

AT THE NCC

"A commitment to ecumenism has marked my ministry from its inception."

The Right Reverend Craig B. Anderson, a Bishop of the Episcopal Church and Rector of St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, is the 19th president of the National Council of Churches.

A seasoned ecumenist, he has served on the NCC's governing body for a decade and has been active on several committees, including one that guided NCC social justice work from 1988-91. He is also the Episcopal Church's representative to the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women 1988-98. He has served his communion as a participant in several bilateral theological dialogues, as well as representing the Episcopal Church in the Consultation on Church Union. Throughout his church career, he has worked ecumenically, building on the gifts of the Episcopal Church, which he characterizes as a "bridge church" between Catholicism and Protestantism that sees reconciliation as its ministry.

As NCC President, Bishop Anderson works to strengthen the Council for significant ministry in a nation and a world marked by increasing religious pluralism—and in a time when secular values compete with religious values, even among the churching population. He is interested particularly in the relationship between theology and public policy and how churches bring appropriate pressure to bear on government structures to promote justice, righteousness and healing.

A VARIED BACKGROUND, A CLEAR CALL

"I've never thought of ministry as a career, but as something that results from a call."

Born and raised in Los Angeles, California, Bishop Anderson graduated from Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana. Following college, he served for two years on active duty as an infantry officer in the U.S. Army. After completing military service, he joined the Procter and Gamble Company, where he was a marketing and advertising manager from 1966 to 1972.

Discerning a call to ministry, he attended The School of Theology at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, as a postulant from the Diocese of Colorado. He received his M.Div. with honors in 1975.

MINISTRY IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

In 1975, he was ordained to the priesthood and was assistant chaplain at All Saints Chapel at the University of the South, while beginning graduate work at Vanderbilt University. Subsequently, he earned his M.A. and Ph.D. in theology from Vanderbilt. In 1977, Bishop Anderson returned to his seminary, where he taught theology until he was elected the eighth diocesan bishop of South Dakota.

Upon arrival in South Dakota, he was adopted by the Oglala Tribe of the Pine Ridge Reservation and given the name *Wanbli Tokaheya* (*Leading Eagle*) at a gathering of Episcopal Indian Churches of the eight reservations in the Diocese. The name, he said, was given as a call to be a spiritual person and a leader. During nine years in South Dakota, he focused on teaching, ecumenical concerns and issues relating to American Indian ministry and women in the

ministry. In a poor diocese where the majority of members are Native American, Bishop Anderson "saw past the despair and poverty of the reservation to the deep sense of holiness in the people and the land." Compelled by an ecumenism "dictated by need," he helped bring people together to provide the necessities of life and to resist racist—sometimes violent—structures of oppression. Honors for his work there include the Governor's Award for Reconciliation in 1990 and 1991 and the Sacred Hoop Peace Medal by the Great Sioux Nation in 1991.

Bishop Anderson was awarded a Mershon post-doctoral fellowship at Ohio State University for research and teaching in the areas of public policy and theology for the academic year 1992-93. Following that period of study, he began his ministry as 11th President and Dean of The General Theological Seminary in New York City. In addition to administrative and pastoral duties, he taught systematic, philosophical and pastoral theology. He continued his ministry as a bishop, assisting in surrounding dioceses.

In July 1997, Bishop Anderson assumed duties as Rector (headmaster) at St. Paul's School. Having led a variety of educational institutions, he describes his current post as an opportunity to come full circle and to nurture in students the qualities of character, virtue and academic excellence "so vital as our culture seeks to regain its spiritual and intellectual bearings."

Over the years, he has served on numerous committees and commissions of the Episcopal Church at national and diocesan levels.

FAMILY

Bishop Anderson and his wife, Lizbeth, have three children.