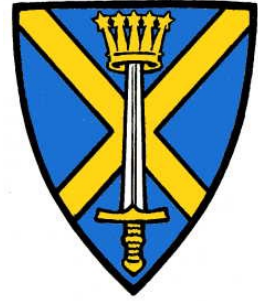


The Centurion

The Parish Magazine of St. Alban's Church

1011 Old Joppa Road, Joppa, Maryland, 21085



My dear People:

As summer begins and people begin traveling to and fro I would be remiss if I didn't remind you to please stay current with your giving! The church does not stop receiving bills during the summer months, so we need your faithful giving to keep our doors open and everything up and running. If you can't put cash or a check into the offering plate don't forget that you may give with a card safely and securely online via the parish website, or with a card/device at the payment kiosk in the parish hall. If you use the kiosk, be sure to sign your receipt and place it in the glass container, or in the offering plate, so your giving statement is properly credited. I do hope that you will make it out to some of our summer events that we will be offering: Grace, Grit, and Thanksgiving (GG&T); Men's Group; Summer Prayer Series, etc. All of these activities involve fellowship with your fellow believers. Many of them have great food! And sometimes there is live musical entertainment offered by the parish band: Flash Gordon & the Holy Rollers (with Rockin' Roy on the rhythm guitar, and Stoner Steph on percussion). Check out our social media and announcements for when these will be happening.

Summer is a time when everything grows... the grass, trees, flowers, etc. It is also a time when we can really grow spiritually. One of the reasons we clergy wear green vestments at church during the summer/fall season of Trinitytide is because it symbolizes growth... spiritual growth! We spend the first part of the ecclesiastical year (Advent-Pentecost) reliving the earthly ministry and life of our Lord Jesus Christ, and then we spend the second half of the year (Trinitytide) reflecting on the mystery of his teaching and what it all means for us. Summer is not the time to go on 'spiritual' vacation! Let us stay sharp and focused on growing in godliness and righteousness by the grace of almighty God. We mustn't forget that weeds also grow in the summertime. One way or another, *something* is going to grow. The same is true in our spiritual life. If we are not growing in godliness and love of God, then it means that spiritual weeds are growing up in our lives (e.g. the Parable of the Sower).

So make plans on how you are going to maintain your spiritual development this summer. Find a spiritual classic to read. Do an in depth study of a book of the Bible. Try out a church activity that you have never tried before (e.g. Holy Day services, GG&T, the Rector's Forum, pray the rosary, etc.). Just do something —anything— that will help keep the weeds down and out of your spiritual life, and that will keep the fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) growing up within you.

Faithfully, your priest,

J. Gordon Anderson

June 2023

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UPCOMING PRAYER BOOK
HOLY DAYS:

Jun 2nd - Ember Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Jun 24th - St. John Baptist

No Services

Jun 29th - Ss. Peter & Paul

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Jul 4th - Independence Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Jul 25th - St. James

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Aug 24th - St. Bartholomew

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Sep 20th & 22nd - Ember Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Sep 21st - St. Matthew

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Please see the parish website for the complete list of Sunday and Holy Day services offered each month.

www.saintalbansjoppa.org

THEOLOGY: *The Articles of Religion — Article VI. Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scripture for Salvation*

This month we pick up where we left off with the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion back in the March 2023 edition of *The Centurion*. This month we will briefly consider Article VI. Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scripture for Salvation. The Article itself reads as follows: *“Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.”* Article VI goes on to list the names of the books of Bible recognized by the Church as canonical (i.e. official), and then quickly addresses the status of the so-called “Apocryphal” books. (Note: we will not be addressing the Apocrypha in this article, but if you would like to read about it please check out the November 2021 edition of *The Centurion* available on the parish website.)

