George was an enigma.
—Bishop William P. Spofford, bishop of Eastern Oregon

Barbara—having lost a son much, much younger than Andy, we cannot even imagine the horror you are going through. But, we can taste it. And it is awful. Love, Sue and George.
—telegram, n.d.

When the colorful, activist Charles moved on to his Cambridge deanship, the Utah diocese sought a less dramatic personality in its next bishop. George E. Bates fit the bill. Tall, at 6 feet 6 inches, and looking like a bishop, he was the experienced rector of two significant parishes, one in Oregon, the second in New Mexico, before becoming Utah’s ninth Episcopal leader. Bates could be a textbook pastor in one-on-one situations, compassionate with those facing grief or reversals, and quick to respond to clergy and laity needs when made aware of them. For parishes in conflict with their clergy, he stayed the course, clarified issues, insisted on openness, and helped resolve emotionally laden disputes. He had an abiding interest in the poor, the marginalized, and those recovering from substance abuse, and gave generously to such causes once the diocese sold St. Mark’s Hospital in December 1987. This watershed event in the history of the Episcopal Diocese of Utah resulted in a distinctly different before and after diocese, and the sale’s implications remain to be sorted out years later.

Bates did not mix easily with the state’s leadership, nor did they seek his advice beyond the obligatory civic boards expected of someone in his
position. Some of this was due to his shyness, but he also had consciously taken the Episcopal Church out of the policy arena shortly after his election. He was most at home with known quantities, “the good old boy network,” a close associate recalled, and he frequently called those he valued most “good brother” or “good friend” in letters. He was possessed of a constant faith that saw him through the dark hours of “the journey of life,” a favorite phrase of his.

His own struggles, first with sobriety, then with daunting medical problems, were discussed openly. Bates, once a heavy smoker, was treated by radiation for cancer of the throat during the summer of 1988. He left the state for sick leave in a more humid climate, then returned to Utah to resume part-time work while recuperating. His regimen included three hours a day in a hyperbaric chamber for oxygen therapy. “I have no plans to resign or to take a disability retirement,” he told the diocese that year. “There is more than one way to proclaim the Gospel and preach the Good News. I hope that acceptable liturgical alternatives may be found regarding the voice of the bishop while I am learning new methods of communication. As Corporation Sole, I also have a great deal of unfinished business.” Bates used a torpedo microphone to speak as his voice weakened, and he spent increasing time in hospitals, working at home, or on medical leave, reducing his availability to parishes and clergy. His right shoulder was operated on in 1992 for the third time. He had six knee replacements, and four hip replacements on the right side. The bishop took medical retirement on June 29, 1996, at age sixty-three, and died three years later.

**Sale of St. Mark’s Hospital**

The sale of St. Mark’s Hospital had not figured in either the diocesan profile or discussions with candidates for bishop in the 1986 election, but once it was sold, the character of the Utah diocese changed dramatically, affecting basic ideas about the roles of congregations and clergy, and their relationship with the bishop. This before and after quality of the diocese marked new differences as sharply defined as the state’s geology.

The idea of selling the hospital originated with Otis Charles. A western Episcopal diocese had sold its hospital to a nonprofit corporation for one dollar, and Charles liked the idea of doing something comparable with St. Mark’s, but was absorbed by the multiple demands of his office and never followed through. Shortly after Bates came to Utah, Albert Colton, a lawyer–priest and hospital board member, asked the bishop if he wished to pursue the option. Bates liked selling the hospital, but not for one dollar.
By the 1980s, St. Mark’s ran with little church influence. Its Episcopal Church identity was derived primarily from its historic name, nursing school, church-supplied chaplaincy, and Clinical Pastoral Education Program. The day of the independent hospital was fast fading, and two other local institutions, Holy Cross Hospital and the Latter-day Saints Hospital, were being sold; St. Mark’s, a well-run regional hospital and an attractive investment opportunity, soon followed. Several bids were considered, and after tough negotiations, the buyer was the Hospital Corporation of America. HCA was a for-profit hospital management company founded in 1968 by a Nashville, Tennessee, father-and-son medical team turned business entrepreneurs, Drs. Thomas Frist, Sr., and Thomas F. Frist, Jr., who later became a U. S. Senator from Tennessee. At the time St. Mark’s was purchased, HCA was restructuring and had recently sold 104 hospitals. Its remaining flagship properties were 82 large general hospitals and 225 hospital management contracts. Hospital management had become a big business in America.

In an August 28, 1987 press release, Bates announced the pending sale, saying it would allow the church to concentrate on “building up the body of Christ,” fulfilling its charitable responsibilities and missionary work, and providing seminary-trained clergy throughout the diocese. The bishop stated, “economic competition, government regulations, declining Medicare reimbursement and the high cost of medical services have limited the ability of St. Mark’s Hospital to act as an effective agent of this Church’s charitable outreach.” The State of Utah challenged the hospital’s tax exemption as a charitable institution, and the county government saw opportunities to collect tax revenues as well.

Vocal opposition to the sale came both from hospital employees and within the diocese. Bates wrote hospital employees on September 2, 1987 to assure them St. Mark’s would not be closed, and that the nursing program at Westminster College and the St. Mark’s chaplaincy programs would continue, as would an irrevocable trust of several million dollars providing health care for those who could not afford it. Grateful patients and their families had contributed to the fund through the years. Shortly after the sale was completed, however, fifty-five employees were dismissed as part of the hospital’s restructuring. Lincoln Ure, director of St. Mark’s Pastoral Care Center and the diocesan priest most affected by the changing relationship with the hospital, remembered his encounters with Bishop Bates over the sale of St. Mark’s. The hospital staff voiced concern that the institution’s commitment to indigent care be maintained. Bates assured them that would be the case, but Ure recalled that monies in such programs gradually diminished to those specifically designated in
bequeaths for that purpose. “It was a promise he forgot as time when on,” Ure remembered.15

Lawsuits and settlement negotiations took almost three years to complete, even after the hospital was officially sold on December 31, 1987.16 HCA and a later owner kept the name “St. Mark’s” for the hospital by agreement, but later added it to other medical facilities without diocesan permission.17 A convoluted Medicare settlement of $2,700,000 and malpractice claims of $1,331,822 complicated the transaction.18 “Though not popular with everyone, it was a good move,” Bates reflected on the sale, “a giant learning experience for me, and [it] provided considerable money for the poor and the homeless. Also, Utah, which was almost a ‘destitute’ diocese in terms of finances, now has the resources for parish development and increased diocesan staff.”19

Reflecting on the new money now available, William F. Maxwell, dean of St. Mark’s Cathedral from 1978 to 1990, observed: “We needed a theology of affluence. We had a pretty good theology of penury. We were like the Beverley Hillbillies. We had money rolling out our ears and it was exciting.”20 “The money was a two edged sword,” lay leader Barbara Losse reflected. “There were a lot of wonderful things you could do with it, but it also went to George’s head.”21

