



The Episcopal Church in Crisis: How Sex, the Bible, and Authority Are Dividing the Faithful (Religion, Politics, and Public Life)

Frank G. Kirkpatrick

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The current debate in the Episcopal Church in the United States (ECUSA) over its relationship with the worldwide Anglican Communion has been building for some time. Some Episcopalians (including priests, bishops, and dioceses) have broken or are considering breaking their historic affiliation with the current authoritative bodies of ECUSA because they believe they have betrayed the historic teachings and morality of the Anglican tradition. The author places this emerging crisis in context: historical, moral, theological, cultural, and ecclesiological. He explores how the rift between Episcopalians in the United States originated, how it is being played out now in the rift between the official representatives of ECUSA and the Anglican Communion, what the arguments are for and against all sides, and what are the prospects for either reconciliation at some level between the opposing parties or deepening schism in the future. Kirkpatrick explores the variety of contentious issues, rather than focusing just on the one that gets the most media attention: homosexuality.

The crisis in the Church goes much deeper than that, however, and involves issues of church, tradition, and biblical authority. The author provides necessary background but focuses primarily on the events that have occurred since 2003 when ECUSA approved the election and consecration of an openly gay bishop. While the situation continues to evolve and change, the book provides readers with an up-to-date account of the history of the crisis, an analysis of the conflicting arguments, and a contextual guide for understanding what might come next in this unfolding story.

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