 The SUMMER A.D. 2023
Anglican Digest
TM

VOL. 65 NO. 2



*Trinity Episcopal Church
Upperville, Virginia*



The
Anglican Digest
TM

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ISSN 0003-3278 VOL. 65, NO. 2

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

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The Anglican Digest

REFLECTING THE WORDS AND WORK OF THE
FAITHFUL THROUGHOUT THE ANGLICAN
COMMUNION FOR MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS.

CONNECTING GATHERING TELLING

For sixty-five years, *The Anglican Digest* (*TAD*) has been the leading quarterly publication serving the Anglican Communion. From its inception, *TAD*'s mission has been "to reflect the words and work of the faithful throughout the Anglican Communion." At a time when print editions are becoming an endangered species, *TAD* remains a familiar presence in the homes and offices of many Episcopalians.

Founded in 1958 by the Rev'd Howard Lane Foland (1908-1989), our heritage is "Prayer Book Catholic," and is open to the needs and accomplishments of all expressions of Anglicanism: Anglo-Catholic, Broad, and Evangelical. Thus, *TAD* does not cater to any one niche or segment of the Church, but finds its enduring ethos in serving the Church, including her clergy and lay leaders, those theologically educated and "babes in Christ." Each issue, therefore, is unique.

TAD is sent to anyone who desires to receive it, and is supported by contributions. To receive your own copy, or to partner with us in sharing the work of the faithful, visit anglicandigest.org/subscribe-now/, call 479-253-9701, or write us at 805 County Road 102, Eureka Springs, AR 72632.

A LETTER FROM THE
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dear *Digest* Family,

I recently completed Fleming Rutledge's *magnum opus*, *The Crucifixion*. It took me many months, because I read it in small bursts, but it was worth the investment. Part of a recent lecture Fleming gave at Nashotah House is included in this issue.

What changed me most after her lecture and her book has to do with her treatment of *what* was happening on the cross. Most of our preaching and teaching, by contrast, is focused on *why* Jesus was crucified. We are always quick to answer the *why* question with, "Because He loves us." And, of course, Jesus does love us, but for love's sake He could have well died from pneumonia! There is so much more to appreciate!

Without spoiling this entire issue, let me stop and simply invite you to go deeper into the mystery of our salvation in all its richness than ever before. This issue does just that!

I hope you will be inspired to support the *Digest*. Please make a gift today.

Yours in the Crucified One,

CW+
(The Rev'd) Charleston David Wilson

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers of *The Anglican Digest*,

We welcome Trinity Church, Upperville, Virginia, as our newest Parish Partner. Originally named Meade Parish, after an early Bishop of Virginia, it is in a charming, small village, nestled in the foothills in the eastern side of the Blue Ridge Mountains, a short distance from the Shenandoah River, in the heart of Virginia's hunt country and wine making region. Trinity's first church was built in 1842 and its current buildings were begun in 1951 in a free adaptation of the style of 12th and 13th century French churches. The church and much of the campus is the gift of Mr. Paul and Mrs. Bunny Mellon and were designed by architect H. Page Cross. There are many attractive and important fixtures and fittings, including medieval pieces brought there from Europe. Trinity is home to a large and active congregation and a growing ministry program, the whole being situated in over forty acres of delightful country. A letter from their Rector, the Rev'd Jonathan V. Adams, is found beginning on page 7.

When visiting Virginia, or even just driving through, make Trinity Church part of your travel plans!

What parish church will be our next Parish Partner?
If interested, please contact me.

Faithfully yours,



The Rev'd Dr. Fredrick A. Robinson



A LETTER FROM OUR NEWEST PARISH PARTNER!

Dear *TAD* friends,

Have you ever been involved in the filming of a television program, perhaps at your church? It's a chaotic, disruptive, and time-consuming process; a lot of work for (what is often) perhaps just a short piece of film. For all that, it is a fascinating process, and somewhat surreal. Major services, such as Christmas Carol services, produced by national or regional religious

broadcasters, must be filmed many months in advance; and so, during the heat of July you can find yourself dressed for winter, filming in a church bedecked with Christmas Tree, Advent Wreath, and bathed in candlelight! Of course, the whole congregation have to pretend (convincingly) that they are celebrating Christmas, and cheerily sing along with all the favorite carols.

We have a similar experience here at Trinity Episcopal, Upperville, on a regular basis.



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We have continued to pre-record our “virtual” service since the times of Covid-19 (livestreaming is not an option with snail pace internet speeds in this rural idyll!). Some weeks it is necessary to perform a quick change of church frontals to ensure that they are the correct liturgical colors for the day the recorded service will be shown... and then, quickly change them all back again!

Here I am, writing for the summer edition of *TAD*, and publishing schedules mean that spring has not even sprung yet! What should I write for a summer edition? What will have happened within the world between now and when you are reading these words? What will be in the minds and hearts of *TAD* readers during summer 2023?

One thing that immediately took my mind straight to summer was a verse from

scripture that many of us will have heard on the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany. “When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.” *Matthew 5:1*. At the very beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry, the crowds are beginning to swell in number. People followed him everywhere, and so, seemingly, for some “time-out” he goes to the mountains with his disciples, where he teaches them the well-known and well-loved words which we now know as “The Beatitudes” and “The Sermon on the Mount.”

Summer may be your “getting away” time, too. A time to take a break from your regular routine; perhaps spending time away from work; time with family; time to do something new, visit new places, or perhaps time spent on a recreational activity you enjoy. It can be a time to relax, and like

Jesus, to get away from the pressure and from whatever is crowding in on life.

This summer, some will vacation at home—a staycation. Others will travel much farther. Here at Trinity we are blessed with a historic suite of church buildings—of national architectural significance. They sit within 40 acres of beautiful Virginian country, complete with an Outdoor Sanctuary, firepits, a creek, and walking trails. When the summer days are not too hot, it'll be the place we occasionally gather for Sunday worship. This is a place where it really isn't any hardship to have a staycation! Many choose to walk here each day, and for a good number of them this is a time of spiritual feeding; of feeling close to God; of healing; to recharge the human batteries, with the energy of the Holy Spirit!

Such opportunities can be times of blessing, too. Too of-

ten I hear phrases like “we’ve been really blessed” – words usually from someone who’s having a great time; who has received material and worldly rewards; a new job, or a great vacation... I guess you’ve all heard similar sentiments. But blessings should not be confused with *Disney* fairy dust; sprinkle a bit here and there, and in a flash all your dreams come true! Blessings aren’t like the “luck of the Irish,” where a leprechaun might suddenly jump up, tap you on the shoulder, and grant three magic wishes! No! To be blessed, as Jesus speaks of it within “The Beatitudes,” is a real blessing of the here and now; it’s not just a future dream or promise. Jesus says... “Blessed are”... not blessed in the future, somewhere down the road. We are blessed now. How? - what is this blessing? To be blessed is simply to know God and to know God’s love—for you and for me. It’s as simple as that. People who

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are struggling with their faith, but know that God doesn't abandon them... they're blessed because they know God. People who mourn and feel loss but know that they have hope in a God who loves them... they are blessed, because they know God. People who reconcile others back to God...they are blessed because they know God.

Jesus, when he got away to the mountain, urged his disciples to a radical new way of living, a way of living based on:

- Knowing ourselves: knowing our total need for God's help and forgiveness and knowing our love and worth to him.
- Loving others: Seeking justice, mercy, and peace for all.
- Living, loving, and worshipping to God's praise and it not being about us, our gain, wants, or desires.

Let's all take time this summer to pray through these encouragements to living a

transformed life, and live into the true blessing of being connected to God, in love, hope, and in praise. And a peaceful rest to you all, and safe travels, whether near or far!



Jonathan

THE REV. JONATHAN V. ADAMS
RECTOR, TRINITY EPISCOPAL
CHURCH, UPPERVILLE, VA.



“In those whom I like, I can find no common denominator; in those whom I love, I can — they all make me laugh.”

— W. H. Auden

MEMORIAL DAY

THE REV'D C. JEFF KRAEMER



The Rev'd C. Jeff Kraemer

Wear Cemetery, Prosper, Texas, is very much like 1,000's of little country cemeteries scattered all over Texas, the United States, the world, and near you. Wear Cemetery came about due to the need to drive cattle from south Texas to the



railheads in Kansas City and Chicago. The Preston Trail(a north/south major road in Dallas still bears that name) was one of those routes used to move herds of cattle.

