

The Centurion

The Parish Magazine of St. Alban's Church

1011 Old Joppa Road, Joppa, Maryland, 21085



My dear People:

As I mentioned recently in a sermon, and also in time past in the pages of *The Centurion*, St. Alban's Church is the remnant of the old Prince of Peace Episcopal Church in Fallston which closed in the 1980's. I love the fact that we are the old "Prince of Peace" Church because we here at St. Alban's are indeed an island of spiritual peace in this incredibly agitated and noisy world. Our quiet, contemplative, and dignified worship services, rooted in scripture and tradition, help set our minds at ease and our hearts towards God. In a world where people are becoming more and more like "ships that pass in the night", and where people are more interested in interacting with smart phones than with other people, we here at St. Alban's we can get to know each other, and share one another's joys and sorrows in life, so we don't feel all alone in the world. Visitors from other churches have told me how friendly St. Alban's is in comparison to other churches (both large and small), and how nice it is to be part of a church that is not divided up into cliques and rival factions. Here at St. Alban's we all just manage to get along. And that is so nice. St. Alban's is truly a *wonderful* parish. It is, when it's all said and done, a family... a *peaceful* family. I always hope that one day we will have a dedicated "chapel" somewhere in the church where we can have our special Prayer Book Holy Day services. When we do get this chapel my dream is to call it "The Chapel of the Prince of Peace," or "Prince of Peace Chapel," or something like that, as a way to pay homage not only to our roots, but also as a way to celebrate this very real aspect of our life as a parish. Jesus Christ is the indeed the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). When we invite him into our lives, and walk with him day-by-day, we find that the trials and tribulations of life are put into proper perspective and that we don't have to live in fear of them. We learn that we do not have to go through life being terrified of what may happen to us, or of what the future may hold. Remember the disciples after Jesus' crucifixion? In John 5:4 ff. (the Gospel appointed for The First Sunday after Easter, BCP p. 171) we read that they were gathered together in a secret place "for fear of the Jews." They didn't know yet that Jesus had been raised from the dead, and probably thought that they'd be the next ones to face the wrath of the Jewish authorities! But then Jesus appeared in their midst and said to them, "Peace be unto you." And they were at peace. The lesson is that being in the presence of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, gives us peace. Do you want peace in your life? Then follow Jesus! Because just as he imparted to his disciples back then his peace, so he imparts his peace to his disciples of today. We then carry that peace to our communities and to the world, which is not always an easy thing to do, but still we try. And indeed, as Jesus said in his Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the peacemakers! For they shall inherit the earth." (Matthew 5:9)

Faithfully, your priest,

J. Gordon Anderson

August 2018

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Important News and Other Items

UPCOMING SERVICES:

Aug 6th - Transfiguration

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Aug 15th - Assumption of BVM

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Aug 24th - St. Bartholomew

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Sep 8th - Nativity of the BVM

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Sep 19th & 22nd - Ember Days

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Sep 21st - St. Matthew

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Sep 29th - St. Michael

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Oct 18th - St. Luke

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Oct 29th - Ss. Simon & Jude

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 1st - All Saints' Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 2nd - All Souls' Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

DIOCESAN NEWS: *A Report on the 2018 Diocesan Synod*

Last month Mason Waldhauser and I drove to Charlotte North Carolina for the 50th synod of our diocese, the Diocese of the Eastern United States, Anglican Province of America. It was hosted by St. Michael the Archangel Anglican Church in Matthews, NC, which is just outside of Charlotte. This parish has hosted many important synods and events over the years. They have an absolutely gorgeous carpenter gothic-style church in a bucolic, suburban setting, along with several out buildings, such as the parish hall.

We left Baltimore on Monday morning and arrived at the hotel that evening. Unlike the last synod St. Michael's hosted, because of the growth of the diocese, we had to have all of our business meetings at the local Hilton Hotel, instead of on the grounds of the church. While it is good that the diocese is slowly growing, it's too bad we couldn't meet at the church the whole time because it makes for a very prayerful atmosphere! The reason Mason and I had to arrive so early in the week was because I was president of the Standing Committee, and I had to be in a meeting first thing Tuesday morning. (Now, after this synod, I have rotated off of the Standing Committee.) On Tuesday evening, as people are slowly arriving, everyone gathers together for Evening Prayer and then a dinner for clergy and standing committee members and their spouses.

The diocesan synod itself began on Wednesday morning with Morning Prayer, which along with Evening Prayer and the Holy Eucharist is celebrated each day of synod. (The Litany is also read at least once during the week.) A clergy conference follows Morning Prayer and breakfast, at which the bishop and other officials go over policy changes, give brief reports, introduce new clergy, and the like. The business sessions of synod begin after lunch on Wednesday. The archdeacon takes role in order to establish a quorum, and once it is established the bishop ordinary, Bishop Grundorf, enters the room and calls the meeting to order. Our agenda is posted on the "Diocese" bulletin board in the parish hall for everyone to see. Basically people just give a bunch of reports. Each bishop reports on his activities for the year as do the heads of different committees (e.g. camp, examining chaplains, global partnerships ["missions"], treasurer, area deans and select churches in their deaneries, etc.). At every synod the diocesan treasurer always takes parish pledges for the next fiscal year. As mentioned in last month's magazine the APA's policy is for each parish to offer what it can to help fund the ministry and work of the diocese. (This is quite unlike the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland where the diocese "assesses" each parish and *tells* them what they *have* to give to the diocese each year!)

