

Episcopal Church Ousts Bishop Amid Gay Row

Yesterday the Church voted to remove a California bishop three months after he and his diocese voted to break away from the official church over disputes about scriptural interpretation.



[] The Episcopal Church voted this week to remove the San Joaquin, Calif. diocese bishop only three months after he, along with three-quarters of his 8,000-member diocese, voted to split from the mainline church over biblical interpretational issues, including homosexuality, reported *The New York Times*.

During the church's semiannual meeting yesterday in Texas, the Episcopal House of Bishops voted to remove Bishop John-David Schofield.

The unprecedented move served to highlight a schism that has been widening within the Episcopal Church ever since it ordained openly gay New Hampshire Bishop Gene Robinson in 2003.

Schofield, who left the American-based Episcopal Church to align with the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone, based in South America, said the church forced the dissension. "I have not abandoned the faith," he told *The Times*.

"It is the leadership of the Episcopal Church that is treating itself as a separate and unique church. They may do so, but they ought not expect everyone to follow teaching that serves only to undermine the authority of the Bible and ultimately leads to lifestyles that are destructive," he said.

Leaders of the Episcopal Church, which has already warned two other bishops not to go forward with their votes to secede, contend that Schofield's removal was not "punitive" but was "dealt with ... prayerfully."

Healing in Wake of Shootings at Colorado Church

After losing two daughters in a church shooting in December, the Works family met with the parents of the killer. Photo: Rachel Works far left; Stephanie Works far right.



[] On an unusually mild day for January at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colo., Ron and Loretta Murray walked the church grounds where their 24-year-old son had shot and killed two of a total of four young people in the Denver area before taking his own life.

The couple was scheduled to meet surviving family members of Stephanie and Rachel Works—two teenage sisters that their son, Matthew, slew in the back parking lot just a few weeks earlier on Dec. 9, 2007 (Matthew also killed 24-year-old Philip Crouse and 26-year-old Tiffany Johnson at a Youth With a Mission (YWAM) training center in Arvada, Colo., where he was once a student).

Before New Life Pastor Brady Boyd escorted them to meet the Works family in his office, he took them on a private tour, retracing the fatal last steps of their son. “I know as a pastor that many times, when a family has a tragic loss of a loved one, part of the healing process, and one of the steps that a family needs to take sometimes, is to go to the place where the death happened,” Boyd told *Charisma*.

They were shown where a darkly clad Matthew Murray, armed with an AR-15 assault rifle, two pistols and tons of ammunition, parked his car, jumped out, and blasted out the windows of a late-model Toyota minivan, killing 16-year-old Rachel and 18-year-old Stephanie Works, and also wounding their father, David.

Ron and Loretta Murray were told how in a scene of panic and horror, worshipers frantically scrambled in all directions while their son, who packed hundreds of rounds of ammunition, opened fire repeatedly and randomly, spraying parked and moving cars, and putting many rounds through the back of the church building before going inside.

The couple—heads bowed, hesitant and ashamed—then walked into the office where the Works family was waiting to see them. David Works, father of the two slain girls, shot twice himself by Matthew, was waiting for them with his wife, Marie, and their two surviving daughters—Laurie and Gracie.

David Works told *Charisma* the Murrays extended their hands to him, but that he ignored their gesture, and instead opened his arms. They embraced. The Murrays pleaded for forgiveness. Pastor Boyd said the two families wept in a pile together for close to 20 minutes. “Weeping, sobbing, crying,” said Boyd. “The Works embraced them and told them: ‘We’re so sorry you lost your son.’”

Said David Works: “There was an explosion of the presence of God. We just found ourselves comforting them, ministering to them, trying to help them through.”

In a setting that could've been filled with bitterness and animosity, Boyd said he witnessed a miracle. “There was immediate redemption and forgiveness,” he said. “They embraced each other's sorrows. What I saw was Jesus Christ on display that day.” —PAUL STEVEN GHIRINGHELLI

Tithing a Hot-Button Issue on

Internet

"We believe that everything the church teaches about tithing is wrong," author Russell Kelly says. On his Web site he argues against the teaching of tithing, contending it was an Old Testament practice.



[] To tithe or not to tithe—that is the question author Russell Kelly wants churches to address. His answer is a categorical “no.”

"We believe that everything the church teaches about tithing is wrong," Kelly says.

Through his Web site , he argues against the teaching of tithing, contending it was an Old Testament practice and that verses supporting it are often taken out of context by preachers *CBS* reports.

Kelly also believes it has been used as a tool of abuse.