Once the sale was completed, the impoverished diocese became wealthy. Newspaper reports put the sum at around $100 million dollars. No one in the parishes knew how much it was or what the bishop would do with it, and Bates was slow to provide answers.22 The bishop had an initial reason for not disclosing details. The sale was complicated, took time to sort out, and was hindered by lawsuits. Finally, on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 1988, he announced a $600,000 grant to the Salt Lake Men’s Shelter and Homeless Program to complete its 235-bed downtown facility. After presenting the check to Mayor Palmer De Paulis at a cathedral service, Bates spoke of the Annunciation. “The announcement was made to a poor young girl in a remote village of a country occupied by a foreign power. At the time of Christ’s birth, Mary and Joseph had to seek shelter in makeshift quarters, for there was no room for them in the established places of rest. Essentially, the Holy Family was a homeless family.”23

The $600,000 was part of over a million dollars distributed in the first round of annual charitable grants announced by January 1, 1989.24 Another major grant was $150,000, divided among seventeen Utah parishes to support their ministries. Additional money went to the Holy Cross Hospital AIDS program; Project—Utah; Campus Christian Center, University of Utah; Spouse Abuse Victim Assistance Project; Legal Aid Society of Salt Lake; and Odyssey House, Salt Lake City. The diocese supported groups committed to
alleviating the burdens of poverty, abuse, chemical dependence, illness, and those with disabilities. Absent from the list were social or political advocacy groups of the sort Charles had supported, in spirit if not financially.

As word of the church’s affluence spread, requests for funds multiplied. In 1993, the diocese received more than $1,610,080 in requests for aid, but had only $250,000 to allocate through the Charitable and Educational Grant Committee. The spread of grants to those in need was: poverty, fifty-three percent; disabilities, thirty-two percent; chemical abuse, six percent; and physical and mental abuse, nine percent.

The Corporation of the Bishop

With the hospital’s sale, the Utah diocese, one of the church’s poorest, became among the richest church institutions in America. Before selling the hospital, Bates had looked carefully at other Episcopal dioceses with large endowments, and was anxious to avoid the mistakes made by some. The Diocese of Rochester had lost $25 million by promising money to various groups without protecting its core assets; others had invested in resort hotels or risky securities. Bates pursued conservative investment policies, and wanted to keep the money in safe financial instruments. He also controlled the assets himself, while seeking investment advice from outside experts. The mechanism he employed was the Corporation of the Bishop, a Corporate Sole that under Utah law gave complete control to the person in charge of the corporation. This long-established Utah law allowed the head of any church to acquire, hold, sell, mortgage, or exchange property without any authorization of the members. Bates kept the money in several accounts, including the Bishop’s General Fund No. 1, Bishop’s Fund No. 1 (different from the Bishop’s General Fund No. 1), the Bishop’s Special Fund, the Diocesan Development Fund, Charitable and Educational Fund, Indigent Health Care Fund, and the Real Estate Transaction Account.

Bates’s nondisclosure of the extent of assets and their use frustrated the diocese. A few people supported leaving the entire matter in the bishop’s hands, but others wanted transparency in the management of diocesan assets, adding these were not private monies, but church property gradually accumulated through the years from the time Bishop Tuttle founded the hospital in 1872. In his 1989 diocesan address, Bates said the Corporation of the bishop’s assets were $74,283,278 in fixed income investments. “Only a portion of the interest income may be expended,” he told the diocese. “This money is an enormous benefice to be celebrated and cherished and guarded and loved, as it represents the years and years of work by so many, many people—Episcopalian and non-Episcopalian.” The names of the
Corporation of the Bishop’s investment committee and Charitable Advisory Board were disclosed at the convention. “It’s people who make it work,” Bates said. “Offer those persons to God in daily prayer as they preserve the corpus, the principal of this money.” The members, however, played only a limited advisory role, and the Corporation was structured so that decision-making authority was in the bishop’s hands, aided by a few close advisers.

Bates never publicly disclosed the Corporation’s full assets and how they were spent. He said, in 1991: “If I open this Pandora’s box, I am inviting direct questions about the present posture of assets. Because of the market, the volatility of the same, because of the fact that everything isn’t settled, and much more to the point—because I do not want to become involved in revealing that kind of information as Corporation Sole, I am again reticent to do anything that would go beyond the statement I have written.” A year later, the bishop told the diocese the biblical reasons why he was reluctant to discuss the subject of money further. “I became uneasy with this posture when I reread Matthew 6:1–4” about giving alms in secret. The church monies did not compare in size with other large foundations in Utah, and “more to the point for me as your bishop, I think our posture of quiet and mostly anonymous work is appropriate.” “Be proud, be humble, be alert, above all, be thankful!” Bates told Utah Episcopalians, who still awaited a comprehensive statement of the diocese’s assets and how they were spent. “Most people in the diocese did not know anything about the financial capacity or the management of resources in two-thirds of the financial part of the church,” Stephen F. Hutchinson, later its Chancellor, observed.

A partial reconstruction of diocesan finances is possible from documents available in the post-hospital-sale period. The stated goal for income from the Trust was seven million dollars in some years. In the Bates administration, about a third of the total annual trust income went toward the annual diocesan budget, another third was controlled directly by the bishop, and the remaining money went to various grant projects or to what was then called Episcopal Social and Pastoral Ministries. For example, the 1990 diocesan budget of $2,722,948 included only $144,604 from congregational giving. By 1992, the diocesan budget had risen to $3,310,358, of which 93.4 percent came directly from a grant from the bishop. Congregational giving amounted to only five percent of the total budget. The gap widened for parishes between local giving and reliance on diocesan money, and the diocesan staff soon grew from two to twenty-four persons.

Meanwhile, Bates discontinued listing church membership statistics in the diocesan annual report, a feature of such reports since Tuttle’s time. Bates said the church’s numbers did not determine its true worth. In fact, the numbers were flat. Such information, required of all dioceses for compiling
national statistics, was available in the national church’s *Episcopal Church Annual*. Utah’s figures reveal only a modest increase in active member numbers—4,061 communicants in 1990 and 4,626 in 1995—despite the substantially increased availability of funds.\(^4\)

In 1995, the last complete year of Bates’s episcopate, diocesan records showed the bishop’s total compensation had risen from $48,000 in 1986 to over $750,000. The bishop’s basic 1995 salary of $450,690 came from two sources, $110,162 from the diocese, and $340,528 from the Corporation of the Bishop.\(^4\) Additional benefits that year included $317,899 in various retirement plans, including a $50,000 retirement bonus and $50,000 for club memberships.\(^4\) “I recognize my pension is large—Thank God,” Bates wrote in 1999, shortly before his death.\(^4\)

