

# The Centurion

The Parish Magazine of St. Alban's Church

1011 Old Joppa Road, Joppa, Maryland, 21085



My dear People:

This month is the last month of the ecclesiastical year. On the first Sunday in Advent in December 1st a new Church Year begins. Our annual parish meeting will be held on Sunday, November 17th at 10:00 a.m. We will have one service that morning at 9:00 a.m.! Please make a note of it! As is our custom, a brunch will follow the service and then we will segue into our meeting. At this meeting we need to elect new vestrymen, approve our 2020 budget, and recognize all of the people who serve in various capacities here at the church. (And that's pretty *everyone!*) Rotating off the vestry are Linda Tillinghast and Edwin Okoye. And since our former junior warden stepped down a few months ago that means we have three seats to fill. The vestry has chosen Oby Okoye, Kristi Sjöholm-Sierchio, and C. Carter Glass to replace them. Nominations can of course be made from the floor at the meeting as well. The other thing we are going to do at the meeting is vote on a change to the parish by-laws concerning vestry term limits for the senior warden. This has been discussed *ad nauseam* at church, and the first vote to accept the change was taken on Saturday, October 19th, so there is little need to go over it here. But should anyone have any questions about it feel free to ask me or a vestryman about it. As we end another ecclesiastical year let me state how blessed and happy I am to be here at St. Alban's serving as your priest. This is a truly special church, full of caring people who love each other and love our Lord and his Church. Once in a while someone leaves the church, and they complain on their way out that we are not friendly, and that there are no activities. Often, however, the problem is with the people, not the church. For whatever reason they choose not avail themselves of the many opportunities we have for fellowship, liturgy, and service. Well, as the old saying goes, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink." For what it's worth, I think our church is incredibly friendly. And furthermore for such a small body we have a huge number of activities going on all the time. Other clergy and laity write to me sometimes commenting on how much we have happening here at our quaint little country chapel! And the reality is that *everyone* here has a role in making this parish what it is. It's not just me... it's *all* of us working together that make St. Alban's such a special and unique place. God bless each and every one of you!

Faithfully, your priest, *J. Gordon Anderson*

November 2019

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UPCOMING SERVICES:

**Nov 1st - All Saints' Day**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Nov 2nd - All Souls' Day**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Nov 21st - Presentation of BVM**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Nov 28th - Thanksgiving Day**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Nov 30th - St. Andrew**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Dec 18th - Ember Day**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Dec 20th - Ember Day**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Dec 21st - St. Thomas**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Dec 24th - Christmas Eve**

Holy Communion at 5:00 p.m.

**Dec 24th - Christmas Day**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

FOR ALL THE SAINTS: *What's the big fuss about saints?*

The beginning of November is sometimes called “Hallowtide” because of the observances of All Saints’ and All Souls’ Days. Anyone who has been paying attention at church the last few months has no doubt noticed that on certain Sundays we “commemorate” a saint. On these days, after the Collect for that Sunday in Trinitytide is read there sometimes follows a Collect for a saint. In recent weeks we’ve commemorated St. Edward, St. Louis, St. Bruno, St. Dominic, and many others. Note that we only do this when a particular saint’s holy day, which is usually the day of his death, happens to fall on a Sunday. Why all of this fuss about saints? Isn’t devotion to them, and remembrance of them basically Roman Catholic faith and practice, and not Anglican? The answer is no! Commemorating saints and observing their feasts is Anglican through and through. One need only peruse the Book of Common Prayer—the American Edition of 1928—to see that this is the case.

On page 1 (Roman Numeral Fifty) of the Prayer Book we see “A TABLE OF FEASTS TO BE OBSERVED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.” On this table we see a number of Holy Days dedicated to saints. These are all saints found in the New Testament (although Saint Michael is mentioned in the Old Testament book of Daniel too). On pages xlii-xliii we see special scripture readings appointed for daily Morning and Evening Prayer for the patronal festivals of bishops, confessors, martyrs, virgins, and matrons. Turning ahead to page 226 we see “provers” (Collect, Epistle, and Gospel) appointed for the Holy Days, beginning with Saint Andrew (November 30th) and going all throughout the calendar years until All Saints’ (November 1st). On pages 258-259 there is a set of provers for use on a saints’ day if he or she does not have a unique set of Prayer Book provers. In the liturgies of the Book of Common Prayer there are various references to the saints as well, for example, in the office of Morning Prayer in the canticles *Tē Deum laudamus* and *Benedicite, omnia opera Domini*.

