

Saints and sinners: The end time in Christian tradition

The best-selling novel “Left Behind” (Tyndale House, 1996), which is about the world coming to an end, has people thinking again about what the Bible calls the End Time.

In 1950, Billy Graham told an audience, “We may have another year, maybe two years, then I believe it’s going to be all over.”

The evangelist no longer predicts when the world will end. Now he says, “I do not know the day, the month or the year. God alone knows.”

But, Graham goes on to say, “What we see happening today may well be a preparation for God’s intervention in human affairs, when Jesus Christ will come and set up a new social order.” Not exactly the end of the world, but certainly the end of the world as we know it.

Among the biblical signs pointing to the last days, Graham mentions the “perplexity and distress in the world, the breakdown in morals,

and more-devastating and more-frequent wars.”

Most people are probably inclined to agree with the scientists who recently predicted that the world can look forward to about 5 million more years. Then it’s going to be all over, they say.

Like Graham, today’s believers in the Second Coming refuse to be pinned down to any specific date for Christ’s reappearance. Those (mostly evangelicals) who believe that history is nearing its final curtain use words like “soon,” “near,” and “imminent.” At one conference in Jerusalem on biblical prophecy, the chairman told the gathering that it might be their last opportunity to get together.

There hasn’t been so much interest in the end of the world since that morning in the autumn of 1844 when William Miller’s followers



george plagenz

• saints & sinners

climbed the hills and housetops around Hampton, N.Y., and cocked their ears for the sound of the last trumpet.

It never came.

Many of the people were dressed in home-made “ascension robes,” confident that on that morning — Oct. 22, 1844 — the Lord would return to earth in fulfillment of Bible prophecies.

When the Lord didn’t appear, Miller and his disappointed disciples concluded that they had

made a mistake in their arithmetic. The continued to maintain that the end was near, but they set no new date.

Miller, an Upstate New York farmer who became a Bible student, made his calculation that the world would end in 1844 mainly on the basis of a passage in the book of Daniel.

In a vision, Daniel hears the question “How long will the Holy Place be given over to be trodden down?” The answer comes back “For 2,300 evenings and mornings.” Daniel was trying to figure out what that could mean when the angel Gabriel told him that the vision points to the end of time.

Miller figured out that 2,300 days was only a little more than six years. Obviously, the world hadn’t come to an end six years after Daniel’s vision. Then he remembered a passage in which the Lord said “I count one day for every year.”

By determining the year in which Daniel saw his vision, then adding 2,300 years, Miller arrived at 1844.

Miller’s movement became the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

While most Christian churches believe in the Second Coming of Christ, many give it a symbolic or spiritual meaning. They don’t look for the literal return of Christ to this planet, as Graham and other evangelicals do.

Christ’s return, says a Lutheran pastor, “will be genuine and real, but not necessarily in the flesh.” But a Seventh-day Adventist pastor says, “His coming will be accompanied by convulsions of nature. Christ will literally come in the skies.” According to this view, the dead will be resurrected at that moment and the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth will begin, to be followed by the final judgment.

Episcopal deacon gives up assignment after deciding to switch genders

By Jennifer L. Brown

Associated Press Writer

OKLAHOMA CITY — In the last few months, Paula Schonauer has left the parish where she was an Episcopal deacon. A few friends have abandoned her, and some that remain have trouble using her first name.

That’s because Paula Schonauer was once known as Paul, a 6-foot-3, 200-pound Gulf War veteran who is an Oklahoma City police officer.

Under pressure from the congregation at St. James Episcopal Church, Schonauer quit the parish after deciding to wear a brown shoulder-length wig, makeup and dresses — and live life as a woman.

But while the 35-year-old Schonauer has left from St. James, she has not renounced her faith or given up her title. And she has not ruled out taking an

other assignment as a deacon someday.

Schonauer is thought to be the first Episcopal deacon in the United States to change gender and remain with the church, said James Solheim, spokesman for the church’s national headquarters in New York.

