

Briefly noted

News in the [May 3, 2005](#) issue

The Episcopal Church Executive Council has decided to “voluntarily withdraw” its three official participants from a June global steering committee meeting of the worldwide Anglican Communion. A voluntary withdrawal until 2008 from the Anglican Consultative Council was requested in February by an international meeting of Anglican primates, or chief bishops, in light of widespread criticism of the election of an openly gay Episcopal bishop in New Hampshire. The statement was issued April 13 by the council. In a previous response to the primates, the Episcopal bishops in March placed a self-imposed moratorium on the election of any new bishops until mid-2006. They agreed also not to bless same-sex unions at least until the church gathers next year for its general convention. “We are mindful that Christ has made us members of one body, and that no part can say to any other, ‘I have no need of you,’” says the statement coauthored by Episcopal presiding bishop Frank Griswold. “At the same time we wish to express our openness to the concerns and beliefs of others.”

For the fourth year in a row, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has received a multimillion-dollar anonymous gift for global missions—this time \$5 million. Most of the gift will go to salaries, benefits, equipment and training, with additional funds designated for expanding HIV/AIDS initiatives and Partners in Hope, the fellowship’s rural poverty initiative. The remaining \$300,000 will go to the Asian response fund for tsunami relief. It was the fifth multimillion-dollar donation to CBF missions in four years, but the name of the donor was not given. The previous amounts sent to the CBF were \$4 million, \$5 million and \$7 million. The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, an Atlanta-based organization of moderate Baptist churches and individuals, supports about 150 missionaries, most of them working among unevangelized people and the world’s poor.

German Protestants have remembered Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed 60 years ago for his role in the plot to kill Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler. “Until the last moment he was not broken by what the Nazi power did to him, but kept his faith, his love and his hope,” said Bavarian Lutheran bishop Johannes Friedrich April 9 at the Flossenbürg concentration camp in Bavaria, where

Bonhoeffer, 39, was executed in 1945 after two years' imprisonment. Friedrich said the Protestant church in Germany had compromised with the authorities between 1933 and 1945 even though Bonhoeffer and others had called attention to the nature of the regime. Bonhoeffer's opposition to the persecution of Jews was a reminder of the need to oppose all forms of anti-Semitism, he said.