

Opening Letter by Mark Rudolph

Sometimes, it's a compliment to say that someone is "pragmatic." The word evokes the idea that what one says or knows can be put into practice and acted upon. The pragmatic person deals with what is real and concrete, unlike the so-called ivory tower scholar, far removed from the *real* world.

In fact, it's this idea of what is real, what is concrete that underlies the words "pragmatic," as well as "practical" (both come from the same Greek root word). Dealing with reality, being hardnosed about the *real* world, that's to be commended. It's the idea behind the political term of art, *Realpolitik* (a German compound word), referring to a pragmatic or practical approach to international affairs. *Realpolitik* is what is realistic, practical, and actual. It refers to the application of financial leverage and military might to accomplish a goal, without regard for ethical premises.

Theories and ideas (some might say) may have their place in the classroom, in the science lab, or in a late night conversation between scholars over cigars and port. But such things are typically seen as unhelpful in the real world, where one must put food on the table, pay taxes, raise children, and otherwise function on a daily basis. The protected and soft-minded academic might have the leisure to deal with these things, but *real people* have to deal with the real world!

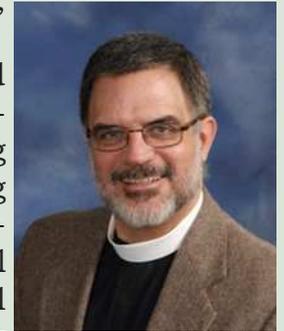


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It's because of a "pragmatic" mind-set that the Christian hope has often been criticized as impractical, unrealistic, and not pragmatic. Churches seeking to be faithful to Christ's call to be salt, light, and the exemplar city set in a place for all to see, can be criticized as guilty of foolish, pie-in-the-sky empty headedness.

Perhaps, then again, perhaps not!

The word "pragmatic" also has a negative connotation. Being pragmatic can mean being amoral (ignorantly not taking into account moral standards), even immoral (knowingly acting contrary to moral standards). It can evoke phrases such as these.



- "Doing what you have to do to get things done ..."
- "The ends justify the means."

Inside this issue:

Opening Letter	1
Faith Of Our Fathers	2
The Mystery of the Baby Bottles	2
Upcoming Events	2
Baker Book Brief	3
Let the Fire Fall	4
A Taste of Alpha at Abington Baptist Church	4
Commentary from Phila. Inquirer Appeal ruling on marriage	5
Nicaragua Update	7
Walking Worthy	8

- "You've got to break some eggs to make an omelet."
- "Sometimes you have to lie to make your point."

(continued on page 6)

The Faith Of Our Fathers

By Bill Kenney

We have been blessed with a precious inheritance from our Christian forebears: A set of beliefs and a way of life, both distinctive and demanding. The beliefs are summarized in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Within the second of these two can be found this description of the Holy Spirit, "Who proceeds from the Father and the Son." These words which compose what is technically called "The Filioque Clause" have sadly caused deplorable division within Christ's worldwide church for the last 1,000 years. On one side are the Eastern Orthodox branches, and on the other are the Western branches including Roman Catholics and Protestants and our parish. The question is, should the clause say only "From the Father" (The original Eastern Form) or should it say "From the Father and the Son" (The Western Form)?

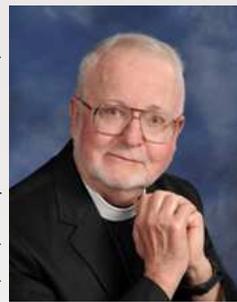
We raise this issue now because we are in the process of adopting for our own use the liturgical booklet of our denominational body, The Anglican Province of

Rwanda in U.S.A. and its affiliate, the Anglican Church in North America.

Our purpose is to avoid using indefinitely our red booklet which was created by our own church staff over 30 years ago, and was intended to be a temporary expedient in dealing with the unscriptural direction of our diocese and denomination at that time.

Our new liturgical booklet will no longer maintain artificial silence on this "Filioque" matter, as has been the case up to the present. Instead, the Filioque dispute will be described in a brief footnote, clearly acknowledging the scriptural legitimacy of both forms.

There are also political, philosophical and cultural aspects to this historic dispute which some of us may have the time and aptitude to delve into. If so, please contact any of our clergy.



