



*Carolina*  
GRACE

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GOLD FOR THE SOUL

FREEDOM  
Lent 2010

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## A COLLECT FOR CAROLINA GRACE

God of Grace and Glory, be present with us to guide and nurture, to comfort and instruct. May the words contained herein continue to feed us as they themselves have been the product of your sustaining presence in the lives of your faithful people. This we pray in the name of the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



*Collect written by  
the Reverend Canon J. Michael A. Wright  
Rector, Grace Church, Charleston*



# Carolina GRACE

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# CAROLINA GRACE

Welcome to our second issue of *Carolina Grace: Gold for the Soul*. While we continue to suggest and encourage themes, Carolina Grace is evolving into something of a miscellany, which we regard as a wonderfully positive development.

In addition to historical pieces revealing our heritage as Episcopalians in the Diocese of South Carolina, the theme for this issue is “Freedom in Christ: Light in the Dark.” Christ calls us to freedom, and part of that freedom entails freedom of inquiry.

As always, Carolina Grace exists to share the grace of God as, to-

gether, we grow in the knowledge and love of our Lord. As Bishop William Alexander Guerry continues to remind us through God’s saints on earth, in our shared faith we strive for unity, not uniformity.

*Peace in Christ,  
Callie*

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## NEXT ISSUE

Suggested themes for our next issue are “Journeying through the Wilderness in the Sure and Certain Hope of the Resurrection” and “Sabbath as Restoration and Renewal.”

We continue to welcome and encourage essays which pertain to the history of the Episcopal Church in South Carolina and figures whose legacy has shaped our heritage while setting the stage for a bright future.

The deadline for submissions is April 10, 2010. For further guidelines for submissions and to subscribe to *Carolina Grace*, please see the final page of this journal.

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## GOD WITH US

The Wise Men may never have known the consequences of their diplomatic call on Herod. Maybe they never heard that helpless babies were torn from their mothers' arms to be murdered. If they did hear about it, did they know that the baby before whom they knelt was rescued in time?

God sent his son, and it was announced in highest heaven, with angel choruses and new stars. It was not a secret, if you knew where to look. And because it was not a secret, the wrong people heard about it, and young children died. How is that good news?

Those babies could make no conscious choice to follow one as helpless and weak as they were. But not one of us makes a fully informed choice. We do not know how our choices impact our families, our friends, even the person on the street corner.

All we know for sure is that God has not forgotten or abandoned even the smallest, most insignificant creature he has made. Maybe that is why the Church has never forgotten the Innocents – because they are a sign to us that Jesus' very presence among us is dangerous and powerful, even in the person of a tiny baby, because it is God's presence. No matter how we react to that presence – with love and welcome, or with hatred and fear – the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

*Emily Guerry*  
*Grace Church, Charleston*

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“[H]oliness is not so much  
a quality to be acquired  
as a way of seeing and acting  
in the day-to-day events of the world.”

James C. Fenhagen in *Invitation to Holiness*



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## PUPPETS OF TRADITION

Beneath the sun of centuries,  
Lulled by murmuring waters  
of its boundaries,  
Sleeps an old city of the South.  
Mildewed dwellings of an ancient beauty  
Decaying aristocracy.  
Narrow streets of age-worn cobblestones  
Form a quaintly perfect setting  
For the passers-by—  
Marionettes—of an old time,  
Punch and Judy show;  
Acting their jerky roles  
On the narrow stage of their little lives,  
Moved this way and that  
By strings of tradition  
Held in ghostly hands  
Of long-dead ancestors.

*Laura Dotterer Dickinson Taylor*  
(b. 1898 in Charleston. Died in Charleston.  
Lived most of her life in Chicago.)

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## ONE CHURCH – ONCE UPON A TIME

One afternoon several years ago, I attended the wake of the Right Reverend James C. West, Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Southeast. Bishop West had died quite suddenly. The Reformed Episcopal Church was organized in 1873 by clergy and lay persons who had formerly

belonged to the Episcopal Church. This group was opposed to what they considered to be “excessive ritualism” present in the Episcopal Church. They emphasized the Protestant, or Reformed, nature of the Church in opposition to the Catholic.

In South Carolina, however, the situation which brought this newly-forming body to our state was entirely different. The issue of race—rather than any opposition to ritualism—was the reason for the split. Before I went away to seminary at Sewanee, I happened to take a couple of classes at the Reformed Episcopal Seminary in Summerville. Classes took place in a historic, rambling building surrounded by enduring but exquisite gardens in the old section of town.

One evening, one of our professors recounted to us the history of the Reformed Episcopal Church in South Carolina. I learned that we were deeply connected, after all. Here in South Carolina, a couple of young African-American men by the names of Frank Ferguson and Lawrence Dawson had studied for the Episcopal priesthood under the guidance and tutelage of three Episcopal

priests: Peter Stevens, Benjamin Johnson of Trinity Church in Abbeville, and Anthony Toomer Porter of the Church of the Holy Communion in Charleston.

After these two men had prepared for ordination, the Bishop of South Carolina at the time, the Right Reverend William B.W. Howe, wished to ordain them. The Standing Committee of our Diocese, however, refused to ordain them. Because of their race, they were not considered to be full members of the Diocese. As a means of explanation, the journal of the Diocesan Convention reads:

The Church is bound to recognize, in all its relations to the world... that distinction between the races of men which God has been pleased to ordain, and to conform its polity and ecclesiastical organisms to his divine ordinance.<sup>1</sup>

Stevens noted later that all this “raised the very good question of whether there was any future for blacks anywhere in the Diocese of South Carolina.” Given this exclusion, which was said to have been opposed “bravely” by Bishop



<sup>1</sup>Allen C. Guelzo, *For the Union of Evangelical Christendom: The Irony of the Reformed Episcopalians*, 1994, p.220.

Howe, the two men happened to hear of a Bishop Cummins who was a part of a movement called the Reformed Episcopal Church. They petitioned him for ordination, and were ordained. This then prompted untold numbers of former slaves who had been Episcopalians in South Carolina to join the Reformed Episcopal Church, where they were welcomed.

As my professor concluded his story, he looked directly at me, knowing me to be an Episcopalian, and said, gently, “You see, we were a part of you.”

Bishop West was born in Berkeley County and grew up in the town of St. Stephen. He was educated at Claflin College in Orangeburg and the Reformed Episcopal Seminary in Philadelphia. He was the son, grandson, and great-grandson of Reformed Episcopal clergymen. According to the SC Christian Action Council newsletter, “Bishop West was a faithful supporter...of many ecumenical endeavors...always eager to advance Christian unity... [and he] never wavered in his service to the church’s prophetic tradition.”<sup>2</sup>

At his wake, those who spoke unflinchingly mentioned his humility. “He came,” one said, “not to be served, but to serve.”

Another spoke of his great concern for the congregations and of a dream for his diocese to shore up resources somehow in order to be

able to provide financial support to congregations when needed.

Another repeated words the Bishop had spoken during his final Convention address, in which he urged the faithful: “Walk together, children. Walk together. Don’t you be weary. Walk together.”

His predecessor Bishop Sanco Rembert, who was also one of my teachers, said that the last time he had seen the Bishop he asked him how he was doing, and the Bishop had responded: “I’m trusting the Lord.”

The last time I saw Bishop West was during my final weeks at Sewanee. He was one his way to visit congregations in another part of Tennessee, and made a special trip to Sewanee to visit a church history class I was taking. He recounted to my classmates this same history. Before he left he gave me a broad smile and a big hug, and a copy of the book *The Irony of the Reformed Episcopalians*.

To walk together and trust the Lord – fitting advice from a man who came not to be served, but to serve.

*Callie Perkins  
Grace Church  
Charleston*

<sup>2</sup>June, 2006

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# REMEMBERING MARY HARPER

1922-2009

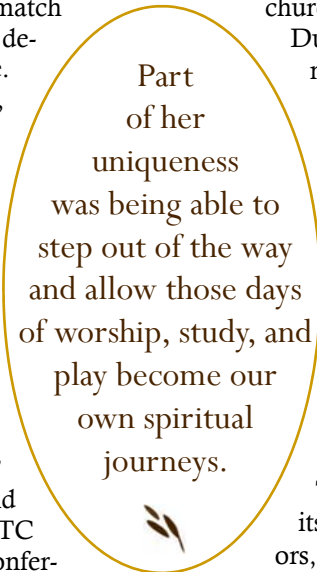
Most of us – if we are fortunate – have many loving mentors as we grow from childhood into adulthood. Mary Harper was one of those special people in the lives of young people in the Diocese of South Carolina.

Hired by Bishop Thomas N. Carruthers in the late 1940's to be the "Youth Worker" – an amazing decision for the Bishop – for a meager salary for this graduate of Windham House in New York City, she was an unbelievable match for the future for youth development in the diocese.


Mary originated, coordinated, and encouraged the activities of the youth for the next 15+ years. Her commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord was lived out in her love for, her belief in, and her nurture of young people. She helped local parishes to form YPSLs (Young Peoples' Service Leagues), and each year she directed LTC (Leadership Training Conference) to empower the youth who would be leaders in their own YPSLs. She served as advisor to the Youth Commission, whose membership included representatives from the YPSLs, Acolytes' Guild, Junior Altar Guild, and the Canterbury Club. She led the participation in and travel to the provincial gatherings and the National Youth Convention. She helped initiate a project of the Canterbury Club-Episcopal college students across the state. In teams of four, Canterburians went to small

parishes and missions and conducted Bible School using material they had written and been trained to use. It was a marvelous stimulus to the parish and a happy joining of college students and the very young churchmen.

During the summers, Mary moved her office from Diocesan Headquarters at 138 Wentworth Street to Camp St. Christopher, which had just been relocated to Seabrook's Beach. She swapped her handsome skirts, blouses, and heels for tee shirts, shorts, and sneakers. She was the camp's general manager. Though each session had its own clergy and counselors, she coordinated everything – from establishing "work camp" (the cleaning and setting up for the summer), to training the permanent staff, to registration, and to conference themes. She didn't get much sleep in those summers, but what a difference Camp St. Christopher made in the lives of its campers. How does one have a "mountain top" experience at the beach? St. Christopher has been that special place for so many – from those days of rustic living until now. Part of



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of her  
uniqueness  
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her uniqueness was being able to step out of the way and allow those days of worship, study, and play become our own spiritual journeys. The atmosphere of love and acceptance which she fostered in the '40s and '50s continues to be a guiding spirit of St. Christopher. One interesting outgrowth of the influence of Mary Harper, Camp St. Christopher, and the clergy who were on staff is the unusually large number of young men who later responded to their calls and became priests of the church.

