E. Otis Charles

The Independent Diocese
(1971–1986)

The future of the church will rest more and more with the total community of the baptized and, as bishop, I will hope to make my place in the midst of the community as its encourager. Above all as one who seeks to share and inspire the love of God which sustains our life together.

—Bishop Charles, 1971

Truth is always a good thing. I could not imagine living the rest of my life in a deceptive way.

—Bishop Charles discloses his homosexuality, Camp Tuttle, 1976

The thick white hair and thin, slightly lined ascetic face suggested someone who prayed a lot, and the merry, piercing eyes bespoke pastoral warmth. If the casting director of a 1970s film sought someone to play the role of bishop, on sight they could have easily settled on E. Otis Charles, first bishop of the independent Diocese of Utah. Charles was a right-side-of-the-brain person, an E in the Meyer Briggs personality test. He could have been a theatrical director, had he chosen another line of work. His vestments were colorful, and the liturgies he designed gave careful attention to music, movement, and lay participation. They were far from the plainness he inherited.

The Charles era, 1971–1986, was one of rapid change in almost every domain of church life. It went surprisingly well in Utah, major innovations swiftly following one another, with general acceptance and little opposition from church members. The buttons distributed early on said it all, “Episcopali ans, one-half of one percent but we make a difference.”
Women were ordained, and for the first time the church discussed the place of homosexuals openly. Active lay ministry was encouraged, and Charles ordained a corps of local deacons and priests, called “sacramentalists.” Not since the time of Spalding and Jones did a bishop speak out on so many public issues; with Charles it was about the death penalty and nuclear waste storage in Utah, disarmament, Watergate, and the draft. Nationally known figures like William Sloane Coffin and Harvey Cox were invited to discuss topics like the arms race and human sexuality. A synergy was created with a series of progressive cathedral deans who were articulate voices on religion and public-life issues.

A new prayer book and hymnal were introduced—Charles chaired the national church’s Standing Liturgical Commission. It was a creative time at the cathedral as well. The bishop choreographed the full splendor of the Easter Vigil service, and the cathedral’s brilliant young organist, Clay Christianson, led a multi-choir performance of Bach’s “St. Matthew Passion.” Charles less successfully tried several innovations in church governance, including brief-lived regional deaneries and inter-parish cooperation programs. A plan for house churches never materialized. Clergy and laity freely discussed their dreams and visions for the new diocese. Yet, for all its creative energy, Utah was a poor diocese, and Charles’s achievements were accomplished on a shoestring.

Those who knew him give Charles high marks as a pastor. He remembered the aging H. Baxter Liebler on the anniversary of his ordination, making Liebler an honorary canon. The files of several churches contain solicitous letters from the bishop to a priest, or sometimes to a vestry helping a church through the difficult process of removing a less-than-competent clergy leader. Charles was an intense participant in everything he did. “He had the sort of personality that either engaged you or you wanted to distance yourself from him,” a contemporary acknowledged, adding, “Otis and I duked it out a number of times.”

What was Otis Charles like? “Real is the first word that comes to mind,” Anne Campbell, the diocese’s first woman priest, recalled. “He carried our bags from the airport when we came to Salt Lake City. That is not what you would expect of a bishop. He was someone with his own vision, but was willing to listen to others. He was very pastoral.” Of the diocesan clergy in the late 1970s and early 1980s, she recalled, “we were a tiny, incredibly intimate group at that time, eleven priests. All congregations in Utah were small and broke. We lived in a state where religion was a hot issue. We were a marginalized people and one big happy family. You knew everyone’s warts and bumps. I never knew what a gift that was until the hospital was sold and things changed.”
Charles was forty-four when he was elected bishop of Utah, with its less than 3,500 communicants. Born in Norristown, Pennsylvania, on April 24, 1926, he grew up in Audubon, New Jersey, where his father was a teacher in the Camden schools. Neither parent was interested in religion, but two neighboring women took young Otis to church school at St. Mary’s, Haddon Heights, New Jersey, where he was baptized. Only confirmed children could stay for the full service. Otis thought he was missing something, and badgered the rector to allow him to attend confirmation class. St. Mary’s was a Morning Prayer parish, and one of the women took Otis with her each Sunday by bus to mass at St. Clement’s, Philadelphia, a well-known east coast high church parish. His high school graduation coincided with World War II. Charles joined the Navy and, as part of his military training, was sent for several weeks to a course at Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut. The splendor of its Gothic chapel deeply impressed the youth, and after the war, he returned to Trinity, graduated in 1948, and decided to attend seminary. At New York’s General Theological Seminary, Charles discovered a growing passion for liturgy that would be pivotal throughout his life. The church in the 1950s was also discovering urban ministry, and Charles was attracted to the work of Dorothy Day and the short-lived French worker–priest movement. Charles had met his wife, Elvira, at General, where she came to work on a summer project. A 1948 graduate of Hunter College, she had decided that a career in fashion with Lord & Taylor was not for her, preferring instead to help the poor and marginalized in society. They were married on May 26, 1951, at the Church of the Resurrection in New York City and began married life in an urban parish in Elizabeth, New Jersey, and in 1953 moved to Beacon, New York, a mid-Hudson Valley town on the opposite side of the river from Poughkeepsie. St. Andrew’s sat on the fault line between Beacon’s black and white communities. It was the civil rights era, and Charles actively recruited African American parishioners, many of whom came from Southern Baptist churches, so there was plenty of singing. “Those were great years,” he recalled; by now the family included five children, and the next-door rectory had become a parish hall for the growing congregation. Bishop and Mrs. Paul Moore, leaders in the 1960s church reform efforts, lent the couple their house near Kent, Connecticut, for a summer vacation. Then a nearby parish, St. John’s, Washington, Connecticut, asked Charles to become its rector.

The period of Charles’s stay in Connecticut coincided with the Vatican II renewal movement in the Roman Catholic Church. Nearby in Litchfield, Connecticut, were the Montfort Fathers, an unreconstructed missionary order. Vatican II resulted in the closing of many small, isolated seminaries.
In this case, four of the monks wanted to found an ecumenical center. Charles left his parish in 1968 to join them. At the same time, he became executive secretary of Associated Parishes, a liturgical renewal movement within the Episcopal Church.

Prayer book revision and liturgical experimentation were widespread all over the United States in the late 1960s and 1970s, and Charles, by now a member of the Standing Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Church, flew about the country holding workshops on creative forms of worship. One such stop in 1970 was in Utah, where a classmate from General, Wesley Frensdorff, was dean of the cathedral. Charles led a conference on “Introducing the Green Book,” the Episcopal Church’s trial usage volume. He later chaired a conference in Loveland, Ohio, on the proposed baptismal rite attended by William J. Hannifin, a longtime Utah priest. In 1971, Charles was one of three candidates nominated to be bishop of Connecticut. A letter and questionnaire had come from Utah at the same time. “I put them on the dining room sideboard and they sat there. Elvira said, ‘I knew it was our future.’ After I lost the Connecticut election, I wrote the Utah diocese. Bill Hannifin, representing the clergy, and Bob Gordon, a lay leader, came to Connecticut to interview me. I was told I was a candidate.”

