



THE CALL

ST. ANDREW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS

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What Scripture Gives your Life Meaning?



The Rev. Adrian Robbins-Cole

■ WAS RECENTLY ASKED TO WRITE a personal “testimony” using a passage of scripture that is meaningful for my life. I will give this testimony to a group of clergy this summer, when I attend a weeklong preaching seminar at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria.

My initial reaction to this exercise was one of irritation. How could I choose one passage from the whole of scripture? But then I realized there is a passage I constantly reflect upon as I try to order my life and which lies at the heart of my preaching. I can't say that the passage is particularly original—indeed it is probably one of the best known in the New Testament, but then again I never cared much about the contemporary obsession with being unique or different.

The passage I chose is Matthew 22:37-40, when Jesus responds to the question about which is the

greatest commandment. He answers that the greatest commandment is to love God, and there is a second commandment like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. These two commandments, he says, summarize the totality of God's laws and the teachings of God's prophets.

What I love about this commandment is that it resonates with a deep sense that I have in my soul that we are designed as humans to be in spiritual relationship with the divine, but equally we discover meaning in how we are called to love and serve our neighbors. I find this is where meaning and purpose are to be found at the most profound levels in our lives. Furthermore, I find the relationship between the call to love God and also to love my neighbor is one that keeps me on my toes. It reminds me as a Christian that I am not just called to be a person of prayer, nor am I called just to be a person concerned with charity and social justice. Both are important and each feeds the other.

As we enter these summer months, and hopefully have a chance to step back from the rushed pace of so many of our regular lives, it might be valuable to think about a passage of scripture that is meaningful for your life. You could ponder how this passage reflects your spiritual life and the ways in which you might wish to recommit yourself to deepening your faith.

For me, this question has come at an interesting time in my life, as I prepare to celebrate 25 years of ordained ministry and five years as the rector of St. Andrew's. It has caused me to reflect on the purpose of the ordained ministry and on the direction of our common life at St. Andrew's.

It also comes as we anticipate the celebration of our parish's 125th anniversary next year and look forward to the next 125 years. As we ponder the next chapter in the life of St. Andrew's, it seems so important that we know “what we are about.”

I have been reading a book by two management consultants who took a yearlong sabbatical from their jobs to investigate critical factors that could help enrich the spiritual life of their church. Their study of spiritually dynamic churches, which seemed to be helping their members grow in the depth of their faith, revealed that a clear sense of direction in the life of those churches was a critical factor in their spiritual mission. In particular, the authors found that churches who clearly identified their main purpose as helping people build a relationship with Christ, and live Christ-centered lives, were the most spiritually dynamic.

This finding may seem obvious, but this sense of clear vision can get lost in the life of a church when we can get so caught up with the nitty-gritty of keeping the church going—in the same way we can

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lose our focus on Christ in our individual lives as we deal with day-to-day tasks and stress. We have to build up spiritual practices, such as prayer and dedicating each task we face to God, to keep our call to be followers of Christ in focus.

As a clergy team, Margaret, Cat, Karen, and I are committed to a vision of St. Andrew's as a place where we help you to deepen your relationship with Christ. Through the ministries of our parish, whether they are lay- or clergy-led,

we want to provide opportunities to experience Christ's love more deeply and recognize how God is calling you to use your talents to serve your neighbor.

Yours in Christ,



Warden's Message

Then he left, returning a different way (1 Kings 13:10)



Michael Vanin, Warden

JUST A FEW MONTHS AGO, I completed my three-year term as warden, but, as we know, life is somewhat unpredictable and the unexpected often happens. Minding my own business, feet up with drink in hand, I heard the home phone ring one evening. The familiar voice on the other end said, "I have good news and bad news." It was Nancy Hancock letting me know that, after looking for 18 months, she had landed a dream job (the good news) . . . in Baltimore (the bad news). This meant she would have to move and give up her position as warden.

A day or two later, I got a different call from another famil-

iar voice; it was Adrian. He also said he had good news and as he called it . . . "interesting news." (Is "interesting" loosely translated as "bad"?) The good news was that he, like all of us, was thrilled for Nancy and excited about the professional journey she was about to undertake. The "interesting" news was that there was now a hole in the St. Andrew's leadership. He asked if I could occupy the warden vacancy until the annual meeting in January 2019. David Hamlin, a very capable new warden, had only been on the job for six weeks. Other past wardens could not fill in because they were either too far removed from the day to day operations and management of the church or had committed to other significant responsibilities.

Movie and TV news clips flashed through my mind. No, I could not respond with the words of Lyndon Johnson, who said 50 years ago, "I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term." Or, in the words of Michael Corleone (in *The Godfather: Part III*), who said, "Just when I thought I was out, they pull me back in." But the best and most lighthearted quote



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I thought of was from Bill Murray in *Groundhog Day*: “Did you ever wake up with the foreboding sense of Déjà vu? Like you’ve lived the exact same day, over and over again?”

