

CTK: February News 2019



If I were to ask you, “What is the most important book in your life?” Since you are reading this newsletter I know what the answer most would give (or feel like they should give!)—The Bible. While that’s the most popular answer, most Christians in America (across denominations) have little familiarity with the Bible. Less than half can name any of the four gospels. The same applies to the first book of the Bible, and many are convinced that the Sermon on the Mount was preached by Billy Graham! According to Gallup, which has done numerous surveys on this topic, “Americans revere the Bible—but, by and large, they don’t read it. And because they don’t read it, they have become a nation of biblical illiterates.”

That may sound a bit harsh, yet I do think this is a major problem. In the Episcopal Church our worship is saturated with scripture, to a degree that few Episcopalians even realize. A few years ago I researched the Biblical roots of our typical Sunday worship service. I was unable to find a single sentence that was not directly from scripture or a paraphrase from scripture. The result is that many Episcopalians know small bits and pieces of scripture, but few can locate these phrases in the Bible, without the help of Google.

I grew up in the Episcopal Church and was very ignorant of scripture. I remember reading the Bible for the first time in college and being pleasantly surprised at how much wisdom and good advice I found.

Where do we go from here? St. Paul once said, “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways” (1st Corinthians 13:11). Following his train of thought, consider a few questions:

- What does an adult understanding of scripture look like?
- How much time are you willing to commit to deepened your knowledge of the Bible?
- Want to test your knowledge of the Bible? I can e-mail you a Biblical Literacy Quiz. You can also find them online.
- Did you know that if you read the New Testament for 5 minutes a day, you’ll finish it in a year

I don’t suggest trying to read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It’s too easy to give up. Instead, make an achievable goal and start small. Even if you’re not a reader, there are many free Bible Apps, videos, and other resources you can easily use. And please let me know what additional resources you’d like should you decide to take on a new Bible reading project.

Yours in Christ,

Fr David

What's Happening in February

3

- 8:00 Holy Eucharist (Spoken)
- 10:30 Holy Eucharist with Music and Children's Chapel

4

- Noon Ladies Lunch Bunch, Longhorn Steak House (By Deerbrook Mall)

5

- 8:00 Breakfast Brothers 1960 IHOP

9

- 8:30 Brotherhood of St. Andrew

10

- 8:00 Holy Eucharist (Spoken)
- 10:30 Holy Eucharist with Music and Children's Chapel

10

- 4:00 PM Confirmation Class
- 6:00 – 7:30 PM EYC

17

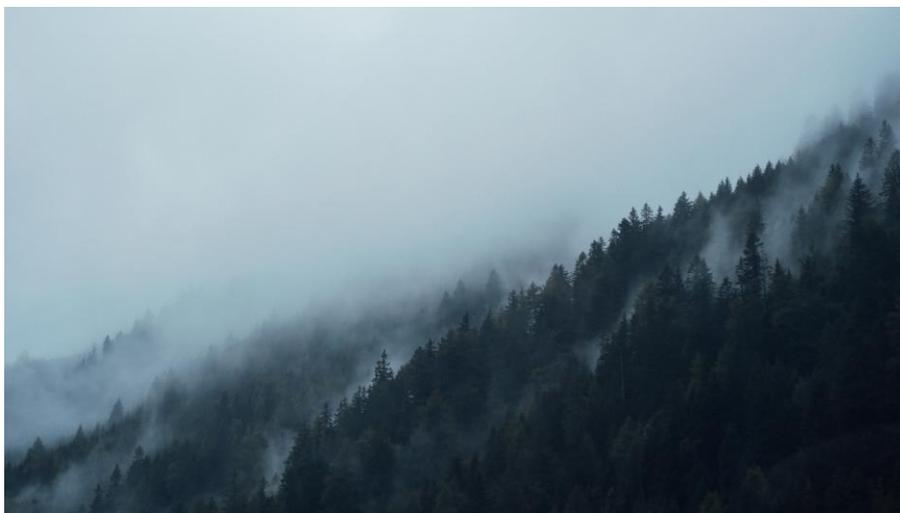
- 8:00 Holy Eucharist (Spoken)
- 10:30 Cantata and Holy Eucharist and Children's Chapel

24

- 8:00 Holy Eucharist (Spoken)
- 10:30 Holy Eucharist with Music and Children's Chapel

24

- 4:00 PM Confirmation Class
- 6:00 – 7:30 PM EYC



Absalom Jones, Priest 1818

February 13



Absalom Jones was born a house slave in 1746 in Delaware. He taught himself to read out of the New Testament, among other books. When sixteen, he was sold to a store owner in Philadelphia. There he attended a night school for Blacks, operated by Quakers. At twenty, he married another slave, and purchased her freedom with his earnings.

Jones bought his own freedom in 1784. At St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church, he served as lay minister for its Black membership. The active evangelism of Jones and that of his friend, Richard Allen, greatly increased Black membership at St. George's. The alarmed vestry decided to segregate Blacks into an upstairs gallery, without notifying them. During a Sunday service when ushers attempted to remove them, the Blacks indignantly walked out in a body.

