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Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Ordinary Time, Proper 25

October 28, 2018

Prayer List

Let us pray...

...in thanksgiving for the members of our congregation: Barbara; Mary; Rick; and Matthew.

...for support and protection for those who serve our country at home and abroad: Mike, Christopher, Steven, Sam, Wes, Michael, and Thomas.

...for those in need of God's healing grace: Dian; Mike; Joan; Lisa. *Our continuing prayers are offered for:* Ann; Mabel; Missy; Conor; George; Butch; Carol; Buddy; Rhonda; Jeanne; Tom; Rose; Roy; Arnold; Luci.

The flowers at the altar today are given to the glory of God and in memory of Alice Breese and Marie Haberer by Roy and Rick.

The Diocese of Washington cycle of prayer: All Saints' Church, Chevy Chase Parish; All Saints' Preschool, Chevy Chase; All Saints' Parish, Oakley; All Souls Memorial Church, All Souls Parish, DC; All Saints' Day (November 1); Diocesan Confirmation Service (November 3), pray for those who are being confirmed.

The Anglican Communion cycle of prayer: The Church in the Province of the West Indies.

Announcements

Don't forget to check out the calendar at www.OldDurham.org! Also, these announcements are now being posted on the church website.

Adult Forum is watching a video lecture series on church history from the Reformation to the present. Join us at 9:15am in the Parish Hall on Sundays.

Coffee After Church. Join us for coffee and a chat after the service in the Parish Hall.

“Transforming Generosity” This year’s annual pledge campaign starts today. Please pick up your letter today after church. It includes a letter from the Vestry and a “narrative budget” showing how your generosity becomes the ministry of the parish. Pledge cards will be available next week. Please prayerfully consider what proportion of the money at your disposal you will be able to pledge to the church in 2019. The pledge campaign will wrap up with a celebration and ingathering of pledges on November 18.

Prayer Shawl Ministry: Our Thursday meetings will start in November. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Macri, 301-246-4137.

Joe's Place Food Pantry distributions do not follow their normal schedule in November and December. The next distributions are Thursdays, Nov. 8th and 15th, from 4:30 to 6 pm in the Parish Hall. In December the dates are Dec. 13th (with special holiday items), and 27th. Volunteers are always welcome to sort and distribute food to our neighbors.

The Health and Wellness Ministry Discernment Group is up and running. We have a

good group of folks to talk and pray about health and faith and where Durham Church's passion might meet the community's needs. Our next meeting will be this Tues., Oct. 30. Contact Rev. Catharine if you are interested or have questions.

Lay License renewal: In order to participate in worship as a chaliceist or Eucharistic Visitor (who takes Communion to homes and hospitals), you must be licensed by the bishop. Lay licenses are renewed annually on Oct. 31. Please be in touch with Rev. Catharine if you would like to be licensed for the next year.

All Souls' Day. Christ Church La Plata will host a Eucharist and Lunch at 11AM on All Souls' Day (Nov. 2) for people who are in bereavement, or who want to remember loved ones they have lost. RSVP by October 30 to office@christchurchlaplata.org, or call 301-392-1051.

Jam Session in the Parish Hall on November 2nd at 7PM. All are welcome!

Daughters of the King and Men's Group meeting on November 5th at 6:30PM.

Dinner and a movie: Wednesday, Nov. 7th at 5PM. Durham's Community Building Group is offering a chance to have supper and watch last year's hit movie, 'Hidden Figures' in the Parish Hall. Please join us. Lasagna will be provided; feel free to bring a side or salad (or just yourself!).

The 32nd Annual Senior Citizens' Thanksgiving Dinner, Friday, November 9, 2018 from 12 p.m. 2pm in the Mt Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School Cafeteria. Please RSVP by Tuesday, November 1st cstephens@ccbboe.com or call 301-246-4383

Parish Meeting Mark your calendars for Nov. 18th. We will have the ingathering of pledges that day, then celebrate with a meal and a Parish Meeting. The meeting will be to approve updates to the parish bylaws. The proposed changes are posted on the website and in the Parish Hall.

We will be holding a service on Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 22) at 10AM. It's often a lovely, intimate service, and it's an opportunity to get out of the house with your houseguests. It's also a good, low-barrier introduction to our church for neighbors and community members, so feel free to talk it up, even if you aren't able to come. If you are interested in serving at that service, please let Rev. Catharine know.

All Hallows and the Day of the Dead

The following is adapted from fullhomelydivinity.org, a wonderful website published by the Consortium of Country Churches in England.

