

## Perspective

### Patience and Accountability

By the Rt. Rev. Henry N. Parsley Jr.  
 Bishop of Alabama

The most memorable symbol of this General Convention to me is the great Jubilee cross. Its beautiful diversity of wood reflects the beauty of our diversity as the Body of Christ. Its weight and height require that it is carried by two persons, one on either side of the cross. It has been moving to see them struggle to lift and carry the cross in our processions, as we are led forward.

Our life together as the Church is like that. We are called to take up and bear the cross, not alone but together. To lift it high we need each other. Christ's cross is the divine bridge where we are connected, the center point where all our differences and conflicts are reconciled in the love of God. The cross stands at the center and moves in the center aisles of our churches.

The Committee on Ministry in amended Resolution A045 on the continuing implementation of the ordination of women has offered us a center point where we can continue to move forward together. The Committee, on which I serve, listened to a great deal of impassioned debate on the resolution offered by Executive Council, which proposed monitoring, especially of the Dioceses of Fort Worth, Quincy and San Joaquin where the canons have not been fully implemented as mandated by the 72nd General Convention. We heard passionate debate as well on D101 which urged stronger measures. One way seemed to offer patience but too little accountability. The other seemed to offer canonical accountability but too little patience.

The Committee has attempted to find "a more excellent way." Amended A045 calls for the creation of a Task Force to meet with the three dioceses to "visit, interview, assess, and assist" them in the development and implementation of an action plan to comply with

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## 7/8 Time

William Swing knows what's at stake. The bishop of California claims to have blessed more same-sex couples than anyone in the country. He would like to see the Church affirm that practice. But he knows that now is not the time to begin the process of developing rites to support same-sex couples. The unity of the Church is at stake. That's why we hope the Bishops reject any motions that lead, directly or indirectly, to the development of same-sex rites.

You don't have to be a pragmatist on Church unity to rally behind this position. Those who believe in same-sex blessings already have plenty to take home from the 73rd General Convention.

The seven resolves of D039, approved by the Deputies and awaiting action by the Bishops, represent a major step forward in the Church's pastoral support of gays and lesbians. For a number of dioceses, they will be a stretch for people in the pews, requiring the full force of enlightened leadership to hold the Church together.

All that's required to keep that momentum going is the Bishops' consent to D039—without amendment.

Having spent most of their time yesterday debating, and then rejecting, a proposal to restore the eighth resolve to D039—an amendment to begin the process of developing same-sex rites—the Bishops today will tackle another proposal that could do the same thing, only indirectly. It, too, deserves rejection.

Anything other than an approval of D039, without amendment, runs the risk of involving the Deputies in a game of legislative ping-pong, with the Convention clock about to run out. That could mean no approved resolutions.

What it comes down to is this: The Bishops have one more chance to affirm the unity of the 73rd General Convention on issues of human sexuality. We pray they do so.

**One priest considers the impact of the seven resolves on his parish. See page 3.**



Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold and Presiding Bishop H. George Anderson of the ELCA celebrate "Called to Common Mission" at the Eucharist yesterday.

Hearing schedule for Thursday, July 13. Sites and subjects reflect information posted by the Secretariat of the General Convention as of 6 p.m. yesterday. For further information on meeting room assignments, call the General Convention staff office at 303/228-8520.

- Social and Urban Affairs, 7 a.m. meeting is CANCELED.
- Program, Budget and Finance, Convention Center Room A108, 8 a.m.: Clarifying questions may be asked. There will be no debate or testimony.

Topping the list of what's coming up in Deputies is A045 amended, on implementation of the canon on women's ordination. Deputies have that resolution slated for first thing this morning. But figuring out the rest of the schedule could be dicey, since there is so much to do, and so little time. Our guess as to what will survive the cut:

- D092, on dioceses that don't pay their full askings. This is a good and pastoral approach that deserves to be heard, approved and implemented.
- B040, substitute, on Jubilee Debt Reduction. It's a good public stance, but lacks teeth.
- D061, amended, on the Anglican Congress, and A135, on COCU. Both reflect our commitment to life in the greater Body of Christ.
- B051, implementation of "Called to Common Mission." We passed it, we need to implement it.
- A034, on rebuilding the church (concur with Bishops). This is the final step in 20/20: A Clear Vision. Let's finish the job.
- B033, substitute, divestiture from the Sudanese oil industry. Our brothers and sisters in Christ are persecuted daily in Sudan. Withdrawing our investment money shows our support for them.

Over in Bishops, human sexuality remains the topic of the day. After that, Bishops face work on persecution around the world (B016, B053 and B047), the Revised Common Lectionary (A063) and miscellaneous work that might or might not survive the cut.



