

The Hallowed Word

All Hallows Episcopal Church

The Rev. Kenneth Thom, Priest-in-Charge

May 2011

109 West Federal Street

410-632-2455

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Snow Hill, MD 21863

Altar Guild

At one of our recent Soup and Salad Suppers, Alice Tweedy provided a very interesting and informative discussion about the many activities of the Altar Guild as they care for the altar area of the church. Since most of these activities are performed when there is no one in the church, we only see the results of their work – but there is a lot to do, and they do an outstanding job. Alice shared prayers that can be used by altar guild members when they first arrive at church and after they have finished their planned activity. They are very well written, and with little or no change can be readily applied to many other situations besides altar guild work, so here they are:

Before beginning – O loving Savior, give us your grace that we may be loyal to your Holy Church and faithful on our care of holy things. Grant that as we adorn and make ready your altar we may learn greater love and reverence for all that belongs to your service and through all outward symbols come to a clearer vision of the inward and spiritual truth taught by them. We ask this for your sake, O Blessed Lord and Master, Amen.

Before leaving – Most merciful God, my duties here today have been completed. Before I leave I ask forgiveness for any thought or deed that was not in your will. I thank you for accompanying me in my work. Accompany me also as I go from here. May those lives with whom I come into contact the remainder of the day receive from me what I have received from you, the peace that passes understanding. In all I have done, I have sought to praise your holy Name, O Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

United Thank Offering

The Spring Ingathering for the United Thank Offering will take place at All Hallows on Sunday June 5th. Through this program, developed by and administered by women since 1889, offerings collected are sent to the UTO national office, which is entrusted to promote, receive and distribute the United Thank Offering monies through grants. In 2010 more than \$2,163,000 was given in 69 grants. Grants within the United States went to 43 recipients. There were 15 international grants. There were also 11 awards to Companion Dioceses.

The Mission of the UTO is to expand the circle of thankful people through daily prayers, offerings and awareness of the abundance of God's blessings. Many choose to take the "Blue Box" (available at all times in the back of the church) and make a thoughtful daily offering. Others participate by placing an offering in the plate during the UTO collection on June 5th. Others choose to mail a check to Ann Gibb, the treasurer of the Episcopal Church Women of All Hallows, at 30025 Southhampton Bridge Road, Salisbury, MD 21804. For more information, google United Thank Offering or go to www.episcopalchurch.org.

Wisdom from Rev. Beverly Porteus, rector of Trinity, Elkton

When I was a kid dawdling through a chore, my father would look over at me and say "Look alive!" It's an expression I rarely hear today.

Years ago a lovely and holy woman in my parish, who had befriended me in a most kindly way, gave me a little written piece that she thought I would like. I did. And here it is for you:

"The most visible creators I know of are those artists whose medium is life itself, the ones who express the inexpressible without brush, hammer, clay or guitar. They neither paint nor sculpt. Their medium is being. Whatever their presence touches has increased life. They see and don't have to draw. They are the artists of being alive." Anonymous

We may not have the talents or the will to be poets or painters or dancers, or the brains and curiosity to be scientists or engineers or naturalists, but we all have one "medium" we can work in: just plain being. Our person, our aliveness, is what we have to sense God and to share God with others. So my message to you, via my father, for the Easter Season is heartfelt: "Look alive!"

Concert at All Hallows

All Hallows will present a musical concert on Sunday, May 15, at 4:00 p.m., featuring members of the Snow Hill High School Concert Choir and Concert Band. There will be another concert at All Hallows on October 9. These concerts are a part OF “Music in Snow Hill,” a cooperative program to encourage music as a performance art, and which will include three military band performances at the Bandstand in Byrd Park this Spring and Summer. The concert is free, and light refreshments will be served. For more information call Fr. Ken at 40-632-2327.

Ordinary Time: A woman is staring at her computer screen. *“There’s a message from God in my spam. I’m afraid to open it and afraid not to.”*

I’m not surprised to see how many folk don’t know the stories in scriptures, much less The Story... It’s not like we Episcopalians aren’t exposed to scripture – there are a surprising number of quotations from the Book of Common Prayer in the Bible, after all. The Rev. Alice Connor, campus minister at the U. of Cincinnati

Emergency Update: Deadly floods and tornadoes throughout the South and Southeast have devastated the region, killing hundreds of people, destroying thousands of homes, and wiping out entire neighborhoods. Already, Episcopal Relief and Development has rushed into action, contacting dioceses in hard-hit areas and deploying resources to support local dioceses and churches in offering food and shelter, pastoral care, spiritual support, comfort and hope.

There are so many communities with the same needs. I hope they will be able to count on you to offer prayers and direct support in this time of such great loss.