Ironically, Groundhog Day is my birthday, and, yes, I often wake up thinking I’ve lived this same day over and over again, this time it’s real and I only have to relive this day another 290 times (until the election at the annual meeting January 29, 2019).

Obviously, I write this in jest. St. Andrew’s is very important to me and to my family. How could I ever again show my face at a Sunday service if I declined Adrian’s request and the vestry’s vote of confidence? As a former and a

current member of the vestry said to me, “Oh, you love this,” and they wouldn’t be wrong. Except the “this” is more about service to this wonderful organization, an opportunity to continue to do the work necessary to extend our legacy beyond our 125-year history. It’s a chance, to give David the luxury of knowing there is someone with just a wee bit more institutional memory to provide a safety net, and ultimately to allow the newly elected warden that same luxury once she is serving alongside the then “seasoned” veteran, Mr. Hamlin.

Thank you for the privilege of serving this wonderful congregation and for the confidence you have in my ability to continue to lead. I am grateful for the notes,

emails, texts, and quiet whispers of thanks and encouragement. Even though I started my article with a quote from Kings—“Then he left, returning a different way”—maybe I should have quoted Dorothy Gale from Kansas, who woke up from the dream she had after suffering a bump on her head. If the farm and her room are a proxy for St. Andrew’s, you may remember that she sat up, looked around her bedroom, saw all the familiar faces, and said gratefully, “Oh, we’re home, Toto! Home! And this is my room, and you’re all here. . . I love you all, and—oh, Auntie Em—there’s no place like home!” St. Andrew’s is like home. . . it’s good to be back, and Dorothy’s right. . . there’s no place like home.

The Power of Forgiveness



The Rev. Margaret Schwarzer

SUMMER BRINGS SWEET AIR, a change of pace, and the growth of beautiful trees, fruit, and flowers.

But it can’t happen without winter, when old leaves are shed, the fields lie fallow, and plants prepare for growth. Much of our Christian practice of forgiveness has a similar rhythm; we can’t be freed up for new life, new beginnings, new starts, until we have let go of old disappointments, old resentments, old wounds. Are you ready for a summer of the soul? Practicing

forgiveness is a certain way to free up energy and possibility. When we make room for the Holy Spirit to help us forgive a genuine hurt in our lives, we make room for abundant life to find us and transform us. We make our peace and move forward into the place where new life—new opportunities—are waiting for us.

This past Lent, we offered a five-week program on the gifts and challenges of forgiveness. So many people came, or asked for program handouts, or asked for more classes, that we will be offering more opportunities for the practicing of forgiveness next fall. But why wait till then?

What I know about forgiveness is that it does take practice; forgiveness isn’t easy for most of us. And the bigger the sorrow or resentment, the harder it will be for us to let go. But letting go is worth it; so much life, so many new possibilities, are waiting for us when we can forgive. Start small. Be gentle with yourself. Ask yourself if you are ready to forgive. If you aren’t quite there yet, what would

it take to become ready to forgive? Or become ready to be ready to forgive? Pray about it. We choose forgiveness for ourselves, to set ourselves free, and this may or may not require us to speak to the other person. It doesn’t require us to wait for the other person to be ready. We choose forgiveness so that our life can begin again, so that our energy can be freed up for peace, for rest, for love, for creativity, for joy. Every day that we try, or try to try, we are coming closer to freedom and new life.

*Hang on to resentment
is like drinking poison and
waiting for the other person
to die. —Bert Ghezzi*

If you want to be humbled by the power of forgiveness, I invite you to think about Ray Hinton’s story. On April 3, 2015, after 30 years on death row in a five-foot-by-seven-foot cell in an Alabama prison, Ray Hinton was exonerated

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The Power of Forgiveness *continued*

and released. *60 Minutes* did an interview with him a few weeks after his release, and the *60 Minutes* interviewer asked, “Are you still angry with the people who put you in prison?” Ray Hinton said that he had forgiven the people who put him in jail. The interviewer was outraged. He said, “But they took

30 years of your life; how can you not be angry?!” Ray Hinton replied, “If I am angry and unforgiving, they will have taken away the rest of my life.”

As we are out and about, on beaches, in forests, in exotic vacation locales, I invite you to see if there is a pinched place in your

own heart that needs freedom and release. Step by step, day by day, we practice the Christian art of forgiveness, until, by our hard work and the grace of God, we discover new freedom, new peace. God-speed in the practice of forgiveness.

Getting to Know David Hamlin



Peter Lull

David Hamlin was recently elected warden of St. Andrew’s. We profile him here in The Call to share a little more about him, how he came to St. Andrew’s, and what makes this place special for him.

