

## Majoring on Trifles: An Interview with Naim Ateek

By Susan Fawcett

*The Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek, founder and director of the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem, is a Palestinian Anglican. He also is a citizen of the state of Israel and a strong voice for Christian nonviolence. His most recent book is "Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation."*

**CA:** How do we as Christians respond to our fellow Christians in the Holy Land—as well as our Muslim and Jewish friends?

**Ateek:** The conflict in the Holy Land today should not be described as Palestinians versus Israelis. It should be described as Jews, Christian, and Muslims who are pro-justice and pro-peace, versus Jews, Christians and Muslims, who are either against peace or are not doing anything about it. For example, with us at Sabeel, we have many Jews who work with us who are very much for justice. This is not a race

issue, and it's not a religion issue either. It's political.

**CA:** What thoughts do you have on Resolutions A011 and A012 on justice in the Holy Land?

**Ateek:** My impression is that they will be good resolutions, and balanced in the sense that they will not let one side have advantage over the other. I hope the Episcopal Church will say, "We want Israel to be a secure state, and we also want Palestine to be a secure state." We need to do justice to the Palestinians, and I would expect our church, while affirming the importance of security for the state of Israel, to take a stand on ending totally the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. All the West Bank needs to go back to the Palestinians, and Jerusalem must be shared between Israel and Palestine. Our church needs to be firm enough to speak prophetically against the injustice.

### The High Table

A guide to area gastronomy

#### Est! Est! Est!

Well, we finally found it. We knew we would. And, of course, it's no secret to natives. (Although, most of the natives we've spoken with know surprisingly little about their city, like where to eat, or how to get to the ballpark.) Nonetheless, south on 3rd and across the highway overpass at the edge of German Village (the polar opposite end of downtown from the Convention Center) is Katzinger's Deli: over a hundred artisanal cheeses, olive oils from Italy, California and New Zealand, handmade rugelach, knishes, latkes, and breads, plus excellent gazpacho and some of the tastiest sandwiches and salads in town. The names of the sandwiches are no help to decision making, names like "Rachel & Nicki Got Stuck in a Closet," and "The Good, The Bad and The Lawyer." But the ingredients are deli classics – fresh mozzarella, portabello mushrooms, brisket, ham, turkey and chopped liver. A small is all you need. The best part – and this is important for folks huddled around the Convention Center – they deliver. Katzinger's Deli, 475 S 3rd St., 614-228-DELI, menu online at [www.katzingers.com](http://www.katzingers.com). Open M-F 8:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m., Sat. & Sun. 9 a.m.-8:30 p.m. •

### Specificity continued

candidates on a temporary basis is too high a price to pay are, in essence, rejecting a key call of Windsor: the moratorium. Three years is not too long, particularly since such a temporary moratorium would allow our Church to test the waters of consensus at the 2008 Lambeth Conference, and to engage fully in the Communion listening process.

3. Insist that uninvited bishops who cross diocesan boundaries obey the rules. Building trust in the Communion depends on respecting the authority of bishops. It also depends on bishops supporting a program of Designated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight for alienated church members. Windsor has justly praised our church's DEPO program for setting the right balance on these matters.
4. Reaffirm our embrace of gay and lesbian members of the church, and remain mindful of the burdens our actions will place on them. This is not a patronizing pat on the back. It's a declaration of love and good faith in a contentious time.

That's it – no more, no less. Let's get on with it. •

**CA:** Does it seem ironic to you that, amidst the Convention's calls for continued participation in and awareness of our Anglican brothers and sisters, we have trouble identifying our response to Anglicans in Palestine?

**Ateek:** We need to really look at priorities. When people are getting killed, when their land is being confiscated and they are oppressed, when injustice is done to so many, it seems to me that that's where we need to put our energy. Sadly enough, it's like when Jesus challenged the Pharisees in Matthew 23. You're spending all your time trying to tithe the mint and dill and cumin, and you are forgetting justice, mercy and faith. That's majoring on trifles rather than majoring on the real issues that dehumanize people: injustice, poverty, and the weightier issues of life. •

### OffCenter



*Worship is central to our week together at General Convention. Center Aisle will share snippets of sermons, hymns and prayers from those services.*

THE BROTHERS OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. JOHN EVANGELIST LED US IN SINGING THE FOLLOWING REFRAIN AT THE FAREWELL CELEBRATION FOR PRESIDING BISHOP FRANK T. GRISWOLD:

"I have called you friends;  
You know what I do;  
All the Father's love I now give to you."