### So Where's the Diversity?

Center Aisle, a publication of the Diocese of Virginia promoting core values of unity, love and witness, issue No. 5, July 2000 endorsed the following for Executive Council: Martha Bedell Alexander, Louie Crew, Theodore Mollegen Jr., Russell V. Palmore Jr., Sarah Harte, William D. Nix Jr., James B. Simons, [and] Rebecca Snow for six-year term[s] and Phillip M. Duncan II for a three-year unexpired term in the name of unity and diversity.

All of the above who have been endorsed by Center Aisle are Caucasians. One wonders what kind of unity and diversity that leaves out. Black, Hispanic, and Asian American to mention a few?

The endorsement moves back to a time when people of color were never endorsed and elected to the governing bodies of this church.

The Rev. Benjamin Musoke-Lubega  
Deputy from Michigan

### The People Respond

Join us in the walk down the center aisle by writing us at Suite 322, Holtze Hotel, 818 Seventeenth St., Denver (just drop it by the front desk and they'll get it to us, or give it to any member of the Diocese of Virginia deputation). Or you can send your letter to [centeraisle@thediocese.net](mailto:centeraisle@thediocese.net). As space permits, we will publish your letters and commentary. Please try to limit your letters to 150 words. Your letters may be edited for length and clarity. Please be sure to sign your correspondence and let us know how we can contact you.



**CORRECTION: In issue No. 5, Center Aisle endorsed Vince Currie for vice president of the House of Deputies. Of course, we misspelled his name. Sorry Vince.**

## Center Aisle

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# Cha-Ching!

The resolutions have been passed; the debates waged. Now it comes down to dollars and cents.

The updated budget proposal, unveiled yesterday in the House of Deputies to the tune of “You Can’t Always Get What You Want,” ranks as this year’s minor miracle from the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance.

Shuffling dollars, tracking discussions, striving for balance, the committee has cobbled together a thoughtful beginning to today’s budget discussions. There’s good—and not so good—news.



For starters, as the Presiding Bishop noted, a disconnect remains between spending (boy, do we have ideas on that!) and revenue (uh, we’ll get back to you on that). We welcome the proposal to send planning and support teams to those dioceses who fall below the 21 percent asking for the general Church. More attention also needs to be paid to the growing percentage of revenue projected to come from the unpredictable world of investments.

Even though dollars are scarce, we’re delighted that PB&F has recommended for the coming triennium:

- \$250,000 for the proposed Episcopal Youth Corps.
- \$4,050,000 for the Church’s historically black colleges (\$450,000 more than requested).
- Zero for the proposed stipend for the president of the House of Deputies. (We favor keeping this position voluntary.)

Yesterday’s agenda for the Deputies stretched well beyond the budget. In other business, the Deputies:

- Took stands on hate crimes (C029 and D068) and handguns (A006, B007, D004) after great discussion. The resolutions on hate crimes—to continue the Church’s education program and to lobby Congress—extend the Church’s prophetic voice into the world. The stand on handguns, while contentious in the House, is pastoral and deserves support.
- Strongly voiced support for persecuted Christians in Sudan (A130, concur with Bishops) and the people of Okinawa—moves that keep us mindful of our lives together in the Anglican Communion.
- Concurred with Bishops on renewal of the prayer book (A066), a move that will allow all Episcopalians to participate in the enrichment of our worship.
- Endorsed the CREDO project (A071, concur with Bishops) to strengthen and care pastorally for our clergy, a move that benefits the entire Church.

## Seven Resolves: A Parish View

*It can be easy for Convention to lose sight of the practical implications of the actions it takes. In the ongoing debate on resolution D039, we are at risk of overlooking the very real shift that will take place if the seven resolves are adopted. The following piece sheds some light on how those seven resolves will impact at least one parish in the Diocese of Virginia, as considered through the eyes of its rector, Center Aisle correspondent the Rev. John Ohmer.*

Sitting in the press gallery during yesterday’s debate on human sexuality, I heard several bishops argue that the eighth resolve, which would start the ball rolling for rites supporting same-sex unions, needs to be reattached because we as a Church need to “do something.”

They argued that we need to “provide leadership,” and that passing the first seven resolves without the eighth makes us guilty of “gradualism,” or foot-dragging.

As I listened to their debate, I began to wonder: Has anyone stopped long enough to add up the practical impact of the seven resolves as approved by the House of Deputies?

Is anyone talking about what implementing those seven resolves would look like locally, in a real parish?