As we chose themes each year – “Personal Commitment to Christ,” “Whither Thou Goest,” “To Know the Christ and Make Him Known” – we knew we had Mary believing in us as we were trying to articulate our own faith. She knew us, and she loved us, but as one group moved on,

she began anew with the upcoming group of young people. She never lost her love for the now, the present.

Mary left her youth worker position to go home to care for her aging parents, and she taught in a variety of positions in Georgetown and Williamsburg counties. She died October 27, 2009, in her family home in Andrews, S.C. Her obituary read (at her request) “In lieu of flowers, it is suggested that you give some of your ‘time, talent or treasure’ to the nurture of children and young people.” This lady, a child of God, a leader among leaders, an enormous influence on lives, our youth worker, our friend, was our mentor. Thanks be to God.

*Daisy Porcher Stoudenmire  
Grace Church, Charleston*

(Published in *Jubilate Deo*, January, 2010)

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“[T]he supreme wonder of the history of the Christian Church is that always in the moments when it has seemed most dead, out of its body there has sprung up new life; so that in age after age it has renewed itself, and age after age by its renewal has carried the world forward into new stages of progress...”

William Temple in *Christian Faith and Life*



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# ROBERT SMITH

## THE FIRST BISHOP OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Robert Smith, the first Bishop of South Carolina, was born in Norfolk, England in 1732, and ordained deacon and priest by the Bishop of Ely in 1756. At the time of his ordination he was a Fellow of Caius and Gonville College, Cambridge from which he held both bachelor's and master's degrees.

The new priest arrived in Charleston on November 3, 1757, less than a year after his ordination to the priesthood. He was invited to serve as the assistant rector at Saint Philip's Church; then, before the end of the year, at age 25, he became rector of the parish where he served for many years.

In 1770, Smith became, along with three future signers of the Declaration of Independence and three future signers of the United States Constitution, one of the founders of the College of Charleston, the first municipal college in America. Under Smith's leadership the college was organized on the classical British university model emphasizing the study of Latin and Greek as the basis for a sound education. He served as the first principal or president of the college for 28 years. His residence, from the time of the founding of the college until his death in 1801, was at 6 Glebe Street, just off Wentworth across from Grace Church. The house, still the residence of the presi-

dent of the college, is known now as the Bishop Robert Smith House.

By the time the winds of independence for the colonies became a strong gale in 1776, Smith had become an American in every way, and he joined Washington's Continental Line as a chaplain in the Hospital Department of the Southern Army. He, with all of the men and officers of the Continental and Militia forces in the city, was taken prisoner at the time of the fall of Charleston in 1780. All of the prisoners of war were removed from the city and sent elsewhere by their British captors. Some were held on Sullivan's Island, and others taken elsewhere in the country. Under these conditions, Smith spent most of the next three years in Philadelphia. He returned to Charleston soon after the cessation of hostilities in 1783 after serving for a short time as priest in charge of a parish in Queen Anne's County, Maryland.

Frederick Dalcho, the author of an early history of the church in



South Carolina, says of Smith, “The active interest he took in its [the church’s] affairs, was the principal means, under Providence, by which the members of this Church were kept united and in harmony, under all discouragements of their circumstances and prospects, at the close of the revolutionary war.”<sup>1</sup> Smith’s interest in church unity led to the organization of the parishes in South Carolina into a convention. The first state convention was held at the Statehouse in Charleston (now the Historic Courthouse at the corner of Broad and Meeting Streets), and elected delegates to the first General Convention of The Episcopal Church that was held in Philadelphia in 1785. Although he did not become a bishop until much later, Robert Smith was a leader in the formation of the Episcopal Church. He actively supported the decisions that were made by the convention of churches in South Carolina and in other states to join the indissoluble union that is now The Episcopal Church. In 1789,

“But for his influence it is likely that South Carolina would not at this time have acceded to the proposed union of the Episcopal churches.”

the church in South Carolina set its future in The Episcopal Church by enacting what has been from that time to now the first article of its Constitution acknowledging its loyalty and unalterable tie to The Episcopal Church.<sup>2</sup> Bishop Albert S. Thomas wrote in his history of the diocese, “But for his [Robert Smith] influence it is likely that South Carolina would not at this time have acceded to the proposed union of the Episcopal churches throughout the United States.”<sup>3</sup> We are therefore indebted to Robert Smith for setting the sail of unity in the diocese that has endured into the 21st century. South Carolina was without a bishop until 1795 when Robert Smith was elected its first bishop. Consecrated at Christ Church in Philadelphia, he became the sixth bishop in the American Church succession. During his episcopate that lasted until his death in 1801, he ordained 11 priests in the diocese and two in Georgia. There is, oddly, no

<sup>1</sup>Frederick Dalcho, M. D., *An Historical account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina* (Charleston: E. Thayer, 1820), 217.

<sup>2</sup>“The Church in the Diocese of South Carolina accedes to and adopts the Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States and acknowledges this authority accordingly”, Article I, Constitution of the Diocese of South Carolina.

<sup>3</sup>Albert S. Thomas, *The Episcopal Church in South Carolina* (Columbia: The R. L. Bryan Company, 1957), 11.

record of any confirmations administered by him. Among his lasting accomplishments was the founding of The Clergy Society, an institution that endures to this day for the purpose of providing financial aid when necessary to retired clergy of The Episcopal Church and their families in the Diocese of South Carolina.

Bishop Robert Smith, a principal founder of the Diocese of South Carolina, was the first leader of the

diocese to work for the unity and harmony of all Episcopalians here and throughout the country. His leadership and guidance, ever since he arrived in Charleston in 1757, has been a strong pillar of support for us all to move forward into the future.

*ECCE QUAM BONUM*

*Thomas Tisdale  
Grace Church, Charleston*

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“There is no unity  
in which there is not diversity,  
and in the highest unity  
there is the utmost diversity.”

William Porcher DuBose in *The Gospel According to St. Paul*



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# HOME SICK

Dawn

The sky behind the trees  
Is sodden blue.

Magnolia leaves high up  
Wave in its sea,

And I, given either bad or  
Good luck,

Am home from school sick,

Looking down at the kitchen sash's view,  
A city scene.

Behind fences, shrubs, trees, other's lives  
Abide.

In this space the time is mine.

Like some dogged determined minor god  
I made it.

The garden square of collards and herbs  
Sink into brick.

The hackberry's silver trunk an elephant's leg,  
The crepe myrtle tree –  
Mounded lariope –

Why shouldn't heaven look like this?

It's winter's moody morning I will miss.

*Erica Lesesne  
The Cathedral of St. Luke  
and St. Paul, Charleston*

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# THE CHURCH A BETTER PLACE THANKS TO ABSALOM JONES

Winner of the 2008 Annual Absalom Jones Essay Contest for Young People  
in the Diocese of South Carolina

Absalom Jones was born into slavery on February 6, 1746. At the age of sixteen, he was purchased by a storeowner by the name of Mr. Winthrop. By the age of 28, Absalom had purchased his own freedom. Four years later he purchased his wife's freedom.

Mr. Winthrop had a shop in Philadelphia, PA. It was here that Absalom worked as a free man. Absalom taught himself to read and write. In 1766 he began attending Anthony Benzet's School in the evenings. At this time Absalom was an active member in St. George's Church, where he served as a lay preacher. While at the church, Absalom made great efforts to reach the African-American population. Although his efforts were not a failure, he did not gain the success he truly set out for until another African-American by the name of Richard Allen joined the church. Together they made great efforts to help those in need, forming the Free African Society in April of 1787. This group helped provide for and aid the sick, the orphans, and even the widows of Philadelphia. With this Society being so well in

place and aiding to the community, the number of African-Americans attending Saint George's rapidly increased.

Although this seemed to be a positive step for the church, many of the white church leaders were not happy with the outcome. As a way to try and control the growth and show the African-Americans who truly ran the church, the whites segregated the church. The balcony section of the church was for the African-Americans, and the remainder of the church went to the whites; they could sit and enjoy the service wherever they pleased. Without the knowledge of the segregation to



the balcony, Absalom came to church on what he thought was just another Sunday and sat in a seat outside of the balcony. During the prayer an usher came up to Absalom and told him he would have to move to the balcony. When Absalom refused, the usher attempted to move him physically. Soon afterwards Absalom Jones, along with Richard Allen and many of their followers, left the church.



After this event Absalom and Richard realized that they were left with no choice but to form their own church. On July 17, 1794, the construction of Saint Thomas's African Episcopal Church was complete. Absalom was named the renowned Orator. With the formation of his new church, Absalom's outreach to the community grew, and so did his congregation. Many different societies were formed in the church to help the community. Along with the fact that Absalom had become the first African-American Orator of a church, his accomplishments proved themselves. Absalom started as a simple working slave and became one of history's most remarkable men. Absalom is proof of what faith in God, and power and determination can do for you and a community.

It is because of Mr. Jones's strong beliefs and morals that today

the church is a much better place, a place where the congregation is not limited to one ethnicity or religion; instead, it is a place to worship, praise, and give thanks to God. Thanks to Absalom, the diversity of the church has also grown. There are so many different people from so many different places that come to worship. I definitely think that without the will power and strong heartedness of Absalom Jones and his followers, the conditions of the church would not be so free-spirited and open-minded as they are today. For these reason I appreciate Absalom Jones greatly for his persistence in forming an equal body for the church.

*Perry Thomas II  
Holy Cross Faith Memorial  
Pawley's Island*

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“The one great lesson that must...make ready  
the Christian unity of the future is this:  
that contraries do not necessarily contradict,  
nor need opposites always oppose.