1971—A New Bishop, an Independent Diocese

The election of a new bishop was one sign of Utah’s becoming an independent diocese, after being a Missionary Diocese for 103 years. At its 1970 General Convention, the Episcopal Church had made many domestic missionary districts independent dioceses, responsible now for raising their own budgets and electing their own bishops. Charles, one of seven candidates, was elected on the fifth ballot on May 16, 1971, at the special convention of 105 persons from the new diocese’s nineteen congregations. His salary was $12,000 a year, with a $10,000 life insurance policy, $4,000 for travel, $1,000 for representational expenses, and a $2,000 discretionary allowance. Extending the insurance policy to the bishop’s family required a convention vote. The median total compensation for Utah’s thirteen full-time clergy in 1972 was $9,700. The national median was $10,500. Utah was seventy-third out of ninety-two dioceses.

The consecration service, scheduled for September 12, 1971, was a signature event in Charles’s episcopate. The bishop requested a two-day retreat with diocesan clergy beforehand at Holy Trinity Abbey, a Roman Catholic Trappist monastery in Huntsville, Utah. Father Emmanuel, the abbot, had a close relationship with many Episcopal clergy. Presiding Bishop John E. Hines was the principal consecrator. The service was set for 10 a.m. on a Sunday
at the University of Utah’s Special Events Center, with all Episcopalians in the new diocese invited to attend. (There were no other Sunday services in Utah that day.) Charles designed his own vestments, which a newspaper account described as “brilliant psychedelic hues in red, orange, green, yellow, and black.” More than forty yards of red Thai silk were ordered for clergy vestments, but arrived too late for use. (Charles had to find the money first.) Musicians strolled about the grounds and a “festival potluck” followed the service. Everyone attending was asked to bring extra food.

Balloons decorated the building, but the planning committee nixed a suggestion to let loose a cloud of doves following the service. The preacher was C. Kilmer Myers, bishop of California, whom Charles had known for his pioneering work in urban ministry in New York. Charles provided the bread and wine for the celebration, and the new Second Order communion rite replaced the traditional 1928 Prayer Book service. The Ordination Service for a new bishop was one Charles had helped write. Hymns not yet widely used, such as “Take Our Bread,” were introduced. Charles knelt on a Navajo rug to receive the laying on of hands. Diocesan clergy were con-celebrants with the new bishop, and each was presented with a matching stole. The bishop’s pastoral staff had been refinished for the event, and its beehive and seagull, two classical Utah and LDS symbols, were removed. The bishop selected a plain gold signet ring, a traditional symbol of authority, which was presented to him by the clergy. He wore Bishop Leonard’s pectoral cross until he could select one for himself.

In 1971, the new diocese had fifteen parochial and institutional clergy, including the bishop. All but five had come within the last five years. Liturgically, Morning Prayer had long given way in Utah to a parish Eucharist in most churches. Support for liturgical innovation was widespread. Dorothy Gordon, a parishioner at St. Mark’s Cathedral, was one of the authors of the prayer book rite for the Reconciliation of a Penitent. The service of celebration of a new ministry was field tested at St. Stephen’s, and the Burial of the Dead was patterned on one used at the Huntsville Abbey. Reflecting on the place of the Episcopal Church in a heavily LDS setting, Charles observed, “One of the remarkable things about Utah is that it is a very open diocese. The church is a bit of a counter culture. Everyone got pushed to the left of where they were. We did not have the difficulties other places did with the new prayer book or the ordination of women.”

At the October 1971 diocesan convention, Charles unveiled his plans for the new diocese. He saw his ordination as a visible transition from an old to a new order. During the previous century, “the strength and survival of the church depended to a large extent upon the capability and vision of the bishop and those most closely identified with him.” In the coming century,
“the future of the church will rest more and more with the total community of the baptized and, as bishop, I will hope to make my place in the midst of the community as its encourager.”  

His program was “to create an environment within the diocese in which each person has an opportunity and feels able to express his or her particular needs, concerns, hopes, aspirations; an environment in which all of these form the ingredients of our discussion and debate; an environment in which decisions reflect a consensus of opinion.”

The newly independent western missionary districts met to form Coalition 14, named for the fourteen member dioceses. They represented 450 mostly small, rural congregations covering thirty-six percent of the landmass of the United States. C-14, as the group called itself, agreed to(pool a single annual request for funds from the national church. Previously, each of the twenty-some missionary bishops made frequent trips back east to seek their own funds. A C-14 publication called that process “a really weird mixture of paternalism and individual initiative.” It announced a minimum clergy salary of $7,200 as a goal for the dioceses, plus a $1,200 car allowance, housing, utilities, and insurance. The activist Charles worked hard with the new group, and Robert Gordon, his lay assistant, carefully prepared the new diocese’s numerous requests, most of which were supported by the Coalition.

Organizationally, Charles tried several initiatives, some of which he later abandoned. Four regional deaneries were created, but Utah was a large state, churches and clergy were notoriously parochial, and the regional idea never got off the ground. Neither did an inter-parish cooperative plan, where larger parishes would help smaller ones. The idea of a joint council was launched, including a twenty-one member standing committee (fifteen of them lay members), to which were added former members of the corporation and executive council.

Two years later Charles said, “Our meetings have been long and often tedious. We have gone home exhausted and with headaches.” “He had an ass of stone,” a colleague later recalled, “because he could sit in meetings forever.” But Charles was committed to process the way a seventeenth-century Calvinist might be wedded to Predestination. “I have always been trustful of process, believing that what comes out of it to be good,” he remarked later. Newsprint sheets were tacked up on meeting room walls as a way of soliciting lay and clerical nominees for various positions. Nominations of women were specifically encouraged. Extra time at convention was spent in intense small group discussion. These were followed by parish conversations, a Eucharist, and a business session Sunday morning, at which a budget and resolutions were adopted.
The pattern Charles established was repeated in future gatherings over the next decade. The files contain thick sheets of notes penned in his bold artist’s hand, with words like “total ministry” and “inter-parish partnership” underlined. It was the heyday of “process” management; consultants and trainers appeared with newsprint and magic markers. They guided people sitting at circular tables through their responses to questions like “Dream how to best use the bishop” and “When I see the word ‘Diocese’ I immediately think of . . . .” Canons gradually evolved out of the discussions, although they were clearly of less interest to the bishop than the process of engagement with clergy and laity. “I didn’t perceive myself as being in a power struggle with the clergy or others,” he reflected. “First, there were only fifteen of us. We worked together, went on retreats together. Utah was a great place to be a bishop.”

An observer in a future generation would wonder how Charles accomplished all he did, for his staff was one executive assistant, Robert Gordon, a former oil company employee and insurance salesman, and a secretary, Marjorie Black, who turned the bishop’s scattered notes into finished statements.

As for relations with the cathedral, Charles saw them as harmonious, but a close observer said, “Otis impinged on the cathedral a lot. His office was over there and there were lots of hard feelings. He was always interested in changing the liturgy or was hanging up art pieces nobody liked.” Frensdorff, cathedral dean since 1962, had cautioned of tension between himself and Watson and in his December 1971 vestry report added, “we were never able to define the roles and relationships involved.” At one point, when the cathedral leaders tried to remove him as pro forma rector, Charles threatened to move the cathedra, the official seat of the bishop, to St. Stephen’s mission, West Valley City, and make the newly-completed cinderblock building the diocese’s main church.

