

Christus Rex

Anglican Province of Christ the King



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Apostolic Christianity in the Anglican Tradition

January, 2010

St. Thomas Church, San Francisco

Reprinted from the St. Thomas Newsletter

Tucked away in a mostly residential section of Pacific Heights, San Francisco's Anglican parish of St. Thomas Church has a history that goes back a few decades longer than the age of the church building would indicate. And although it's safe to say that only an enlightened handful of the Bay Area's population know that there is a small but beautiful church on 2725 Sacramento Street, an even smaller number of people know the history of the parish.

Anglicans Among the Wineries

In 1980, the late Dale Cowgill Crichton and her husband John Crichton asked Bishop Robert S. Morse to hold a traditional Episcopal Mass on St. Stephen's Day at their weekend house in the Napa Valley. The following year the Crichtons sponsored a similar mass in an abandoned church situated among the vineyards west of Yountville. (A small parish sprouted, and today a full-time priest serves St. Stephen's thriving congregation.)

A San Francisco architect with a degree from Stanford and a longtime friend of the church, Mrs. Crichton had studied church architecture and became an expert on the writings of St. Augustine of Hippo. She gave generously of her time and resources, renovating St. Joseph of Arimathea, the traditional Anglican seminary in Berkeley, and acting as an advisory designer on several other Bay Area church projects. By 1986 Mrs. Crichton had grown too ill with cancer to attend services at St. Stephen's in the Napa Valley. Finding no traditional Episcopal Church in San Francisco, she appealed to Archbishop Morse, who agreed to hold a Christmas Eve mass in

the Swedenborgian Church in Pacific Heights. Dozens of like-minded Episcopalians appeared at the service; a small parish took root, and it was named for St. Thomas. Dale Crichton died one year later at the age of 61.

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Abp. Provence stands before the doors to St. Thomas Church.()

An Idea Takes Form

In 1994, Mrs. Crichton's son, the author Barnaby Conrad III, approached his godfather, Bishop Morse, with an interesting proposal. Mr. Conrad was then chairman of the board of trustees of the Fathers Wilder & Easton Foundation, a charitable trust created by The Reverend Lesley Wilder and his long-time associate, The Reverend John Easton. Bishop Morse was chairman of the St. Joseph of

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Arimathea Foundation, which served U.C. Berkeley students by offering prayer and counseling. Bishop Morse had been a good friend of the late fathers, and all three priests had been close to the Cowgill-Crichton-Conrad clan. Father Wilder had blessed Dale Crichton's marriage in 1949, and Bishop Morse presided at Mrs. Crichton's funeral.

As the beloved traditional priest at St. Matthews in San Mateo, Father Wilder had narrowly been passed over for Bishop of California in the early 1960s, and he had been named canon of Grace Cathedral. In retirement, he had continued to offer prayers and counseling from his house in San Francisco until his death in 1990. Father Wilder's will stipulated that the assets of his foundation be used to create a center for Anglican worship, unity, and prayer. In order to fulfill this mandate, Mr. Conrad proposed to purchase a church in San Francisco. By unanimous decision, Mr. Conrad and the board of the Fathers Wilder and Easton Foundation voted in 1994 to merge their assets with St. Joseph's of Arimathea Foundation. Mr. Conrad joined the board of St. Joseph's and helped arrange the purchase of the Allen Chapel, a former African-Methodist- Episcopalian church located at 2725 Sacramento Street. That fall, Bishop Morse and The Reverend Paul A. Russell consecrated the chapel at St. Thomas Church.

The Property is Transformed

In the summer of 1995, Bishop Morse called The Reverend Christopher A. Bowhay to serve as the first full-time vicar of St. Thomas Church. That Christmas there was standing room only in the tiny chapel on the second floor of the old building. Under Father Bowhay, the congregation grew, preparing for the next step. As the Allen Chapel's architecture did not reflect Anglican aesthetics or history, in 1995 Bishop Morse proposed a dramatic renovation of the time-worn church building.

Dale Crichton had spent several years researching and designing a Romanesque church which she and Bishop Morse had hoped to build in Marin County; this project was cut short by her death. Fortunately, all her plans and blueprints were intact, as well as the scale model of the church. Working with his colleagues at Hannum Associates, architect Steve Pogue adapted Dale Crichton's

original design to the new site. Though technically a renovation, the project called for virtually constructing a brand new building. The contractor was Philip Goings.

The cost of this dramatic renovation was more than \$550,000, largely funded by gifts and loans by Barnaby Conrad III, Michael Whitman, Conrad-Crichton family members, Ted Judson, Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Barkan, and other parishioners. Demolition of the old building began in July 1996. During the nine-month construction period, St. Thomas' parishioners met in a side chapel of Trinity Church. The new building was finished in 1997, just in time for Easter Sunday.