In 1855, a cowboy driving cows on the Preston Trail became very ill and the Reverend B. W. and Mrs. Wear took him into their home to care for him. In spite of their best efforts, the young man died and was buried on the Wears' ranch. The marker simply states: Cowboy, June 1855. Cowboy was the first, but was

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followed by the dead from the Civil War, Spanish American War, both World Wars, Korea, Viet Nam, and Afghanistan. Of course, civilians came to be buried there as well: infants, children, mothers, fathers, the old, and those born dead. Today fewer than 260 are buried in Wear Cemetery.



Long before Memorial Day was established and proclaimed on May 30, 1868, by Commander John A. Logan, Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, to honor those

who had fought and died to preserve the Nation in the Civil War, there was Decoration Day. Decoration Day began in the Spring when family and friends returned to the grave of a loved one to clean out the weeds, right toppled headstones, say prayers, enjoy a picnic lunch, recall and tell family stories, and remember Bible passages of comfort and victory.

It has been my honor to have joined others in little and large cemeteries all over our country in participating in this rite. Cemeteries near Mineral Wells, Texas; Marshall, Illinois; Sulphur, Louisiana; Avery, California; Vicksburg, Mississippi; and Windsor, Connecticut; just to name a few.

The ritual at each of these cemeteries was much the same because they were based on respect for the dead by tending to the needs of the

graves and remembering the past, and making the past part of the now. It's rather like what we do each Sunday as we gather at our Lord's altar. Stories are always told, tears come as does laughter, and prayers are said. Food is shared, if not in the cemetery, then shortly thereafter. On one occasion someone uttered the words of the repentant thief, dying there beside another dying man, Jesus, with these words, "Remember me when you come into your Kingdom,"



followed by some of Jesus' last and perhaps his most poignant words, "Today you will be with me in paradise."

Today, not tomorrow, next week, or a 1,000 years from now, nor even at the end of the ages, but today you will not only be remembered; you, yes you, will be with me in paradise.

Each May 30th, Memorial Day, our fellow Americans will pause to remember, or not. People do what people do. That is a given; but we can be sure that our President will motorcade to Arlington National Cemetery to perform a solemn rite, which is to lay a wreath of gratitude at the graves of the Unknown Soldiers, which include unknown dead from both World Wars, the Korean War, and the war in Viet Nam. As the citation reads, "Known Only Unto God."

CONNECTING

As a young boy with a hunger for history I had assumed that the Unknowns of Arlington National Cemetery were the only unknowns. The ignorance of youth! As a young man and now as an old man my travels have taken me to many Civil War battle sites and at each are large cemeteries holding the dead of both armies, the North and the South. At each are hundreds of graves marked Unknown. Graves that are easy to walk by because the gravestone bears not a name, a regiment, or even the state from which the person came. Shocking to see, but not unusual throughout the course of history.

Traveling to many countries, and walking through several cemeteries, I have seen the same sad story, lots of unknown dead, no name to be recalled. Remembered.

During the Civil War there were five groups that followed



the armies. There were civilian family members, not a large group, but there were always some who followed along. There were the merchants called sutlers who sold better food items than provided by the armies. There were the women named after General Hooker, who sold themselves, and there were photographers who made tintype images of the soldiers and undertakers who were available to embalm the dead, at least the dead who had paid in advance for their service, and

wore the undertakers' identifying patch. Soldiers, most who had never been more than a few miles from home, passionately wanted their body returned home to their family, or if not their body, at least a photo likeness.

They wanted to be remembered, and these new industries of photography and embalming could help make that happen for them. These two industries grew exponentially during the Civil War.

Poor Yorick of Shakespear's Hamlet might be remembered in this world, but in time you and I will be forgotten, joining the unknowns. It has been stated that most people are forgotten after a short span of time, after just 3 or 4 generations. Some longer, some perhaps less.

I suppose that might be troubling to some, but for us believers in Christ Jesus, it's of

little or no importance. We are aliens here, aliens living in a strange land, a land where we reside for a while, but not our eternal home. You see, you and I have been redeemed by the blood of that man on the cross who turns to us when we cry out, "Remember me," by reassuring us, saying, "You will be with me in Paradise!"

In time, my wife Mary and I will join Cowboy in Wear Cemetery, but by the Grace of God we will be with God for ever and ever, and thus, not forgotten.



WHY TALKING TO DAD IS LIKE TALKING TO GOD

THE REV'D JOSEPH N. DAVIS
VICAR OF GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SPRING HILL, TENNESSEE



The Rev'd Joseph N. Davis

After reading what Garrison Keillor wrote about Father's Day, I felt amused but a little sad because, after all, no matter how pitiful Garrison makes himself look in a few artfully chosen words, lots of people want to know what he has to say, and many have read his words with a chuckle or two. I don't know if anyone

wants to know what I would say about Father's Day. But I do like a challenge, so just because no one will probably ever read my reflections on Father's Day with a chuckle or two, here they are, anyway.

As Father's Day approached, I began to feel the old fear of failure. When I gazed from the relative safety of Tuesday afternoon towards the dangers of the coming Father's Day Weekend, I saw a snarl of competing obligations and duties all mixed up hopelessly like a ball of kite string reorganized by a five year old. I needed to see my own father, who can't go anywhere, unless my sister decides to take him to get a haircut, which she did about two weeks ago, though we are in the midst of a deadly pandemic. People over 65 are judged high risk; people over 90 are assessed as somewhere between "Don't even think about it!" and "Call the undertaker." I have been stay-

ing away from Dad's house because of the coronavirus, so I won't give it to Dad, but the first Saturday in June, his wife had about ten or fifteen of her descendants over for a grand ninety-second birthday celebration. I learned this when I called Saturday to tell her



*Djokovic holding the 2019
Wimbledon men's trophy
Photo Wikipedia*

a happy belated birthday. At the moment, her great-granddaughter was in her lap, producing thousands of droplets of untested cleanliness right in her adoring face. I wondered if her family came as a political statement to prove that we all need to move on and open up, or if they figure that, with a matriarch of ninety-two, they'd better see her while they can. Well, I can't do anything about all that now. I hope they had a good time, and that they are all in better health than Novak Djokovic, who tested positive a couple of days ago for COVID 19 after hosting in mid-June one of the first live tennis events since February.

So, feeling pretty left out of Dad's life, I went to see him the Friday afternoon before Father's Day, before the obligations of preparing for church on Sunday took over all my time and thoughts, and we had a good, long visit.

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He sits there at his breakfast room chair taking a spoonful of oatmeal here and a sip of coffee there for a couple of hours a day, peacefully doing one of the things he says he does best, which is eating. How he manages with no teeth is a wonder I hope I never understand through personal experience, though my present record shows I may be well on my way to toothlessness myself. You've heard the expression, "If you've got your health, you've got everything." Forget that, I say. If you've got your teeth, that should be all you would really need for life. Right now, I have just enough teeth to chew, though I can tell one of those teeth may go before the rest of me does, a possibility that renders aging more problematic. Such things make life interesting, I suppose.

Dad and I sit there and talk for a while, which means I sit there and talk, because he

likes to listen, but he doesn't really have any initiative anymore, so he can't think of many things to say or ask about. So I tell Dad again, and Barbara, his care giver, who sits in the kitchen while we talk, how I discovered a few years ago that talking to Dad is like talking to God.

Back when Dad would get up in the morning and be able to go somewhere by noon, he and I used to do things together, and I would be driving him around and talking to him about things that he and I had done years ago and whatever was going on in my life at the time. We were cruising down Belle Meade Boulevard one afternoon, perhaps after visiting Parmar School Park, the nice park they made of the place where Dad, my older brother, and I all went to grammar school, when it occurred to me that I can tell Dad anything that is on my mind. He just sits there

and listens, usually quietly; but occasionally he will make some cryptic remark, which is exactly like God.