Bill



Baby Bottle Boomerang

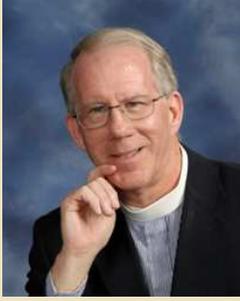
*The Mystery of the Missing
Baby Bottles Has Been
Resolved!*

The baby bottles have been found! Because of the delay in finding the baby bottles, we are extending the deadline to Sunday, July 13, 2014.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, June 7th at 3:30 p.m.
Grete Ingalls to Perform at the
Kimmel Center Verizon Hall
Free admission.

Thursday, June 12th at 7:30
p.m.
Evening Women's Fellowship in
Abington, PA



*Baker Library Book
Brief
By Ken Cook*

I am sure that many of you will agree with me that it was a privilege to have among us a visiting preacher and teacher who had been raised and served as a Christian minister in a Muslim nation. His testimony with regard to the persecution of Christians within his native land was chilling. I quickly came to have admiration for this brother, realizing the circumstances under which his discipleship in Christ had been formed; this was how the “other 85%” of the world’s population, who do not have our present tradition of religious freedom, come to live and believe in Christ. We struggle to have some steel in our spines; they have much less choice, if they wish to persevere in Christ and his word.

Yet, I suppose that we were not all that surprised by his testimony. After all, Jesus had said to his disciples that last night in the Upper Room, “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you... The hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me” (John 15:18; 16:2-3). For those of you who were not present on this recent occasion - and for those who were present and would like to learn more - a copy of [Mirage: The Love Language of Islam](#) is being added to our library.

This volume is just as startling as was our visitor’s address at both services and in the adult Sunday School class. The book is based on life experience as a member of the Christian minority within the cruel crucible of a Muslim nation, but also upon a great deal of formal research over the last three decades, and the crucial test of reality. It is, in the

opinion of our author, with regard to this last-mentioned dynamic that modern Americans are proving to be most ignorant; see the fifth chapter. Otherwise, the author provides almost encyclopedic information - with which he needed more editorial assistance. (If you wish, see the bibliography and the list of websites regarding Islam found in the final pages of the book.)

If you are looking for an extensive one-volume introduction to the history, thought, terminology, ethics and practice of contemporary Islam, this work - despite the editorial difficulties - will serve you well. The major picture that emerges throughout is that, properly understood, there is no such thing as a moderate Islam, and that Islam is given to deception until it arrives at a critical mass within any given society. After that the gloves come off. Certainly, that has been the case as it has been observed within history. This study examines the many facets of Islam from a variety of perspectives, while consistently considering how the claims and practices of Islam differ from the teachings of the Bible, and, particularly, the New Testament as fulfilled in Christ.

The first three chapters focus upon an attempt at dialogue between Muslim and Christian leaders fomented by a document published by the Yale Center for Faith and Culture in 2007, “A Common Word Between Us and You”, which, following 9/11, sought formal cultural reconciliation between Muslims and Christians in the Western world. A response document came to be signed by quite a number of ecclesiastical leaders, while the majority found themselves having to remain critical or aloof. Our author’s key perception is that such attempts at “interfaith dialogue” are impossible with Islam, which insists on determining what “common ground” there might be between Islam and those who are not yet converted.

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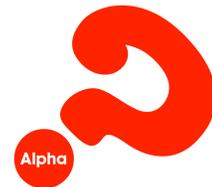
Let The Fire Fall
@2014 Linda Barrett

*A *
Flame
Came down
From Heaven forty days
after Jesus ascended from Mount Sinai

Commanded by Him, the apostles went to Jerusalem
Awaited His message among many pilgrims
Who came celebrating the Pentecostal holiday
Through a mighty, roaring wind, the Holy Spirit swept in

*Ignited flames upon the 12 disciples' heads, opening their tongues *
Made them speak in countless languages in that known world
*After that day, 12 men expanded Christ's Church from 500 *
*adding 3,000 whose lives would never be the same expanding to now *

over 2014 years



“Taste of ALPHA” for local churches

Where: Carriage House at Abington Baptist Church

Format: Light Meal, DVD presentation, Small Group Discussion

June 7th, Saturday, 9-11 a.m.	Breakfast: Bagels, muffins, coffee, tea, etc.
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“Is There More to Life Than This?”