THE REV. FRANK WADE, HONORING THE PRESIDENT OF THE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES, THE REV. GEORGE WERNER: "We are a Church of conflict and contradiction sprinkled over with absolute confidence."

THE REV. ALISON CRAWFORD, QUOTING POET ANTONIO MACHADO: "Traveler, there is no way...the way is made by walking."



## Center Aisle

*'The middle is not the midpoint on a line between two extremes. In the life of faith, the great bulk of people are at the center, and that center is faith in the Risen Christ.'*

The Pastoral Address to the 210th Annual Council of the Diocese of Virginia, 2005, the Rt. Rev. Peter James Lee

### Perspective

## On Mutual Submission, Compromise & the PB Election

By The Rt. Rev. Peter James Lee

We have reached a point in the 75th General Convention where the legislative process needs an infusion of the spiritual values of mutual submission (Phil. 1:4) if we are to act in ways that are clear to our own Church and to the wider Anglican Communion.

Mutual submission has been operative in the legislative committees as many members of many committees have agreed to resolutions and budget provisions that do not represent all that one or more individual committee members might prefer. But in a spirit of surrendering some of what an individual wants in order to secure a resolution or budget provision that embraces as many committee members as possible, many committee members have voted for provisions that they may not consider perfect, but build up the whole.

With three days left in the legislative process, both the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops need to embody more of that spirit of mutual submission. When multiple amendments are proposed on the floor to a committee's carefully crafted product, one house risks losing the balance of the committee's work and losing support in the other house. This is especially problematic with amendments to a

*For additional and expanded analysis and opinions, visit us at [www.centeraisle.net](http://www.centeraisle.net). Or subscribe to our daily e-mail push at <http://www.centeraisle.net/listserv.html>. We'll send out a notice each night when the next day's content is ready for viewing.*



Mike Keir

motion to concur, which will cause a resolution to bounce between the houses. Our own people and the wider Communion expect us to act clearly and wisely. Our committees are working to embody mutual submission. The two houses need to honor the work of the committees so the Convention might act with that same clarity and wisdom.

The election of the Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Bishop of Nevada, as Presiding Bishop and Primate was not a surprise to members of the Nominating Committee who visited her in her diocese last fall nor to several bishops who were taken by the breadth of her

*Perspective continued on THREE*

#### **"Where can I find the Center Aisle?"**

*By about 6:45 each morning, you can find it on the General Convention info desk in the lobby of your hotel. You also can find it in the Convention Center on the desk near the volunteer kiosk by the main escalators. And of course, we're distributing by hand each morning around town and outside the Convention Center.*

### Editorial

## Time for Some Specificity

Only Anglicans could argue that clarity clouds the issue.

Yet that's the ode to vagueness some are reciting when it comes to Windsor resolutions. The argument seems to be: If we're too specific about how we react to Windsor, we'll never agree on anything. So, let's embrace our ambiguity.

There's nothing wrong with a little fuzzy AnglicanSpeak. It can be uniting in a church with significant differences on fundamental issues, particularly as time runs out on this Convention. But there are limits.

If we want to be true to ourselves, open to the views of others, and faithful to the spirit of Windsor (not to mention the Gospel), we need to keep focusing on the priorities:

1. Express regret for the breach in Communion relations that was caused in part by the perception that our church acted unilaterally in consenting to the election of Gene Robinson.
2. Forego any new consents to the election of candidates for bishop who are involved in sexual relationships outside of monogamous, heterosexual marriage until there is greater consensus on these issues in the Communion, or at least until the 2009 General Convention. The same goes for any consideration of liturgical changes to bless same-gender unions. The wording we use on candidates for bishop should avoid focusing exclusively on gays and lesbians, by referring to the normative model for sexual intimacy —monogamous, heterosexual marriage. Those who claim that singling out such

*Specificity continued on FOUR*

## Letter to the Editor

We're interested in our opinions—and yours!

E-mail your comments, analyses and reactions to [centeraisle@thediocese.net](mailto:centeraisle@thediocese.net) or bring them to our offices in Room 30 on the third floor of the Columbus Renaissance Hotel.

Candor is welcome. So is brevity. Shoot for 80 words or less.

### Thank You

Once again, it is clear why the *Center Aisle* is such a gift to those of us trying to follow the events of General Convention. Thanks to the entire staff for the information, insight and thoughts you share with us daily. Reading the *Center Aisle* restores my faith that the Episcopal Church does not have to be about extremes, but rather a place in which we all listen to one another in the love of Christ. Continue the great job!

THE REV. JOSÉ A. McLOUGHLIN  
WINCHESTER, VA.

