

**ALL SAINTS' BULLETIN**  
**The Monthly Newsletter of All Saints'**

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January, 2019

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Dear Friends,

On Christmas Eve I was reading the New York edition of the New York Times. On page 19 I came across an article by Peter Wehner entitled "The Power of Grace". I want to share it with you as we all start a new year. In the first paragraph, Wehner notes that C.S. Lewis said that grace was Christianity's unique contribution to the world's religions. Grace is not just what we believe we have received from God, it is how we should be living our lives, as those who are full of grace towards others. 'To know grace and to live grace' is worth considering as a New Year's resolution.

Every Blessing,

Paul+

"In his book "What's So Amazing About Grace?" Philip Yancey describes a conference on comparative religions where experts from around the world debated which belief, if any, was unique to the Christian faith. C.S. Lewis happened to enter the room during the discussion. When he was told the topic was Christianity's unique contribution among world religions, Lewis responded: "Oh, that's easy. It's grace."

Lewis was right. No other religion places grace at its theological center. It was a revolutionary idea; as Mr. Yancey puts it, grace "seems to go against every instinct of humanity." We are naturally drawn to covenants and karma, to cause and effect, to earning what we receive.

Grace is different. It is the unmerited favor of God, unconditional love given to the undeserving. It's a difficult concept to understand because it isn't entirely rational. "Grace defies reason and logic," as Bono, the lead singer of U2, put it, "Love interrupts, if you like, the consequences of your actions."

There's a radical equality at the core of grace. None of us are deserving of God's grace, so it's not dependent on social status, wealth or intelligence. There is equality between kings and peasants, the prominent and the unheralded, rule followers and rule breakers.

If you find yourself in the company of people whose hearts have been captured by grace, count yourself lucky. They love us despite our messy lives, stay connected to us through our struggles, always holding out the hope of redemption. When relationships are broken, my wife Cindy told me, it's grace that causes people not to give up, to extend the invitation to reconnect, to work through misunderstandings with sensitivity and transparency.

You don't sense hard edges, dogmatism or self-righteous judgment from gracious people. There's a tenderness about them that opens doors that had previously been bolted shut. People who have been transformed by grace have a special place in their hearts for those living in the shadows of society. They're easily moved by stories of suffering and step into the breach to heal. And grace properly understood always produces gratitude.

Of course, grace can easily be exploited by people who don't want to be held accountable for their misdeeds; the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer referred to this as "cheap grace." Nor is it easy to balance grace with the requirements of justice. We obviously can't organize society entirely around the concept of grace. Yet the problem today is more the absence of grace than its presence.

It's easy to understand why. Living a grace-filled life is hard. Most of us, when we feel wronged, want payback. Our first impulse, when hurt or offended, is to strike out, justifying our anger in the name of fairness. We forget the words of Edward Herbert (the poet George's brother), "He that cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself," and we forget that only grace can break the cycle of ancient hatreds among peoples. (It is notable that while I have regretted not granting grace to others, I've never once regretted extending it.)

When Mr. Yancey was young, he rejected the church for a time because he found so little grace there. There is a tendency among many people of faith to come across as holier than thou, more eager to judge than to forgive. Jesus encountered this throughout his ministry, which helps explain why he was more comfortable in the company of the unclean and reviled, the lowly and the outcast, than religious authorities. The odds are that you know people who have had scars of ungrace inflicted upon them by the Christian church. Yet when we see grace in action — whether in acts of extravagant, indiscriminate love, in radical self-giving, or in showing equanimity in the face of death — it can move us unlike anything else.

In 2014, Steve Hayner, my spiritual confidant, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Upon learning it had spread, Steve wrote, “In all probability, the remainder of my life on this earth is now to be counted in weeks and months.” (He died in January 2015.) Steve acknowledged that pain and death are reminders of the nature of our broken world. Yet he went on to say: “There is a much bigger story of which this is only a tiny part. And it is God’s story of love, hope, forgiveness, reconciliation, and joy. We went into this journey choosing to trust God and to offer our fears to God. We’ve been so grateful for the freedom from fear and the abundance of peace that we have experienced.” He added, “There are, of course, times of discouragement, grief, pain, and wonder. After all, there are a lot of unknowns ahead of us.”

I sent Steve’s reflections to my friend Jonathan Rauch, who responded, “It’s letters like this — the wisdom, the grace — that make me wish I weren’t an atheist.”