June 11, Wednesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m.	Dinner: Pasta and salad
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“Who is Jesus?”

June 18, Wednesday, 12-2 p.m.	Lunch: Sandwich Tray
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“Why and How Should I Tell Others?”

The Alpha logo is new and can be used for advertising Alpha programs. If you have any questions, contact communications@alpha.org or visit <http://www.alphausa.org/Groups/1000042084/Downloads.aspx>.

I encourage all interested readers to peruse the whole book. Of special value are Chapters Six through Ten and the appendix, "The Myths of Islam". A great deal of misunderstanding concerning Islam is dispelled as the reader is exposed to texts from the Qu'ran, Hadith and Sira, the pronouncements of historic Muslim leaders, the study of Islamic terms and names, a consideration of the "Paradise" which is promised the faithful and a contrasting study of "Love", Muslim and Christian. The last chapter offers wise counsel about reaching out to Muslims with the Gospel.

COMMENTARY

Appeal ruling on marriage

By Michael J. McMonagle

On May 20, U.S. District Court Judge John E. Jones 3d declared Pennsylvania's law that defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman unconstitutional. The next day, Gov. Corbett refused to appeal the ruling, which represents a betrayal of his duty as governor and his promises to voters.

Pennsylvania's elected representatives overwhelmingly passed the law defining marriage in 1996, and it was signed by Gov. Tom Ridge. Yet 18 years later, Jones and Corbett have decided that gender no longer matters to marriage, instituting a huge public policy change without the approval of the state's citizens.

Just last year, Corbett had forcefully criticized Attorney General Kathleen Kane for not defending Pennsylvania's marriage law. He is now similarly derelict in his duty.

Corbett says an appeal of Jones' ruling is unlikely to succeed. Not necessarily. In January, the U.S. Supreme Court put same-sex marriage on hold in Utah.

When Corbett ran for attorney general in 2008 and for governor in 2010, he signed a pledge saying he supported Pennsylvania's marriage law. He has abandoned that pledge, and the most likely explanation for this change of heart is that he believes his political interests are best served by not appealing. But here's the reality: Corbett's failure to appeal greatly reduces his reelection chances,

as many pro-life voters will not reward such betrayal.

Civil marriage exists primarily to provide tangible benefits for children, not emotional benefits for adults. Thus, Corbett and Jones have decided to end the only legal relationship that unites children with their mom and dad. Their decision means that more children will be raised without a mom or a dad, adoption agencies that are faithful to Christian teaching will be forced to close, and there will be increased attacks on the civil and religious rights of citizens who don't support same-sex marriage.

Corbett is wrong to suggest that his decision does not conflict with his Catholic faith. The Catholic Church teaches that marriage is necessarily heterosexual. The conjugal relationship between husband and wife, because it is capable of creating a third person, reflects God's image in the Holy Trinity. Human life is sacred because human beings are created in God's image. Thus, the undermining of God's image through same-sex marriage undermines the sanctity of human life.

The state's clergy must boldly proclaim the truth about the nature and purpose of marriage. Citizens need to courageously take a public stand. We all should demand that Corbett appeal Jones' decision, making our voices heard in Harrisburg and at the March for Marriage June 19 in Washington.

Michael J. McMonagle is the president of the Pro-Life Coalition of Pennsylvania. ✉ paprolifecoalition@gmail.com

- Or any sentence that contains the clause, "... in this day and age ..."

Why is pragmatism sometimes frowned upon? Because it only takes into account this moment of one's experience, and only the data available for one's own judgment. It's often short-sighted thinking and ill-informed.

- "How do you think this will affect the environment in the long-term?" "I don't know and I don't care! It's the bottom line that matters right now!"
- "What do you think this will do to the family over the next 50 years?" "Who knows? I just know what feels right for me, right now!"
- "Don't you know that smoking can kill you?" "All I know is that I feel just fine!"

Why am I addressing the idea of "pragmatism"? Because Christians have fallen into the trap of pragmatism in the west and it's killing the church and killing our nations.