**The Election of a New Bishop, June 20, 1986**

Bates originally came to Utah as a nominee because of his leadership of two sizable western parishes and his service to the national church, which included chairing the Standing Committee on the Church in Small Communities, 1979–1985. The Church of the Redeemer, Pendleton, Oregon, where he served from 1970 to 1984, was a sizable church in eastern Oregon, a parish split into Capulet and Montague factions, as a former member described it. One prominent family would not kneel at the communion rail when another did. Bates patiently worked with both sides. “George was an archdiplomat, managing to keep it all in balance,” Julie Fabre Stewart, a parishioner there, recalled later.\(^4\) The future bishop was part of a Wednesday afternoon golf foursome, including her father, which was followed by cards and whiskey in the clubhouse. Toward the end of his time in Oregon, he confronted a growing dependence on alcohol, and underwent two cancer surgeries. Parishioners rallied to their priest. “He really lived that [Alcoholics Anonymous] program and the Senior Warden helped him,” Stewart remembered. “As in many small towns there was a lot of secretiveness. George walked his walk openly and he brought that out in others.” Later Stewart, then a comparative literature major at Radcliffe College, was seriously injured, and Bates visited her weekly during her recovery. He recommended theological works for her to read. “We would talk. I have very fond memories of how George became my spiritual director. He spent time with people in the kind of traumatic events every family goes through, divorces, deaths, and sickness. He was always there.”\(^4\) Stewart then attended seminary, was ordained to the deaconate, and was engaged in a productive ministry to the elderly in Salt Lake City. Dirk Rinehardt Pidock, a clergy colleague for eight years in a team ministry with Bates in
George E. Bates

Pendleton, called him “an imposing figure, tall and authoritative in manner, and formal. He tried to be casual, but couldn’t be.”

Next, Bates exercised a wide-ranging pastoral ministry at St. Mark’s-on-the-Mesa in Albuquerque, New Mexico, an expanding church in a college community. He spent only two years there, 1984–1986, before the Utah election. Bates was popular in Albuquerque, and when he was elected bishop, forty church members made the trip to Salt Lake City for his consecration.

The future bishop was born on August 11, 1933, and grew up in Binghamton, New York. His father, a midwestern Baptist before becoming an Episcopalian, was a physician who took early medical retirement because of a heart condition. Bates attended Deerfield Academy, but left it during his father’s illness, and returned to Binghamton to finish high school. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1955 as a sociology and English major, and in 1958 completed work at the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. On June 9, 1956, while at seminary, Bates married Mary Sue Onstott from Short Hills, New Jersey. She was “a committed Christian, a choir member of long standing and an active communicant,” he said, who joined her husband in several Leadership Skills Institutes, Cursillos, and Marriage Encounters. Pidcock said, “Sue was a loyal partner and a rock in his life, compensating for him many times. He clearly was the dominant one in this relationship and in almost every relationship.”

The young cleric studied clinical pastoral education at the Massachusetts General Hospital, where his supervisor was Chaplain William P. Spofford, bishop of Eastern Oregon from 1962 to 1979. Later Bates studied at the Menninger Clinic. Ordained a deacon in 1958 and a priest in 1959, from 1958 to 1970 he served parishes in Ithaca and Syracuse, New York, and became a consultant on church conflict, the vacancy process, and parish life evaluation to the Diocese of Idaho from 1962 to 1973.

The Bateses had two children, Richard Howard Bates, born on September 22, 1960, and Katherine Bates Schey, born on July 6, 1962, and later five grandchildren. A son, Curtis Edmonds, had died in 1965 after living only two months. Memories of the death stayed with the couple, allowing them to empathize with others experiencing the grief of a child dying young.

Bates had contacted Spofford about job possibilities in his diocese, and arrived in Oregon at age thirty-seven. He began to dress and act the part of a Westerner. He listed himself as an outdoorsman, a former National Rifle Association member who enjoyed bird hunting, fishing, golf, and the popular western fiction of Louis L’Amour. Almost all his correspondence was signed with a smiley face inside the initial G in “George.” As his health declined in later years, the signature and features grew increasingly
shaky. In eastern Oregon, the future bishop served as chair of the diocesan Department of Communication, was a member of Coalition 14, and its secretary from 1971 to 1974. Interest in the national church was a constant in his life, and Bates served as a deputy to several General Conventions between 1967 and 1982.\textsuperscript{54} He was a board member of Recovery Ministries, the National Episcopal Coalition on Alcohol and Drugs (NECAD), and was its “Person of the Year” award recipient.\textsuperscript{55}

On December 1, 1985, the profile for Utah’s new diocesan bishop was released following a survey of parishes.\textsuperscript{56} The state’s population was now 1,461,000, and Utah was the fifth fastest-growing state in the nation, with a birth rate double that of the rest of the United States. The diocese had twenty congregations, eighteen seminary-trained clergy, six Canon 8 priests, and five local deacons. The total number of church households was 2,486; the total number of communicants, 4,172. St. Mark’s Hospital was mentioned in a passing paragraph of the profile, with no suggestion that its sale would soon become the central issue in the diocese’s life.

The profile of the bishop Utah desired was a standard job description. Desirable traits were being a spiritual leader, pastor/counselor of the clergy, teacher, liturgical leader, theologian, preacher and administrator.\textsuperscript{57} The laity wanted a leader to help the diocese grow numerically; many expressed frustration at their isolation, distance from the diocese, meager financial resources, and limited program possibilities. The clergy wanted “a warm, effective person who is appropriately present with and available to the clergy of the diocese . . . who will share significant time with clergy families . . . who is supportive in dealing with clergy in conflict situations . . . who honestly confronts destructive behavior and provides guidance.” No mention was made of local, national, or international public policy issues, and by now the new Prayer Book and hymnal, and women priests, were accepted in church life. These were contentious subjects elsewhere, but not issues in Utah, where many Episcopalians had come from out of state or had left the less-progressive LDS Church.

An initial list of over a hundred candidates was reduced to nine, from which the Nominating Committee, headed by Albert J. Colton, a cathedral clergy member and leading local attorney, selected four finalists. In addition to Bates, the others were Charles Ellsworth Bennison, Jr., rector of St. Mark’s Church, Upland, California, and later bishop of Pennsylvania; Donald Wylie Seaton, rector of St. Paul’s, Oakland, California, and Francis L. Winder, rector of Church of the Good Shepherd, Ogden, a longtime Utah priest. It was difficult to learn much about the candidates from their responses to the written questions. Most answers were cautious; for example, Bates wrote, “As a diocese, how we treat each other, respecting divergent opinions, is
often more important—in the long run—than positions taken and works accomplished. Pastoral care, the good news of God’s incredible love, and the search for appropriate moral posture are held together in our Lord Jesus Christ.” In relations with clergy, he desired an atmosphere of “collegiality, honesty, good fun, loyalty and the kind of spirituality that allows the team and each individual to live into ministry, with hope, enthusiasm and integrity.”

It was difficult to disagree with such a response, but difficult to make much of it, either.

Meeting at St. Mark’s Cathedral on June 20, 1986, 168 lay and clerical delegates to the special Diocesan Convention elected Bates as their bishop on the third ballot. He received 75 of the 126 lay and 21 of the 40 clerical votes. Earlier that month, he had lost the episcopal election in Delaware. He told a reporter he had been considered in nine other dioceses previously, but declined to run. “This time it seemed appropriate.”