Some churches give as much as 40k/year to the diocese, while others as little as \$500. Most are somewhere in the vast in between.

Synod adjourns for the day after about four hours. Then we have Evening Prayer followed by the synod banquet. Usually there is entertainment at the banquet... this could be anything from a vocal ensemble singing madrigals, to a string quartet, to a rock band, a choir, or even karaoke. In the evenings clergy and laity gather together in various rooms for fellowship.

The next day opens with Morning Prayer and the Litany. After breakfast everyone gathers in the hall to listen to the guest speaker. This year we had Bishop Kenneth Myers, a prolific author, who spoke on the topic of eschatology (the end times and last thing). Two years ago he spoke at our Tampa synod on soteriology (the theology of salvation). The quality of the speakers is always very good. After lunch synod reconvenes and we continue with reports. We break again around 4:00 p.m. to prepare for the Synod Eucharist. In theological parlance this service is referred to as a "Pontifical High Mass" because it is celebrated by our diocesan bishop (the Most Rev'd Walter H. Grundorf, D.D. A scrumptious feast always follows this special service.

This year's Synod Eucharist was special because during it we consecrated a new missionary bishop for the diocese, the Rt. Rev'd David Haines. Bishop Haines is our vicar for global partnerships and has travelled the globe ministering to our churches in India, the Philippines, Haiti, and Ecuador. Now that he is a bishop he will be able to confirm and ordain as needed when ministering overseas... primarily in Haiti and Ecuador, as the churches in the Philippines and India have their own bishops. When back in the states he serves as rector of All Saints' Church in the beautiful town of Wilmington, North Carolina. A South African by birth, Bishop Haines was formerly a botanist working on his Ph.D before sensing a call to ordained ministry. He's a brilliant and delightful guy! I was privileged to serve as the deacon of the Solemn High Mass! The service was recorded and may be viewed on Facebook via a link on St. Michael's website.

The next day opens with Morning Prayer and Holy Communion, and then, after breakfast, synod reconvenes where we finish our business by noon. Then we close with prayer and receive a blessing from the bishop, say our fond farewells to one another, and go on our way until the next meeting, the nowhere near as large and long "winter conference" in January. ✠

LITURGY: *A Recent Forum on the Book of Common Prayer Raised Many Questions About Liturgy*

Recently I was invited to St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Emmorton (Abingdon) to join a panel discussion on the liturgy for the people of St. Mary's. Also on the panel was Fr. Bill Smith, former rector of St. Mary's, and Fr. Don Schranz, supply priest at St. Mary's. The forum was organized by the Senior Warden, Pat Weaver, to answer questions about the differences between the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.

While the latter is the official Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church, and has been for many years, St. Mary's has long maintained an early Sunday morning celebration of the Holy Eucharist according to the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. But recently the Bishop of Maryland, the Rt. Rev'd Eugene Sutton, asked them to stop that service and use only the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. As this could be upsetting to some older members of the parish, the Senior Warden thought it would be helpful to organize a talk about it.

In my opinion the main difference between the 1928 and 1979 Books of Common Prayer is that the 1979, with its infinite options for variations, abandons the classical Anglican tradition of "common" prayer... everyone saying substantially the *same* prayers and reading the *same* liturgy. Indeed some commentators go so far as to say that the 1979 Book of Common Prayer is not really a Book of "Common" Prayer at all! Why? *Because of all of the variety it contains.* In the 1979 Prayer Book there are two rites of Holy Communion (Rite 1 and Rite 2), several different Eucharistic Prayers (Prayers of Consecration), several different forms of "Prayers of the People" (the equivalent to our "Prayer for the Church"), and "Traditional and Contemporary" versions of the Collects, as well as other services (such as the Burial Office).

All of that variation means that on any given Sunday the services of different Episcopalian parishes could be radically different, indeed almost unrecognizable, from one another! (The Episcopal Church, by the way, was not the only mainline church to develop these new service books with infinite amounts of variation. The very conservative Roman Catholic Church, of all denominations, did almost the exact same thing when they jettisoned the Missal of Pope St. Pius V—the old Latin Mass, which was very similar to our 1928 BCP Rite—for the new "Novus Ordo" of Pope Paul VI in the late 1960's, which had all sorts of variations, and optional prayers, including three Canons of the Mass!)

While it is true that "variety is the spice of life", and while it is true that the older liturgies such as the 1928

Book of Common Prayer (and its sister Prayer Books from other churches in the Anglican Communion, up until the 1962 Canadian Book of Common Prayer) contained elements of variation, there was a *balance*. There was just enough unity in these books in terms of their prayers and services so that some semblance of "Common Prayer" could be maintained... so that if you went to an Anglican parish in the United States, Scotland, England, Canada, Ireland, South Africa, Ceylon, etc. the service would be substantially the same throughout. Most of the prayers would be the same, the services offered would be the same, the liturgical readings would be the same, the same version of scripture would be read, and so on.

