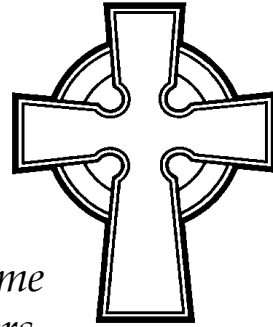


ApostlesJournal



*"The gifts the Lord gave were that some
would be ... pastors and teachers,
to equip the saints for the work of ministry,
for building up the body of Christ."*

(Ephesians 4:11-12)

Church of The Apostles

Evangelical Anglican

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Church of The Apostles
Evangelical Anglican

*We are
Christians
who Worship
in the
Anglican Tradition.*

*Our Mission
is to
Obey,
Follow
and
Bear Witness
to
Jesus Christ.*

Church of The Apostles is a member of the
Conservative Congregational Christian Conference.



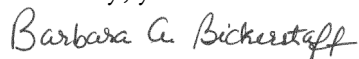
What you will find in this issue of the ApostlesJournal

Welcome to this Summer 2011 edition of the *ApostlesJournal*! July 1, 2011 marked the fifth anniversary of the Church of The Apostles. This publication, which is the primary platform for the voice of the Eldership, contains a collection of articles that are reflections on this first five years, and a testimony, if you will, to *from whence we have come*.

The first article, *A Conversation with the Superintendent*, is the transcript of an interview that I conducted with The Reverend Mark R. Galloway in June 2011. This is the third time we have sat down and had such a conversation. The intention of the questions was to draw out his thoughts and reflections on these first five years and cast his vision for the future. The next three articles, one from each of the Elders, Chad Tvenstrup, Nina Deuel and Rob Geoffrey, are their personal reflections on the first five years of this journey as Church of The Apostles and encouragement for the future. Following is an article by Superintendent Galloway entitled *A Confessing Congregation: the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Church of The Apostles*. This lengthy and in-depth work demonstrates that the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* expresses the fundamental principles of authentic Anglican belief and their utmost importance as a foundational document for the Evangelical Anglican Church of The Apostles. The sixth article, *What of Tradition in the Church?*, by The Reverend Chad W. Tvenstrup is a study between capital "T" and small "t" tradition in the Christian Church. This article also draws its perspective from the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*. The issue concludes with a second article by Superintendent Galloway, *Who will go to heaven and how do we get there? The Doctrine of Salvation in the Thirty-Nine Articles*. The title is quite self-explanatory and the text demonstrates that what God has revealed in Scripture is affirmed in the teaching of the *Articles of Religion*. Finally, sprinkled throughout this publication are text boxes relating a *Summary of Our Origins*, a brief history of the events that transitioned this body of believers from the Episcopal Church of Saint Andrew and Saint Philip to our current polity and structure as the independent autonomous Evangelical Anglican Church of The Apostles.

The preparation and compilation of this document was a monumental and often tedious task. It is the result of literally hundreds of hours of research, writing and editing. As always, I am honored to work along side the Elders in the presentation of this work and invite you to journey with us through this document and witness the work of the Holy Spirit in this place.

Faithfully, your sister in Christ,



Barbara A. Bickerstaff
Communications Officer

A Conversation with the Superintendent

July 1st marks our fifth anniversary as an independent Congregation worshipping in the Anglican tradition and under the three fold polity of Superintendent, Elders and Deacons. Are you pleased with the way the structure is working?

Yes. It has worked amazingly well, much better than I ever could have anticipated. I think that is so because of the quality of the men and women serving in the Eldership and the Diaconate.

Are there areas that need improvement?

I will answer that by saying it is incumbent upon the Superintendent to continue to make sure that communication works as well as possible between himself and the Eldership, himself and the Diaconate and between the Diaconate to the Eldership. There must continue to be clear delineation between the roles of Elders, Deacons, and Church Staff members.

With five years experience, how would describe your transition from Episcopal priest to Superintendent? Are you comfortable in this 'new skin'?

Yes. Since the last time we spoke this way, I would say I am much more comfortable. I really see myself now in the role as a congregational superintendent, a bishop. I no longer see myself as an Episcopal priest and that was a transition that took time. I really

enjoy the identity that I have now.

You have had to advantage of watching the other Elders and the Deacons function in their ministries over these past five years. How have they grown into their duties and function?

It has been an honor and a joy to watch them grow into their duties, really their vocation. It is remarkable, the growth that they have displayed. The Deacons: it is hard to articulate accurately how much work the deacons do and how well they do it. They are to be so commended.

They literally live out that Biblical example of being servants into the world. The Elders: if you observe the Elders you can see how they have taken on, incrementally, the

responsibility of being fully Ministers of Word and Sacrament and how effectively they do it. Literally, the Elders have become a group of Ministers who share the responsibility of Word and Sacrament.

Have you seen a change in the demographics of the Congregation in these past five years?

Yes. We are really a new Congregation. If someone who ceased going here five years ago were to come back, they would find out that we are really a completely different culture. Demographically, we are made up of a very different type of people. Of the 200

January 24, 2004

The Reverend Mark R. Galloway began his ministry as Rector (Pastor) of The [Episcopal] Church of St. Andrew and St. Philip.

people who are here on a regular basis, every Sunday, probably only about 75 of them were regular attendees of the previous Episcopal parish. The new people who have come, come from all different places and they bring different experiences and strengths with them. They don't have any connection to the old Episcopal system, so that is not really their story. What is different between Apostles now and A & P [Church of Saint Andrew and Saint Philip] as it was, is that new people who would come to the old A & P were either Episcopalians transferring from one parish to a new parish or, in a sense, disaffected Roman Catholics. Our new demographic is people who either are un-churched or they tend to come from Evangelical backgrounds, so it has created a very different demographic.

In thinking about church growth, you can look at growth in a Congregation in two ways: horizontal growth, when the size of the Congregation grows; and vertical growth, when the individual members grow in Christ. How would you categorize the growth we are experiencing?

The vertical growth has been just monumental! It is staggering how much more literate we are as a Congregation in the Christian Faith. It is astronomical growth and it has manifested itself in so many ways. It is not just that people attend Bible study and education, but you see the growth lived out in their lives. It effects how they make decisions, how they speak, how they think, how they approach the difficulties of life. Their great reasoning is now based on a knowledge of the Christian Faith. Again, that growth has just been astronomical! We

have had good steady growth in other directions, too. Our Sunday attendance growth and economic growth put us in a very healthy place and the growth has been very intergenerational, which has been a real blessing for us at this point.

Do you see or hear from any of your old clergy friends in the Episcopal Church?

Not really. There are a few people a generation older than me that I continue to have contact with, but I do not have much contact with virtually any of my former Episcopal colleagues and that saddens me.

Have you developed new relationships with pastors of other "Evangelical" churches?

Yes. Obviously in the past five years the circles that I associate with have changed quite a bit. I have grown new friendships in Evangelical circles. They have been a bit more difficult than I thought they would be, only because our identity as Anglicans still confuses some folks in Evangelical circles. The local guys have become really good friends and confidants, especially Pastor Joe Campbell at Quidnick Baptist, Pastor Doug Tourgee at Riverpoint Advent Christian, and other men like them of just such high quality and wonderful character. They are really good mentors and friends.

It was three years ago this summer that our Congregation was received as a member of the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference [4Cs] and you were licensed as an ordained Minister of the Conference. Tell me a little about our Congregation's relationship to the 4Cs and your role in the Conference.

Our entry into the 4Cs was historic, not because it was so important that we chose to affiliate with them, but by the fact that we were the first former Episcopal (Anglican) parish to have affiliated with them. I think our association to the 4Cs is important. It keeps us rooted in the mission of the Universal Church; it keeps us accountable morally and to a high standard of doctrine and Biblical authority. Overall, I think our relationships have been very healthy that we have formed through the 4Cs. Our involvement (my involvement) into the workings of the denomination have happened much quicker than I thought would. My being elected to the Board of Directors was quite an honor and I think we have a lot that we can offer to the denomination, just as we have received a lot from them already.

What is your vision for Church of The Apostles for the next 5 years?

My vision, my hope, is that we continue to be as steadfast in emphasizing the essentials in our life as a Congregation: that we continue to preach the Word of God with confidence and minister to the people that come to be part of our fellowship with integrity and courage. My vision is that at some point in the next five years we will break out of the comfortableness of just being Church of The Apostles and really see ourselves as a mission oriented Congregation in Rhode Island and that we would have the courage and muster

the resources to eventually plant some other works in other areas of the state.

The Church is called to be the body of Christ. How do you see our Congregation living out that calling in today's culture?

To be the body of Christ in the culture today, means that we have to be vastly more courageous than our immediate forbearers were. The culture is becoming more and more hostile to the Christian gospel and our ethic. We, in prayer, have to become equipped to engage the culture with the Gospel in ways that are effective. It is a great challenge for our generation. I think we see this happening in the work of our Diaconate. An example is the work of Deacon Cathy Morgan at the Crossroads Family Shelter and those who help her with that ministry. We need to show the Gospel in our actions and in our love for other people by putting our resources into ministries

that produce the good works that will eventually allow us the opportunity to share the Good News with the people that we service. That takes patience, resources, and time. People in this culture don't come to the church so much anymore for the gospel, the church has to take the gospel to the people. We are learning this. We haven't mastered it yet, but we are getting better at it.

Is there anything you would like to add?

It is a real honor for me to continue to serve in the capacity that I do. We are just so

September 23, 2004

The Vestry (the governing body of The Church of St. Andrew and St. Philip) voted to join the Anglican Communion Network, a renewal movement within The Episcopal Church committed to the Biblical principles of Christian orthodoxy and moral order.

blessed by the quality of people that God has raised up in leadership in this Congregation. I'm not just saying that as a cliché. I am so impressed with the men and women who serve in our Diaconate, Eldership and on the Church Staff; with the commitment of the laity, both in their willingness to want to learn and their excitement about the Gospel as it changes their lives. The economic commitment of our people to the Congregation tells me that the Holy Spirit has something for us to accomplish. God has equipped us and prepared us with resources and people to be in a position to make a difference in the culture and that is a great vocation for us to have as we go forward.



Reflecting upon our collective experience in the Lord

By Elder Chad W. Tvenstrup

“So I exalt the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.”

(1 Peter 5:1-3)

In this edition of the *ApostlesJournal*, upon our five year celebration as an autonomous

(Evangelical Anglican) Congregation of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, we find ourselves reflecting upon our collective experience in the Lord.

I would argue (as I am sure that many of you would agree with me) that our time together has been most assuredly blessed by God and guided by the power of the Holy Spirit. And it is not because we are “in the black” in our finances, or that our average Sunday attendance has been steady. It is not due to the fact that we are a relatively large (and growing) and participatory Congregation of the faithful among many smaller (and dying) churches in our region. It is possible that those things, rather, may be a testimony to the work that God has been doing in our hearts and minds, growing each of us closer to him, and shaping us into the image of his Son. For we are the Church Catholic here at 170 Fairview Avenue, Coventry, Rhode Island, and we will continue to be true to that identity as long as we faithfully preach, teach, and learn the pure Word of God, and rightly administer the Sacraments according to Christ’s own ordinance (see Article XIX of the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*).

I must say that five years ago when my brother in Christ (and, in some ways, my spiritual father), the Reverend Mark R. Galloway, nominated me to be an Elder of the new *Congregational Episcopacy* here at Church of The Apostles, I did not clearly understand the exhortation of the Apostle Peter (quoted above) to the Elders of the churches in Asia Minor. In fact, I assumed that my function would be more like an administrator (functioning in the realm of education – for at the time I was denoted as

the “Education Elder”).

Sure, I could handle that! By that season of my life (in 2006) I had been a teacher in the public schools for the better part of a decade. I was in the process of finishing my Master’s Degree in Biblical Studies at Providence College. I had been privately and devotionally steeped in God’s Word for a number of years. I (in my own pride and ignorance, of course) thought that the task of being an “Elder” was certainly within my reach. After all, running a Christian Education Program was not going to be rocket science! But I was vastly unaware of the road that lay ahead! Really, I was unable to see the vision that God had already cast for my life and for my service to him. I love the words of the great prophet Jeremiah (10:23) (as they are so relevant in all of our lives): *“I know, O Lord, that the way of a man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.”*

The pace of necessity

As God always has, he led me from that point in my limited understanding of my own calling to a very different place. Subsequently, I also believe that while Mark was further along in his understanding of exactly who an Elder (Presbyter) would be in our Congregation, he may not have been that far ahead. God, in fact, is the only one who knew exactly what was going on then (as is the same case today). And it was the Holy

Spirit who has grown me and Mark (and all of us, quite frankly) at what I like to call the “pace of necessity.” When my calling began to be revealed to me in a more sophisticated way, it was only then that I grew as a Christian and as a leader in ways that were necessary for me to function in those new roles and responsibilities. God does not, then, call the enabled; rather, God enables the called (at the pace of necessity). This concept is very important in all of our lives and faith journeys, because it is often the case that we feel ill-equipped to handle that which is on our ministerial plates (as I do feel right now, in fact!).

September 15, 2005
The Canterbury Mission Society was formed and incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the State of Rhode Island for the purpose of providing financial and other support to The Church of St. Andrew and St. Philip.

Today, in the Summer of 2011, five years beyond all of that, I am an ordained leader in the Church of The Apostles. I wear a clerical collar along with my brother Presbyters, and I function much like an Elder would have functioned in the early (pre-Nicene) Church. I

consecrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion, I administer the Sacrament of Baptism, I officiate at the Rite of Holy Matrimony, I pronounce God’s absolution and his blessing, I preach and teach the Word of God, I engage in pastoral counsel... I think you get the point.

In addition to the apostolic order in which I serve and the ministerial role that I play here at the Church of The Apostles, I am also an ordained Minister of the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference (or the 4Cs). In fact, when I was received into the

4Cs at the denomination's Annual Conference last year, one of the members of the Credentials Committee (those who formally accepted me as an ordained Minister) said to me: "I hope that you will find an opportunity to use your ministerial gifts and, thus, function as an ordained Pastor of a Congregation." To which I responded, "I already am!" You see, because I minister part-time (whatever that means) and because I am unpaid, this gentleman errantly assumed that my work in the ministry "doesn't count."

This brother in Christ was, in fact, assuming that all the churches in the 4Cs are still operating under the old paradigm – that people who ascribe to be ordained Ministers in the Conference go off to seminary in order to earn their ministerial degrees, and then go off to look for a church to shepherd full-time (as their livelihood). This particular model, which was in no way the regular model of the early (pre-Nicene) Church (after all, they did not have seminaries!), is quickly going by the wayside. Most of the ordained Ministers that you will be led by in the future (as is even the case now in our Congregation) will be part-time and volunteer (or perhaps supported by a meager stipend – not that I am asking for money).

