

A History of the  
**Diocese of Christ the King**  
and the  
**Anglican Province of**  
**Christ the King**

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## **A History of the Diocese of Christ the King and the Anglican Province of Christ the King**

**I**t is legendary that Vikings successfully navigated short trips into the gray, befogged waters of the North Sea by trailing a rope behind their dragon ships and lining the trailing rope between two visible objects on the same shores whence they had departed. If their course was true, the rope would keep pointing back between the two landmarks. With a drift either to the port or starboard, the trailing rope would point elsewhere showing them they were off course.

Anyone's course that heads into an unseen future, with too many variables, potential changes, and chances to predict the outcome, has the same dilemma as the Vikings. At the very least, one's course must be oriented with things in the past to know if it is heading anywhere desirable.

Our Anglican or "Continuing Church" movement with its evolving objectives and emerging leadership at the helm, has stayed on course by looking back. The unchanging features of creedal and biblical authority, Christological orthodoxy, and a clear, consistent ecclesiology need to be in our sights, our trailing ropes never pointing elsewhere, lest we founder on unfamiliar shoals.

Today the future of our Anglican Province of Christ the King is, as it has always been, somewhat unsure. Our objectives have changed slightly, our personnel almost fully replaced, but the genius that birthed this movement is still in the wisdom and foresight of Archbishop Robert Sherwood Morse and those who were with him forty years ago.

## **The Episcopal Church in its Agony**

Anglicanism, as a legitimate part of the original One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, resident in the British Isles since the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD and later in their various colonial holdings, has always had a role within the worldwide Catholic Church of keeping alive a kind of skepticism toward the monolithic Roman Church. That skepticism was felt in the primitive Celtic Church that flourished with a naturalist orientation toward the world, instead of the crushing legalistic and human-centered forces that were the power of the Roman world.

Rome distrusted nature. Its architecture and engineering feats suborned nature to man's will. To the Roman mind, nature was the lurking place of unruly spirits and evil, and was to be shunned. England's native souls weren't so convinced of that. St. Patrick's great work among the Druids of Ireland succeeded largely because he didn't fight their appreciation for the goodness of creation. He worked with it, making the shamrock his explanation for the Trinity rather than a carving or a legal paper.

When St. Augustine of Canterbury established his outpost of the Roman Church on English soil, his question regarding local customs differing from Roman ways obtained a letter from St. Gregory the Great. This letter gave leeway for the English Church to follow its own patterns of worship and practice, so long as the creedal faith remained unaltered.

Through the centuries, the Church of England sat at some distance from the political turmoil that gradually changed the face of Catholicism in Europe, the English never being major players in claims

to the papacy. Gradually, as Europe's middle class and educated, wealthy commoners grew in number and power, England hosted a class of Christians bred on new ideas, ready to challenge assumptions solidified in the Roman Church.

When the Catholic Church ceases to be Catholic through innovations and unbiblical theological assertions, then, under the definition of St. Vincent of Lérins<sup>1</sup>, who can claim to hold the center of the continuum? Where is that rope pointing, if you have taken a new heading?

As England's pugnacious King Henry VIII broke with Rome for his own political and personal reasons, the always-faithful Catholic Church of England, severed from Rome, remained intact, but without the Pope.

Was this Church still valid? The arguments have flown back and forth for centuries. But we might ask: Was Rome still valid, when it claimed doctrines that were not held *Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus*, "What is always, what is everywhere, what is by everybody believed"<sup>2</sup>? Can one insist on doctrines damning souls who disbelieve them, if such innovations were never considered by the early Christians, not even the first Pope, St. Peter? A claim to western catholicity resided in England and arguably nowhere else. England's claims rested in truth; Rome's rested in power. This truth became the genius that created the United States, so different from western nations under the Spanish flag.

Tensions developed within the newly non-Roman English Church, the Elizabethan Settlement overarching Anglo-Catholic and Puritan churchmen in an uncomfortable union. The English Church

was challenged to maintain the continuum. It was easier and safer to be Protestant, when the Roman Catholic purpose was to dispose of both cross and crown in England. Broad churchmanship grew; lax social associations of the latitudinarian Church became the norm.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century arrived with the English Church largely ignorant of its fully Catholic nature, with a growing secularization of religion as elsewhere in Europe. In the 1830's the Oxford Movement rediscovered the Church's roots and validity as the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of England. These "Tractarians" are sometimes criticized as having "invented" a Catholic Anglican heritage, claiming from the time of Cranmer that it was fully Catholic, that the Prayer Book was a Catholic, not Protestant, document, and that the 39 Articles reflected the conclusions of the Council of Trent.

Maybe. Maybe not. But the Oxford dons realized for the first time in several generations that the Anglican Church held all of the Catholic positions, held valid apostolic orders, held all of the sacraments, and held all of the spiritual authority, just as did the Roman and Eastern Orthodox Churches. This realization on the part of the Oxford dons inspired a strong, conservative voice in a changing world adrift in new thought. They wrote tracts and became popular, even among the common people comforted by a High Church liturgical approach. This approach embraced not only a High Church of smells and bells, but a theological underscoring of ancient Catholicism and our English heritage within it.

This movement happened, perhaps not by coincidence, alongside a different and opposing fruit of the Age of Enlightenment: the academic schools of Higher Biblical Criticism. Scholastic discussions

of supposed alternate scriptural sources, textual critiques, and questionings of the validity of early books of the Bible, particularly the books of Moses, grew out of the scientific orientation of the age.

It was good to ferret out the most likely original manuscripts, in the original tongues of all Biblical books, using tens of thousands of ancient copies and comparing texts to arrive at the best representation of the "Word of God." But "higher" schools of criticism, particularly in the German theological schools, were influenced by the existing anti-Jewish sentiment, such as that of Julius Wellhausen, who taught seminarians that the Pentateuch was not authored in the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century BC, but 800 years later. Wellhausen taught that these rabbis of a "defeated" religion, Judaism, sought to invent a divine origin and history that chose them as "specially called of God."

The cynicism of the Wellhausen conclusions found resonance within England's seminaries and crushed Old Testament authority by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is this author's opinion that the Wellhausen conclusions led to the Jewish Holocaust 65 years later.