DAVID GREW UP in Delaware, graduated with a degree in Economics from Emory University, and a Master’s in Economics from The University of Delaware. He is also a CFA Charterholder. He has spent his career in financial services and is currently head of public fixed income research at Sun Life Investment Management, a position he assumed in 2017. He had previously spent a decade at Fidelity Investments and before that had a long tenure at Putnam Investments.

He moved with his family—wife Becky, daughter Margie, and son Tucker—to Dover from Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, in 1998. He was raised as a Presbyterian and Becky an Episcopalian, so when they moved to the area they did a

number of church visits to see what made sense. “I had worshiped in the Episcopal Church with Becky’s family in the summer and at holidays before we moved up here. However, in Wilmington we belonged to the Presbyterian Church where I was raised,” said David. They decided on St. Andrew’s because it “was where we felt at home.”

St. Andrew’s attracted them for several reasons. David felt the homily and sermon are a very important part of worship, so he wanted to find a church where there was a tradition of strong preaching. They wanted to find a home parish where they could worship and be part of the community, but also raise their young children—three and five years old at the time—to be part of the church community. Margie and Tucker attended church school and eventually served as acolytes and crucifers.

David remembers one of the first visits by someone from the church was when associate rector Gwen Buehrens came to their home and left as a gift *The Book of Common Prayer*. David recalled, “It was a really wonderful gesture and I remember having a meaningful discussion with her,” helping to foster their connection with St. Andrews. “I have found the Episcopal liturgy to be very special and moving to me, and I believe that I have



David Hamlin (first row on the right) and cohort at the October 2017 Day of Service.

Photo: Peter Lull

grown spiritually as a member of St. Andrew's."

When David thinks of what makes St. Andrew's special, he notes first and foremost the people in the parish. He reflected on spending an hour at the most recent Maundy Thursday vigil rereading the Lenten meditation guide that Rev. Cat Healy had put together. "I was struck by the talent and the diversity of the people who contributed to that and it just reminded me of how amazing the people in the parish are," he noted. "And I was also impressed by the willingness of people to be open in their Lenten meditations."

David also appreciates that St. Andrew's benefits from a "superb group of clergy—Adrian, Margaret, Cat, and Karen—talented, thoughtful, engaged, accomplished, and dynamic leaders." He recognizes this combination leads to a vibrancy that is both rewarding and refreshing, highlighted by

the many things the parish takes on in the arenas of both in-reach and outreach. Sunday services, with the beauty of the music and flowers and all the parts coming together, make the worship meaningful to him week after week. "I like the Sunday morning 10am service—it is a very important part of my weekly cadence."

David also values his role in the lay Eucharistic ministry corps for the past five years, enabling him in a small way to give back and participate in the life of the parish. He knows it takes a lot of people volunteering to make all of the activities and services work. He said, "To have the ability to give back is, in my mind, really an honor. I think overall I feel very humbled and honored to be in this role. I am really looking forward to contributing in many ways and getting to know people more." Additionally, David has ushered and served as vestryperson for Finance.

Despite his signature bow ties, David suspects he needs to raise his profile while serving as warden. Laughing while speaking of his highly involved, outgoing wife: "When you think of the Hamlins, most people know Becky Hamlin. Fewer people know David Hamlin." Although David's career commitments have at times limited his volunteer activities, he looks forward to expanding his circle of St. Andrew's friends.

Looking ahead, David says the parish is in terrific shape, being financially sound while attracting new members. He is particularly excited about the progress in both the youth and adult formation programs, where he expects us to continue to grow and evolve as a parish. He feels "it is important as a parish that we continue to grow spiritually and look for opportunities to help our parishioners grow in their spiritual life."



David and Becky Hamlin with children, Tucker and Margie.

Photo: Courtesy Hamlin Family

Angels



Charlene Smith

ANGELS WEAR SNEAKERS and Ferragamo, show a preference for aprons with deep pockets in the front, and are prone to break into an a cappella version of “Home on the Range” while in the basement repairing electronics for Bargain Haul.

They move with a purpose to behold; they have to when there are vestments to clean, altars to arrange, funerals to cater, hours-long expeditions to buy flowers in Quincy, homeless to serve, sandwiches to make, kids to coach, and trips to plan.

St. Andrew’s has close to two thousand parishioners, of whom a quarter—yes, 500, don invisible angel wings and try to get halos to stop from falling—as they

commit to giving thanks for their blessings and reach out to those less fortunate in almost a dozen outreach programs. These include assistance to the hungry and homeless through Family Promise Metrowest, Pearl Street Cupboard & Café, Salvation Army, Wellesley Food Pantry, and *common cathedral*. Another corps of volunteers assists our sister church, St. Stephen’s, with its huge child and youth outreach programs in central Boston. Then there is Healthcare without Walls.

