

Setting the record straight

In the providence of God, Good Shepherd has had a long history of being a church that stands up for what the Bible calls "the faith once delivered to the saints" — meaning what the Church has been entrusted to uphold, teach, and clarify for the people it serves in the Name of Jesus Christ.

The Church of The Good Shepherd has a missionary gene in its DNA. We are the mother church of three parishes in Radnor, Villanova, and Paoli, towns on the Main Line of Philadelphia. We established the first hospital on the Main Line, predating Bryn Mawr Hospital and have sponsored missionaries and built hospitals and churches in distant parts of the world. God be praised!

Many of our past rectors have had the wisdom and courage to stand up to the spirit of the day when the Episcopal Church was captured by it. They, as we, were not against new things, but expressed concern how the church was not leading but following.

The clergy and people of The Good Shepherd are committed to the study of Church history and to the study of our present culture. We strive to be men and women of prayer, open to all and humble before God, the giver of all good things.

As the Rector of Good Shepherd, and as one who has had considerable media attention originating with serious concerns about the theological positions of many leaders in the Episcopal Church, I have heard people say directly or indirectly that I am "anti-women" and "anti-gay." I respectfully disagree, and declare that I am neither. It saddens me that there are those who have misunderstood, manufactured, and/or misrepresented me with such statements.

If Jesus Christ is the Son of God (as is recited Sunday by Sunday in the Nicene and Apostles Creed by countless people), then what He did and said has far reaching implications. Christians believe that at a certain time and in a certain place (what the Bible calls "the fullness of time") God spoke definitively through His Son, Jesus Christ. He was both human and divine. Christians are to submit to what He in His sovereignty put into place. Among what Jesus passed on to His apostles was a ministry in and for the Church that was led by men. Full stop.

I have been married for 37 years to a wonderfully bright and capable woman, and have the blessing of two adult daughters who are highly educated and have found their niche in the professional world, as well as a son who is tennis professional (and who is no fun for me to play!).

I am convinced along with the vast majority of Christians throughout the world that women are not to be ordained as bishops, priests, or deacons. To hold that theological position hardly makes one "anti-women";

In response to the accusation that I am "anti-gay," I would like to let one of my parishioners speak on my behalf. I was thankful to learn awhile ago that when a gay man in our parish heard his friend state that I was "anti-gay," he replied, "You should get to know Father Moyer. He's not that way." I sincerely appreciate this gentleman's loyalty, insight, and candor.

I also believe that none of us is free of sin. Furthermore, our patterns of behavior and relationships are influenced by what we have experienced in our families and what we have found to work for us over the course of our lives. If I had come from a different family, I might well have developed attractions and a certain comfort level with men on an intimate level, rather than with a woman. And where I find myself now, I struggle with other sins and temptations, as I always have and will always do. Welcome to a fallen world.

At Good Shepherd, we try in our small part of the Christian world to live according to God's known from Holy Scripture and the living Tradition of the Church- for our good. It is not always easy, but we believe the struggle is essential. We strive to be forgiving, patient, and understanding with each other, and are reminded of the words of our Savior, "He who is without sin, let him cast the first stone." One has to walk in the shoes of another to truly understand the road taken and why it is being followed.

Scott Peck, in his book *The Road Less Traveled*, begins with the sentence, "Life is difficult." We agree with that, but we also know that with Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, we are on a journey to wholeness and life as God wills it.

Come and see who we are. Join us in our quest. Come to Him who provides living water for our souls.

+David L. Moyer