It is difficult to uphold a faith that is based on questionable documents. It is impossible to teach a faith's authority without belief in the authenticity or existence of its founders. Yet the scholars graduating from American and English seminaries were expected to preach that all was well. One exception was the Anglo-Catholic branch of the Anglican world that, with its liturgical dress and arcane ceremonial, largely held to the belief that the creedal faith was true.

And from the days of the American Revolution, the American Anglican Church, embodied in the Protestant Episcopal Church USA (PECUSA), brought the same love of truth in the Church that was in

the newly formed American government. No longer supported by the crown, but standing in the same marketplace as other denominations, Episcopalians had to present their claims of authenticity to the public without appearing too Catholic or too Presbyterian. The Episcopal Church became a status Church to many, the educated, wealthy, and upper crust being prominent members in the two centuries following the first bishops consecrated for America. PECUSA was never the largest Church in the country, but it retained a disproportional influence in government, business, and academia, where it met scholastic doubt.

### **Preconditions to the Anglican Continuing Church Movement**

Nevertheless, a lid covered such doubts, and all seemed well through the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> World Wars. PECUSA grew, peaking in 1960 at about 3.4 million members. That number today has been officially reduced to 1.7 million and is probably far less. When things were going well, the Church acquired substantial real estate and vast endowments. Then James Pike was elected Bishop of California in 1958.

Dr. Walter McDougall's treatment of the apostasy of this watershed bishop illustrates what Pike meant to the Episcopalians nationally.<sup>3</sup> If Pike believed so little of the creedal faith and still retained such an influential position in the Church, all was not well. His threat to legally expose his fellow bishops' similar lack of fundamental faith held the House of Bishops at bay. They made no move to defrock him until his own diocese cited his three divorces, a sin that looked ungraceful for Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, and finally a reason to ask for his resignation.



Exit James Pike in 1966, but not before Pike cursed the ministry of a young firebrand orthodox priest from the San Mateo peninsula, Fr. Robert Sherwood Morse, removing him from chaplaincies at Stanford and UC Berkeley (1961). A focal point for Pike's anger, Morse was a burr under the episcopal saddle and was strategically entrenched at a power base, the Bay Area's prestigious universities, where Morse had founded those chaplaincies and was influencing the young with the deep truths of Christ.

On a visit to Sweden in the early 1950s, Morse realized what was coming to the States. Sweden's socialist legislature imposed women's ordination on an unwilling, state-run Swedish Lutheran Church. Thinking correctly that this issue would destroy the Church in America, Morse strategized to build "Fort Defiance" and prepare a resistance movement within PECUSA.

That idea solidified in 1960 with the incorporation of the St. Joseph of Arimathea Foundation, its primary purpose "to promote the teaching and practice of the Christian faith at the University of California, and for other religious purposes." The local PECUSA churches, St. Mark's and All Souls Parish, in Berkeley, felt threatened by his intention to hold collegiate chapel services. That year the St. Joseph of Arimathea Foundation purchased property on the corner of Durant Avenue and Bowditch Street, one block from campus.

Conservative groups within the Episcopal Church began growing in membership and vocal objection during the 1960s, including the American Church Union (an Anglo-Catholic group under Bishop Albert Chambers of Springfield, Illinois), the Society for the Preservation of the Book of Common Prayer, the Coalition for the

Apostolic Ministry, the Foundation for Christian Theology (a Low-Church group under Dorothy Faber from Texas), the Society of the Holy Cross, and Episcopalians United.

While remaining within PECUSA, these groups' consternation was echoed by earlier-departed Anglican-style ministries. These included the Reformed Episcopal Church (REC) that left PECUSA in 1873 in protest to the Tractarian Catholics and American Bishop Charles Grafton, the 1968-launched American Episcopal Church (AEC) under Anthony Clavier; and a plethora of alphabet Anglicans angry about PECUSA's politics, racial policies, and Catholicism.

Often dubbed the "Republican Party at Prayer," new forces now acted upon PECUSA in the 1960s: the Second Vatican Council, a charismatic revival among formerly staid Episcopalians, and the emerging liberal culture. PECUSA drifted with the tides, away from transcendence in its austere services and lofty church sanctuaries to a more immanent experience. This led, as Paul Seabury noted, to a more secular attitude and ultimately left-leaning politics:

By the late 1960s, national church authorities were dispensing millions of dollars of missionary funds collected from parishes and dioceses to radical political movements across the land—Black Power groups, migrant farm workers, Afro-American thespians, native American organizers, Puerto Rican nationalists, Marxist documentary film producers, and Third World liberation movements. While many groups and projects may have deserved support, virtually none had Christian or religious content... Whales and porpoises, unlucky New England clams, the snail darter and the furbish lousewort could become objects of veneration, and... a bird or a blade of grass in a national park

could be entitled to greater legal protection than a five-month-old human fetus.<sup>4</sup>

Locally, across the bay from Berkeley, Grace Cathedral continued its descent.

In 1971, during one nature ceremony in the cathedral, a decidedly ecumenical audience watched reverently as the poet Allen Ginsberg, wearing a deer mask, joined others similarly garbed to ordain Senators Alan Cranston and John Tunney as godfathers of animals (Cranston of the Tule Elk and Tunney of the California Brown Bear). The cathedral dean was dimly seen through marijuana smoke, wrestling atop the high altar to remove a cameraman, while movie projectors simultaneously cast images of buffalo herds and other endangered species on the walls and ceilings, to the accompaniment of rock music. Although Episcopal priests had protested that this vigil would be a "profane employment of this sacred house of worship," Bishop Myers joined in, nonetheless, and offered prayers for a "renaissance of reverence for life in America."<sup>5</sup>

Shortly before (P)ECUSA held its fated General Convention in 1976 in Minneapolis, the St. Joseph of Arimathea Foundation dedicated its new chapel in Berkeley. Around that time, PECUSA dropped the "P" and became simply the "Episcopal Church USA," or ECUSA. Today, further reducing their belief and name, they are merely TEC.