Collared

My ordination in this Congregation, which took place on July 16, 2006, and is only still being realized to its full capacity, is that of *function*. God did not "zap me" when Mark and Elder Conrad Ruppert laid their hands on me. God did not make me ontologically different from anyone else in the

Congregation. And I have to clarify this point because of the fact that many (if not most) in our own wider-tradition believe this very same thing (regardless of what our historic Anglican confession, the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* states). Instead, God ordained (from the very beginning) certain gifts in me (gifts, by the way, that are not superior to any other gifts enjoyed by the Laity of our Congregation). And those gifts (which I had before I was ordained; though God has been further developing them in me – as he will continue to do so) will remain with me forever.

Thus, I may be a "perpetual" Elder by the identification of my gifts of teaching and preaching the Word of God and the ability to administer the Sacraments in the Congregation. However, my ordination pertains first and foremost to my active *function in this particular Congregation*. For instance, I presumably will not always (until I leave this world to be with Christ) function as an ordained Elder (either here in our Congregation or elsewhere). Therefore, I wear a clerical collar here at the Church of The Apostles because it is here that I *function* as a Presbyter. Elder Rob Geoffrey and Superintendent Galloway wear their collars here for the same reason. When one of us ceases to function in these capacities, we will no longer be obligated to wear clerical dress in the Congregation.

And I must say (as an aside, perhaps) that I grew into the collar, much like I grew into the envisioned function as an Elder in the Congregation. For instance, it was two years after I was ordained (beginning in 2008) that the Elders' Board decided that we should

institute Shepherding Groups in the Congregation (in response to an academic and classic spiritual reading that we had engaged in from Richard Baxter, the great seventeenth century Puritan Divine). And the Shepherding Groups have proven an excellent way for Elders to offer various services (in order to “shepherd them”) to members of and visitors to our Congregation.

An everlasting love

Likewise, it is only after we instituted these Shepherding Groups that I began to see myself increasingly as an earthly shepherd of God’s people – that is, the same act of shepherding that Saint Peter is referencing in the passage quoted above. It is at this point that I tremble at the prospect of the responsibility that the Apostle Peter outlined (much in the same way that I tremble at what I read in the Letter of James (3:1): “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.” But “I press on” (Philippians 3:14) because of the fact that God will not let me down in the same way that he will not let any of you down in your own ministry for the Lord.

If one thing is obvious in my ministerial experience here at the Church of The Apostles it is that we have been equipped by God

himself to do the work that he has given us to do. We have *everything* and *everyone* (right now, at the pace of necessity!) that we need to succeed in our mission! And I am utterly convinced of this fact because it is based in an entirely Biblical supposition. God does and will provide – always! And it is this reality about our spiritual journeys (both individual and collective) that is most comforting. In this way, reflecting upon the past five years, as God has moved us miles away from where we began our journey together, we can

immerse ourselves in that same hope for the future. God has saved many souls here at the Church of The Apostles. God has restored many relationships and healed much brokenness. God has cast faithful and powerful missions from this church (for places that are both near and far away), and has seen his people here follow through in those missions time and again.

And, thus, God (and God alone) should get all of the praise and all of the glory.

Mark and the other Elders, we should most definitely not get any of the glory, nor the Deacons, nor the Church Staff, nor the other Laity. Praise God that we all have been faithful to our calling. We have all grown stronger in our relationship with Jesus Christ. We have all been more and more conformed to his image (Romans 8:29). And this is precisely how it should be.

December 15, 2005

Thoroughly convinced of the unwillingness of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island to emphatically uphold and proclaim the orthodox Biblical Faith and order of historic Christianity, the individual members of the Vestry of The Church of St. Andrew and St. Philip voted unanimously to separate themselves from The Episcopal Church and, by association, from the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island.

As we pave the road ahead for the next five years (rather, as God paves the road ahead for us), I encourage you all as members of and visitors to the Church of The Apostles. I encourage you, regardless of the time and resources that you give currently to the mission of Christ (whether those resources be manifested in church-related ministry, in your family life, or in your witness for Jesus at your place of employment), to *increase* that commitment. Read the Bible more. Pray more. Witness more. Love more. For our journey in the Lord is never done. We will *never* reach “spiritual capacity,” even on the other side of glory. We will always grow infinitely toward God, and as we as a church body, as the very bride of Jesus Christ, collectively commit to this growth, then God will continue to do awesome things among us.

The Bible makes it known that God has loved us with an “*everlasting love*” (Isaiah 54:8), and that he “*is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think*” (Ephesians 3:20). Praise God! May God bless you and keep you, and may his light and the light of his Son, Jesus Christ, always shine upon you such that you may shine his light for all in the world to see.

“The message of the cross
is foolishness to those
who are perishing,
but to us who are saved
it is the power of God.”

(1 Corinthians 1:18)

Reflections on the Journey

By Elder Nina Deuel

When the Superintendent said that this edition of the *ApostlesJournal* would be about our Congregation’s journey for the last five years (I cannot believe it has been five years!), I started to think in a focused way about where we are and where we have been. I also realized that, recently, I have taken things for granted.

In the beginning (back in 2006), as a Congregation, we were stepping out into uncharted territory, knowing that we had to totally trust God for what was happening and for what was to come. As human beings the unknown seems to cause us all kinds of fears and emotions, but taking anything for granted is usually not one of them. There is fear, doubt, excitement. Many questions: Will we make it? Will God really guide us and lead us? Can we really trust God?

Actually, as I am writing this article, I am thinking of the Israelites in the Wilderness after their release from slavery in Egypt (the Books of Exodus and Numbers have some very interesting stories about human responses to totally trusting in God — or not). In their case there was lots of grumbling and anger at Moses (and God) for taking them to where the Israelites were sure they would die (the Wilderness) – at least back in Egypt they had food! Yet, further along in the story, after forty years of wandering in the desert, Moses warns them to ponder what their response might be once

they eventually get into the Promised Land of milk and honey. Indeed, the Israelites needed to do this before they began to forget what God had already done for them.

What I love so much about God's Word (as I think about the journey of the Israelites to Canaan) is that God has been showing me what my own response should be to what he has gloriously done for the Church of The Apostles over these past five years. I came to realize that I had better get before the Lord in prayer and thanksgiving;

because we are as a Congregation where we are today only because of God's mercy and grace. There is nothing we could have done except to be obedient to God and trust him; and now is not the time to stop being obedient (or to become complacent). Rather, now is the time to continue to ask God to guide us, to show us the way and to readily admit that only God can do what still needs to be done among us.

Indeed, God did not give us our church building; he did not give us the many gifts that are manifested in and among us for us to hoard them unto ourselves – but to give away. God has given us these things in order for us to be witnesses of his power in and to the world. By praising God and preaching his pure Word, by rightly administering his Sacraments and striving to live holy and sacrificial lives, we honor his holy Name and daily become his witnesses

more and more as we lay our lives before him and walk with him in grace.

As a Congregation we have come such a long way from where we were five years ago. The road has miraculously been made straight. We are now a body committed to God's work, a church that is growing both as individuals and as a community, yet we cannot become complacent. We cannot take God for granted.

This past May I read a book written by a young Christian man who worked for an evangelical ministry called "Operation Mercy" in Uzbekistan from the late 1990's to about 2005. He was eventually not allowed back into that country because he had challenged the horrible political corruption there. This book (along with God showing me where I was in my own complacency in life) has truly caused me to think about attitude and gratefulness. The book was so meaningful for me because we often hear about political

corruption (in our country), but especially in some of these Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries. Yet, it is hard for me to understand exactly what that means. "Corruption" covers lots of things, and since it is such a general word I can say it and not really appreciate just what that means.

In this book (*A Carpet Ride to Khiva*) the author, Christopher Aslan Alexander, lived

January 19, 2006

The Vestry voted to authorize The Reverend Mark Galloway, Harry Sacchetti, and Rick Bonin, Senior Warden-designate, to negotiate a purchase agreement for the property at 170 Fairview Avenue, Coventry, Rhode Island, with the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island for a price up to a maximum of \$500,000.

with the people in Khiva, Uzbekistan. There he saw the tangible results of corruption (of people working for the government or someone with socio-economic power and yet not being paid). He writes about a country that can't do anything without bribes (including giving bribes in order to get the pay due you!). The rich and powerful take from the poor. The corrupt steal honest labor by force and terror; they kill or imprison any who would dare fight back.

Eventually, the author starts a workshop to weave carpets. He hires people who are handicapped or outcasts in some way, and develops a thriving business that helps many local people. Then, upon leaving the country for a trip, after having worked there for seven years (because he would not allow the mayor of Khiva to come in and take whatever carpets he wanted without paying for them), he is not allowed to come back into the country.

The book is powerful because the author helps the reader to get to know the everyday local people and come to care for them nearly as much as the author did himself. And in getting to know the people the reader is able to see how this horrible corruption affects individuals as well as all of society. It is a life without hope, and yet people marry, have children and continue to live trying to find happiness wherever they can.

So what am I trying to say? Well, for all the faults of the United States of America (and yes there is plenty of corruption); we are still the freest country in the world. We have laws that protect us and we can vote and with real hope we can know (if enough people

really care) that corrupt people can actually be brought to justice. God calls us to pray for our leaders and our nation and we (of all people) should be thankful for the many, many blessings we have here in America.

But, I want to add this: As a community of Christians we at the Church of The Apostles are free to worship every Sunday; we were able to buy the building that houses our Congregation, we can readily come together any day of the week for Bible study, prayer, worship and fellowship. We can freely preach the Gospel. Our very existence as the Church of The Apostles is not only dependent on our obedience to and love for Jesus Christ and God's mighty grace and mercy, but also on the freedoms God has, under his divine providence, given to this country.

As I contemplated all of this, I was overwhelmed by God's mercy and I begged him to forgive my complacency. I pray that I will (from this time forth) always give him thanks for all we have – here at our church and in our country. We do not know the future, but over the past five years we have seen the wonder of God's work among us. And in this we have had the privilege of seeing God more clearly and knowing that his steadfast love will endure no matter what the future may hold for us.

As a Congregation we are on the greatest journey any group of faith-filled people can ever be on: a journey in which we are called to serve and follow the Lord God of our Fathers; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

May God truly give us grateful, joyful and thankful hearts here at Church of The Apostles; and as we look back at the last five years of our life together, and we look forward to what lies ahead, may we not grumble, but trust with all our heart, soul and mind the God who gave his life for us so that we may have eternal life. Let us pray that, as individuals and as a community, we will have the courage, desire and will to share that love with all we come into contact with each and every day of our lives – always praising and trusting our God who is both Lord and Savior.

February 19, 2006

The Annual Parish Meeting of The Church of St. Andrew and St. Philip was held. Sixty-eight (68) parishioners were present. A vote was taken to endorse as a body the Vestry's decision of December 15, 2005, as individuals to separate from The Episcopal Church and, by association, from the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island, effective June 30, 2006. The resolution passed sixty-five (65) to one (1).

**“Thou hast given so much
to me, give one thing more
— a grateful heart.”**

George Herbert
(1593-1633)

Searching for the Truth

By Elder Robert Geoffrey

“The visible Church of Christ is a Congregation of believers in which the pure Word of God is preached and in which the Sacraments are rightly administered according to Christ's command in all those matters that are necessary for proper administration.” (Article XIX, The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of 1571 [contemporary version]).

On the Day of Pentecost, God breathed life into his Church and so she was born. The Church of Christ, his bride as it is characterized in Holy Scripture, would soon turn the world upside-down (Acts 17:6), and in so doing it would upset the apple cart, turn the tables and make the you-know-what hit the fan. The Prince of the Power of the Air, the Ruler of the Earth, Satan himself, was dealt a mortal blow and as he writhed in pain, with his last gasp he lashed out against God's holy creation. To this day we endure his wrath; the evidence is everywhere, even in the Church. Though Jesus was victorious, and the war is finished (John 19:30), other battles rage on until the end, and as the lines surge back and forth across the countryside, leaving devastation in their wake, we are left to wonder “how long, Lord?” Like the Allied Forces closing in upon Hitler's Berlin in 1945, we may taste of the victory of tomorrow, but we must press on through tribulation of today (Matthew 5:10-11).

The experience of the Church of Jesus Christ has not changed since the day of Pentecost;

the battles have raged for centuries and our story at Church of The Apostles is true to her history. In fact, we can wear it as a badge of honor, as evidence of our faith (1 Peter 1:4-7). The blessings we enjoy today are the fruit of our trust in God, our adherence to his Holy Word and our faithful remembrance of his precious Son. Though we have endured trials as a result of our journey since we established ourselves as a Congregation (and, get ready, we always will!), our trials are a testament to our fidelity; they are marks of the true Church. Jesus taught us that discipleship comes at a cost (Luke 14:26-28). The *cost* for the Church is dedication to The Word and Sacraments regardless of inconvenience or adversity. The *promise* is his steadfast guidance and counsel (Matthew 28:20b). Thus, the true Church will persevere, while the impostors languish. Still, she is Satan's favorite target because she was bought with the blood of her Savior and she is the vehicle of the Good News. The Evil One has used the fickle heart of man to distort her holy mission and her history reads like the recurrent theme of rejection and revival in the Old Testament. Still, God has used his very nature of loving-kindness to glorify himself (Genesis 50:20).

In fact, the to-and-fro nature of a citizen of heaven in a dark world is the archetype of the Christian struggle. Each one of us knows our own individual battle with corruption, don't we? Every one of God's elect is engaged in some kind of struggle (Romans 7:18-24). We see it also in the context of family, work and school. Why is it surprising then that the Church, which is the paradigm of the family and community, has its struggles as well? It should not be; it is natural. It is God

working out his plan in history (Psalm 66:8-12). So the challenges of the individual are common to the community. The Church of Christ, being comprised of well-meaning people of a fallen nature, has always exhibited and always will exhibit both godly and ungodly behavior, and we are not to judge, lest we be judged (Matthew 7:1).

But there it is; there is the plumb line, the standard of truth, the canon, God's Word. The Word is that which all creation is measured against. Everything we see or touch or do or think is measured against the Truth of God's Word. I believe that the awareness of this fact is ingrained in our psyche (Romans 1:20). I believe that God put it there, and part of the reason for our struggle in life is our battle with the presence of the Truth. Sometimes we put ourselves on the side of the battle where we don't belong. If we could only submit to the Truth, half of our struggle would be gone. I know that you will agree. You *know* in your heart that there is truth. Relativism, the belief that truth is not universal or absolute but may differ between individuals, defies intellectual honesty. You know it, as I do, and it was this nagging reality that brought me to Christ and eventually to Church of The Apostles.

Searching for the Truth

About a decade ago, my lifelong struggle with my need to confront the Truth had come to a head. I had spent all my adult life in a vocation that demanded that I respect the truth of the natural order; I simply could not function competently otherwise. To me, there is a scheme to all creation, and the scheme is so perfect in many aspects that I

began to surmise that it could not be by chance, but it had to be planned. Knowing that I was not the sharpest tool in the shed and that others had surely pondered this before, I began to earnestly seek out the source of this truth and it was just at that time that the seed planted by my mother decades before started to sprout. I found myself responding to the encouragement of the Holy Spirit; I turned to the Church for corroboration of my theory that the wonder of creation was planned rather than happenstance, and more importantly, that truth existed, and its source could be known.