The meaning of the article is very straightforward. Everything that we need to know in order to be saved may be found in the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. They tell us about the origin of humanity and the world, how he and all creation fell from God’s grace because of the sin of Adam, and how God has begun the restoration of the universe through the saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ. They describe —through different types of literature (poetry and prose)— how God worked in history in the lives of his people. From end-to-end the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament teach that salvation is a free gift offered by God that we receive by grace through faith. Abraham’s faith was credited to him as righteousness (Gen. 15:6). And centuries later Saint Paul wrote to the Ephesians, *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”* (Eph. 2:8-9) Whereas the Old Testament saints looked forward to the coming Redeemer, Saint Paul and we ourselves look at back to him and his finished work on the Cross. The Scriptures have one theme and tell one story: the story of the salvation of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. They teach us who he is and what he came to do. The salvation history of the Scriptures is summarized for us in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.

Now, to be sure, there is a whole lot that the scriptures do not tell us. They say nothing about gravity, black holes, how to change the oil in our cars, what instrument is the most pleasant for making music, etc. Why doesn’t the Bible give us all of the answers for

every single question in life? It is because there is simply too much knowledge in the history of the world! A book like the Bible could not contain all there is to know about everything in life. And furthermore, human life is constantly developing and changing, whereas the Bible is already written and complete. Also, it is not the Bible’s purpose to answer mundane questions about everyday life, like how to install a door knob. Its primary purpose is to testify to working of God in Christ for the salvation of the world.

None of that, of course, is to say that the Scriptures cannot help us in everyday life. What the Bible does do with these and many other questions that we face in life is give us principles and precepts to guide us in our thought and actions that we may be aligned with God’s will. So, for example, what does it tell us about how the world was created? It says that God is the ultimate creator of all things. What does it want us to think about paying taxes? *“Render unto Caesar things that are his.”* (Mark 12:17) How does it inform our thinking about bodily health? It says that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). And Philippians 4:6 is certainly good to keep in mind when installing a doorknob, fixing things, or doing a million other tasks: *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”*

Occasionally in the history of the Church and the world people come along and claim that certain things not found in the Scriptures must be believed in order to be saved. In the Roman Catholic Church the doctrines of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Immaculate Conception have been raised to the level of ‘dogma’ by the popes, which means that these pious devotional beliefs about the Blessed Virgin Mary must now be believed as much as the doctrines of the Incarnation and Holy Trinity in order for a person to be saved. The Articles of Religion reject that notion, because it is impossible to prove those doctrines from Holy Scripture.

Pseudo-Christian cult leaders also arise from time to time, making bizarre claims that followers must be celibate in order to be saved; commit suicide; give all of their money to the leader; live in a compound; etc. in order to find eternal life. Again, none of that is found in the Scriptures, so the Church rejects those teachings. (In fact, such teachings as these, and others promulgated by lunatic cult leaders, are anti-Scriptural and therefore anti-Christian.)

Please turn to the next page.

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Interestingly, Article VI ties in with the vows ministers make at their ordination:

Deaconal Ordination (BCP p. 533): “Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all Doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ?”

Priestly Ordination (BCP p. 542): “Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all Doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined, out of the said Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge; and to teach nothing, as necessary to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture?”

Episcopal Consecration (BCP p. 554): “Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all Doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined out of the same Holy Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge; and to teach or maintain nothing, as necessary to eternal salvation, but that

which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the same?”

All of this means that the ministers of the Church are not authorized to teach doctrines which cannot be found in the Scriptures as necessary to salvation. The Bible contains everything necessary for salvation, and the minister is to teach from that book only!

Almost all of the troubles the Church has gotten into over the years have been from her neglecting the Scriptures... and also—in our case as Anglicans—the Book of Common Prayer, which is a liturgical summary of the Scriptures. We should honor and believe the Bible as being the word of God, and the basic place where we go to learn about him and what he has done in the history of the world. Their point is to lead us to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and to help us find eternal salvation. May we strive to make the study of Scripture an important part of our daily lives. ☩

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SPIRITUALITY: *“Thoughts on Happiness” by Robert Louis Stevenson*

