

foccus

Friends of Canterbury Cathedral in the United States

Volume 1, Issue 1

January 2007

New Capabilities/New Challenges

Significant Recent Events

- FOCCUS incorporation in the United States
- New trustees & board officers
- New Executive Director
- Continued support of Study Centre programs
- Multiple U.S. events to promote Canterbury Cathedral, the worldwide Anglican community, and its new opportunities

Canterbury Cathedral, American Anglicans, and the Global Ministry of Christians

This newsletter, with what we hope is an intriguing headline, is designed to inform you of, and excite you about, the most recent events in the life of one of the oldest Christian ministries in the English-speaking world — advancing God's Kingdom under the banner of Canterbury Cathedral. The Cathedral's programs and principles are better equipped than ever to help carry out Christ's mandate: to inspire the devout, to spread the Gospel, to help the unfortunate, and to advance love, justice, and mercy as the principles that govern the world.

Most specifically, this newsletter describes the work of FOCCUS — Friends of Canterbury Cathedral in the United States — as it enters a promising new era with greatly enhanced capability to help Canterbury Cathedral engage Americans more fully in the global work of Anglican Christians.

For at least thirty years, interested Americans have worked to strengthen the Cathedral's programs and the bond between American Christians and Canterbury Cathedral, first through the Canterbury Cathedral Trust, and then through an unincorporated entity. Much has happened recently. Here are some of the highlights.

Incorporation as a U.S. Entity

Our work began in the mid-1990s, when, under the leadership of the late Rev. Dr. John C. Harper, former Rector of St. John's Church, Lafayette Square, Washington, D.C., the unincorporated FOCCUS succeeded Canterbury Cathedral Trust in America to work with Canterbury Cathedral, the Mother Church of the worldwide Anglican Communion. FOCCUS' successes were numerous; most significantly, it raised funds for Canterbury's new International Study Centre (ISC), a spacious, versatile, and professionally staffed conference facility capable of running programs, hosting pilgrims, and making possible well-organized meetings and international events. (See article page 3)

With that facility completed, Canterbury's energetic new Dean, the Very Reverend Robert Willis, a uniquely effective leader, along with Dr. Harper's widow, Barbara, and other dedicated long-time FOCCUS trustees sought new colleagues. Over time, they attracted to the board the Rt. Rev. Peter Lee, senior member of the House of Bishops and leader of the largest diocese in the United States, along with Alan F. Blanchard, President Emeritus of the Church Pension Fund, which oversees the management \$8 billion in Church assets.

Committed to greatly increasing FOCCUS' activities, the new leadership group sought to become an independent, tax-exempt corporation with an



elected Board of Trustees and a professional Executive Director. Incorporation in the United States eases the ability of United States citizens to make tax-deductible gifts. It forces the organization to better articulate its mission. It allows broader implementation of its original goal of engaging Episcopalians more fully in their Church's rich history and encouraging their involvement in a network of worldwide Anglican activities. After incorporation, we were pleased to receive formal federal recognition of our tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) in July 2006. This of course means that our donors may deduct their gifts to FOCCUS for tax purposes.



New Board and Staff Leadership

At its February 2006 meeting the new board elected Bishop Lee as Chair and Mr. Blanchard as Vice Chair. It also elected three new trustees: William Herrman, Barbara Creed and David Pitts, all committed and active lay people in the Episcopal Church. In addition, FOCCUS appointed Thomas Moore III its first Executive Director.

Mr. Herrmann has a long background in finance and governance of not-for-profit organizations. He has served the Episcopal Church in many ways, including his parish, the Diocese of New York, General Theological Seminary and currently three major cathedrals — those in New York, Washington as well as Canterbury.

Ms. Creed is an attorney at the San Francisco law firm of Trucker Huss. A Church Pension Fund trustee since 2002, she is also a trustee of the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, and a member and past president of the Board of Directors of Episcopal Community Services of San Francisco.