Bates was ordained as diocesan bishop on October 25, 1986, and on the following day was seated in the bishop’s chair at St. Mark’s Cathedral. The Most Rev. Edmond Lee Browning, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, served as chief consecrator, assisted by six other bishops. The service was held in the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Utah, scene of many civic functions, and more spacious than the Episcopal cathedral. The Roman Catholic cathedral was not available; relations were strained since Bates’s predecessor had received the Roman Catholic cathedral’s former rector, Jerald Merrill, into the Episcopal priesthood. The bishop’s old friend and mentor, Rustin R. Kimsey, bishop of Eastern Oregon, was the preacher, and Bates celebrated the Eucharist. His previous parish gave the bishop’s ring, his pectoral cross was from Church of the Redeemer, Pendleton, Oregon, and the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Utah contributed a cope and miter. “Many, many family and friends arrived from all over the country. . . . It was a wonderful time of reunion, filled with laughter and tears of joy. . . . Utah was affirmed over and over again,” the Bateses wrote friends in their Christmas letter.

As a denominational leader, Bates rarely spoke out on public issues; consequently, the Episcopal Church was not a visible presence in most of Utah’s public policy debates of the mid-1980s to 1990s, unless the cathedral dean took a stand on an issue. In a press conference shortly after his election, Bates said eradicating racism and sexism would be priorities of his administration. On racism Bates said: “Because if we can do this to men and women and blacks and whites we can do it to Russians and Chinese and everybody else. That’s how you start world wars. It makes no sense at all. . . . We’re a tiny minority, white people are. It’s just an accident of skin and sun and nature.” He opposed sexism as well. “The idea that women have a role
in life which somehow theologically makes them different from men, I just don’t find any truth in that. Sure they have a role in life. Women can get pregnant and men can’t. So what else is new? On abortion, the bishop said this was a woman’s decision to be made in consultation with others beyond her family. “I think the thing that disturbs me most about the abortion issue is that historically in the church this decision has been made by men. They’re not the ones having the abortions. They’re not the ones carrying the child.”

These comments were in response to media questions. Bates did not anticipate commenting on the moral implications of political issues as bishop of Utah—how could one person speak for the whole church, he asked? Issues like nuclear disarmament and national defense “were concerns church members must each address personally,” he said in drawing a distinction between personal and official views. He clearly did not place himself in Utah’s line of outspoken bishops: Spalding, Jones, and Charles. “I’ve already told the Episcopalian people here I’m not speaking for you unless you voted on it. . . . But I will also speak out for myself,” which rarely happened. In another press interview, the reporter observed, “if visitors came expecting to get an earful they probably left disappointed. Bates . . . is saying as little as he can. He says he’d rather listen.” “I am faced with decisions that affect me,” Bates concluded. “I can’t make decisions for anybody else. That would be immoral.”

When Presiding Bishop Browning issued an October 1990 declaration on the Persian Gulf crisis, Bates wrote to congratulate him but said he could never make a similar statement. “I . . . can say this to you personally, but would not put this in writing to the Diocese of Utah, nor for that matter, anybody else. It is so clear it would be redundant. And for those to whom it is not clear, such a statement would only be inflammatory and not convincing. Therefore, I congratulate you thrice on your pastoral stance. You do good work, my friend.” But at some point Bates did speak about the Gulf War, and in the January 1991 Diocesan Dialogue he wrote, “I cannot and will not defend the posture of this government as we prepare, for whatever reason, to engage in, or perhaps even initiate, a war in the Middle East in response to the invasion of Kuwait.”

Still, the bishop was no theological conservative. Most of his positions would place him in the center-to-liberal wing of the Episcopal Church of the 1980s and 1990s. “He had a radical sense of grace. An individual was saved by grace and that was all there was to it,” recalled Bradley S. Wirth, Canon to the Ordinary during much of Bates’s tenure, adding, “He brought a sense of the Protestant tradition with him.” His sermons place him in the camp of most church progressives of the 1980s. When Charles announced he was gay, Bates publicly supported his colleague, with whom he maintained
a cordial relationship. Likewise, he issued a pastoral letter on AIDS, and endorsed the action of Episcopal Bishop Walter Righter in ordaining a gay man living in a committed relationship.\textsuperscript{71}

He was for women’s ordination, and supported the 1989 decision of St. Paul’s, a large Salt Lake City parish, to call as rector Caryl A. Marsh, an Englishwoman and graduate of San Jose State College and the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. The locally trained versus seminary educated clergy issue was also alive when Bates came to the diocese, triggered by Charles’s ordination of many local clergy. Bates’s solution was to ordain aspirants in the pipeline, and support those already ordained, but to otherwise limit the program and recruit seminary-trained clergy for future openings.\textsuperscript{72}

His main concerns were about training and continuing education for the local clergy. “We still have twenty-nine persons in process, only five of whom are in seminary. Unavoidably, there is some division among the seminary trained and non-seminary trained clergy. . . . While Bishop Charles was very careful to ‘contract’ specific ministries for specific purposes, we are, of course, finding some difficulty with overlap.”\textsuperscript{73}

Largely through the efforts of archdeacon Francis L. Winder, a Utah Council of Churches was in place. Bates had little contact with the LDS leadership. He hoped for more cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church, although neither he nor that church’s leadership could move beyond the cautious positions both denominations held in the late 1980s. Notwithstanding, Bates maintained a cordial relationship with his Roman Catholic counterpart, William K. Weigand, who prayerfully kept contact with Bates throughout his illnesses, at one point writing, “I greatly admire your faith and peace in the face of all this. I am edified by, and in full agreement with, your decision not to resign but to continue to serve as bishop of Utah. Your ministry could end up being more powerful and effective than before.”\textsuperscript{74}

In 1991–1992, Bates gave the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Madeleine restoration fund $37,500.\textsuperscript{75} He raised the possibility of jointly issued public pastoral letters from the bishops of the two denominations, but a brake was put on future cooperation when, on August 6, 1989, he received into the Episcopal Church a highly visible Salt Lake City Roman Catholic priest, W. Ivan Cendese, a now-married former monk. Cendese had been principal of two major high schools, including the Roman Catholic Church’s flagship Judge Memorial High School, but had been laicized by the church. He had been active in the Episcopal Church for six years, including a term as senior warden of St. Mark’s Cathedral.\textsuperscript{76}

The bishop was at his best as a pastor. Clergy said he was responsive when asked, but otherwise kept his distance from many of them and the laity.
Sometimes parishes became locked in controversy with their priest. Letters and phone calls flew in all directions. Contracts and agreements were reviewed in disputes, and the bishop’s name was invoked in support of one or both sides. “George was very directive and faithful and large numbers of people sought out his counsel. As counselor, he attracted large numbers of emotionally needy people,” Pidcock recalled. “In a pastoral crisis he came through.”\textsuperscript{77}

In 1994, Grace Church, St. George, a small congregation in an expanding southern Utah retirement community, was enveloped in such a controversy. Both sides appealed to the bishop; the confrontation was between a newly arrived, young and inexperienced priest and an entrenched “Pillar of the Church” senior warden, a civil engineer who lacked human interaction skills. Who worked for whom? Each Monday morning the senior warden gave the priest a list of assignments for that week. The power conflict extended into every aspect of the small community’s life. Saying he supported the priest at Grace Church, Bates wrote a parishioner: “The fact that we cannot solve the problem to their satisfaction, or anyone else’s satisfaction, is a major frustration for all of us. It is also what I believe the journey of life is all about. It is not about feeling good or having ones needs met. It is about working with God in the midst of an imperfect world filled with imperfect situations and people.”\textsuperscript{78}

The bishop made several visits to St. George, and actively engaged the parish in open discussion. He said it was inappropriate for the Vestry to meet without the Vicar being present. “In group life work we call this ‘sewer work’ in its most extreme form,” he said. “Normally the sewer workers are those that say little during a meeting—then go home and get on the telephone. I know clergy who have operated that way; I know laity who have operated that way. It is . . . never helpful to the Church at large.”\textsuperscript{79} Eventually the priest left for another diocese, but the issue had been exposed to the light of day and faced openly by the congregation.