When I recently asked Jonathan how, as a nonbeliever, he understood grace and why it inspires us when we see it in others, he told me that grace is “some combination of generosity and magnanimity, kindness and forgiveness, and empathy — all above the ordinary call of duty and bestowed even (or especially?) when not particularly earned.” We see it demonstrated in heroic ways and in small, everyday contexts, he said. “But I guess, regardless of the context, it’s always at least a little unexpected and out of the ordinary.”

A lot like if the incarnate deity, veiled in flesh, were born in a manger in Bethlehem.”

### **BOOK CLUB NEWS**

Our January selection is "The Reckoning" by John Grisham. Please plan to join us on Wednesday, January 9th at 11:50 am. Lee Chubb has graciously volunteered to lead the discussion.

Here is how an online book seller described this one:

John Grisham returns to Clanton, Mississippi, to tell the story of an unthinkable murder, the bizarre trial that follows it, and its profound and lasting effect on the people of Ford County. Pete Banning was Clanton's favorite son, a returning war hero, the patriarch of a prominent family, a farmer, father, neighbor, and a faithful member of the Methodist church. Then one cool October morning in 1946, he rose early, drove into town, walked into the Church, and calmly shot and killed the Reverend Dexter Bell. As if the murder wasn't shocking enough, it was even more baffling that Pete's only statement about it—to the sheriff, to his defense attorney, to the judge, to his family and friends, and to the people of Clanton—was "I have nothing to say." And so the murder of the esteemed Reverend Bell became the most mysterious and unforgettable crime Ford County had ever known.

It sounds like a good one. Hope you have time to read and prepare to discuss it with the rest of us. Enjoy!

Maureen

**Body and Soul**  
**Wednesday, January 16**

## **ALTAR GUILD NEWS**

Beginning January 1st we have a new Altar Guild Chairman, Patti Poppell, and Vice Chairman, Kim Bragg. We also warmly thank our outgoing Chairman, Julie Carico, for her service and dedication, not just to the Altar Guild, but to other church ministries as well. Beginning Sunday, January 6th, we commence the season of Epiphany, which is actually the third season of the church year. For the first two Sundays, the liturgical color is white, and thereafter, the color is green (symbolic of growth and the green things of the earth).

## **ATTENTION VESTRYMEN**

This month's vestry meeting will be held on Sunday, January 27 immediately following Morning Prayer.

## **CHOIR NEWS**

The St. David's Choir will sing at the January 27th Morning Prayer service.

Thank you to St. David's children and parents for a lovely 5:30pm Evensong and Pageant service. All of the children were in attendance and sang beautifully. It was a wonderful Christmas present for everyone.

Thank you also to the Adult Choir. Lessons and Carols and the 11pm Christmas Eve service was extra special because of your dedication and willingness. Blessings to you and your voices for a Happy and Healthy New Year of singing.

## **A NOTE OF INTEREST:**

One of the UK's leading psychiatrists has said that students (and adults) who are feeling stressed should try joining a choir.

In a keynote speech at a recent conference on the subject of mental health among students, Professor Sir Simon Wessely hit out at many of the mental health services offered by universities.

“The risk is not just ineffective solutions, but the real possibility that our solutions may actually be contributing to the problem.”

He went on to say: “I would love to see trials of volunteering, peer support, sport, drama, CHOIR and so on – that’s the research I believe we need.”

It’s not the first time Sir Simon has criticized mental health initiatives offered at the country’s universities. In June 2018 he told The Telegraph:

“There are things that aren’t disorders at all, that students habitually get – exam stress, loneliness and so on – all of which can be problematic. But we shouldn’t go round automatically saying ‘Oh you have a psychiatric disorder, you need psychiatric or mental health or professional health.’”

He told the paper that having a strong social support network was “probably better” than seeing professional help – and doesn’t “involve the risk of maybe thinking you have a disorder when you don’t”.

Margit Miller

Choir Master, Organist and Music Director

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**All Saints’ January ECW Meeting  
*Celebrate Epiphany with a  
Traditional Russian Christmas Brunch***

**Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>  
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**At the home of Dina Sinclair  
107 St. Andrews Circle  
Thomasville GA 31792**

**Please rsvp – 228-9242 (Libby or Nikki)**

## **ALL SAINTS AUCTION**

**Mark your calendar, the All Saints' Episcopal Church Auction will be on Tuesday, March 5, 2019.** This year, we are asking for everyone to volunteer on a committee. There are five committees: set up/decorations, live auction items, silent auction items, food and drinks, and checkout. A description of each committee is listed below. You can sign up for as many committee as you like! Call or email Libby to let her know what committee you would like to join.

