



# Baptismal Mission Forum



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## BAPTISMAL MISSION FORUM

### The Good Newsletter for Episcopalians on Baptismal Mission

Editor: Rev. Dr. Peyton G. Craighill

Associate Editors:

- Rt. Rev. Herbert A. Donovan, Jr.
- Rt. Rev. Edward L. Lee, Jr.
- Rev. J. Fletcher Lowe
- Ms. Demi L. Prentiss
- Rev. A. Wayne Schwab

Contact Information:

25 Sycamore Lane, Lexington VA 24450

540-463-7092

Peyton.g@comcast.net

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 From the Editor
- 3 The Missional Church Movement and the Anglican Communion
- 10 Since Canon 1 about Ministry addresses the Essence of Christian Faith and Life, Why is It so Widely Ignored?
- 12 Book Review: “*Transforming Evangelism*” Needs Transformation
- 16 Tentmakers as full-time ministers
- 17 Book Review: Ministry and Mission Aren’t the Same Thing

## FROM THE EDITOR

Dear friends in Christ,

Welcome to a baptism!

Usually, a baptism involves a human baby. This occasion is different because it involves a *digital baby*! The baby’s name is *Baptismal Mission Forum*, and its parents’ name is *Episcopalians on Baptismal Mission*. Godparents for the baby are self-selecting. If you’re interested, you can be a godparent. But if you choose to do so, you must commit yourself—as all good godparents should—to taking an interest in the child and in the child’s parents and to contributing to its welfare by showing your interest.

Why has God brought this child into the world?

The best way to answer that question is to take a look at the child’s family name and its own name. First the family name:

***Episcopalians***—Since the organization behind this publication is deeply committed to outreach, we are also committed to outreach and inclusion. We welcome anyone who shares our enthusiasm for our mission. As we do so, we also acknowledge that the “base camp” supporting our mission is the Episcopal Church.

***On***—The word used in this context suggests movement with a purpose, as in the phrase, “on safari”. In our case, we aren’t

on a journey to shoot wild animals. Our journey involves promoting sharing in Christ's mission in daily life for all baptized people.

**Baptismal**—We use “baptismal” in our name to point to what we believe is the most important meaning of the word, baptism. We recognize that baptism means inclusion into the Body of Christ and sharing in Christ's death and resurrection through dying to a self-centered existence and rising to a new life of God-centered living. But we believe that the rite also has a third meaning. This meaning is Christ's commissioning through baptism of people to share with him in his mission of transforming the world.

**Mission**—What is the mission that God calls us to through baptism? To explore the answer to that question as fully as possible is why this publication exists. A short answer is, to share with God in his mission of bringing God's love and justice into every corner of the world in which we live.

**Forum**—The presence of the word in this publication's name means that we won't indulge in one-way communication from us to you. According to the dictionary, a forum is a place for public discourse. We want this publication to be a space for two-way, public discussion of the world-

transforming issues and processes associated with the word, “mission”.

What the future will bring to this newly-baptized infant remains up to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The present plan is that it will be an online publication produced four times a year.

Congratulations on this baptism will be gratefully received! Your interest and support is welcomed.

Peyton G. Craighill, Editor

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## THE MISSIONAL CHURCH MOVEMENT AND THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

by Peyton G. Craighill



In The Episcopal Church, knowledgeable church leaders should have heard by now about the missional church movement. But even those committed to the

movement may think of it as an American phenomenon. In fact, the movement has spread around the world. This article will explore its development, first, through the official organizations of the Anglican Communion and then in five Anglican provinces in which English is the first language.

In order to trace the movement's global development, we need to be clear about the movement's new understanding of mission. Here are five aspects of the definition of mission, each one highlighted by comparing the traditional understanding of the word with its new, missional understanding:

### 1. National

*Old think:* Traditionally, the Christianized nations of the West were lumped together under the collective term, "Christendom". Nations outside the boundaries of Christendom were referred to as heathen lands. Within Christendom, churches were provided with governance and pastoral care. Heathen lands were regarded as mission fields and as such became objects of mission.

*New think:* In all nations, the Spirit of Christ is at work, although where the church isn't present, he is not recognized. Even in locations where the church has long history, every nation is still regarded as being a field for Christ's mission.

### 2. Theological

*Old think:* In theological systems, "mission" is one category among many. Mission is thought of as a function of the church at work increasing its areas of influence.

*New Think:* Theological systems begin with mission as their defining category. God is seen as the archetypal missionary. The Trinity is understood as God in mission - creating, reconciling, and life-sustaining.

### 3. Ecclesial

*Old think:* Congregations regard mission as their "extra-curricular activity". In congregations, when the pastoral needs for ministries that serve members have been met, any resources left over are donated to outreach programs in the community or to missions in foreign mission fields.

