have been in gyms in January when it was overcrowded; our joke was that we had to leave early to get there "due to resolutions." However, in September, the sharp contrast was that there were only a handful of people ready to exercise.

In the past, along with exercise and dieting, I have also been guilty of making too easy of resolutions or not making them at all. While I have not answered the resolution question by joking "I think I'll breathe this year" as I have heard others say, I have prom-

ised myself to be a better person. Consequently, when I am really not specific about what that means and when I fail to be as charitable or as positive as I could be, I really have not failed myself or anyone else.

According to the *Standard Encyclopedic Dictionary*, resolutions are defined as "the making of a resolve, also the purpose or course resolved upon," or to "fix or set in purpose." What is it about resolutions that are hard to keep? It is

not unlike Lent where we must sacrifice something that we love, only for a much longer period of time. Self-improvement typically involves sacrifice, and relinquishing our wants is so incredibly difficult.

Via the Internet, there are actual web sites that will send you e-mail reminders about your resolution as well as offer tips on how to keep them. Of course, these websites also run rampant with advertisements on buying items to help you achieve your personal goals. Why is it that we would rather buy something than achieve it for ourselves? Is it that much easier?

On one particular website that will send e-

mail reminders called hiaspire.com, they list the most popular resolutions made by their subscribers. Not surprisingly, exercise comes in first with dieting as a close second. Saving money and being a better person are popular as well. A handful of people want to quit certain behaviors, such as smoking and drinking. Ones that made the list that surprised me, and may surprise you, are to have more fun and to get a hobby.

As of yet, I do not know what my resolution will be for next year, but I do know that if I promise myself to be a better person, I am going to be a little more specific about what exactly that means and try to stick to it. Whatever you decide for your own personal resolution, may it be meaningful, worthy of your time, and most importantly, keepable.

- by Erin Case



New Arrivals

Mark Joshua Nelson was born November 29. He is the son of Katie and Josh Nelson and grandson of Joan Bock.

Eagle Scout Project Benefits Cathedral Library

A daunting project here at the church was taken on by one its younger members, Thomas Smith. Thomas, who will turn eighteen this month, is a senior at Shawnee Mission North High School. He is also a member of Boy Scouts Troop 1 based out of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Wyandotte County. Thomas has been an active member of his troop for the past ten years, and is trying to obtain his Eagle Scout status. Part of the process in becoming an Eagle Scout required Thomas to pick a project to work on, and then the completed project had to be approved and passed by the Eagle Board of Review.

Finding a project was the first hurdle Thomas Smith had to tackle, and it was not easy. The first two ideas for projects at other places Thomas had did not work out due to circumstances beyond his control. He then met with Deacon Linda Yeager back in October to see what could be done here at the Cathedral. Deacon Linda suggested organizing the library; Thomas decided to take it on and collaborated on a plan with Dan Campbell, who gladly accepted to help.

According to Dan Campbell, the library has been a little disorganized since it was moved from what is now the bookstore into the Common

Room in 2001. When the books were moved, all the outdated material was removed from the collection, but the card catalog was removed as well. That is where Thomas Smith and his Eagle Scout project came in to organize the existing library using the Dewy Decimal System as well as to create a new card catalog.



Thomas organized three workdays on November 8, 15, and 27. Dan Campbell did much of the preliminary work, organizing and categorizing the books by topic; then Thomas came in and labeled the books with a number, card and card pocket and date due slips.

Unfortunately, there was more work than time and Thomas was unable to complete the whole library. At present, a small section of books has been completed; the library itself is better organized but still needs the

majority of books assigned a dewy decimal number and card for the catalog. Thomas' father, Hal Smith, is also involved with his son's project by working on a computerized database of all the books contained in the library to go along with the card catalog system.

Dan Campbell plans to continue working on the library reorganization, and estimates it should be ready for use shortly after this coming spring.

- story and photo by Rachel Chambers

A Lenten Retreat for Men

This spring, we will begin what we hope will be a new tradition at Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral - a Men's Lenten Retreat. This retreat will be a combination of Christian education, contemplation and fellowship.