Indeed, it was after counseling from Bishop Robert Moody and a therapist Schonauer decided in September, after a long internal struggle, to live as a woman.

“It’s not strength,” Schonauer says, after walking into a coffee shop with a purse over her shoulder. “It’s surrender.”

Since age 4, Schonauer felt that she was a woman trapped in a man’s body. “I got caught playing with my mom’s cosmetics and scarves,” she says. “I remember staring in the mirror while I was doing this and asking myself, ‘Why am I me?’”

When parishioners learned of Scho-

nauer’s decision, they asked Moody to remove her. But Schonauer left her post before the bishop acted formally.

“It still hurts because I wasn’t able to explain my situation, although it probably wouldn’t have made any difference,” said Schonauer, who served for two years as a deacon, an ordained minister who participates in some sacraments. Unlike many deacons, Schonauer was not on track to become a priest, intending rather to stay in her role. Officials from St. James did not return calls from The Associated Press.

Schonauer, who recently divorced a wife of 13 years, continues to live in Oklahoma City because of their children — an 11-year-old boy and 3-year-old girl. They have a joint custody arrangement

“I think if I went away that would be more unforgivable than my transition,”

she said. “It takes some fortitude to stay here. But I don’t want to deny my past anymore than I want to deny who I am.”

Schonauer’s ex-wife has long known about his gender conflict and they have remained friends. She was one of 32 people, including church friends and members of a transgender support group, who attended a church ceremony for Schonauer in September. The service, which was informal and did not include a blessing from the bishop, marked the start of Schonauer’s transgender journey.

“It was an offer by my friends to prayerfully begin my journey, nothing more,” Schonauer said.

Hormone injections have made Schonauer’s skin softer and smoother, and her waist has taken on a womanly shape. She says the injections also caused her to grow breasts and have

calmed her emotions.

Schonauer bought a new wardrobe and invested in electrolysis to remove unwanted hair. She’s trying to save at least \$10,000 for a sex-change operation, but said that likely will take years.

Schonauer said she tried to fight her inner feelings for years by acting masculine. As a man, Schonauer earned a black belt in karate, joined the Army, served in Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm and became a police officer.

“I tried to keep it repressed,” she said.

Schonauer said faith in God and service to the church kept her from turning to drugs or alcohol to deal with depression from her conflict. But she struggled until recently about whether being transgender was sinful or shameful in the eyes of God.

“The Bible teaches all of us fall short of the glory of God,” she said. “My

challenge is to realize what I am and find a way to live into it and make peace with myself.”

Schonauer now attends St. Paul’s Episcopal Cathedral, the bishop’s congregation, where most members do not recognize her, she said.

Moody has been supportive.

“This is a man who for a long time has felt uncomfortable in his body,” the bishop said. “He was a man trapped in a woman’s body. This is not something that just happened.”

Moody says he hopes the church will be “as compassionate as the Oklahoma City Police Department has been.”

“We wouldn’t treat this particular situation any different than we would treat an officer going through a divorce or another particular emotionally stressful time,” said police spokeswoman Capt. Jessica Cummins.

Bible Baptist Church

Pastor: Don Crutcher

Fifth & Broadway
899-7368

Sunday: Sunday School: 9 am
Worship Service: 10 am

Evening Service: 6:30 pm

Wednesday: Evening Bible Study: 7 pm

Calvary Gospel Church

Pastor: Rev. Steve Rains

Fourth & College • 899-3605

Sunday: Sunday School: 9:15 am
Morning Worship: 10:30 am

Evening Worship: 6:30 pm

Wednesday: Family Night: 7 pm
Adult Bible Study and Youth Group

Saturday: Prayer Meeting: 5-7 pm

If you would like to receive a free newsletter, please call the church office.