### Title IV Validates Suspicion

I couldn't agree more with Russ Randle's comments in "Title IV: No thanks," especially regarding the issue of replacing the standard of evidence from "clear and convincing" to a preponderance. Validating suspicion as standard of evidence is not a worthy behavior of the church, in my opinion.

THE REV. ALEXANDER MACPHAIL  
GORDONSVILLE, VA.

### Robinson's Flaw

Bishop Robinson reveals the major flaw in the revision agenda. It is not that Bishop Akinola and the rest of us would not want Gene Robinson in our Church, but rather, we just do not agree with the fact that he is a Bishop.

THE REV. CANON RICHARD A. SWAN  
DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

### Godspeed

I have greatly enjoyed reading the daily reports and editorials from General Convention. I particularly want to commend the Rev. John

Ohmer for his thoughtful and insightful work and presentations. His report of his interviews with the Rt. Rev. V. Gene Robinson and the Rt. Rev. Robert Duncan was masterfully presented. I have also enjoyed using the links to the ENS website and the Provincial websites to see what folks in other parts of the country are saying. Your hard work in Columbus is not going unnoticed here in Virginia and we are praying hard for all of you as you seek to find God's will among so many strong-willed people. Keep up the good work and take good care of yourselves. Godspeed.

HELEN SPENCE  
SPRINGFIELD, VA.

### Clergy Family Support

This is just a quick note to express thanks to you for your web site. I am the spouse of a newly ordained priest. Beside the major issues gripping the Church, my concerns seem very trivial. They relate to the lives of spouses and "PKs" [priest's kids] in the church, those who support those in the discernment process and those ordained. Of special interest to me is B001, and without your site, I would find it difficult to track its progress. I know that there are many others whose focus is church liturgy, or outreach etc. These are not the issues that spark the attention of CNN or the print media. So, for all of us whose concerns seem so mundane, again, I say thanks for keeping us posted.

EMILY HENDERSON  
MAYSVILLE, KY.

### This Is About Power

I've often heard it said that Jesus preached a message of radical love and acceptance. Frankly, I'm not sure I agree. While it's true Jesus offered acceptance to many, that acceptance was far from universal. In fact, Jesus admonished many people during his time on earth. It's interesting to me that his harshest and most angry criticisms were aimed at the Scribes and Pharisees, the ones with religious power and prestige.

It makes me sad to see so many in the church fighting. And what are they fighting over? They're fighting over power – who has it and who wants it. They're fighting over who gets to be in charge. Is this why Jesus died?

I have a feeling God doesn't give a flying fig what rich white person gets to wear a purple shirt. While we are sitting in our comfortable pews with our fancy vestments arguing over who is most worthy of being in charge, God is where God always is. God's walking with sinners. And those sinners are who they always have been. They are the poor, the powerless, the marginalized, the oppressed. And as has been the case for well over 2,000 years, the church still has very little to do with them.

PATRICIA MUELLER  
MANASSAS, VA.

### Why Moratorium?

"What would we gain from a moratorium...?" ("Time and Timing", CA #4) The more important question is what would we lose. We would be telling our faithful gay and lesbian church members, who have waited so long for the church to set aside historic bigotries and to fully welcome them to the table, once again, we do not truly care enough for them as persons to put their real spiritual needs ahead of church politics.

A Windsor-type moratorium would tell them that we think maybe yes, there is something "wrong" with gays and lesbians because we need "more time" to think about whether simply being in a loving committed gay relationship may be enough to disqualify someone from being a bishop after all.

And we would be giving these good people this slap in the face why? Simply to appease those other voices in the Communion who are the very ones persecuting and demeaning them? It is not enough to merely talk of "reaffirming the full and equal claim of gay and lesbian people for membership in the Body of Christ" if we simultaneously choose actions which reject them and add to their pain. We are told to love, not just in word and speech, but in action and in truth (1 Jn. 3:18). Why do we need more time? Surely, in our hearts, we know the actions of GC 2003 were righteous. Let us have the courage of our convictions, and not give in to pressure simply to gain "time."

JOHN SCHWARZ  
RESTON, VA.

## Virginia Voices

# The Long View on Women

By The Rev. Holly Antolini

Standing with a candle on the Women's Ministry timeline ringing the walls of Trinity Church, I felt the patient witness to Christ of centuries of women all around me in the glimmering dark.

It's tempting to think that progress is linear and moving steadily forward. But the breath of the Spirit "bloweth where it listeth." And often it listeth in a disorienting, circular motion before the forward impetus can be discerned.

Take women's ordination. Things have moved at a pretty fast clip in the past 30 years, from "irregular" to "regular" ordinations, to women in the episcopate, to a woman presiding bishop-elect.