Here is what they would mean in the Leesburg, Va., parish of which I am rector: In implementing the resolution, St. James’ would be clearly stating that gay and lesbian couples—like couples living in marriage—are held accountable to high standards of behavior: namely, “fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and holy love.”

While there are people in my church ready to extend their full support to gay and lesbian couples, there are many more to whom the very idea is foreign, if not offensive. In other words, we have a long way to go to achieve what the first seven resolves call for.

The first seven resolves are asking my parishioners to acknowledge that there are homosexual couples living in lifelong, committed relationships and that our church is to provide to them—these gay and lesbian couples—the encouragement, pastoral care, and prayerful support necessary to live faithfully by the values articulated above.

I try to appreciate the point of view that many gay and lesbian couples are tired of waiting. But at least in my parish, implementing, really implementing those seven resolutions—truly making my parish a place where homosexual couples as couples would be “encouraged” and “prayerfully supported” in their relationships—would be a major step.

House of Bishops, please listen: “Selling” those seven resolves to my parishioners—getting them fully on board with the spirit behind those resolves, helping them to provide, themselves, the kind of pastoral care and prayerful support to gay couples that the seven resolves call for—will be possible precisely because the perceived threat of the eighth is not there.

The sign outside our church and so many others says “the Episcopal Church welcomes you.” I often point out that there is no asterisk after the word “you”—that we welcome everyone. I want so very badly to have a resource, a clear guide for making that true. The seven resolves are that tool. Please, House of Bishops, please realize how huge a step those seven resolves are, just the way they are.

## Planning Her Legacy

Ever wander by the bishops' entrance to their house and seen a smiling security guard playing with what looks like a yo-yo?

Marie Duvall has been standing there every day of General Convention, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., greeting all who pass by with her beaming smile while watching the comings and goings of the Episcopal Church and playing with an exercise ball attached to the end of a string. ("It's for strengthening my hand," she said.)



Duvall says she doesn't mind the long hours. "It's for a good cause," she said. "I'm saving my money to send my 13-year-old grandson to private school."

Adam, the youngest of Marie's five grandchildren, lives with his grandmother in Aurora, Colo., and hopes to go to Riverside Military Academy in Atlanta in the fall of 2001.

"The schools here—schools everywhere—are getting rough," Duvall said yesterday. "He doesn't feel safe. He says kids want to fight all the time.

"He's trying to better himself to get into the school," Duvall said, describing Adam's regimen of running, exercising and swimming before school, followed by an hour of reading and work on his math.

### Perspective *continued from front*

the canons. This resolution offers the way of community and mutual responsibility in the Body of Christ. It opens the door to learning, patience, and creativity as we move forward. It creates an environment for both growth and reconciliation to take place.

I was struck by the quotation cited by Presiding Bishop H. George Anderson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in his warm remarks to us at yesterday's Holy Eucharist: "The sharp edge of difference will be rubbed off by communion and contact." He was speaking of our churches' journey into full communion, of course, but the same wisdom applies in this context.

Amended A045 calls for communion and contact as we urge full reception of the ministry of ordained women in this Church. There are still sharp differences among us. We need to be whole. This resolution has the potential to allow the grace of God to work in us by real communion and contact which can rub off the sharp edges, if we will open ourselves to it.

The Jubilee cross must be carried by those on both sides.

Duvall said she's planning to start a new savings plan—"I read about it in the newspaper (Wednesday's Episcopal Life Convention Daily)—setting aside one dollar of her money for every penny Adam saves. "He needs to learn how to save money," she said.

"I'm sure he'll make it because he's a great kid," Duvall said, smiling and sending her exercise ball flying.

Look for her smiling face outside the "Bishops Only" entrance to the House of Bishops.

## The Day After

*What is the first thing you are going to do when you get home?*



"Sleep for many days, as long as I can sleep."—Francis Wilson, Convention Public Safety

"I am going home and retire some more."—Bishop James Warner, Retired, Nebraska



"Take a shower and call my kids."—Deputy Ann Ray, West Tennessee

"When I go home I will brief the people of my diocese and have meetings."—Bishop Peter Munde, Yambio, Southern Sudan



"Sleep, what else is there? Sleep is definitely the No. 1 priority and spending time with my husband."—Lori Ionntiu, General Convention Manager

"I have to go back to work."—Kirk Hart, Youth Presence, Newark



"Go to bed and then celebrate and preach on Sunday, and no doubt I will preach on General Convention."—Paul Burrows, Legislative Aide, West Des Moines, Iowa

"The first thing we are going to do is have a debriefing on sexuality and Committee 25 and plan strategy for our next Beyond Inclusion meetings."—Rich Meiklejohn, Exhibitor, Beyond Inclusion