What we want is not to surrender or abolish our differences,  
but to unite them.”

William Porcher DuBose in *The Gospel in the Gospels*



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## ONE LORD, ONE FAITH

Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes one child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes also the one who sent me.” There is this mysterious and wonderful connection between holding a child and accepting Jesus and being at one with God the Father.

Today we have baptisms. I know at least one person who thought this morning, “Oh, baptisms again; why can’t they have private baptisms like we used to.” But I really love and highly value baptisms. It is because of what we proclaim about these children, and it is because it gives me the chance to remember and renew my relationship with a loving God.

And the baptism of infants proclaims a truth that we often miss or forget. The grace of God is given to us unearned and undeserved. These children belong to God’s family not because they believe and confess just the right thing, not because they have earned some place in the world. Who knows what they may be in the future. Do you remember the old jump rope ditty: “Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief, doctor, lawyer, Indian chief?” Who knows what our children will be? In part that will be determined by how we hold them, love them, let them go. In part their life with God will be affected by godparents and about how the church welcomes and guides them. For sure they will all be very different. They will go to different schools, follow different political parties, develop different values; they will have all sorts of jobs and professions, yes. But in baptism they are made one family,

in which different people can find unity with each other. We proclaim a Christian faith that is not about uniformity, but rather about the unity we experience through one Lord, through one faith, and through one baptism. With faithful prayer and generous stewardship and committed action you and I must do everything in our power to preserve that church family and the church’s God given unity.

The Reverend Furman Buchanan is a priest at St. Martin’s in the Fields. In a sermon some weeks ago he reminded me of an important story. William Alexander Guerry was born in Eastover, lived in Charleston, and attended the theological school at Sewanee. In 1907, at Trinity Church, now this cathedral, William Guerry was elected bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina. The diocese was still the whole state.

It was a time of tension and fear not unlike our own time. There was anxiety about a new scientific theory by Charles Darwin, strife about developing new liturgies for a new 1928 prayer book, tension about race relations, and fear about the economy and about war. In South Carolina Bishop William Alexander Guerry preached boldly about striving for



unity, and not uniformity, in the Church. He preached boldly that “the Church should be broad enough to embrace within its communion... every living human soul.” He followed this by saying, in effect: “Dear people of God, it is time we had a black bishop for the Episcopal Church in South Carolina!”

Bishop Guerry’s vision of the Church can be summarized in the opening sentences of what we proclaim at Holy Baptism. There is One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, One God and Father of all. Bishop Guerry wanted all people, regardless of race, to be part of the community of Christ, the family of God in the diocese, and he wanted a black Bishop Suffragan (assistant) to work alongside him to build up the Body of Christ in this state.

Bishop Guerry’s dream was never realized. And in 1928, a priest who passionately insisted on the principle of white supremacy walked into the bishop’s office in Charleston and shot him. He died several days

later, as a martyr – a witness – for the faith. Bishop Guerry preached boldly, not only with his lips, but with his very life.

We don’t know yet who the candidates for bishop will be when we gather at Trinity Cathedral this December 12th for election. I pray that the candidates will be men and women who will be eager to proclaim and protect the baptism promise of One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all. I pray they will insist upon a diocese that is broad enough to embrace within its communion every living soul; one family of those desiring to be connected to Christ and to each other.

And I hope that today as we embrace these children and proclaim for them and for ourselves the unearned grace and love of God, we will take seriously the promises we make again in baptism, especially those last three. That you and I, by our words and examples, will proclaim the Good News of God in

I hope  
that we will  
take seriously the  
promises we make  
again in baptism...  
that you and I, by our  
words and examples,  
will proclaim the  
Good News of God  
in Christ. It is not a  
time for meanness,  
but a time  
for great  
kindness.



Sources:

Sermon by The Reverend Furman Buchanan, St. Martins in the Field, Columbia. Preached on August 23 using Propers 16B

Donald Armentrout, “Sewanee Priest Murders Sewanee Bishop” in *Sewanee Perspectives: On the History of the University of the South*, Gerald L. Smith and Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., Eds. 2008, p. 406.

Christ. It is not a time for meanness, but a time for great kindness. St. James writing to the troubled early church said this that we heard read this morning, “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.” The next promises are clear and say an important truth in different ways, that we will seek Christ and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves, that we will strive for justice and respect the dignity of every human being.

Those are tough promises. No wonder that we answer, “I will, with

God’s help,” – only with God’s help. But by keeping these promises we will offer a future Church family for these children, a place of love and acceptance and joy and security and peace. We can do this, with God’s help. And in keeping these promises we can bring some sense and sanity to our confused, secular, and warring world. Not easy, but it is the ministry to which God calls every one of us.

And I will .....with God’s help.

*Robert G. Riegel  
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral  
Columbia*

*(Sermon preached at Trinity Cathedral on the  
16th Sunday after Pentecost, September 20, 2009)*

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“I saw that all compassion  
to one’s fellow Christians,  
exercised in love,  
is a mark of Christ’s indwelling.”

Julian of Norwich



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# UNITY NOT UNIFORMITY

BISHOP GUERRY OF SOUTH CAROLINA<sup>1</sup>

We just heard what St. Paul wrote to the Ephesian congregation, “Pray for me...to make known the boldness and mystery of the gospel... pray that I may declare it boldly...”<sup>2</sup>

When the air is thick with controversy and there is deep tension and strife, when people are confused or abandoning ship, it is just plain common sense not to preach too boldly. In the life of the Church, or of a diocese, or of a congregation, these are the times when it is just plain common sense to avoid “rocking the boat.”

What would Jesus do? One of my teachers put it this way: “Jesus was in the middle of everything but the road!”<sup>3</sup>

I want you to notice what has happened in the story according to John’s Gospel that we have been hearing for the past month.<sup>4</sup> In a lovely, green, grassy field by the sea, five thousand people gathered to see what Jesus was all about, and they ended up having an incredible picnic — a sort of holy communion on the hillside.

Jesus slipped away in the night, along with his closest friends, but the crowds came after them. They greeted Jesus, but he challenged their motivation for coming; and then he preached boldly, “I AM the bread of

life!”

You can guess what happened next. The religious folks in the crowd began to complain. (This is what we “religious folks” do when we get offended.) But what did Jesus do? He preached even more boldly, he kept on rocking the boat by saying, “Your ancestors ate the manna ...and they died. I am the living bread. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever.”

There was even more confusion, tension, and disagreement in the crowd. This is when good common sense should’ve kicked in. It is not hard to imagine one of the disciples — someone like you or me — pulling Jesus aside and saying, “Let’s adjourn debate on this whole ‘bread of life’ thing for the day. It’s not polling well in the crowd. Your numbers are dropping. Let’s sleep on it, and start fresh in the morning.”

But what did Jesus do? He preached even more boldly; he kicked it up another notch by saying, “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life...” I remind you that Jesus is speaking to

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<sup>1</sup> A sermon preached at St. Martin’s on August 23, 2009, Year B, Proper 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 6:19-20

<sup>3</sup> The Reverend Richard A. Smith, School of Theology at Sewanee.

<sup>4</sup> These next several summary paragraphs are drawn from chapter 6 of the Gospel according to John.

people who observed unbelievably strict dietary laws. He just said the most offensive thing imaginable – flesh eating and blood drinking were just too much for the crowd to stomach.

John records that the congregation declined from 5,000 to twelve. And so Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?”

I want you to consider what it would be like to serve on a vestry for a congregation that experienced a similar, breath-taking drop in numbers. What would you say to a preacher like Jesus? Now imagine standing in the pulpit of that same congregation trying to summon the courage to preach boldly. What would you say to those who were leaving?

We would much rather hear some “common sense” preaching, wouldn’t we? Maybe some helpful hints for happy living!

How do you think this would fly?

“Dear people of God, it is time we had a black bishop for the Episcopal Church in South Carolina!”<sup>5</sup>

Does this sound too bold, given the tension that is already present in the Episcopal Church and in our na-

tion? Does it feel like I’m trying to rock the boat, when our diocesan numbers are declining?

Well, listen to another story about bold preaching that cuts very close to home: On Christmas Eve of 1860, God was working yet another miracle inside a young woman whose name was Margaret. She was married to a preacher in Eastover,

S.C. They were probably at church, singing hymns about the Christ child and dreaming about the child they were expecting. On Christmas Eve — of all days—our state government declared its intention to secede from the United States. It was the “common sense thing to do” given the tension,

strife and disagreement that was all around.

In 1861 the American Civil War began, Abraham Lincoln became President, and Margaret gave birth to William Alexander Guerry. Things were falling apart — Margaret died when William was just a boy. His father struggled to make ends meet. And his grandmother read to him on Sunday afternoons out of the Bible and the prayer book.<sup>6</sup> Many Episcopal Church leaders in the South



<sup>5</sup> Bishop William A. Guerry first called for an election of a black bishop in the diocesan convention of 1911 according to Albert Sidney Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina 1820-1957* (Columbia, SC:RL Bryan Company, 1957), p. 131.

<sup>6</sup> Donald Armentrout, “Sewanee Priest Murders Sewanee Bishop” in *Sewanee Perspectives: On the History of the University of the South*, Gerald L. Smith and Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., eds. 2008, p. 406.

wanted to secede from the national church during this time, much like the Confederate States. Given the tension, disagreement and strife in the Episcopal Church back then, it was the “common sense thing to do.”