Church growth was not a priority for the new diocese. St. Luke’s, Park City, continued its fitful existence. The mining town had become a ghost town during the Depression, and from 1947 to 1964 the church had been deconsecrated. It was revived briefly, and a priest from St. Paul’s, Salt Lake City, held periodic services there. But the congregation was always small, and the structure badly in need of repair. Bishop Charles deconsecrated it again on July 15, 1978, and helped carry out the altar. Still, a determined core of five parish families would not give up, meeting at a Holiday Inn or in one another’s homes for worship. Within a year the needed repairs on the old building were completed, and Lincoln Ure, a Salt Lake City hospital chaplain during the week, made the Sunday journey to Park City where, without stipend, he held weekly services for several years.
Anne Campbell Thieme, Utah’s First Woman Priest

In his 1973 convention address, Charles reminded the diocese that at the previous year’s national convention in New Orleans, he was among those voting for the ordination of women. At the 1976 Minneapolis General Convention, women were admitted to all three orders: deaconate, priesthood, and episcopacy.

Anne Campbell Thieme was ordained as Utah’s first woman priest on the Feast of the Ascension, May 25, 1979, at St. Peter’s, Clearfield. Born on May 12, 1945, Campbell attended Northwestern University as a journalism major. She took degrees in 1965 and 1967, met her husband, Richard Thieme, married in a Jewish ceremony, and lived in England for two years, where Richard converted to Christianity and decided to attend seminary. Anne, the mother of three small children, joined him at Seabury Western Seminary in Evanston, Illinois.

“We wanted to be a tandem couple but our only work was cleaning an office building in Evanston,” she recalled. After graduating in 1977, the couple was selected by St. Peter’s, Clearfield, to fill two half-time jobs. Was there hostility at Anne’s being a woman priest? “The parish bought into it from the start. Men were willing to accept me pretty easily. It took longer for some women, but people were gracious when they met me in person.” In September 1979, the Thiemens became co-rectors of St. James’s, in an expanding Salt Lake City suburb, but the marriage soon came apart, and Anne overdosed on over-the-counter sleeping pills. She later reflected: “We were co-rectors and there were no role models. If something went wrong at the office, we would both bring it home in the evening. I was avalanched with positives, lionized, made a member of the Standing Committee and Commission on Ministry six months after I was ordained. The relationship took a competitive edge.”

Anne later married Peter Maupin, a priest who had done an interim ministry at St. James’s. The couple spent six months in Vernal, Utah, then moved to Seattle, Washington. Anne became a family therapist, served part-time in a parish, divorced, and later lived with a community of Roman Catholic sisters and became a nurse with the aged and dying.

What does she remember most about her time in Utah? The desert.

I came to love the Red Rock Desert. It is a holy place. It is not surprising to me that so many of the world’s great traditions had birthplaces in the desert. That’s my image of my journey in Utah. It’s the glory of the desert journey with the intensities of heat in the wilderness of large perspectives, the big sky, the joy of shade and the intimacy of a cave.
or an oasis surrounding a water hole, the extraordinary flash of beauty when the rains come and the wash, the blaze of wild flowers where you thought there was just desert sand.\textsuperscript{15}

**Ecumenism: Francis L. Winder and the Ogden Covenant**

Ecumenical activities were rare in Utah, but in 1976 Francis L. Winder went against the tide. His 450-member Good Shepherd Parish, active since the 1870s, was left landlocked amid the parking structures and cement buildings of well-intentioned but poorly conceived downtown redevelopment in Ogden. Nearby St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church was in similar straits. Winder had gotten to know his Roman Catholic counterpart, and from their contact the two parishes explored possibilities for shared activity, leading to a covenant drafted and signed on Trinity Sunday, 1977, for the two denominations by Bishops Charles and Joseph L. Federal, the Roman Catholic bishop of Utah, 1960–1980. The document was filled with hope. The “highest leadership of the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches have expressed a desire for reunion.” It was time now to pray for one another, periodically attend each other’s worship services, seasonally hold joint worship services, and sponsor action programs in everything from social justice to cultural events.\textsuperscript{36}

During the next two years, cautiousness and coolness turned to warmth and boldness as a small segment of members of both parishes began to act together. Neither parish had the resources to run a preschool, but combined they launched the Ark School, led by a skilled teacher, Bonnie Winder, the rector’s wife. Experiencing the frustration of sharing church life together but not being able to share communion, many parishioners from the two congregations petitioned the Vatican and archbishop of Canterbury to work more zealously for full communion. Canterbury replied with a handwritten letter expressing his own distress at the failure of reunion efforts. The Vatican secretariat said only that the message was received and noted. Six years into the Covenant, the two parishes designed an ambitious joint project to aid the transient poor through volunteer advocates. St. Anne’s Center was founded in an unused Roman Catholic school. Later, as archdeacon, Winder was largely responsible for founding the Community of Churches in Utah and other collaborative programs with the Roman Catholic and other Protestant churches.

**Strategy for Ministry and Mission in the Diocese of Utah**

Five years after his ordination as bishop, Charles reflected on progress in his convention address. He saw the bishop’s role having moved to
“a participatory style of life. . . . We have consciously set aside a rigidly hierarchical organization. Differences in relationship have been based on function rather than rank, wealth, size or prestige.”

The bishop voiced enthusiasm for the Charismatic movement, as he had the Cursillo movement earlier, and as he would for other such possibilities appearing on the horizon. He recalled a 1960 Agnes Sanford School of Pastoral Theology gathering, where he had asked for her prayers. “As I left the room where we had been praying, I was filled with an overwhelming sense of joy. The only word I know to describe it is hilarity. All my upbringing said, ‘This is no way to behave in public.’ So, I did what seemed proper. I went to my room. There, on my knees, I fought to control the bubbles of joy. I pushed my feelings down inside as though putting them back in a box.” A quarter-century later, Charles recalled the event in almost the same language, but this time said, “What I experienced was that I am all right who I am. After that it will be a question of living with myself.” By which Charles meant the discovery of his homosexuality.

Evaluation was the stepsister of innovation, and in 1974 Charles participated in a self-evaluation workshop. He listed his strengths as confidence in his own personal abilities, a willingness to learn, and adaptability in understanding the positions of others. His self-catalogued weaknesses “too often short circuit[ed] my own process in making decisions”: wishing to impose his own goals, and entering situations only at the point of crisis. Evaluations of the bishop by others mirrored his own assessment. One said he was capable of “giving and withholding authority simultaneously.” A priest wrote, “sometimes I think you have your own agenda and are blind to where others are coming from, though you try to see the other side.” Another identified Charles’s leadership style as a “subliminal benign dictatorship.”

Charles faced daunting organizational challenges with few resources. He did not launch brand new missions, as Watson had, believing the new diocese faced enough demands in supporting and financing its existing programs. One of the few mission initiatives of the 1970s occurred in Utah’s south, but was not the result of any central planning. The Episcopal Church in Cedar City began life in the fall of 1977 when James and Katherine Mittenzweis, a lay couple, hung up a sign in their yard that said “Episcopal Church Meets Here.” Bishop Charles told the story of heading through southern Utah and nearly driving off the road when he saw the sign; no one from Cedar City had any contact with the diocese.

For many Sundays, the living room congregation was Jim Mittenzweis, who worked for the FAA, his wife Kathy, and their daughter Rebecca, who Bishop Charles licensed as a lay reader at age eight. They were joined by Dr. Sonja B. Wycoff, a Los Angeles physician now working in Cedar City, and
a few other families. The new congregation of St. Stephen’s, West Valley City, began supporting the even newer Cedar City Episcopal community. Father James A. Martin, priest in charge of St. Stephen’s, and various church members made the nearly 250 mile trip to Cedar City every six or eight weeks. They gathered for Saturday evening potluck, and fellowship evenings, spent the night as guests of various church members, and worshipped as a community on Sunday mornings. The Cedar City Episcopalians periodically came north to St. Stephen’s as well.

