

SANCTUARY

Newsletter of St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Elberton, Georgia

Calendar

Holy Eucharist, Sundays, 10:30 a.m. (Eucharistic prayer will be Form C; Rev. Charles Romine may preach one Sunday in the month). Come into the Lord's house with quiet and reverence.

SafeHouse Sunday August 9

Sunday School and Bible Study in recess until September

Vestry meeting, August 10, 6 p.m.

August 6, *The Transfiguration*

August 15, *St. Mary the Virgin*

August 24, *St. Bartholomew the Apostle*

August Birthdays

Mary Randall, August 1
Steve Jenkins, August 16
Thomas Barclay, August 16
Allen Nicas, August 25

Prayer List

Amelia & Mike, Aylith, Betty & Richard, Bill, Britney, Debra, Diane, Dolores, Don, Donald, Floyd, Henry, Hermione, Karen, Kathleen, Katie, Kim, Lorie, Malachi, Michael, Todd, Wil, William

Prayers for the departed: Janna Dixon, Dottie Smith, Melissa Tyler

Rector's Reflection



I've talked before in sermons about the origins of ministry. We all know that ministry is a part of our responsibility as members of the church. It's part of our baptismal vows, our initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into the earthly body of Christ, the Church, but where does ministry come from; who decides? The answer is simple: you do. Jesus set the example in his life and teaching: feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit those who are isolated, be present in healing to those in need of healing, pray for those in need of prayer.

Jesus gave us an example and instructions, but the ministries come from us. We see our community and our world and then do what we are called to do.

Ministries can, and often do, begin with one or two people—people who see a need and go to work, using the time, treasure, and talent they've been gifted with. The ministry might grow and involve more people, or the whole church, or it might stay as just one or two. It really doesn't matter. A small ministry is as important to those who receive it as a large one.

I challenge all of us to spend some time and let God speak to us. Let God show us, call us to what we should do. There are places we can help, in large and small ways.

Ministry comes from you. You receive the call from God and then you share yourself with the people you minister to and with the congregation. They grow from there, and we grow as a church with them. *Blessings, Fr. John Keeler +*

Notes of Interest

Bats in the Belfry

We don't have bats in the belfry (in fact, we don't have a belfry), but we do have bats who have taken up residence in the downstairs parish hall. Although we believe in churches being hospitable and democratic, accepting of differences, we have drawn the line at eating with bats. The vestry has received three estimates on the cost of removal and prevention of return; hopefully the bats will be hanging out somewhere else soon.

Room for Growth

Start going through your books for possible donations to the St. Alban's library. A much anticipated, large new bookcase is now installed in the vestry room, thanks to Marilyn Slocumbe. It bears a plaque: "In Loving Memory Jeffery Allan Barker" and will be blessed soon at a convenient Sunday service. We are fortunate to have so much book capacity added to our library.

Looking toward September

And talking about books, remember that the Sunday School book for the fall is *James in the Suburbs: A Disorderly Parable of the Epistle of James* by April Love-Fordham, and the Bible Study will consider *Conversations with Scripture: The Acts of the Apostles* by C. K. Robertson (New York: Morehouse, 2010). I have obtained a copy of the latter, which (according to the book back) is the eighth book in the Anglican Association of Biblical Scholars Study Series. "Written in accessible language . . . , each book in the series focuses on exploring the historical and critical background, as well as how the biblical texts written centuries ago can still speak to us today." The Right Rev. Kirk Smith, Diocese of Arizona, says of Robertson's book on Acts, "This insightful study of the triumphs and struggles of the early church is especially relevant for Christians today."

By the time the next *Sanctuary* comes out, I should have *James in the Suburbs* in hand. The title is intriguing.

Looking toward December

Good news! Once again we can look forward to a joint Lessons and Carols service in December. So far, the First Methodist Church and the First Baptist Church have agreed to participate along with St. Alban's. Fr. John says that planning has begun.

Diocesan Purpose Statement Draft

Fr. John wanted the following Diocese of Atlanta purpose statement draft circulated to members: "We challenge ourselves and the world to love like Jesus as we worship joyfully, serve compassionately, and grow spiritually." The process of working on the draft began at last year's council, continued with input from deans and convocations, and will undoubtedly come up for discussion at this year's council. Fr. John urges members to get in touch with him if they would like to express approval or disapproval of the draft; if they disapprove, why?

A Puff of White Smoke

Our New Presiding Bishop

On June 27, 2015, Michael Bruce Curry—the first African American to lead a southern diocese of the Episcopal Church, the diocese of North Carolina—was elected on the first ballot to serve a nine-year term as presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. He will formally take office on November 1, 2015, succeeding the current presiding bishop, Katharine Jefferts Schori.

