

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol. 43 No. 35

The Eighth Sunday after Trinity

July 29, 2012

PAUL WADDELL PRITCHARTT R.I.P.

Fr. Pritchartt, Rector of St. John's from 1970 to 1973, died Saturday July 21st at his home in Spartanburg, South Carolina. He was preceded in death by his wife, Dale Smith Pritchartt, earlier this year. His funeral took place at St. Francis Anglican Church, Spartanburg, on Tuesday July 24th. Fr. Pritchartt was the first rector of St. John's after it came back into the diocese after four years as an independent congregation.

*Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord;
And let light perpetual shine upon him.*

PARISH KALENDAR THIS WEEK

Monday- Friday (Chapel)

8:15am & 5:30pm

Morning or Evening Prayer

In addition, on Wednesday

9:45 a.m. *Litany*

10:00 a.m. *Sung Eucharist*

THIS SUNDAY AT 9:30 A.M.

The Rev'd Horace Tipton will speak about his experience in the Anglican Church of Kenya and his work with PLANTING FAITH MINISTRIES. Please plan to attend.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE FROM HERE

The news out of the 77th triennial General Convention this past month was (mostly) bad. Who expected anything else? By now many of you will have heard of the passage of a resolution (A049) authorizing for trial use a rite for blessing same-sex partnerships. Although no surprise, the resolution further degrades the already confused teaching and practice of Christian marriage among Episcopalians and contradicts the commitment of the Episcopal Church to uphold and

propagate the historic Faith and Order of the Church Catholic within the fellowship of the Anglican Communion.

There are some mitigating factors. First, though in principle in favour of some kind of same-sex blessings, the Bishop of Georgia criticized the measure as "problematic, poorly written, and confusing", and voted against it, as did the majority of the diocesan delegates (3-1). Second, as a trial rite, it requires the diocesan's explicit permission before it may be used – whether he will do so or not is a decision he has said he will announce in the fall. Third, the resolution comes with explicit protection of conscience: it commits the General Convention to "honor the theological diversity of this church in regard to matters of human sexuality, and that no bishop, priest, deacon or lay person should be coerced or penalized in any manner, nor suffer any canonical disabilities, as a result of his or her conscientious objection to or support for ... the Blessing of Same-Sex Relationships". The Bishop of Georgia also has said that no parish or priest would be required to use it, and I think we may take him at his word.

So the immediate practical impact of this measure on St. John's and even on the Diocese of Georgia may well be limited for the foreseeable future. But a foothold has now been established for the theological principle - and who knows how long the "foreseeable future" will last? The supporters of this measure will probably agitate to extend

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STANDING NOTICES

The occasional Sacraments of Baptism, Matrimony, Penance, Communion and Unction of the Sick, and the Office of Burial of the Dead are always available by appointment, at announced times, or as necessary.

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS

Please call the Church Office to inform the clergy if you or a loved one is in the hospital.

ST. JOHN'S WEB SITE

Parish Paper essays may be read on our web site:
www.stjohnssav.org

VESTRY OFFERING CHAIRMEN

8:00 Mr. Arthur D. Weed
10:30 Mrs. Richard C. E. Jennings

The flowers at the altar are given to the glory of God and in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Francis E. Williams, Jr. and Mr. Mike Lowrance and Mr. Dean Lowrance by Mr. and Mrs. Roland B. Williams.

CHANCEL SOCIETY

Mrs. William H. Dearing,
Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard Sr.
Ms. Anne Mingledorff, Mrs. Philip F. Kirk
Mrs. Jonathan D. Sprague, Ms. Jeanne McMillan
Mrs. Joseph R. Ross, Ms. Jeanne McMillan
Mrs. Franklin Brunson.

ACOLYTES

8:00 John DeBacker
10:30 Clayton Compton, Chris Dixon
Charles Perrie, Lindsay Perrie
Patrick Perrie, Jamie McClellan

COFFEE HOUR

Mrs. Floyd G. Whittington, Jr.

**TUESDAY AND THURSDAY MORNING
Men's Bible Study & Discussion Groups**

(READING ROOM, 3RD FLOOR, CRANMER HALL)

Tuesday 7:00 a.m. – *Colossians*, with Dr. Bergstrom

Thursday 7:00 a. m. — *Acts of the Apostles*, with Fr. Dunbar

BAZAAR BUSINESS

The **canners** need fresh veggies and fruits (figs, peppers, pears, peaches, apples, mangos, etc) sugar, mint, pecans and half-pint jars. Jane Pressly 233-6551.

Storage unit available for **White Elephant** and **Treasurer Room**, contact Betsy Howard at 398-1326 or betsyd6@aol.com

CHURCH OFFICE SUMMER HOURS

Office closes at Noon on Fridays.
Monday through Thursday 9—4:30 p.m.