In 1787, Black Christians organized the Free African Society, the first organized Afro-American society, and Absalom Jones and Richard Allen were elected overseers. Members of the Society paid monthly dues for the benefit of those in need. The Society established communication with similar Black groups in other cities. In 1792, the Society began to build a church, which was dedicated on July 17, 1794.

The African Church applied for membership in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania on the following conditions: 1, that they be received as an organized body; 2, that they have control over their local affairs; 3, that Absalom Jones be licensed as lay reader, and, if qualified, be ordained as minister. In October 1794 it was admitted as St. Thomas African Episcopal Church. Bishop White ordained Jones as deacon in 1795 and as priest on September 21, 1802.

Jones was an earnest preacher. He denounced slavery and warned the oppressors to "clean their hands of slaves." To him, God was the Father, who always acted on "behalf of the oppressed and distressed." But it was his constant visiting and mild manner that made him beloved by his own flock and by the community. St. Thomas Church grew to over 500 members during its first year. Known as "the Black Bishop of the Episcopal Church," Jones was an example of persistent faith in God and in the Church as God's instrument.

From Lesser Feasts and Fasts

Valentine's Day

February 14



About the only place you won't find St. Valentine this month is on our liturgical calendar. Evidently history records three martyred Valentines but not much is accurately known about any of them and so they don't make the calendar. What we do know is that none of them were particularly associated with "romantic love."

Valentine's Day only became associated with romantic love during the late fourteenth century, when Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343-1400), author of *The Canterbury Tales*, made the association in his poem 'The Parlement of Foules', written some time in the 1380s, possibly in 1382. The poem features a parliament, or assembly, of birds, which have gathered together in order to choose their mates. As Chaucer's narrator remarks, 'For this was on seynt Volantynys day / Whan euery bryd comyth there to chese his make.'

But when was Valentine's Day in Chaucer's poem? The modern reader is likely to assume Chaucer is referring to 14

February, but critics and commentators have pointed out that mid-February is an unlikely time of year for birds to mate, at least in England. Artistic licence is obviously a factor here, and 14 February was already established as the Christian feast day of Saint Valentine. And yet some scholars, Henry Ansgar Kelly among them, have proposed that Chaucer was actually referring to 3 May, a date on which Valentine of Genoa, a bishop who died around AD 307, was commemorated. Chaucer wrote a poem about the coming of summer which contains the lines, 'Saint Valentine, that art full high aloft, / Thus singen smalle fowles for thy sake'. Given that this poem is about the arrival of summer, early May seems a more likely date for this St. Valentine's Day than mid-February.

Another fact adds credence to the 3 May theory: it was on this date in 1381 that the engagement of Richard II (Chaucer's patron) to Anne of Bohemia was announced. Chaucer possibly wrote his poem the following year to mark the one-year anniversary of the betrothal.

So perhaps Chaucer 'invented' – or at any rate helped to popularise – Valentine's Day as a day of love and romance. It's just that he possibly had a different date marked on his calendar for Valentine's Day.

[From Interesting Literature](#)

FYI

Outreach is More Than Donating Money!



It is how we use our resources of time, money, talent and facilities to show God's love to the world. Our new Parish Hall has provided greater opportunity for Outreach. It has enriched our bible studies, provided greater flexibility for our youth, and enhanced Breakfast with Santa. These you see and participate in.

You may not be aware that we host the Kingwood Memory Cafe. It is a tax-exempt non-profit founded by Donna Composto and Barbara Hemphill. Serving families in Kingwood, Humble, Porter, and Atascocita, its purpose is to relieve the isolation, loneliness, and stigma experienced by those in early stages of dementia and their caregivers. **Kingwood Memory Cafe offers two programs: a monthly dinner and assistance with short-term care expenses.**

The monthly dinner, offered free of charge, includes bingo and other social activities. Here people can interact, find support, share concerns and celebrate without feeling embarrassed or misunderstood. It is a fun social time around a shared meal, yet it means so much more to these families who are challenged by ordinary social situations. Wives bring their husbands, husbands bring their wives, daughters and sons bring their moms and dads. And sometimes grandchildren come along too. Nothing is judged or criticized and laughter is in abundant supply.

Short-term care (respite care) cost assistance makes it easier for these family members to take a much needed break from the 24/7 demands of caregiving. This program is offered when donations exceed the cost of the monthly dinners.

Brochures providing details and contracts can be found on the table just inside the church entrance.

—Barry Rought

FYI

This May Surprise You



Will Symmes is director of volunteers at Lord of The Streets Houston, an Episcopal church within the Diocese of Texas. He recently wrote a commentary in the **Houston Chronicle** headlined, *“Real Help For The Homeless.”* An excerpt is provide below. You can access the entire article [here](#).

“I prey on the benevolence of Christians.”