Concurrent with this journey was my developing conviction that there was something innately wrong with me and indeed with every other person I knew. The modern doctrine of the inherent goodness of mankind just didn't hold water in my experience. All of us are defective somehow. Some people either denied it or just didn't care; others seemed to process their defects in a very interesting way. They, the few, did not ignore their faults but they seemed to carry them in a sort of dutiful and matter-of-fact way, as if it was OK that they had an innate wrongness. I found out later that they were actually honest about their failings but they were still at peace. I had met people like this before and I thought they were just a bit detached, if you know what I mean.

As I and my family began to habitually attend the Episcopal Church, I got to know a few of these "detached" people quite well. They were not crazy; in fact they really had that honesty and peace. As I got to know them I became aware that they, the few, had something. I had the idea that the source of the Truth that I had been seeking was in their

midst. Today, I know that some of them may have had a relationship with the Living God. What continues to astound me is that they were never able to communicate this gift to me. In fact, despite their best efforts, no one in that particular church, not even the Rector, could articulate a convincing apology for a coherent faith system. If they knew of the Truth, they sure could not show it to me! I know my experience is not unique. Many of you may have gone to church egged on by the Holy Spirit, searching

for the Truth that you know exists, only to be disappointed. It's as if your boat was towed out to sea and set adrift.

The Truth was not in them

I did not fault these people for their lack of substance because I know now that they lacked understanding of their commission. They may have had a personal relationship with God, but it ended with them. Their church is not necessarily *the* Church. They let me come and they let me go because they

February 19, 2006

At the Annual Parish Meeting of The Church of St. Andrew and St. Philip a resolution was presented to confirm the Vestry's decision of January 19, 2006 that The Church of St. Andrew and St. Philip, on behalf the Diocese of Rhode Island, sell the property at 170 Fairview Avenue, Coventry, Rhode Island, to The Canterbury Mission Society. The resolution passed sixty-seven (67) to zero (0).

could not live out *the* Truth that I had been seeking for forty years. I know an empty sales pitch when I see it. How sad it is because these people who, for all I know were good and religious people but they could not transfer their faith for beans. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism was reduced from a rite of Christian initiation and commitment to a mere social engagement. Not one really knew the purpose of the Sacrament of the Lord's Table and fellowship meant sticking to their own clique. I wonder now if they truly possess regenerate hearts. It is not surprising that their numbers dwindle and their "church" is dying.

I am grateful to them for their kindness and hospitality while I and my family were with them, make no mistake about that, and I believe that it was God's plan for us to live out that experience. Being set adrift was not a good feeling though; it caused me to step up my quest for the Truth. Being now a church-goer, I guess I began to pray, "God show me the Truth!" In reality, I was asking of God exactly what he wanted me to ask. I was asking him to reveal Jesus to me. He knows just how dense I can be, so he used Christian radio to ignite my interest in his Word. I realize now how absurd this sounds, but the study of the Word was not encouraged in any meaningful way in my church experience. It was the constant barrage of Scriptural reference that I heard over the radio as I drove around in the course of my workday that answered my prayers. I began to look to God's Word for Truth, and there I found it – in the person of Jesus. "*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ*" (Romans 10: 17).

Once the words of Scripture sunk in, I realized that the Truth that I had been seeking was not in myself, or in others, or even in a church. The Truth I had been seeking was not even a philosophy; it was a person, the God-man, Jesus. If the parish I had been attending claimed to be the custodian of the revelation of Truth, why then were they unwilling to share it with me? There could only be two answers: either they were brutally selfish (which I honestly did not believe) or they did not really possess the Truth in any substantial way. As I read the Word and prayed for enlightenment, I became convinced of the latter. The Truth was not in them, either due to ignorance or outright denial. Since it was Holy Scripture that had taught me about my sinfulness, my need for a savior, my inability to save myself, the vast love of God, the work of Jesus on the cross, his victory over death and my inheritance in the eternal Kingdom, and my need to believe, I knew that Truth could only be found in Scripture and it could only flourish in a place where Scripture was honored above all else as the ultimate rule. As painful as it was, I uprooted my family and once again I began a quest, this time not for the Truth but for a community that revered the Truth.

God is faithful

The "long-story-short" version is that the counsel of the Holy Spirit acted upon my family by showing God's faithfulness to us who earnestly prayed in concert with his will. I had been searching for Truth (The Word) and my wife, Sharon, insisted upon the regular celebration of the Lord's Table by all the baptized (The Sacraments). God truly

prevailed in each of our hearts and minds to attend the soon-to-be Church of The Apostles. At last we were at peace knowing we had landed where God had led us – a place where the pure Word of God is preached and where the Sacraments are rightly administered.

Be careful what you pray for; God is faithful!

It has been five years since that fateful day

when Sharon and I began to attend this Congregation and we have witnessed astonishing spiritual growth in many lives, ours included. The greatest testimony is that this church primarily serves the Gospel, all other aspirations being to that end. Lives within and without the Congregation are being changed by the Light of Christ. Hope abounds where there once was none. The greatest gift imaginable is being grasped with abandon. Diverse peoples are becoming one with each other and one with their Creator. The Truth is known and it is being shared. These, my friends, are the marks of the Church of Jesus Christ!

But so are the trials that we face as a Congregation, and so are the trials we face as disciples of Christ. Though we prefer to

focus on the blessings, the burdens of Christian life are just as much a part of our journey. Jesus told us there would be tribulation for those who chose the straight path “...if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23). And, “... we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another” (Romans 12:5), so we

share in the sufferings of Christ and of each other in this world. If no member of the Body is exempt, neither is the Church itself.

The New Testament way of thinking is so radical that its uniqueness is not compromised by time. The Word is just as radical today as it was two thousand years ago because it lives anew every time it enters a new heart. But by its very nature it conflicts with the fallen world we live in. It can be said with confidence that an individual or a Congregation is not

living the Gospel if it experiences no tribulation for its fidelity. Therefore, my assertion is that in addition to the positive marks of the true and living Church, there is and always will be consequences in this life for those who call Jesus Lord. Scripture tells us plainly that we are to accept these trials as our Lord accepted his, and we are to rejoice

May 18, 2006

The Vestry unanimously passed three resolutions: 1.) To charge The Reverend Mark R. Galloway with forming a Biblically based polity to be called the “Church Council,” which shall serve as the governing body of the successor church (Church of The Apostles); 2.) That the Reverend Galloway appoint four Biblically qualified persons from the membership to serve as “Elders” on the soon to be formed Church Council; 3.) That the Vestry endorse the vote of The Canterbury Mission Society to call The Reverend Mark R. Galloway as the ordained leader (Superintendent) of Church of The Apostles.

in them as badges of honor. *“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed”* (1Peter 4:12, 13). Do not be disheartened, sisters and brothers, when hardship besets our community at Church of The Apostles, instead rejoice! It is proof that we are the Bride of Christ. Do not despair when you suffer because you live for Christ. Do not fret when The Prince of Darkness Grim sets your church up for a fall. And most importantly, do not be surprised when, not if, it happens; be fearful rather, if it does not.

Press on

During the Battle of the Bulge in the winter of 1944-1945, the overconfident Allied Forces were set back by the last gasp of the Third Reich’s panzers in their desperate attempt to stall the assault on Occupied Europe. Though victory was in their grasp, the Allies failed to sustain the push that began in Normandy. What a miserable winter that must have been for both sides, locked in a tooth-and-nail struggle under the most brutal conditions. How many soldiers and commanders had all they could do to muster the energy just to press on! Some believe that the reason for Allied success laid solely in the perception that the invaders saw victory in the distance, but the Germans saw no end at all.

So it is with our holy struggle. Jesus has won the victory, and we have won the victory through him, yet we must press on. *“Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our*

Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57). And do not fear for God is faithful; Jesus said to Simon: *“...you are Peter, and on this rock [that is, Peter’s confession of Jesus as Messiah] I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”* (Matthew 16: 18). We have nothing to fear, and *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”* (Romans 8:31).

We are a confessional Congregation that honors the Word of God as containing all things necessary for Salvation. We believe in the Grace of God that is imparted by the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord’s Table. We rejoice in the trials that come as a result in our fidelity to our Lord Jesus Christ — and so may it ever be! Amen.

May 21, 2006

There was a Special Parish Meeting to vote on the sale of the assets of The Church of St. Andrew and St. Philip at Fairview Avenue, but excluding St. Philip’s Cemetery, to The Canterbury Mission Society for a total of \$600,000, effective June 30, 2006. \$500,000 was for the land and buildings and \$100,000 was to be added to the endowment of St. Philip’s Cemetery, an asset of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island. One hundred and twenty-six (126) members were present and the resolution passed one hundred and twenty-one (121) to five (5).

A Confessing Congregation: the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Church of The Apostles

By Superintendent Mark R. Galloway

The opening paragraph of the Preamble to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church of The Apostles states the following:

The Church of The Apostles (Evangelical Anglican), 170 Fairview Avenue, Coventry, Rhode Island, is an autonomous Christian Congregation rooted in the confessional and ordered liturgical Anglican tradition. The Church of The Apostles is, therefore, a Congregation upholding the orthodox Christian Faith of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as confessed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and as defined in the original (English/Latin) version of the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of 1571*.

As the above quote clearly states, constitutionally speaking the Church of The Apostles is marked by a clear doctrinal attitude. The *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* attests to this doctrine and, for this reason, hold a true place of honor in the life of our Congregation. The Superintendent (Bishop), Elders (Presbyters), Deacons and Laity alike formally make allegiance to this distinct doctrine. The Superintendent declares this allegiance when consecrated by his fellow Elders to his Biblical and patristic office of oversight (1 Timothy 3:1-7); the Presbyters declare this allegiance when they are ordained to their apostolic ministry of Word, Sacrament and Order (Titus 1:5-9); the

Deacons when consecrated to their Biblical office of service (Acts 6:1-6); and the Laity – the priesthood of believers (1 Peter 2:9) – when annually renewing their commitment to membership in the Congregation.

The Church of The Apostles is, therefore, a “confessing” church with a confident and clear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And as a confessional “Evangelical Anglican” Congregation we are committed to keeping the *Thirty-Nine Articles* in a central place in the doctrinal life of our church. For this reason it is expected that all members of the Congregation will strive to know, without vague ambiguity, what is (and what is not) the confessional teaching of the Church of The Apostles.

A visitor to the Church of The Apostles is not presented a picture of sorry confusion as to what we believe. Conflicting statements are not made by our Presbyters. The Pulpit is not used to promote propaganda. All who enquire are capable of learning the doctrine that our Congregation officially upholds. At the Church of The Apostles, the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, the historic confession of Anglicanism, is not only nominally accepted, or ignored, or evaded, or reinterpreted, or dismissed as irrelevant. Members of the church are not told that as “Christians” they can believe more or less anything or nothing as long as it seems right in their own opinion. The Church of The Apostles is committed to the real Evangelical Anglican tradition and as such, confronted as we are by the challenge

of the teachings presented in the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, believe ourselves to be summonsed to uphold and defend the Universal Church's two-thousand year succession of apostolic doctrine.

Our Congregation's leadership is confident in the original purpose of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* at the time of the sixteenth-century English Reformation. Likewise, we recognize the importance of the continuing function of the *Articles* in the life of all Evangelical Anglican churches truly committed to orthodox Biblical witness. At the Church of The Apostles, the *Articles of Religion* is received and taken in their literal and grammatical sense; and as expressing the fundamental principles of authentic Anglican belief. We firmly believe that the *Articles* are the key to our Congregation's ability to maintain a continuing and distinctive Reformed Catholic character while simultaneously not rendering our Presbyters ineffective in the need to address the pressing theological issues of our own day. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* is THE valued tool that has in her five years of existence led to the doctrinal health and spiritual unity of the Church of The Apostles.

The confessional use of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* at the Church of The Apostles ensures

that our Congregation is an apostolic church, in the sense that she teaches only essential Biblical (that is, apostolic) doctrine. The *Articles* ensure that the Bishop and the other Presbyters will be sound in their preaching and, thus, not expose the Laity to unorthodox teachings. They allow us to have a genuine doctrinal unity within the Congregation; and they positively set the boundaries of a comprehensiveness based upon the New Testament's Gospel of grace in Jesus Christ.

The history of the Thirty-Nine Articles

The *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* is only one of a large crop of confessional

formularies produced in Europe during the sixteenth-century Reformation. The *Articles of Religion* makes no pretension to be representative of a complete system of Christian belief. Rather, they are an exposition of the fundamental truths of Biblical doctrine, and, to a lesser extent, statements of ecclesiastical practice and discipline. They deal not only with the nature and being of God and his great act of redemption, but with mankind's innermost spiritual life. The *Articles* are very concerned about

the meaning of sin, the relation of faith to works, as well as grace and freedom.

May 21, 2006

At the Special Parish Meeting, The Reverend Galloway announced the name of the new Congregation, Church of The Apostles; announced the plan for the new form and structure of government (Congregational Episcopacy); and introduced the Board of Elders-designate to the gathering. The resolutions from the May 18, 2006, Vestry meeting were read and unanimously supported by a voice vote by those present at the meeting.

The Reformed Catholic theology of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* was developed into its distinctive Anglican shape by its main authors – two Archbishops of Canterbury: Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) and Matthew Parker (1504-1575). Cranmer, a martyr and the primary architect of the English Reformation, was the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1533 to 1556. Parker, a man of self-restraint and moderating wisdom, who served as Archbishop of Canterbury from 1559 to 1575, was the person directly responsible for implementing Anglicanism’s famed “Settlement of Religion” during the opening decades of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603).

The *Articles of Religion* was originally written in 1551 in Latin by Archbishop Cranmer and styled as the *Forty-Two Articles*. These *Forty-Two Articles* were in 1563 re-worked by Archbishop Parker into their now familiar content. The learned John Jewel (1522-1571), Bishop of Salisbury, was given the task of completing the *Articles* by finishing up some necessary minor editing. Published and authorized in 1571 in both Latin and English, the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* was officially accepted and then issued as the definitive doctrinal standard of the reformed (Anglican) Church of England. Since 1571 the *Articles* have remained unchanged.

The relative brevity of each of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is a wonderful virtue. Indeed, the orderliness and clarity of the *Articles* is more than a matter of style – it reflects the church’s belief that God truly does speak clearly through the divinely inspired Scriptures. And this fact alone is a more than ample reason for the *Articles* to be valued as a

great treasure of orthodox Anglicanism.

Although the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is characteristically Anglican in flavor, they bear unmistakable evidence of Lutheran influence and language. However, while the (Lutheran) Augsburg Confession (1530) had direct influence on Archbishop Cranmer while he was compiling the *Forty-Two Articles*, Archbishop Parker (as he was revising Cranmer’s doctrinal statements into the *Thirty-Nine Articles*) was more shaped in his thinking by the Wurttemberg Confession (1552). The latter being a clearly Evangelical confession of faith (predominately Lutheran in nature but containing some Calvinistic elements) that was drawn up by various Protestant Reformers for presentation in 1552 to the Roman Catholic counter-Reformation Council of Trent (1545-1563).