What He Has to Say

Among his priorities, the Jesus movement. “I am looking forward to serving and working for the cause of the Jesus movement in the world to help this become a transformed world that looks more like God’s dream and less like our nightmare. That’s what energizes me and what I believe in and we can really continue and build on the good work that’s been done in Bishop Katharine’s years.”



Evangelism vs. evangelical. “Everybody knows I really do take evangelism seriously and discipleship and witness and service and social advocacy, the gospel principles that we hold. Those three things are critical and needed in this time. I think the Episcopal Church has something to offer in the public square. We have a way of looking at the Gospel that makes known the love of God in Jesus.”

But is he evangelical? “I think it’s fair to say that I am a follower of Jesus.”

How will he address societal issues? “Some of this will evolve over time.” He said that good public initiatives are already going on, with the church’s Office of Governmental Relations and other efforts, to address issues of racism and poverty.

Noting the specter of the recent killings of nine people at a Bible study in Charleston, he added: “It was the voice of the Christian community that really did change the narrative from one that could have degenerated into a negative and hurtful one to one that was a narrative of forgiveness. That’s one of the roles religious communities and in particular the Christian community can offer, and is a positive way forward.”

Becoming the beloved community. “I believe profoundly that Dr. King was right. We were put here to create the beloved community; God is the same God and creator of all of us. I’m not a scientist . . . I’m just a preacher, but if we’ve got the same parental source then you’re related to everybody. We are brothers and sisters of each other. The hard work is to figure out how we live as beloved community, as the human family of God and do that in practical and tangible ways.”

(Continued on p. 4)

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Suzanne Moore,
Organist

Mary Randall, Verger

Vestry

Steve Jenkins, Sr. Warden

Charles Duke, Jr. Warden

Suzanne Moore

Allen Nicas

Debra Romine

Nancy Seymour

Robyn Keeler, vestry
secretary

Charles Romine,
treasurer

Puff of Smoke (continued)

On preaching. "I do love to preach. The preaching and teaching of God's word does make a difference and can lift us up. You know the story in Ezekiel 37? That's pretty much about preaching. We're a valley of dry bones; God said preach to them and the bones started to shake, rattle, and roll . . . that is what preaching does. I hope to continue the preaching ministry as well, as a way of moving the church forward."

On being elected the African-American leader of a largely white denomination. He said the election of Jefferts Schori as the first woman presiding bishop paved the way for him. "I was there when it happened and I remember just realizing it was an experience of the Holy Spirit for real. Today I had that same feeling.

"I think that's a sign of our church growing more deeply in the spirit of God and the movement of God in our world. It was like the day of Pentecost, when the spirit came down, people living in the spirit of God's love, of God's embrace, and we find ourselves growing more in the direction of God's dream."

On growing churches. "The gospel hasn't changed. Jesus is still the same. We need to learn and discover new ways of carrying out and sharing that good news of Jesus. In this day, in this time, the church can no longer wait for its congregation to come to it. That change of directionality on the part of the church, church-wide, will have impact for reaching people who are not automatically coming to our doors."

What he wants people to know about him. "That Michael Curry is a follower of Jesus. Not a perfect one. I want to be one of his disciples. I believe that the way of Jesus, the way of God's love that we see in Jesus, is the way of life, life that sets us free, that moves us. I just want people to know that Michael Curry does strive to follow in the way of Jesus and reflect his love and compassion in his life and in the life of the church."

About reconciliation. "If you follow Jesus, you're good with me . . . let's go together. Ultimately, that's the thing that matters. We deal with each other in love and charity. We'll find a way forward. We will create space. Better yet, the spirit of God will create space for all of us."

These are excerpts from the bishop's comments at a news conference following his election. For a fuller account go to <http://www.episcopaldigitalnetwork.com>.

The Doxology: Origin



The following information came from *Then Sings My Soul* by Robert J. Morgan (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2003).

Thomas Ken has been called "England's first hymnwriter." He was born in 1637 on the outskirts of London and attended Winchester College, a historic boys' school. Later, after he was ordained a priest, he returned to Winchester as a chaplain.

In 1674 he wrote three hymns to encourage the devotional habits of the boys. This was revolutionary because at the time only Psalms were sung in public worship. Ken suggested the boys use the hymns privately in their rooms.

One of the hymns was to be sung in the morning, one in the evening, and one at midnight if the boy was having trouble sleeping. The beginning verses of the three hymns were different, but they all ended with a common stanza, which we know as the Doxology:

*Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; / Praise Him, all creatures here below; /
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; / Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

In 1680, Ken was appointed chaplain to King Charles II, in which job he distinguished himself by refusing to lodge one of the king's mistresses in the chaplain's residence. He rose to be a bishop in the reign of James II, but again got in trouble: He was sent to the Tower of London for his Protestant beliefs.

Ken died in 1711 (in the home of a friend, not in the Tower), and his Doxology was sung at his funeral.



*At home with
the grand-
children:
Carole Oglesby
with Peyton,
Lauren, and
Megan.*

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