In an illegal service<sup>6</sup> in Philadelphia in 1974, eleven women were "ordained" to the sacred ministry of "priest." Two years later, ECUSA would vote at General Convention to retroactively confirm their

ordinations, thus ratifying women's priesthood. Those against the decision argued that this violated Scriptural authority, that male Apostles only were appointed by Christ, that this followed 1,500 years of an all-male Jewish priesthood and the consistent leading of the Holy Spirit for another 2,000 years to the present. These arguments fell on deaf ears, and a narrow majority ruled. 60 of the 58 required clerical votes and 64 of the 57 required lay votes carried the motion in what was certainly not a consensus of the Holy Spirit.

The delegates who refused to entertain the conservative arguments did so because they no longer gave weight to the voices of the past, the authorities that had founded Anglicanism. Not one of the legs of Anglicanism's three-legged stool remained.<sup>7</sup> The rope trailing their ship was ignored, and Episcopalians lost their way. A year later, Bishop Paul Moore of New York ordained an open lesbian, Ellen Barrett, and the Trojan horse unpacked its next, perhaps true, objective, that of sexual redefinition.

In concert with ECUSA's decision to ordain women priests was the decision to authorize its new *Book of Common Prayer*, confirmed at the next General Convention, thus called *BCP 1979*. While the *Rite I* services in this document reflected a traditional service akin to the *1928 BCP* and incorporated elements that had come into normal practice, such as the *Agnus Dei*, the balance of the new Prayer Book, in services less often heard by Episcopalians, was a radical departure from the Church's centuries-old practice and theology.

Canon Francis Read, in *How Episcopalians Were Deceived*,<sup>8</sup> explains how the theology of the Church was being purposefully changed. A study of the new ordinal quickly shows how the Church

intends the function, authority, catholicity and meaning of its orders to be altered. Not only will women be ministers at every level, the very meaning of the Church's ministers has been reinvented. Bishops are unnecessary.

And of course, as with the ordination of women, many steps led to the creation of a Church conditioned to continual change. Every year the propers<sup>9</sup> for Sunday would be different. *Rite I* churches were led into *Rite II* by their bishops. At present, the *1979 BCP* is no longer in general use, but has been replaced by a printed service booklet for any occasion containing a pastiche of new hymns, banal liturgies, politically correct prayers, and references to a Christ we might not recognize. Women's ordination led to homosexual ordinations, then to transgender ordinations.

Fr. George Clendenin, Church of the Holy Apostles, Glendale, CA, one of the original priests in the DCK, said about Minneapolis: "The bishops have a fascination with radical chic. They are so much with it, they're without it."<sup>10</sup> Fr. George Rutler, Church of the Good Shepherd, Rosemont, Pennsylvania, also among the first priests in the DCK, speaking of the inclusiveness of the new ECUSA, said, "No one from Mao Tse-Tung to the Pope can be sure he is not an Anglican."<sup>11</sup>

Conservatives rallied around an opposition to ECUSA's Minneapolis decisions, the new *BCP*, and women's ordination. The Fellowship of Concerned Churchmen and the American Church Union joined forces, announcing a St. Louis Congress in September 1977 to address these issues, seeking to save their beloved Church. Walter McDougall, in his lecture series<sup>12</sup>, offered three responses to unwanted

change in an organization: to leave, to stay and fight, or to choose loyalty in spite of all. The St. Louis Congress voted to leave.

But not without hope for re-entry. For a decade after St. Louis, the Diocese of Christ the King (DCK) maintained the title "Episcopal" in hopes that an ECUSA collapse would lead to reunification with us, hoping that our "Anglican Movement" would guide them back to the faith once given for all.

But when ECUSA's new policies led to disaster, ECUSA's answer was to forge ahead with more of the same, with added money. The Episcopal Church was already lost by the time Barbara Harris received her orders as the "first female catholic bishop in history."

### **The First Anglican Church of North America**

It is sad to speak of the events leading to the dissolution of a fragile new national Anglican Church in 1979. Many allege that the eventual disunity was caused by a clash of personalities. I believe it was a clash of ambition, fear, power, vision, and character. Unprincipled and unqualified men are often attracted to positions of prestige and power. Our movement has continually fought against this type of person.

The St. Louis Congress of 1977 provisionally formed a new Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), first with three non-geographical diocesan jurisdictions, then adding the Diocese of the Mid-West under the Ven. C. Dale Doren of Texas. Each diocese held synods, elected bishops, and awaited their consecrations on January 28, 1978, in Denver, Colorado.

The consecrations took place, miraculously, in a rented Lutheran church, despite an aggressive and sustained attack against all the

potential consecrators by ECUSA. On the courage of Bishop Albert Chambers alone, our movement could even begin. Bishop Clarence Haden of Sacramento had promised to join him, but was forced out by the pressure of ECUSA. A bishop of the Philippine Independent Church, the Rt. Rev. Francisco Pagtakhan, was willing to co-consecrate, and the customary third bishop was supplied by letter of consent by Korean Bishop Mark Pae, who couldn't get to Denver. When Bishop Doren had been consecrated, first of the four, he became the third bishop to co-consecrate the other three. While that format has been criticized, lacking the customary three bishops for all four consecrations, successful arguments have been made that a single bishop is all that is *sacramentally* required, and that *historically* single bishop consecrations had been done in the Church's history.

Bishop Chambers won the day as the only *indigenous* American Bishop with the courage to face the fire from ECUSA. He never lost his pension, health benefits or seat in the ECUSA House of Bishops, as had been threatened. It may be noted that this threat to void pensions, health care insurance, and similar illegal moves by ECUSA ran like wildfire through its frightened clergy, often held back by wives who could not feature life without such security were their husbands to abandon ECUSA and follow their consciences. It was a successful lie. No one lost his vested pension or health care, nor did any widow thus suffer.

The four newly consecrated bishops—Robert Sherwood Morse, Peter Francis Watterson, James Orin Mote, and Dale David Doren—met in April of 1978 in West Palm Beach, Florida, to consider what kind of Church they were building and how they should proceed. They

decided to conduct a Constitutional Synod in Dallas in October 1978, and that no new dioceses be formed nor bishops elected until after that meeting.