*New think:* The reason that the church exists is that God calls the church into being to share with him in his mission. The church has no meaning apart from serving God as his agency for carrying out his mission. Every congregation is a "base camp", inspiring, guiding, and supporting its members in their missions in daily life.

### 4. Baptismal

*Old think:* Baptism is the rite through which new members are initiated into the church.

*New Think:* Through baptism, all members are commissioned by Christ to share with him in his mission of love and justice in all areas of their daily lives.

### **In the Anglican Communion, what is the history of the missional church movement?**

In 1963, church leaders from all over the Anglican Communion gathered in Toronto for an Anglican Congress. Among other activities, a meeting of mission executives was held. Many of those attending brought with them the assumption that this gathering would be like previous similar meetings. Those attending would divide into two groups, one made up of officers of mission boards of sending churches in the West and the other of leaders from churches in mission fields located in the East and South. The latter group would describe the needs of their churches, after which the former group would decide how to allocate their resources in the best way possible to meet those needs.

As the meeting progressed, those attending discovered that this approach was totally out-of-date. Mission was not a commodity to be exported and imported. Each Christian community is a cell in Christ's Body. Every cell has the opportunity and responsibility of supporting every other cell in their common mission in Christ. At the end of the Congress this new understanding of mission served as the basis for a highly influential document: *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence Within the Body of Christ*. An excerpt from that statement is as follows –

*“Every church seek to test and evaluate every activity in its life by the test of mission and service to others in our following after Christ...The Church exists to witness, to obey, and to serve. All planning must be tested by this.”* (emphasis added)

This official Document of the Anglican

Communion expresses eloquently the spirit of the missional church movement. The hub-and-spoke model of church authority is dead. The organic, network model of mutual interdependence and responsibility lives!

Following the Anglican Congress, church leaders who had been moved by its spirit met to organize a follow-up movement, which became known by its acronym, MRI, standing for Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence. Out of this movement came phrases that are still in use – “Partners in Mission” and “Companion Dioceses”. We hear less about missionaries being sent and more about mission partners being shared. This is MRI at work.

In 1968, the Lambeth Conference established the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) and in so doing gave it eight functions to guide its actions. Here is the third function:

*“To develop as far as possible agreed Anglican policies in the world mission of the Church and to encourage national and regional Churches to engage together in developing and implementing such policies by sharing their resources of manpower, money, and experience to the best advantage of all.”*

From its beginning, the ACC regarded mission as a major focus of its mandate.

In response to this mandate, in 1981, the ACC established an Advisory Group on Mission Issues and Strategy and charged it with writing a report. After producing two interim reports, in 1992, it issued its final report, entitled *Towards Dynamic Mission Renewing the Church for Mission*.

The document begins with a theological reflection that summarizes what is now called missional theology. It is well worth reading and can be Googled online. Here are excerpts:

“If the Universal Church is to model her mission on that of God himself, this will call for profound involvement and concern for every aspect of society and the whole of the created realm...Our God of suffering love calls us to costly witness and service in the world which he has created and which he is redeeming...He calls us now to be fellow-workers with him.” (p 11)

Meanwhile, the ACC had been at work. If God’s mission is so all-involving, how can church people be sure that any activity is mission? How can authentic mission activities be identified?

For six years, ACC pondered the answer to these questions. In 1990 they revealed their response:

#### The Five Marks of Mission

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom  
To teach, baptise and nurture new believers  
To respond to human need by loving service  
To seek to transform unjust structures of society  
To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth  
(*Bonds of Affection-1984 ACC-6 p49, Mission in a Broken World-1990 ACC-8 p101*)

We will see that this formulation has had a major impact on at least the few provinces of the Anglican Communion that we will be able to consider, including ours.

In 2009, the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention adopted a resolution titled *Five Marks of Mission*. Here are excerpts from the opening statement of the resolution:

*Resolved*, ...that the 76th General Convention name the five Anglican Marks of Mission as the five top strategic priorities for The Episcopal Church, and that the House of Deputies direct Program, Budget and Finance to center the budget on these strategic priorities...” (GC-DO27)

Five top strategic priorities for the Episcopal Church! What does it mean that our national church budget will be centered on them? Why have we never even heard about them? We in our church have become a *missional* community – and none of us have heard anything about it!

One final matter remains to be noted. In 1993 ACC appointed a new Standing Commission for Mission named MISSIO. In 2000 this Commission published a book titled *Anglicans in Mission: A transforming Journey*. It’s available from Amazon and is well worth reading. Here are two passages that represent the message of the book:

“The Church cannot proclaim this good news simply by “having a mission” or by seeing mission as an external activity or program. To put it more positively: the Church must be mission – a community that incarnates the mission entrusted to Jesus and given by him to his followers (John 20:21). The world will never hear a gospel that is apparently contradicted by the character of the community that proclaims it. A profoundly transformed Church alone can be God’s agent of transformation.” (p 16)

“Whatever words or ideas each local expression of our Church uses, MISSIO hopes that they will be informed by three convictions:

We are united by our common commitment to serving the transforming mission of God.