There he sits, God, listening to whatever we are willing to tell him, because he really does love us, and he is grateful for any time we want to spend with him in his old age. In fact, living where he does, he is pretty happy if we just call and say “Hello!” and ask how he’s feeling today. If it’s what we are thinking about, he may not like it, but he wants to hear it. And he rarely interrupts. Have you

ever noticed that? Unlike my wife when she is listening to my latest opinion about the newest horror on the news, he doesn’t say, “Will you stop talking please?” He just lets us talk on, maybe because he is so good at multi-tasking. Being omnipotent and ubiquitous helps a lot with that. Seriously, he can simultaneously watch puppies cavorting about on a farm in Ireland, gaze at a beautiful sunset in Hawaii, listen to a teenaged girl practice a Mozart piano sonata, enjoy a group of bees gathering pollen from a hydrangea bush, and still listen to us talk about how crazy some of our political leaders are, or what we want to buy at Macy’s if we ever get to go to a store again, or how we are sick and tired of being stuck in the house with plenty of food, functioning air conditioning, the ability to telecommute by way of computers and the internet, and twenty-four hours a day of television, includ-

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ing, sometimes, classic tennis matches we never watched when they were played in real time.

Like God, Dad sits there in the passenger's seat of my car, hearing me blather on about people at church, or what I said in my last sermon, or how I definitely inherited my fine backhand slice from him, but that I believe I learned my topspin backhand ground-stroke from Roger Federer. From time to time, he will say something inscrutable, mysterious, and quite profound, which shows how well he is in fact paying attention. But sometimes he just says, "Do you ever play tennis?" Stifling a desire to pull all my hair out, I earnestly remind him that I have played three times a week, year round, for three years, and I usually tell him all about my exploits because he understands tennis and I am trying to help him get out of that chair, if only

in his mind, if only my silly words could free his spirit for a few minutes. Then he'll say, with that stoic look on his face he adopts when sagely expressing one of the ironies of life, "Don't quit playing tennis. People who quit playing tennis get old." You, being a sensible person, might ask, "Don't we all?" But you would be missing the cryptic logic of Dad's wit. Until the match is over, and the last point is played, you can still win, no matter what the score may be. You can't be old until you can no longer win.

As I walk out the door to leave, I have the funny feeling again that I have been with someone who enjoyed my presence, no matter what I have been doing or where I have been, and that I have been with someone who is simply glad that I am. Surely, that's like being with God.



*Maclin P. Davis, Jr.
7/13/1926 - 1/11/2023*

The article is a tribute to the author's father, Maclin P. Davis, Jr., who finished his race on January 11, 2023.

THE ORDER OF ST. ANDREW

Men and Women, married or single, not living in community. Being in the world, but not of it. Entrusting ourselves to the hands of the eternal potter, and being molded daily through religious life.

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**THE PRACTICE OF
LOSING CONTROL**

THE VERY REV'D SAM CANDLER
DEAN OF THE CATHEDRAL OF
ST. PHILIP
ATLANTA, GEORGIA



The Very Rev'd Sam Candler

I practice sailing. I practice sailing a small, and heavy, wooden dinghy every summer. I am not an expert sailor, but I do love to sail. The boat I sail is not exceptionally fast, but she loves to sail, too. I like to think we look graceful together.

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The boat is old, scratched, and scarred. Each summer, with help from my son or brother (both of whom are excellent sailors!), I rig the boat with replaced lines and bent hardware. Each summer, she and I sail out with mismatched lines, a rusty centerboard, and occasional water in the boat. I am practicing.

But what I am really practicing is the art of losing control.

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These days, I think that many of us need more practice in the art of losing control. When we don't learn how to manage a lack of control, we can be dangerous and unhealthy to those around us. In these last three years, those of us who were the least practiced in this art had, maybe, the hardest time. For, in whatever other ways we might describe the last three years in our civil society, most of us lost control. We lost control in different ways, and to greater and lesser degrees. But we had our lives changed by powers over which we had no control: disease, health, public health policies, business policies, social interaction expectations. We didn't like it.

If I was able to manage my loss of control at all, it was because I had some small practice at it.

Sailing has been one of my practices. Thus, it helps that I am not an excellent sailor!

But, every sailor has to tack; we can rarely sail directly towards our goal. I have to come about, have to change direction. And then the wind changes direction, and my great plan has to change again. It is the moving with the wind that I practice. It is the changing out of lines. It is the pumping out of water. It is learning to live with sore hands.

Not all of us sail sailboats. But each of us can find ways of practicing the art of losing control. For instance, community interaction of any sort can be that practice. Once we are in relationship with a group, even if just one other person, we begin the practice of not always getting our way. Sometimes, it turns out that our way would have been good. And sometimes, it was fortunate that we did not get our way! Either way, we learn to live through changes together.



Sail Boat from "The Simpsons"
Photo: Wikiart

As the severity of the pandemic subsides, I believe that most of us are in some kind of post-trauma situation. It may not be bad. But it is real. We are wary. Some of us don't know how to exercise control without being excessive! Many of us have become anxious police officers, intent on aggressively seizing the control which we lost for so long. Some of us are just numb, not willing to spend ourselves.

I recommend finding a community. Of course, as a priest, I recommend finding a community of faith—in particular a church, if you will. But any

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community devoted to a higher power than us, an acknowledged higher good power than us, inherently takes us out of control. We devote ourselves to the tradition of this Greater Good, around which that community gathers. People in communities learn not to behave in violent ways. They have learned how to lose control, gracefully. Oh, I realize that there are tragic exceptions—people in community are certainly fallible—but in general, good community regulates its members (even its visitors who are not willing to be called “members”).

Prayer can also be a practice of losing control. Playing with children can be a practice of losing control. Playing good, competitive sports, can teach us how to lose control. These practices teach us how to adjust, how to manage, how to be free and confident, even when we have lost something—even when some con-

trol might have been seized from us.



As our churches, and our world, continue the process of re-engaging, I hope we can enjoy the practices of losing control. They can save our lives. Sometimes when we learn to lose things, we end up gaining our souls.

From *The Cathedral Times*,
September 25, 2022.

A SURE FOUNDATION

THE REV'D GAVIN DUNBAR
RECTOR, ST. JOHN'S CHURCH,
SAVANNAH, GA AND PRESIDENT
OF THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY USA



The Rev'd Gavin Dunbar

It is an astonishing thing to read what the American founders thought about its founding: for they regarded both the achievement of independence and a constitutional union as an act of Providence. Here's Washington, for instance:

“The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all

this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked, that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations...”

To read the founders, of course, is to recognize the great distance our society has traveled since the founding. The dominant idea of freedom on the left as on the right—as freedom to do whatever I want—would be regarded by the founders (and virtually every religious and philosophical tradition of mankind) as a travesty, mere license for ignorance and debased passions, an invitation to spiritual bondage. Freedom, in the ancient and universal account, is the power to obey the law of one's own being, to realize one's own nature in accord with the design of Nature's God. Freedom is realized in virtue, and virtue requires religion. As Washington said in his Farewell

CONNECTING



Address, “Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles.”

Given the antiquity and universality of such ideas, we may ask what brought about the late emergence in human

history of religious and civil liberties in societies like ours, of the recognition of human rights, and of the institutions of liberal democracy. Historians have long recognized it has something to do with the Reformation, since it was from countries shaped by reformed doctrine (such as the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States) that these ideas first emerged in stable forms. Exactly what that connection is, however, the historians are not always clear. The freedom of conscience prized by the 16th century reformers did not extend to disestablishment of churches or toleration of religious dissent. It was, rather, an inward spiritual freedom of the conscience from fear of God’s wrath, which it received in justification before God, through grace alone, on account of Christ alone, and by faith alone. Yet it is from this purely inward freedom that the outward freedom

gradually emerges, as scholars like Bradford Littlejohn have argued.

For if Christ has made us free, then he is our Lord, and we owe all ultimate loyalty to him alone. All other claims to Lordship over us are therefore radically qualified. They are at best provisional authorities, to which we submit according to the will of God, out of loyalty to Christ. In this loosening of loyalties to earthly powers, the free individual emerged: one who might have to conform outwardly to the dictates of the community in which he found himself, but his conscience could transcend those limits in judgments of truth. At the same time, those community authorities charged with upholding the public peace and order began to see that those public goods required minimal intrusion into the relation of the individual with the Lord, and the judgments of the individual

conscience, and ever broader toleration of ideas and practices that might well be erroneous. Because the individual is answerable to God alone for the way he responds to God's call, the role of public authorities in it is much diminished.