This idea of "common prayer"—everyone has one book and does and says pretty much the same thing—was the idea of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, the liturgical genius who compiled the original Prayer Books of the Church. In his day in the early 16th century there were numerous rites being celebrated all over England which lead to a sort of liturgical and spiritual disunity within the kingdom. So upon the accession of King Edward VI he introduced a book of "common prayer" to be used by all people within the kingdom. Our prayer book, the 1928 American Book of Common Prayer, is a direct descendant in form and theology of the original 1549 Book of Common Prayer of Archbishop Cranmer.

That means that the infinite amount of variety allowed by the 1979 Book of Common Prayer (and in other service books of the contemporary Anglican Communion, such as *Common Worship* in England) is really something of a betrayal of the most basic intentions of one of our most important spiritual fathers for the Church.

"Common" prayer allows us to all be on the same page (no pun intended) spiritually with one another. We have one faith, one theology, and one tradition. While canonical authority allows APA clergy to supplement the 1928 Book of Common Prayer, those supplemental resources affect only minor parts of the service, and come from the catholic tradition of the Western Church (i.e. not from a liturgical laboratory in some contemporary American seminary). Despite the variety that we are allowed certain things *always* remain the same: the Collects, the Prayer of Consecration, the forms for Confession and Absolution, etc. This core unity feeds our faith and helps build in a us a true spiritual unify under the power of the Holy Ghost, making us one with one another as members of Christ's mystical Body, the Church. ✠

PARISH NEWS & UPDATES: *Please note these important items!*

Seminarian Update - Mr. Mason Waldhauser

Dear Friends in Christ,

It has been good spending another month with you here back home. I have until Sunday the 26th of this month before I head back to Nashotah House. (That will be a big day, because I'll be preaching that morning, too, before making the road trip.) This fall, I will be starting my second year out of three. I just bought my textbooks yesterday, which have me really looking forward to the year ahead. I am most excited about the New Testament course, because I have heard great things about that professor.

I'm mobile again! I just bought a 2000 Toyota Celica last week, so I'll be taking that back to school. My mom and aunt will be making the road trip with me, which will be fun. This car has air conditioning, so it will be a more comfortable 16 hour trip than what we had last year in my old car. This Celica's in good shape for a used car, and it's really fun and sporty! I'm hoping this will do more good for my dating game than that family station wagon I was borrowing. Not much to report there on that front, by the way—I've been on a couple of dates since the summer began, but no sparks with anyone, really. But I understand our student body at Nashotah won't be all dudes again like it was last year, so we'll see what happens. I'll keep you posted.

I really enjoyed the trip down to Charlotte last month with Fr. Gordon for synod. I always enjoy catching up with everyone: we've got some really cool people in our diocese. I had never seen an episcopal consecration before, so that was special; and it was especially nice getting to catch up with Fr. Tyler and Holly. No interviews or exams for me this time around, but I'll have an interview at the winter conference this January.

Thanks for your prayers for me! Hope each of you are having a good summer, too.

In all Christian Love,

Mason

Grace, Grit, & Thanksgiving

St. Alban's new prayer group has its inaugural meeting on Tuesday, September 11th at 6:30 p.m. Its focus is on physical and spiritual healing. The meeting is lay-lead with different individuals taking turns leading each session. They will meet in the parish hall the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Please see Kristi Sjöholm-Sierchio for more information.

Help Us Through the Summer Months

Please remember that the bills do not take a vacation during the summer. We need your support to make ends meet throughout the year. God's standard of giving is called the "tithe" which means "tenth." He desires that we give 10% of our income to the church to support her ministry and mission. While not all are able to do that, that is nonetheless the goal to which we should strive. Please remember to support your church, realizing that we will be called to account one day for what we have done with the resources God has given to us.

2018 Yard Sale:

If you want to buy something from the yard sale before its official day by all means go ahead and do so! You may leave your donation for the item in an envelope in the senior warden's inbox (located next to the rector's office). Envelopes are found at the back of the church on the table. If you do not have money on hand to buy items you may pay for them later. But please, please, please... if you see an item you want *take it!* Because if you leave it in the basement with a note on it saying it is "reserved" someone else may come along and take it out from under you. Please remember to be generous with your donation as well, as this is not only to help the church but also those battling cancer.

Invite Someone to Church (Part 2):

As you think of inviting people to church remember to not make their decision to visit or join St. Alban's *for* them. Let *them* make the decision. In other words, don't assume that our church is not something for which that person is looking. This is the common thought process: "Oh, why should I bother to invite X to St Alban's! He/she would *never* like our church or even consider joining. So I am not even going to bother to invite them." That thought process is wrong. Don't make their decision *for* them. Invite them to our church and let *them* make the decision to join or not join us.

Standing Notices:

"The minister is ordered, from time to time, to advise the People, whilst they are still in health, to make Wills arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, and, when of ability, to leave Bequests for religious and other charitable uses." (BCP, p. 320) ☩