1. It was academic pragmatism that gave way to European liberalism in the 1800s, making the path clear for the complete undermining of the authority of Scripture.
2. It was economic pragmatism that gave way to use of slave labor in the south and child labor in the north.
3. Social pragmatism has caused the church to become silent about the roles of men and women, marriage and the family.
4. Political pragmatism has silenced the mouths of politicians about matters having to do with life and death.

In all of these cases, the church has allowed itself to become overwhelmed and seduced by what seems practical, pragmatic, and workable in the moment. And in a sense, who can blame the church? If the pragmatic person has a choice between "the meek shall inherit the earth" and "might makes right," who wouldn't choose the latter? If the practical organization has the choice between "blessed are the peacemakers" and "secure are the well-protected," it doesn't take a genius to figure out which seems most — well — pragmatic.

And so the church has chosen its own short-sightedness over God's long eternal view. It chose passing academic fads over divine authority. It chose the approval of constituents over the approval of the creator.

I'm often asked what my vision is for St. John's. It's actually pretty simple. "To be flexible and creative within the standards." This implies two things (at least).

There are standards, and we must take them seriously. No matter what external forces may press against us, we will stick to those standards — by which I primarily mean the Bible. After all, since the Bible is God's word, it's the ultimate practical document!

Let's be so confident about the practicality of God's word that we are unafraid to put our weight on it, without hesitation. Instead of retreat and isolation, let's stick our necks out in confidence, knowing that the Lord's revelation is worthy of our trust!

If we put our weight on Scripture, then Christians are the most practical people on earth, the most pragmatic. We have a sneak peek into how things really work, unlike those who do not trust God's word. We may look foolish to those around us, but then again, don't adults often sound foolish to children?



Nicaragua Mission Trip June 15-28, 2014

Update



The team is nearly ready for their mission trip to Nicaragua. The team meets for dinner on Saturday, June 14th to divvy up the VBS and team supplies which need to be packed in luggage, go over final details, and of course pray!

There is still time to make a donation for the Nicaragua Mission Trip. Please remember to make a note on the memo line of your check "Nicaragua Mission Trip 2014."

2014 Team Members:

Ellen Bodenheimer	Chris Freisheim	Mayo Dunn
Butch Bodenheimer	Deb Freisheim	Chuck Steege
Chris Chambers	Rev. Mark Rudolph	Sue Steege
Liz Christian	Lynn Rudolph	Lydia Wegner

Ministry in Santa Maria:

- Support to community driven work projects
- Home visits
- Youth Group meetings
- Vacation Bible school for community children
- Men's and Women's Bible studies
- Relationship building

If you would like to hear more about our mission trip, please feel free to talk with any of our 2014 team members.

***The community of Santa Maria and the St. John's team
welcome your prayers and support!***



What's the Buzz, our weekly newsletter, is shrinking.



If you are looking for the General Information which was repeated every week, you can find it on our website www.toknowchrist.org under Resources/ General Information.



Less Paper = Less Cost = Less Reading = More Trees!

Walking Worthy by Bishop Steve Breedlove

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:1-3

BY LWATTS



Many, many people are praying daily as the time draws nearer for the election of a new ACNA archbishop. The bishops of the ACNA have agreed to reject “politicking” or lobbying for any particular candidate or issue. Instead there has been a commitment to fasting and prayer for God to raise up his anointed leader. From all accounts, that commitment is holding. The bishops will gather in conclave in Latrobe, PA, June 19-22. For four days we will pray and talk as we take a series of votes until one bishop emerges as God’s choice to lead the ACNA for the next five years. We expect it to be a good and godly process.

As I pray for the ACNA’s next archbishop, I sense God calling me equally to pray daily for protection and growth of unity in the ACNA. Why? The effort to bring together any sort of diverse expressions of Christianity in spiritual, missional, relational, and structural unity is rare. Determining to do so while remaining committed to biblical faith and Gospel mission makes the effort of “re-unification” even more rare. (In the ACNA truth has **not** been discarded in favor of bureaucratic forms and fuzzy feelings: rather, evangelical fervor, theological engagement, and genuine reconciliation are hallmarks. Those hallmarks **should** lead to oneness, but the historic Church’s track record around maintaining unity in the context of theological fervor is not great.) Further, faithful praying is logical because this work of **actualized** unity is newly begun, because much work remains to be done, and because the enemy of the Gospel is fiercely opposed to this effort. Throughout this work, we must stay alert to the schemes of the one who loves to rip asunder and divide.