Christ Enthroned
Christine Hales, Iconographer
Sarasota, Florida

That's a thumbnail sketch, that passes over the gradual and painful way in which the political implications of the Gospel were worked out in thought and practice. But work themselves out they

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did, and so gave birth to the modern world. The question is, whether these ideas of religious and civil liberties, of individual human rights, which emerged out of the Reformation, out of the Gospel itself, can survive without the Gospel, as our societies move away from their Christian roots. It's not insignificant, for instance, that much enlightened opinion, especially the opinion of the elite institutions, wants to subordinate the freedoms of religion and speech—those rights established in the very first Article

of the Bill of Rights— to other pressing concerns such as those of gender, sex, racial justice, public health, and environmental safety, all of which require the state's return to the policing of morality. You can live on your capital for a long time, if you have enough; but eventually it runs out. The horrific collapse of the condominium tower in Surfside, Florida, is a reminder: a building can remain standing for quite a while when its foundations are undermined, but eventually it will fall, and the ruin of it will be great.



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Advertisement

ENTITY

D. W. SHIPMAN

Bluest of bluest
 vastness of depth
 omnipotent presence

jet blue soars high
 technology magnified
 thru cloudless clime

2nd vapor trail appears
 cruising lower altitude
 reckons due east

purest of air kisses
 my cheek as folds of
 grass cushion underfoot

bathed in the observance
 like holy water sprinkled
 from the hyssop branch



*Colored pencil drawing
 of hyssop branch
 by Charlotte Staub Thomas,
 member of Church of
 the Redeemer, Sarasota.*

THE TRANSFIGURATION

THE REV'D J. GARRETT BOYTE
CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS
SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA



The Rev'd J. Garrett Boyte

The story of the Transfiguration is featured twice a year; once on the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, and then again on the Feast of the Transfiguration (6 August). We see in each account that Christ goes to Mount Tabor with Peter, James, and John. And suddenly he is transfigured. His body and clothes shine with a brightness that stuns the disciples. And Moses and Elijah flank him on his left and right.

Often in art the disciples are depicted as being knocked down, covering their eyes. But what is happening here?

The Transfiguration is three kinds of an event. It is a Trinitarian event. It is a Christological event. And it is an eschatological event. What does this mean? This one event relates to the Trinity, the three persons of the one God. It relates to Christ himself, his dual nature in one person. And it relates to the end of all things: that's what eschatology means.

Christ, the Son of God, is radiated with light as the Holy Spirit, symbolized here by a cloud, descends upon him and the voice of the Father speaks: "This is my Son..."

Christologically, we see that Christ is revealed to be that which he always was, but is only now manifested as. He was always that radiant light,

but it is only now that we and the disciples see him. We see here what it looks like for the divinity of God to dwell in human flesh. It's important to note that Christ did not become something other upon that mountain. He was still fully human, and fully God. And the divine energies did not destroy his body, but enlightened it, made it transparent.

In this way, the Transfiguration expresses in visible form the truth of the Council of Chalcedon. This can be found in the prayer book on page 864, by the way. The truth is that in Christ the fullness of God and the fullness of humanity dwell in perfect harmony. Neither distracts from the other. Neither negates the other. Neither diminishes the other. But in his person, both distinct natures are joined.

And so it is not accurate to say that the glory of Christ shone because he is God, but that his

glory shone because he is fully God and fully human. And this is where the eschatological comes into focus.



The Transfiguration
Raphael, c. 1520
Photo: Wikipedia

In Christianity, and in Anglicanism more specifically, we teach that the end goal of God for all people is perfect union with him. And what that means is that God longs for

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us, all of us, to be joined with him, but not in a way that diminishes our individuality. Just as Christ's humanity was not diminished, but fulfilled, by his humanity, so too will our humanity be enlightened by God's radiance.



His Eminence Kallistos Ware speaking at Ascension Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Oakland, California

Archbishop Rowan Williams writes: “In the Transfigura-

tion, what the disciples [saw was] Jesus' humanity opening up to its inner dimensions.” What we see in Christ is the fulfillment of God's desire for all of us. The Transfiguration is but one example of what a human life in perfect union with God looks like. And through Christ, we have been invited into this union. The Transfiguration does more than reveal the glory of God; it also reveals the glory of humanity as it was originally intended.

To quote the Greek Orthodox Bishop Kallistos Ware: “The Transfiguration reveals to us the normal human state, the original beauty of our nature. Christ, the new Adam, transfigured on the mountain, shows us the state before the fall, human nature as it was in paradise.”

O God, who on the holy mount revealed to chosen witnesses your well-beloved Son, wonderfully transfigured, in rai-

*ment white and glistening:
Mercifully grant that we, being
delivered from the disquietude
of this world, may by faith be-
hold the King in his beauty;
who with you, O Father, and
you, O Holy Spirit, lives and
reigns, one God, for ever and
ever. Amen.*

The Collect for the Feast of
the Transfiguration

From Crossings, August 17,
2022



from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
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SOUL

CHRIS ROE

Be silent
Be still,
Awakened.
Be the silence
That struggles
To be heard.
Perceive
Acknowledge,
Be the wisdom.

Love
Be loved
Be silence.
Be this space,

This inner sanctum,
That is
Your soul.



HARLOW SHAPLEY AND ST. PAUL

THE REV'D JAMES P. HANEY
ST. PAUL'S-ON-THE-PLAINS
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
LUBBOCK, TEXAS



The Rev'd James P. Haney

I admire the example of Dr. Harlow Shapley. During my grandparents' childhoods in the early days of the last century, the accepted astronomical knowledge was that there was one galaxy in the universe, the Milky Way, and that our solar system was a part of

it. As new large objects were being discovered in the heavens, most astronomers considered them as dust clouds within our galaxy, which they named the "Andromeda Spiral Nebula" (nebula means "cloud").

As more and more and more of these large structures were discovered, a few astronomers started to assert that they were not clouds within our own galaxy, but rather separate, distant galaxies. The question was argued in the so-called "Great Debate" of 1920, in which Dr. Shapley was the staunch lead-defender of the "one galaxy" model of the universe. Later, when a slightly younger astronomer started publicizing findings that supported a "many galaxies" hypothesis, Dr. Shapley classified it as "junk science."

In 1923, that same younger astronomer sent a letter to Shapley with detailed data he had gathered which showed



*Dr. Harlow Shapley
(1885 - 1972)*

that a star in the “Andromeda Nebula” was in fact MANY times further away than the Milky Way Galaxy was wide, thus indicating that it was really in a far away, separate Andromeda Galaxy (as we know it today). When Shapley received the letter, he realized the data was firm, and he called it “the letter that destroyed my universe.” But to his credit, he accepted the

new findings, and encouraged the younger astronomer to write a paper for a major journal in the field. And Shapley even devoted a significant chunk of his own time and research over the next decade to mapping out distances to other galaxies using similar methodology.



Andromeda Galaxy

Many decades later, a space-based telescope would be named after that younger astronomer (Edwin Hubble). And the Hubble Tele-

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scope would help push the estimated number of galaxies in the universe to somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,000,000,000,000 (2 trillion). But as important as Hubble's work was in the early 20th century, and as important as the discoveries of the Hubble Telescope were in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, I can't help but admire Harlow Shapley. When confronted with evidence, he admitted that he was wrong, and worked to further his field along the new lines that had opened up.

Like Shapley, St. Paul also had a famous conversion, and went from being a fanatical anti-Christian to one of the most important Christians in history. While we probably won't face circumstances as extreme as Paul or Shapley, they are a good reminder to us that we need to retain a certain degree of humility when it comes to our views

and opinions. We might very well be totally right. But then again, there's always a chance we might not be.

In life, it's important to act in accordance with our views, convictions, and consciences. Personally, I'm fairly confident about my opinions and ideas, and wish everyone could think like me. But I'm also aware that there are different opinions out there. And I have to be open to the (remote?) possibility that I might not always have a 100% lock on the truth in 100% of cases. And if I, or any of you, find we're wrong about something, may God give us the grace and humility of a Harlow Shapley to admit it, and move forward in a different direction.



Love has nothing to do with what you're expecting to get, only what you're expecting to give — everything!"