Mission is the bedrock of all we are, do, and say as the people of God.

Our faithfulness in mission will be expressed in a great diversity of mission models, strategies, and practices.” (p 21)

As we promote the mission of all baptized people in all areas of daily life, we should use these quotes to typify the spirit that motivates our every effort.

At present the Mission Department of the ACC carries on the work of the Commissions that we have just considered. Its influence in the Anglican Communion is illustrated by the fact that the agenda and content of the 2008 Lambeth Conference was very much shaped by the Communion’s understanding of mission as central to the existence and life of the Church.

What do we make of these developments in the ACC in response to its mandate to offer guidance about the meaning and practice of mission to the member provinces of the Anglican Communion? We cannot be otherwise than enormously grateful for its leadership. We in the Episcopal Church as a whole - and we in EBM in particular - are its beneficiaries.

I must add two comments.

The ACC discussion gives transformed meaning to global mission and to mission among the oppressed and the underprivileged people of the world. But it says little about mission from the perspective of con-

gregations inspiring and supporting their members to share in Christ’s mission through their daily life activities. This ignores 99% of the potential missionaries available to serve God in his mission. Their daily life missions make up a microcosm of God’s macrocosmic mission. This microcosm is critically important - a fact that needs to be recognized in the discourse about the new paradigm for mission.

Another concern that I have is about the lack of recognition of the importance of baptism in God’s mighty plan for mission. This emphasis may be the special contribution that the American Episcopal Church can make to the Anglican Communion’s renewed approach to mission. In the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, the rite of Holy Baptism emphasizes the Baptismal Covenant, including five commitments that grow out of the Apostles’ Creed. The rite makes clear that baptism brings the newly baptized into Christ’s Great Commission to share with God in his mission. Every time a church celebrates a baptism, the entire congregation as a whole, and its members individually, renews its commitment to God’s mission.

### **The Missional Church Movement in English-Speaking Provinces of the Anglican Communion**

How has the ACC’s efforts to promote new approaches to mission paid off in the provinces of the Anglican Communion?

Since we obviously can’t consider all forty-four provinces, we will limit ourselves to five – Australia, Canada, Ireland, UK, and USA – in which English is their first language.

USA We have already seen that the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention passed a resolution

making, “the Five Anglican Marks of Mission... (determine) the five top strategic priorities for the Episcopal Church”. How this resolution will work out in practice remains to be seen. When I enquired at the Episcopal Church Center about how the National Church was responding to this resolution, here was part of the response I received:

“As one example of our continued commitment to the *Five Marks of Mission*, the Executive Council, through an application to the Constable Fund Grant, will be working with the Anglican Churches in the Americas to organize a second mission conference which coordinates Anglican mission opportunities, networks mission activities and identifies ways to share resources for mission.”

Sad to say, this sounds like “old think” about mission strategy. In this context, it implies that “mission” is something done overseas rather than being the whole work of the Church, both near and far, in response to the mission of God. We will have to watch how the Executive Council carries out its responsibility in regard to this resolution.

UK The Church of England’s chief agent for outreach and mission is the Archbishop’s Council on Mission and Public Affairs. In 2004, the Council began to issue a series of books that are transformative in their power and vision. The first is titled *Mission-shaped Church*, the second, published in 2008, *Mission-shaped Questions*, and the third, in 2010, *Mission-shaped Spirituality*. Together they represent a remarkable achievement. Their spirit is best reflected in the following blurb that was written about them:

“The church does not exist as a convention or a club or even as a self-perpetuating community; it exists as a first-hand witness to transformation of life. This resource focuses relentlessly on that mission, helping every one of us to embrace a challenging new way of life.”

In its attempts to move from a “come” to a “go” model of church life and ministry, the Church of England has had to deal with a daunting reality. The Church has inherited a system of parishes, many of which go back for over a thousand years. During their many centuries of existence, the churches have developed attitudes and customs about parish life and ministry that are exceedingly difficult to change. Consequently, if the national Church is to develop an approach for outreach to the large majority of its unchurched citizens, it must plant new congregations that respond to the needs of a diverse population. This has led to a movement that has come to be known as *Fresh Expressions of Church*. In America, we call them Emerging Churches.

The first volume, *Mission-shaped Church*, primarily deals with this development. Because we in America are more hopeful about changing our established congregations from an attracting/pastoring style of ministry to a sending/missional style, we are not as interested in planting fresh congregations and therefore might not be interested in many sections of the book. However, if we read it selectively, we may find many passages that do apply to us. In particular, I recommend Chapter 5, *Theology for a Missionary Church*. In its twenty pages, it outlines a missional theology that is the best concise expression of the topic that I have encountered, in particular for those of us who are in the Anglican tradition.

doesn't recognize Baptism and Eucharist as great gifts from God for commissioning people and renewing their commission for sharing with Christ in his mission in all areas of living.