The bishop maintained an extensive pastoral correspondence, much of it short and to-the-point letters compassionately responding to individual needs. Bates once telegraphed a grieving mother, “Barbara—having lost a son much, much younger than Andy, we cannot even imagine the horror you are going through. But, we can taste it. And it is awful. Love, Sue and George.”\textsuperscript{80} At the loss of another child he wrote the parents: “While his pain and suffering is over, and I know that lightens the weight in your heart on the one hand, your loss is now final and more complete. I pray with you, I cry with you, I suffer with you.”\textsuperscript{81} Bates intuitively read a person’s moods and emotions, and could respond thoughtfully to them. In 1993, the bishop wrote a priest whom he saw at a large church gathering, but with whom he was unable to speak. “How hard it must have been for you to see me [at the
celebration]. . . . Non-verbally I could tell you were not doing well, but until your good letter I did not know with certainty of your divorce in June of this year. Lonely and hard times. Yet, I know the relationship was also difficult. I am sure that God’s grace will continue to offer healing and hope.”

On January 21, 1995, Bates gave the wedding homily for Patti and Jeff Sells; the latter was a clergy colleague who designed the bishop’s pectoral cross. Bates, nearly voiceless now, said: “Marriage is not about perfection. Marriage is about miracles. Marriage is not just about feeling good. Marriage is about commitment. Marriage in not about the highs and the lows. Marriage is about living into wholeness. Marriage is not just about walking with Jesus. Marriage is about walking with Jesus individually and sharing the story together. Marriage is not about saving each other. Marriage is about blessing each other. . . . Not a fifty-fifty proposition—but a relationship of total giving. Marriage is not about staying young with each other or growing old with each other. Marriage is about being with each other. Marriage is not about perfection. Marriage is about miracles. Expect miracles. I love you both. God bless you.”

The liturgical season with which Bates most identified was Lent; his writings about it were compelling, perhaps informed by the early loss of his son and his own severe medical problems. In 1994, decrying the plain-vanilla texture of Utah life, he said, “Lent offers us an opportunity to reassess who we are and where we are on our journey.”

“The crucible of life is what Jesus faced. The crucible of life is what he voluntarily—though not without pain—entered with an integrity unknown to others. His offering was blessed as your offering is blessed.”

A major event for the bishop was spending Maundy Thursday mornings with the clergy. In 1989, he sent each a copy of the book Addiction and Grace by the psychiatrist–spiritual leader Gerald May. Bates said, “Please do not believe that it deals with substance abuse alone. It deals with all the things that all of us do that are, in fact, addictions.”

“For years I honestly thought and prayed that many things I sought would happen,” he said in his 1994 Maundy Thursday meditation. “I was asking, begging, crying for God to help, but I did not know I had to let go. I wasn’t raised that way. I wasn’t educated that way.” He concluded: “Finally, I came to understand that I was not bad, was not weak, but rather had a primary, awesome, escalating disease. I was alcoholic. Cutting to the marrow, I finally found AA and the twelve-step program. The success I have celebrated, one day at a time, is because of turning the behavior over to God and not taking it back.”

Addiction keeps a person’s love for his neighbor incomplete and creates rival gods, he said in a 1990 clergy meditation. On a carefully enunciated
personal note, he remarked, “given my health and age, I am sometimes attached to worry.” He worried about his wife and family, and his responsibility for them both financially and emotionally. “This time-consuming concern and—even without dwelling too much on it—is sin. Sue and the children and their children are God’s concern. Yet, I am attached to those concerns. From time to time I am addicted to those concerns.”

Articles he had recently read, or speakers heard at conferences, provided the central ideas for many of Bates’s key sermons or addresses. For example, each section of the bishop’s twenty-one-page 1989 diocesan convention address began with a lengthy quote from prominent figures—the church historian John Booty; Bishop Furman C. Strough of the Presiding Bishop’s Fund for World Relief; local law professor Edwin B. Firmage; a General Convention Call to Evangelism; a Diocese of Eastern Oregon paper on the role of the bishop; and, finally, from Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

As a liturgical celebrant, his style has been described as “flat” or “country and western.” Bates did not try to dominate the service; he had no standard way of conducting ceremonies, and no demonstrable musical preferences. “I have no interest in baptisms,” he wrote a local rector, “though at an Easter Vigil baptism would make sense. I do have an enormous conviction regarding Confirmations and Receptions. I do believe the clergy in Utah who do not present young people for Confirmation misunderstand totally the culture in which we live. We need more rites of passage, not less.” He was not a gifted preacher,” a longtime clerical colleague and friend recalled; Bates relied on “long manuscript sermons with little human interest. His liturgical leadership was uninspired.”

Although the image the bishop sometimes projected was that of the blunt Westerner, to others he appeared aloof, presiding over the small diocese’s conventions in floor-length purple cassock and matching colored zucchetto (skullcap). Following his installation, the new bishop purchased a collection of copes, miters, and other church garments. One package arrived at the cathedral, when his office was still there, and a visitor recalled seeing the tall bishop trying on the ceremonial headdress before a long restroom mirror. Then he turned and, exiting through a much lower door, knocked it off.

Al J. Colton, Jack C. Potter, W. Lee Shaw

The bishop was not the only leading clergy presence in the Utah diocese. The ministries of Francis L. Winder as archdeacon and Lincoln Ure as St. Mark’s Hospital Chaplain have been mentioned earlier. No less important was the work of Albert J. Colton, a lawyer and priest, Jack. C. Potter, dean of
St. Mark’s Cathedral, and W. Lee Shaw, who instituted a significant ministry to ex-Mormons and the gay community.

A lawyer with a leading Salt Lake City firm and canon chancellor of the Diocese of Utah, Albert J. Colton was a major presence in the Utah ecclesiastical landscape until his death of cancer in 1988, at age sixty-three. Born in 1925 in Buffalo, New York, Colton was a Rhodes Scholar after leaving Dartmouth College, where he was class valedictorian. After graduating from Yale Law School, he was a highly successful, aggressive young attorney until abruptly changing careers and attending seminary in 1960. Of that experience he wrote: “The story might be different for the newly married couple just out of college, but most of us had gone through the Bohemian joys of orange crates for furniture many years before, and didn’t relish returning to it. Not only was there the grayness of marginal economic life, and the physical drain on wives who had to find employment and still care for the family, but the ridiculous cases of seminarians working fifty or sixty hours a week and thereby only able to give their seminary work an occasional glance.”