I was praying about unity recently on a morning when I was to meet with bishops from two other ACNA jurisdictions. In both conversations, it became apparent the same burden is on the hearts of my fellow bishops. We had fruitful, hopeful discussions about unity. In the course of the day, a working definition of **actualized** Christian unity emerged in my mind.

We start by remembering that true unity is a given, founded upon and established by Jesus himself. Our hope of unity is that it is Jesus’ idea, Jesus’ prayer, and Jesus’ commitment. If we are **in Christ**, we are one with him and with one another. But **visible, actualized unity in this life** requires intentionality in pursuing at least four dimensions of Christian unity: Gospel-centeredness, grace-filled relationships, shared Gospel mission, and institutional coherence.

“Gospel-centeredness” means (1) following Jesus Christ in growing faith and allegiance, (2) embracing biblical truth and its corresponding lifestyle, and (3) worshipping and proclaiming the Triune God in the power of the Spirit. (By no means is this a complete description, but it gets us on track toward the fullness of the concept.) This particular tri-fold definition covers the beginning of the Christian life, the path of the Christian life, and the ultimate purpose of the Christian life.

“Grace-filled relationships” describes a life of love and charity toward one another, a determination to pursue honesty and biblical reconciliation, a shared delight

in the family of God, and the capacity to honor one another as we talk openly about non-essentials. (This last point is important. Relationships can feel united until we find out that we disagree with one another on an issue that is dear to our hearts. How we talk that through, and how we agree to disagree over secondary theological issues, is a fundamental component of unity.)

“Shared Gospel mission” calls us to actually work together to proclaim the Gospel in words and deeds of truth, love, and mercy. Action!

Finally, my brothers and I talked about the place of **“institutional coherence”** in unity. I believe this is essential to actualized unity. Many evangelical friends would disagree, so let me take a minute to defend this proposition.

In our particular understanding of the faith, we stand on the notion that Christianity is incarnational: it is spiritual truth and faith embodied in physical (visible) forms and actions. “God created man in his own image, male and female he created him.” “This place is none other than the house of God!” “Lo, the bush is burning, yet it is not consumed.” “The Word became flesh and dwelled among us.” “Faith without works is dead.” The concept of “a personal relationship” with God leads to the most basic of relational actions – conversation (i.e., prayer). “Trusting God” is expressed in obeying God. Marital love logics into covenant marriage between one man and one woman. The Gospel is both proclaimed and enacted in worship, and the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Eucharist invite us into a mystery of grace beyond our ken but open to our sight. Every sacramental action embodies elements of what we believe about salvation.

In the same way, unity that has substance must be visible, not just theorized. Therefore, the institutional expression of unity matters, or we stand accused of “words without deeds.” This came home to me as I prayed for a pastor who faces a real struggle of enduring in a denomination headed down the broad way of liberalism. His question of integrity in the Gospel is complicated by the knowledge that his institutional departure will, in his particular ministry setting, be seen as shameful to the watching world. It can sound like a simple answer (“Leave!”), but the fact is, the world expects Christians to fragment. They deride us for it. They do not buy “spiritual unity” without “visible unity.”

This is why this grand experiment – this uphill trek against the tide of our human proclivity toward division – is worth prayer, tears, intentionality, work, and practical action. It is why we should figure out how to honor our various convictions within the broad tent of orthodox Anglicanism AND figure out how to work together, love each other, and form visible expressions of unity. I pray daily for the ACNA in light of the revolutionary venture we are on.

I am privileged to be a member of the ACNA’s Anglican Unity Task Force. I cannot tell you how “papa-proud” I was recently when I heard at least five examples of PEARUSA bishops and clergy leading in collaborative mission shared by other members of the Task Force. The stories came from every region of the US. I am grateful that our core commitment to be a relational movement, and therefore a collaborative movement, is not just words but deeds. What we have learned from living in connection with Rwanda is bearing fruit. Gospel-centeredness, grace-filled relationships, shared Gospel mission, and institutional collaboration – it’s the Rwandan way. Far more important, it’s the Jesus way: *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”*

Bishop Steve Breedlove, Presider, PEARUSA