**Mission-shaped Questions and Mission-shaped Spirituality** are even more valuable resources for developing missional congregations.

Anglicans around the world are much in debt to the Church of England for its missionary efforts that brought our churches into being. Once more, we must renew our debt to our Mother Church for its contemporary, Spirit-filled movement, pointing the way to new expressions of mission.

**Canada** The Anglican Church of Canada, with its long-range plan for their church's mission called Vision 2019, has set a high standard for the other provinces of the Anglican Communion. The plan is completely built around the Five Marks of Mission.

Here is a quote from the plan:

"The Marks of Mission are an invitation to the whole church, a challenge and an opportunity to ground our common life and ministry in mission – in what God is doing in and for the world. ... For parishes, dioceses, and regions, Vision 2019 offers the Marks of Mission and a profound commitment to the present as the time God has given us for faithful ministry." (p 8)

We will watch with much interest as the Canadian Church lives out its thoroughly and wonderfully-developed plan.

**Ireland** The Church of Ireland has developed a parish development program for its

congregations, called Church 21. The introduction to the program describes its requirements for participating congregations as follows:

"A recognition that patterns of ministry which worked well in the past do not necessarily meet the needs of people today – a willingness to think beyond the conventional – an openness to share with and learn from churches from a wide variety of outlooks" (p 2)

Although the word "mission" and missional language don't appear in this statement, it conveys the spirit of exploration of new frontiers.

One document of the Irish church that is explicit about a new theology of mission and about the Five Marks of Mission is from CMS Ireland. In its document "What is Mission?" it describes church mission as God's mission, holistic, and central to the life of the Church and ends with a description of the Five Marks of Mission.

**Australia** In Australia, the missional church movement, represented by leaders such as Mark Sayers and Liam Bantock, is alive and well. No doubt many Anglicans participate in the work of these para-church organizations. But as far as I can tell, the only official Anglican organization that promotes the Five Marks of Mission is the Anglican Board of Mission – Australia. The ABM, having worked out its own wording for the Five Marks, states that, "ABM grounds all of its work in one or more of the Marks of Mission ."

**New Zealand** When I contacted Captain Phil Clark, National Director of the Church Army, New Zealand, about the missional church movement in the Angli-

can Church there, this was his response:

“I'd have to say that sadly, the Anglican church here has not yet embraced the missional church movement in significant ways. Most resources and effort is still put into maintaining existing structures. However, there are signs of hope!

The Fresh Expressions movement from UK is being introduced to churches here. It is inter-denominational, but is being enthusiastically embraced by some Anglican Dioceses. We hope to offer the first training programme in 2012. Church Army NZ has recently introduced *StreetHope* which is a network of missional communities but this is very much in its infancy.

Overall I would say that there is pioneering work going on in NZ in terms of missional church, and my hope and prayer is that as growth occurs many others will come on board.”

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**Peyton Craighill** served as a missionary, primarily in theological education, in Taiwan for 21 years. After returning to the USA, he served in a number of different ministries in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. In retirement, he lives in Lexington, Virginia.

**Since Canon 1 about Ministry Addresses  
the Essence of Christian Faith and Life,  
Why is It so Widely Ignored?**

**By Fletcher Lowe**

**TITLE III MINISTRY**

**CANON 1: Of the Ministry of All Baptized Persons**

*Sec. 1. Each Diocese shall make provision for the affirmation and development of the ministry of all baptized persons, including:*

*(a) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, to identify their gifts with the help of the Church and to serve Christ's mission at all times and in all places.*

*(b) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to sustain their ministries through commitment to life-long Christian formation.*



In essence- and in canon law- that is what the Christian faith and life is all about! That is the calling of all the Baptized! How is the Episcopal Church, its dioceses, its seminaries, its agencies and its congregations to be held accountable for living out this canon?

That it is the first canon under Title III is not just happenstance. It is there because of its primacy. After all, 99% of Episcopalians are included within its boundaries!! Yet, as our two bishop steering committee members admit, it is the rest of the long title (Canons 2 ff ) that suck up the energy of the church. Why? They deal with clergy- the 1 % of the Body of Christ! It is all out of balance! How do we refocus the church's energies toward giving equal time and effort to the calling of all the Baptized in their daily life and work?

Let me share a metaphor that may help. Think of what a base camp (e.g. Mt.

Everett) does for the hiker. It provides support and equipment and nourishment and healing and guidance for the hiker. It is a way station, a watering hole for his/her journey. It is not the destination, but a pause along the way. It exists to support the hiker; the hiker doesn't exist to support the base camp.

