



# Ecclesia Anglicana

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## Profitable and Productive Lent in India: *By Bishop-Elect David Haines*

During the Lenten Season we are encouraged to use abstinence and fasting, along with prayer, Bible study and regular church attendance, to strengthen and enhance our Christian faith and put it into action. Bishop Jaya Rao, Presiding Bishop of the Anglican Church of India, Diocese of Andhra Pradesh and Telengana, reports that the churches and parishioners in his jurisdiction have been participating enthusiastically in the various Lenten services offered by the churches in south India.

The churches have been offering daily worship services on each of the forty days of Lent. They are also fasting and holding special prayer services every Friday. The Bishop, together with his wife, Rebecca, and their eldest son (Rev. Richard Rajish Kumar) have been visiting each of the churches and holding meetings with the local Anglican Church of India clergy in these areas.

During the first

thirteen days of Lent (through February 28<sup>th</sup>) the Bishop and his family have visited nine churches in the Chittoor and Nellore Districts, as well as

meeting with all the clergy from these districts. The Bishop plans to visit the other eleven churches, in the four other districts, during the remaining weeks of Lent, and to hold meetings with the clergy in each of these districts. His plan is to travel first to the churches that are furthest from the Cathedral in Jammalamadugu and then visit the churches in the

Ananthapur and Kadapa Districts during Holy Week. The season will conclude with special

services on Good Friday and Easter Even at the Cathedral of the Holy Nativity in Jammalamadugu. Please continue to pray for Bishop Jaya Rao and for all the work he and his clergy are doing to build God's Kingdom in south India, and for a successful outcome for our 2018 Lenten Appeal. ✠



## On Christian Friendship: *By the Rev'd Ian Emile Dunn*

In last month's *Ecclesia Anglicana* the Right Reverend Robert T. Giffin expounded upon the need for our parishes to grow, especially by developing models of discipleship that lead to individuals in our congregations having a healthy and vibrant walk with Christ. One element of discipleship that we do not often talk about is friendship. There is a need for strong bonds between men and strong bonds between women to the end that we can pour out our hearts, and share our struggles and joys with each other. Altogether too often in our culture, we take the antithetical position to John Donne's poem and say, every man is an island. But the great poet-preacher was right – no man was created to be an island, and these rich friendships are foundational in our ability to disciple each other and grow in Christ.

As I prayed about whether I would accept the call to be the Rector of All Saints Anglican Church, Prescott, many issues weighed on my mind, including a fear of being alone. Moving to a parish even farther from my family, leaving behind the friendships I had established, and no longer having other APA parishes and priests as neighbors presented itself as a significant obstacle as to whether this would be a wise choice for me. In the end, Lord gave me great peace about the decision. As I've established myself in my little mountain city, He has blessed me with not only one, but several Godly friends, who have poured out their lives to me as I have to them.

These new friendships have led me to contemplate what it means to be a genuine, good, and Christian friend. The cultural view that surrounds us is skewed; we have twisted and downgraded why friendships are important. The culture views tell us that the other is there to hang out with and do things with so we don't get lonely. Likewise, our culture views intimacy, which is critical to the Christian's understanding of friendship, as sexual interaction. In this view, sex is no longer intimate, and friendships no longer contain deep personal bonds. Instead, God created friendships to be intimate. We see this through scripture, God would walk in the garden with Adam and Eve, then David and Jonathan's souls were described as being knit together, and Christ set the perfect example of friendship by laying down his life for us.

The goal of true friendship isn't someone to hang out with to fill the aloneness, no, the goal is

that we would we would encourage and strengthen each other in our walk with the Lord. For this reason, friendship is critical in discipleship.

First – when Christ has called us to leave everything behind, it isn't to leave everything behind for nothing, but for something so much better than what the world can offer us. We can find in the world authentic friendships, fulfilling careers, and even comforting relationships, but Christ offers a better version of this. Look at the rich young ruler in Luke 18. He had it all, but Christ offered him more. The church is meant to be a place of deep relationships and familial love.

Second – the Biblical model for friendship is that the other knows our soul. The relationship between David and Jonathan models this. Too often, our culture fears this pouring out, and so modernists often insinuate that David and Jonathan were homosexuals, but this is not in the text, and in doing so, they miss out on the great lesson of true friendship. David gains so much from knowing Jonathan. Likewise, we and those whom we are genuinely friends with gain a more profound blessing from these relationships.

Third – when we call someone friend, and let them in, we model Jesus. Ultimately, a true Christian friendship isn't meant to take the place of Christ, but to point to Christ. A friend will, inevitably, fail you, but Christ never will. For two human friends are two friends who are broken and sinful, and no matter how deeply we walk with Christ, we still have those sins that will injure the other; this is where the practice of living in grace comes in for grace must be shown here. This living in love and showing grace point us to a deeper walk with the Lord who has already called us a friend, and in doing so, He says "I have let you in, you are mine now." We are no longer on the outside, but on the inside held close to Him through His grace.