The Rev. Benjamin J. Newland will lead the Christian education portion this year, with a study of The Psalms of Lent and Easter.

For obvious reasons, most of us tend to focus on the Gospels and the letters of the New Testament during the Easter season, but there is much relevant content in the Psalms as well.

In addition, there will be plenty of opportunity for contemplative prayer and meditation. The retreat will take place at the Rivendell, an Episcopal religious community of prayer and hospitality in Dunnegan, Mis-

souri. For further information, visit www.rivendellcommunity.org.

Rivendell has plenty of open space for prayer walking and meditation. In fact, for those sturdier souls who are familiar with the uncertainties of March in Kansas City, you can join several of us who are already planning on camping out in tents.

For others there are more comfortable (and warmer) rooms and beds available at the retreat center. Meals will be included. The retreat will take place March 26-28, the weekend before Palm Sunday. Contact Fr. Ben at the Cathedral office for more details on the retreat and to sign up. Space will be limited (unless you are one of the brave campers.)

- by John Hornbeck



Richard Preis Featured at Concert Series

On November 21, a small contingent of Cathedral folks (and one St. Paulite) gathered to hear one of our own, Richard Preis, sing. Richard Preis, baritone; and Riva Capellari, soprano; accompanied by Wayne Smith and Marian Thomas, performed at the popular Brown Bag Concert Series which has been held for the past ten years at the Westport Presbyterian Church.

For those who may not know, Richard is a retired pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. He has given more than 100 performances of his one-man programs, "The Gospel According to Broadway" and "The Gospel of Love According to Broadway," in 18 states and Canada. He also performs in local musicals and dramatic productions.

Richard opened the program with *Songs of the Sky*, beginning with *O du mein holder Abendstern* from Richard Wagner's *Tannhauser*.



This was followed later in the program with arias from the *Oratorio Elijah*, by Felix Mendelssohn. And then he sang a series of Favorite Songs which included Vincent Youmans' *Through the Years* and *Without a Song*, which were particularly appealing.

The program concluded with Richard and Ms. Capellari singing a selection from *Don Giovanni*.

As with all of the Brown Bag Concerts, the very well behaved children from Willow Woods Day Care Center, which is also housed at Westport Presbyterian, were in attendance and sat on the front row. Watching these children enjoying the music and the lovely surroundings of the sanctuary, added to the pleasure of hearing these talented musicians.

We are fortunate to have Richard at the Cathedral and to be able to hear him perform.

- story by Mary Byrne,
photos by Jan Frizzle



Pictorial Directory

Can you identify everyone at Grace and Holy Trinity by name? If not, do you at least know the names of everyone in your group or activity? Maybe you can answer "yes" to the second question but wouldn't it be nice to have at your disposal a list of photographs of all the families in the church along with spouse's and children's names and addresses? And even e-mail addresses! Now we're getting somewhere!

The planning for a new pictorial directory for GHTC is underway and the committee needs your help. All you have to do is sign up at coffee hour to bring you and/or your family for a portrait sitting. The Olan Mills photographers will be on campus two separate weeks in January and there are plenty of sign-up times left. But if your time is limited by work and family activities, please sign up early. Each family will receive a copy of the new directory and an 8x10 portrait FREE. At the time of your sitting, you will see on a computer screen the poses the photographer has taken and select your favorite for the directory. At that time you will also be able to order additional prints from Olan Mills.

We want to be able to hand our new Dean a directory of this congregation so that he will feel at home and be able to recognize us each by name. One hundred percent participation in this project would be an invaluable tool in making that a reality. If you have any questions about the directory, please contact me. Remember - Sign Up and Smile!

- by Patti Howell, (913) 451-8386

Interested in Confirmation,
Reception or Reaffirmation?

Episcopal 101:
Understanding
Anglican Christianity

Sunday Mornings

9:10 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

January 11 - February 29, 2004

See bulletin for details, speak with
one of our clergy or call Valerie
Johnson at the Cathedral Office.