What if the congregation saw its focus as a base camp; that its *raison d'être* was truly to "equip the saints for (their) ministry (in the world)?" What if that congregation had as its mission statement, the dismissal- "Go forth into (your home and your office and your community and your) world, rejoicing in the power of the spirit?" How would that affect the Liturgy, the Christian Formation programs, the pastoral care? Take pastoral care as an example. Seminaries primarily train students to see pastoral care as the ways that those who need help are helped, e.g. counseling, hospital and nursing home visits, etc.. What is Clinical Pastoral Education's (CPE) focus but

primarily on those in need, e.g. in hospitals, mental hospitals, prisons. Nothing wrong with any of that. But it underscores pastoral care as strength to weakness.

What if pastoral care were broadened e.g. to include visiting parishioners where they work- their places of relative strength? To continue with the CPE model, it would shift the dynamics from visiting folks in the hospital where they are on unfamiliar territory, wearing unfamiliar clothes, being served by unfamiliar people to visiting folks in their own clothes, in their own environments where they are providing the service. That changes the dynamics of what pastoral care is about- not only helping people in need, but supporting people in their Baptismal ministry- on their “hiking” journey. For remember, the base camp is not there primarily to help people in their weakness, but support them in their strength.

We at *Episcopalians on Baptismal Mission* (EBM) have been about this for 4 years. We have participated in conferences of several national Episcopal organizations, worked with a few dioceses and congregations. We placed two resolutions before the last General Convention (A191, C080) calling the church to accountability for Title III, Canon 1. They were sent to the Standing Commission on Ministry Development. Its response to date has been underwhelming as its focus has been on preparing a resource list to be made available for the Church for the next General Convention!!

What is it in the ecclesiastical culture that resists being a base camp? Why is the Church’s default position parochial? Is not the substance of Canon 1 the essence of the Christian faith and life? Is not the “hike” where the action is for the Baptized? And what is more important and affirming for the

congregational base camp to be than the place of regrouping, renewing, replenishing, refreshing, for the hiker’s journey outside its walls?

Just some thought for considering- and some questions for pondering- of real importance for the life of the Church and its Baptized hikers.

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After serving for 37 years in three dioceses and in Europe, **Fletcher Lowe** has served as Convener for *Episcopalians on Baptismal Mission*. Recently, he published an e-book: *Baptism: the Event and the Adventure, the Journey from the Font into the World*, and co-edited a National Church’s book, *Ministry in Daily Life: Living the Baptismal Covenant*.

## Book Review: “*Transforming Evangelism*” Needs Transformation

by A. Wayne Schwab

*Transforming Evangelism* by David Gortner



David Gortner writes clearly and with excitement; shares his own experiences of need and grace appropriately; and gives workable tools to achieve the transformation he desires. His goal comes through as belief and participation.

While widely accepted, this goal is only an intermediate one. The full goal of evangelism should be to join Jesus’ mission to make the world more loving and more just – a goal that is both biblical and fresh. We will return to this fuller goal later. First, mark the scope of Gortner’s recommendations.

Gortner grounds the transformation he seeks in sharing with others how encounter with the Holy can lead the believer to basic attitudes of gratitude and wonder. “You enter your public life daily to share your gratitude and wonder with others – and to hear their own experiences of God’s abundant life” (p. 2). Evangelism is the “practice of expressing our delight and wonder at the work of God” (p. 3).

The heart of such evangelism is the Christian’s grounding in the Holy Spirit’s work to build “a deep conviction of God’s unbridled love for humanity and all creation” (p. 33). The fruits of the Spirit’s work are “resilience in the face of trauma, determination to live and thrive despite one’s wounds and brokenness, and self-honesty that leads one beyond simplistic categories of victim and villain” (p. 45).

Evangelism is a spiritual discipline of three practices.

- “I will remember my own wonder, joy, and gratitude.
- I will speak; I will tell my stories.
- I will meet other people listening for the Holy in their lives” (p.48)

Our practice of it properly begins with our loved ones in our homes and friendships. Then it moves out into the world all the way to the great debates of our time. He quotes Chinese Bishop Ting who gave socialism a theological name: “Love organized for the masses of the people” (p. 63).

What does such an evangelism look like? Gortner answers with stories of churches:

- a Latino mission in Illinois;
- a culturally inclusive new church in Hawaii;
- a “main line” church in mostly fundamentalist North Carolina;
- Theology on Tap in Chicago, originally Roman Catholic and now Protestant as well;
- youth and homeless ministries in the Navajo country of Arizona;
- “The Office,” an African-American Episcopal campus ministry in upstate New York;
- Faith Inkubators, an ecumenical ministry for parents located in Minnesota;
- various programs for faith renewal such as Alpha, Via Media, Cursillo, and Faith Alive;
- a church in the Silicon Valley of California centering on covenant community and evangelism;
- a Chicago church using listening to center on social concern and community building;

•and two churches in Texas that seek to create a “safe environment for relationships and asking the hard questions.”