— Katherine Hepburn

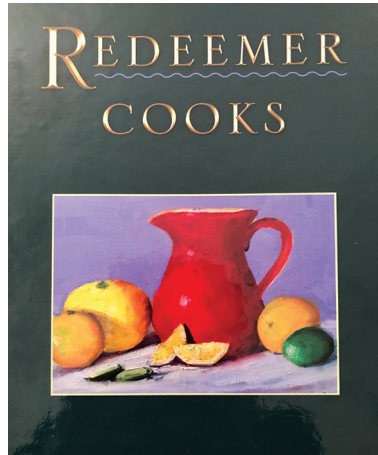
HOUSE SALAD

Charleston Wilson

For the dressing:

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
4 tablespoons dry white wine
Pinch of salt
4 tablespoons fresh cracked
peppercorns

1 head romaine lettuce
(not packaged)
1 head red or green leaf lettuce
1 cup crumbled French feta cheese
1 cup sliced red seedless grapes
¾ cup pine nuts (toasted, plain)



For the dressing, combine the olive oil and white wine using an immersion blender until it is nice and thick (usually just a few seconds). Add the salt and pepper (it looks like so much pepper, but it is really necessary).

Combine the lettuces, washed and torn in small pieces, with the feta, grapes, and pine nuts. Toss. Add dressing a little at a time, making sure the salad is not overdressed.

Number of Servings: 6

Notes: The French feta cheese is so much creamier. For dry white wine, use Chardonnay or Pinot Gris. You can adjust the grapes to taste. Refrigerate any remaining dressing.



On Saturday, 16 February 2019, Nashotah House Seminary was pleased to welcome distinguished preacher, theologian, and prolific author, the Rev'd Fleming Rutledge, to its campus. Her lecture to a full house in Adams Hall, "The Strange Silence of the Cross in Christian Preaching," reflected on the reception of her *magnum opus*, *The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus Christ* (Eerdmans), *Christianity Today's 2017 Book of the Year*.

Following the lecture, Fleming sat down with Dean Gar-

wood Anderson for an informal conversation about her work, the art of preaching, and the future of theological education.

Anderson: How are you discerning God's call at this point in your life and your ministry? Where are you making your investments?

Rutledge: Well, I think about that all the time because I know that I don't have a lot of time left. So I really am trying to pick and choose. I have made the decision that I should aim at whatever I can do to contribute to the

upcoming generations. So, reluctantly, because I am very fond of the many parishes that I have been to, I have decided to concentrate on settings where I can talk to students, clergy, and the younger generations.

A: We're grateful that we found a place on your Itinerary.

R: I am glad to have finally been to this place that I have heard so many talk about.

A: Because of your experience in preaching and the teaching of preaching, what advice do you have for young preachers who are learning the craft?

R: Well, the young man who was here today (referring to the question-and-answer session after the lecture) said something that is at the center of what I believe about preaching and that I try to pass on. That is, ending every sermon with a promise of God.



Pulpit, Bristol Cathedral

Photo from

<http://heatheronhertravels.com>

Used by permission

But preaching is not easy to teach. In fact, there have been people who say it cannot be taught, because it is a gift, and that the best you can do is to shape what's already there. But I was redirected in my first homiletics class; I was directed away from what I thought I should do to something entirely different, and it changed my entire orientation and made me—if I am a preacher today, it is because of the influence of my homiletics professor at Union Seminary in 1972. He changed me.

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A: How did he reorient you?

R: Oh. I didn't understand that the sermon was a drama, that it was a story with a plot, that it should have a beginning, middle, and an end. And that it should build and have suspense and that there should be a destabilizing kind of center which then moves to some kind of—not resolution—but some kind of upward arc, where the person feels enabled and empowered rather than scolded or made to feel impotent, or, even worse, made to feel self-righteous.

All of that is part of what goes into making powerful preaching, and I don't think a lot of preachers understand that. They seem to be just imparting information, telling stories about their families, or something that has happened in the community, and then talking about what we ought to be doing as followers of Christ. The sense that a sermon might ac-

tually be empowering, or the idea that a sermon might be delivering someone, or that God might use the sermon to deliver someone from sin and death—that doesn't seem to occur to a lot of preachers. It's more like just little religious reflections or entertainment.

A: Almost like Neil Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, but from the pulpit.

R: Yes.

A: You talked about your 1972 reorientation as a preacher. What do you say to the preacher who has grown accustomed to their way of going about it but is in some ways stuck?

R: I think it is almost impossible. It would have to be a movement of the Spirit. I have found people to be quite resistant to teaching about preaching. I think most people either feel that they already know it all, because they have a certain gift of gab or whatever, or

they are threatened. Because it really is not like passing on a body of information, it is asking for something different from that. The student has to be willing to submit to some kind of overhaul in a way that a class in liturgy or church history doesn't ask for.

A: We almost need to have a kind of support group—but for preachers—to get the help we need?

R: I have not met many people who were willing to undergo the rigor of relearning what they thought they knew about preaching. I think you normally have to catch them in their formative phase. And although I have not had a lot of opportunity to do that, I did have a season of teaching about 30 seminarians at Wycliffe College, and that was a great experience.

A: Looking back now as you are, what wisdom do you have for theological seminaries. Have we missed the

mark? And if so how should we reform?

R: I don't know if I would be so presumptuous as to offer that advice. What I know about Nashotah House is that there is this affection. There is something about Nashotah among those who have been here that is more intense and emotionally grounded than with other seminaries. I mean, alumni love their seminaries, but the quality of the Nashotah affection—I keep coming back to that word—well, it is different.

A: It may be because we have spent so much time in the Chapel together; that makes an indelible mark.

R: It must have something to do with that and the fact that you are living in community. I just really don't believe that theological formation can be done outside of a context of genuine community. In the end, it is that personal connection that makes it work.

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POSTPONED VICTORY

RUTH COPELAND

Yesterday I saw visions
and dreamed dreams
that coaxed me into a
struggle,
fascinating, endless.
And now I know my soul
shall never know
the satisfaction of
final triumph.



Rudesheim am Rhine, Germany

(For I have toiled to build
from contrary elements
Foundations to support

my house of dreams—
Only to find when those
were built,
my restless, scheming soul
had painted other castles
on the sky
Larger, higher than
the ones before).
So.....
I shall keep on toiling
Until the day
the Master says,
“Well done.”
Then I shall be satisfied.



Where does the good Lord
live?” asked the Sunday School
teacher of a four-year-old-boy
in her class

“In our bathroom,” replied the
youngster.

“What makes you think so?”
the teacher asked.

“Because,” the boy replied, “I
hear my Dad shout, ‘Good
Lord, are you still in there?’”

—Pastor Tal Bonham

THE FRONT PORCH GANG

J. MICHAEL HARTENSTINE
MEMBER, CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER
SARASOTA, FLORIDA



J. Michael Hartenstine

About 3 miles east of Hamilton, a town of 1,800 in rural Harris County, Georgia, near the Alabama border, two gravel roads lead through a forest of loblolly pines to the bucolic pastures and homes of Allen Levi and his 94-year-old father, A. C. Levi. Before 7:00 a.m. every Thursday, an average of thirty men from around the county travel these roads to the front porch of Allen's home for an hour-



long Bible study. The north road passes the Levis' private chapel—a white, wood-frame country church, replete with steeple, pulpit, pews, hymnals, organ, and wood-burning stove, which was originally constructed in 1806 and was moved to the property from Alabama around 1990. The Levi family cemetery, a 25-foot by 25-foot plot surrounded by an antique wrought-iron fence, lies nearby.

The men are young and old, working and retired, public officials and private citizens.

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Some are prominent local business leaders. They have been coming each Thursday for over 20 years. No one remembers exactly why or when, but they dubbed themselves years ago the “Front Porch Gang.”

There are 47 names on the Front Porch Gang roster. As might be expected in rural Georgia, most are non-denominational or Baptist. Only six are Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, or Episcopalian.