Church of Christ

401 Caldwell

899-6185

Sunday: Bible Study: 9:45 am
Worship Service: 10:45 am

Evening Service: 6 pm

Wednesday: Bible Study: 7 pm

Church of the Nazarene

Pastor: Matthew Delp

Third & Caldwell

899-2080 or 899-3797

Sunday: Sunday School: 9:45 am
Worship Service: 10:50 am

Evening Service: 6 pm

Wednesday: Evening Service: 7 pm

First Baptist Church

Pastor: Bud Chester

Fifth & Center • 899-3450

Sunday: Sunday School: 9:15 am
Morning Worship: 10:30 am

Evening Worship: 6:30 pm

Tuesday: Mens’ Prayer Group: 6:00 am

Thursday: Night Bible Study: 7:00 pm

Seventh Day Adventist Church

1160 Cattletrail

Pastor: Arlin Cochran • 785-332-2888

Saturday: Sabbath School: 9:30 am

Worship Service: 11 am



Bible Baptist Church

First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

Pastor: Loren Strait

Eighth & Arcade • 899-5233

Sunday: Worship Service: 10:30 am

Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

Activities: Junior High & High School Youth Groups,
Adult Bible Study, Choir, Men’s and Women’s Groups,
Devotions Study, Monthly Fellowship

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First United Methodist Church

1116 Sherman

899-3631

Pastor: Rev. Carol Moore-Ramey

Sunday: Sunday School: 9:15 am

Worship Service: 10:30 am

Sonrise Christian Church

Ninth & Caldwell • 899-5398

Minister: Tony Kafka

Youth Minister: Doug Bean

Sunday: Worship Service: 9:30 am

Sunday School: 10:45 am

Wednesday:

Junior/Senior High Meeting: 7 pm

Adult & Children’s Classes: 7 pm

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

13th & Sherman • 899-6161

Pastor: Scott Grimshaw

Sunday: Sunday School: 8:45 am

Worship Service: 10 am

Wednesday: Confirmation: 6 pm

Kanorado

United Methodist Church

Pastor: Leonard Cox

399-2468

Sunday: Sunday School: 9 am

Worship Service: 10:15 am

Goodland Bible Church

109 Willow Road • 899-6400

Pastor:

Sunday: Sunday School: 9:45 am

Morning Worship: 11 am

Evening Worship: 6 pm

Wednesday: Call for location

Grace Fellowship Church

104 E. Hwy 24 • 899-6423

Pastor: Bob Snyder • Residence: 899-0134

Sunday: Sunday School: 10 am

Worship Service: 11 am

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

13th & Center

899-2115 or Rectory 899-2114

Priest: Father Charles Schneider

Deacon: Gretchen Talitha

Adult Forum: Sunday : 8:30 am

Morning Prayer: 9:30 am 1st & 5th Sundays

Holy Eucharist: 2nd, 3rd, & 4th Sundays: 9:30

Sr. Warden for emergencies during the week 899-2067

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

1200 15th Street • Burlington, CO • (970) 664-2470

Sacrament Meeting: 9:30 am

Sunday School: 10:45 am

Priesthood/Relief Society: 11:30 am

Word of Life Foursquare Church

223 E. 10th

899-5250

Pastor: John Coumerilh

Sunday: Worship Celebration &

Kids’ Church: 10:30 am

United Methodist Church

Brewster:

Pastor:

Worship Service: 10:45 am CST

Sunday School: 9:45 am CST

Winona:

Minister: Rev. Bob Winters

Worship Service: 9 am CST

Sunday School: 10:15 am CST

Iglesia Del Dios Vivo

La Luz Del Mundo

Spanish Speaking Church

Minister: Esteban Ortiz B.

1601 Texas • 899-5275

Daily Prayer: Sunday thru

Saturday: 5 am & 6 pm

Sunday: Sunday School: 10 am

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Pastor: Father Daryl Olmstead

307 W. 13th • 899-7205

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

4:30-5 pm Saturday or by appointment

Mass Schedule:

Saturday: 6 pm

Sunday: 8 am and 10:30 am

Spanish Mass:

1st & 3rd Sunday: 2 pm

Pleasant Home Church

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Rt. 1, Box 180 • 694-2807 • 3190 Road 70

Pastor: Jim Cress

899-5784

Sunday: Worship Service: 9 am

Sunday School: 10 am

Evening Service: 6 pm

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