Those words hung in the air as I reflected on what James had said. James, a homeless drug addict, was explaining how he supported his cocaine habit. He was adept at “flying a sign” and had mastered his panhandling skills over the past five years. He stands at a busy Houston intersection with a sign that reads “God Bless, anything helps.” He makes hundreds of dollars a day practicing his trade. “It’s hard work. If the weather is cold, I don’t wear a jacket. If it’s hot, I sweat a lot. I have got to look the part. But it works, and that’s how I get the money for drugs.”

Rosco, another member of the homeless community, explained his thought process in approaching a target. “I like to approach people when they’re leaving a restaurant — not on the way in. People are happy and feel good after their meal, so they’re more likely to give me a couple of bucks for food. If a guy is walking with a woman, he’ll want to give me something to get rid of me. Oh yeah, I can make a few hundred dollars a day just asking.” When I asked him how he spent the money, he said, “When I make \$200 bucks, \$40 goes for alcohol to get me warmed up. Then I’ll spend \$120 on crack and save the last \$40 for food and other stuff.”

These are some of the many accounts shared with me over the past year working at a ministry with a day shelter for the homeless. Listening to these stories has convinced me that the mayor is right about giving money or food to panhandlers — DON’T DO IT! If you do, you are simply being an enabler — not providing help but perpetuating unhealthy behavior. [\[Continue reading\]](#)

FYI

Confirmation Class

Confirmation Class will meet at 4:00 PM on February 10 and 24.



EYC Meeting

EYC meets on February 10 and 24 between 6:00 and 7:30 PM. Don't miss it!



Time to Celebrate!



February 2 Paul Masters
February 3 Debbie Lee
February 3 Eric Clevenger
February 6 Kadence Nichols
February 6 Kourtney Nichols
February 7 Ruth Masters
February 9 Steve Goodson
February 9 Brooklynne Fitzgerald

February 16 Tristan Heaton
February 18 Rachel Taylor
February 23 Susan Lunson
February 23 Ashley Taylor
February 26 Elizabeth Dimaala
February 27 Melissa Heaton
February 28 Bill Williams

Happy Anniversary!

February 1 Andy and Susan Yee
February 10 Brad and Tracy Painter
February 14 Ray and Mimi Buchman
February 17 George and Patsy Ebert
February 26 David and Tori Yee



Who's Doing What?

Usher Schedule

February 3

- 8:00 – Henry Lee, Robert Keller
- 10:30 – Caren Thomas, Phoebe Aston, Michael McNeil

February 10

- 8:00 – Rod and Ann Rodriguez
- 10:30 – George and Barbara Spence, Saman Khalaf, Paul Masters

February 17

- 8:00 – Robert Lunson, Rachel Shaye
- 10:30 – Hilary Sellar, Steve Goodson

February 24

- 8:00 – Henry Lee, Robert Keller
- 10:30 – Bruce and Diane Newport

Vestry Member of the Day and Counter

February 3 – George Ebert, Barbara Spence

February 10 – Lesley Exum, Debbie Lee

February 17 – Bob Keller, Johne Dowell

February 24 – Ann Rodriguez, Billie Bailey

Lay Reader and Chalice Bearer Schedule

February 3

- 8:00 – Deb Tisch
- 10:30 – Fiona Aston(LR), Rice Aston(CB1), Valerie Bonnie(CB2)

February 10

- 8:00 – Debbie Lee
- 10:30 – Rosalie Pyle(LR), Shawn Sanders(CB1), Susan Lunson(CB2)

February 17

- 8:00 – George Ebert
- 10:30 – Billie Bailey(LR), Lynda Rought (CB1), Lesley Exum (CB2)

February 24

- 8:00 – Lyn Goodman
- 10:30 – Barbara Spence (LR), Valerie Bonnie (CB1), Rice Aston (CB2)

Staff, Vestry and Contacts

Our Staff

Reverend David Nelson, Rector bgchaplain@gmail.com
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Staff Members may also be reached via our main phone line: (281) 852-1990

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Bill Williams (713) 859-7439 wm.k.williams@comcast.net

Vestry Appointed Positions:

Rachael Shedeed, *Clerk of the Vestry*
Bill Williams, *Treasurer*

Where to Find Us and How to Contact Us

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Vestry's Financial Summary as of December 31, 2018

Revenues and Expenses Year-to-Date	
Total Revenues	\$279,054
Total Expenses	\$295,356
Total Revenue Less Expenses	\$(16,302)
Cash Accounts	
Operating Account	\$54,026
Capital Campaign	\$47,065
Reserve	\$3,843
Building	\$1,090
Total Cash	\$106,024

Concealed Handgun and Open Carry Restrictions

NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 30.06, Penal Code (Trespass by License Holder with a Concealed Handgun), a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code (Handgun Licensing Law), may not enter this property with a concealed handgun.

NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 30.07, Penal Code (Trespass by License Holder with an Openly Carried Handgun), a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code (Handgun Licensing Law), may not enter this property with a handgun that is carried openly.

Picture Credits

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 Page 10 – Annie Spratt (Birthday)
 Page 10 – Element5 Digital (Anniversary)



Got something for the Newsletter? Send questions, comment or news to the editor at ebertg@gmail.com