Following graduation from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, in 1962 Colton became vice dean and canon chancellor at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, to Bishop James A. Pike, also a formidable attorney with strongly held opinions. Colton served four years as rector of St. Francis’s Episcopal Church, San Francisco, before returning to Utah. Eventually he became director and president of the law firm of Fabian & Clendenin, and a member of St. Mark’s Cathedral staff. As canon chancellor of the diocese, he and his firm prepared the initial legal work for the sale of St. Mark’s Hospital. As a delegate to the national church’s convention, he was remembered mainly for his successful effort to retain the Birthday prayer—“Watch over thy child, O Lord, as his/her days increase”—which was slated for removal from the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.

Possessed of a confident manner and booming voice, for many years Colton celebrated the Wednesday morning Eucharist at the cathedral, open, he said, “to anyone who wishes to share the Spartan pleasure of meaningful activity at 7:00 A.M.” He is remembered especially for a letter he sent to St. Mark’s parish members shortly after learning he had inoperable lung cancer that led to his death on November 7, 1988:

I do have ‘a sure and certain hope’ that I will be accepted by a loving hand. I do not believe in the Greek separation of body and soul. . . . I believe with the Jew that we creatures are a totality. . . . And when this totality dies, it dies in its totality. It is only by the grace of Almighty God that this is given meaning again. . . . We will have an individual identity.
We will again live in relationships. The sharing of the Beatific Vision would include relationships with others cleansed by this Presence from those elements which so often separate us now. . . . I have avoided talk of judgment, hell, etc. This is because I believe from my life as a Christian, in the way it is expressed in the Anglican Communion, that judgment is certain, but that hell is self-imposed. I have been given the means of grace and the hope of glory.96

From 1990 to 2002, Jack C. Potter was the cathedral’s dean, bringing to the position experience in interracial and intercultural ministries, an arresting liturgical presence, and strong pastoral skills. Potter had participated in inner-city work in Providence, Rhode Island, and social–racial ministries in Cincinnati, Ohio, in the 1960s. He was rector of two Indiana parishes in the 1970s, and of the thousand-member Grace Church parish in Tucson, Arizona, 1982–1989, before coming to Utah. Potter and his wife, Patty, had been long-time friends of Dean William Maxwell and his wife, Sue, and Maxwell asked if he could put Potter’s name on the list of candidates.97

More than 10 percent of Salt Lake City was Hispanic, and the new dean launched an active Hispanic ministry at the cathedral and hired a young priest from the Episcopal church in Mexico, Pablo Ramos, to build a Hispanic congregation. Eventually, the cathedral’s social services ministry joined with the diocese’s full-time Jubilee Center, offering compassionate assistance to people on society’s margins. Potter continued the cathedral’s tradition of being an open forum on controversial issues. The cathedral was well known for its musical programs, but to Bach’s motets Potter added a Winter Solstice jazz series, and opened its doors to other contemporary musicians and visual artists. From his work with the Anglican Council of North America, he brought Caribbean and Latin American music to the cathedral, plus a variety of other liturgical expressions.

Possibly 60 percent of the cathedral congregation were ex-LDS or from LDS families. It was not the cathedral’s policy in Potter’s time to proselytize, but to be a welcoming place. Often the ex-Mormons stayed two or three years at St. Mark’s, were exposed to Anglican liturgy and beliefs, then moved on to suburban churches nearer their homes. Potter was remembered for his statement on “What is St. Mark’s Cathedral?”

If you are passing by and feel intimidated or angry because of religion, please know that there is immunity granted when you enter St. Mark’s Cathedral. Immunity from the ravages of religion and misuse of Divine
revelation. We live in a time of religious zealots, abortion clinic bombings, and TV evangelists attempting to take power in our land. How do you find persuasiveness rather than coercion and will-to-dominate in religion? An answer is St. Mark’s Cathedral. Here operates an unconditional surrender to the freedom of God to speak to whomever in whatever language is understandable to you. Immunity from religious control is granted to you upon entry. St. Mark’s offers sanctuary and promises this glorious freedom of God as the climate to explore the healthiest living that religion affords.

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W. Lee Shaw, whom Bates ordained, in addition to an active parish ministry in several churches, launched a ministry to those leaving, or who had left, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as well as to gays and lesbians. Shaw said, “I do not consider myself to be a ‘gay’ priest. Rather, I am a priest and pastor who is gay, among other things in my life, and I am trying to live out my baptismal covenant and ordination vows as I serve in the Episcopal Church.”

Born in Helena, Montana, on May 20, 1948, Shaw was the son of an Air Force officer who was stationed in Finland. As a youth he was raised in the LDS Church and, at age nineteen, returned to Finland to serve an LDS mission. A 1972 University of Utah graduate, he married Christine Barlow that year in a temple ceremony. Their son, Matthew, was born in 1974. After a period of questioning, in 1982 Shaw requested excommunication from the LDS Church. He said: “The more I read about the history and theology of the LDS Church, the more uncomfortable I became in this very fallible institution claiming to have all the truth. I also could not imagine that 2,000 years of Christian history amounted to nothing until Joseph Smith. And I had a very hard time accepting the fact that only one church in all the world would have absolute truth and authority.” His marriage ended during this period of questioning.

Next Shaw explored several Christian churches, settling on St. Mark’s Cathedral, where he was baptized and confirmed on May 22, 1983. He subsequently held several lay positions at the cathedral, and wrote a pamphlet, “A Thoughtful and Rational Alternative—The Episcopal Church in Utah.” Shaw attended the Episcopal Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, California, from 1989 to 1992, where he wrote the Forward Movement publication, “When Mormons Enquire.” Ordained a priest by Bishop Bates on December 5, 1992, he subsequently served at St. Michael’s, Brigham City; St. James’s, Midvale; and St. Stephen’s, Valley City. St. Michael’s church members remember Shaw starting the church’s first youth group, and being
an active presence in the community. Once when the regular driver was a no show, the newly arrived priest was asked by a funeral director to drive the firm’s limousine to a burial service. “I don’t know the way to the cemetery,” Shaw replied. “Just follow the hearse,” the owner said. The service took place in a snowstorm, and at the wake the funeral parlor director showed up to make a contribution to the vicar’s discretionary fund.

While at the cathedral, Shaw helped found the Society of St. Chad, a discussion and support group for persons leaving the LDS Church. He also started a branch of Integrity, a support and advocacy group for Utah gays and lesbians. Shaw has testified before legislative committees on hate crime legislation, and initiated the first Episcopal presence at a Salt Lake City Gay Pride event.