This agreement was not kept. Bishop Mote of the Diocese of the Holy Trinity created a new Diocese of the Resurrection in June 1978. He allowed the unsanctioned election of the Rev. William F. Burns for bishop of this new jurisdiction, and together with Bishop Doren he sought to have him consecrated before the Dallas Constitutional Synod. But the move was prevented by Bishops Morse and Watterson. They withheld consent on the basis that no criteria had been established for giving of such consent, awaiting the Dallas Synod.

Bishop Doren violated the agreement again in 1978 with the election of a "suffragan Bishop for Canada" with oversight by Doren's Diocese of the Mid-West, thereby creating a new bishop and claiming an extended new jurisdiction in Canada. The suffragan-elect wisely declined his election.

Next, Bishops Mote and Doren created a Texan Diocese of the Southwest, although the Diocese of Christ the King was already strongly represented in a region that could be termed "Southwest." Further, they consented to the election of a bishop for this unsanctioned jurisdiction. This diocese was not viable, because it had only two priests and fewer than the required number of parishes for an ECUSA diocese. Under the West Palm Beach accord, the provisional canons governing their actions at this time were those of ECUSA prior to 1967. "Southwest" was a paper diocese.

Finally, Bishop Doren unilaterally "translated" himself from the Diocese of the Mid-West to a new "Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic



States," again violating the West Palm Beach accord by failing to notify the other bishops, by not obtaining their consent, by "translating" himself in a non-canonical manner, and by creating yet another jurisdiction. Once there, Bishop Doren claimed to be the "senior bishop" of the original four, with Bishop Mote helping to enthrone him, Mote being the self-titled "next senior bishop." The four bishops had never given consent to the idea of seniority among them.

The new Texas "Diocese of the Southwest" sent representatives to the Dallas Synod seeking to be seated as members with a vote. The Dioceses of Christ the King and the Southeast opposed this, stating that the synod had to be held first and canons adopted as previously agreed, with the participation of only the original four bishops and their dioceses. After that, newly qualified dioceses could be admitted in a legally sanctioned manner. In a compromise, the Texans were seated, but without voting privileges or recognition as a diocese.

The ensuing firestorm, after a tense Dallas meeting, was sparked by parties interested in the power structures of a new Episcopal order. Unfortunately, certain of these, speaking from the platform of the *Christian Challenge* and the Fellowship of Concerned Churchmen newsletter, wanted to punish Bishops Morse and Watterson for their resistance to the illegal formation of new dioceses, unapproved episcopal elections, and seating in the ACNA Synod. While Bishops Morse and Watterson urged careful and gradual growth of diocesan structures, the Challenge, the FCC, and *The Certain Trumpet* pushed hard for the formation of new jurisdictions and multiple episcopal elections.

The intended effect for Dallas was that a faction of the new Church was seeking to flood the conference with votes to override the more conservative bishops. The Mote/Doren faction entered Dallas with a program they had pre-arranged in Chicago, fully expecting the others to fall in line.

Dallas was a difficult time. The tensions produced by the attempts to install new jurisdictions on the one hand, and the refusal to consent on the other, extended throughout the proceedings. Provisional Constitutions were examined and debated. The FCC-sponsored version, still in use today by the Anglican Catholic Church (ACC), was convoluted and lengthy. It created a multiple hierarchy that was difficult to make functional at any time, not answering the need for a truly American document—a framework upon which a living government could, in time, be erected.

It is clear that Bishop Morse was the threat. Robert Morse was a force of nature, superhuman in size and personality, his voice rising above any crowd, and his clear thinking and deep spiritual authority mastering any situation without his trying. Bishops Mote and Doren were afraid of his becoming king, and ironically, after the break up, the clergy of the new DCK lovingly referred to Bishop Morse as "the King." The ploy to stack the delegates at the Dallas meeting and create a Byzantine set of canons so complex that no one might ascend to a position of power was designed to silence Robert Morse. These stratagems destroyed the new ACNA but did not silence Bishop Morse. He simply took his diocese and left the field.

One misnomer regarding the ACNA split blames the old High-Church, Low-Church debate. The two main groups that instituted the

St. Louis Congress and created the ACNA were essentially a Low-Church and a High-Church group. The Low-Church group was evangelical. The High-Church group was composed of the FCC and the American Church Union (ACU), led by its new president, Bishop Robert S. Morse. The FCC asserted that the old embittered distrust between these groups caused the fraction of the movement.

FCC publications portrayed Bishops Morse and Watterson as "dictatorial," "authoritarian," and "Roman Catholic," while strangely, Bishop Mote, a dedicated High-Church Anglo-Catholic, was not so castigated. The truth is that while Bishop Morse was a fairly High-Churchman, he never established in his diocese a policy of strict ceremonial observance, maintaining only that the Holy Eucharist should be the central Sunday service. This was hardly grounds for the accusation of *The Certain Trumpet* that Bishops Morse and Watterson wanted to make us Roman Catholics. The issue of High-Church versus Low-Church was a blind to cover the struggle over establishing and maintaining order and equity in a new organization—order by a consensus of equals, not by a campaign in journals and the illegal stacking of the chairs with votes. This power play alone was the cause of the division.

The Rev. Canon Francis W. Read, a renowned canon lawyer, analyzed the "Dallas Constitution," as it was called. He also co-authored a document containing proposed straightforward canons, which became canons for the Diocese of Christ the King, then later the Anglican Province of Christ the King. In Canon Read's assessment of the Dallas Constitution he states, "Its language is vague and its grammatical structure complex. It purports to set up an ecclesiastical

structure which is at once grandiose and pretentious."<sup>13</sup> He explains that a constitution for a Church body is itself a novel invention, hardly ever used. All that was truly needed—especially when our movement was not establishing a new Church, but rather continuing the true Church—was a set of canons to govern the alliance of dioceses. For this and other reasons, he and John Den Dulk, Sr., the DCK Chancellor, recommended in their joint report that we should not accept the Dallas Constitution. A similar statement was drafted by Mr. Philip C. Davis, Chancellor of the Diocese of the Southeast.