The garden of St. Thomas' is a memorial to Geraldine King Cowgill, given in 2003 as a gift by her three grandchildren, Winston, Tani and Barnaby Conrad III. The garden statue is a memorial to the Marquise de Surian, daughter of Mrs. Cowgill and sister of Dale Crichton.

In 1998, The Reverend James Provence was named Vicar of St. Thomas Church. As a boy, Father Provence had been a choir boy at St. Matthews under Father Lesley Wilder. He had also served as the Rector of St. Stephen's in Napa. In 2003 Father Provence was ordained as a Bishop and named coadjutor of the Diocese of the Western States. In 2007 he became Archbishop of the Province of Christ The King; St. Thomas Church serves as his main office.

Today, St. Thomas' is "the village church" of Pacific Heights. It stands as a monument to faith in God, and is a testament to old friendships, family, faith and prayer. ✠

Bishop Wiygul Holds Third Annual Clergy Retreat

By The Rev. Ben Jones



(From left) Fr. Bryan Smith, Holy Comforter, Montevallo, AL; Dcn. David Sweeney, St. George's, Raleigh, NC; Fr. Ben Jones, St. George's; Fr. John Upham, St. George's; Bishop Wiygul, Bishop Ordinary of the Southern States, Holy Comforter; Fr. Les McAbee, St. Charles the Martyr, Huntsville, AL; Dcn. David Milam, St. Charles; Dcn. Clancy Specht, St. Charles; Postulant Mike Church, Holy Comforter; Postulant Mark Arthington, Holy Comforter.

The Diocese of the Southern States held their Third Annual Pre-Advent Clergy Retreat at the Anglican Church of the Holy Comforter in Montevallo, AL, November 10th-12th. Bishop Wiygul started the Clergy Retreat in 2007 to further the fellowship, prayer life, and instruction of the Clergy at the mid-point of the year from the Annual Synod. Bishop Wiygul stresses the importance of the retreats in giving the clergy, who are spread over the Southern states, the opportunity to come together for a few days of brotherly fellowship.

The Retreat convened with the “Office of Sext” in the Chapel on the campus of Holy Comforter. Following the opening remarks and prayer by Bishop Wiygul, Fr. Bryan Smith

distributed copies of The Lesser Hours of Prayer provided for the clergy by Bishop Wiygul to keep and to use for the lesser offices. Fr. Smith gave a brief instruction on the Lesser Offices and then led the Office of Sext.

There was adequate time set apart during each day for personal prayer time and meditation, the daily offices, the lesser offices of Sext and Compline, the Celebration of the Mass, instruction, and fellowship. The clergy took up residence in the comfortable accommodations at The Ramsay Conference Center on the beautiful campus of the University of Montevallo. The conference center is only a short distance from Holy Comforter.

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A Pontifical Mass was celebrated by Bishop Wiygul on Veteran's Day to commemorate this special day and to honor the sacrifices of those men and women that serve and that have served in the military. The homily was given by Postulant Colonel Mike Church on the service to God and country in the Military. The homily emphasized what it means to those that serve and the freedoms that are provided at all costs for all Americans. Thursday morning, Fr. Ben Jones celebrated a Requiem Mass in "Memoriam of the Reverend Father Robert M. F. Haux" on the anniversary of his passing. We all truly miss our dearly beloved fellow Brother in Christ, Fr. Bob.

One service that we always look forward to when the clergy of the South has the opportunity to assemble is the "Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament." Fr. Les McAbee always does a magnificent job officiating this service.

Fr. Bryan Smith gave an instructional presentation on the "Anglican Prayer Beads." The clergy were all given a set of Anglican Prayer Beads. Following the presentation, Fr. Smith led a meditation on the hymn, "St. Patrick's Breastplate" using the Anglican Prayer Beads. The next day a meditation was led by Postulant Mike Church using a meditation that he wrote. The clergy agreed that using the Anglican Prayer Beads helped to focus and concentrate on being drawn closer into the presence of God during the time of meditation.