William graduated from high school in Charleston around the end of the Reconstruction Era. It was a time of great tension and uncertainty. He went to Sewanee on a scholarship, and not long after graduating from college he decided that he was called to ordained ministry.<sup>7</sup> There continued to be much volatility and fear within the Episcopal Church in South Carolina. For example, black clergy and lay persons from St. Mark’s in Charleston were rejected as delegates at the diocesan convention.<sup>8</sup>

In 1888, William graduated from seminary and was ordained at Christ Church in Greenville. He served capably in a number of capacities in South Carolina and beyond during this tense and ambiguous period in the Episcopal Church in South Caro-

lina.<sup>9</sup> At one diocesan convention there was even a resolution to segregate the blacks into a distinct and separate organization.<sup>10</sup>

In 1907, at Trinity Church (now Trinity Cathedral) in downtown Columbia, William Guerry was elected bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina.<sup>11</sup>

It was a time of tension and fear not unlike our own time. There was anxiety about Darwin’s theory of evolution, strife about developing new liturgies for a new 1928 prayer book, tension about race relations, and fear about the economy and about war. And South Carolina Bishop William Alexander Guerry preached boldly about striving for unity, and not uniformity, in the Church.<sup>12</sup> He preached boldly that “the Church should be broad enough to embrace within its communion... every living human soul.”<sup>13</sup>

So now you know that roughly one hundred years ago, a man who grew up in Charleston, S.C., some-

<sup>7</sup> Donald Armentrout, “Sewanee Priest Murders Sewanee Bishop” in *Sewanee Perspectives: On the History of the University of the South*, Gerald L. Smith and Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., eds. 2008, p. 406.

<sup>8</sup> Albert Sidney Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina 1820-1957* (Columbia, SC:RL Bryan Company, 1957), p. 88, 105, 112.

<sup>9</sup> Donald Armentrout, “Sewanee Priest Murders Sewanee Bishop” in *Sewanee Perspectives: On the History of the University of the South*, Gerald L. Smith and Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., eds. 2008, p. 407-408.

<sup>10</sup> Albert Sidney Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina 1820-1957* (Columbia, SC:RL Bryan Company, 1957), p. 129.

<sup>11</sup> Donald Armentrout, “Sewanee Priest Murders Sewanee Bishop” in *Sewanee Perspectives: On the History of the University of the South*, Gerald L. Smith and Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., eds. 2008, p. 407-408.

<sup>12</sup> Edward B. Guerry, ed., *A 20<sup>th</sup> Century Prophet* (Sewanee: The University Press, 1976), p. 18-19 as cited in Thomas Tisdale, “Bishop Guerry’s Vision on the Church as a Community” in *Carolina Grace*, ed. Calhoun Perkins, August, 2009, p. 22.

<sup>13</sup> Edward B. Guerry, ed., *A 20<sup>th</sup> Century Prophet* (Sewanee: The University Press, 1976), p. 18-19 as cited in Thomas Tisdale, “Bishop Guerry’s Vision on the Church as a Community” in *Carolina Grace*, ed. Calhoun Perkins, August, 2009, p. 23.

one whose immediate relatives fought as Confederate soldiers in the Civil War, someone who was educated at a college chartered to serve young white men from the south — this person stood up in the building we know as Trinity Cathedral in Columbia, S.C., and preached boldly when he said:

“Dear people of God, it is time we had a black bishop for the Episcopal Church in South Carolina!”<sup>14</sup>

Bishop Guerry’s vision of the Church can be summarized in the opening sentences of what we proclaim at a Holy Baptism. There is One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism. One God and Father of all.<sup>15</sup> Bishop Guerry wanted *all* people, regardless of race, to be part of the community of Christ in the diocese, and he wanted a black bishop suffragan to work alongside him to build up the Body of Christ in this state.

Bishop Guerry’s dream was never realized, and in 1928 a priest who passionately insisted on the principle of white supremacy walked into the bishop’s office in Charleston and shot him. He died several days later as a martyr — a witness — for the faith.<sup>16</sup> Bishop Guerry preached boldly, not only with his lips, but with his very life.

I don’t know who the candidates for bishop will be when we gather at Trinity Cathedral this December, but I pray that they will be women and men who are eager to preach just this boldly with their lips and in their lives. I pray they will insist upon a diocese that is broad enough to embrace within its communion every living soul.

There are only a few of us from this parish who will vote in the upcoming Episcopal election. On the other hand, every one of us is called to preach boldly with our lips and in our lives. Among the several promises we make in baptism and at confirmation, one is that we will all proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.<sup>17</sup>

In others words, you are called to preach boldly, alongside bishops, priests and deacons.

And we preach a Christian faith that is not about common sense. It is about common prayer.

We preach a Christian faith that is not about uniformity, but rather about the unity we experience through one Lord of one faith through one baptism.

Jesus was obviously discouraged when he turned to the last twelve



<sup>14</sup> Bishop William A. Guerry first called for an election of a black bishop in the diocesan convention of 1911 according to Albert Sidney Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina 1820-1957* (Columbia, SC:RL Bryan Company, 1957), p. 131.

<sup>15</sup> Book of Common Prayer, p. 299.

<sup>16</sup> Donald Armentrout, “Sewanee Priest Murders Sewanee Bishop” in *Sewanee Perspectives: On the History of the University of the South*, Gerald L. Smith and Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., eds. 2008, p. 415-416.

<sup>17</sup> Book of Common Prayer, p. 305, 417.

people still with him after he preached so boldly and rocked the boat. He asked them, “Do you also wish to go away?” God bless Simon Peter, who answered, “Lord to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.”<sup>18</sup>

The words of eternal life are not always easy to swallow. There are 4988 witnesses to that fact in today’s Gospel. Jesus preached about an intimacy with God that was too close for comfort, and the crowds melted away. Bishop Guerry preached about intimacy with God and one another that was too close for comfort, and it cost him his life.

Tension and strife, fear and un-

certainty will always be part of this world and Christ’s Church. But we have promised to stand with saints like Simon Peter and with martyrs like Bishop Guerry, with saints from every race and nation, and with sinners from every theological and political orientation who are still willing boldly to proclaim one Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ because – like Simon Peter – we also have come to believe and know that Christ is the Holy One of God.<sup>19</sup>

*Furman Buchanan*  
*St. Martin’s in the Fields*  
*Columbia*

<sup>18</sup>John 6:69

<sup>19</sup>John 6:69

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“Fear is an insidious adversary.  
By binding us to the future,  
it leaves us paralyzed  
for life in the present.  
At the same time it drains  
the past of meaning.”

James Kilgo in *Colors of Africa*



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## FREEDOM OF LIGHT

There was once a rash young man, so the story goes, who bet his friends that he could stand in the snow all night long in the village square. They took him up on it, and so one winter night he found himself standing alone in the dark with snow falling around him, shivering and wondering why

he had been such a fool. Just as he felt he would surely freeze to death he saw a candle in a window opposite the square. Fixing his eye on the light he felt somehow warmed, as if he could feel the flame inside him. It seemed to free him from the tyranny of the dark around him.

And as he watched the shape of the flame, he was reminded of his mother's hands clasped in prayer, and he knew that she would be praying for him, as she did every night. The glowing, leaping flame reminded him of the warmth of his mother's faith, steady yet ever leaping toward heaven, the source of that faith. And the memory seemed to free him from many of the foolish and reckless habits that were dragging him down. He remembered her favorite Bible verse – "I am the way and the truth and the light," and he felt that if he followed that light he would be warm always.

The candle burned all night and he watched it all night, and when his friends came for him they found him

alive and well in more ways than one. He would never be the same again, for he had been delivered from the spiritual as well as the physical darkness of night by a single flame.

I think often of this story when the world seems to be in a mess, and I am reminded of how much power lies in a little bit of light: faith and hope and love all born from a brave little flame. Surely on the first Christmas night the world was a dark enough place to a nation under the military thumb of the Romans. And the light of the world that sprang into being to deliver them began as a tiny light, an infant light, a candle flame that would grow into brilliance great enough to set not only a nation free, but a whole world for all time. Remembering the miracle, we can feel the warmth again. All is never lost. We only have to keep our eyes on the light.

*Florine De Veer*  
*Grace Church, Charleston*

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# ELLISON CAPERS

## THE SEVENTH BISHOP OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Ellison Capers, a soldier during the Civil War, was elected Bishop Coadjutor of South Carolina in 1893, and became diocesan bishop later that same year. Capers was but one of many in the Episcopal Church throughout the South who embraced wholeheartedly and unabashedly the cause of the Confederacy,

but who ultimately would be remembered for the life given for the cause of oneness within the Body of Christ.

Capers has been described as possessing a “playful fancy,” and a “joyous and compelling humor.” He never forgot—and “never let anyone forget—whose servant he was, and whose grace it was that made him stand.”<sup>1</sup> He was characterized by a kindness and generosity of spirit marked by a deep knowledge of himself.

A story is told of a time when Bishop Capers traveled by train one evening.

The train accidentally ran over a man, a former slave. The night was bitterly cold. The train stopped, and the suffering man was brought aboard and laid in the baggage car. Bishop Capers came forward with the other passengers to see what the trouble was. Seeing the poor soul “weltering in his own blood and shivering with cold,” witnesses described the Bishop as immediately divesting

himself of his overcoat and spreading it over the injured man. Then, he

further undertook to do all he could to alleviate the gentleman’s suffering. Such, it has been described, was the impulsive, compassionate nature of his character.<sup>2</sup>

On another occasion, in 1897, Capers implored his clergy as well as all other ministers of the gospel in the state of South Carolina to set aside the Fourth Sunday in Advent that year as a

day when they might preach against murder, as homicides were becoming quite a crisis in the state. He began his letter by saying: “The sign of murder is upon us. Homicides are of frequent distressing occurrence, and in our judgment the public conscience needs to be instructed and the public mind aroused to a sense of the danger which threatens the character of our people.”<sup>3</sup>

*The New York Journal* commenting on the Bishop’s request described it as “an unusual and striking document, one with few precedents... It is



<sup>1</sup> Walter B. Capers, *The Soldier Bishop*, 1st printing 1912, 2nd printing 2000, p.283.

<sup>2</sup> See Capers, pgs. 225-226.

<sup>3</sup> Capers, p.209.

<sup>4</sup> Capers, p.210.

provoked by a remarkable condition of affairs in this hot-blooded southern state, and is promulgated by one of the most interesting figures in the American pulpit.”<sup>4</sup>

Upon the death of Bishop Capers in 1908, his successor, the Right Reverend William Alexander Guerry, had the following to say about him:

...[O]ur great-hearted bishop is still exercising that ministry of love and reconciliation which was his joy and happiness here.

...[O]ne other characteristic of the bishop’s life...is his power of growth and development. It so happens that when a man has passed the prime of life he shows a strange inability to take on new ideas or to adapt himself to new conditions. He becomes unprogressive and stereotyped. But such was not the case with Bishop Capers. He was a growing man, spiritually and intellectually, in each new field of service to which, in the providence of God, he was called...