At Dallas some sections of the Constitution were adopted outright by the synod attendees and others only tentatively. Each diocese would have to ratify the final document in its respective synod. It was resolved that the official transcript, with all the changes made in Dallas, be sent to the dioceses within 60 days for study and adoption. The Diocese of Christ the King received its copy on February 20, 1979, weeks after it had held its annual synod. Therefore, it could not be enacted that year.

By summer 1979, it was apparent to the leadership of the Diocese of Christ the King and the Diocese of the Southeast that union with the opposition would be counterproductive. The Continuing Church would be better served if these two dioceses survived without them, at least for a time. They announced a meeting between these two dioceses at Hot Springs, Arkansas, October 16-18, 1979, to "provide a charter and canon law for the movement so we can move forward on our mission to all orthodox Christians in North America."<sup>14</sup> At Hot Springs, the canons drafted by Francis Read and Philip Davis were adopted by DCK and Southeast, thereby forming a province called "The Anglican Church."

The Dallas group soon split. Bishop Mote led the Anglican Catholic Church (ACC). Bishop Doren formed a Low-Church province in New England, eventually becoming the United Episcopal Church of North America (UECNA). A few years later, the Diocese of the Southeast dissolved, its parishes going to the ACC and DCK, but the canons adopted by the DCK have remained a highly favorable rule of governance, envied by other jurisdictions and praised by Anglicans outside the Americas. Bishop Watterson of the Southeast renounced his ministry and joined the Roman Catholic Church as a layman.

As for the original movement, to quote one who witnessed the events described above, "We did not leave our sins behind in PECUSA—only the heresies."

### *Episcopi Vagantes*

A treatment of the early days of the Continuing Church would be incomplete without touching upon the wolves that prowled about, seeking whom they might devour. Some have been mentioned, so-called bishops in so-called Anglican bodies that left ECUSA before or after we did or invented themselves Anglicans *ex nihilo*.

*Episcopi vagantes*, wandering bishops, present a subject so involved and unbelievable that we in the legitimate clergy find it difficult to discuss what these pretenders to Anglicanism mean to our movement.

Before 1976 there existed in the United States, in addition to ECUSA, several churches using the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* or closely related versions. These were vagante churches and other Episcopal-style churches. Vagante means vagrant, and is used to mean

a wandering "bishop" without a proper see or jurisdiction. These pseudo-bishops derived "holy orders" through questionable means and successions.

The Apostolic Succession is of great importance to us as Catholics. It is not merely a matter of the right set of hands. The Church has established a proper order for the selection of bishops, whether elected or appointed, always with the intention that a bishop must preside over a see, an already-existing jurisdiction. A see is not a see of mind or hope, but one consisting of a valid body of churches, clergy, and laity.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, an Englishman named Arnold Mathew thought he would like to be a bishop, objecting as he did to the Oxford Movement and its influence on the Church of England. He drew up papers of appointment and traveled across the English Channel to Utrecht, where the Bishops of the Old Catholic Church preside. The Old Catholic Church has valid Catholic orders, having broken with Rome in 1719 over theological matters.

Mathew convinced the Old Catholics that his appointment was valid, and the See of Utrecht "consecrated" him. Mathew returned to England with his document of consecration and proceeded to bring followers into his new "Anglican Church." The Old Catholics heard about his deception and revoked the consecration. But this didn't stop Mathew.

He ordained almost anyone. Vagantes tend to get re-ordained frequently, often with little improvement in the line of Succession. This is important. Without real Apostolic Succession there is no secure sacramental validity. You can attend their church service and hear the

familiar words, and yet there is probably nothing in the Eucharist but bread and wine. You may, in fact, hope there is not.

Our movement has always been in danger of vagantism. Episcopalians ask us, "Who are you to leave the mainline Church and set up dioceses, appoint and consecrate bishops, establish your own seminaries and such? Who gave you the authority? Aren't you schismatics? Aren't you wandering jurisdictions without reality in God's Church?"

We have been scrupulously careful to be able to answer these questions correctly. Had we not avoided the stigma of "vagante," our Church would have died long ago. In fact, we were perilously close to non-existence, but Bishop Albert Chambers recognized—in a body of true Episcopalians—God creating a new body for His Church to continue. Bishop Morse avoided the vagantes, and thereby saved us from a fatal union.

Many of the pre-St. Louis vagante churches were formed over issues such as their objection to racial integration of the Church, to liberal politics, high or low churchmanship, and theology. Many of them emulate bodies other than Anglican, such as Orthodox or Roman. A brief review of some of them follows:

**The Anglican Orthodox Church** (AOC) was founded in 1963 by James Parker Dees, a former ECUSA priest. He appointed himself archbishop of the new body and was "consecrated" by two vagantes. In turn he ordained priests, including Walter H. Adams. Many of their churches became established and went out of business, having taken people's money and hearts.

**The United Episcopal Church** (UEC) was formed from a merger of two vagante groups led by Thomas Kleppinger and Russel Fry, former AOC "priests."

**The American Episcopal Church** (AEC) was the largest vagante Church, headed by "The Most Reverend" Anthony F. M. Clavier. Clavier deposed the AEC's original archbishop who created another vagante Church. Clavier resigned from the AEC to enter Nashotah House, an ECUSA seminary, as a lay postulant in 1976, then returned to the AEC. He sought a merger with ECUSA and then the ACC, causing dissention, resulting in the resignation of its archbishop. A former part of the ACC merged with Clavier's group to form the **Anglican Church of America** (ACA).

**The Anglican Episcopal Church** (AEC), under Walter Hollis Adams, a former "priest" in the AOC, was a merger of Adams' AECNA and the Anglican Church of America, under former AEC "Archbishop" George. Adams had numerous ordinations and consecrations under numerous vagante orders. Adams was admitted into one of the "Continuing Churches" along with his "priests."

**The Southern Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Church (Evangelical)**, and many independent churches exist without any organized body or see at all.

This 1991 list is out of date. Today the plethora of alphabet-Anglicans is evidence of the opposite of what we attempted to form: a single valid claimant to Anglican authenticity in America. One may look on web and print publications and not receive a complete list of the alphabet-soup churches. Some churches have more, some have less,



sacramental validity than others, and all have a slightly different cause than ours.