In his revision of the *Forty-Two Articles*, Archbishop Parker omitted four articles, four new ones were introduced and a further seventeen articles were changed to some extent, four of them quite substantially. When the revised *Articles of Religion* was presented to the Convocation of the established Elizabethan Church it was decided that three further articles were not needed because they addressed specific Anabaptist (radical Protestant) views that were no longer considered a threat to the unity of the reformed (Anglican) Church of England. Thus, they became the familiar *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*.

In several respects the *Thirty-Nine Articles* was more “Protestant” than the earlier *Forty-Two Articles*. However, they were also less definitive (while not ambiguous) on certain

points, thus leaving room for a more diverse orthodoxy. Indeed, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* avoids any sweeping condemnations as was the case with many of the decrees of the Roman Catholic Council of Trent, nor are they preoccupied with the detailing of non-essential secondary matters that (despite their many virtues) tend to characterize the Lutheran Book of Concord (1580) and in particular the Presbyterian (Calvinist) Westminster Confession of Faith (1646).

The content of the Articles of Religion

The *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* is divided into four sections, moving from the general (the fundamentals of the Christian Faith) to the particular (the supreme authority and interpretation of Scripture, the structure and authority of the church, and the relationship between church and society).

The foundational block of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is Article VI (“Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation”), which states:

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.

Article VI is perfectly complimented by Article XX (“Of the Authority of the Church”):

The Church hath power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, and Authority in controversies of Faith: And yet it is not

lawful for the Church to ordain any thing contrary to God’s Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another.

Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation.

Article VI is to be contrasted with the notorious decree issued by the Council of Trent in 1546 (“Concerning the Canonical Scriptures”) in which the Roman Catholic Church laid down the principle that the unwritten traditions, that is, those not written in the Sacred Scriptures (and yet, which were claimed by the Roman Church to have been passed down throughout the generations without error from our Lord and the Apostles), must be received by the faithful with equal piety and reverence with the Holy Scriptures themselves. Until this particular decree of Trent, the Reformers had contended against an undue weight allowed to tradition, but it had not previously been made the formal rule of the Faith (as well as of practice) that the “Tradition” (note the capital “T”) of the Church Universal should be accepted as of equal authority with the Canonical Scriptures on the points in dispute at the time of the Reformation. Accordingly, when Article VI, respecting “the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation,” was put forth by the reformed (Anglican) Church of England it was done to directly challenge the pronouncement of the Council of Trent. However, this assertion of the sole authority of Holy Scripture “in controversies of Faith”

is not merely of cardinal importance to the Reformation controversy; but rather it indicates the whole character and purpose which Evangelical Anglicanism assumes.

Indeed, this latter point is the ideal upon which the Evangelical Anglican principle stands. We do not look for our beliefs in the historical developments of the Christian churches either in the West (Roman Catholic) or in the East (Orthodox). Those developments have certainly at times produced noble results and grand institutions and admirable liturgical services, which we (if it is appropriate) thankfully revere and cherish, as long as they are in conformity with the Scriptures and the practice of the early Church, and so far as they “be done to edifying” in the present (Article XXXIV, “Of the Traditions of the Church”).

While the *Thirty-Nine Articles* emphatically stresses the supremacy and sufficiency of Scripture in all matters pertaining to salvation, they do simultaneously recognize a subsidiary role for tradition (note the small “t”) in the life of the church, though it is always under and corrected by the Word of God. Each statement contained in the *Thirty-Nine Articles* can and should be held up to the penetrating light of Scripture. All things held by the *Articles* “as necessary to salvation” are clearly found in the Word of God. Yet there are, as the *Articles* recognize, other devotional practices from the Universal Church’s long heritage (that is, tradition) allowable (in the

liturgical and pastoral life of the church) outside of the realm of specific Scriptural warrant, which can rightly be recommended for use in the Congregation in so far as they are devotionally helpful and do not contradict Holy Writ.

For example, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* condemns the “invocation of saints” as “a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God” (Article XXII “Of Purgatory”). In other words, there does legitimately exist in the Church Catholic a sound belief that saints pray for the Church in general (see Hebrews 12:1). However, saints (including the Blessed Virgin Mary), because of a lack of Biblical evidence, cannot be considered as mediators of redemption.

Therefore, while the *Articles of Religion* does not approve of the “invocation of saints” they also do not disapprove of the honoring of the saints. Thus, in Evangelical Anglican devotional practice the saints can be (and generally are) honored in three ways: firstly, by thanking God for examples of his mercy; secondly, by using the saints as an example for strengthening our own faith; and thirdly, by imitating their faith and other virtues.

Employing the reasoning explained in the latter example, as stated in Article XX (quoted above), in questions about the church’s power “to decree Rites and Ceremonies” and to make decisions “in controversies of Faith,” the Congregation has

June 5, 2006

The Church of The Apostles was formed and incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the State of Rhode Island within the meaning of section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

authority to issue things not contained in Scripture but may not decree anything contrary to Holy Writ.

Thus, the first four ecumenical councils of the Church Catholic: Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431), and Chalcedon (451), have a special place of honor in the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*. This authority is usually considered to pertain to the questions of the nature of Christ (the hypostatic union of the divine and human) and the relationships between the Persons of the Holy Trinity, summarized chiefly in the great (Nicene) Creed which emerged from those councils. Nonetheless, Article XXI (“Of the Authority of General Councils”) limits the authority of these and other General Councils, noting that “they may err, and sometimes have erred... wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture.” In other words, their authority is strictly derivative from and accountable to the Word of God.

Summarizing the Articles

The *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* might best be summarized as follows: The *Articles* are Catholic in the ecumenical doctrines of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation (while in their presentation they actually draw upon the language of the Augsburg Confession). They follow Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430) in his anthropological (the nature of mankind) and soteriological (doctrine of salvation) teachings on free-will, sin and grace. They are in agreement with the classic

doctrine of the substitutionary Atonement of Christ as advanced by Anselm of Canterbury (c. 1033-1109). They are in unity with the German Reformer Martin Luther (1489-1546) in the insistence on the centrality of the doctrine of Justification by faith alone (the doctrine, as Luther claimed, upon which the true church rightly stands or a false church falls). The *Articles* are in concert with the teaching of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) on the disputed doctrine of Predestination. They follow closely the Augsburg Confession on the doctrines of the nature of the church and the ordained ministry. And (using language echoing the thoughts of the early Church Fathers) they are Reformed Catholic (that is, teaching a view with close affinity to that held by John Calvin (1509-1564), the French Reformer), on doctrines related to the two Gospel Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, which are “effectual signs of grace” for those who in faith “worthily receive” them (Article XXV “Of the Sacraments”). The *Articles* particularly show the influence of Calvin in their doctrinal details concerning the “spiritual manner... whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten” in the Supper of the Lord (Article XXVIII, “Of the Lord’s Supper”).

The *Thirty-Nine Articles* is classically “Evangelical” and as such are not (when interpreted historically and contextually) ambiguous, nor are they capable of a double interpretation. Indeed, on the main points of contention (that is, the extra-Biblical teachings considered as essential belief) advocated by the medieval (pre-Council of Trent) Roman Church and the post-Council of Trent Roman Church, the *Articles* are

crystal clear.

For example, the *Articles of Religion* rejects the following Roman Catholic doctrines: purgatory (a state of cleansing that most people must pass through before entering heaven); indulgences (good works that can be accounted towards the process of one's salvation); works of supererogation (extra good works that can be accrued as merit for the living and the dead); the invocation of saints; worshipping of relics (that is, the mortal remains of saints); transubstantiation (the metaphysical change of the Bread and Wine used in Communion into the literal Body and Blood of Christ); the Mass offered as a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; the denying of the cup to the Laity in Communion; compulsory celibacy for the clergy; and the teaching that the "Tradition" of the (Roman) Church has equal authority with the Canonical Scriptures, as well as several others.

Each of the above stated medieval beliefs of the Roman Church are at odds with the teachings of the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, as are, *post facto* (because they contradict the principles outlined in Article VI and Articles XX quoted above), several more recently pronounced dogmatic Roman Catholic doctrines: in particular, the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary (1854); the

Infallibility of the Bishop of Rome (1870); and the Bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin into heaven (1950).

It is very important, however, to remember that the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is also very clear about the various Anabaptist distinctions that they repudiate, including, among others: the deprecating of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; the outright rejection of infant Baptism; inattention to the ministerial order

of the Congregation; and the tendency to sweep aside the great mystery of election and predestination (the both/and tension between free-will and grace in the Biblical texts) and resolve it by (re)implementing a crude if not overt form of the fourth-century heresy of Pelagianism (the latter being the belief that original sin did not taint human nature and that mankind's will is still capable of choosing good or evil without God's special aid).

There are also several commonly held beliefs among numerous contemporary Charismatic/Pentecostal and non-denominational churches (who to one extent or another continue to ascribe to historic Anabaptist theology) that must also (*post facto*) be considered to be at odds with the principles outlined in the *Thirty-Nine Articles*. Included among the latter would be the following: the churches of the wider-

July 16, 2006

In the context of the 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rick Bonin, Chad Tvenstrup, Nina Deuel, and Conrad Ruppert were set apart with the laying on of hands by The Reverend Mark Galloway as Elders and The Reverend Galloway was set apart and installed with the laying on of hands by the Elders as Superintendent of the Church of The Apostles. A festival celebration followed on the church grounds.

Charismatic/Pentecostal tradition that teach the necessity of “speaking in tongues”; the specific Dispensationalist theologies advocated with exactitude in churches of various traditions; and the Adventist churches who insist on their distinguishing doctrine of “soul sleep” for the regenerate upon death.

Differentiating essentials from non-essentials

Though the main influence on the *Thirty-Nine Articles* came initially from Lutheran theologians, the overall effect is not Lutheran. And while the teachings of John Calvin were certainly a factor in the compilation of the *Articles*, they are not a presentation of classic Calvinism either. It is important to note that the *Thirty-Nine Articles* were not designed to make Anglicanism conform to either Lutheranism or Calvinism or to play a compromising role but rather were about differentiating essentials from non-essentials. For this reason, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is equally firm with the extreme (extra-Biblical) doctrines promoted during the sixteenth-century in the Roman Catholic Church as well as among the Anabaptists (and other radical Protestants). In essence, the *Articles* directly address any ecclesiastical group that claimed a non-essential belief as being necessary to salvation or wrote off any essential Biblical doctrine as unnecessary to salvation. Indeed, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* represents the commendable insight later expressed by Charles Simeon (1759-1836), one of the great Evangelical figures in Anglican history, who confidently claimed that he refused in his life “to be any more systematic than Holy

Scripture [itself].”

On examination, one article after another of the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* gives witness to the fact that not once is there any overstatement of a disputed doctrine. For instance, it could be said that Article XVII (“Of Predestination and Election”) comes very near classic Calvinist doctrine. On further study, however, one would realize that the apparent Calvinistic phraseology of Article XVII (because of the influence that the teaching of Thomas Aquinas had on the thought of Matthew Parker) falls short of Calvin’s notorious doctrine of “double predestination.” Although Article XI (“Of the Justification of Man”) – in unity with the cardinal Lutheran principle – teaches that mankind is “justified by faith only and not for our own works or deservings,” Matthew Parker was careful to also include Article XII (“Of Good Works”) among the *Thirty-Nine Articles* – so as to balance the distortion that some Antinomian proponents in England had attached to the doctrine of Justification. (Antinomianism is the belief that for the person under the Gospel dispensation of grace the moral law is of no use (nor is it an obligation) because “faith alone” is necessary to salvation.) Thus, Article XII (authored by Parker and echoing James 2:17) wisely and brilliantly states that “Good works...do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith.”

The whole structure of the teaching contained in the *Thirty-Nine Articles* holds together in a manner that gloriously combines a humble respect for our ancient Catholic forbearers in the Christian Faith with a profound grasp of the great and

essential doctrine of grace so courageously recaptured at the Reformation. And it is a system always subservient to Scripture. For example, the *Articles* gladly acknowledge that in the doctrine of the Trinity and in questions regarding mankind's abilities as contrasted with the reality of Divine Sovereignty we press against the limits of human intellect, but, nonetheless, the mystery is required as a necessity because of the coherence of the Biblical evidence as a whole.

The *Thirty-Nine Articles* is remarkable in that they are both Catholic and Reformed. There are no strange innovations, no errant subtractions, and no unnecessary or odd additions. There is, however, a due appreciation and appropriate reverence of the early Church Fathers' interpretation of the Scriptures, of the first four ecumenical Councils of the (undivided) Church Catholic, and of the three great Creeds of the Church Universal (the Nicene Creed, the Creed of Saint Athanasius, and the Apostles' Creed) – which, the *Articles* tell us, “ought thoroughly to be received and believed; for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture” (Article VIII, “Of the Three Creeds”).

The enduring value of the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* goes beyond mere history. The men who composed them believed in the absolute authority and trustworthiness of Scripture as the Word of God and further believed the *Articles* to be a faithful summary

of Biblical truth. The *Articles* include only those doctrines which are clearly to be found in the Scriptures, and reject as “necessary to salvation” those doctrines which are not. The reason that the *Articles of Religion* is so successful, really, has everything to do with their clear exposition of the Bible and very little to do with their own eloquence. As a person reads them, the *Articles* will draw

attention not to themselves or to their human authors but to the Word of God, which still remains the complete revelation of Jesus Christ and his redemptive power. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* truly is the measuring rod of what it means to be living the Christian life as a self-identified Evangelical Anglican.

January 28, 2007

The First Annual Meeting of Church of The Apostles at which the Board of Servants and the Constitution and Bylaws were presented to the body for ratification and unanimously accepted.

The purpose of the Thirty-Nine Articles

As has been stated elsewhere, it is obvious that the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* is not an attempt to develop a full statement on every point of Christian doctrine. Nor are the *Articles* intended to forbid free discussion, to hamper the continued testing of received doctrine by Holy Scripture, or to forbid the whole movement of theological inquiry. Indeed, the intended purpose of their confessional use at the Church of The Apostles is far more modest, direct, and practical.

For the good order of every Congregation committed to the orthodox Biblical Faith, a common mind of essential Christian doctrine must be maintained. For instance, the

Presbyters of the Church of The Apostles (that is, those men charged by ordination vows with the responsibility of guarding the unity, doctrine, discipline and worship of the Congregation) must assent to the *Thirty-Nine Articles* and be prepared to abide by them in their public teaching. In this way public theological conflict can be checked and the pulpit never used as an instrument for the propagation of one's private opinions. And, thus, the members of the Church of The Apostles can always know what the general doctrinal position of the Congregation is; and confusion, strife and division amongst the Laity can be avoided.

Indeed, in a profound way, the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* defends the Laity of our Congregation against Presbyters who would arbitrarily foist upon them extra-Biblical and/or down-right illicit or false teachings. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* clearly teaches that the Bible, not a "mediating" Presbyter or Bishop, is the source of both doctrine and authority in the Congregation. Ignore the *Articles*, hide them, or abolish them, and the Church of The Apostles is left without adequate rule and guide; the Superintendent and the other Presbyters could do as they please, teach according to personal whims and assume un-Biblical authority and non-canonical power unto themselves. Such arrogance would cause strife and ultimately the disintegration of the local body of Christ.