1. Make up your mind to be happy. Learn to find pleasure in simple things
2. Make the best of your circumstances. No one has everything, and everyone has something of sorrow intermingled with the gladness of life. The trick is to make laughter outweigh the tears.
3. Don't take yourself too seriously. Don't think that somehow you should be protected from the misfortunes that befall others.
4. You can't please everybody. Don't let criticism worry you.
5. Don't let your neighbor set your standards. Be yourself.
6. Do the things you enjoy doing, but stay out of debt.
7. Don't borrow trouble. Imaginary things are harder to bear than the actual ones.
8. Since hate poisons the soul, do not cherish enmities or grudges. Avoid people who make you unhappy.
9. Have many interests. If you can't travel read about new and exciting places.
10. Don't hold post-mortems. Don't spend your life brooding over sorrows and mistakes. Don't be one who never gets over things.
11. Do what you can for those less fortunate than yourself.
12. Keep busy at something. A very busy person never has time to be unhappy. ☩

Taken from “Memories of Fifty-Six Years of Ministry” by Rev'd Jack Cooper, 1st Rector of Saint Alban's Anglican Church.

PARISH NEWS & UPDATES:

Diocesan Summer Camp

A few weeks ago Fr. Anderson and his daughter Hannah attended the diocesan summer camp (Anglican Life Adventure Camp) at the Vineyard Camp in North Carolina. There were about 30 campers and counselors. Camp included sports, crafts, swimming, shooting, catechesis, games, fellowship, worship, and more. It was a joy to see the kids (and adults!) grow closer to the Lord that week. You can see pictures of the camp on the Facebook group "Anglican Camp 2023." Camp is every summer, so if you or some child you know is interested in coming in 2024 please let Fr. Anderson know.

How to Pray Morning and Evening Prayer from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer

If you missed our gathering a few weeks ago on this important topic fear not! You may go to our YouTube channel and watch the teaching online. All you need is a Prayer Book, a Bible, and some patience and in no time you will be up and running with praying the Divine Office! Here is the link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fC7rGLfUgV8>

Website Resources

Did you know that every single issue (10+ years!) of *The Centurion* is available for download on our website? There is some great material just sitting there waiting to be discovered—or rediscovered—by you! You can also send *The Centurion* to friends who might be interested as a way to introduce them to our church. http://www.saintalbansjoppa.org/Parish_Magazine.html

Building Project Update

We are ready to start fundraising for our building project. Phase 1A—which covers the storm water management and half of our new parking—comes in at \$168,000.00. It includes making a stone construction entrance, silt fence and filler logs, inlet protection, temporary and permanent stabilization, mass grading, parking lot, grading for sidewalks/curbing, backfill, micro bio-retention facility #1, swm detention facility, piping, drains, landscaping, and more. Check out the bulletin board in the parish hall for visuals and the complete list of work. All of this information will be e-mailed to the church very soon, and we will also have some large diagrams up that show 'before and after' views of the project. We are counting on you for your

support! Please give as generously as you are able to help us secure our church and grounds for ourselves and for generations to come.

New Rug in the Parish Hall

Special thanks to Ms. Vicki d'Angelo of Baltimore for donating the gorgeous oriental rug for the seating area in the parish hall. It looks great! She also donated magnificent rug in the office.

Summer Series on Prayer

Join us on July 12th at 6:30 pm for dinner and the final installment of our summer series on prayer. We will explore more unconventional methods of prayer and mediation including praying with icons, use of sacramentals, and much more. We will meet at 6:30 p.m. for dinner (provided) followed by instruction on the topic for that day.

"Grace, Grit, and Thanksgiving" Prayer and Fellowship Group

Join us on Tuesday, July 25th for the topic "Praising God with Musical Instruments." Stephanie Brown will lead us in the exciting annual event. Non-instrumentalists are most welcome to join us for the fun. Sign up on the sheet in the parish hall

Hymnody

Ever wonder how the rector chooses hymns for worship? The answer is that he simply follows the 1940 Hymnal! Opening to the front of it one finds hymns organized according to the season of the ecclesiastical year, beginning at Advent and going through to Trinity. The hymns of Lenten season are sung during Lent, Ascension during Ascensiontide, and so on. During Trinitytide most hymns are chosen from the 'General Hymns' section, which runs from page 266 to page 600.

Thank You For Your Support

"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) ✠