In November 1978 Otis and Elvira Charles spent a weekend with the Cedar City congregation, talking late into the night about people’s hopes for the future. The initial five-family Cedar City congregation gradually expanded, sometimes joined by students and faculty from what eventually became Southern Utah University. The Mittenzweises were transferred to Gallup, New Mexico, and in 1984, an orange-walled shopping mall archery shop became a store-front church. The congregation, informally named the Episcopal Mission of Southwest Utah until 1983, called itself St. Jude’s, after the first century Roman Catholic martyr and saint, patron of hospital workers and desperate or lost causes.

Dr. Wycoff said, “St. Jude’s has never waited for help or even permission from headquarters in Salt Lake to move ahead and do what needs to be done. We’ve been too far away and alone for too long.” Chairs of various sizes, shapes, and colors were assembled in the six hundred square feet of store space. Drapes in the colors of the church year were ordered from Sears and Roebuck, except for purple ones used during Advent and Lent. Since these liturgical season colors were not carried in the Sears catalog, Dr. Wycoff found the appropriate choices in a Las Vegas custom drapery shop. Her description, “I found a remnant of purple satin which appeared to be left over from decorating a brothel. I wasn’t sure there was enough so I asked the man if he had any more of it. He said, ‘God, I hope not!’ But he made us a pair of drapes for $56—and that’s the story of our custom-made drapes.”

Evicted on short notice when the shopping mall changed owners in 1987 the congregation moved to a house at 354 South 100 West, where it stayed for several years, then, with diocesan help, it purchased the former Roman Catholic Church of Christ the King in 2001. Even as it was in formation, St. Jude’s was a mission-minded church. As St. Stephen’s helped St. Jude’s, the latter helped launch Grace Church, St. George, in the early 1980s. By then Fred Cedar Face, a Lakota Sioux and lay reader, and his wife, Mary Jane, had joined St. Jude’s. It was Cedar Face and Mittenzweis who alternated holding services and helped jump-start Grace Church, St. George, in its early days.

St. George existed as a small congregation since July 3, 1966, when a service of Holy Communion was held at the home of Nello and Eleanor
The Independent Diocese

Beckstead, 781 East 100 South. The Becksteads, formerly of St. Paul’s, Salt Lake City, had recently moved to St. George. They found sixteen Episcopalian families in the St. George, Cedar City, and Washington, Utah, area. The celebrant at the first service was the Rev. Lawrence Kern, chaplain of St. Mark’s Hospital, Salt Lake City, and priest-in-charge of St. Luke’s, Park City, a former “timberline circuit” priest from Colorado. St. Mark’s Cathedral provided prayer books and hymnals for the small congregation. A communion service was arranged every two months in St. George. Nello Beckstead would read Morning Prayer each Sunday morning in the interim.42

A “Sacramentalist” Ministry

Life was never dull in Charles’s time. In 1973 the bishop introduced a controversial program to ordain local deacons and priests. First called “Auxiliary,” then “Sacramentalist” ministries, they finally became Canon 8, later Canon 9, clergy. The idea was to raise up deacons and priests with limited responsibilities in every parish. “Sacramentalist” clergy could celebrate the Eucharist in their own particular parish, but were not supposed to preach, make house calls, participate in community ministries, or wear clerical dress outside the church. They would receive no payment, retirement, or medical benefits. At church conventions they had at first no clerical vote, then a half clerical vote, and eventually a full vote.

For Bishop Watson, life had been a continual struggle to find and pay for a priest in each parish. His successor said, “this is ridiculous; I’m spending all my time and energy in raising money to keep a seminary trained priest in each church.” He found precedents in the writings of Roland Allen, the mid-twentieth-century Anglican missionary and champion of locally ordained clergy, and in the example of such local ministries already employed in Alaska by Bishop Robert Gordon. Utah’s size, and the isolation of many of its churches, led him to launch the new program. “A congregation must not be deprived because it is small or poor. A congregation must not be prevented from making Eucharist week by week—even day by day—because it cannot afford a professionally trained priest.” Each congregation was asked to identify individuals suited to become priests and deacons under the program.43 He set no training standards for participants, and some were better prepared than others. Charles believed that ordination came first, and participants could improve their skills later.

After several years of experimentation, in 1978 the requirements for locally ordained priests and deacons were codified. The Canon 8 priests had limited responsibility, and would be part-time, non-stipendiary volunteers.
(Several later sought retirement and medical benefits for their work, and Bishop Bates quietly put some on the diocesan payroll.) Such priests had a decidedly supportive role, and would not serve as vicars or rectors of congregations, nor would they exercise general pastoral, administrative, or educational oversight of a congregation. Prospective local clergy should have skills at leading worship, and a “good speaking voice, poise, grace, and attractiveness.” They should “be known as a person who is continually growing.” By 1974, one such priest was functioning in Tooele, and others were in training at St. Francis’s, Moab; St. Michael’s, Brigham City; and All Saints’, Salt Lake City. A search was conducted to find candidates for the Uintah Basin in eastern Utah, and for the Church of the Good Shepherd, Ogden. In 1978 there were eight such priests functioning in six Utah congregations, with four others in various stages of preparation.

Some of the local priests remembered the discrimination they faced from seminary-trained colleagues. Sometimes it was shown in a patronizing manner. “You talk about a cutthroat thing,” Elizabeth Dalaba, a local priest at St. Peter’s, Clearfield, recalled twenty years after her ordination in 1981. “I remember one clergy member telling me ‘You’re not educated.’ I said ‘I have my degree,’ most of us had degrees. It was absolutely outrageous, but these men were so jealous of their prerogatives.”

Many of the Canon 8 clergy were ordained in their sixties and seventies, near or after the age when other clergy were retiring. Some were reluctant to lay down their ministry with advanced age. Others were identified in their communities as “regular” clergy and were asked to join ministerial associations, and participate in community ecumenical services. Pastoral and preaching demands soon came their way, as well. Also, some became fixtures in parishes with their own loyal followers, especially during the long interims between seminary-trained clergy. When a new priest arrived, the local clergy often remained forces to be reckoned with.

The Canon 8 program had positive and less positive results: At its most basic level, it was the people of God making Eucharist, the fundamental act of worship of the church. But in the church structure, the sacramentalist clergy moved from positions of lay church leadership to the bottom of the clerical pecking order, below the seminary-trained priests, at least during the program’s initial years, when clergy collegiality was distinctively two-tiered. Also, many of the participants were among the parishes’ strongest lay leaders, thus depriving the small, emerging diocese of some of its most able independent lay voices, an absence noticeable decades later.

A reader whose experience with ministry is only the traditional seminary-trained model might look skeptically at the Utah program, but it served an important purpose, even with its improvised quality. Utah was a
small, poor, isolated diocese, whose scattered churches were often deprived of sacramental services. The locally ordained clergy filled a vacuum, offering the bread and wine to the small communities gathered from Vernal to Tooele, from Cedar City to Logan.

**Betty Dalgliesh and Dovie Hutchinson**

Among the locally ordained clergy was Betty Dalgliesh (1904–2004), who spent almost a half-century in first lay and then ordained ministry at St. Paul’s, Salt Lake City. Dalgliesh left Philadelphia in 1933, during the Depression. Jobs for historians were hard to come by, and her husband, Harold, found a one-year appointment in the three-person University of Utah History Department. Driving across the United States for thirteen days in their $200 Buick touring car, the couple headed down out of the mountains toward Salt Lake. Betty asked, “I wonder if there will be an Episcopal Church here?” “I certainly hope so,” said Harold.