Set up/Decorations – This committee will meet a month before the auction to plan table decorations and Parish Hall Decorations. We have a lot of supplies and decorations left over from past auctions that can be used along with black tablecloths and napkins. Fun, new items can be ordered as well. The week before the auction, this committee will start transforming the Parish hall to a Mardi Gras theme party.

Live Auction committee – This very important committee will come up with fun live auction items, trips, and experiences. They will need to call people for donations and gather all information to write a brief description to be used for the catalog.

Silent Auction Committee – This committee will organize the silent auction items that are donated to the church. They may also ask some community shops and restaurants for donations.

Food/Drink – What is an auction without fabulous Cajun food and drinks!! If you help in this committee you are responsible for creating a menu, finding a caterer, and creating a specialty drink for the night along with picking up beer and wine.

Check out - The night of the auction this committee will check people in at the door, hand them a paddle, and at the end of the night help with check out and payment.

## CHRISTMAS DINNER OUTREACH

On Monday, December 24 and Christmas Day the All Saints family prepared over 200 meals for the residents of Providence Plaza, Halcyon Home, The Rescue Mission as well as those in the Oak Street/Good Shepherd community.

We would like to thank everyone for their help in making the 2018 All Saints' Christmas Outreach Dinner Program a success. 200 people who may not have had a real Christmas dinner were served. The brightness and joy those dinners gave them also were given to us.

The list of helpers and deliverers is long, but we wanted to thank each one by name. God bless you in the year to come.

Rozzie and Eddie

### 2018 Christmas Dinner Helpers

Hannah Jaspert	Trip Chastain	Simms Ladson
Janie Deal	Luther Chastain	Mark Cobb
Charlie Deal	Hawk Chastain	Dort Cobb
Warren Bicknell	Eve Walter	Caroline Cobb
Suzanne Alexander	Whitney King	Henry Cobb
Brad Alexander	Robert King	Martha Cole Glen
Mary Catherine Alexander	Alexandra King	Diane Parker
Annalee Jackson	Tazewell King	Parker Watt
Virginia Jackson	Georgia Walter	The Tom Parker
Lily Jackson	Margaret Boltja	Family
John Forbes	Jack Boltja	(Hayley)
Mary Wise	Peggy Boltja	(Justin)
Margaret Levings	Stephen Boltja	(Will)
Julie McPherson	Dawna Bicknell	(Page)
Elise McPherson	Mike Tanner	(Blake)
Chris Alexander	Mercer Watt	Randy Watts
Tyler Alexander	Berkeley	Nadia Watts
Lindsay Alexander	Wetherbee	Ben Watts
Ashley Jackson	Frannie	Sam Watts
Rebecca Strickland	Wetherbee	Bob Meadows
	Sims Wetherbee	Heloise Meadows



## **USHERS FOR JANUARY**

### **Sunday, January 6 Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.**

Epiphany Sunday	Mike Tanner
Festival of Lights	James Tyson

### **Sunday, January 13 Morning Prayer 10:30 a.m.**

The First Sunday after Epiphany	Ben Waddill
The Baptism of Our Lord	Mary Kathryn Sibley

### **Sunday, January 20 Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.**

Epiphany II	Charlie Whitney
	Robert Balfour

### **Sunday, January 27 Morning Prayer 10:30 a.m.**

Epiphany III	Warren Bicknell
	John Brinson

## **TRANSITIONS:**

### **Happy birthday in January to:**

Wyatt Jackson Davis	1-8-08
Campbell Avery Smith, Jr.	1-17-10
Curry Brinson	1-18-00
Will Carico	1-18-98

### **Happy birthday in February to:**

Lexi Kirkham	2-4-02
Mary Katherine Moreton	2-6-97
Maryam Norajean Sibley	2-11-02
Neel Gurley	2-12-98
Avery Kirkham	2-12-04
Will Ladson	2-13-99
Virginia E. Jackson	2-19-99
John B. Brinson, V (Jack)	2-24-97

## **FOR THE PARISH REGISTER**

### **Marriage**

Marshall Blake Summers and Olivia Christine Kavouklis were united in Holy Matrimony on December 29, 2018