What tools enable an evangelism of sharing gratitude and wonder?

- First, cultivate self-love, self-knowledge, compassion, courage, integrity, and humility. Gortner provides questions to explore each of these values.
- Second, practice gratitude.
- Third, identify your most sacred Christian stories and practice listening for them in your neighbor’s life.
- Fourth, follow steps for programming – invitation, follow-up, welcome and incorporation, preaching, teaching, small groups, and wisdom when coping with innovations.

Gortner notes that Rick Warner maintains that seeker services can’t replace personal evangelism. He also provides detailed guidance for each of the above four steps.

In conclusion, Gortner writes, “Speaking our own stories and hearing others’ is the first and most basic element of the spiritual practice of evangelism – and if we really embrace the fundamentals, all the rest will follow” (pg. 170). A discussion guide is appended.

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While evangelism is sharing – in one way or another – the good news of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ, what is the goal for that sharing? Belief and participation go only half-way to the full goal of joining Jesus’ mission to make the world more loving and more just. In the context of being loving and just, the Christian tells what God has done for us and invites the other to “come and see” (John 1:46). The Christian does so in midst of daily life on one’s own, not

pat of some church program or activity.

Evangelism belongs inside of mission, not apart from it. This is the real transformation that evangelism needs. Evangelism does call to belief and participation but its full call is to join Jesus’ mission. Understand baptism as joining that mission.

Understanding evangelism’s goal this way, we can name the places that Gortner’s work need transformation.

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First, his models of evangelism are centered in church-based activities. There is almost no talk of what Christians do in the arenas of daily life – at home, at work, in their neighborhoods, in the wider world of the issues and systems of society, and in their leisure as well as in seeking spiritual health and sharing in their church’s life.

Second, these arenas of daily life are the “mission fields” where Christians live out their baptism into Jesus’ mission. Each of these arenas is there 24/7/365. Christians do not pick one or two as their “missions” and forget the rest. Gortner seems to be unaware of this call to each Christian to live Jesus’ mission in every one of life’s arenas.

Third, Gortner pays too little attention to the intense struggles for justice in our own day – and in every day in the past. Courage is only fourth in his list of six personal values needed by the evangelist. Further, among all his stories are few stories of actions taken in the face of injustice and evil.

Most serious is Gortner’s implication that gratitude and wonder are enough to sustain Christians in all of their daily living. Grati-

tude and wonder are real but are inadequate to sustain the responsible Christian who is working on issues of: maintaining a loving and just home; seeking employment; developing adequate health care for all; avoiding exploitation of the environment; coping with child abuse; and restraining the power of corporations and private wealth to distort the political process. What is offered to commend Christianity to people facing these difficult works? It is time to reach for a wider, more adequate, and more robust evangelism that is inside of mission.

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A biblical, wider, more adequate, and more robust evangelism that is inside of mission begins God's mission from Jewish scripture – the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings of what we call the Old Testament. These writers talk of God's kingdom or reign. God's work – God's "ruling or reigning" to use the regal metaphor – is overcoming evil with God's love and justice and bringing the creation to fulfillment. This is God's mission among us today as well.

Continue with Jesus' first words "The kingdom of God is at hand . . ." – the reign or power of God is at work among us to overcome evil; and "Follow me . ." (Mark 1:15,17) – join my mission, God's mission at work through me, to make the world more loving and more just. It is in the midst of living that mission in one's daily places that the Christian calls people to join Jesus' mission, God's mission. Evangelism's role in mission is completed when the responder joins Jesus' mission in baptism.

What more specific texts underlie our

evangelism?

Along with so many, Gortner bases evangelism on the Risen Lord's words in Matthew 28:19 – "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." The leading evangelist and lately departed John Stott bases it in John 20:21-22. For him, these words more relational than the institutional Matthew 28:18-20. The Risen Jesus says, "As the Father has sent me I send you." How that must have alarmed the eleven who had seen the ultimate cost of being sent in Jesus' crucifixion. Then, he reassures them with, "Receive the Holy Spirit" – "the power at work in me is available to you as well." What God calls us to do, God helps us to do. This is the greatest love of all. The all-powerful God freely shares the power of the Holy Spirit with us. This is the greatest love of all. This gift to draw on the power of the Holy Spirit to do the works of love and justice that God asks of us will indeed appeal to those facing the vexing issues of life in today's world. Here is the starting place for a fresh – and biblical – way in evangelism.

A vignette of what evangelism inside of mission might look like – a combining of several actual experiences:

Mike a sales supervisor worries that his sales meetings are filled with a sad mix of competition and blame. He senses his discomfort to be the Spirit's work and to be a call to make changes. He comes up with might help – his mission – and finds some sales people to help and begins the changes.

The changes are hard; his teammates tire; in nonchurch words he says, "We want to work

together as brothers and sisters; it isn't easy; I believe we'll get the help we need." The teammates know he is a church person; moved by his example, one asks about his church.