**The Corporate Executive**

At his friend’s funeral, Bishop Rustin R. Kimsey spoke of Bates’s fondness for being considered a senior executive, and once the hospital was sold, the bishop set about installing the trappings of corporate office, including a new large car each year, spacious offices with custom furnishings, club memberships, floor level VIP basketball seats, and hospitality rooms at national conventions where he entertained in viceregal style. But despite it all, he lacked the executive skills to accompany the image; the overriding vision and day-to-day management abilities eluded him. He was often hesitant and indecisive in making decisions, not open in financial matters, and awkward as a communicator. Bates’s administrative reflections are strewn with airline-flight-magazine management concepts, words like “new paradigms,” “postures,” and “multi-phasic programs” that unraveled with the telling. Although the staff was large, divisions of responsibilities were never clear and competency levels varied. “As a recovering alcoholic George loved rescuing people,” Maxwell recalled, “and that is why the diocesan staff became so huge. We had the biggest staff of any diocese in the country. They were all nice people, some of them folks that just needed a job.” Bates had a quick temper and could be harsh with colleagues in the office or church settings, but always apologized, “sometimes within the hour, always by the next day,” a close associate recalled. And there was no trace of lingering vindictiveness or double-dealing.

Charles had worked hard to build up the diocese’s lay leadership; Bates gave it only lip service. There was no question who ran the diocese. Maxwell remembered: “When he was first elected somebody said to him, ‘What kind of trouble are we going to have with you?’ George drew himself up to his full height and said, ‘Arrogance.’” “He was an imperious
windbag,” a prominent Salt Lake City attorney and church school board member recalled. “He was incredibly arrogant. He loved to hear himself talk and drop names about how worldly he was, and how conversant he was with rich and famous people.”103 “George’s passion was administration and finance and functioning in the councils of the Church, the higher the better,” Pidcock, who worked eight years with Bates, noted.”104 Bates functioned well in the church’s corridors of power, Alan F. Blanchard, head of the Church Pension Fund, recalled, admiring his bluntness in settings often filled with sanctimonious prelates. “I liked George, he was attractive, appealing, engaging,” Blanchard stated.105

In 1991, Bates completed an employee evaluation form, answering the question, how successful was he in fulfilling his goals as bishop? Medical problems hindered his mobility, and visitations and out-of-office activities were substantially curtailed. “My personal goal of bonding with new clergy has been met with those that could travel to Salt Lake to meet with me,” but building effective relationships with other clergy remained incomplete.106

Anne Campbell, when a staff chaplain–social worker at St. Mark’s Hospital, recalled Bates as “a very large man and when he had his voice it was a strong voice. He wanted to be central to everything. He thought large and the staff shot upward. George was monopolistic from my point of view. As a pastor, he could share his AA experience, but not his personal spirituality. He was very authoritarian, very grand. He liked to have a lot of people working under him, but never gave them any power. He played favorites. The money was freely flowing. It didn’t feel very good to be part of an institution where that was happening.”107

Lincoln Ure, a respected senior priest and hospital chaplain, recalled his encounters with Bishop Bates. “I ran a parish based nursing program and when one of the employees left, Bates cut the funding in half. I protested and he sent me two front row tickets for a Jazz game. I didn’t feel good about that so I sent them back. I learned later from a diocesan staff member he said how immature I was. Later Bates told me I did not have to worry about my daughter’s college tuition, but I did not take any money from him. That sort of thing was going on all the time. Many people fed themselves at the trough.”108

“George would have been considered a B grade executive,” a long-time diocesan treasurer recalled. “He was a secretive man. Once he had sold the hospital, knowledge of it didn’t go any further than he wished it to go. He liked to operate so that not too many knew what was going on.” Yet, “He was a fun person. I liked George very much. He didn’t drink at all because he had had drinking problems in his past. He traveled a lot and the way he
did it was not to buy a helicopter but to buy the very most expensive large cars he could.”

Kathryn Miller, who worked for the diocese for nineteen years, remembered Bates as “a very complicated man, tough, controversial, but a great pastor.” Bishop William P. Spofford, who knew Bates for over three decades, said “George was an enigma.”

Bates wanted to purchase a ranch in a canyon at the town’s edge as the bishop’s residence, but settled instead on a large house in the Avenues district of Salt Lake City, where the couple lived, joined by their two children and their families for part of their time in Utah. Bates, whose only planned trip to England was cancelled for medical reasons, called it “Bishopstead,” after an English bishop’s residence, and ordered an accompanying “Bishopstead” letterhead in Gothic type. Visitation itineraries announced “Depart Bishopstead at 8:30 a.m.” when the episcopal party, with Perpetual Deacon Richard Frank at the wheel, emerged in a top-of-the-line-black Lincoln town car and a backup van filled with staff members to visit one of the diocese’s twenty-some parishes.

The Investment Committee met at resorts like the Broadmoor in Colorado, or in Scottsdale, Arizona, where discussion time soon gave way to golf. And the whole management team flew to New York for conversations with bankers and investment counselors. Bates said that Alan F. Blanchard, head of the Church Pension Fund, supported him in believing that as CEO of a multimillion-dollar corporation, he deserved a senior corporate executive’s salary and perks. “That is really not accurate,” Blanchard said, adding he never knew what the bishop’s salary was, nor did he discuss setting its level. Bates was an excellent golfer until his health declined, and played with a twenty-six handicap. He was also an avid Jazz basketball fan. The bishop wrote to two leading Jazz players whom he encountered on an airplane: “You are not only superb athletes, you are exemplary representatives from Utah. I thank God for that, and want you to know that ‘win, lose or draw,’ I am always behind you and the team.”

Each year the bishop held a New Year’s Day open house, which diocesan clergy and their families were expected to attend. “Sue and I will provide food and refreshment. Just bring yourselves! Some of us like to watch the games on New Year’s Day, and we are making provision for that.” His 1998 party invitation contained a Christmas check of $250 or $500 for each clergy and staff member, a holiday custom he continued. The bishop also gave each clergy attending the annual diocesan convention $250 for the purchase of vestments. Favored staff employees were given supplemental contracts and scholarship money for themselves and/or their children, and his own son and daughter were added to the church payroll as staff numbers expanded.
It was difficult when he put his daughter in a staff position here and nobody knew what she did,” a lay official of the period recalled. “His son was supported for a while by the Corporation of the Bishop. Those were real trouble spots.” The 1994 directory listed a diocesan staff of twenty-four persons for twenty-one congregations, plus sixty-three clergy (local and seminary-trained), three educational institutions, a hospital chaplaincy, and an Urban Indian Support Center. The days of the small, struggling church, shaping its identity in an alien culture, were gone.

Bates saw the need for a diocesan Vision Statement by 1990, to accompany the diocese’s new wealth. Despite the corporate image he projected following the hospital’s sale, there never was a definition of where the church was headed. The diocese “began to build and fly a new wonderful and clumsy blimp,” Bates observed. “For almost three years, once airborne, we have continued to build as we fly it. We have watched it closely, scrutinized it; and now it is in need of a tune up and repairs.”

Bradley S. Wirth, commenting on the vision statement exercise, wrote: “I don’t think we are in bad shape. I think that with several pots of coffee, and in the bad ol’ days, many cigars, David, Pete and you, George, can hammer out a mission statement that would fit the bill.” His comments were triggered by a Bates proposal to add four additional positions to the diocesan staff. Wirth said the diocese should have a statement of future goals in place before any new persons were hired. The new draft statement was presented to and passed at the 1991 convention. Over the next five years, church members were called to witness boldly in their communities, establish new congregations, and love and serve their neighbors through compassionate outreach, prophetic advocacy, and inclusive congregational life. Few would question the statement, but few hearts would be quickened by it either. Church bodies are given to laboriously crafting declarations and then ignoring them; this was the fate of the Operational Mission of the Episcopal Diocese of Utah.