Others have said that his greatest work as bishop was to have reunited a divided diocese and to have restored peace within the family of God.<sup>5</sup> He conceived of his ministry as including all—white and black, rich and poor, dissenter and Churchman—in the one Body of Christ...To

me the greatest legacy he has left the Church in South Carolina is his catholic-minded spirit, his freedom from narrowness, and his large-hearted charity...he was tolerant not from lack of conviction, but because he was so sure of his own position and the truth of the Church’s claims. He believed that the Episcopal Church had a great mission to fulfill to all people of every class and race and station...<sup>6</sup>



Perhaps in order to truly understand Bishop Capers, we should return to his earlier years. Towards the end of the Civil War, Capers was the last Confederate officer to attain the rank of General. As a young lieutenant, he had served as an aide to the delegation sent out to Fort Sumter to negotiate with Major Robert Anderson, the Union commander. Those negotiations, as we know, failed. I cannot help but wonder how Capers’s observations as a young man during that encounter might have informed his later commitment to negotiation and reconciliation. Perhaps the echo of our Lord rang ever in his ear: May they all be one.

*Callie Perkins  
Grace Church, Charleston*

<sup>5</sup> When Capers became bishop, seven parishes had earlier seceded from the Diocese over the issue of black membership in the Diocese.

<sup>6</sup> Capers, p. 281-282.

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## IN GOD'S IMAGE

*A hymn written in thanksgiving for the visit of  
the Right Reverend Julio C. Holguín, Bishop of the  
Dominican Republic, to Grace Episcopal Church,  
Charleston, South Carolina on Wednesday October 21, 2009.  
Tune: Dix*

In God's image, we are born;  
In God's image, we are formed.  
In God's likeness, we are one;  
In God's likeness, Adam's son.

"Demos gracias a Dios."  
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

In Christ's dying, now embraced;  
In Christ's dying, sin erased.  
In Christ's power, risen thus;  
In Christ's power, Lazarus.

"Demos gracias a Dios."  
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

In Love's presence, we are healed;  
In Love's presence, we are sealed.  
In Love's purpose, we now live;  
In Love's purpose, we forgive.

"Demos gracias a Dios."  
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

In God's image, we are gift;  
In Christ's power, we uplift.  
In Love's presence, all is done;  
Alleluia! Abba's son.

"Demos gracias a Dios."  
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

*Michael Wright  
Grace Church, Charleston*

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## HYMN REFLECTION

In writing and offering this hymn I have chosen to offer each verse in celebration of our relationship in these two dioceses. In the first stanza I celebrate the relationship we have in our common humanity, a common humanity created by the very same God and in His image and likeness.

This common heritage is rooted in God's wondrous creation and makes us one as brothers and sisters celebrating our common origin in the one and same loving God and Father.

In the second stanza I build on this relationship by celebrating our oneness in Christ Jesus. Through our common baptism we remain one in Christ, Crucified and Risen. Nothing can diminish this relationship rooted in our common Lord and Saviour.

In the third stanza I celebrate the Spirit's life in our midst, a Spirit who has acted in love and empowered us to live out this relationship these 40 years. It is no accident of fate that has brought us together in this special bond of affection. No, it is the Spirit within us, around us, over and

about us that has made this special mission and ministry possible over these many years of common mission and discipleship.

In the last stanza all is brought together to present to our God, as we celebrate our common humanity, baptism and ongoing life and ministry.

Throughout this hymn we repeat 'Thanks be to God, 'Demos gracias a Dios'. These simple words of faith remind us in whose hands we are and through whom all is accomplished. All we do we do to God's greater glory and in the presence of His holy and life giving Spirit.

Demos gracias a Dios!

*Michael Wright*  
*Grace Church, Charleston*

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“So let us set ourselves to gain a deepening loyalty  
to our Anglican tradition of Catholic order,  
Evangelical immediacy in our approach to God,  
and liberal acceptance of new truth.”

William Temple in *The Church Looks Forward*



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# FAITH AND SCIENCE V. FAITH IN SCIENCE

Does it matter what you believe about science and theology? What are the issues? Why bother being concerned with the fields of science and theology? What can you do about it anyway? Let's begin with a short story about the human body.

Once upon a time, a mechanism came into existence that keeps our lungs and their 300 million tiny air sacs clear of dust, fungi, bacteria and other foreign substances that may be inhaled as we breathe. Any tiny foreign substance that enters your lungs will land on the equivalent of an escalator that is constantly moving from deep in your lungs to your mouth at a speed of 6 feet each hour. This movement is attributed to the constant work of nearly 50 billion tiny hair-like structures that move in a coordinated fashion similar to the manner in which waves can be seen in a field of grain propelled by the wind. Each tiny hair-like structure is only 1/125,000 of an inch (0.0002 cm) wide and 1/5000 of an inch (0.001 cm) long. Just how the rows upon rows of these tiny structures are coordinated to create the escalator that moves a coating of a correct thickness along the airways to the mouth is unknown. This is just one of many examples of microscopic architecture and function of the human body, not to mention that of animals, plants and insects. You might ask how this arrangement of highly coordinated action of billions of microscopic structures came into existence? Your answer to that question will reveal your world view.

Do your thoughts turn immediately to scriptures such as, "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb? I praise you because I am fearfully and

wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." Psalm 139:13-14. Or, do you seek a materialistic explanation for these amazing phenomena? What is your view of the world? Does it include or exclude a Creator God?

I began my journey through life in a Christian home that valued going to church, where I eventually embraced a Christian world view consisting of belief that God created all that there is, that humans were capable of both good and evil, and that there was always hope for change. Our family believed in a Creator God, the fall of humans, and the hope of redemption. As I continued my journey and completed a doctorate in human anatomy, I became an experimental scientist in a laboratory, where I set forth hypotheses, designed and performed experiments, made observations, collected data and finally, after analysis of the observations and data, I came to conclusions. After several experiments, I had enough findings and conclusions to develop a theory that was supported by the findings. This is the scientific method, one of experiment and analysis.

During my 40 years as a professor of cell biology and anatomy, my explorations mainly were at the microscopic and submicroscopic level, where I was privileged to view the microscopic architecture of the hu-

man body. Throughout my career, I have considered myself fortunate to have viewed this structure that I believe was created by God. That is how my world view has made a difference in my career. I have been able to worship God in the laboratory as well as in a church sanctuary. I share the sentiment of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who wrote, "When science is learned in Love, and its powers are wielded by Love, they will appear the supplements and continuations of the material creation (Essay XII, Art by Ralph Waldo Emerson). Or, as Elizabeth Michael Boyle states in her book, *Science as Sacred Metaphor, An Evolving Revelation*, "...[P]ersonal faith experience (or the lack of it) predisposes some to reduce God to a mythic metaphor for science, while others celebrate science as a cosmic metaphor for God. For the former, eventually 'nothing is sacred'; for the latter everything is".<sup>1 p. xii</sup>

Some scientists do not approach their work with a Christian world view. Their observations and discoveries are reward enough for them. A materialistic and naturalistic view of the world does not lead to the same experience as that of one who holds a Christian world view. You may be asking the question, "Are there scien-

A common thread in the thinking of these scientists is that they believed that what God created was not only good, but that it had order and that what they discovered would be repeatable or reliable.

tists who have made major discoveries who have a Christian world view?" The answer is a resounding YES! A common thread in the thinking of these scientists is that they, unlike the ancient Greeks who did not have a concept of order and reliability in created matter, believed

that what God created was not only good, but that it had order and that what they discovered would be repeatable or reliable. Modern science arose in Christianized Europe, a thought well documented in Nancy Pearcey's book, *The Soul of Science*.<sup>6</sup> William Whewell (1794 – 1866) an English scientist, Anglican priest, philosopher, theologian, and historian of science, coined the word 'scientist' in 1833. Before that, scientists were termed natural philosophers or men of science. Natural philoso-

phers in the Middle Ages contributed significantly to the foundations of modern science according to Edward Grant, a science historian who relied heavily on the work of Pierre Duhem, a famous French physicist turned historian.<sup>3 p. xi</sup> Duhem placed the Middle Ages in the mainstream of scientific development filling the hiatus that had existed between Greek and Arabic science and early

modern science in seventeenth century Europe. From these early times in the development of modern science until today, I found a continuous thread of scientists who have made some of the most significant discoveries and have a Christian world view. Recently, I have studied 49 scientists, from the thirteenth century until the present time, who had a religious conviction that included a creator God. I have identified a small sampling of scientists who were not only profoundly inspired, but have, in turn, profoundly inspired me.

**Roger Bacon** (1214 – 1294), who publicized the concept of “laws of nature”, fully accepted Christ, and had a strong faith and a profound reverence for the Scriptures with a deep conviction of the close connection between religion and science.<sup>4 p. 225</sup>

**Nicholas Copernicus** (1473 – 1543), presented a fully predictive mathematical model of a heliocentric system, that the planets revolved around the Sun rather than around the Earth, and maintained a strong Christian faith that was not shaken by his scientific discoveries. He stated, “I am aware that a philosopher’s ideas are not subject to the judgment of ordinary persons, because it is his endeavour to seek the truth in all things, to the extent permitted to human reason by God.”<sup>4 p. 226</sup>

**Johannes Kepler** (1550 – 1617), the founder of modern astronomy, believed that the goal of science is to bring man to God. He regarded science and religion as different aspects of an integrated world. In the conclusion of one of his favourite works, “*Harmonices*,” he states, “O Thou, who by the light of nature increases in us the desire for the light of Thy mercy in order to be led by this to Thy glory, to Thee I offer thanks, Creator, God, because Thou hast given me pleasure in what Thou hast created and I rejoice in thy handiwork.” His dying words were, “Only the merits of our saviour Jesus Christ. It is in Him, as I steadfastly testify, that there rest all my retreat, all my consolation, all my hope.”