For the above reason, it is of the utmost importance to remember that Evangelical Anglicans believe that the ordained apostolic ministry of the Presbyter is not *sacerdotal* (literally meaning "sacrificing") in nature, but is pastoral. Yet, while both Martin Luther

and John Calvin rejected the *sacerdotal* model for the Biblical order of Presbyter they simultaneously held to a high doctrine of the ordained ministry, not in order to promote clericalism but instead so as to uphold the proper ordering of the Congregation. The authors of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* stand with these two magisterial Reformers in asserting their belief in the "*royal priesthood*" of all believers (1 Peter 2:9). There is no more need for priestly intercession, since the Old Testament office of priest has been perfectly fulfilled in Jesus Christ our "*great High Priest*" (Hebrews 4:14); who, through his victory over sin and death, has made all of us "*a kingdom of priests*" that serve his Father (Revelation 5:10).

Therefore, the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church of The Apostles, instead of using the traditional English word "Priest," purposely implements into use in the Congregation the far more accurate English word "Elder" or "Presbyter" as the normative translation used for the (Biblical) Greek word *presbuteros*. This action is in complete uniformity with the Evangelical doctrine expressly taught in the *Thirty-Nine Articles*. That is, Presbyters of the Church of The Apostles, according to the Reformed Catholic beliefs promulgated in the *Articles of Religion*, are not ordained to *sacerdotal* status and to the duty of being a mediator between mankind and God as the "Priest" (*sacerdos*) was believed to have been in the medieval Church (and continue to be viewed as such in the (post-Vatican II) Roman Catholic Church as well as in contemporary Anglo-Catholic circles within Anglicanism). Jesus Christ himself (as the *Thirty-Nine Articles* plainly teaches) is "the only Mediator

between God and Man” (Article VII, “Of the Old Testament”):

[Christ] hath made upon his cross a full and sufficient sacrifice for thee, a perfect cleansing of thy sins; so that thou doth acknowledge no other Savior, Redeemer, Advocate, Intercessor, but Christ only ... [and] thou dost need no man’s help, no other sacrifice or oblation, no sacrificing Priest, no Mass, no means established by man’s invention (Article XXXV, “Of Homilies”; quoted from Homily No. 15, “Of the worthy receiving of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ”).

Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in which it was commonly said, that the Priests [*sacerdotem*] did offer Christ for the quick [living] and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits (Article XXXI, “Of the one Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross”).

In the original 1571 Latin text, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* never uses (in direct opposition to the practice of the medieval Roman Catholic Church in England) the words *sacerdos* (“Priest”) and *sacerdotem* (“Priests”) when translating the (Biblical) Greek words *presbuteros* (“Elder”) and *presbuteroi* (“Elders”) into Latin. Rather the Latin words *presbyteris* (“Presbyter” or “Elder”) and *presbyterorum* (“Presbyters” or “Elders”) are always used in the Latin text of the *Thirty-Nine Articles*. In the early (pre-Nicene) Church, in the teaching of the *Articles of Religion*, and here at the Church of The Apostles, Presbyters

(Elders) are believed to be pastoral Ministers of Word, Sacrament and Order; they are not *sacerdotem* (“Priests”) – mediators between God and mankind. Indeed, the primary function of an ordained Presbyter is to, with authority, preach “the pure Word of God” in the Congregation and to rightly administer the Gospel Sacraments “according to Christ’s ordinance” (Article XIX, “Of the Church”). And a man cannot “take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments” within the Church of The Apostles unless he has been “lawfully called” according to the Bylaws of the Congregation (Article XXIII, “Of Ministering in the Congregation”).

A limited comprehensiveness

As has been noted earlier, whereas the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* states the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith and take a definite position in relation to such important matters as Justification “by faith only” and the number and nature of the Sacraments, they do not attempt an overly detailed or too narrow a definition. In this respect the *Articles* are unlike the more famous decrees of the Council of Trent and the better known doctrinal pronouncements of the Westminster Confession. Archbishop Cranmer and Archbishop Parker had no desire to repeat the practice of making certain, rigidly defined tenets of secondary importance essential to salvation or even as essential to good standing in the Congregation. They realized that there must be freedom from such rigidity in order that the Bible itself should be truly sovereign. In drafting the official statements of Anglican doctrine, Cranmer and Parker attempted as much as possible to phrase the *Articles of*

Religion in the actual words of Scripture and/or the early Church Fathers. It was not the authors' intention to deter future generations from the practice of genuine theological endeavor, nor did they claim that new things cannot be revealed in response to new situations or in relation to new issues. The English Reformation itself was a dynamic movement and the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* as a collective attained its final content only after going through a revision in which there was no disloyalty to the past.

To this extent, it may be stated that there is a certain degree of caution and comprehensiveness in what is taught in the *Articles of Religion*.

Yet we must not exaggerate. In context, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* allows a comprehensiveness that falls within the definite setting of not only an English Reformation understanding, but a distinctively Reformed Catholic position. For instance, the ordained Minister desiring to preach against a Biblical warrant for the practice of infant Baptism, (Article XXVII "Of Baptism") or teach a belief in a mere memorialist (that is, Zwinglian) view of the Lord's Supper (because of the authority of Article XXV - "Of the Sacraments") could not possibly be a licensed preacher here at the Church of The Apostles. A Minister in our Congregation insisting on a literal teaching of the Lutheran doctrine concerning the real

presence of Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion (often referred to as consubstantiation) would be in contradiction of Article XXIX ("Of the wicked which do not eat the Body of Christ in the use of the Lord's Supper"). The Charismatic (or Pentecostal) Minister who insists on propagating the necessity of speaking in tongues as evidence of a person being born again in the Holy Spirit, or a Dispensationalist demanding a particular view of the end times as an essential belief

(because such positions "expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another" and are, thus, in clear conflict with Article XX) would also be disqualified from licensure at the Church of The Apostles.

It is not acceptable, therefore, for the Superintendent of the Church of The Apostles to allow any Preacher (including himself) to strain the wording of the

Thirty-Nine Articles in order that they may permit an interpretation which is possible but hardly the original or natural meaning of the text. In other words, there is an accepted comprehensiveness to the *Articles*, but it is limited to a certain domain. Some doctrines are plainly ruled out for the purposes of public proclamation. No freedom is given to the Presbyters of the Church of The Apostles to link the wording of the *Articles* with a new and perhaps strained interpretation.

February 4, 2007

The Consecration and Commissioning by the laying on of hands by Superintendent Galloway upon Tom Bourn, John Adams, Bill Sexton, Cathy Morgan and Cory Dupont as Diaconal Ministers of Church of The Apostles took place in the context of the 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist. A reception followed the service in the fellowship hall.

The official doctrine of our Evangelical Anglican Congregation has been laid down in words which are plain even though they do not aim at being unnecessarily restrictive. Freedom is left for personal reflection and discussion. But in public preaching, and in the witness and relationship of our Congregation to other churches, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is, without apology, the accepted confessional teaching of the Church of The Apostles.

The function of the Articles

The function of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* at the Church of The Apostles grows naturally out of their purpose, and it will be seen that they have a vital and positive role to play, especially when the Bishop and the Elders are sufficiently informed and conscientiously allow the *Articles* to exercise that function. Indeed, if one or more of our Congregation's Presbyters were for some reason deviating from our confession in their teachings, the *Articles of Religion* would perform its function of influence as the standard of doctrine that has been officially approved by the Congregation and codified in her Bylaws.

At the Church of The Apostles, the first and primary function of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is to preserve the doctrinal order of the Congregation. The *Articles* keep in check any tendencies towards individualism or schismatic preaching and action. The underlying purpose of the *Articles*, however, is the positive promotion of order and edification through the instrumentality of accepted Biblical doctrine. The members of and visitors to the Church of The Apostles can only be confused and hampered when

subjected to jarring and often erroneous opinions. The Laity – the priesthood of believers – are truly instructed and strengthened in their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ only when what is preached and taught is genuinely informed by the Congregation's official confessional standard of Biblical doctrine.

The second function of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* at the Church of The Apostles is to exercise a purifying influence on liturgical and canonical action; the function of exposing and expelling that which is contrary to accepted teaching. But the purpose of the *Articles* is not merely to sanctify the Anglican liturgical tradition preserved in our Congregation through our use (as a liturgical template) of the incomparable (1662) Book of Common Prayer of the reformed (Anglican) Church of England. Indeed, new modes of worship and action have been needed in response to new situations in which the Church of The Apostles has had to live out her vocation. These situations have been tested by the *Articles*, but they are also informed and suggested by them, so as to best bring out that for which our Congregation stands in doctrinal interpretation. If we want to truly know the mind of the Evangelical Anglican tradition then we must study the *Thirty-Nine Articles*; if we desire to act in accordance with that mind we must be imbued with the spirit of the *Articles*, and must teach and worship in accordance with them.

The *Thirty-Nine Articles* provides a most useful guide in shaping the Eucharistic liturgies that the Board of Elders (using classic Common Prayer resources) creates and

issues for seasonal use at the Church of The Apostles. These liturgies are shaped and driven by the Reformed Catholic understanding of the doctrine of the substitutionary Atonement of Christ and its full application. Indeed, liturgical rubrics are very important elements of doctrinal understanding and interpretation. It is necessary, therefore, to compare the teachings of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* (especially its sacramental teaching) with the words of the venerable Anglican Common Prayer tradition that we in gratitude continue to use in our Congregation. The comparison is mutually beneficial for both our understanding of the *Articles* as well as how and why we pray the classic words of Common Prayer. The whole process affirms the ancient Latin saying to the effect that “the rule of our prayer is the rule of our belief” (*lex ordandi, lex credendi*); meaning that how we pray reflects on what we believe. If something is unclear in one of our liturgical texts, it should generally be helpful to see what the *Articles* might have to say on that particular subject. The more we know about the belief that shapes the way we pray, the more effective will our prayer be.

Having said this, it must be emphasized that liturgical rubrics and Bylaws are not instruments for the secret and unauthorized introduction of new or conflicting doctrines into the life of the church. Liturgical and canonical action, out of necessity, stand under the doctrinal norm of the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, and no good can come to our Congregation from theoretical or practical evasions of this truth.

The third function of the *Thirty-Nine Articles*

at the Church of The Apostles is to pose a question of seriousness to those individuals or groups who in legitimate discussion may desire to bring for consideration into the local body of Christ new teachings and/or to amend the accepted doctrinal standard. However, before any person (whether they be Elder, Deacon or Laity) can plausibly speak of any new doctrinal position, they must face the challenge of the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*. No movement can claim to sincerely represent the Congregation until it has honestly faced and satisfactorily measured up to this challenge.

The test of the true catholicity of our Congregation

The fourth function of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* at the Church of The Apostles is to provide a framework within which discussion can go forward, new issues can be taken up, and new teachings perhaps formulated – all without sacrificing the formulations of the past or disrupting the continuity of our Congregation’s apostolic witness. In relation to an official pronouncement, the *Articles* are to some degree restrictive. But this does not preclude theological debate and discussion in the church. On the contrary it spurs it on. Only that which is Biblically true should be demanded in a public pronouncement. There is no place for irresponsibility in “*the work of ministry*” (Ephesians 4:12). Hence it is necessary in a vital way that the beliefs stated in the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, or others which may suggest themselves, should be weighed with the utmost seriousness against the Scriptures before they can be advanced and taught as the accepted doctrinal teachings of

the Congregation. Properly understood, this methodology is not a restriction on theological freedom. What is excluded is the bondage of irresponsible and frivolous individualism. The freedom of serious discussion is, in fact, safeguarded and fostered.

The fifth (and final) function of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* at the Church of The Apostles is to pose an ultimate challenge by their own acceptance of the Biblical and, therefore, the apostolic norm – which is the test of the true catholicity of our Congregation. This function is closely linked with the freedom of serious discussion to which reference has already been made.

While the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is a genuine attempt to state Biblical doctrine on essential issues they do not attempt to usurp the place of Scripture. By their own confession, the *Articles* are themselves subject to the supremacy of God's Word. This means that they call for constant scrutiny in accordance with the Bible. Perhaps some things in the *Articles of Religion* is wrongly stated. Perhaps others ought not to be there at all. Perhaps important Biblical truths have been left out, possibly because their relevance was not seen at the time of their compilation. Perhaps the emphases are distorted. On the other hand, suggested revisions, additions, or subtractions must be brought under the same

scrutiny in order that the teaching of the Church of The Apostles should not be the personal opinion (or opinions) of the Superintendent or Elders, nor factions within the church, nor even the whole Congregation. Rather it should only be that doctrine which is truly apostolic and, therefore, Catholic and Reformed (and which as such unfailingly promotes a saving faith in Jesus Christ and fosters the spiritual growth of his saints in grace), that is taught in our Congregation.

April 7, 2007

James Trivisonno was presented for the Rite of Confirmation by Elder Chad Tvenstrup to Superintendent Galloway for the laying on of hands at the first celebration of The Great Vigil of Easter at Church of The Apostles. Superintendent Galloway was the Presiding Minister and Elder Chad Tvenstrup was the Preacher.

The *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*, by the authority granted to them by our Constitution and Bylaws, calls the Church of The Apostles to the constant task of seeking and stating genuine Evangelical truth and of making this truth the accepted standard of our preaching, teaching and outreach to the community. As it was when they were conceived at their genesis some 450 years ago, the *Thirty-Nine*

Articles gives hope of promoting both the unity in truth and the freedom under authority that are absolutely necessary for the well-being of a faithfully orthodox and Biblical Congregation.

The soundness of judgment in matters of faith

On our Congregation's website (apostlesri.org) and in all our official publications we make the following

statement:

We are Christians proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ who worship in the Anglican tradition. Church of The Apostles is a member of the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference.

Because we are an “autonomous” Evangelical Anglican Congregation that is a voluntary member of the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, it is important for us to understand that upholding the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* as our confession is not in contradiction to the doctrinal principles of historic and orthodox Congregationalism.

The Heads of Agreement of 1691 is a series of statements on church government that was accepted in London by representatives of English Presbyterians and Congregationalists. The agreement did not attempt to cover every point of ecclesiastical polity, but simply set forth areas of agreement. In the document there is a clear element of self-government allowed to the Congregations whose Ministers comprise the association. Churches are defined as particular assemblies of visible saints who are under the headship of Christ. Each church may choose their own officers, and no church is subordinate to any other nor shall any officer exercise power over another church. There is not a single statement contained in The Heads of Agreement that is in any detectable conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church of The Apostles.

In fact, The Heads of Agreement articulate a tremendous reverence and esteem for the *Thirty-Nine Articles* when it states (under the section called “Of a Confession of Faith”) the

following:

As to what appertains to soundness of judgment in matters of faith, we esteem it sufficient, that a church acknowledge the Scriptures to be the word of God, the perfect and only rule of faith and practice; and own either the doctrinal part of those commonly called the Articles of the Church of England, or the Confession or Catechisms, Shorter or Larger, compiled by the Assembly at Westminster, or the Confession agreed on at the Savoy, to be agreeable to the said rule.