Bates bought choice land and contracted an Atlanta church architect, unfamiliar with the extremes of heat and cold in Utah, to build two new churches, one in the growing snow capital, Park City, the second in the hot climate of St. George. The bishop hired his son as supervisor of both projects. Climate-related problems, such as a slate roof that had to be replaced after a Park City winter, and other architectural flaws required expensive reworking of both projects. The decision to build came from the bishop, as did the land purchases and the building designs. Friction thus resulted between the two local congregations and the diocese, and also among various bodies responsible for the work but not consulted about it. Ronald S. Winchell was hired as regional missioner to southwestern Utah in 1988, charged with
building up the small congregations in Cedar City and at St. George.\textsuperscript{125} Grace Church, St. George, began its later klife in the warm-weather southern Utah retirement community in 1981, when about thirty persons responded to a newspaper ad, placed by a few families, inviting Episcopalians to meet on a Sunday afternoon in a Roman Catholic church. Lay readers from Cedar City came regularly to support the St. Gorge community, and in 1983 John Yoder, a priest from nearby Las Vegas, Nevada, came twice a month and held services, continuing to do so for three years. Telemarketing campaigns in 1990 and 1991 were attempted, and the congregation, now about one hundred persons, moved to the local Lions Club, then in 1992 to the Senior Citizens Center for regular Sunday morning services. Later that year, the diocese purchased five acres of land at 1072 East 900 South in the St. George suburbs, and a church was built in 1993. By then, Sunday attendance during the winter months averaged ninety-five persons.\textsuperscript{126}

Now that the diocese had money, Bishop Bates also revived work with Native Americans. By the 1980s, both the Whiterocks and Randlett missions were in a decrepit state, lacking clergy, congregations, and facilities. The Whiterocks Indian School had been closed in 1952, which had resulted in a sharp drop in church attendance. Still, the church stayed open for the next twenty years, largely through the work of lay leaders such as Harriet Taveaport, Henry Wopsock, Irene Gardner, and her sister Geneva Chimburas, who sometimes held services in their homes for the Whiterocks congregation. Nancy Pawwinnee and her three sisters, Mary, Ruth, and Clarice, also worked faithfully to keep an Episcopal presence alive at Randlett. At the 1987 convention, delegates from Whiterocks described the difficulty of keeping birds out of the church building, and placed a birdcage where delegates could contribute to the cost of wire to cover its windows. Bates gave money to refurbish the historic church of St. Elizabeth, and on an adjacent site to build a modern parish hall and community center. St. Elizabeth’s was rededicated on January 28, 1989. Quentin F. Kolb, a Native American priest who spent ten years with the Church Indian Ministries and in various other clerical capacities, recalled that the procession began in twenty-nine degree below zero weather. As it passed from parish hall to church, members saw birds with feet frozen to the telephone wires.\textsuperscript{127} The church in Randlett was also restored. Although the Navajoland Area Mission to the south was no longer part of the Diocese of Utah, Bates provided money to reduce its debt. The bishop also actively supported Kolb, who founded a successful storefront ministry in downtown Salt Lake City, recognizing that by the 1980s more Native Americans lived in cities than on reservations. “Bates did a lot for Native American ministries,” Kolb reflected. “He does not always get the credit he deserves.”\textsuperscript{128}
In addition to the extensive renovations at Whiterocks and Randlett, St. Paul’s, Vernal, was refitted for a physically handicapped rector. All Saints’ and St. James’s, two suburban Salt Lake City parishes, were encouraged to complete their new buildings to accommodate growing congregations.129

To improve communication within the diocese, Bates held the first of several Bishop’s Weekends in 1988. These were family times for golf, relaxation, camaraderie, a chance to hear a major speaker on church life, and meet informally with the bishop in a Park City resort hotel. An estimated 500 persons attended in 1988, and the diocese paid the $40,000 cost, while participants contributed $6,000 to the Presiding Bishop’s Fund for World Relief.130

Although Rowland Hall–St. Mark’s School had only a nominal tie with the Episcopal Diocese by the 1990s, it was still influenced by its historic roots, and continued to expand its course and extra-curricular offerings. In 1992, construction was completed for the Larimer Center for the Performing Arts, named for Tony Larimer, a beloved teacher and community arts leader for over twenty-five years. A state-of-the-art gymnasium was part of the building program, and in 1994 the school opened the doors of a new middle school campus at 970 East 800 South. Within a few years, the school had once again outgrown its facilities. On May 4, 1999 Rowland Hall–St. Mark’s purchased a nine acre site on Guardman’s Way near the University of Utah to build a new beginning and lower school.131

Retirement and Death

In October 1994, Bates, then sixty-one, announced his forthcoming medical retirement. “My body is no longer up to what you deserve and have earned by your constant support, prayers, and collaboration,” he told Utah Episcopalians. Doctors urged him to limit the use of his voice, not easy for someone in a church leadership position, and move to a more humid climate.132 The bishop said, “cancer of the larynx, radical irradiation, further biopsies, hyperbaric treatments, and two total hip replacements” were nowhere on the horizon when he accepted the Utah episcopacy eight years earlier. But in the summer of 1994, “I noticed further considerable change in energy and resiliency, along with a shortened and painful window of voice usage.”133 The early announcement would allow the diocese to elect a successor, and for Bates to complete visitations and take a medical sabbatical from September to December 1995. A special convention was scheduled on December 3 to elect a bishop coadjutor. The bishop said he would stay in office through June 1996. “I do not want to disappoint your expectations. Rather, I would like to be able to finish more of what we have started
together. . . . God may be calling me to remain in office and if that is God’s will, I believe you and I can work this out together.”

Bates’s later life was a study in contrasts. His faith was unwavering, his abilities as a pastor could be exemplary, and his support of the disadvantaged was real. But he was also autocratic and secretive. And if he gave readily of diocesan money to parishes and clergy in need, he rewarded himself far more generously than his peers in salary and retirement benefits.

His medical retirement was effective on June 29, 1996, and Bates died March 30, 1999, in Medford, Oregon, at a recently-built, spacious family home. At his April 6 funeral at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church there, his old friend Bishop Kimsey, preacher at his consecration, delivered the eulogy. Drawing on Bates’s struggle with addiction, Kimsey said the Alcoholics Anonymous “program freed him from the prison of dependency and offered him a freedom of choice and obedience which I find remarkable, even awesome.” Kimsey drew contrasting pictures of Bates—the-executive, who presided over the sale of St. Mark’s Hospital, and Bates—the-constant-pastor. “The side of George which loved the board rooms and intrigue of difficult organizational and financial arenas was in clover,” he reflected. “But it was equally true George was one of the finest pastors I have ever known. I have the image of his managerial prowess . . . but I also have the image of a large man kneeling beside the bed of an elderly, dying woman, holding her hand and anointing her forehead with oil. His influence as one who efficiently dealt with corporate matters should not overshadow the compassion he so ably offered to us all.”