**Galileo Galilei** (1564 – 1642), in 1613 wrote in a letter to Father Benedetto Castelli, “I believe that the intention of Holy Writ was to persuade men of the truths necessary to salvation; such as neither science nor other means could render credible, but only the voice of the Holy Spirit. But I do not think it necessary to believe that the same God who gave us our senses, our speech, our intellect, would have us put aside the use of these, to teach us instead such things as with their help we could find out for our selves, particularly in the case of those sciences of which there is not the smallest mention in Scripture.”<sup>4 p. 352</sup>

**Blaise Pascal** (1623 – 1662), a French mathematician, physicist and religious philosopher, wrote, “Those who seek for God out of Christ, and rest in the evidences which nature furnishes, either find no solution of their inquiries or settle down in a knowledge and service of God apart from a Mediator: thence they fall into either atheism or deism – two things which the Christian religion almost equally abhors. Without Jesus Christ the world could not subsist; for it would infallibly either be destroyed, or become like hell.”<sup>4</sup>

**Michael Faraday** (1791 – 1867), an English chemist and physicist who contributed significantly to the fields of electromagnetism and electrochemistry, is quoted in “The Life and Letters of Michael Faraday,” by Henry Bence Jones, Longmans, Geen & Co., Ltd., p. 432: “The Christian religion is a revelation, and that revelation is in the Word of God. According to the promise of God, that Word is sent into the entire world. Every call and every promise is made freely to every man to whom that word cometh. Therefore our philosophy, while it shows us these things, should lead us to think of Him who wrought them, for it is said by authority even far above that which these works present that the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.”

**Louis Pasteur** (1822 -1895), the famous French chemist and microbiologist, was quoted in *Makers of Modern Medicine*, by J. J. Walsh, p. 318: “Posterity will one day laugh at the sublime foolishness of the modern materialistic philosophers. The more I study nature, the more I stand amazed at the work of the Creator. I pray while I am engaged at my work in the laboratory.”

**James Clerk Maxwell** (1831 – 1879), a Scottish mathematician and theoretical physicist said, “I think men of science as well as other men need to learn from Christ, and I think Christians whose minds are scientific are bound to study science, that their view of the glory of God may be as extensive as their being is capable of.” Einstein admired him so much that he equated him to Isaac Newton.

**Max Planck** (1858-1947), best known for quantum theory which revolutionized our understanding of the atomic and sub-atomic worlds, expressed the view that God is everywhere present, and held that “the holiness of the unintelligible Godhead is conveyed by the holiness of symbols.” Atheists, he thought, attach too much importance to what are merely symbols. Planck was a churchwarden from 1920 until his death, and believed in an almighty, all-knowing, beneficent God: Both science and religion wage a “tireless battle against skepticism and dogma-

tism, against unbelief and superstition" with the goal "toward God!"

**Francis Collins** (1950 - ), Director of National Human Genome Research Institute who led a team of international scientists in cracking the hereditary code of life, wrote in an article, *Faith and the Human Genome*, the importance of "the literal and historical Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, which is the cornerstone of what I believe." In his latest book, *The Language of God*, he refers to our DNA as God's instruction book or God's Language. Dr. Collins gives four options or ways of viewing the interaction of science and faith. Option one is when science trumps faith (Atheism and Agnosticism). Option two is when faith trumps science (Creationism). Option three is when science needs divine help (Intelligent Design). Option four is when Science and Faith are in harmony (BioLogos). He says "The God of the Bible is also the God of the genome. He can be worshipped in the cathedral or in the laboratory. His creation is majestic, awesome, intricate, and beautiful – and it cannot be at war with itself. Only we humans can start such battles. And only we can end them." (210-211)

In conclusion, I would like to address certainty because the search for certainty seems to be what produces conflict. Can we now be certain as to who and how all that exists

in the universe was created? Can we be certain as to just how humans were created? The answer is maybe and, maybe not. What really matters? I would like to suggest that it is meaning that matters. In *The Myth of Certainty* Daniel Taylor quotes Blaise Pascal: "This is our true state; this is what makes us incapable of certain knowledge and of absolute ignorance. We sail within a vast sphere, ever drifting in uncertainty, driven from end to end. When we think to attach ourselves to any point ... it wavers and leaves us...Nothing stays for us. This is our natural condition, and yet most contrary to our inclination; we burn with desire to find solid ground and an ultimate sure foundation whereon to build a tower reaching to the Infinite. But our whole groundwork cracks, and the earth opens to abysses. Let us therefore not look for certainty and stability. Our reason is always deceived by fickle shadows...."(94) Dr. Taylor suggests, "...While certainty is beyond our reach, meaning – something far more valuable – is not. Meaning derives from a right relationship with God, based not on certainty and conformity, but on risk and commitment." Dare we risk and commit to a Christian Worldview that will bring us to a relationship with our Creator who indeed has an internal relationship in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

It is said no better than C. S. Lewis when he stated his belief in Christianity in an essay titled "Is

Theology Poetry?" in *The Oxford Socratic Club*, 1944, pp. 154-165: "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else." (140) If we, who are Christians, become firmly grounded in the Christian worldview, we will be more likely to go to the edge and dialogue with others who have a different worldview. Our dialogue can be more constructive if we understand that modern science took root in a Christianized Europe in the Middle Ages. Perhaps, we may find ways to go deeper in our understanding of

what it means to be a Christian in our view of Science and to build bridges of understanding between those who do not see things as we do. Perhaps we may find meaning in the way we relate to others. We need to work to create a space where science and theology are not out to prove or disprove, but instead, to allow both modes of knowing to enrich each other in the search for Truth.

*Robert W. Ogilvie, Ph.D*  
*Grace Church, Charleston*

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## CONSCIOUS

Asleep, asleep beneath the sea of dreams,  
you breath the nostril  
songs of the waning day's soft embers

and long for the world  
behind your eyes,  
of stars that earth could not devise  
for your divided heart, alone  
with the wind  
and the doors and the dark.

The fan oscillates its rhythm  
to your mouth and your memories – old moments  
frozen from terror or bliss,  
like flesh and blood, the flashing lights  
cast monsters on the wall again tonight.

Your flesh and your blood  
have changed you to a lamb, you Christ unconscious,  
wandering the plains of  
salvation in the wild dark of Death,

and I that held you once can only see a  
cloud through the veil of your skin  
in shadow words that  
drown among the chasms of your mind.

*Daniel Lesesne, III  
The Cathedral of St. Luke and St. Paul  
Charleston*



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## MY VISIONS

Awake, the ceiling  
extended like tundra to the wall and the dream  
that masked me  
while I slept has flared itself again.

The same dream as my last.

A man like Joseph's coat,  
shines many rainbows from his shoulders.

Dreamer, does it help to hold the seed of Gilgamesh's plant?  
The pure earth holds all the wealth  
you need but never wanted.  
So waste, young sleeper,  
rest upon each breath  
that takes you one step closer

that I might smile when I see the dirt  
appear in the lines of his old face.

*Daniel Lesesne, III*  
*The Cathedral of St. Luke and St. Paul*  
*Charleston*

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## SO HERE I AM TODAY

Being born what is known as a “cradle Episcopalian” has seemed to carry me a long time in my mind that I was “in the fold”. I learned at 39 years of age that I needed to act more directly on the vows said at my baptism in Roper Hospital. I was a three-pound preemie with not much of a chance in those days – 77 years ago. My incubator was not as hi-tech as they are today.

Dr. William Way of Grace Church baptized me in the hospital, and here I am today.

I do believe the Spirit of God came alive in me even at three pounds by the sacrament of baptism. Many, many years later I learned of the Communion of Saints present when we partake of the bread and wine in Communion. Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of me,” and I have yet to find any words that fully describe the awe, joy, and comfort as I meet Jesus at the rail and am acutely aware of the Communion of Saints present: my great-grandmother, Joan Alexander Warren Holmes; my parents, Cosmo and Marguerite Brockington; my brother, Cosmo Brockington; and my grand-

son, Joseph Horn. I leave the rail believing each time in the Communion of Saints and with an unexplainable glimpse of what it will mean one day to be free of the limitations of this world – a sweet freedom provided through God’s love – and reunited with all who have gone before me.

Communion is the “glue” for me to our Lord and Savior Jesus in my journey on earth as a Christian. In John 16:33, Jesus said he had overcome the world, and that is so true for me with the Communion of Saints and the bread and wine representing what Jesus did for believers.

*Lillie McGougan  
St. James, James Island*

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“We are Jesus’s disciples  
not because we are immune to human frailty  
but because we must serve him.”

Albert Schweitzer



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## WHAT THEN IS ANGLICANISM?

Being concerned one evening about events in the Church, I picked up my Prayer Book, said Evening Prayer, read the daily lessons from the Bible, and then went to my bookshelf and started reading from some of my favorite books on Anglicanism. I found this quotation in the last chapter of Bishop Stephen Neill's classic work on Anglicanism. It comes in his final chapter, "What then is Anglicanism?"

"It cannot be said that the Anglican churches have always been ready and eager in the acceptance of new truth. Churches are conservative bodies. There is always a tendency to identify the whole cause of Christ with some trivial outwork of the faith, to cry out that the Church is in danger, when all that is really in danger is some ancient and venerable prejudice...Certainly the Church, and individual Christians, have the right to discriminate, and not to accept as permanent the passing fashions of each age. Intemperance and violence, however, are always to be deplored. But what is notable in Anglican history is not that violent passions have sometimes been stirred up, but that in times of passion so many leaders have kept their heads, and that the climate of equable and discriminating study has so soon been restored. In so far as this is true, it is due not to indifference to truth, but to the typically Anglican conviction that truth is larger and more beautiful than our imperfect minds are able to apprehend or conceive...In line with this belief in the greatness of truth is a general Anglican willingness to tolerate for the time what appears to be error."

*Lester Pittman*  
*Grace Church, Charleston*

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"There have been some who were so occupied  
in spreading Christianity that they  
never gave a thought to Christ."

C.S. Lewis in *The Great Divorce*



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## THE PEACE OF GOD

Nearly forty years ago I noticed a high school classmate browsing the jewelry counter in a Lasalle's department store in Findlay, Ohio. His name was Everett, and he had been a basketball teammate of my brother.