Harold taught European History until 1971, and then was historiographer of the diocese, meticulously collecting and cataloguing the missionary district and Diocese’s historical records. Betty, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, taught history for a term, worked at the University’s Middle East Center for seventeen years, and was copyeditor of a scholarly journal for fifty-one years, while raising two children—Bill, a local attorney who eventually served as Bishop Charles’s chancellor, and Margaret, who later lived in California.

On May 10, 1986, at age eighty-two, Dalgliesh was ordained a priest at St. Paul’s. “I was called by my congregation to be a local deacon,” she recalled, “but I decided I didn’t want to be a deacon. I had been doing everything a deacon does for several years. If I was going to do anything, it would be as a priest.” For nearly fifty years at St. Paul’s, she had taught Sunday school, been part of St. Martha’s Guild, led discussion groups, visited the sick, trained acolytes, cooked parish dinners, been a delegate to four General Conventions—whatever it took to support an active parish and diocese.

St. Paul’s advanced four persons for ordination, but Dalgliesh was the only one to complete the process, which she described as being like “a two year Oxford–Cambridge tutorial” with Donald P. Goodheart, St. Paul’s rector from 1980 to 1988. “The fact is he pushed me, challenged me,” she recalled. “I knew church history, anyone whose specialty was England from 1400 to 1600 would know that. But I didn’t know theology. Don was very practical, willing to reduce issues to points where they could be studied.”
E. Otis Charles

Goodheart, later rector of a large church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, said of Dalgliesh: “She was a person of incredible energy, a real take-charge person. I remember once we were taking the day to do home communions, one every hour for eight or nine hours, with half an hour for lunch. I was totally wiped out at the end and said, ‘It’s time to call it a day’ and Betty said, ‘How about just one more?’”

Brigham Young’s great-granddaughter, Dovie M. Hutchinson (1914–2003), was another locally ordained priest. Raised up by the Church of the Resurrection in Bountiful, Hutchinson was one of two persons the parish presented to Bishop Charles for the ordination process from her parish. (The other candidate declined, and moved to Florida.) Peter Chase, vicar of the Church of the Resurrection, designed a work-study program for the past-seventy widow and mother of five children. Physical and psychological examinations were followed by practical training in pastoral calling and biblical studies. Hutchinson remembered reading and discussing The Cloud of Unknowing, Stephen Neill’s Anglicanism, and Marion J. Hatchett’s Commentary on the American Prayer Book. “I poured over those books line by line,” she recalled a quarter-century later. Ordained in Bountiful on June 26, 1988, she actively served at Resurrection after her official retirement in 1995 until her death in 2003. “I felt comfortable that I could do the work, preach, celebrate, visit the sick, help people in the community,” she recalled.

**Charles and Liturgy**

Liturgy was central to Charles’s ministry, in a way that administration and fundraising never were. It was his work with Associated Parishes that brought Charles to the attention of Utah, and his time spent as a leader in liturgical reform allowed the diocese to introduce the 1979 Prayer Book and 1982 Hymnal with little opposition. Two breakaway congregations led brief existences in Salt Lake City and Logan but died of natural causes, and a few letters in the Charles-era archives objected to the changes, one linking them somehow with communism.

Each Monday when he was in town, the bishop held a 5 P.M. Eucharist at the cathedral. He asked one parishioner, Frances Wilson, to promise to be there so there would be a congregation. Before long, the numbers increased to over twenty persons. Gathered at the chancel steps for the Service of the Word, people read and discussed the lessons, then moved to a freestanding altar, where they formed a circle. The basic service was the new Rite III liturgy, an experimental rite with full congregational participation.

All of the splendor of worship came together in the Easter Vigil service, as the church moved from darkness to light, from death to life. The lighting
of the new fire and Paschal candle, the baptisms, singing of the Exsultet, and Easter communion were all combined in the Anglican tradition’s most glorious worship services at the cathedral. Charles focused on it with all his creative intensity. The records contain his lighting instructions. In bold script he wrote: “At the time of the ALLELUIA, CHRIST IS RISEN, as the bishop says ‘Alleluia’ the brown switch is turned up. As the Dean at the High Altar says ‘Alleluia’ the chancel (4 from left) switch and Nave 3 (extreme right) are turned up.”

Many LDS persons, coming from a church that did not emphasize liturgy, were drawn to the cathedral, especially for its festive Christmas, Easter, and other seasonal celebrations.

**Wider Questions**

What was it like to be the leader of the Episcopal Church in a state dominated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? “It was like being a black pastor in a white community. It was like being a minority and not being able to affect anything around you. In Rome, you pay attention to what is going on in the Vatican; in Salt Lake City, it is with the Mormon hierarchy.” Charles sought a meeting with the First Presidency, the LDS Church’s ruling triumvirate, to discuss LDS baptism. Joseph Fielding Smith, the First President, was elderly and slept through most of the meeting; his counselors, Nathan Eldon Tanner and Harold B. Lee, led the discussion. The meeting was held in a large room, with the three LDS officials seated at the head of a T-shaped table; Charles was given a chair facing one of the wings, and a stenographer sat nearby. Lee said there was no point in discussing the issue of baptism, because Episcopalians did not have the Holy Spirit; hence, Episcopal baptisms were not valid.

Basically Charles, like most of his predecessors, accepted the baptism of Mormons joining the Episcopal Church, unless they sought to be baptized again, which many did. The position adopted on LDS baptism by the diocese and enunciated in Charles’s time continued to be held by the Episcopal Church in Utah for the rest of the century. Charles wrote, “no baptized Mormon whose life has been lived in faithful commitment to the Lord, and who comes to the Episcopal Church as a result of maturing Christian awareness is required to be rebaptized or even conditionally baptized.” He stated that Episcopalians could accept the fact that Mormon baptism was by water and the Holy Spirit, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, adding, “since the validity of baptism was never dependent upon the proper belief of the one who administers the sacrament but upon the desire of the one baptized, it is my belief that to require even conditional baptism is a violation of the individual's conscience.”

Charles was aided
by his theological adviser, Alan C. Tull, a Utah cleric who spent many years
as chaplain to Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut. His paper, “On
Mormon Baptism: A Report from Hippo,” argued that Mormon baptism
could be found acceptable through acceptance of St. Augustine’s conclusion
that the sacrament of Baptism remained valid, “however polluted and
unclean its ministers may be.”

A similar position was taken by Francis L. Winder, who urged Episcopalians not to confuse LDS theology with a wider vision of the church.

Wesley Frensdorff, Robert M. Anderson, and William F. Maxwell, Cathedral Deans

The cathedral was a center of religiously informed social and political
activism in the 1970s and 1980s, and St. Mark’s was sometimes a stepping-
stone for cathedral deans to become bishops. Such was the case with Wesley
Frensdorff, dean from 1961 to 1972, then bishop of Nevada from 1972 to
1985. After his retirement, he served as assistant bishop of Arizona until his
death in 1988, in a small plane crash over the Grand Canyon. Frensdorff,
of German Jewish ancestry, was an early advocate for what later was called
“Total Ministry.” His essay, “The Dream,” written while he was in Nevada
but based in part on his Utah experience, remained in print decades after
it was written. The totally ministering church was a place “in which the
sacraments, free from captivity by a professional elite, are available in every
congregation regardless of size, culture, location, or budget.” It was a place
where “all sheep share in the shepherding,” where “the law is known to be a
good servant but a very poor master.” A church “affirming life over death as
much as life after death . . . as concerned about love in all relationships as it
is about chastity, and affirming the personal in all expressions of sexuality.”
A church “so salty and so yeasty that it really would be missed if no longer
around; where there is wild sowing of seed, and much rejoicing when they
take root, but little concern for success, comparative statistics, growth, or
even survival.”