Although the Front Porch Gang is called a “Bible study” even by its members, that moniker is misleading. The Front Porch Gang did not originate as a Bible study, but as a prayer group. As Allen writes in *The Last Sweet Mile*, a memoir and tribute to his brother Gary, who died in 2012 after a lifetime traveling the world as a Christian missionary. In the late 1990’s, Gary and four other men met to pray for every kid in the local high school. It was their concern that there might be young people in the community whose names had never been brought to God in prayer. They knew, most certainly, that God did not need anyone’s prayers to make Him aware or solicitous of them, but it still seemed right and good to ask a blessing on their behalf. And so they prayed, passing a high-school yearbook around and reading names until all fifteen hundred had been spoken out loud.



Praying for each student in the high-school yearbook remains today an essential purpose of the Front Porch Gang. Other purposes, Allen writes, are “to organize ways of helping people in our community” and “to read and discuss the Bible together.”

On a recent summer morning, I witnessed how these purposes are realized in a gathering of the Front Porch Gang. Allen opened with a prayer that included the following petitions and thanksgivings:

“Thank you, Lord, for the great and mysterious opportunity

of this August 25, 2022. We thank you, Lord, that no matter where we are, you are with us, that your promise is still true this morning that nothing can snatch us out of your hands, and that all that happens to us because we know and love you will somehow work for good. Help us, Lord, to have confidence in that this morning, confidence in you.

We thank you, Lord, this morning that your intent is what it has always been, to make us more like your Son. And so, Father, as a group of men this morning, we want to come to you honestly with all our brokenness and our

imperfection and our sin, our contradictions, our hypocrisies, our weaknesses, our strengths, our gladnesses, our growing wisdom. Lord, we want to bring all of that to you this morning with an honest prayer, Father, that you will change us and make us more into the men that you want us to be.

Thank you that we get to be here together. Thank you for each life that is here. We pray, Lord, that because of this hour we will be better prepared for this day, that we walk with you closely, to serve you, to love you, to see you in everything around us. We pray you will make us ministers of mercy and ambassadors of Christ this morning so that we can serve you faithfully all through this day.”

Allen then asked if anyone “had a word.” Bill Berry and Scott Lightsey responded that Front Porch Gang volunteers were needed to tear out and

replace a widow’s deteriorated porch. Following discussion of the project, Allen reminded the participants of their central mission: A common term to all of us is we participate in Bible studies. An author I like says, “I like to do Bible dos—not Bible studies, but Bible dos. The Bible is not a book we are supposed to study; it is a book we are supposed to do.”

So this is a chance for us to do a Bible do, to tear a porch out to the glory of God, and to get dirty to the glory of God, and fill up a dumpster to the glory of God, and hit our thumbs and not cuss, to the glory of God. So this will be a good chance for us to work together, and I am convinced personally it is the best thing that we do as a group and historically have done for the last number of years.

An especially meaningful group work occurred in the summer of 2012, when the

Front Porch Gang gathered in the chapel to pray before taking shovels in hand to dig from the Georgia clay a grave for Gary in the family cemetery. A few weeks later, Gary's body was placed in the grave in a private family burial. Allen writes:

“By day's end, one task remained undone. Gary's casket had been placed in the ground but left uncovered. Two days later, at 7:00 a.m., just after sunrise, instead of meeting at my house on the porch as we usually did on Thursday mornings, the brethren gathered at the chapel, shovels in hand, to mend the earth and close Gary's grave.

It was a beautiful morning.

We sang a song.

We read and talked about
John 21.

We moved the soil back to its
place.

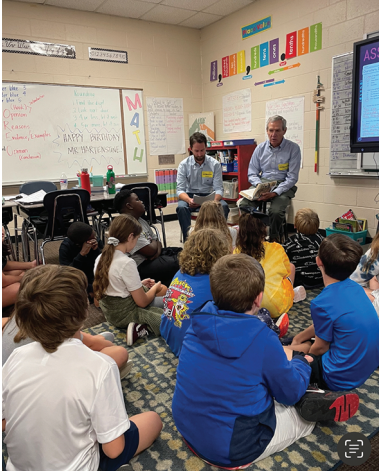
We said goodbye.

Our work was done.”

Another Bible do that is ongoing is supporting students and faculty at nearby Park Elementary School. The Front Porch Gang provided a catered lunch for teachers, a song of appreciation, and a \$1,000 donation to the school the day before classes began. Throughout the school year, twenty men are reading stories once a week to classes at the school, both as an expression of Christ's love for children and as a model of a Christian man.

In the Bible Belt, one might expect a Bible study to be centered on either the Bible itself or a contemporary evangelical devotional tract. Not so on Allen's front porch. The text Allen selected for the year is *Following the Call: Living the Sermon on the Mount Together*, a collection of essays on *Matthew 5—7* by a chronologically and theologically diverse set of Christian authors, including

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Price and Michael Hartens talk to students at Park Elementary School

Augustine, Irenaeus, Cyprian, John Chrysostom, Luther, Bonhoeffer, Kierkegaard, C. S. Lewis, John Wesley, and N. T. Wright. The essays on *Matthew 7:13-14* even include passages from the *Didache* and the *Shepherd of Hermas*, two of the earliest non-canonical Christian writings. The essays probably are the Front Porch Gang members' first encounter with many of these classic Christian writers. Be-

sides broadening theological perspective, the essays lend a sophistication to The Front Porch Gang's understanding and discussion of scripture that is both refreshing and surprising.

On this morning, the essays dealt with the passage in *Luke* in which Jesus teaches the Lord's Prayer. Ken Callaway, who endured the death of a son years earlier and whose daughter presently was seriously ill, led a discussion on prayers for healing: "I think you can ask for healing of a child, but you say at the end of it, if that is your will. This is my hope, this is my prayer, as long as it is in compliance with what your desire is. I don't know how you cannot pray for your child's health.

Go to God and say, 'Father, I don't know anything. I really don't. But I know you are the power of the world. You hold my eternal life in your hand,

and you are the one who will take my daughter, who has some unknown health issue, and you will heal her, or you won't. But what you do will be,' and this is tough, 'the right thing.' That is a PhD in faith, and I am not sure I've got it. But I have experienced enough of his grace to know that at some point—and I have watched others lose children and know what level of pain that is and the potential for bitterness, even in believers—if we are going to turn it over to him, if we are going to give it to him, we've got to give it all."

As the hour ended, several men in turn read the names of about 50 students from the Harris County High School yearbook. John Gay then offered a prayer on their behalf: "We pray for those who don't know you as their Lord and Savior. You said none come unless they are drawn, so we pray you will draw those who

don't know you to you, so that they may be saved. Give them wisdom well beyond their young years. We thank you for them. In Jesus' name, we pray this day."



Piety, community, charity, and faith. These characterize the Front Porch Gang, a band of redeemed sinners in rural Georgia seeking every Thursday morning on the front porch of Allen Levi to know and do God's will.



"I was young and foolish then. Now I am old and foolisher."

— Mark Twain

THE TROUT

CHIP PREHN
EPISCOPAL PRIEST, BOARDING
SCHOOL CONSULTANT, AND WRITER

It was my last night in Oxford and my penultimate night in England. My son had begun his summer-school studies and was required to dine in hall that warm July evening. I was thus on my own and I planned ahead. I was utterly, even stubbornly, dedicated to having dinner for the first time at The Trout Inn just up the Thames from Oxford.

I phoned the restaurant early in the afternoon. The maître d' told me that dinner was fully subscribed until the cows come home. I was so disappointed!

“But you could try your luck,” he suggested.

When the cab dropped me off at The Trout, the maître d's warning was confirmed. “It



Photo: Courtesy of Creative Commons and Wikipedia

will be two hours, at least,” the maître d' told me when I at last made it through the crowd to his stand. He was attempting to say a great deal with his eyes, looking at me over his reading glasses. He grabbed four menus from the desk and quickly floated away into the dining room with four customers following after.

While he was disappeared, I studied the reservation book and, true enough, the page was overflowing with his

penmanship. Lines through seated parties, circles and question-marks here and there, and marginalia which told other stories. When the *maitre d'* returned, I was standing with one elbow on his professional oak. I told him that I had phoned him earlier in the day, *et cetera*.

“Do you have a reservation, then?” he asked.

“No. You did warn me you’d be full.”

“How many are you?” he asked.

“Just one.”

“One? Oh.”

“Yes. It’s my last night in Oxford. I’ve never been to The Trout. I’ve always wanted to – ”

“If there is one only,” he said, “why don’t you go out there

to the vestibule just inside the front door. There’s a little cocktail table out there. Sit there if you like,” he commanded. “Or you may wait for a table in here – but it will be a long, long night, I’m afraid.”