Time was set aside each day for instruction and discussion in the Parish library. Fr. John Upham gave presentations including: "A Comparison of the American and Anglican Missals," "The Rudiments of Music and Plainchant," and "A Brief Explanation of the Rankings of the Days and Feasts of the Liturgical Year." For the comparison of the Missals, Fr. Upham gave a brief history of the Missals and then went through a comparison in chart form of "The Mass of the Catechumens" and "The Ordinary of the Mass." This was very informative to the clergy in understanding the differences between the two Missals that are in use in the Province. The presentation on the rudiments of music and plainchant was very well received. Fr. Upham has extensive training in voice and music and is an accomplished pianist and organist. The clergy was given a quick music lesson and at the end, Fr. Upham had the clergy chanting a Psalm in fine fashion! As an added treat, Fr. Upham led Evensong in plainchant. The presentation of the rankings of Days and Feasts of the Liturgical Year explained that

within all of these cycles and seasons there are five different types or classifications of the days in the Liturgical Year and that they differ as to the degree of their importance and solemnity. The five different types or classifications are Sundays, other Feasts Days, Ferias, Vigils, and Octaves. The focus of these types or classifications is to teach us how to live our Christian Faith and to illustrate one of the themes of the seasons or larger cycles in which they occur. Fr. Ben Jones and Bishop Wiygul led a discussion on a "Liturgics Practicum: Notes on a Deacon's Liturgy," a booklet which they co-authored. The practicum is an explanation in step by step form of the different segments of a Deacon's Liturgy and how it compares and differs with the Mass. All segments from the preparation of the Altar and Credence Table to the recessional hymn and final dismissal were covered. Fr. Jones and Bishop Wiygul also went over the proper way to introduce lessons for the daily offices, as well as the Epistle, Lesson appointed for the Epistle, and the Gospel for the Mass, which is included in the booklet as well. The clergy appreciated the presentation and the opportunity to discuss how to carry ourselves at the Altar. Bishop Wiygul and Fr. Jones stressed the consistency or uniformity of the Diocese as the several Parishes offer the daily offices, the Mass, and the Deacon's Liturgy in the absence of a Priest, where the Deacon offers Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament. Fr. Les McAbee gave a presentation on A Manual for Priests. Fr. McAbee led discussions on some of the various Offices. He especially covered Holy Unction, Last Rites, hearing Confessions, and the Order for the Burial of the Dead. Fr. McAbee also went over some of the various Blessings and Prayers. A Manual for Priests was found to be a very valuable resource and tool. The instruction was well received as all felt they had learned quite a lot.

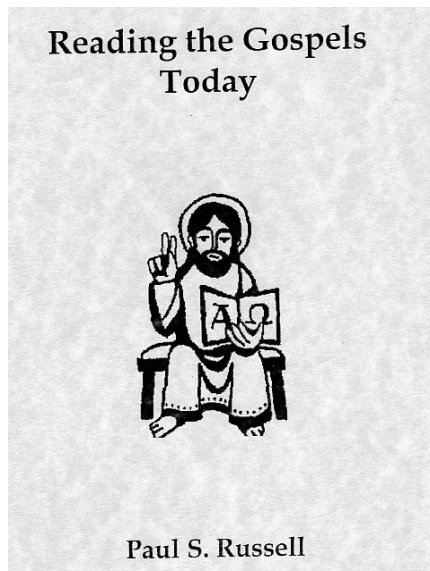
Bishop Wiygul thanked the clergy for their attendance and thought the retreat went very well. In a round table discussion, all of the Clergy gave comments on what the retreat meant to them personally and corporately with their Brothers, and thanked Bishop Wiygul and Fr. Bryan Smith for planning the Retreat and The Church of the Holy Comforter for hosting the retreat. Everyone left Spiritually refreshed and looking forward to our next time together in the Spring Synod following Easter which will be hosted by St. George's Anglican Church in Raleigh, NC. Bishop Wiygul adjourned the Retreat with a prayer and a Blessing, and wished everyone a Holy Advent. ✠

Calendar of Events

- ❖ April 27-29, 2010 – Diocese of the Southern States Synod hosted by St. George's Anglican Church in Raleigh, NC.
- ❖ April 28-May 1, 2010 – Diocese of the Western States Synod, Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa, Lafayette, CA.
- ❖ October 21-23, 2010 – APCK National Meeting 2010, Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa, Lafayette, CA.

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The APCK Provincial web site is available on the internet at <http://www.anglicanpck.org>.

A New Booklet from the ACU



Written by The Rev. Dr. Paul S. Russell and designed for both individual and group use, this concise guide will help Bible Study teachers develop new approaches to reading and teaching Gospel passages. Paper cover. 20 pages. \$3.00

The American Church Union
P.O. Box 40020, Berkeley, CA 94704

Some of Our Beautiful Churches



Atonement Anglican Church, Fountain Hills, AZ



Parish of Christ the King, Washington, D.C.



Church of the Holy Cross, Oklahoma City, OK



Church of the Holy Comforter, Montevallo, AL