Like many northern Ohioans he came from German stock, and his pleasant square face and impressive height showed it. I knew he'd done two tours in Viet Nam. My brother's tour had been short—just two months after he left Findlay on a cold January morning, he was on his way home to the USA. He'd been wounded in the right shoulder, collapsing his lung and sending him to a six-month recovery in Walter Reed Hospital. But Everett had survived two tours unharmed. I decided to remind him who I was.

He was considering jewelry. "Wife" floated across my consciousness. I greeted Everett, introducing myself by name, thinking that the years and his experiences in them might well have driven the memories of high school acquaintances from his mind, but no—he remembered me. I learned he was married and choosing a Christmas gift for his wife. We lifted earrings off display trees and discussed bracelets. Finally Everett sighed and said he couldn't make up his mind—not in the shopping mood.

"You must be so thankful to be home and with your wife after all you went through. It's truly wonderful that you are home safe."

"Yeh....yes it is....," he replied. We looked at each other. And then he went on quietly. "I miss the fire-

fights though."

I wasn't able to respond, and he looked a bit embarrassed. "I never felt more alive," he continued. I saw him momentarily as the skinny gangling boy in a flimsy basketball uniform, all knees and boney shoulders.

"Weren't you afraid?" I could ask then.

"Hell yes. It scared the ----- out of me....But I miss it." He smiled. "Merry Christmas. It was nice to see you." His eyes crinkled behind lenses reflecting the store's bright lighting. I watched him walk away, and that British term "safe as houses" crossed my mind. Everett who had run amongst explosions was driving home to his house, a safe, earth-bound mortal.

James Thurber drew houses. His famous picture of a house morphing into a haranguing wife is a metaphor for the voice we hear: "Get things I need. Take care of business. Do that and I will be content." Such contentment with things and control evaporates and the emptiness returns, as dramatically portrayed in E.A. Robinson's poem telling of the mysterious suicide, Richard Corey, who had everything and "glittered when he walked."

How do we seekers of the peace of God, which certainly does "passeth all understanding," move

beyond the remedies of this world, whether they be the thrill of intense fear or the comfort of antique furnishings in an elegant mansion?

William Alexander Percy, author of the beautiful memoir *Lanterns on the Levee*, answers this question which arises in the heart of every seeker of Christ's peace. His council is direct yet manages to be both comforting and daunting in the same short verse: "The peace of God it is no peace/But strife torn in the sod..."

This is either bad news for the seeking Christian – or a great release. Seeking Christ is guaranteed to fail unless the seeker relinquishes control of the search. Surely the exigencies of life require us to honor all who have a claim on our time. And the riddle of God's peace in our lives is found in that word "time" – a human experience left to us to manage. And time management we do, most of us, to a hectic and hour-devouring degree. How is it possible to find God's peace in the moment we are living?

William A. Percy never claimed to have found God's peace. His family's successes and tragedies play out through generations, as if a Greek tragedy; they are chronicled in Bertram Wyatt Brown's study *The House of Percy: Honor, Melancholy, and Imagination in a Southern Family*. The uncle of the novelist Walker Percy and the man who raised the young writer and his brother after

their father shot himself on "a dull Saturday afternoon," Will Percy had lost other men in his family line to suicide. Walker Percy once said that "Men can be well off, judging by their own criteria, with all their needs satisfied, but as time goes on, life can be almost unbearable." His father LeRoy called his own suffering "the Crouching beast" after a phrase in a Henry James short story. It is an apt term for the dark intruder that corners a spirit before the spirit can

arm itself. Roy Percy was not burdened with financial worries. He and his wife had built an impressive house. His children were healthy. But his son the writer recognized the heavy weight of the mundane, which could suffocate the sensitive, seeking spirit, and his novels, such as *The Moviegoer* and *The Last Gentleman*, portray the "triviality or everydayness" of life in the suburbs.

Walker Percy must surely have gleaned some of his fear of a bland comfortable passage through life from his uncle/adoptive father/mentor Will Percy. In 1924 Will Percy wrote a collection of simple verses called "His Peace." In it, according to Wyatt-Brown, "Will ...dwelt upon a consequence of divine grace that Walker would later make a theme in his novels: the solitariness and affliction that the Christian pilgrim experiences even ...with the favor of grace." The hymn based on those verses that we sing today

How  
is it  
possible  
to find  
God's peace  
in the  
moment  
we are  
living?



continues its exploration of the “strife torn in the sod.” John died alone at Patmos; Peter was crucified head-down. Though they loved and served Jesus Christ, they suffered terribly. Will Percy’s hymn tells the ultimate truth of life’s meaning if it is a life in Christ:

“The peace of God/ it is no peace/ but strife closed in the sod/ yet brothers pray for just one thing –/ the marvelous peace of God.”

Will Percy’s hymn seems to be a conundrum: how can no peace be peace? But here is the mystery of our lives as Christians. When we are comfortable, our spirits wane. When we are seeking, when our spirits keep watch, when we struggle in search of his will, we live. To acknowledge God with a conquered heart requires distancing ourselves from what we see and hear in most of our worldly experience. Only extreme experi-

ences can draw our attention from the mundane; we remember Hurricane Hugo and talk of it partly to invoke the sense we had of sharing an experience that would forever show us the vividness of our lives. For my classmate Everett, the intense confrontations with death’s power showed him life’s glory. I have no idea whether he was a Christian; in any case, he had not seen life’s intensity since he faced death’s threat. We cannot all go to war to know Christ’s presence. But we can pray to be ready to admit His presence, no matter what the cost. We can commit to serve that presence when it comes. And “the readiness is all.”

*Erica Lesesne  
The Cathedral of St. Luke and  
St. Paul, Charleston*

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“Peter’s face . . . was a face made to bear the wounds  
of singularly vulnerable emotions; to be scarred  
by a warfare between the heart of a romanticist  
and an intellect that would be relentless  
in its destruction of illusions.”

DuBose Heyward in *Peter Ashley*



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## ADVENTURE

From the Collect for the First Sunday in Advent: "Almighty God, give us the grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility...."

I have said this collect all my life. I have not lost the child-like thrill of imagining that I am actually putting on "armor of light." I wanted to be where armor was worn and knights went on adventures, even though (with exception of Joan of Arc) not many women put on armor of any sort. We prayed this collect all week in my family around the Advent calendar and I almost always drifted into excited imaginings of how bright and shiny my armor would be.

I still thrill in this sense of adventure that I experience every year, which putting on armor of light would be as we get ready to receive the most exciting and thrilling gift anyone can ever ask for. The adventure of moving toward that gift is exhilarating and thrilling. The church has preserved this and numerous other lovely collects that speak to not only of this exciting adventure, but also virtually all of the joys and challenges we face in our daily lives.

For example, consider the evocative Collect for the Unity of the Church – "O God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior and the Prince of Peace; Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee...."

My Lord, put upon me the armor of light and help me to put away any hatred and prejudice that, in my sin, I can experience. Help us all to love one another in your one great church, so that we do not lose this one hope of your calling and can all share in your holy bond of truth, peace, faith and charity. During all our days, guide us all in our struggles for unity. And for all your blessings and the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, we say Amen. Amen.

*Ann Stirling  
Grace Church, Charleston*

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# GRACE HAPPENED AT THE CATHEDRAL

When I went to St. Luke and St. Paul in Charleston in the spring of 1961, the Church in America was on the verge of great change. John Kennedy had just been inaugurated as President of the United States.

The Right Reverend Gray Temple had only a few weeks before been consecrated as Bishop of South Carolina in St. Luke and St. Paul. The Civil Rights movement was about to erupt in violence and flames. Churches were still segregated. The times were changing however and difficult and threatening and challenging. I was 29 years old and had been an assistant in a downtown church in Richmond, Virginia.

I visited Charleston, met Bishop Temple, and he told me he wanted me to come to St. Luke and St. Paul as their new rector. I had never heard of the place. Bishop Temple moved fast, and I met the Senior warden, who asked me to consider coming as their rector! It was all happening so fast. A vestry meeting was called quickly, and I was offered the rectorship. Bishop Temple said if I would come the two of us could turn St. Luke and St. Paul into the Cathedral of the Diocese of South Carolina. I was excited. I went back to Richmond and in a few days accepted the call. The vestry had already told me that this was in the wind and they were all for it.

Of course, under the surface was integration. Everybody knew that if St. Luke and St. Paul became the Cathedral, then it would be integrated. But the vestry was willing to pay the price to survive! Of course

the building is beautiful, with a seating capacity of 1,200. In those days it had a membership of about 80 and the competition from the other downtown Episcopal Churches was great. St. Michael's and St. Philip's were the historic churches in the middle of the city. Grace was a booming church also in the downtown area. Holy Communion was the Anglo-Catholic parish. St. Luke and St. Paul was struggling to survive. They had called several priests, all of whom were not interested. I was. The challenge was great and the opportunities even greater.

And so I arrived and had my first service on the Sunday after Easter, 1961, and I began working on making the church the Cathedral of the Diocese.

It took two years. I worked the parish, vestry, and congregation selling the idea, and Bishop Temple took care of the Diocese. There were no problems selling the concept. No other church in Charleston wanted to be the Cathedral because it would mean integration. Marches had begun, and Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana were having great trouble. So, two weeks after arriving in Charleston I decided on the spur of the moment to go to the offices of the *Charleston News and Courier* and visit with Mr. Tom Waring, the editor. I had been warned even in Virginia

that the *News and Courier* and Tom Waring were both giving the Episcopal Church a difficult time. It was thought that they had run more than one rector away. I did not want this to happen to me. So I presented myself at the *News and Courier* editorial offices and asked to see Mr. Waring. "Do you have an appointment?" His secretary asked. "No," I replied, but I do want to see him because I do not want him to run me out of town." The secretary was shocked. Mr. Waring's office door was open, and he heard what I said and walked out to see what this was all about.

When I saw Mr. Waring, I immediately understood him! He was short as I am. He smiled and asked me what I wanted. I told him that I did not want him to run me out of town. I had just come to Charleston, knew very few people, was single and trying to save a beautiful old church. "I am not a Communist," I announced to him. He laughed, shook my hand, and invited me into his office. We became good friends that day. We talked for at least an hour. I told him what I believed and that I wanted to make St. Luke and St. Paul the Cathedral and save it. I asked him straight out if he would help me. "You bet I will," he said. And he did.