Evangelism? Yes, and the best kind because it is inside of the mission to make the sales meetings more loving and more just! And he has opened the door to the goal of joining Jesus' mission in baptism.

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A transformed evangelism finds its place inside of the daily missions of the members. It will cope with hardened hearts and injustice – and, of course, connect healthy experiences with God's mission. It includes gratitude and wonder and much, much more. It is founded on Jesus' sending his people to carry on his mission of love and justice and sharing with them the power to do it – the Holy Spirit at work in him will help them too. And the world becomes more loving and more just!

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**A. Wayne Schwab**, founder and coordinator of the Member Mission Network ([www.membermission.org](http://www.membermission.org)); consultant and trainer; Episcopal priest; and first Evangelism Officer for TEC

## Tentmakers as full-time ministers

by Demi Prentice



Davis Fisher is a full-time priest who divides his priestly ministry between churches and the business world. In the latter ministry, he worked initially in private banking and personal trust work, followed by teaching sales skills, and most recently in non-profit development work, as well as helping people explore their relationship to money. His term for his dual vocation is “tentmaker,” although he understands that some call him “bivocational.” As he explains it, “I’ve always viewed my involvement in business as priestly ministry. I am a full-time priest; I just have a part-time position in churches”.

As a complement to his congregation at church, Fisher has always viewed his customers in the business world as a congregation as well. “A difference is that the people I encounter in the business world don’t have to come to church, don’t have to pledge, and don’t have to be Episcopalians.” But he’s clear that he functions as a priest for that congregation as well – even in that secular setting. He poses the question to himself: “How do I do this in such a way as to see Jesus in the people I serve?”

After having grown up in the Midwest, when he arrived at General Seminary in New York his eyes were opened to a much wider world. In that setting, he developed into something of a social activist. When he returned to the Diocese of Chicago to serve a curacy in a well-heeled suburban parish, he recognized that he was in a unique position to connect the Gospel with the life experiences of his well-to-do parishioners. When he determined that he needed to equip himself to speak to those captains of industry and finance, he went to work

for the First National Bank of Chicago (now Chase Bank) and earned an MBA at the University of Chicago. In the process, he reaffirmed his calling to ordained ministry as included in his baptismal vows.

In this era of “emergent Christianity” and the “ministry of all the baptized,” Fisher, now semi-retired, combines his passion for tent-making ministry with his commitment to supporting and sustaining his fellow tentmakers. He explains, “Part of the tentmaker’s objective is to provide an option where a church can no longer afford a full-time rector. But it’s also a positive option – making the priesthood available to the world at large.” He is energized by the multi-dimensional ministry he enjoys – and feels compassion for some of his fellow priests “who feel trapped in the hierarchical church structure” and may not experience the freedom to explore the full reach of their calling outside institutional walls. “Unfortunately, in the past, our hierarchical model encouraged the laity to be passive. I’m very excited about where we are today. All baptized Christians need to see what we do every day as ministry and as opportunities that present themselves in a variety of ways to live out our baptismal call.”

With his commitment to the tentmaker model of ordained ministry, Fisher brings a new dimension to the steering committee for Episcopalians on Baptismal Mission. He enlarges the conversation about the meaning of 24/7/365 baptismal ministry.

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**Demi Prentiss** serves as ministry developer/administrative officer for the Diocese of Fort Worth. For more than 25 years she has worked to support and equip laity and clergy in fully realizing their baptismal callings.

## Book Review—*Ministry and Mission Aren't the Same Thing*

by Edward Lee

*Transforming Congregations* by James Lemler

It can be said that, in The Episcopal Church (TEC), while the diocese is the basic *ecclesial* unit the local congregation is the basic *missionary* unit. Grounded on its baptismal theology, the 1979 Prayer Book radically maintains that, in the church, there are four, rather than three, orders of ministers – “lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons” (BCP, p. 855). From this position, it follows that *baptism* rather than *ordination* is recognized as the primary sacrament that establishes the mission and empowers the ministers of the church. Instead of seminaries, parishes are - or rather should be - the primary training camps for ministers/missionaries. This is indeed a radical reorienting of the missional locus of the church. To date, the tradition and programs of local congregations have been focused on the exercise of *ministry* on the assumption that *ministry* is synonymous with *mission*. But is it?

The words “mission and ministry” are practically interchangeable in most parishes’ mission statements, in their stewardship promotions, and even in most of their sermons. To do one is to do the other - or so it seems. Ideally that should be the case, and in some parochial endeavors that is being achieved. For that, we can thank those enterprises in the church that have been giving serious thought and consulting time to supporting and strengthening local parishes as places for authentic ministry and mission. One need only look in the Alban Institute’s catalogue at the book and seminar titles to realize that, for decades, how resourceful that organization has been in melding ministry to mission, and vice versa, as the primary Gospel task of the church.