From 1972 to late 1977, Robert M. Anderson was dean of St. Mark’s
Cathedral. Born on December 18, 1933 in Staten Island, New York, Anderson
graduated from Colgate University in 1955, and in 1961 from Berkeley Divinity
School at Yale University, where he was a Danforth Fellow. He married Mary
A. Evans in 1960, and she was an active participant in most of his public
ministry. Anderson served parishes in Stamford, East Haddam, and Middle
Haddam, Connecticut, before coming to Salt Lake City in 1972.

Although Anderson had a reputation for social activism, it was his
strong prayer life and passionate interest in liturgy and religious arts that
informed his public presence. The cathedral’s Holtkamp organ, a state-of-the-art instrument in its era, brought music lovers to the building. Cathedral music programs included an annual Bach organ concert on New Year’s Eve that filled the building, liturgical dance as part of the services, and an annual arts festival coordinated by G. Edward Howlett, a cathedral clergy member and university chaplain. Mary Anderson organized the Mustard Seed, a Christian bookshop, and an active lay worship committee worked closely with the clergy in planning experimental services.

Tall, affable, and an engaging speaker who sometimes delivered sermons with minimal notes and carefully told stories to a rapt congregation, those who heard him remembered Anderson’s ready laugh and sense of humor, someone who could work easily with those holding differing views. He served as president of the Utah Council of Churches from 1974 to 1976, and as a member of the Standing Committee from 1974 to 1977. It was also Anderson who gave intellectual buttressing to many of Charles’s public policy utterances.

The cathedral congregation to which Anderson came was a decidedly liberal one. At the annual parish meeting in January 1977, some seventy-two percent of the fifty persons responding to a questionnaire opposed capital punishment, and more than ninety encouraged the clergy to become involved in social issues and exercise their own consciences in addressing social concerns. The 1977 Gary Gilmore capital punishment case, Utah’s most notorious execution since that of Joe Hill in 1915, triggered vocal opposition to capital punishment. A telephone call from Presiding Bishop John M. Allin caused Anderson to become active. Bishop Charles was out of the country at the time, and the presiding bishop, articulating the church’s opposition to the death penalty, asked Anderson to carry a message to the state. Anderson was the only local church leader to do so; the Roman Catholic Church did not speak to the issue, and the Latter-day Saints supported blood atonement. Meanwhile, the issue attracted national attention, and demonstrators poured into Utah.

Gilmore, who had spent eighteen of his thirty-six years behind bars, was shot by firing squad at 8:08 a.m. on January 17, 1977, at a Draper, Utah, prison. He was the first person sentenced to death in the United States since the death penalty had been reintroduced in 1976. Advocating life imprisonment as an alternative to the death penalty, Anderson and Charles both spoke out publically. In retrospect, Charles wished the church had voiced its opposition earlier, before the execution was set. He recalled visiting the governor at home, but the chief executive would not stay the execution. Charles said publicly he hoped “we can deal effectively with perpetrators of heinous crimes and still eliminate the death penalty.” The bishop also
objected to the trial’s speediness, including Utah Attorney General Robert Hansen’s late night flight to Denver to argue against a federal appeals court granting a stay of the Gilmore execution.\^8

Although bishop–dean relations were sometimes frayed, Anderson and Charles got along well. Both had been active in the liturgical reform movement in Connecticut, and it was Charles who nominated Anderson as one of the candidates for the cathedral dean’s job. Then, at age forty-four, Anderson was called to be bishop of Minnesota. He stayed in Minneapolis from 1978 to 1993, and after retirement became an assisting bishop in the Diocese of Los Angeles.

William F. Maxwell, St. Mark’s next dean, arrived in 1978, and continued the cathedral’s social–political activism. A former dean of St. James’s Cathedral, Chicago, Maxwell was a graduate of Seabury Western Seminary, and chaplain at Northwestern University, who also led large parishes in Texas, Montana, and Oklahoma before coming to Salt Lake City.\^9 A highlight of Maxwell’s time in Salt Lake City was a service for 600 persons at the cathedral to mark the arrival of the NAMES Project AIDS quilt in Salt Lake City in 1987. The service concluded with a candlelight walk to the nearby Salt Palace, where the quilt was displayed publicly. Few in the LDS community would acknowledge the presence of AIDS, and the cathedral launched a public education program. “Folks in the cathedral ceased to be upset and anxious about gay issues after the service. It stopped being an issue and the cathedral congregation came together in a really lovely way,” Maxwell remembered. Gay men served on the vestry and one served as senior warden. A gay man was elected head of the altar guild, and for two years a group of gay men and married couples met weekly and were open about their relationships.\^60

Maxwell also hired an assistant, Bradley S. Wirth, later rector of All Saints’, to work with the homeless and start a food bank. Groups like Utah Issues, a public policy advocacy group, were housed in the cathedral basement. A cathedral-backed Utilities Task Force petitioned the legislature not to allow the utilities of the poor to be cut off in winter for nonpayment of bills.\^61

With his own strong interest in liturgy, the dean helped organize a yearly Good Friday service in which over a thousand persons processed in downtown Salt Lake City—from Roman Catholic to Presbyterian, Methodist, Greek Orthodox, African Methodist Episcopal, and Episcopal churches—led by a large wooden cross, after which they heard Bible readings for the day and sang Passiontide hymns.

The MX missile proposal was a Carter-administration program designed to build on Utah’s defense-related industrial base; by 1969 nearly 4,900 persons were employed locally in the missile industry, including active
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members of many Episcopal parishes. The Salt II treaty had been signed in June 1979, and the $60 million to $100 million project was dangled before Utah and Nevada, with its more than 20,000 new construction jobs. The down side was that with over 200 mobile missile launchers, these two states would be instant targets in case of war. Hundreds of thermonuclear warheads would be moved among thousands of thick silos covering a vast desert landmass, leaving the Russians to guess their location. The desert would be webbed with concrete roadways, and its fragile water system would perish. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff summarized the complex issue in a sentence: “We’re sorry that someone has to be the bull’s-eye, but you’re it!”

Charles sought LDS cooperation on opposition to the planned deployment of the MX missile in Utah, and the U. S. government’s proposal to deposit nuclear waste in the Utah and Nevada deserts. Gordon B. Hinckley, who later became president of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, was a first counselor at the time. “He was just great to work with,” Charles recalled, “carefully gathering the facts and asking a lot of questions.” Throughout the winter of 1980, Charles and other church representatives met with their LDS counterparts. The number of persons on each side of the table gradually grew. Finally the Mormons asked them to make a presentation, but said their schedule was busy and they would not have time to make a response. Then, that spring, the announcement came from the First Presidency. They opposed the MX missile deployment in Utah, and later the nuclear waste deposits as well. “That was the end of that,” Charles recalled. “I realized later what an internal struggle it must have been for them, because they were committed to supporting the lawful authorized authority in the state. The MX deployment would have been the largest public works project in the country.”