*"Almost every person I contact on the Internet, they tell me the same story, where they go to their pastor—no matter what kind of church it is, Baptist, charismatic, Methodist, you name it—and start asking questions about tithing, they are told to shut up, to be quiet, to leave the church," he told *CBS*.*

According to a recent *CBS* News report, tithing “is a hot button issue that has reached critical mass on the Internet.”

Study Suggests Moses was High on Mount Sinai

A new study from an Israeli professor suggests that Moses had eaten hallucinogenic plants when he received the Ten Commandments.



[] A study by Israeli professor Benny Shanon, suggests that Moses was high on a hallucinogenic plant when he came down from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments reports *MSNBC*.

According to Shanon's article, originally published in the British philosophy journal *Time and Mind*, the Israelites were also high as a result of the hallucinogenic plants.

He pointed out that two plants in the Sinai desert contain the same psychoactive molecules found in plants from which the powerful Amazonian hallucinogenic brew ayahuasca is prepared.

Shanon, who is very familiar with the affects of the ayahuasca plant, having "partaken of the brew about 160 times," says that the thunder and lighting described in Exodus may have been no more than drug-induced visions of people in an "altered state of awareness," *MSNBC* reported.

Shanon concedes he has "no direct proof."

Scholars are less than impressed.

Rabbi Yuval Sherlow told Israel Radio, "We have to fear not for the fate of the biblical Moses, but for the fate of science."

City Proclaimed No Swearing Zone

Yesterday the South Pasadena, Calif. city council declared this week No Cussing Week. The idea for the week originated with a 14-year-old high school student.



[] A California city has declared this week No Cussing Week. Standing in sharp contrast with Los Angeles, its neighbor eight miles away that has battled irreverent gangs for decades, South Pasadena, Calif., officials hope to promote more civility throughout the city, the Associated Press (AP) reports.

South Pasadena Mayor Michael Cacciotti and the city council declared yesterday that No Cussing Week would continue through Friday.

“It's part of exercising self-discipline,” Cacciotti told the *Pasadena Star-News*. “It's about treating each other with love and respect. Profane language causes pain, anger and could lead to violence.”

Though the city council has designated the first week of March as No Cussing Week, the idea did not originate with the council but with a 14-year-old high school student.

When McKay Hatch was in junior high he became despondent with the abundance of colorful words that many of his friends were using “to fit in.”

“I finally told my friends ‘I don't cuss.’ And I said ‘If you want to hang out with me, you don't cuss,’” Hatch told the AP.

He admits that it took a few years for some of his classmates to rally behind him. But eventually 50 Pasadena High School students agreed with Hatch's idea and last June held their inaugural No Cussing Club meeting.

Nine months later a Web site was launched, which now boasts numerous chapters and 10,000 members throughout the U.S. and the world.

“My mom and dad always taught me good morals, good values, and not cussing was one of them,” Hatch told the AP.

Hatch’s parents, Brent and Phelecia, are co-authors of the family handbook *Raising a G-Rated Family in an X-Rated World*.

Evangelicals Attend College in World Landmark

The King’s College, which occupies three floors of the Empire State Building, seeks to bridge the gap between a secular world and a Christ centered-church.



[] Above the fast-paced streets of midtown Manhattan, in one of the tallest buildings in the world, a Christian four-year college seeks to bridge the gap between a secular world and a Christ centered-church.

The King’s College, which was founded 70 years ago and moved from upstate New York to the big apple several years ago, occupies three floors of the Empire State Building, which includes classrooms, lounge, student recreation center and administrative offices.

Undergraduates at the private school are taught to excel in fields such as business, philosophy, economics and politics, with hopes that they will impact secular society with godly principles.

“What The King's College is doing is a beautiful illustration of what Christ did,” student David Lapp told the *The Washington Post*. “He came into the muck and mire of this world, and He lived among men, and lived in a real place, Nazareth. So that's fundamentally what we as Christ's followers are to do as well: Go into those places where there is real hurt, real sin, and live among them and strive to live the way of Christ.”

Many students indicated that they planned to remain in New York City after graduation in order to work for secular companies.

Survey: Evangelical Leaders Want to Stay in Iraq

The National Association of Evangelicals recently conducted a survey that found that most evangelical leaders believe the U.S. should stay the course in Iraq.



[] According to a survey by the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) most evangelical leaders believe the U.S. should stay the course in Iraq. Even those who felt the invasion was not initially justified supported continued U.S. presence in Iraq.

“Iraq represents that existential threat we have from global Islamic Jihadists,” said one unidentified leader. “We must defeat it in Iraq, Afghanistan and then act pre-emptively to destroy it wherever it emerges.”

Though the majority of respondents supported the war, the NAE reported that many leaders voiced serious reservations.