Mr. Pitts is Chair and CEO of Pitts Management Associates, Inc., a national firm serving the health

care industry. Among his many church-related activities, David chairs the Board of Trustees of the Church Pension Fund. He has also served six terms in the House of Deputies.

Thomas Moore III, Executive Director, most recently served as Senior Project Advisor to the Church Pension Fund's CEO, as a consultant to the Chief Financial Officer of the Episcopal Church, and as the Church's Interim Treasurer for the 2003 General Convention.

These gifted individuals join a diverse and international Board of Trustees dedicated to FOCCUS' mission. Each director is a leader in his/her field and together they represent an impressive array of strengths — history with the organization; pastoral, legal, and financial expertise; they also share deep commitment to and love of the Anglican community.

New Challenges

As the Anglican Communion struggles with significant disagreements, we believe the mission of Canterbury Cathedral and of FOCCUS is more important than ever. Canterbury embodies the traditional values of Anglicanism — compassion, the Via Media, the belief that faith and intellect work hand-in-hand, support for pilgrimages, and commitment to mission.

In any governance structure or structures, these principles should be paramount. Many believe the current brokenness of the world, war, poverty, disease, and genocide lend particular urgency to the notion that people with shared basic values must bond together to address these issues. Canterbury can play a significant role, programmatically and symbolically.



Our goals are ambitious. They can only be attained prayerfully and in community with one another. But we believe Friends of Canterbury Cathedral in the United States can make an important contribution toward creating that community and joining with people of good will throughout the world in the hope of making it a better place.



The Historical Cathedral... The New International Study Centre

*...And specially from every shire's end
Of England to Canterbury they wend
The holy blissful martyr for to seek...*

Geoffrey Chaucer,
The Canterbury Tales (1400)

By Chaucer's time, two hundred years after the canonization of Archbishop Thomas Becket (1173), who had been murdered in the Cathedral (1170), Canterbury had become one of the major medieval shrines in the world, a holy place where pilgrims came to pray, repent, or be healed. In fact, the word "canter" comes from the pace of the pilgrims' horses as they rode to the Cathedral.

Canterbury, now visited by over a million people a year, remains a site of pilgrimage for the faithful. The new International Study Centre (ISC) offers visitors comfortable and functional accommodations on the Cathedral grounds.

The ISC, a state-of-the-art conference centre, which opened in 2000, welcomes pilgrims and visitors all year round. FOCCUS seeks to strengthen the annual Scholars' Program, sponsor and support special pilgrimages, and encourage and assist individual pilgrims.

The Scholars' Program at the Study Centre

Each summer since 2001, the new Study Centre has welcomed a group of seminarians and clergy in the early years of their ministries, who spend two full weeks at Canterbury to study, share opportunities to pray, and exchange experiences and ideas.

The students, who come from all over the world, broaden their horizons by exploring Anglicanism as it is practiced in cultures other than their own. As the class of 2006 put it, "...we have found unity and mutual respect in diversity by being in dialogue with each other at Canterbury." (See page 4) The students are committed to share what they have learned with their colleagues and friends in their home countries.

The John C. Harper Scholarship Fund, established by FOCCUS to honor our founder's memory, helps to support participating seminarians, particularly from Third World countries.

*All Canterbury Cathedral photographs by Buffy Tucker,
Dean and Chapter of Canterbury*



Sponsoring and Supporting Special Pilgrimages

FOCCUS believes that the ISC gives Canterbury a greatly expanded opportunity to fulfill a ministry of hospitality, a ministry stretching back to the days when it was a Benedictine monastery. Thirty private en suite rooms, each with a view of the cathedral, meeting rooms, a library, an exhibition space, and a dining room make the ISC an ideal meeting place for groups who have an affinity for or interest in Canterbury and Anglicism.

Going forward, FOCCUS plans to sponsor such visits and assist parishes and dioceses from the United States in taking advantage of ISC for meetings ranging from three days to one week. The up-to-date centre is an ideal place to meet and work, while the ancient cathedral and its grounds offer many places and opportunities for worship and contemplation.