Vagantes are not our people. The actions and apparent attitudes toward the Church these men display, along with their questionable origins, cast grave doubt on their validity. Using the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* does not make them Episcopalians. We of the Province of Christ the King will not join vagantes, nor let them join us, without requiring the same training and ordination as anyone else, through our own seminary, coming as laymen.

The recent re-forming of the Anglican Church of North America has joined a great many such groups, with older ones, and whole dioceses newly escaped from TEC, in a vaguely friendly amalgamation of common cause: their opposition to TEC. The rage we receive because we have not joined them is similar to what we faced in 1979. So many "Anglican" dioceses, ministers and world-wide Church organizations emerged from TEC after Barbara Harris' consecration, or Gene Robinson's, with reasons focused on solely an offense at these aberrations, rather than the greater issues that brought our original groups out of TEC and launched the Anglican Movement in Denver. Thus, we have restored collegial relationships with the ACC and UECNA because we know what they are and what they stand for. We don't join other groups, in the main, because they are true to their hidden cause when they do join us. A few years of union, they tear a great hunk out of our Church fabric and leave, with noise, blame, bluster, and bad publicity.

Vagantes, in addition to holding questionable orders, remain true to their own causes, and would tear our Church apart, leaving with blame and bluster, and endless publicity.

God save us from the vagantes.

### **Proof in the Pudding**

The Anglican Movement began as a cure for the ailing Episcopal Church USA in the hope that it would repent and return to orthodoxy. Then ECUSA made specific decisions, crossing bridges with no hope of return to orthodox faith and practice. There was nothing left for us to rejoin.

With accusations on every side, we had hoped for reunion with ECUSA, at least as a definitive stance in the beginning. We were Formosa after the Communist Revolution in China, believing ourselves the valid Church in exile and waiting to see who recognized us as the real Anglican Church of the United States. We carefully kept within national borders as Anglican Churches have done worldwide. We resisted union with neighboring Canada, although Bishop Morse helped establish a Continuing Anglican Church in Canada with the 1980 consecration of Bishop de Catanzaro.

In later developments, Anglican-style churches in the USA attempted to gain episcopal oversight from provinces from Africa, Asia, or South America's Southern Cone. This cross-linking was intended to retain a theoretical membership in the worldwide Anglican Communion through these foreign bishops, while in the USA only ECUSA held that position officially.

Bishop Morse quickly rejected the notion of gaining further validity by aligning with others, always viewing his own consecration as a complete sacramental reality. The vagantes were always trying to improve their ordination status, to join with more valid jurisdictions, and take them over. We never did that, and we owe Bishop Morse thanks for this.

Other churches went offshore, creating vast international Anglican ministries, in India, Asia and the other continents. Looking bigger in other countries than they look here is another sign of a lack of bona fides. We resisted that as well, not even seeking corporate union with a similar movement in England. We do not have the same issues as those in other lands, even England.

Our focus, for the first decade or so, was on ECUSA and what direction it would go when thousands left it and financial support waned. The once mighty denomination of 3.5 million in the 1950s shriveled to under 2 million in a decade.

But most of those who left ECUSA did not join us. They were through with fighting, and we were fighters. We were angry and offended. We had not left the Episcopal Church, but the Episcopal Church had left us, and they were to blame. We cheered their misadventures and booed their proclamations. When we introduced ourselves to would-be members, we defined ourselves as being against the Episcopalians. We were defined in the negative, complainers in a war of words.

This attitude was not conducive to growing a new Church, though a new Church was not how we saw ourselves or wanted to be. We didn't want to form a new denomination or jurisdiction. We saw ourselves as

the Episcopal Church in exile, Formosa off the coast of Red China, waiting to invade our former Church and save it.

Save it we did not. The events that followed our leaving demonstrated that faithful Anglicanism in ECUSA was over. While women were trained in Episcopal seminaries and received holy orders, they were limited to the diaconate and priesthood. Then Massachusetts elected Barbara Harris "suffragan bishop."

### **Barbara Harris**

Harris had been ordained a female priest in 1980, but never served as rector of any church. Her major job was as publisher of a liberal magazine, *The Witness*. A prison chaplain, civil rights advocate, and advocate for women's rights, Harris was well chosen for breaking this 2,000 year continuum wide open in 1989. The first woman bishop in any Catholic order worldwide was African-American. No one could complain.

But we complained. Yet it was clearer than ever the direction ECUSA was taking. More women bishops followed, far more outspoken and farther to the left. Harris was never elevated to Bishop Ordinary, but retired in 2003 and suffered a stroke in 2010. The glass ceiling was shattered. In 2006, ECUSA elected Katharine Jefferts Schori as its first female Presiding Bishop.

In response to the election of Barbara Harris, the Episcopal Synod of America was born, another entity competing with the DCK and its constituent members and parishes. The field was getting crowded with churches formed around single issues, angrier than we were and newly

opposed to "The Episcopal Church" (TEC). TEC became the new name for the shrinking denomination, removing "USA."

With a female bishop in TEC, we could not rejoin their denomination. It was time to become a national Church body, a province. In 1991 the Diocese of Christ the King became the Anglican Province of Christ the King and created a national center in Washington, D.C.

### **The Episcopal Heritage Center, Georgetown, W.D.C.**

Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C. had served a largely African-American congregation since before the Civil War, and had been a stop on the Underground Railroad for escaped slaves from across the Potomac. The Methodist-Episcopal Church sold the property to the DCK in 1984, Bishop Morse sensing the iconic location would soon be needed for a national headquarters.

Bishop Morse envisioned regional dioceses across the United States, with one small diocese anchored in the nation's capital that could support a national cathedral and house the archbishop. Morse never sought to be that archbishop, to move from the Bay Area. He hoped that his successor would be seated in this historic church in Washington.

The opening of Christ the King Parish, The Episcopal Heritage Center, was held with great celebration. President Ronald Reagan conducted the closing ceremony for his Year of the Bible, in February, 1984 in the newly acquired crumbling edifice.

## **Further Developments**

At the 1986 DCK Synod in Burlingame, CA, John T. Cahoon, Jr. was elected the first assistant bishop of the DCK. Subsequent to his election and consecration at St. Peter's, Oakland, Bishop Cahoon became rector in Washington, D.C., but shortly after left for the Anglican Catholic Church (ACC) to become Bishop of the Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic States and, in 1996, Metropolitan of the ACC until his death in 2003.