At first glance, it looks like a natural outgrowth of the women deaconesses of the late 19th-century suffrage movement.

But in the first half of the 20th century, that ever-rolling stream of justice roiled and churned and looked as if it might turn back on itself. The Lambeth Conference reversed an earlier decision

## Over Trained?

By The Rev. Susan Goff

The people of our church have a heart for those who are in need, those who are neglected, and those who suffer. The beating of that heart is evident in a variety of ways in this General Convention, from our local attentiveness to tipping those who serve us, to our global focus on the Millennium Development Goals.

It is also evident in the number of resolutions that call for specialized training for clergy and lay leaders. Building, perhaps, on the successful model of required training for the prevention of sexual abuse, we have before us resolutions calling for training in active non-violence, awareness of domestic and intimate partner abuse, and awareness of HIV/AIDS. These are all vitally important issues.

Adding requirement upon requirement for our clergy and lay leaders, however, could prove detrimental. How many more days of training can be added to already full seminary schedules?

and asserted deaconesses were not in holy orders after all. In 1919, General Convention inserted the word "male" into the qualifications for being a deputy, rejected licensing women as lay readers. And even as late as 1949, women deputies, elected by their dioceses, were refused voice and vote at Convention.

Yet by 1970, women were once again accepted as deacons and lay deputies to Convention, as priests in 1976, and bishops in 1985. Pam Chinnis became the first woman President of the House

of Deputies in 1991, and by 1998, there were 11 women bishops among the more than 700 at the Lambeth Conference.

Reflecting on this history in the candlelight at Trinity, 15 years into my own ministry as a priest in the church, I took a deep breath and thought, "OK, chill, *amiga*. Let's trust the Spirit. We might not know where it's headed. Worse, we might think we can control it. We often get in its way. But sooner or later, God works God's purpose out." •

And how many people in our pews will allow their names to be placed in nomination for leadership positions if it means hour upon hour of required training programs?

Committees of this Convention are aware of these questions and have amended resolutions to encourage rather than require training. A further step we can take to balance the need for training with the demands on our leaders is to create and fund a Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Education, as called for in the amended Resolution A105.

The duty of this commission would be to recommend to the General Convention comprehensive and coordinated policies for lifelong Christian formation, including education and training for leaders. Adoption of this resolution will go a long way toward ensuring that our heart for protecting and serving others continues to beat with health and strength. •

## Perspective continued

insights when she and the other nominees spoke to the House of Bishops at the house meeting in March at the Kanuga Conference Center.

The election is a surprise to those who view the position of Presiding Bishop as the pinnacle of a career track that has usually included rectorship of a cardinal parish and experience in a large urban diocese with the Primacy as a natural extension of a conventional career track.

Katharine Jefferts Schori has experience in a small diocese and small churches – which are more characteristic of the Episcopal Church than the large ecclesial institutions on both coasts. She has experience as a scientist. She is fluent in the science and technology of the 21st century and as such is in a position of potential leadership to help this church speak a word of grace to new generations.

That she is a woman is a gift to the worldwide Communion, where the typical Anglican is a faithful woman. Dr. Esther Mombo, an Anglican theologian who spoke in May to the clergy and lay professional conference in the Diocese of Virginia, was asked her opinion of the impact on the Primates' Committee should the Episcopal Church elect a woman as our Primate. "It will be good for the brothers," she quipped.

Bishop Jefferts Schori may be in a better position than a male primate to speak new dimensions of old truths to the wider Communion. She thinks clearly. Her faith is articulate and sound. She will not have to prove her progressive credentials back home. She can speak the truth in love and represent the Church with grace. •

## Committee Hearings: June 19

**Canons:** 7:30 a.m., Union DE, OH, C026,D067,D068, Reg. 15 min. prior

**Nat. & Int.:** 8 a.m., Delaware A, OH, A130,B015,B022,D024, Reg. 30 min. prior

**Social & Urban:** 7:30 a.m., Delaware BC, OH, B025,B026,B027,C048,D063,D070,D073, Reg. 15 min. prior

**Prayer Bk., Lit. & Ch. Music:** 8:30 a.m., Franklin CD, OH, D084, Reg. 15 min. prior

**Communications:** 8:30 a.m., Fayette, OH, A022, Reg. 15 min. prior

**PB & F:** 7:30 a.m., Convention Center, Exec. Sess., D233

**Spec. Comte.:** 8:00 a.m., Hayes, Deliberations, A169



Bishop Lee Jones Ohmer Stanley Antolini Fawcett Kerr Getlein  
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