Accommodating Individual Visitors/Pilgrims

FOCCUS also wants to enhance and assist visits by individuals — for a day or, when possible, longer stays at the ISC. Size and timing of meetings frequently allow individual rooms to be available on a bed-and-breakfast basis. FOCCUS members who plan to visit the Cathedral have the advantage of being able to inquire through the organization as to available space and to receive help with the actual booking. FOCCUS members also receive priority access to the Cathedral and its grounds.

During a stay at the ISC pilgrims can attend daily services, tour the architectural wonders of the Cathedral, visit libraries and exhibits, and attend scheduled events.



The ISC is about community, about people coming together to study, to meet, and to build bridges. To the extent that it does this, the Centre's value, both now and in the future is incalculable.

A Letter to Rowan Willams, Archbishop of Canterbury

The following letter from the most recent class of Canterbury Scholars eloquently captures the spirit of the program and gives a sense of its wide-ranging promise.

August 11, 2006

Dear Archbishop,

We are writing to tell you how sincerely grateful we are for the privilege of being Canterbury Scholars this year.

By getting to know our brothers and sisters of different cultures, by hearing each unique story, and by eating and conversing at the same table together we have grown in our own personal enlightenment and broken the barriers of our individualism. We have learned to laugh, cry and build respect and trust for one another in the spirit of love for God's creation and the Anglican Communion.

Further we wish to express our sincerest gratitude for the warm hospitality we have experienced from everybody who lives and works within the Cathedral precincts. We were also made very welcome at the Anglican Communion Office and our visit deepened our understanding of the Anglican Communion.

We now look forward to returning to our own countries and being Ambassadors of unity and love for you and for Canterbury Cathedral by sharing and expressing all we have experienced in these past two weeks.

Our words cannot express enough our desire and wish for this program to continue for future seminarians and clergy of the Anglican Communion. Also, we feel it would be wonderful if it were possible to expand and open the program to the wider Anglican Communion so that more people could share in the experience.

We were very moved that you found time in your busy schedule to visit us and speak to each of us individually. We have committed ourselves to pray for you daily and want to encourage you to continue to hold a vision of unity during these difficult times and situations for all in the whole Anglican Communion.

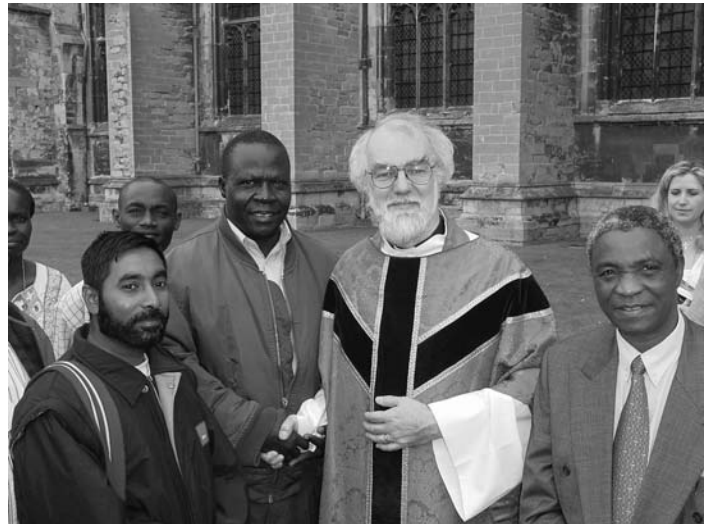
Most importantly we want you to know that as Canterbury Scholars we have found unity and mutual respect in diversity by being in dialogue with each other at Canterbury.



Signed by twenty-eight students from eleven countries: Brazil, Canada, India, Mauritius, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, the United States, and Zambia.