In 1988 a generous donation established the Decade for Development Fund. The Decade Fund has built churches and supported clergy, establishing ministries in new areas and expanding the APCK.

In 1989 in Dallas, the Evangelical Catholic Mission (ECM), still within TEC, and Forward in Faith North America (FIFNA) held a convention of traditionalist Episcopalians. DCK's Bishop Morse attended. Nothing was resolved toward mergers at that time. Dr. Walter McDougall notes that the ECM that had threatened TEC with *leaving*, unless certain conditions were met, now threatened *to stay* unless certain conditions were met.

Bishop Davies of the ESA created the Episcopal Missionary Church (EMC) in South Carolina which became the Christian Episcopal Church. Its central U.S. diocese, the Diocese of the Holy Cross, later merged with the APCK.

In 1990, in anticipation of the creation of a national province, two suffragan bishops, James Pollard Clark of Huntsville, Alabama, and George Stenhouse of Louisville, Kentucky, were elected in the DCK. They were consecrated and awaited the restructuring of the new APCK.

## **The Anglican Province of Christ the King**

At the DCK Synod of 1991 in Sacramento, the three bishops—Morse, Clark, and Stenhouse—with members of the synod adopted canons that would govern the Anglican Province of Christ the King and dissolved the Diocese of Christ the King. Each diocese then met in its own synod and established its own canons, confirmed its own Bishop Ordinary, and continued forward within this new provincial structure.

Quite appropriately, Bishop Robert Sherwood Morse was elected Archbishop of the Anglican Province of Christ the King. He remained Bishop Ordinary for the Diocese of the Western States (DWS), a huge territory from the Pacific to the Mississippi. Bishop Stenhouse governed the Diocese of the Eastern States (DES), north of the Mason-Dixon line, and Bishop Clark governed the Diocese of the Southern States (DSS). Two years later, Edward La Cour was consecrated bishop to assist in the DSS.

In 1992 Bishop Stenhouse departed from the new APCK. Without a bishop for the DES, the duties were split between Bishops Morse and Clark.

The APCK grew rapidly in Arizona and, with a thriving All Saints Church in Tulsa headed by Fr. Frederick Morrison from England, a new Diocese of Southwestern States was envisioned. In 1995, at the DWS Synod in Carefree, AZ, David McMannes, rector of St. Luke's, Sedona, AZ, was elected bishop suffragan.

Archbishop Morse brought the new bishop to San Francisco for training. Bishop McMannes returned to Sedona, there forming the new Diocese of the Southwestern States, ranging from Nevada to Arkansas.

However, in 2000, Bishop McMannes came under ecclesiastical, civil, and criminal charges, ending his tenure with the APCK.

### **Bishop Morse's Prophecy and the End of the Episcopal Church**

At a small news conference in 1983, held at Bishop Morse's request, in Davis, CA, in which he was interviewed by the Davis and Woodland newspapers, Bishop Morse stated, "I was quoted in *Time Magazine* saying that we would be the only Episcopalians in 50 years. I want to revise that. In 15 years we will be the only Episcopalians." I was then seminarian-in-charge of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Sacramento, and I was shocked at such boldness on the part of His Grace. I was concerned that it would embarrass us if this did not come true.

But TEC entered into serious discussions with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) regarding the sharing of sacramental duties, ministers, etc. The ELCA does not have apostolically ordered bishops, a fact that had previously prevented the full interchange of Church duties.

Yet in their Concordat of 1999-2000, TEC merged ministries at all levels, with plans to co-consecrate and validate both Lutheran and Episcopal bishops by and for each other.<sup>15</sup> Bishop Morse's prophetic words of 15 years beforehand echoed in my ears.

### **Trouble at the Top**

In 2002, Frederick George Morrison was consecrated Bishop for the Southwest (and would ascend to Archbishop of the APCK in 2015). The year 2002 also saw Robert Waggener elected suffragan Bishop for the DWS. Having come to us via the Diocese of the Holy Cross,



formerly of the CEC mentioned above, Waggener was already a bishop. Five years later, he would lead a contingent of churches out of the APCK to a newly formed Diocese of the Holy Cross.

James Provence, longtime successful priest in the DWS and Canon to the Ordinary, Diocesan Treasurer, and Archbishop Morse's right hand, was nominated as sole candidate to be Bishop Coadjutor. In 2003 he became Bishop Ordinary of the DWS.

Some concerns were voiced at that time, because Bishop Provence had been divorced and remarried. Though the issue was raised, it seemed settled after the election. But at his elevation in 2007 to succeed Archbishop Morse, a tragic exodus ensued, led by Bishop Robert Waggener, Bishop Rocco Florenza (DES), and Fr. Paul Hewett. Their issue was divorced and remarried clergy, in contravention of the validity of ecclesiastical annulment. Many parishes, mostly small, left quickly with Waggener, Florenza, and Hewett. Moreover, they left in violation of the canons, without due process, and without legally called parish meetings.

Archbishop Provence led the DWS for 12 years, strengthening our financial position. With fewer parishes in both the DES and DSS, he engineered the merger of the DES and the DSS into a new diocese, the Diocese of the Atlantic States (DAS). The third diocese, the Diocese of the Southwestern States, remained under Bishop Morrison.

In 2012, with the deposition of Bishop McMannes (2000), the departure from the APCK of Bishops Waggener, La Cour, and Florenza, the death of Bishop Clark (2001), and the retirement of Bishop Wiygul (2011), three suffragan bishops were elected and

consecrated: Donald Ashman for the DWS, Frank Brulc for DSWS, and John Upham, Jr. for the DAS.

In 2015, Archbishop Provence resigned for health reasons. Bishop Morrison was elected by the Council of Bishops as the new Archbishop. The three suffragan bishops elected in 2012 were then elected bishops ordinary in their respective dioceses.

In 2017, Canons Blair Schultz (DAS) and Peter Hansen (DWS) were elected and consecrated suffragan bishops for their respective dioceses. Later that year Bishop Frank Brulc chose to return to a lay vocation. At this writing in 2018, the House of Bishops consists of Archbishop Morrison, and Bishops Upham, Ashman, Schultz, Hansen, and the retired William Wiygul (DSS).