“I am also very concerned that the ardent support by

evangelicals for the war in Iraq, and unquestioning support of President Bush has made evangelicals appear as if we are 'pro-war.'

The increasing battle cry among evangelicals to fight radical Islamists is also troubling to me," said one leader.

Christian Publishing Pioneer Robert Walker Dies

Robert Walker, the man who published the first national cover story about Billy Graham, died peacefully Saturday in a retirement community in Carol Stream, Ill. He was 95.



[] The founder of *Christian Life* magazine helped bridge gap between Pentecostals and evangelicals.

Robert Walker, the man who published the first national cover story about Billy Graham, propelled Pat Boone's encounter with the Holy Spirit to best-seller status and inspired millions of Christian writers and readers alike is dead at age 95.

The editor emeritus of *Charisma & Christian Life*, Walker died March 1st at a retirement community in Carol Stream, Ill. Although a former athlete and avid weightlifter, Walker had suffered from Parkinson's disease and dementia since 2005.

Friends, family and industry acquaintances remember the pioneering journalist as a giant whose legacy will outlive his years on earth.

"He was one incredible man," said Boone, the popular entertainer whose 1970 book, *A New Song*, sold 2.5 million copies after Walker helped him shape his story. "There was an Old Testament quality to him, like I was talking to a modern

Gideon or one of the patriarchs.”

Among his many professional accolades was receiving the first Magazine Publishers Award from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association in 1994.

Born April 30, 1912, in Syracuse, N.Y., Walker attended a boarding school in Massachusetts and then enrolled in the University of Illinois. But after two years there he decided his football talents were better suited to a smaller school and transferred to Wheaton College.

Walker accepted Christ while at Wheaton and considered enrolling in seminary, but opted to continue studying journalism instead and enrolled in Northwestern University. After graduation, he worked at two newspapers in Michigan and for two years as a copywriter for a Chicago-based advertising agency. He then returned to Wheaton to start a journalism department and served as an associate professor there from 1941-51.

During that time, Walker responded to an invitation from a friend with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship to start a campus magazine titled *HIS*, which would be the first of his many publishing endeavors. In 1941 he started a magazine called *Sunday*, which he renamed *Christian Life* in 1948 after acquiring *Christian Life & Times* from a friend. *Christian Life* would merge with *Charisma* in 1986.

To report on the then-fledgling Christian Booksellers Association in the mid-1950s, he started *Christian Bookseller*, which was renamed *Christian Retailing* after its acquisition by Strang Communications. Creation House Books followed in 1970; the company lives on as one of several imprints under the Strang book division's flagship, Charisma House.

Walker's vision didn't stop with profitable enterprises. When he saw a need to help Christian writers, he started the Christian Writers Institute; when he saw a need for missions outreach, he helped missionaries and founded Christian Life Missions, a 501(c)(3) charity.

Raised in the Methodist church, Walker was present in 1942 when the National Association of Evangelicals held an organizing conference in Chicago. That brought his first exposure to Pentecostals, who stirred up controversy over whether they should even be considered part of the evangelical camp.

A few months later, Walker was invited to the Assemblies of God (AG) headquarters in Springfield, Mo., to lead a seminar on communications. For the first time he saw people speaking in tongues. The experience sparked a hunger in Walker's heart for a closer walk with God. Still, a decade passed before he was baptized in the Holy Spirit after meeting with a Spirit-filled Presbyterian minister.

"I went through one of the most deeply spiritual, satisfying experiences wherein the Word of God, which had led to my conversion, seemed to fill me," Walker said. "Now, here was the Word of God, the object of truth, and, on the other side of the coin, was the subject of truth, the witness and the Spirit of God with my spirit."

Walker was known for his pioneering nature. He printed the first national cover story on Graham in 1948, withstood criticism from some evangelicals for first reporting on the AG's Sunday school program, and broke new ground by profiling a living cartoonist at a time when Christian magazines restricted such stories to profiles of the deceased.

Despite such efforts, Walker was quick to credit others, praising the late George Otis Sr. for persuading Boone to agree to publish *A New Song*. And remembering the late Herbert Taylor—a prime mover in launching the National Association of Evangelicals—as one of his primary mentors.

"I would like people to think that I was sort of the chap who responded to what God wanted done," Walker said. "I sometimes kicked, and I often blew it by taking off in the wrong direction. [God] had to bring me back."

Walker is survived by second wife Barbara—whom he married in 1995 after the death of his first wife, Jean; five children; two stepchildren; 18 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. A memorial service will be held March 14 at Wheaton Bible Church in Illinois.

New Man

**CBS Sports analyst Clark Kellogg
Evel Knievel's faith remembered**

Vibes