The bishop’s most extensive public statement was in 1982, on the thirty-first anniversary of nuclear testing in southern Nevada. He urged a strong arms control treaty, a comprehensive test ban treaty, a freeze on further development, testing, and deployment of nuclear weapons, and a reduction of the existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons; “in short, by giving up the notion that we can create a safe world by reliance on the threat of nuclear war,” he said. At the same time, the Standing Committee supported the idea of a bilateral, verifiable nuclear weapons freeze. J. A. Frazer Crocker, Jr., an Episcopal cleric, accepted the chair of Utahans for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze, seeking to obtain 100,000 signatures on a petition urging a halt to nuclear arms testing.

The cathedral also hosted an ecumenical statewide meeting on “The Arms Race and the Human Race,” keynoted by William Sloane Coffin of
Riverside Church, New York City, on April 12, 1980. At the service Charles likened the people of Utah to Moses, who would rather have not been called on to lead his people out of Egypt, but who accepted the call. In this case, Utah’s citizens faced a similar call to oppose the MX missile.67

Combining his interests in liturgy and public policy, the bishop arranged for a 1978 cathedral service commemorating the Saints and Martyrs of Our Time, including Martin Luther King, Jr., the martyred Ugandan Archbishop Janani Luwum, Jonathan Daniels, an Episcopal Theological Seminary student shot in Alabama in 1965 while helping in a civil rights campaign, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Protestant theologian who was hanged in 1945 for his resistance to Hitler.68

Elsewhere, Charles supported a General Amnesty for Vietnam draft resisters, urged impeachment proceedings against Richard Nixon, and, with Anderson, opposed any further presidential pardons. “Let mercy follow justice,” he wrote President Ford, opposing a Nixon pardon.69

Native American Ministries

It was clear to Bishop Charles that something had to be done with the Navajo mission. Father Liebler had retired in 1962, to a trailer sixty miles distant from St. Christopher’s, where he founded St. Mary of the Moonlight retreat center, along with Brother Juniper, Helen Sturges, and Joan Eskell, whom he would marry on October 27, 1979, after his wife, Frances’s, death on October 4, 1977. Charles called Liebler an “incredible person,” whose sole flaw was his rigid model of pre-Vatican II Anglo Catholic priesthood. By the 1970s, St. Christopher’s mission was running up sizable deficits, and failed to raise up any indigenous clergy.70 Father Wayne Pontious, whom Liebler groomed as his successor, had never held a parish or managed a complex institution before. Charles asked him to leave when conditions failed to improve, and a series of priests came for short periods, while work at the mission atrophied.

By 1975, a new mission strategy was called for, including the idea of carving out a “Navajo Area Mission” with its own bishop. The Utah Diocesan Convention passed a resolution to this effect, and in 1979 the General Convention created the Navajoland Area Mission, comprising Native American missions from the dioceses of Utah, Arizona, and Rio Grande. Charles was suggested as first bishop of the Navajo Area Mission, but the post went instead to Bishop Frederick Putman, then retiring from Oklahoma. At that time the Rev. Steven Tsosie Plummer was the only Navajo priest, having been ordained on July 25, 1976.71 Plummer became bishop of Navajoland in 1990.
Meanwhile, the Ute missions had come to a virtual standstill. In 1983, Iva O. Cutshaw, warden of St. Paul’s Church, Vernal, reported the historic church building at Whiterocks was falling apart because of vandalism, and advised it should be razed and the debris hauled away. But the Church waited, and Bishop Bates resumed a ministry to the reservations several years later. In the meantime, lay leaders like Nancy Pawwinnee kept the small congregations alive. “When I became an Episcopalian, I did away with everything else. That’s how I felt about it. I was a traditional Episcopalian, a 1928 Prayer Book Episcopalian,” she said. The Church of the Holy Spirit, Randlett, was the center of her religious life for over a quarter-century. Not someone caught between two cultures, for Nancy there was no connection between traditional religion and her Christian beliefs. The Sun Dance was a place to meet friends; its religious significance was nil. “Our dad didn’t believe in it, so we didn’t believe in it,” she recalled.72

Born in Ouray, Utah, on October 9, 1921, Nancy was one of ten children of a Ute sheepherder and his wife. Life was happy for the young woman, and continued that way. Her earliest recollections were of the family moving with the herds to summer pasture. There she ran barefoot, swam, and played. “It was a wonderful childhood,” she recalled. “We couldn’t even remember the Depression, because we lived the same way we had before because we were well provided for.” She attended the Ouray Indian School in 1929; the three-year course took Nancy and her sisters four years, since they spoke no English. From 1931 to 1936 she was a student at the nearby Whiterocks Boarding School, where Bishop Moulton baptized her in 1931. Next came the Sherman Indian School in Riverside, California, from which she graduated in 1940. During World War II, Nancy returned to Utah, and in September 1942 went to work for a Salt Lake City commercial sewing company. Shortly after retiring and returning home in 1977, she agreed to lead Morning Prayer services for the small Randlett congregation until a resident priest was found, which took until 1987. Meanwhile, she and a handful of other Native American women kept the church alive, teaching children, visiting the sick, and preparing the altar when an occasional priest came to hold a Communion service.

Clifford Duncan and St. Elizabeth’s, Whiterocks

Clifford Duncan, a Ute healer and Whiterocks church member, bridged both religious worlds, Christian and Native American.73 At funerals he was able to chant both the traditional Native American prayers in a liturgical setting and participate in the Episcopal Church’s burial service. Duncan explained that Ute prayer requires facing the four cardinal points of the
compass. Life is divided into patterns of four, “talking to all creation.” In the morning “light gives all things birth.” It is a time of cleansing, oblations, and preparation for the day ahead. Evening brings the end of the day and presages life’s end. It is also a time of forgiveness. “We ask all things to be corrected so that we can begin the new day.” Midday is the time of healing. “You have light on both sides, morning and evening. . . . We are not the ones that possess healing. It has to be a spirit that is outside of us.”

Born at Whiterocks in 1933, Duncan remembered his great-grandfather coming to church each Sunday by horse, and his mother taking him there, a mile’s walk to St. Elizabeth’s. The youth attended the local Native American boarding school until his father was transferred to Fort Duschene with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Duncan graduated from high school there in 1952. After two years as a tank driver with the U. S. Army, he became a consultant helping various government agencies locate and preserve Native American sacred lands in several states.

His interest in traditional religion was heightened by participation in the Sun Dance as a young person, and later by being asked to lead such ceremonies. The last of the Ute traditional healers had died or had ceased to practice by the 1930s, but elders shared their knowledge of their past and their beliefs with Duncan. Both the annual Sun Dance and the more frequently conducted sweats “give you an insight into who you are and why you are here.” Both rites were avenues to expiation, purification, and restoration, compatible with similar church ceremonies. Duncan found Episcopal mission clergy to be generally accepting of Ute religion, and believed the Episcopal Church has played a positive role among Native Americans. Still, church ritual “needs more of a Native American interpretation” as a way of showing the comparability of biblical and Native American religion.

St. Mark’s Towers, the Schools, the Hospital, and Camp Tuttle

In 1975, the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) launched a nationwide program for low-income elderly and handicapped persons. Occupants were required to pay thirty percent of their income for rent, and the federal government would pay the rest. Charles liked the idea of such a program and applied for a grant to help house the elderly in Salt Lake City. To his surprise, a letter arrived from Washington saying $3.6 million had been set aside for a local housing program. An Episcopal Management Corporation was set up to oversee the venture, and an unused property at 650 South 300 East was purchased for one dollar from the Salt
Lake City School District. It took three years of negotiating before ground was broken, and on December 19, 1979, the first tenants moved into the ten-story building with its 100 one-bedroom apartments.\textsuperscript{75} Total expenditure to the Diocese: $23.