Episcopal Relief and Development, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Embracing the cross: A severe aftershock gave two workers suspended above ChristChurch (New Zealand) Cathedral “a life-changing experience.” They were suspended from a crane on a platform, inspecting a stone cross on the southern gable of the cathedral when a 5.0 magnitude aftershock struck. One clung to the stone cross as it swayed back and forth while the other gripped the stone gable. “We just shared a life changing experience.” The large stone cross, deemed unsafe before the aftershock, was later removed.

A Visit to the Amazing Clinic

A poem by the Rev. Joel Atong (MA, '12, VTS), Anglican Diocese of Mumbasa

I went to the Amazing Clinic to have my routine medical check-up and I confirmed that I was ill.

When He took my blood pressure, The Great Physician found I was low in tenderness.

When He read my temperature, the thermometer registered 110 degrees of anxiety.

And when He ran the electrocardiogram, He found that I needed several by-passes of Love since my arteries were blocked with loneliness and could not provide for an empty heart.

He sent me to the orthopedics and found that I could not walk by my brother's side because I had fractured myself when tripping with jealousy.

He also found I was short sighted since I could not see beyond my brother's shortcomings.

He discovered I was deaf because I had stopped listening to the voice of The Great Physician.

Imagine! Imagine, my brothers and sisters! For all this, The Great Physician gave me free consultations.

So I pledged and I pledged, my sisters and brothers, that I will follow strictly my prescriptions:

..Every morning I take a glass full of gratitude;

..When going to work I take a spoon full of Peace;

..Every hour I take one pill of patience, one cup of brotherhood, and one glass of humility;

..When going home, I take one dose of Love;

..When going to bed, I take two caplets of clear conscience;

Have you been to the Amazing Clinic? It is free! It is free! And fully paid for by the Great Physician. Rush today when it is still day!

The Children's Bible in a Nutshell (A child was asked to write a book report on the entire Bible.)

In the beginning, which occurred near the start, there was nothing but God, darkness, and some gas. The Bible says, 'The Lord thy God is one,' but I think He must be a lot older than that.

Anyway, God said, 'Give me a light!' and someone did.

Then God made the world.

He split the Adam and made Eve. Adam and Eve were naked, but they weren't embarrassed because mirrors hadn't been invented yet.

Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating one badapple, so they were driven from the Garden of Eden....Not sure what they were driven in though, because they didn't have cars.

Adam and Eve had a son, Cain, who hated his brother as long as he was Abel.

One of the next important people was Noah, who was a good guy, but one of his kids was kind of a Ham. Noah built a large boat and put his family and some animals on it. He asked some other people to join him, but they said they would have to take a rain check.

After Noah came Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jacob was more famous than his brother, Esau, because Esau sold Jacob his birthmark in exchange for some pot roast. Jacob had a son named Joseph who wore a really loud sports coat.

Another important Bible guy is Moses, whose real name was Charlton Heston. Moses led the Israel Lights out of Egypt and away from the evil Pharaoh after God sent ten plagues on Pharaoh's people. The plagues included frogs, mice, lice, bowels, and no cable.

God fed the Israel Lights every day with manicotti. Then he gave them His Top Ten Commandments. These include: don't lie, cheat, smoke, dance, or covet your neighbor's stuff.

Oh yeah, I just thought of one more: Humor thy father and they mother. (cont.)

The Children's Bible (continued)

One of Moses' best helpers was Joshua who was the first Bible guy to use spies. Joshua fought the battle of Geritol and the fence fell over on the town.

After Joshua came David. He got to be a king by killing a giant with a slingshot. He had a son named Solomon, who had about 300 wives and 500 porcupines. My teacher says he was wise, but that doesn't sound very wise to me.

After Solomon there were a bunch of major league prophets. One of these was Jonah, who was swallowed by a big whale and then barfed up on the shore.

There were also some minor league prophets, but I guess we don't have to worry about them.

After the Old Testament came the New Testament. Jesus is the star of the New. He was born in Bethlehem in a barn. (I wish I had been born in a barn, too, because my mom is always saying to me, 'Close the door! Were you born in a barn?' It would be nice to say, 'As a matter of fact, I was.')

During His life, Jesus had many arguments with sinners like the Pharisees and the Democrats.

Jesus also had twelve opossums.

The worst one was Judas Asparagus. Judas was so evil that they named a terrible vegetable after him.

Jesus was a great man. He healed many leopards and even preached to some Germans on the Mount.

But the Democrats and all those guys put Jesus on trial before Pontius the Pilot. Pilot didn't stick up for Jesus. He just washed his hands instead.