Canterbury Scholars Class of 2006



The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, meets with members of the Scholars' Program



Dean Robert Willis and Bishop Peter Lee at St. Paul's Richmond

Events in the United States

Certainly the best way to connect with Canterbury — a vital, living centre, perhaps the one point of earthly reference shared by all members of the Anglican community — is at the Cathedral itself. But there are alternatives. We have found that Canterbury Cathedral events in the United States can strengthen awareness among Episcopalians that they are part of a global collection of people with an extraordinarily rich tradition and history and a shared goal of improving the world. Recent gatherings have included panel discussions and cultural events designed to highlight FOCCUS' efforts to increase awareness of Canterbury Cathedral's role in history, of its relationships with provinces around the world, and with the Episcopal Church in particular.

These events have varying formats, ranging from dinners, to panel discussions, to all-day, multi-audience gatherings. In some cities, we have worked with a cathedral or a leading parish. Where there is a seminary, we have worked with faculty to arrange sessions that involve both students and professors. Regardless of the format, the themes of each event have been similar. Canterbury's Dean, the Very Rev. Robert Willis, generally with other church leaders, lay and ordained, has participated actively in all of them. During each program there is an exploration of the programs and principles of the Cathedral, its work in the world, and how Canterbury's heritage supports the traditional Anglican values.

FOCCUS plans to hold similar events at regular intervals around the country. As the universe of involved Americans grows, we hope to develop other meeting formats. Becoming a "Friend" will ensure that you will be aware of these events as well as future pilgrimages to Canterbury Cathedral for its American friends.

An Invitation to Involvement and Pilgrimage

Canterbury Cathedral and FOCCUS have become very important to all the board members and to many other long-term supporters. The programs of the International Study Centre, the creative involvement of Canterbury's new dean in our efforts, plus a greatly strengthened organizational capability makes the case for broader and deeper support very compelling.

We are hopeful that many Americans will show their support for worldwide Anglican initiatives and for the programs and principles of Canterbury Cathedral by contributing to FOCCUS. We hope that those who can will consider significant support:

- by becoming a FOCCUS Founding Patron
- by contributing to the Harper Scholarship Fund to provide need-based scholarships for Canterbury Scholars to come from developing countries.
- by exploring a number of other fund-raising opportunities we can describe to you.

The Episcopal Church's continued, if not increased, support for international work is demonstrated by the recent adoption of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and by increased parish and diocesan link agreements with non-U.S. parishes and dioceses.

Contributing to FOCCUS in its mission to Support Canterbury Cathedral and its vision is one way you can further that MDG support. The Cathedral will remain a beacon, beloved by people with a wide range of theological views, regardless of the specific path of the Anglican Communion. Please join us.

Major U.S. Events Since 2002

Multiple New York City Events

- Dinners with the Dean — April 2002 and February 2003.
- Performance and reception — The Choristers of King's School, March 2004.
- Panel — "Utilizing Anglican Heritage and Strength of Enhance Global Wellness," with the Very Rev. Dean Robert Willis, the Rt. Rev. Peter Lee, the Very Rev. Dean Michal Battle, and Courtney Cowart, Ph.D.

Other City visits

- New Haven Day — Dean Willis at Berkeley Divinity School forum for students and professors, lunch with faculty, and Evensong homily.
- Atlanta Day — Dean Willis at Emory faculty lunch, student visits, and St. Philip's Cathedral forum.
- Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes — Keynote speech and workshop by Dean Willis
- Virginia Day — Dean Willis at St. Paul's (Richmond) panel discussion, private dinner, and Virginia Seminary forum.

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Becoming a Friend

To join the American Friends of Canterbury
Cathedral, please fill out and return the enclosed
envelope

Save the Dates

October 14-25, 2007
FOCCUS Pilgrimage, Normandy and Canterbury,
Exploring Benedictine and Anglican Spirituality,
History and Worship.

 **FRIENDS of**
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL
in the UNITED STATES

888 17th Street, NW, Suite 220
Washington, DC 20006
202-822-8994
202-822-9614 (fax)

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