Basic funding for St. Mark’s Towers was the three million dollars plus a low-interest loan payable over forty years from apartment rentals, after which the building would become diocesan property. HUD then told the diocese additional funds were available for another project. Without skipping a beat, Charles and Robert Gordon, his principal lay assistant, prepared plans for a seventy-two unit garden-style apartment complex on five acres in suburban Kaysville. Two million dollars was allocated from federal funds for that project. St. Mark’s Terrace, Brigham City, a thirty-two unit million dollar project, followed in 1988. Then came St. Mark’s, Millcreek, in south Salt Lake City, costing almost a million dollars for twenty-four units set next to a park. In 1993, the Northern Utah Labor Council decided to remove itself from the housing business and transferred to the Diocese ownership of Union Gardens, a $1.5 million fifty-unit project in Ogden.

By the twentieth century’s end, the 228 units of housing in five developments under Episcopal Church auspices were worth an estimated $26 million; they had cost the church only $20,000. Lisa M. Jones, operations director for Danville Development Corporation, which managed the properties, observed that from the early bricks-and-mortar approach, HUD became aware of the problems of “aging in place,” and funded service coordinators who initiated craft activities, outings, and recreational and educational programs.\textsuperscript{76}

* * *

On April 30, 1970, groundbreaking took place for a new St. Mark’s Hospital. The old location, next to an oil refinery, had been added to for a half-century plus, and it was time to move.\textsuperscript{77} The new site was a spacious suburban location in the heart of the expanding valley’s population center at 1200 East 3900 South. The $15 million structure on a twenty-acre site was dedicated in April 1973, and within a year its 251 beds claimed an over ninety percent occupancy rate. The new location and state-of-the-art facilities contributed to the hospital’s success, and soon private medical clinics and offices were built nearby. The hospital provided over a million dollars worth of free care each year to the poor, added an MRI unit and other new technologies, plus an expanded community health education program and a pastoral care program directed by Lincoln Ure, an Episcopal priest and professional counselor, whose Clinical and Pastoral Education program attracted students from around the country.
But the hospital’s move coincided with the beginning of a new era of demands on private hospitals. Sweeping changes were in store for most such institutions, leading to the sale of many. Costs rose, government regulations increased, and hospital management became a specialized industry in America. By 1984, St. Mark’s occupancy rate had dropped to sixty-four percent. Hospital stays were shorter, costs rose, and more patients visited doctor’s offices for treatment, reducing demands for hospital care. St. Mark’s joined an association of nonprofit hospitals as a way of sharing information and achieving economies, but the wave of the future was acquisition by one of the growing number of for-profit professional medical management corporations. That was just over the horizon.

Charles was also interested in Rowland Hall–St. Mark’s School, helping it to affirm its continuing role as a school with a distinctive moral grounding. A watershed event was his moving from chair of the board to becoming a board member in 1984, thus giving the school a dotted line rather than a direct tie to the Episcopal Church. In 1976, the school had closed its boarding facilities, ending a ninety-six-year tradition. During the 1980s a new headmaster, Thomas Jackson, faced the daunting task of raising $2.5 million in a capital campaign to move the near-bankrupt institution to solvency. Meanwhile, the student body more than tripled, from 240 to 840 students, and it acquired the former Roosevelt Junior High School on Lincoln Street as classroom space for grades seven through twelve. The lower grade classes remained at the historic Avenues campus, but major renovations in 1984 allowed for building a new wing to the main building.78

Coming Out: The Bishop as Homosexual

It was the summer of 1976, and Charles was spending a weekend at Camp Tuttle with his wife and their friends, Bishop William C. Frey of Colorado and his wife. At Compline, an agitated participant said to the small group of six persons seated in a circle, “Otis has something he wants to say.” “We’re not here to talk about Otis,” Frey responded. But the participant had released deep, long-suppressed emotions within Charles. “There is something I need to say,” the bishop replied, and went to his cabin to ask Elvira, his wife of twenty-five years, to join him. He then disclosed he was a homosexual. “At that time it felt like a good thing,” he recalled. “Truth is always a good thing. I could not imagine living the rest of my life in a deceptive way.” Charles had been aware of his sexual leanings since at least seminary days. At General, he prayed for a sign from God, and when Elvira appeared, he took it as a sign of what his future state should be. They were married and raised five children, and had nine grandchildren. Elvira was his constant
companion, hard-working in the diocese as a volunteer at the cathedral, and an active hostess at the bishop’s residence as well as in many other service organizations. Almost all of his letters welcoming others to Utah include the phrase “Elvira and I.”

The bishop was torn between two tendencies: to openly acknowledge his homosexuality, discovered over a quarter-century earlier, or to keep it private. After the 1976 CampTuttle disclosure, he discreetly informed the head of the Standing Committee and a few others of his leanings. Experiences at earlier retreats affirmed for him that it was permissible to be who he was, but this fractured his relationship with his wife, and eventually lead to a divorce. The issue never became public while he was in Utah, and Charles resigned in 1985 to accept a prestigious appointment as dean of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Elvira went with him, but after his retirement in 1993 they separated. Their divorce was final a year later, and Charles moved to San Francisco, where he became an influential presence in the gay community there.

Elvira remembers the CampTuttle encounter and its implications differently than her husband. She was asleep in their cabin, she recalled, when Otis awoke her to say he was gay. “That really was hell,” she said, “You realize that the next day something is going to change. We didn’t do anything. He just wanted to live with himself. Besides, I had a poor self-image. I was a volunteer, what could I do on my own?” Elvira continued to shield her husband as bishop, herself, and her children. “It was a different era,” she recalled. “There were prohibitions that don’t exist now. I felt responsible, which was true of women of my generation.” Otis also returned from a lengthy Ignatian retreat, convinced the couple should stay together. And in the 1980s Elvira’s aged parents, who had lived in Spain, settled in Salt Lake City. After Charles retired from EDS, Elvira moved back to Washington, Connecticut. Of the divorce, she said, “We just sort of knew he would go his separate way. It just happened.” She displayed no bitterness toward “Deac,” saying of their life together, “I thought I had the most blessed, positive life going. I was never angry at the church the way some people are when their relationships come apart.” Then, “I don’t need to see him. It’s too toxic.”

On April 24, 2004, the bishop’s seventy-eighth birthday, he and Felipe Sanchez Paris, sixty-two, a four-times-divorced retired professor and political organizer and the father of four, invited friends to join them at “the consecration of their life together” at St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church, San Francisco. Charles thus openly affirmed his commitment to his same sex partner in a colorful two-hour service ending with the couple being carried out of the church in separate chairs by well-wishers. A week later, following considerable publicity about the service, Bishop William E.
Swing, head of the Diocese of California and a supporter of the election of openly gay Bishop Gene Robinson of Vermont, revoked Charles’s license to function in any clerical capacity in the West Coast diocese. Charles, who in retirement had been an assisting or part-time bishop in California, said the ceremony was “done with the bishop’s knowledge and done according to his protocols.” Swing said, “I was entirely clear with Otis about what would be permissible and what would not. Bishop Charles chose to override my decision and proceed on his own authority.” Long retired, Charles had not lost an ability to attract headlines.