Anyways, Jesus died for our sins, then came back to life again. He went up to Heaven but will be back at the end of the Aluminum. His return is foretold in the book of Revolution. (Discovered and passed on by Katherine Gordon)

Ups and downs of small church ministry

(The Rev. Tim Schenck in *Vestry Papers*)

In the book of Deuteronomy Moses says to the Israelites, “See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse.” He holds up the entire life of faith and offers his people a choice – to love and serve the Lord their God or to revolt and ignore the commandments of God. Reflecting upon small church ministry, it seems that there, too, there is such a dichotomy. Though I would term it differently: there are blessings and challenges that are unique to the small church experience.

Would it be more beneficial if the rector of a small church was a certified electrician or had a PhD in church history? I’m not sure. But having served parishes both large and small, I offer the following observations. I’m sure you could add your own blessings and challenges to the list, and I encourage you to do so.

Blessings of small church ministry:

- ..Like *Cheers*, it’s a place where everybody knows your name.
- ..There’s a wonderful sense of intimacy; you can know people in ways that transcend the superficial coffee hour chatter.
- ..Near instant access to the priest during a pastoral crisis.
- ..No long waits at the communion rail.
- ..Coffee hour is one big party.
- ..Intergenerational relationships are life-giving.
- ..Newcomers are easy to identify, welcome and stalk.
- ..It’s like a family in all its familiarity.

Challenges of small church ministry:

- ..Make it to church during a snow storm and you may be out shoveling the walk.
- ..It’s harder to sneak in unnoticed when you’re running late on Sunday morning.
- ..You may have to resort to trickery to get enough people to serve on the vestry.
- ..It’s like a family in all its dysfunction.

(But you are my family, and I love each of you. Bonnie)

Calendar of Events

Worship Schedule

May 15, Holy Eucharist, Enriching Our Worship

May 22, Holy Eucharist, Rite II

May 29, Holy Eucharist, Rite II

June 5, Holy Eucharist, Rite I

June 12, Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Special Events

May 15, 4 PM, Snow Hill High School Concert Choir and Band Member Concert

May 29, Celebration of Memorial Day following morning worship with
Color Guard, bagpiper and trumpet.

Feeding your soul in the small church

..Pray for your congregation – out loud, in detail and at least once a week.

..Take every opportunity to express appreciation, encouragement and gratitude to people who lead and serve.

..As often as possible, find a way to ask the question, “What are we really about in this congregation?”

Don't forget, the parish hall floors are being refinished during the week

between May 15 and 22. If you need a key to basement, see Ed Haile. Access to the office is through the Lychgate door. Access to the church is through the front door only. (If someone is not able to negotiate steps or a longer walk, there is a space between the first rows in the cemetery where one may drive close to the church to obtain entrance.)

At a Q and A session recently in Ohio, the Presiding Bishop was asked:

“What would you like to say to the Archbishop of Canterbury?” A: “What can you find to love about the Episcopal Church?”

She later stated: “The Episcopal Church is for people who like to wrestle with the questions, and who don't need all the answers.” As she has traveled around the church, she has noticed “a more outward focus, a deeper experience of prayer, and leadership coming not just from the ordained, but also those in the pews.”

You can make a difference.

The Julia Purnell Museum needs docents to be at the Between Fences exhibit to answer visitor questions. The exhibit is open Tuesday through Saturday, and there are shifts on all of these days that need to be filled. The exhibit is up July 1 through August 21. Most shifts are 3 hours. Docents can sign up as a pair if they want company, but one person is fine. Anyone interested can contact the director to see the specifics of the times and sign up. You can do as much time or as little as you want. There will be a docent orientation at the library sometime in late June, where docents will get their docent handbook and learn about the exhibit. Call the director, Claire Otterbein, at 410-632-0515.

Sure, you can worship God with a fishing pole in your hand, but when was the last time a walleye told you, “Your sins are forgiven.”

From One Pumpkin to another

A woman was asked by a coworker,
‘What is it like to be a Christian?’
The coworker replied, ‘It is like being a pumpkin.’”

God picks you from the patch, brings you in,
And washes all the dirt off of you.
Then He cuts off the top and scoops out all the yucky stuff.

He removes the seeds of doubt, hate and greed.
Then He carves you a new smiling face and
Puts His light inside of you to shine for all.
(This was found and passed on by Arlene Thom.)

A family counselor’s favorite bit of advice is, “Love is a four letter word spelled T-I-M-E.” She maintains that the best way to prove your love for anyone is to spend time with them ... and for them. The greatest of all commandments is this: “Love the Lord your God.” That too involves our time. God loved us first, the Bible records. It is good for us to remember that God proved his love by giving us his time ... time to share our sorrows, time to teach, time to pay the supreme sacrifice, time for everything we needed. God gave in generous measure.