We liked each other because we understood each other. And many times after that he wrote editorials about my sermons, printed articles about "Old Church Becomes New Again." Publicity you could not buy. We continued our friendship, and he sent Christmas cards to my wife and

me for many years after that. It was sheer grace.

In 1962, Bishop Temple, in his address to the Diocesan Convention at St. Helena's in Beaufort, proposed having a diocesan cathedral where Episcopalians regardless of race could meet and worship together, a cathedral that would be a focal point of unity. It was looked upon with favor. Grace again. And things again moved fast. The following April the church voted...and the vote was 195 for it becoming the cathedral and 5 opposed to the concept. Grace again. On May 5, the Annual Convention of the Diocese approved St. Luke and St. Paul as the Cathedral by an overwhelming vote. Grace yet again. One sidelight is that on April 27 our first son was born. And at the Convention a reporter asked me how it felt to be a Dean of a Cathedral so young, and my reply was, "Giving birth to a Cathedral and a son in less than two weeks was a bit much!"

So far so good. But as we knew, integration came quickly. A black couple with a child came to church. And when I got to the doors of the church I was told that the ushers would not be ushering. "Why?" I asked, and the answer was that a black family was in church and the ushers were told not to usher. But no one seemed to know who told them. So when the six ushers came to communion I asked each one why they did not usher and was told that they had been told not to usher. I did not ask who told them. I checked them off and only one usher was left to be asked. I could not believe it. He was



one of the leading members of the parish. But I asked him, and he responded that he was not ushering when “they” were in church. I was sick! I had no choice but to tell him I could not give him communion. He and his wife stormed out of church and everyone saw it.

At the door of the church it was not mentioned except by one vestryman, who said I had to notify the Bishop. Of course, I knew that and I did. And Bishop Temple put his arm around my shoulder, hugged me, and said I had done the right thing. He also said for me not to discuss this with the press and only to say it was a pastoral matter.

How right he was. The phone rang off and on all week. Associated Press, the *News and Courier*, and other papers. I had already told Tom Waring, and he assured me he would not allow the story in the *News and Courier*. Jack Roach, a reporter, a parishioner, and a friend told me on the following Saturday that there was a very long and bad article to appear on Sunday. I called Mr. Waring; he said he had tried to prevent it, but he had not been able. He said he was so sorry. However, the Sunday paper was late arriving. No one at the early service had seen the paper. Must have been something wrong with the press. Then I discovered that when the paper was published the story was not there. I knew Mr. Waring had come to our defense. I called him and thanked him; he said he had noticed that the article was not there.

Talk about God’s grace.

The family never knew this. They were warmly welcomed. They transferred their membership to the Cathedral. And with that, the Cathedral became the first formal white church in South Carolina to be integrated. The day following that terrible excommunication, I went to see the couple, explained why I had no choice but to do that. They understood and came to the midweek communion service. Grace again.

One footnote: After the Cathedral was successfully integrated with no serious problems, I visited a family of wonderful sisters who were members of the parish, whom my wife and I adored. I asked Miss Isabel why we had not had the terrible problems they had had in Mississippi and Alabama and Louisiana. She thought for a moment and replied, “My dear, in Charleston, we are civilized people. We have been here since the 1600s. We have experienced it all. The only difference now is that the black members sit in the nave not the balcony. And, if you don’t talk about it, it did not happen.” Grace yet again, and this time with a touch of humor.

*Madison Currin*  
*Christ Episcopal Church*  
*Pensacola, Florida*

Dr. Currin is Dean Emeritus and served as the first Dean of the Cathedral of St. Luke and St. Paul in Charleston, and is Rector Emeritus of Christ Church, Pensacola.

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# THE MEANING OF CHURCH

What is the meaning of “Church”? We may say “Grace Church,” “St. Michael’s Church,” “St. Philip’s Church,” etc., to mean a building on Wentworth Street, Meeting Street, or Church Street. Yes, they are churches in the material sense of the word, but to say they are the “meaning” of the word falls short of what they really are. The plaque may read: “This church was founded in 1846,” or whatever date, yet we find that the buildings were built much later, so surely the building is not the Church.

The Church is a family of people who come together to worship and give thanks to a benevolent God revealed to us in Jesus Christ, whose very body is the Church. We are all part of a family in our daily lives – knit together by a thread of Love. We are all individuals with different personalities, wants, needs, emotions, and (heaven forbid) politics. We may argue, even fight, be very possessive of our position, but we respect each other and the thread of love keeps us together as we build an even stronger family.

So, the meaning of “Church” is a family striving to understand our calling in a secular world, seeking to love one another as Christ loved us.

*Thomas Thornhill  
Grace Church, Charleston*

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“[I]t is true that the full Christian life cannot be lived only in groups of like-minded Christians; for if they are like-minded they merely strengthen one another in those elements of Christian faith and life in which they are already fairly strong.”

William Temple in *Christian Faith and Life*



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## A CERTAIN CONFIDENT FREEDOM

“For now we see in a mirror, dimly,  
but then we will see face to face.”

As I grow older, with the “then” less distant on the horizon, I reflect often on a religious life that has had no Damascus road experience, no huge personal tragedy driving me to religion for comfort. Instead I have been a plodder, in Sunday schools and church services since a boy, even considering the Presbyterian ministry for a decade until I married my cradle-born Episcopalian. Retreats, vestries, Education for Ministry, and my work at Sewanee as the Vice-Chancellor and later professor have been wonderful experiences, each opening up new vistas of faith and practice, in the company of wonderful Christian men and women.

To be sure, I continue to doubt on occasion and to ask questions and worry about the meaning of the faith. But I do so with a greater calmness than before, and I do so because of the freedom the Anglican tradition has given me through the *Prayer Book* with its liturgical services whose very familiarity ensures few surprises from Sunday to Sunday, despite occasional poor sermons and worse hymns. The absence of surprises confers a certain freedom, grants a reassurance that in the disorderly world I have a certain confident

freedom as I worship and pray and ask forgiveness.

Within the liturgical services stand the Creeds and the Lord’s Prayer. If the familiarity of the *Prayer Book* confers a sense of freedom, the

Creeds and the Lord’s Prayer remind me of the courage

that is required to believe, to do, and to live accord-

ing to their dictates. I

am not much concerned about polity and contemporary

issues in the church, for that too shall pass.

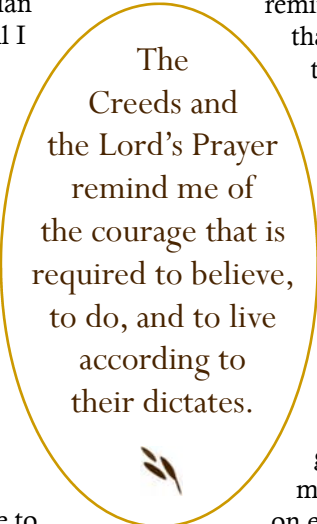
Rather I am far more concerned about using the freedom conferred on us by the

Creator to be courageous in an effort to


make “thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.”

Loving God is the first commandment, loving my neighbor as myself is the second, and that requires freedom and courage and a willingness to risk society’s disapproval, even that of friends and family on occasion, in an effort to help others.

I now see less “dimly” than before that the mission of Jesus Christ challenged the power structures of his day, both Jewish and Roman,



The  
Creeds and  
the Lord’s Prayer  
remind me of  
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required to believe,  
to do, and to live  
according to  
their dictates.



that he was a threat because he included all kinds and conditions of men and women, and because he really did want to help the poor and comfort the helpless. I realize that he really did have a hard time with the rich and those whose piety led to their self-satisfaction.

Far more discouraging for me is the realization that I have done less than I might have done to help others, that I have been content to let others do the heavy lifting, and while praising them and offering funds, I have often still been in love with myself and not others as myself. Yet,

even in writing these words, I believe that this honesty with myself is a first step toward greater freedom for a future that will see more direct efforts to make the world a better place; I pray now that I will have the courage and the will to find the time to put this new awareness into practice.

*Samuel R. Williamson  
The University of the South  
Sewanee, Tennessee, and  
Holy Cross Faith Memorial  
Pawleys Island*

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“If we don’t really know how to attend to the reality that is our own inner turmoil, we shall fail in responding to the needs of someone else. And the desert literature suggests pretty consistently that excessive harshness – readiness to judge and prescribe – normally has its roots in that kind of inattention to ourselves.

Abba Joseph responds to the invitations to join in condemning someone by saying, “Who am I?”

And the phrase might suggest not just “Who am I to be judging?” but “How can I pass judgment when I don’t know the full truth about myself?”

Rowan Williams in *Silence and Honey Cakes: The Wisdom of the Desert*



If you are  
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or (843) 723-4575.



The editorial committee of *Carolina Grace* invites contributions for the next issue, the themes of which will be

JOURNEYING THROUGH THE WILDERNESS  
IN THE SURE AND CERTAIN HOPE  
OF THE RESURRECTION

AND

SABBATH AS RESTORATION  
AND RENEWAL

Our hope is to reveal with consistency the breadth and depth  
of our rich heritage as Anglicans.

Contributions should be uplifting in tone and reflective of God's active presence in our lives. Submissions may be of any genre; they should not exceed 750 words. Electronic submissions should be in Microsoft Word format. The editorial committee reserves the right to make reasonable corrections to grammar and syntax and to determine whether or not a submission appropriately fits the theme of the issue and the direction of the journal.

Please mail submissions to *Carolina Grace*, 115 Wentworth Street, Charleston, SC 29401, or email submissions to [wcsuggs3@yahoo.com](mailto:wcsuggs3@yahoo.com), with "Carolina Grace submission" in the subject line.

We must receive submissions by April 10, 2010 for our next issue.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS  
TO HELP DEFRAY PRINTING COSTS  
ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

They may be sent to:

CAROLINA GRACE  
Grace Episcopal Church  
98 Wentworth St.  
Charleston, SC 29401



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98 Wentworth Street,  
Charleston, SC 29401