I could see in his face that it was not the right time for sad stories from an American tourist. Even as they are routinely courteous, the typical *maitre d'* is not given to pity.

I smiled, nodded, and negotiated my way through the throng of hopeful diners in the foyer. Once I found the front door again, I looked right, then I looked left and found the tiny round table that was by golly mine. I was thrilled. I took my seat feeling happy as a clam. I could tell that some of my fellows in the foyer begrudged my good fortune. One red-faced Anglo-Saxon lady glowered at me. Perspiring most unfortunately through her sundress, I

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smiled from my table and said to her, “Just one of me.” She turned her face quickly away from me with pursed lips. I became suddenly glad that I had not practiced my Southern manners and given her my table and chair. “They’ll be serving me here,” I said to her. She never looked my way again. She and her mate soon left.

I was indeed grateful that I was sitting down at all and that I would be able to dine at The Trout. I knew I would do some waiting, but I like to people-watch and realized I was sitting in the orchestra for



Photo: Courtesy of Creative Commons and Wikipedia

that pastime. And I brought my journal with me! I had two trusty pens in my pocket. They were Uni-ball Vision Needles (07mm point). My last night in Oxford! The Trout! Things were working out just fine! I opened my journal and took a pen from my pocket. I began to write about where I was and what it meant to me. I knew about The Trout from friends who had studied at Oxford and enjoyed the place for meals and ale meets. The inn was a favorite haunt of C.S. Lewis.

It was an alternative meeting place for the Inklings, especially in summer. They would walk up to Godstow about two miles and dine outdoors next to the Thames.

In 2015, the *Daily Telegraph* declared The Trout the most beautiful pub in England. I found it such on my first visit. It is of course a storied place. I remembered the scene in Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisit-*

ed where Charles Ryder and Sebastian Flyte lazily ditch a borrowed car at The Trout and walk back to Oxford. In 1914, a convenient bus service commenced between Carfax (Oxford) and Wolvercote, the town of which Godstow is a faubourg. This public transportation replaced horse-drawn cabs and “flies,” both of which enabled graduates and undergraduates alike to avoid hoofing it or paddling up the River Isis from Oxford. The Trout was established as an alehouse and inn in the seventeenth century. Parts of the present building go back to a sixteenth-century house. That house was built on medieval foundations. The restaurant overlooks a channel of the Thames just above Godstow Lock. A few steps across the channel bridge is a small island where a beautiful garden was built in the early twentieth century. From the island one may look to the southwest and see the ru-

ins of Godstow Abbey. This was a Benedictine community founded in the twelfth century and destroyed in the sixteenth-century Dissolution of the monasteries. To the southeast is Port Meadow and beyond that dear ole Oxford.

Any alehouse or pub *not* in Oxford proper but within a tolerably easy walking distance would naturally appeal to undergraduates. The Trout was just far enough away from the colleges that university authorities were scarce to none. It appears that the town of Wolvercote generally appealed to Oxonians. A gang of local history buffs offer the following tid-bits.

Anthony Wood [the diarist] recorded visits to alehouses ... in the 1660s and 1670s. In 1662, undergraduates rescuing a comrade from the stocks at Wolvercote (into which he had been put for stealing a goose from Port Meadow)

broke all the windows in the village. Eighteenth-century undergraduates, perhaps more decorously, played skittles at Wolvercote and Godstow, and Jeremiah Bishop, the inn-keeper at The Trout, was said at his death in 1771 to have been “well known to most of the gentlemen who have been members of this university within the last 50 years.” Woodforde [another diarist] visited The Trout Inn on several occasions, referring to Mr. Bishop as “old Jerry” (see Baggs, Blair, Chance, Colvin, Cooper, Day, Selwyn, and Townley, “Wolvercote: Introduction” in *A History of the County of Oxford, Volume 12, Wootton Hundred (South) Including Woodstock*, ed. by Crossley and Elrington (London, 1990); 309-10; found via *British History Online*: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol12/pp304-311>).

In the early nineteenth century, enterprising churchwardens decided to take a toll on

anyone attending the horse races at nearby Port Meadow. For perhaps centuries, an important annual event in Godstow and Wolvercote was the Whitsun Ale, which was observed until the late nineteenth century. The Whitsun Ale included worship, a sermon wherein the incumbent doubtless distinguished the Holy Spirit from fine spirits. All nonetheless enjoyed cricket, musical entertainments, and ale.

A significant fact about The Trout is that it is not far off the Woodstock Road. From early medieval times, English kings favored Woodstock and Oxford because the latter was invariably fixed to provide good victuals and delicious port, while the former was a perfect place for a deer camp surrounded by lush coverts, tall forests, and abundant game.

Woodstock functioned after the Conquest as something not unlike Sandring-

ham functions for the House of Windsor today: a fine country get-away featuring conscientious gamekeepers, good shooting, and merry fellowship with noblemen. King Henry I converted the old camp at Woodstock into a royal if rustic house in 1129. Seven miles of stone walls were erected to enclose a deer park and a manor house that could double as a fort. It was during the reign of Henry's grandson King Henry II (1133-1189) that this royal hunting lodge became known as "Woodstock Palace."

We may wonder if the kings of England built the lodge for stag and hare hunting or to avoid their wives; for it appears that in 1166 Henry II practically donated Woodstock Palace to the young mistress who is called "Fair Rosamund" Clifford (1150-1176). Rosamund, daughter of a marcher earl, was considered one of the most beauti-

ful and impressive women in England. Her father sent her to Godstow Abbey to acquire the education and manners befitting a noblewoman who would live in high estate. The king met Rosamund for the first time either at the abbey school or when he was visiting Earl Clifford out on the Welsh marches. Soon they were lovers.

Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine probably knew of the affair by the time she delivered the future King John on Christmas Eve, 1166. The illicit relationship went on for several more years but was over at least by 1172. Interpreters of this history often assume that Eleanor, being Eleanor, shamed her husband into giving up Rosamund. This is an application of our erstwhile morality to a far-off time. I submit that, since Henry had very little affection for, nor fear of, Queen Eleanor, another explanation is more likely than marital fi-

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delity or fear. Why shouldn't we believe that Henry's self-denial was inspired from Above?

Remember that King Henry countenanced and perhaps ordered the murder of Thomas Becket in December, 1170. The king was soon commanded by the Pope to do penance. By most accounts, Henry became a sincere penitent during the early 1170s. It stands to reason, therefore, that Henry sent his Fair Rosamund away from Woodstock as an appropriate aspect of his newly acquired piety. Thus Henry gave up Rosamund, not because he could no longer love her, but because he did love her and cared for her. This view is corroborated by the fact that, when Rosamund died at Godstow Abbey in 1176—she too became a sincere penitent for the rest of her life—King Henry was very public about paying her funeral expenses and gave an ample endow-

ment to the abbey for the tomb's perpetual upkeep. Fair Rosamund was not yet twenty-seven years old when she died at the Abbey on July 6, 1176. Henry died on the same date thirteen years later.



*Ruins of Godstow Abbey
Photo by Alex Rad via
Atlas Obscura*

The story of Rosamund's repentance and piety inspired the attention of many Christians living in the neighborhood of The Trout. When the Bishop of Lincoln—none other than St. Hugh, whose diocese included Oxfordshire at that time—heard that Fair Rosamund's grave was located inside the abbey church (in fact it was dug quite close to

the High Altar), and that the grave was already something of a pilgrimage destination, he ordered her remains exhumed and reburied in the churchyard post haste. We cannot know what sort of conversation took place between the Abbess of Godstow



Fair Rosamund
John William Waterhouse
(1916)
Photo: Wikipedia

and His Grace of Lincoln. I'll bet the dialogue was worthy of Chaucer or Shakespeare, since the Abbess obviously saw no problem interring Rosamund's remains in her abbey church. Abbesses did then and do now possess formidable power in church circles, and especially among priests and bishops. They are not known to be timid in such company, even as they are respectful.