Donna Kell leads a group of women who knit, knit, and knit blankets for babies, and at present, more than 50 tiny baby caps for Rwandan children, which Johanna Horobin will take to her Peace Corps daughter soon.

Every few years, teams of St. Andrew’s parishioners travel to El Hogar in Honduras, one of the poorest countries in Latin America, to lend assistance in a youth and child program there.

However, it is in the ways that the angels of St. Andrew’s serve us, each one of us, that their love is most apparent, and least appreciated. On March 14, in the basement, parishioners made signs for the March for Our Lives in support of the students of Parkland, Florida. Lynda Sperry turned up the music, and poster-makers nibbled on leftovers from a large funeral, catered by church volunteers. The next day we marched from two different locations and sent pictures of our part of the crowd to our Facebook (“St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church”) and Instagram (@StAsWellesley) accounts. (We also have a Twitter account: @StAsWellesley)

As I arrived on Good Friday, an angel draped newly laundered vestments over her arms and slipped into the church. In a basement room there was a large whiteboard where Katie Barrack sketched the style and placement of

Easter floral arrangements before her team. Behind them were huge white containers of flowers. The arrangements took an entire week of preparation and a truck load of flowers with branches salvaged from storm-felled trees.

When I languished at home just over a year ago after breaking both my hands, an angel with his two sons stopped at my door one day after church with flowers, bringing sun into the gloom of my self-pity.

During Bargain Haul the angels are out in full force. They laugh, they gossip, they are frequently heard to say, “what do you think this is?” They go home dusty and tired, but happy after experiencing the companionship of new friends and great people. It is in the community of giving that we all find new purpose in the wonder that is life.

Every one of those angels will insist they are not, but I’ve seen them. If you open your eyes a little wider, you will see them too as they open their arms to embrace you into the life-affirming joy of giving.

We know from the Beatitudes, Jesus’ words: “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.”

Blessed is a nation in which people care for each other, reach out and touch each other, welcome strangers in, and open our hearts.

Blessed are we who volunteer, for we not only learn and experience life anew, but make great friends, and the laughter Jesus speaks about becomes a constant in our hearts.

If you are interested in any of these ministries, please contact the office or speak with a clergy person who will guide you to the right person. (See the contact information on next page.)



Photo: Peter Lull

Raising Wright



Peter Kaufman

YEARS AGO, I SPENT A weekend reading William Allen Storrer's *A Frank Lloyd Wright Companion* (1990), the best practical guide to Wright's enormous oeuvre of more than 800 designs, which far exceeds the output of any other architect, even the great ones. I came to a scholarly realization and historical understanding of Frank Lloyd Wright: that he was the greatest architect of all time.

Wright's career came up again six years ago when I was hired by the St. Benedict Abbey in Harvard, Massachusetts, to tutor one of their more mature monks on the "rhetoric" of his sermons, an engagement that lasted well over a year. I got along very well with my tutee, Fr. Anthony Kloss, who taught me about the New Testament every week. The story of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost came to correspond in my mind with the birth of modern architecture in the early 20th century when architecture

had to marry engineering. In fact, the Europeans were greatly inspired by and enamored of Frank Lloyd Wright, especially the Germans.

Harvard University's Benedictine Monastery was founded in 1941 near the intersection of Bow and Arrow Streets in Cambridge, Massachusetts, (location approximate) to help Harvard students with their perils. Shortly thereafter it abandoned the Harvard students and moved to Harvard, Massachusetts, and became the St. Benedict Abbey where it engaged in farming near Fruitlands Museum on a large dynamic property looking west toward Mount Wachusett.

I learned more recently that Frank Lloyd Wright spent a few of his formative years in the early 1870s in Weymouth, Massachusetts, as the son of an itinerant Baptist preacher, William Wright, who soon abandoned his family for a more pragmatic career in music publishing in Iowa. One of his excellent hymns, "March on,

my soul, with strength," is quite Google-able. Wright was clearly fathered into design and "Froebled" into architecture. (Froebel blocks were the Legos of the 19th century: Wright's mother fostered his play with these after the 1876 centennial in Philadelphia.)

At about the same time Frank was in his formative years, Vincent Van Gogh became a painter—after he flunked his exam to become a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church in which his father served. One can tell that colors were his disciples even if he would not reign in the pulpit. All this seems to point to the religious intent and projection of art and architecture into a capitalist and industrialized world, known to Germans as *schadenfreude*. In other words: this leads me to believe that those who influence the capitalist and industrialized world through religious art and architecture, even as they suffer and fail in other endeavors, can bring us all pleasure and joy.



Falling Water, Mill Run PA, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Photo: Courtesy Creative Commons

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