The Savoy Declaration (whose full title is: *A Declaration of the Faith and Order owned and practiced in the Congregational Churches in England*) is a modification of the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646). It was drawn up in 1658 by English Independents (non-Conformists to the established reformed (Anglican) Church of England) meeting at Savoy Palace of London. Representatives, mostly laymen, of over a hundred independent churches were present. The great Puritan theologian, John Owen (1616-1683), a tolerant and fair man, who possessed deep spiritual insight and a firm grasp of New Testament Christianity, was the primary leader in a committee of six Ministers appointed to draw up the Declaration.

Cotton Mather (1663-1728), the most influential Congregational Minister in New England, received The Heads of Agreement from England with enthusiasm and proceeded to declare it as the best possible exposition of Congregationalism in the American Colonies. And, thus, the recognition that the doctrine of the *Thirty-*

Nine Articles of Religion contained a “soundness of judgment in matters of faith” passed, along side the Westminster Confession and the Savoy Declaration, into the orthodox tradition of American Congregationalism.

The right use of Ecclesiastical Discipline

Article XXXV of the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* gives confessional authority to The second Book Homilies of 1562:

The second Book of Homilies, the several titles whereof we have joined under this Article, doth contain a godly and wholesome Doctrine, and necessary for these times...; and therefore we judge them to be read in Churches by the Ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people.

The second Book of Homilies is a series of twenty-one authorized sermons issued initially for use during the reign Queen Elizabeth I by the reformed (Anglican) Church of England. They provided a new model of simplified topical preaching as well as a theological understanding of the English Reformation. The Homilies present a distinctive Evangelical Anglican theology, namely by defending the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, the radical sinfulness of humanity, Justification by faith alone, and sanctification. The aforementioned Bishop John Jewel wrote all but two of the twenty-one sermons.

The following (which is quoted in the Preamble to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church of The Apostles) is a very important teaching (composed by Jewel) taken from

Sermon No. 16 (“Of the gifts of the Holy Ghost”) of The Second Book of Homilies:

The true Church is a Universal Congregation or fellowship of God’s faithful and elect people, ‘built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head cornerstone’ (Ephesians 2:20). And it hath three notes or marks, whereby it is known: Pure doctrine; the Sacraments ministered according to Christ’s holy institution; and the right use of Ecclesiastical Discipline. This description of the Church is agreeable both to the Scriptures of God, and also to the doctrine of the ancient fathers, so that none may justly find fault therewith.

The central teaching (the “Pure doctrine”) of the Reformation was believed to be Martin Luther’s reintroduction of the Biblical doctrine of Justification by faith alone (see Ephesians 2:8-9) to a place of pre-eminence in the life of the Reformation churches. Thus, Article XI (“Of the Justification of Man”) holds a position of paramount importance within the arrangement of the *Thirty-Nine Articles*:

We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

There is indeed an enviable quality about the mindset of an Evangelical Anglican Congregation committed to the discipline of her confessional heritage. She possesses a

very clear cut, if somewhat narrow, appreciation for the Biblical truth as she has received it and she rarely wavers from that awareness. In her proper “use of Ecclesiastical Discipline” she makes it clear that right is right and wrong is wrong, and that it is her God-given duty to maintain the former and shun the latter.

Many so-called “Protestant” churches in our contemporary culture wink at everything from the supreme authority of Holy Scripture to the doctrines manifested in the Nicene Creed (the sufficient statement of the core dogmatic content of the Christian Faith) and have lost the sense of definable Biblical truth to which both ordained and consecrated leadership and the baptized (the whole priesthood of believers) alike must bear witness. Fear of alienation from the world has replaced fear of God. Compromise is everywhere. As John Milton (1608-1674), the seventeenth-century English poet and statesman and author of *Paradise Lost*, might observe were he alive today, many contemporary liberal churches spend too much time justifying the ways of man to God and too little time announcing the ways of God to man.

On the other hand, there is clearly within confessional Anglicanism a manageable body of revealed truth and ethical conduct upon which the entire priesthood of believers (Laity, Deacons and Presbyters) can agree. And there should be no apologizing in the Congregation for expecting that orthodox

Biblical doctrine – the Evangelical Anglican beliefs defined in the *Thirty-Nine Articles* – will be honestly appreciated and faithfully observed. Lack of discipline always leads to a lack of faith.

Confessional Anglicanism rightly captures the heart of the Biblical message. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* is very clear about the central truths of God and the way of salvation. The *Articles* do not try to codify everything in the Bible and so it allows an appropriate level of liberty on issues of Christian freedom. Nevertheless, it clearly condemns false

teaching and practice – the kind of false teaching and practice that have led to the self-disintegration of the liberal Protestant establishment.

This latter mentioned reality finds strong confirmation in the findings of the best of contemporary sociological research. For example, in 1993 a watershed analysis

(“Mainline Churches: The Real Reason for Decline”) was published in *FIRST THINGS* (the widely influential ecumenical journal) by pollsters Benton Johnson, Dean R. Hodge, and Donald Luidens. “In our study,” they wrote, “the single best predictor of church participation turned out to be belief – orthodox Christian belief, and especially the teaching that a person can be saved only through Jesus Christ.” Yet, amazingly enough, further studies also found that nearly seventy-five percent of those who were still active in Mainline Protestant churches in the 1990’s admitted that (because they find it to

April 21 & 22, 2007

*Elder Chad Tvenstrup
presided for the first time
at the holy Table and
Elder Conrad Ruppert, Jr.
was the Preacher at the
weekend celebrations of
the Holy Eucharist.*

be too exclusive) they no longer believed in the classic Reformation doctrine of Justification by faith alone – and that was nearly twenty years ago!

The economist Laurence Iannaccone supplied more evidence with a fascinating 1994 essay, “Why Strict Churches Are Strong.” Iannaccone insisted that the Biblically conservative forms of Christianity have benefits that the more liberal non-confessional churches do not. Considered purely in economic terms, he wrote, religion is “a ‘commodity’ that people produce collectively.” Precisely because the personal costs are so high, a confessional church soon loses “free riders” – those people who take more than they give. And the remaining members find a genuine faith community: a tightly knit Congregation of believers who are deeply concerned with one another’s lives and willing to help each other in time of need (a reality, by the way, that in 2011 is well evidenced at Church of The Apostles). These Christians gain something like intellectual community, as well – a culture of people who speak the same vocabulary, understand and believe the same doctrine, and study the same sacred texts.

The lack of doctrinal and moral discipline – the catastrophic consequences of Mainline Protestant churches ignoring their Reformation heritage – has become self-evident. Indeed, the Gospel of salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone (ironically, just as it had been in the medieval period) has once again become obscured (even in many independent, non-denominational churches and/or Charismatic/Pentecostal circles) and is

desperately in need of being recovered and placed at the center of ecclesiastical life. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* powerfully provides what is needed in order to achieve doctrinal and ethical discipline within any Christian Congregation truly committed to the orthodox Biblical Faith.

The fine point of the Gospel

In America and elsewhere, thousands of Protestant churches in general have been compromised over the past fifty years by the market-driven Church Growth Movement and the Charismatic Movement which produced it. Many Charismatic/Pentecostal Christians operate on the philosophy that “doctrine divides.” Therefore, they are often quite willing to compromise orthodox Biblical doctrine in order to be part of parachurch organizations. Though they believe in Justification by faith alone (nominally), in practice they are more than willing to compromise this truly essential Christian doctrine in hopes of converting both the church and the un-church to their Charismatic approach to “doing church.” The reason for this approach is that “baptism in the Holy Spirit” and the corresponding “charismatic gifts” are considered essential doctrines for many (if not most) Charismatic/Pentecostal Christians, but the pre-eminent Reformation doctrine of grace is not!

Charles Grandison Finney (1792-1875), a leader in the (so-called) Second Great Awakening of the nineteenth-century, who has been called by some “the Father of Modern Revivalism,” was best known as an innovative revivalist, an opponent of historic

orthodox Reformation theology, and an advocate of “Christian perfectionism.”

Finney’s pragmatism combined with his clear endorsement of un-Biblical teaching has influenced American revivalism from the nineteenth-century forward. Traditionally, non-confessional, non-denominational, Charismatic/Pentecostal churches are less concerned with the doctrine of Justification by faith alone than are churches that hold firmly to the doctrinal discipline of the Biblically orthodox Reformation formularies. Thus, this essential doctrine has (for such churches) increasingly become merely of secondary importance.

Specifically, what were Finney’s most serious errors? At the top of the list stands his outright rejection of the classic Biblical doctrine of Justification by faith only (particularly as this doctrine is articulated in the Westminster Confession of Faith). Finney, who was raised a Presbyterian, denied that the righteousness of Christ is the sole ground of mankind’s Justification; teaching instead that sinners must reform their own hearts in order to be acceptable to God. Finney’s emphasis on self-reformation apart from divine enablement is a strong echo of the (aforementioned) ancient heresy of Pelagianism.

Thus, Finney’s version of the doctrine of “Christian perfection” is a (un-Biblical) belief which holds that, because original sin did not taint human nature and because mankind’s will is still capable of choosing good (or evil) even apart from God’s special intervention, Christians may by self-effort attain a state of holiness where there is a total love for God

and others, and which, in turn, empowers them to reject sin.

Why is Finney’s teaching on “Christian perfection” so damaging? Because the reality is that we humans, by our own self-efforts, can attain in this life absolutely nothing! As the *Thirty-Nine Articles* clearly explains, we humans “cannot turn and prepare” ourselves by our “natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God.” What is more, “we have no power to do good works [that are] pleasant and acceptable to God,” unless “the grace of God by Christ” goes before us (Article X, “Of Free Will”). The *Thirty-Nine Articles* teaches, just as the Scriptures teach, that left to ourselves there is nothing we humans can do to gain salvation.

The English churchman and committed Evangelical Anglican, J. I. Packer (b. 1926), one of the most respected and influential Evangelical theologians in the world, who served as General Editor of the (2001) *English Standard Version* of the Bible (an Evangelical revision of the famous *Revised Standard Version*) and as the Theological Editor of the *ESV Study Bible*, has said that the doctrine of Justification by faith alone is “the fine point of the Gospel.” If Packer’s statement is true, it is alarming, when any Christian would claim that the center of the Gospel is self repentance and obedience (as Finney would say) and that Justification by faith is just “an element of the Gospel” rather than THE Gospel. When Finney’s theological position, or a similar position, becomes normative in a church, then that fellowship will have moved very far away from the historic Biblical Christian Faith and will have clearly jettisoned Reformation orthodoxy.

Finney's (and such like) views are effectively thwarted in the classic work by John R. W. Stott (b. 1921) called *The Cross of Christ* (1986/2006). Stott, the Englishman and Evangelical Anglican theologian, one of the universally recognized leaders of the worldwide Evangelical movement (who as recently as 2005 was ranked by *TIME* magazine among the 100 most influential people in the world) and one of the principal authors of the famous Lausanne Covenant of 1974, maintains that unless the primacy of the doctrine of Justification by faith alone is maintained at the core of Christian theology, then the cross of Jesus Christ will become void of its true meaning.

A great way of being Evangelical

The *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* has a great sense of what is of primary and what is of secondary importance. Other Protestant churches and movements have had a tendency to make secondary issues – like the manner of Baptism, the “gifts” of the Holy Spirit, end times scenarios, or the form of church government – a primary distinguishing mark. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* commits the Church of The Apostles (and like minded Evangelical Anglicans) to essential things – and allow our Congregation true freedom under Scripture in the non-essentials. While they provide an

extraordinarily rich theological foundation, the *Articles* also offer themselves to be tested against the norm of Scripture. What a blessing!

The principles outlined in the *Thirty-Nine Articles* do not deny that cultural change will at times be necessary in order to prevent the elevation of artificial barriers into “*the work of ministry*” (Ephesians 4:12). And sometimes (as we did out of conviction here at the

Church of The Apostles in 2006) reform will mean taking an orthodox Biblical stand against culture for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Indeed, this summer, as we with joy celebrate our fifth anniversary as “an autonomous Christian Congregation rooted in the confessional and ordered liturgical Anglican tradition,” we would do well to once again renew our vision of what it means to be Evangelical Anglican.

Our collective

conviction should joyfully be this: that not only is being Evangelical the most authentic way of being Anglican (we’ve been arguing this point for past five years here at the Church of The Apostles!) but also that being Anglican is a great way of being Evangelical.

A Confessing Congregation

Brothers and sisters in Christ, as Evangelical

October 18, 2007

Following the resignation of Deacon John Adams, the Church Council elected Rob Geoffrey as a Diaconal Minister-elect to serve as Buildings and Grounds Minister of the Church of The Apostles. The name of Diaconal Minister-elect Geoffrey was then forwarded to the Annual Meeting of the Corporation for ratification on Sunday, January 27, 2008. Deacon-elect Geoffrey was consecrated and commissioned to the work of a Diaconal Minister on Sunday, February 3, 2008.

Anglican adherents to the confessional authority of the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* at the Church of The Apostles, we firmly stand in the Reformation tradition, laying special emphasis on the grace of God.

We submit to the Holy Scriptures and recognize them as the supreme authority within our Congregation and acknowledge that they contain all things necessary to salvation and are the ultimate rule and standard of the Christian Faith.

We affirm the following principles of interpretation of the Scriptures: The Old Testament is to be interpreted in the light of the New Testament, and all parts of the New Testament are of equal and apostolic authority. No part of Scripture is to be interpreted in a way that contradicts or excludes any other part.

We gladly recognize in our Congregation the post-apostolic traditions of the Church Catholic in so far as they are agreeable with the teachings of the New Testament and as long as they bring edification to the life of the body in the present.

We accept the Reformed Catholic doctrine of the Christian Faith as set forth in the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, as understood in their plain, natural, and intended sense; and in particular we declare our belief in the doctrines of grace as they are set forth therein.

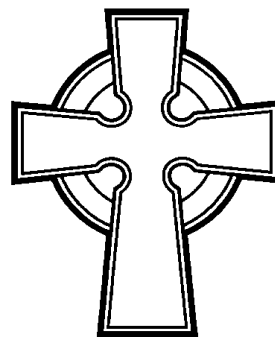
We affirm that a due exercise of doctrinal and ethical discipline is an essential mark of the Church Universal and that the government of the local body of Christ properly belongs under God to the Congregation as a whole; with the Superintendent, Elders, Deacons and

Laity working together in a Biblical “*function*” of service (Romans 12:4).

We affirm that the ordained apostolic order of Presbyters is (according to the New Testament) not a *sacerdotal* ministry but has been instituted for the purpose of preaching, teaching, and pastoral oversight.

We affirm that the true unity of the visible Church of Christ is found in all orthodox Biblical Congregations in which the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are rightly administered according to Christ’s institution.