Recently, Church Publishing Incorporated has produced a series of invaluable books under the umbrella title, *Transformation*, which proposes nothing less than a “transformation series of blueprints” for TEC in the 21st century. The series editor is James Lemler. This series couldn’t be in better hands than those of this gifted priest and parish pastor, former seminary dean, Director of Mission for TEC, and highly sought-after consultant in a variety of areas, including congregational development.

The series touches on eight “transforming” bases: congregations, disciples, evangelism, leadership, preaching, scripture, stewardship, and vocation. Each volume is authored by an accomplished and experienced leader in the topic being explored. Dioceses and parishes would do well to “read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest” these books, and the sooner the better.

The first book in the series, “*Transforming Congregations*”, is written by Dr. Lemler himself. His comprehensive knowledge, research, experience, and engagement with the local congregation is of serious substance, insight, and a compassionate appreciation for the dedication and ministry of parishes throughout the church. Lemler grounds his analyses and projections for the transformed/transfigured congregation solidly in scripture and theology. Baptism is at the heart of the transfiguring process he advocates with clarity and urgency. In this post-Christendom century, this is a new era for the church. How congregations retool for their work is not a matter of tweaking old patterns and practices. It requires the recapturing and

reclaiming of the baptismal mandate in ways that move baptism from being a mere initiatory rite, as in times past, to a marching order for sacrificial ministry today in the service of the world God has loved and redeemed in Jesus Christ. The latter is the substance of mission and ought not to be automatically equated with ministry. *Mission* is the *enterprise*; *ministry* is the *means to pursue it*. This distinction and tension between the two is crucial.

Lemler states it this way: “the present mission work, then, is to connect a congregation's values to its actions. Is there alignment and resonance between the things that a congregation identifies as possessing great value and significance for them and the actions of the congregational life and program? Sometimes there is an unfortunate disconnect. At other times, there is a proliferation of congregational programs at the expense of effectiveness. Congregations try to do too much, doing programs that are not rooted in core values or doing such a great number of programs that the congregation's human and financial resources become exhausted. Conversely, when there is resonance and alignment between values and actions, powerful mission can occur within the congregation.” (pp.64-65) In short, not all ministry is mission.

This distinction cannot be stressed enough. Much that is called ministry today really falls into other modes of parochial life that range from survival to maintenance to chaplaincy, from “are we going to make it?,” to “how do we stay afloat?,” to “we exist to take care of ourselves”. Depending on local circumstances these constitute various degrees of ministry. But none of them are mission in the Gospel and Good Friday/Easter sense of that word. None entail risk or sacrifice nor do they reflect the baptismal awareness that when people are “marked and signed as Christ's own forever”, they are intentional disciples of Jesus. This implies being engaged and endangered in the se-

rious business of representing “Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world”. And only after that should they “take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church”. (BCP, p. 855)

This sequence for the business of mission is crucial. The church exists for the world that God loves; it exists for those who do not either know or belong to it. Like Jesus himself, the church is here for others and not for itself - or at least it *ought* to be. This is the mission of the church, and ministry is to serve that purpose.

On the spectrum of the survival, maintenance, and chaplaincy modes of parochial life, the next two modes are in fact ministry and mission. The latter is grounded in Good Friday/Easter; the former in Advent through Pentecost. When we are baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus, we take on the sobering responsibilities of risk, sacrifice, and maybe even death in order to enable God's redemptive love to break through. That's mission. Ministry in the parish is the formation and support and care of the baptized so that they understand that their work and witness is outside the parish and beyond Sunday. It's always a Monday through Saturday endeavor. St. Paul calls it equipping the saints. That's ministry. It's that basic and elemental.

While the old hymn line, “Jesus loves me this I know”, is certainly true, when it comes to mission, Jesus can also rub us the wrong way when embracing his mission. Just read and hear his parables. They engage and dare us to do ministry in order to be missionaries, persons who are capable of being a counter force to whatever powers and principalities would deny, deface and destroy the holiness of God's creation and people. It's a high calling. But that's what it means to be baptized. It's not just about *membership* in the Body of Christ. It's

*being* the Body of Christ in the world.

Parishes that are baptismally mission-oriented have the capacity to live and give and sacrifice beyond themselves. And they have the capacity to reshape and prune and reorient themselves for that purpose. Lemler's book gives ample examples and illustrations of how and where that is happening. Each one is a vignette of hope and adventure, of ministry in the service of mission. Some are downright exciting.

While not all ministry is mission still it is certain that mission will only happen when ministry flows like the baptismal waters out of which we, the missionaries, come.

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**Edward Lee** is the retired bishop of the Diocese of Western Michigan (1989-2002). He now lives in Merion, PA and serves as an assisting bishop in the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

Comments and questions about articles in this publication are indeed welcome. Contact information is on the first page.