Archbishop Robert Sherwood Morse died in the spring of 2015. His Funeral Mass brought many of his friends together to St. Peter's Oakland, where he had begun this movement, inspiring many, and sending them out to a life of service to Christ. A memorial plaque commemorates him on the wall of St. Joseph of Arimathea Collegiate Chapel, St. Joseph of Arimathea Theological College, in Berkeley, CA. We live in grateful memory of this gifted man and thankful praise to God for his vision and courage.

### **Where to Now?**

Before the provincial APCK was born in 1992, pressures and rumors, campaigns, invasions, and exoduses urged us to merge with other Christian bodies, with the hope of strength in numbers. This has been tried and found dangerous. Trojan horses have abounded at our doorstep, and we have wisely and graciously declined the gifts.

But should we join another Christian body? Should we feel anxious if we're not part of a larger group, like the resurrected ACNA? Should we join the four Churches (ACC, ACA, APA and DHC) that recently forged a mutual understanding in the fall of 2017? Should we join the Roman Catholic Church with its promise for an Anglican Uniate Prayer Book liturgy? Should we join an Orthodox jurisdiction? Will we be more safe in such company? Has that ever been true?

Why join anyone? Some reply, "There is strength in numbers," "Unity gives evidence that God's grace is with us," or "Here in the Age of Ecumenism we must seek unity among the Churches." But numbers do not count in the Kingdom of Heaven. Christ looks for purity of the heart and honest faith. Unity with something impure is not grace but foolishness. The "Age of Ecumenism" has not produced one legitimate union among any catholic faiths. This is not an age of anything except apostasy and least of all ecumenism. Unity, as a goal without a divine objective, is a false god.

Why join anyone? Doesn't the APCK serve our needs as parishes? The APCK gave us episcopal oversight of these churches to begin work that would glorify God and sanctify its members. The APCK trains seminarians in a traditional Anglican seminary. The APCK readily sends supply priests, deacons, and bishops to celebrate the Holy Eucharist, administer Holy Confirmation and Holy Ordination. We have the privilege and pleasure to attend synods where we meet and share with friends from around the country. Because the APCK has a valid line of Apostolic Succession, our validity has never been questioned. Why join anyone?

What do we lack? Other bodies often attempt to include the APCK in their activities. We must have something they want. Priests and parishes accepted into the APCK from other jurisdictions say how relieved they are to find everything orderly, unified, and godly. Why would we want to disperse or dissolve this community of "straightforward Anglicanism, liturgically simple and unfussy, doctrinally mainstream Christian"<sup>16</sup> that Fr. William Oddie describes in his book, *The Crockford's File*, in favor of union with anyone else?

### **Who are We?**

We have been called by Christ to stand in our particular place in the Western world, a living reliquary that contains the best of Western Catholicity without Roman innovations, without medieval political and economic answers to modern issues. Our liturgy is meaningful, wonderful, timeless, elegant, poetic, and beautiful: the best of English worship. Our music boasts the top 600 hymns and chants from 2,000 years of Christendom. Without us, these would be lost.

We have grown up. We are no longer angry. We love Christ, and we serve Him in a way we know He loves. What more is there?

Our Lord Jesus spoke of a great deception to come, as did St. Paul. We are in that age. We must stand strong in our traditional Christian faith and practice.

As we worship, so we believe.

*"Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus."*<sup>17</sup>

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> The Vincentian Canon, long held as the Church's definition of what the word Catholic means. St. Vincent Lérins wrote, "What is always, what is everywhere, what is by everybody believed." St. Vincent (early 5<sup>th</sup> century), was a Church Father and ecclesiastical writer in Southern Gaul (France) on the Isle de Lérins, today Isle St. Honorat.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> McDougall, Walter A., "Challenge of the Episcopalian," Adult Class, Church of the Good Shepherd, Rosemont, PA, Fall 1992. Dr. McDougall is an American historian, winner of the Pulitzer prize for *The Heavens and the Earth, a Political History of the Space Age* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985). Dr. McDougall teaches at the University of Pennsylvania.

<sup>4</sup> Seabury, Paul, "Trendier Than Thou," *Harper's Magazine*, October, 1978. Dr. Paul Seabury (1923-1990), an American political scientist, served as foreign policy consultant under President Reagan and taught at UC Berkeley.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Illegal according to Episcopal Canon Law.

<sup>7</sup> The "three-legged-stool" depicts Anglicanism's three sources of authority: Scripture, tradition, and reason.

<sup>8</sup> Read, Canon Francis W., *How Episcopalians Were Deceived* (Berkeley: American Church Union, 1981).

<sup>9</sup> "Propers" are the selected Collect, Epistle and Gospel readings assigned by the Prayer Book for every Sunday and major holy day in a year. The 1928 Book of Common Prayer selections repeat every

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year, but now the 1979 Book of Common Prayer changes these every year, with options for traditional or contemporary language, in three-year cycles. Thus, the new prayer book cannot print these inside its bulging covers, but they must be found under separate cover.

<sup>10</sup> "What Happened," *The Anglican Digest*, (Speak, Inc. IV Quarter A.D. 1977), pg. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> McDougall.

<sup>13</sup> "Why can't we get together?" *The Trinitarian*, Church of the Holy Trinity, Sacramento, the Rev. Peter Hansen, 1991.

<sup>14</sup> *New Oxford Review*, October 1979.

<sup>15</sup> *An Agreement of Full Communion - Called to Common Mission, A Lutheran Proposal for a Revision of the Concordat of Agreement*, as amended and adopted by The Episcopal Church by the 1999 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on August 19, 1999, Denver, Colorado.

<sup>16</sup> Oddie, William, *The Crockford's File* (London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd., Penguin Group, 1989), 179. Dr. Oddie (1939-), an Anglican priest at the time of writing *The Crockford's File*, was a chaplain at Oxford and librarian of Pusey House. Today he is a Roman Catholic and editor of the *Catholic Herald*.

<sup>17</sup> Vincent of Lérins.