STATEMENTS

The statements for the second quarter were mailed last week. If you did not receive yours please call the church office.

PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR CHURCH IN YOUR WILL

its provisions much further, and the commitment "to honor theological diversity" will come under increasing pressure. "Local option" on same-sex blessings sounds like a solution to many - but its effects are not merely local.

Almost equally dismaying was another resolution (C029) on *Access to Baptism and Communion*, which would have tacitly authorized "open communion" - that is, permission for the unbaptized (not merely the unconfirmed) to receive communion - a practice, current in some parts of the Episcopal Church, that runs against biblical, ancient, Anglican, and ecumenical precedent. Thanks in part to focussed and effective action by the bishop and delegates of the Diocese of Georgia, this resolution was replaced by a much stronger affirmation of baptism as "the ancient and normative entry point to receiving Holy Communion" and of the Church's mission "to go into the world and baptize all peoples". So disaster was avoided; and we owe a debt of thanks to the Georgia delegation for helping to avoid it; but the margin of safety seems uncomfortably narrow. I fear that we have not seen the last of "open communion".

We are told (by the chief operating officer of the Episcopal Church, in a letter to the *Wall Street Journal*, July 20th) that the Episcopal Church has been "liberating itself" from its former "captivity to the dominant culture". Its innovations are both "counter-cultural" and "profoundly traditional", because they follow the example of Jesus in "standing by those [whom] society marginalizes". As an *apologia* for the innovations of the last forty years, this beggars belief. What 'progressive' cultural bandwagon of this time has the Episcopal Church not leaped upon? In almost every innovation it has moved in lockstep with the changing moral and religious views of the social elites it serves - and in almost every case (black, or African-American, civil rights being the

honourable exception) at the expense of historic Faith and Order. Is this "liberation from the dominant culture", or just the expedient transfer of allegiance to the new cultural establishment (in many cases, the same people with updated opinions)? Big business corporations are doing the same with diversity policies in employment and marketing. Is that really what the COO calls 'risk-taking radical faithfulness to the church's tradition'?

That is not what liberal (socially progressive) Christianity used to be. As Ross Douhat pointed out in the *New York Times* (July 14), "the Christianity that animated causes such as the Social Gospel and the civil rights movement was much more dogmatic [i.e. *doctrinal*] than present-day liberal faith. (...) Its leaders ... argued for progressive reform in the context of 'a personal transcendent God ... the divinity of Christ, the need of personal redemption, and the importance of Christian missions'. Today, by contrast, the leaders of the Episcopal Church ... often don't seem to be offering anything you can't already get from a purely secular liberalism."

So is there any good news? First, that this too must pass. Downsizing of General Convention is under serious discussion. The generation that was formed in the 1960's and still believes the mythology of that time is giving way to others. Despite the real failings of the Episcopal Church (and not just of its liberals), God continues to raise up faithful men and women in it, open to the Word of God and the historic Faith and Order as sometimes their elders are not. As conservative and traditional Episcopalians, our vocation in our time and place is to be faithful, to submit ourselves in patience and repentance to God's just judgments, and to hand on unimpaired to our posterity the doctrine, discipline, and worship of Christ as we have received them. GGD

8:00 A.M.—HOLY COMMUNION

COLLECT, EPISTLE, and GOSPEL 199, 200

A continental breakfast is available in Cranmer Hall following this service.

9:30-12:00 (Noon)—Nursery (*Cranmer Hall*)

9:30-10:15 A.M.—ADULT & YOUTH CLASS (*Chapel*)

Pre-School through 6th Grade Summer Program (*Cranmer Hall*)

10:30—11:30 Activities for Pre-School & Kindergarten (*Cranmer Hall*)

Jr. Choir—1st through 4th Grade (*Cranmer Hall*)

10:30 A.M. — MORNING PRAYER & SERMON

CARILLON

HYMN #300 *Before the Lord Jehovah's throne*..... Winchester New

Sentences, Confession, Absolution, & Lord's Prayer Prayer Book, pp. 3-7

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HYMN #378 *Come, gracious Spirit, heav'nly Dove* Mendon

THE SERMON..... Fr. O'Brien

OFFERING

Sentences

Anthem: *God of Love, Forgive and bless us, fr, Cantata 79*..... Johann Sebastian Bach

Vonté Abrams, tenor, and Ashley Whittington, soprano

Presentation of Alms: Doxology #139, and Hymn #141 (verse 4)

PRAYER and BLESSING

HYMN #383 *Blessed City, Heav'nly Salem* Oriel

ORGAN: Prelude and Fugue in E minorattr. Johann Sebastian Bach

Everyone is invited to attend the Coffee Hour in Cranmer Hall immediately after the 10:30 service.

If you are a guest and visiting our Parish, please make yourself known.

12 Noon HOLY COMMUNION in the Chapel. (Collect, Epistle, Gospel as 8 a.m.)