And finally, we affirm that the highest priority of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is the preaching of the Gospel of divine grace and the fulfillment of the Great Commission of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which is this: “to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20).



What of Tradition in the Church?

By The Reverend Chad W. Tvenstrup

It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly alike; for at all times they have been diverse, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word (*Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*, Article XXXIV, "Of the Traditions of the Church").

We talk a lot about "*tradition*" in the Christian Church. It is all too often that a group of people within a Congregation go so far as to cause schism because others in the church are attempting to change or undo specific *traditions* of the past. You can probably hear the voices from some of your own prior church experience: "But that's the way we have always done it!" And as important as *tradition* is in a Congregation, it should never be cause for division. Indeed, by making *tradition* a dividing issue, Christians undermine the very one that binds us in unity (that is, Jesus Christ). Now in the case of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, it could be argued that those who divided did so based on *tradition*, but only because of the fact that the medieval Roman Catholic Church had elevated *tradition* to a new status – **Tradition** – that is, to a stature that (in the opinion of the Reformers) was inappropriate.

What is the difference between Tradition and *tradition*?

As the Christian Church progressed from its earliest stages after the Apostles had all died, she began to evolve into something other than she had been at the very beginning. Many of these changes were necessary to her survival in different cultural and societal contexts. However, some of the doctrinal and practical changes emerged with problematic aspects. To make a long story short, the Western (Roman Catholic) Church, in her eventual hierarchical power structure, decided that these changes (in *traditions*) could be bulked into a category that she eventually defined as the **Tradition** of the Church. By labeling **Tradition** with a capital "T", the Roman Church concluded that she (partly because the historic Church Catholic had canonized the Scriptures in the first place) could access ultimate authority in her magisterial decisions concerning doctrine and practice. Thus, when the Protestant Reformers argued that some of the doctrines and practices in the medieval Roman Church were un-Biblical, the Roman Church's response was that they were all in accordance with the apostolic **Tradition** of the historic Church Universal. Well, of course they were! So ultimately, in the dispute between the Protestant Reformers and the Roman Church, each side was essentially disagreeing on the fundamental issue of *authority*, and, thus, arguing right past one another.

The English Reformers took a very measured approach with regard to *tradition* (notice the

small “t”). The *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of 1571* (as quoted above), generally communicates the position of the reformed (Anglican) Church of England rather clearly: that is, that *traditions* may differ depending on the time and the place, and that any *tradition* should always uphold the core principles found in the Scriptures. So when the English Reformers looked at the “Sacrifice of the Mass” (with all of its extra-Biblical theology and practice) in the medieval Roman Church and noticed the lack of the reading and the preaching of the Word of God in a language that everybody could understand; and when they examined the obvious lack of participation of the Laity in the worship services; they comprehended just how far the medieval Roman Church had strayed from the portrayal of God’s people in the Scriptures themselves.

We see this concept most clearly conveyed in the *Thirty-Nine Articles* in Article XIX (“Of the Church”). This article outright dispels the myth of inerrant Tradition in the Roman Church: “As the Church of *Jerusalem*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch* have erred, so also the Church of *Rome* hath erred, not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith.” Thus (according to the English Reformers), *tradition* is just that: it is a way of doing things that may benefit the Congregation, but is not essential to her existence and should never be in direct and obvious conflict with God’s Holy Word.

Ultimately, then, how are we today (so far removed by time and place from the sixteenth-century Reformation debate) to reconcile these two diametrically opposed positions as we deal with the fundamental

issue of authority in the Body of Christ? The *Thirty-Nine Articles*, as it is the proverbial confession of Evangelical Anglican belief, is a great place to begin!

What of Tradition do the Articles reject?

We clearly see this opposition between the Protestant Reformers and the medieval Roman Church evidenced in the *Articles of Religion* of the reformed (Anglican) Church of England. For instance, Article XXII (“Of Purgatory”) states the following:

The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping and adoration, as well as images of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather *repugnant* [my emphasis] to the word of God.

In other words, the doctrine of purgatory, as embedded and supported as it was by the Tradition of the Roman Church, according to the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, was (because it was un-Biblical) simply a false doctrine. For the Roman Church, the doctrine of purgatory was part of the history and the evolution of theology and practice the Church Catholic, thus, it was an integral part of *the Tradition*. For the English Reformers, on the other hand, the doctrine of purgatory was “repugnant”!

Article XIV (“Of Works of Supererogation”) speaks out against another Tradition of the medieval Roman Church that is closely related to the extra-Biblical doctrine of purgatory. Essentially, in Article XIV, the author, Archbishop (of Canterbury) Thomas

Cranmer (1489-1556), rejected the idea that people are capable of performing good works “over and above God’s commandments”; specifically conveying that this soteriology (doctrine of salvation) “cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety.” This idea of works of supererogation relates to purgatory because the doctrine of purgatory rests on the premise that some people possess so many good works that they have “excess merit,” such that this extra merit can be applied to others who are in purgatory so that they can reach their heavenly destination earlier than planned.

This un-Biblical system of belief (which was solidly in place in the medieval Roman Church by the time of the Reformation) was a major abhorrence to the German Reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546), who voiced his convictions in his famous opposition to the selling of indulgences (indeed, most of his *Ninety-Five Theses* were embedded in this very subject). For Luther and other Reformers, the medieval doctrines of purgatory and supererogation were in complete opposition to the Scriptural teaching of Justification by faith in Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Likewise, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* speaks out in a similar manner against the Roman Church’s doctrine of transubstantiation:

Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is *repugnant* [my emphasis again] to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions (Article XXVIII, “Of the Lord’s Supper”).

Quite frankly, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* does not teach a specific and detailed Eucharistic theology (and neither did Cranmer himself – the primary author of the *Articles*). However, the *Articles* are very clear to reject the hypothesis (or fact, in the eyes of the Roman Church) that the elements upon consecration cease to be Bread and Wine and are miraculously transformed into the physical (actual) Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. And primarily, it was not the metaphysical issues that were problematic for Cranmer

and the other Reformers. Rather, it was the un-Biblical theological implications of the re-sacrifice of Christ in the Mass and the practice of the worship and adoration of the consecrated host – of material substance (even in place of Christ).

Once again we see a similar conflict arise in Article XXXII (“Of the Marriage of Priests”). The Roman Church had exhaustively forbidden the marriage of clergy for

October 18, 2007

The Church Council endorsed Superintendent Galloway’s (and the Board of Elders’) proposed choice that the Church of The Apostles voluntarily affiliate with the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference (4Cs). The Church Council’s proposed choice was then forwarded to the Annual Meeting of the Corporation on January 27, 2008 and ratified by the unanimous vote of those present.

centuries. Hence, it was grounded in their doctrine of the ordained Presbyterate, as it was reinforced by the Tradition. All of the Protestant Reformers (Cranmer included, who was actually secretly married at the time of the English Reformation) argued simply that forcing clergy to remain celibate went against clear instruction from Holy Writ: “Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, are not commanded by God’s Law either to vow the estate of a single life or to abstain from marriage. Therefore it is lawful also for them, as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness” (Article XXXII).

Perhaps there is no more obvious a place within the *Thirty-Nine Articles* where Cranmer takes more issue with the Roman Church than in her attachment to the whole treatment of Tradition in the first place. This fact proves the earlier contention: the controversy concerning the proper role of tradition (note again the small “t”) in the Church Catholic really involves at its very core the definition and proper assignment of authority. No article among the *Thirty-Nine Articles* clarifies this issue more than Article XX (“Of the Authority of the Church”):

The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and in controversies of Faith [i.e. tradition]: And yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing contrary to God’s Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another.

In the context of the English Reformation, the Roman Church had done *all* of these

things (with respect to the points in Article XX). Thus (according to the English Reformers), the Roman Church compromised her right to determine Rites and Ceremonies and matters of doctrine because she was placing her Tradition on the same plane as (or even above that of) Holy Scripture – the very Word of God. Archbishop Cranmer concludes Article XX with this insight: “Wherefore although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation.”

What traditions of the Church Catholic do the Articles uphold?

While the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* does not agree with the foundational approach to Tradition that the medieval Roman Church had adopted (culminating in the authority issue as discussed above), there were traditions of the Church Catholic that the English Reformers thought were beneficial for the Congregation. This aspect of the reformed (Anglican) Church of England is perhaps what sets her apart from other more radical efforts at reform. The *Articles*, in this way, are truly the *via media* (or “middle way”) between radical Reformation circles (such as the hard-line Calvinists and the Anabaptists) and the Roman Catholic Church.

Yet, the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* is very careful to always analyze tradition in light of the ultimate authority found only in Holy Writ (see again Article XX). The prime example of this fact is found in Article VIII (“Of the Three Creeds”). Some Protestants

had rejected the three great ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian) as "the teachings of men, not God"; this being the case, even though, the three historic Creeds are perhaps the best example of the healthiest *tradition* of the Church Catholic! Once again, Cranmer is careful to explain exactly why the reformed (Anglican) Church of England "receives and believes" the Creeds – because they "may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture" (Article VIII).

In a similar manner, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* maintains a most wholesome definition of the Church Catholic, and this definition intersects a truly Anglican understanding of *tradition*. According to Article XIX ("Of the Church"): "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance." Notice here Archbishop Cranmer's direct reference to the preaching of the "pure Word of God." This very important *tradition* of expository preaching (which was prominent in the pre-Nicene Church) was something that the medieval Roman Church had strayed far from by the time of the sixteenth-century Reformation.

Indeed, for the medieval churchgoers, it was all about the "Sacrifice of the Mass." Their mere presence (they need not even pay attention in the service) near the altar at Mass

was by itself alone believed to be efficacious for their individual and collective salvation. But for the reformed (Anglican) Church of England (perhaps not so much for other European sects in the Reformation), the focus was more on regaining, establishing and maintaining the *tradition* of a real apostolic and Biblical balance between Word and Sacrament in the liturgical life of the Congregation.

The *Thirty-Nine Articles* did not altogether throw out the (pre-Reformation) Eucharistic *tradition* of the Church Catholic (as some

Protestant sects had in reaction to un-Biblical medieval teachings regarding the Sacrament). Archbishop Cranmer and the other English Reformers only rejected about the Sacrament that which was repulsive to the Scriptures. For instance, they believed that the Eucharist was important enough such that the Laity should receive the

Sacrament *regularly* (Laity in the medieval Roman Church would normally only receive – the consecrated wafer alone – once a year!) and that God's grace was most certainly bestowed in fellowship at the holy Table.

Article XXV ("Of the Sacraments") specifically addresses the *tradition* of the reformed (Anglican) Church of England regarding the Sacraments (interpreting the Sacraments narrowly to mean "Baptism and the Supper of the Lord"). Again, the reformed English Church formally rejected

July 23, 2008

Church of The Apostles was formally received as a member of the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference and Superintendent Galloway was formally recognized and licensed as an ordained Minister of the Conference at the 4Cs Annual Meeting in Buffalo, New York.

the medieval seven sacraments formula because only these two particular Sacraments have been “ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel” (Article XXV). Likewise, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* upholds the belief that the Sacraments are grace-filled: “Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men’s profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God’s will towards us” (Article XXV). This approach is much less reactive against the medieval Roman Church than most other forms of Protestantism, especially those who, following the teaching of the Swiss Reformer Huldreich Zwingli (1484-1531), rigidly taught merely a memorialist understanding of the Lord’s Supper.

Yet another *tradition* that was retained by the reformed (Anglican) Church of England (which has proved both helpful to posterity and somewhat controversial as well) is the continuation (of some sort) of the ordering of Ministers. Many other Protestant sects rejected Episcopal ordination and/or succession, and some in the modern era have even rejected the idea of identifiable leadership altogether. Once again, our wisely worded confession, the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, maintains a rather Scriptural approach to the ordination of leaders in the Congregation. Article XXIII (“Of Ministering in the Congregation”) is a helpful place to begin:

It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same.

In other words, the ordained leaders of the Congregation should be specifically qualified (according to the guidelines set apart in the New Testament) and lawfully called to “*the work of ministry*” (Ephesians 4:12). Article XXIII assumes a “public authority” that rests “in the Congregation.” It is important that the *Articles* do not over-define this authority, as Scripture is not entirely clear exactly what the authority looks like (apart from Jesus and the Apostles themselves). However, there are some forms of church government that are more Scriptural than others. At the Church of The Apostles (in our own Constitution and Bylaws), we argue that any model of Biblical church government should include some form of a plurality of Elders (see Titus 1:5-9).

Thus, the *Congregational Episcopacy* that we have implemented here at the Church of The Apostles over the last five years is certainly modeled most closely with the Scriptures, as well as keeping in line with the developments in polity as were found in the earliest (post-Apostolic) Church. What we have outright rejected here at the Church of The Apostles is the medieval Episcopal model (as is evidenced in the contemporary Roman Catholic, “classical” Anglican, and Eastern Orthodox definitions of the ordained ministry). This model is a post-Nicene (c. 325 *A.D.*) model that was largely influenced by the political structure of the Roman Empire, and (quite frankly) strays too far away from Scriptural (and early Church) norms as they are plainly understood.

This point is furthered by Article XXXVI (“Of Consecration of Bishops and Ministers”) in the fact that the ordering of Ministers is a process, and should follow certain

parameters. Admittedly, the parameters set forth in the Ordinal (the manual of ordination services bound up with the 1552/1559 Book of Common Prayer) are not exactly the parameters that we have embraced here at Church of The Apostles. However, the point of Article XXXVI (when one reads the language closely) is that the Ordinal in question is *a* legitimate form of ordering and/or consecrating Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons, *not the only* legitimate form. Thus, this specific ordering and consecrating is a healthy *tradition* for the benefit of the Congregation, and is therefore upheld by the *Thirty-Nine Articles*.

Small “t” tradition is important

The point that the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* conveys both implicitly and explicitly about *tradition* is the fact that it is beneficial to the Congregation only as long as such *tradition* is honored in a manner that does not obscure its true importance, but rather is held under the proper authority of Holy Scripture – in other words, *tradition* rather than *Tradition*. Small “t” *tradition*, then, is certainly important enough to uphold and venerate to an extent.

Again, we get our perspective from the *Thirty-Nine Articles*:

Whosoever through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly (Article XXXIV, “Of the Traditions of the Church”).

Article XXXIV explains its rebuke on the grounds that the breaking of *traditions* acts against the good order of the Congregation – and thus “wound[s] the consciences of the weak brethren.” A final reminder in Article XXXIV is the fact that the end (i.e. the final purpose) of all *tradition* should be the edification of the Body of Christ. And the Body of Christ cannot be edified when its members are accepting of and attached to that which is not obviously upheld in the Word of God.

Let us, therefore, always be most aware and particular about the *traditions* in our Congregation, that they are maintained and upheld with wisdom, and that we follow them for the right reasons (for the fact that they lead people *to* Christ and not *away* from him). And may God bless our *traditions* here at the Church of the Apostles, both old and new; may he bless all of us “*whose hearts are set on the pilgrims’ way*” (Psalm 84:4).