Other historic Prayer Books of the worldwide Anglican Communion have some of these and then in addition their own unique commemoration of the saints. The most shining example is perhaps

the Table of Lessons for Morning and Evening Prayer in the 1662 English Prayer Book (still the official Prayer Book of the Church of England). This section contains so-called “Black Letter Days” which are saints days that have no “provers” for the Holy Eucharist attached to them. Still, the saints are acknowledged... many more saints in fact than the relatively few biblical saints (the so-called “Red Letter Days”) found in all Prayer Books... saints like Hilary, Valentine, Blasius, Prisca, Agatha, Alban, Boniface, and many more ancient and medieval saints!

Many more examples from Anglican service books and Prayer Books could be given to further prove that devotion to the saints is not the exclusive tradition of Roman Catholics or Eastern Orthodox but is also part of our tradition. And it is part of our tradition because like Rome and Orthodoxy we are rooted in the faith and practice of the ancient, undivided Church.

We observe these days at Saint Alban’s for other reasons as well, however. One of the most important is that it reminds us that we are not an isolated little island of Christians in a tiny little country chapel with a quirky old liturgy. Rather, we are part of a great cloud of witnesses... the universal Church—Christ’s One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church—which is his Mystical Body. In the Apostles’ Creed we confess our belief in the “Communion of Saints.” We are indeed saints in the sense that we are members in the Mystical Body of Christ. He is alive, and therefore *all* who are in him are alive in him no matter what their state: “militant here on earth”, in the intermediate state sometimes called “purgatory,” or in “heaven.” Christ’s Body transcends space and time, and we are members all of him and also of one another.

So the next we come to church and look around us and see the usual faces in our “small but mighty church” (as the late Rev’d Uche Umeh once described us) let us remember that we are not alone. We are in fellowship with the entire Mystical Body of Christ, worshipping and adoring him with all of God’s angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven (e.g. the saints) at the Eucharistic feast! ✠

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**MISSIONS: *Urgent Needs in Haiti and India, by the Rt. Rev'd David Haines (Missionary Bishop)***

Dear APA Clergy and Lay Members,

I am writing to inform you of an urgent ongoing need for one of our Global Partners. We currently send monthly support to each of our Global Partners to cover a large portion of their monthly operating costs. While we are very grateful for the continued support that we have received to enable us to continue to cover these monthly costs, and while we at present have sufficient ongoing support for most of them, we have an urgent need to cover the monthly costs of our Global Partners in Haiti.

We currently need a thousand dollars per month to cover the costs of running the school (\$900/month) to cover the salaries of eight teachers and a principal and (\$100/month) to reimburse the fuel costs for the five motorcycles that the clergy use in order to visit and supply our two churches there. We are looking for churches or individuals to commit to helping us meet this need by committing to contribute a portion of this need each month.

Our partnership with Haiti has been in place for twenty-six years and the school was established just over twenty-five years ago. The political situation in

Haiti over the years has caused a great deal of hardship for both the churches and the school in Haiti. We do anticipate that the situation will improve over time but the current political unrest and uncertainty have put added pressure on the school in particular.

Checks should be made payable to your local church with a notation in the memo field "Haiti Appeal." I ask each church treasurer to combine the checks and send one church check to the APA Treasurer\* with the designation "Haiti Appeal 2019."

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached via email at davidhaines@hotmail.com or by telephone at (910) 632-4401. Thank you all for your generous support and prayers.

Yours in Christ's service,

*The Rt. Rev. David W. Haines*

(Missionary Bishop for Global Partnerships, APA) ✠

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Many of our churches and several individuals have faithfully provided sponsorships for Dalit children in India who are enrolled in the Good Shepherd School in Kollur, Telengana, India. The sponsorship is \$30 per month per child or \$360 per year per child. The money pays for the child's uniforms, books, school fees, transportation (if the school provides it), health care (provided at the school by trained community health workers) and meals at the school for the year.