But the bishop prevailed. Fair Rosamund was transferred out of doors. Hugh was surely bothered that sheep of his extensive flock were honoring a mistress of the king. If we must assume that Bishop Hugh was correct to insist that fornication is not the way to holiness, we can yet speculate without impiety whether the rule strictly applies in this case of Rosamund? The Abbess and nuns, and others who knew her in her last years, took her for the real

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thing penitent Christian who achieved the forgiveness and favor of God before her early death. I expect that there were some Christians around the realm who honored King Henry II for the same reason.

The story of Rosamund and Henry was for centuries an object lesson for Oxford undergraduates feeling their freedom for the first time. Robert Southey, a Balliol alumnus, wrote “Inscription for a Tablet at Godstow Nunnery” in the 1820s. Southey—grown over the years from a young radical into a pious old conservative—took St. Hugh’s perspective on Fair Rosamund and King Henry. Southey’s poem remains wise counsel for Oxonians, young and old, going to or coming from The Trout. His subject is the tree that produces lust.

Stranger! the seemly fruit
Is worthless, all is hollowness
within,

For on the grave of
ROSAMUND it grows!
Young, lovely and beloved
she fell seduced,
And here retir’d to wear her
wretched age
In earnest prayer and bitter
penitence,
Despis’d and self-despising:
think of her
Young Man! and learn to
reverence Womankind!

In this poem, the word “reverence” denotes “fear.” How times have changed.

Since none from the restaurant had spoken to me in over an hour, I sat at my little table and made the most of my time by writing in my journal. My last day in Oxford had been just about perfect. The day began with one of the most coveted of delights: several hours in Blackwell’s book shop. Mid-day brought me to Woodstock and Blenheim Palace with my son and some college friends. And just

before I caught the cab to The Trout, I had a most educational episode with the owner of The Whisky Shop at 7 Turl Street.

For fifteen or twenty minutes, the proprietor of The Whisky Shop and I stood before a large, colorful poster divided into quadrants. This “map” is designed to help a bloke like me understand the world of malt whisky and which distillery productions I might enjoy. On this chart, the x-axis serves to indicate the continuum ranging from “light” to “rich.” The y-axis is the continuum “delicate” to “smokey.” If you picture the map, the “northeast” quadrant contains the names of all the “rich and smokey” whiskys; the “southwest” quadrant contains the “light and delicates;” and so on.

After asking me a great many questions and explaining what various Scottish distilleries do best, and I confess-

ing that I knew next to nothing about fine malt whisky, the shop owner walked up to the chart and pointed to a particular 18-year-old stuff. He explained why he wanted me to try this one. (The shop represented upwards of 600 different distilleries and brands.) I explained that I was flying out of England the next day. He walked over to a wall bin, grabbed one of those 3.4-ounce bottles, and handed it to me. It was 18-year-old Glen Dronach finished in Spanish sherry barrels. This whisky sits in the “rich and delicate” quadrant of the whisky chart. I sort of liked this affiliation.

“Take this back to your hotel,” he said. “Pour it into a glass. No ice! Let it sit in the glass for a long while. Then sip it slowly. I believe you’ll enjoy it. If you do like it, I believe you can find a big bottle of this whisky at the duty-free shop at Heathrow.”

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I followed this generous expert's instructions. Later in the day, not long before I caught a cab to The Trout, I sat in my rented room at Keble and had an "experience" with the malt whisky. The shop-owner had skillfully matched me! It was surprisingly delicious. I can now understand why even many quite severe pastors of the Scottish Kirk enjoy a nip of this "water of life" every now and then. The proprietor has just gained free advertising via *The Anglican Digest*, and I don't mind at all.

The Trout was lively and loud, but, after almost two hours, I had not initiated contact (let us say) with a single waiter. I walked to my old friend the maître d's desk and asked for a menu and a waiter. He seemed to have completely forgotten me. I said, "I'm the fellow out in the vestibule."

"Right away, Sir!"

I took the menu to my table and waited a good long time before a friendly lady found me, handed me a menu, took the menu back from me because I had one already, and asked if I wanted a cocktail.

"Since I'm at The Trout," I asked with useless American wit and outlander ignorance, "I would like the trout."

She smiled, looked me in the eyes, and shook her head. "Sorry. No trout on the menu tonight, Sir. But I can ask them to fry you up a nice puch."

"What's that?"

"A puch."

"A *puch*?"

"That's right. You'll get a nice portion, Sir. It's the whole fish, head and awl."

"A *perch*!" I exclaimed.

“Yes. White puch,” she said with a smile. “Carrots or peas?”

She left with not only my drink order—a glass of claret, please—but my dinner, salad, and dessert order too. I was learning fast. About twenty minutes later, she brought me my wine and a glass of water. “Your dinnah is on its way, Sir!” I thanked her for her attention to the matter. I began to write in my journal again. I knew to sip my claret slowly.

About four hours into my sojourn at The Trout, the foyer now cleared of people, my fried puch arrived. I must say, the fish was ample and delicious. I did not see my waitress again for another long while. My friend the maître d’ was ready for me as I approached the desk with a napkin in my hand.

“I believe I’m ready for my salad,” I said. I smiled, like a

good Southerner. The maître d’ smiled back, stepped over to look things over in the dining room, then stepped back over to me. “I’ll find your server, Sir. Your salad’ll be right out.”

The garden salad did soon appear. I asked my waitress if there was any dessert left. She nodded, made several suggestions, and I chose a pie. At this time, I do not remember what kind of pie it was. I do remember that it, too, required lots of extra time to prepare.

At some point I moved to a slightly larger table in the foyer proper. I was sitting on a bench with a thin cushion on it. The maître d’ had offered it at some point, and I took it. There was more room to spread out. I must have looked a little silly, because the bench was much lower than the table. My new table was only a few steps from the maître d’s stand. At some point I saw

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that the dining room was empty, but I forgot to ask for a standard table. There were plenty available now.

I looked around at a certain point and saw that I was the only human being in the restaurant. I had not noticed customers finishing and departing. It was eleven-thirty, or later, I believe. Most of the wait-staff were gone. Out on the terrace, the maître d' was straightening things up, shoving in chairs, popping debris off the table with his dish towel, righting canting center-pieces, and sweeping. There was no one tending the cash register on the far side of the foyer. I could have cleaned out the pounds and shillings and none would have noticed. But I was content. I had just had dinner at The Trout.

At some point, the maître d' came back over and asked if I had enjoyed my dinner. I said that I had enjoyed my dinner very much.

“Very busy night,” he remarked, affecting grimness.

I agreed.

“What have you been writing?” he asked. “I see you’ve been at it all night.” He gently put my check on the table. He smiled over his reading glasses.

“I’m a journalist,” I decided to reply. The devil got into me. “I’m the food critic for the *Chicago Tribune*.”

The picture on his face at that moment is worth a thousand words, which are unnecessary at this point in my story. The maître d' returned to the kitchen and I never saw him again. Which allows me to end the story of my last night in Oxford and my first time at The Trout.



“Happiness and the absurd are two sons of the same earth. They are inseparable.

— Albert Camus

NECROLOGY

✠ The Rev'd Jacquelyn Louise Guernsey, 91, on 16 October 2022 in Leesburg, Florida.

✠ The Rev'd John Richard K. Stieper, 88, on 25 October 2022, served Saint Columba's Church in the Chicago area for 37 years.

✠ The Rev'd Canon John W. Kline, 89, on 18 November 2022, served parishes in Northwest Pennsylvania, and upon retirement in Plano, Texas.

✠ The Rev'd Charles Britton Fulton, Jr., 85, on 12 December 2022, in Alpharetta, Georgia, served parishes in Florida and Georgia, but is most well known throughout the Anglican Communion for his role as President of ACTS 29 Ministries for several years and his authoring of several books.

✠ The Rev'd Allen Keith Hall, 98, on 24 December 2022 in Greeley, Colorado, served parishes in Colorado.

O Almighty God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, who, by a voice from heaven, didst proclaim, Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord: Multiply, we beseech thee, to those who rest in Jesus, the manifold blessings of thy love, that the good work which thou didst begin in them may be made perfect unto the day of Jesus Christ.

And of thy mercy, O heavenly Father, grant that we, who now serve thee on earth, may at last, together with them, be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; for the sake of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
BCP, pg. 486.



*God, the Creator Window designed and
made by Joep Nicolas, 1959, Venlo, Netherlands.
Trinity Episcopal Church, Upperville, Virginia*