March 19, 2009

Following the resignation of Deacon Corey Dupont, the Church Council elected Kathy Kettle as a Diaconal Minister-elect to serve as Stewardship Minister of the Church of The Apostles. The name of Diaconal Minister-elect Kettle was then forwarded to a Special Meeting of the Corporation for ratification on Sunday, June 28, 2009. Deacon-elect Kettle was consecrated and commissioned to the work of a Diaconal Minister on Sunday, August 9, 2009.

Who will go to heaven and how do we get there?

The Doctrine of Salvation in the Thirty-Nine Articles

By The Reverend Mark R. Galloway

According to the Gospel of Mark (10:17), the infamous rich young man asked Jesus this question: “*Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?*” This question reminds me of the questions that have most often been asked of me during my sixteen years as an ordained Presbyterian:

“Who will be saved? Who will go to heaven and how do we get there?” These are (of course) more than just important questions. Indeed (although the secular world would never admit it), they are the most important questions that will ever face humanity. For orthodox Biblical Christians, Jesus gives the ultimate answer: “*I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me*” (John 14:6).

The words of Jesus recorded in John 14:6 are (obviously) quite exclusive and are, therefore (according to many ordained Ministers and Laity within liberal churches), at a minimum “controversial” and at their maximum just plain “wrong.”

When asking the question “Who will go to heaven and how do we get there?” the proper

thing for an orthodox Biblical Christian to do is, ultimately, not to find out what any particular ordained person (or even denomination) has to say on the subject, but rather what God has revealed in the Holy Scriptures. The problem with this approach is (of course) that when we unconditionally accept what the Word of God says (for

example see John 14:6 above) charges are quickly made by liberals that we orthodox Biblical Christians are misrepresenting the Bible or failing to read it in the context of its time and culture or in the light of a modern understanding of the world and human psychology. For this reason, as I compose this article for this Summer 2011 edition of the *ApostlesJournal*, an official publication of the (Evangelical Anglican) Church of The Apostles, Coventry, Rhode Island, I will take a

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Superintendent Galloway announced to the Church Council that he had accepted the resignation Elder Conrad Ruppert from the active Eldership for reasons that did not affect his moral character or the quality of his work. In accordance with the first revision to the Constitution and Bylaws on December 6, 2009, Elder Ruppert was granted Presbyterian Emeritus status which allows him to continue to preach, teach, and function liturgically.

different path.

The doctrine, or teaching, of historic orthodox Anglicanism is grounded foremost upon the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. But having said that, in the confessional sense (for historic orthodox Anglicans), doctrine that is “required... or necessary to salvation” is, in particular, to be

found in the *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* (Article VI, “Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation”). The intention of this article I have written is, therefore, to ask what historic orthodox Anglicanism believes about what one might call the “Doctrine of Salvation” and to do so by studying what the *Thirty-Nine Articles* teaches on the subject. Before I go any further, however, I must confess that it is my belief (just as it was the belief of the primary authors of the *Articles*) that the concise and systematic answers defined in the *Thirty-Nine Articles* are in true harmony with the answers that are found in the Holy Scriptures themselves.

Jesus is the Son of God

In Article I (“Of Faith in the Holy Trinity”), the *Thirty-Nine Articles* begins with God, asserting that God is Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and in Article II (“Of the Word, or Son of God, Which was made very Man”) the *Thirty-Nine Articles* proceeds to tell us that the divine Word, the Son of God, became a human being. The obvious question then is this: Why did the Son of God become a human being? Article II provides an initial answer to this question when it states: “the Word of the Father... took Man’s nature [in order]...to reconcile His Father to us and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men.”

Thus, right from the beginning the doctrine of salvation (soteriology) is brought by the *Thirty-Nine Articles* to the forefront. And this is the case because, in the practice of historic orthodox Christian theology, the doctrine of salvation is inseparable from the doctrine of the person of Christ

(Christology). Jesus Christ (the Son of God) became human in order to reconcile humanity to his Father, to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins and, thus, win for us victory not only over our shame and guilt, but, ultimately, over bodily and spiritual death as well.

How can we know why Jesus became human?

Virtually every great work of systematic theology has (logically) begun by asking this question: How can we know why Jesus became human? With the same sound logic, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* begins in its articulation with the person and nature of God, but they soon turn to these questions: How can humanity know why Jesus became human? And, How can we humans be saved? The *Thirty-Nine Articles* states what true Christians have always believed – namely, that we can only know the answer to these questions because God has revealed them to us in his Word. Specifically, therefore, Article VI (“Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation”) famously tells us that “Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation.”

The ever-important Article VI further explains that the specific things humanity needs to believe about salvation are only those which the Scriptures teach. Therefore, regarding the “Doctrine of Salvation,” the Scriptures provide sufficient and complete knowledge. If any church were to claim a doctrine as necessary for salvation that the Bible does not teach or which cannot be proved from Scripture, then such a claim should be rejected by Christians.

Article VII (“Of the Old Testament”) follows up on the theme articulated in Article VI. It asserts that in both the Old and New Testaments eternal life is offered to humanity through Christ. But, more than this, Article VII states that Christ “is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man” (see 1 Timothy 2:5). Here is the heart of the uniqueness of Christ’s role in human salvation. There can be no other “Savior” because salvation requires that the Mediator be both God and Man and, yet, there is no other being that can fulfill this requirement save Jesus.

Why does humanity need saving?

Thus far we have seen that the *Thirty-Nine Articles* teaches that the Son of God became human for our salvation, but why? The main reason for our need of the Savior is set out in Article IX (“Of Original or Birth Sin”). Original Sin is a Biblical doctrine that is often misunderstood and misrepresented. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* affirms that every person born into this world deserves God’s wrath. It is not simply a matter that humans sin against God, though this is clearly the case, but that when Adam (the first human) sinned against God, the whole human race fell. Therefore, the very nature of humanity is corrupted. Part of the reason we Christians struggle with this truth is that we have a very individualistic, self-centered understanding of what it is to be human. But the Scriptures have a much deeper view. Indeed, as Article IX states, human nature is predisposed to sin, it always desires to behave in a manner contrary to the Spirit and “this infection of nature doth remain...[even] in them that are regenerated” (that is, even in all

people who have been baptized and personally know Christ as one’s Lord and Savior). When Adam rebelled all humans were caught up in his fall. As a consequence we are all under the wrath of God, which is the right and proper response of a holy God to sin and rebellion.

What can humanity do?

What can we do about our plight? The shocking answer is that on our own power we can do absolutely nothing! Article X (“Of Free Will”) explains that we humans “cannot turn and prepare” ourselves by our “natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God.” What is more, “we have no power to do good works [that are] pleasant and acceptable to God,” unless “the grace of God by Christ” goes before us. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* teaches, just as the Scriptures teach, that left to ourselves there is nothing we humans can do to gain salvation.

Our Justification

Does this mean that we have no hope? Of course not because (in agreement with the Scriptures) the *Thirty-Nine Articles* asserts that the Son of God became a human for our salvation. Article XXXI (“Of the one Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross”) explains this further:

The offering of Christ once made is the perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone.

Redemption has to do with having been both *brought* back (by the Good Shepherd) and

bought back (by the blood of the Lamb) from spiritual death – that is, set free from our former slavery to sin. Propitiation means, as Article II states, that Christ came “to reconcile His Father to us.” God is a holy God, his honor is offended by the rebellion of his creatures and wrath is the just response. But God’s justice is satisfied through the saving death of Christ.

All this brings us to the same point: that we can only be saved because Christ came into the world, and he is the only Savior – there is no other satisfaction for sin. But this still does not completely answer our original question: Who will go to heaven and how do we get there? Indeed, it opens up the possibility that all people may be saved because, as Article XXXI asserts, Christ’s offering was sufficient “for *all* [my emphasis] the sins of the whole world, both original and actual.”

The Application

For the particular issue at hand, the fundamental questions then are these: How does the saving work of Christ apply to a particular individual? How do the benefits of Christ’s death become our own? The answer to each question is to be found in Article XI (“Of the Justification of Man”), which states: “We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings.” In other words,

salvation is not automatic, nor is it granted to us because of our merit or our works, or because we deserve to be saved; rather we are saved by faith in Christ. What is more, this is the “only” way to salvation: “*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast*” (Ephesians 2:8-9). In the Gospel of John we read these words: “*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God remains on him*” (John 3:36).

Who will be saved? Who will go to heaven and how do we get to there? It is my joy to be able to say to anyone who asks me these questions that Jesus has proclaimed to all people of all times and all places that he is “*the way, and the truth and the life*” and that “*no one comes to the Father except through (him)*” (John 14:6).

January 21, 2010

Following the resignation of Elder Rick Bonin, the Church Council accepted the Superintendent’s appointment of Deacon Rob Geoffrey to serve as an Elder of the Congregation and subsequently elected him to serve. Elder-elect Geoffrey was consecrated and commissioned on Sunday, March 14, 2010.

The orthodox Biblical Christian Faith (which historic Anglicanism affirms) teaches, as God has revealed in his inerrant and infallible Word, that there is one way by which God leads people through Jesus to heaven – “by faith only” (Article XI). The fact is that it is irrefutable that the “by faith only” reality is the key to how Jesus saves. Indeed, this ought to be obvious from the reading of the Scriptures, not least in the Gospel of John where the Apostle asserts that the whole purpose of his writing is to convince people

to come to a saving belief in Christ: *“These [things] are written [in this book] so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name”* (John 20:31).

In the genuine Christian life “faith” is not simply an extra option. Therefore, it is important to recognize that Justification “by faith only” is not a matter of academic debate or curiosity – rather it concerns eternal life and death. The Apostle Peter boldly proclaimed to the *“rulers [of the people] and elders and scribes”* of Jerusalem (Acts 4:5) these words: *“This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12).

The fact is that it is a terrible thing to deceive people regarding the way of salvation. I am put in mind here the words of the Apostle Paul to the Galatians: *“As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed”* (Galatians 1:9). Article XVIII (“Of obtaining eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ”) reiterates this stark reality: “They are to be had accursed that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that Law, and the light of Nature. For holy Scripture doth set out to us only the Name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.”

What about all the “good” people?

In the Letter to the Hebrews (11:6) we read these words: *“And without faith it is*

impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” So-called “liberal” Christians (upon reading this article that I have written) would no doubt argue that the Biblical “Doctrine of Salvation” that (in classic Reformed Catholic fashion) is clearly and faithfully outlined in the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is unduly harsh. After all, do not all of us see and know many people who live “good” and “noble” lives, who (at least by outward appearances and the secular world’s standards) are shining examples of moral excellence? How can we (orthodox Biblical Christians) ever possibly say that they may not be among those who are saved when Jesus comes again in glory to judge the living and the dead? Again, as we have discussed earlier in this article, the problem of Adam’s fall and our own sin is too deep for us to overcome on our own. Our “good” works and “noble” deeds – our merits – will count for nothing before God. For as Article XIII (“Of Works before Justification”) asserts: “Works done before the grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men to receive grace... yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but that they have the nature of sin.”

The Doctrine of Salvation

In the opening paragraph of Article XVII (“Of Predestination and Election”) the entire scope of the “Doctrine of Salvation” as contained in the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is set out:

Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honor. Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God are called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season: they through grace obey the calling: they be justified freely: they be made sons of God by adoption: they be made like the image of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works; and at length by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.

In the end, salvation depends entirely upon God and upon his "counsel" that is "secret" to us. God has "chosen in Christ" those that he will bring by "Christ to everlasting salvation." This is God's sovereign and secret work, yet in his time we see the working out of it. Those whom God has chosen will be "called according to God's purpose by his Spirit." Through "grace" they will "obey the calling." They are "justified freely." They are "made sons [and daughters] of God by adoption." They are "made like the image" of Christ. They "walk ... in good works"; remembering that "a true and lively Faith" (Article XII, "Of Good Works") will always result in good works: "*So also faith by itself if it does not have works, is dead*" (James 2:17). In the fullness of time by God's mercy his elect come to eternal joy.

This is the "Doctrine of Salvation" that

orthodox Anglicanism teaches in her historic confession – the *Thirty-Nine Articles*. It is what all the ordained Presbyters here at the (Evangelical Anglican) Church of The Apostles have in solemn vows pledged to (and will continue to) teach. This Biblical doctrine is neither vague nor uncertain. There is only one Mediator – Our Lord Jesus Christ – and there is also only one means of salvation – Faith in his Name.

Here at Church of The Apostles we shall remain ever-faithful to our Evangelical Anglican heritage: "We must receive God's promises in such wise, as they be generally set forth to us in holy Scripture: and in our doings, that Will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God" (Article XVII, *Thirty-Nine Articles*).

The outline of this article is based in part on an article that appears on the website of the *Church Society* (<http://www.churchsociety.org>).

October 21, 2010

Following the consecration of Elder Rob Geoffrey, the Church Council elected Harry Sacchetti as a Diaconal Minister-elect to serve as Buildings and Grounds Minister of the Church of The Apostles. The name of Diaconal Minister-elect Sacchetti was then forwarded to a Special Meeting of the Corporation for ratification on Sunday, November 21, 2010. Deacon-elect Sacchetti was consecrated and commissioned to the work of a Diaconal Minister on Sunday, January 9, 2011.

Church Council

Superintendent

The Reverend Mark R. Galloway

Board of Elders

Elder Chad W. Tvenstrup	385-9958
Elder Nina N. Deuel	789-3837
Elder Robert J. Geoffrey	943-4661
Elder <i>Emeritus</i> Conrad J. Ruppert, Jr.	

Board of Servants

Archdeacon Thomas G. Bourn <i>Servant Evangelism Minister</i>	294-4186
Deacon William E. Sexton <i>Congregational Care Minister</i>	726-4549
Deacon Cathryn J. Morgan <i>Outreach Minister</i>	781-8577
Deacon Kathleen M. Kettle <i>Stewardship Minister</i>	822-2460
Deacon Harry E. Sacchetti <i>Buildings and Grounds Minister</i>	374-4273

*“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities;
for there is no authority except from God,
and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God.”*

(Romans 13:1)

Church of The Apostles

Evangelical Anglican

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Superintendent's Residence • (401) 397-3652

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e-mail: office@apostlesri.org

*"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
to the breaking of the bread and the prayers."*

(Acts 2:42)

Worship and Education

The Holy Eucharist	Saturday 5:00 p.m. Sunday 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Christian Education	Sunday 9:15 a.m.
Sunday Brunch	Sunday 11:45 a.m.
Evening Prayer Meeting	Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Morning Prayer	Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m.

Church Staff

Superintendent	The Reverend Mark R. Galloway
Church Administrator	Barbara Battey
Communications Officer	Barbara A. Bickerstaff
Director of Christian Education	Linda Jones
Pastoral Assistant	Roberta Tvenstrup, MSW, LICSW
Youth Minister	Roger Hall
Health and Wellness Minister	Sharon Galloway, RN
Organist and Music Director	Marianne Salisbury
Sacristy Minister	JoAnn Ruppert
Property Maintenance Technician	Jim Quinn
Sexton	Mike Edwards
Treasurer	Bob Bickerstaff
Clerk	Deb Adams