Christian Friendship, I propose is an essential part of our model of discipleship. Asking those we walk with in our parish, and our communities: "is it well with your soul?" or "my friend, how can I pray for you today?" begins the deeper conversations that we need to be having for the sake of the churches' health. I hope that, perhaps, you will pick up the phone and call a friend and invite him for coffee, write an old lost compadre a letter, or ask your spouse "how can I pray for you today?" You may very well be surprised by the response, and enjoy the very good fruit of Christ working in this kindness. ✠

## Exciting New Sanctuary Renovations: *By the Rev'd Paul Rivard*

For any of you that have ever visited The Anglican Church of Saint George the Martyr in Simpsonville (Greenville) South Carolina before November of last year, you no doubt noticed the unique nature of the sanctuary. There, resting upon a structure over the altar, attached to the wall and supported by two wooden pillars, was a beloved, adorned, and fully functioning pipe organ. For a church as small as ours, it was a real treat to sing from our great hymnal along with such a living and “breathing” instrument. As lovely as it was to worship God with the use of the pipe organ however, its precarious positioning over the altar along with the obstruction of the pillars was not great. It made the priest and acolytes work awkward, and as we learned from more than one organ repair person – also potentially dangerous. *(Picture above is the old sanctuary. The new design is pictured below.)*



it was made, there was freedom to renovate the entire sanctuary. With the organ removed, old carpet was replaced with “Luxury Vinyl Tile,” a bishop’s throne and side chairs purchased, the new organ and speaker towers were crafted and

installed, and a Holy Spirit themed stained glass rose window was created by a local artist and finally put in place on Rose Sunday in Advent.

Since the completion of the project, along with the notable relief of the Vestry and Rector, the parish has truly enjoyed a much more versatile organ, room to move in the sanctuary, and overall improved acoustics.

Perhaps most refreshing for worship is the effect of light

now beaming in from the east through colorful stained glass. The celebrant is no longer cramped under 1500 pounds of lead pipes and carpentry, the sound of the organ is superb, and the architecture now naturally draws the eye upward in this sacred space that seems to be so much bigger. With many



When it was determined that the organ needed over \$50,000 in repairs in order to function properly and safely, a decision was made to remove the organ and install a digital organ for roughly the same price. This was not an easy decision; but when



generous contributions, the parish did very well to cover the cost of this project within a span of about 8 months from beginning to finish. If you would like to see and hear the completed renovations, come and visit us at Saint George’s any time! ✠



## **The Ministry of Deaconess: *By Mrs. Cynthia Hensley***

As anyone who has answered a divine call to formal ministry can attest, embarking on a course to serve Christ and His Church gives birth to a whole new aspect of your faith. It is, in many ways, a fresh spiritual awakening. On the other hand, the road to ministry can also be long, winding and at times uncertain. For those answering a call to the ministry of deaconess, the path which lay ahead has the added obstacle of being a path less trodden. Although the ministry of deaconess has its earliest roots in the Apostolic Church (Phoebe, who is found in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, being the first woman to bear the title) the ministry has waxed and waned many times over the life of the Church. But, by God's grace, it has always survived. Because there is little written on the subject, a woman who is faithfully seeking to join the order must expect a very personal and spiritual discovery to unfold as to what her ministry will entail. The reality is, the potential role a woman will play in her local parish and community will be as varied as the women themselves. Much will depend on the needs of her parish, the needs of her priest, and on her God-given spiritual gifts. When I moved from the year of quiet discernment to candidacy, the question most often posed was what my future ministry would encompass. The reply I repeatedly and somewhat abashedly gave was the truth. I simply did not yet know. My ministry had to emerge slowly as I studied and trained. I also had the added benefit of working closely with my



priest, Father Erich Zwingert, Rector of All Saints' Anglican Church in Mills River, North Carolina, who has been instrumental in helping me develop a role in our parish that is fruitful and beneficial to him and the church. Today, as the end of my two-year candidacy falls on the horizon, the initial uncertainty about my future ministry has proven to be a well-earned lesson to trust in God always. For one truth is absolute, a genuine call from the Lord means He has need of you and work for you. It is easy now to see the Lord's ever-flawless purpose in each experience, including those which seemed insignificant at the time. My failures, of which there were many, honed my mettle. The doldrums tried and molded my patience and hope. And the triumphs whittled my pride so that I would learn to give Him glory in all things. Looking back, I have come to appreciate a path less trodden, for on them you learn to depend on Him, drawing you nearer to the Savior with each step. ✠