During this past year, through the efforts of our churches and several generous individuals, the APA was able to sponsor 36 children. Their profiles and school progress reports are attached. We are hoping to sponsor this same group of children for the next academic year as well as any others that we are able to raise the funds to support. While D.J. does have some of the monies for next year, if your church has already begun to collect support for this effort, please encourage your parish treasurers to send in any monies you may have collected to the APA by the end of October or during the early part of November so that we can determine how many the APA as a whole might

be able to sponsor in this upcoming academic year, before sending the money to Operation Mobilization by December 2019.

Thank you for all your efforts to provide support for these children and for all of our Global Partnerships.

Please remind your parishioners to continue to pray for these children and for the Good Shepherd Schools as well as for all of our Global Partners throughout the world. If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact me. I can be reached via email at [davidhaines@hotmail.com](mailto:davidhaines@hotmail.com) or by telephone at (910) 632 4401.

Thank you all for raising the awareness of this wonderful ministry and I hope and pray that the faces of these precious children will bring joy to your hearts.

Yours in Christ's service,

*The Rt. Rev. David W. Haines*

(Missionary Bishop for Global Partnerships, APA) ✠

## PARISH NEWS &amp; UPDATES:

**Seminarian Update:**

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for all your support the weekend of my ordination. It was such a blessing to see you and celebrate with you and begin my ministry with you all in my corner. I told Fr. Gordon and Bp. Chad that I felt a lot of peace going into that day. I felt like I had front-loaded all my questions to the first two years of seminary, and so by this point, I felt like I had sorted through everything I needed to and had come to see it in terms of obedience: stepping out in faith to follow the call that I felt like God had given me. Reading the Gospel at that Mass felt like the most natural thing in the world, which came to me as a real encouragement in my ministry.

Since I've been back on campus, I have been trying to see my classmates as (to an extent) my people to serve while I'm here and away from all of you - although I will be back again soon at Thanksgiving. This mindset has transformed my approach to my relationships on campus and made me feel a strong sense of mission during my final year here.

The school work has been very manageable, which I'm thankful for, because life stuff has been keeping me very busy and pretty behind on my to-do list; plus all the relationships on campus feel more intense, now that I realize how impermanent they are, with my graduation coming up in May. I have developed such a strong respect for my professors and friendships with my classmates that I'm not sure I've experienced this degree of communal love ever before.

Homiletics (preaching) class has been a lot of fun lately. I will be interviewing for a curacy at a parish in Denver over Christmas break, and the rector there will have me preach on the fourth Sunday of Advent; and so I was able to preach that sermon to my classmates for their feedback. (I need to become much more animated in my voice and gestures.) Tomorrow, I will be delivering a wedding sermon, which I've written for my brother and his fiancée. It's helpful getting their input on my content and style,

and I feel like I always pick up something in terms of insights or techniques from their sermons as well.

I have been serving a lot in chapel lately. Last week, I was the sacristan on duty, teaching the lowerclassmen how to fulfill their liturgical roles. This week, I'm the officiant, which means that I'm leading Morning Prayer and Evensong. Tomorrow, I will be serving as deacon at the High Mass. Chapel life, too, is something I'll really miss about this place. The Denver position that I'm interviewing for involves celebrating a daily Mass, which would be a really special way to keep some continuity with this place.

Please continue to pray for me, that God would mold me more and more into the servant he wants me to be as a deacon, following our Lord's example. Please pray, also, that he'd give me the logistical know-how and attention span to keep on top of my extracurricular to-do list. Thank you, and I look forward to seeing you again later this month.

Until then,

"Deacon Mason"

P.S. There's already a layer of snow on the ground as I write this. Our first snowfall came a few days before Halloween!

**Reminders**

"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)

**Quote of the Month**

"It is easier to make a saint out of a libertine than out of a prig."

*George Santayana, quoted in "A Treasury of Quotations on Christian Themes" by Carroll E. Simcox (Seabury Press, 1975) ☩*