Archaeological evidence from prehistoric times and modern burial customs alike attest to the fascination and deep concern that human beings have always had regarding death. Christianity is not immune to this engagement with death. In fact, death and questions of the world to come stand at the very heart of the Christian religion. The death of one man and his resurrection from the dead and subsequent ascension into the heavens are the centerpiece of Christian faith and set the parameters for our beliefs about the state of the dead and the future of all mortals.

In the northern hemisphere, the commemoration and celebration of the mysteries of life and death correspond to the changes of the seasons. The Paschal Mystery, celebrating the dying and rising of Jesus Christ, the Lord of life,

is observed in spring, as the natural world emerges from the deathlike sleep of winter, with plants breaking forth in leaf and flower and flocks and herds giving birth. However, reflection on our death and the mystery of what follows comes in autumn, when the light is fading, the crops are gathered, and nature's winter sleep is at hand. The last night of October and the first days of November are the days set aside for remembering the dead, and contemplating our own deaths. There can be little doubt that our Christian observances owe much to pre-Christian customs. Witches and ghosts, unseen demons and the souls of the dead wandering in the dark were very real to ancient people, and this should not surprise us.

Even if we are skeptical about witches and demons, we still have to deal with the reality of death--our own, as well as the death of ancestors, family, and friends (and perhaps some enemies, too) who have gone before us. These days are days to bring death and the dead into the light: to acknowledge loss and move beyond it; to mourn, but not to despair; to regret what needs to be regretted, but even more to celebrate what needs to be celebrated; to remember the past and have hope for the future; to see life as a gift and death as a new beginning; to pray for the departed and to ask for the prayers of the saints, remembering that we are all bound together by baptism into the Communion of Saints, in this life as well as in the life to come.

All Hallows' Eve - Hallowe'en - October 31st

From ghoulies and ghosties, and long-leggedie beasties, and things that go bump in the night, Good Lord, deliver us. —from an old Scottish litany

In Celtic Britain, October 31st was the feast of Samhain, a feast which marked the end of summer and the beginning of winter, the time of year associated with death. It was the time of year when livestock were butchered and when all kinds of foods were preserved and put away for the long winter. The Celts also believed that on this night the spirits of the dead walked abroad and were judged by the lord of darkness.

When the Church took over this annual holiday, it continued to honor the family dead, expanding the notion to include the departed members of the whole Christian family. The "hallows" are the "saints," so Hallowe'en is [All] Hallows' Even, or the Eve of All Saints' Day, which has been celebrated on November 1st throughout the western Church since the ninth century. The saints are those members of the family whom the Church recognizes as having moved already into the Church Triumphant, the company of saints in heaven.

There are other members of the family who are still waiting, the "faithful departed," members of the Church Expectant. Some Christians believe that these people are in a place called Purgatory, a temporary home where they continue to be purified before being received into heaven. Other Christians simply follow the teaching of St. Paul that understands these people to be "asleep" as they await the return of the Lord at the end of time. In either case, they are still members of our family, as needful of our prayers now as they were when they were still alive and among us. To keep us mindful of this fact, the Church has set aside a second day, All Souls' Day (i.e., the Commemoration of All Faithful Departed), on November 2nd.

The more important feasts of the Church calendar begin with a vigil the night before, a time of preparation, usually including fasting as well as prayer, and often including other customs of a homely nature. All Hallows' Eve is the vigil which anticipates both All Saints' and All Souls' and the vigil has quite unabashedly incorporated and reinterpreted customs and traditions which originated in the pre-Christian observance of Samhain and similar festivals in other parts of the world. Particularly in regard to folk customs, the Church has always tended to be generous in finding ways to welcome and, if necessary, reinterpret and even reinvent folk customs.

The modern custom of "trick-or-treating" is a case in point. In fact, it seems to have evolved from a combination of different customs, some pagan, some Christian. At Samhain, it was believed that the spirits of the dead and various other ghouls wandered abroad, evoking fear and wreaking havoc. One way of dealing with these demons

was to dress up like them and lead them away from homes and villages--thus the custom of dressing in costume on Hallowe'en. Another way of dealing with them, particularly if they were believed to be the ghosts of family and friends, was to invite them into the light, to sit by the hearth and be warmed and fed--thus the custom of giving out treats.

All Saints' Day, November 1st

Early in the seventh century, the Pantheon, an immense round temple dedicated to all of the pagan gods of Rome, was rededicated by Pope Boniface IV in honor of St. Mary and All Martyrs. The anniversary of the rededication of that church was observed annually in Rome as a feast of all of the saints, known and unknown, who had no feast day of their own. A century later, the date of the feast was moved to November 1st and, finally, in the ninth century, the observance was extended to the whole Church.

The most important thing one can do on this day is to attend a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, in order to join with the entire Communion of Saints in singing the angelic hymn and sharing in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, which knits us together "in one communion and fellowship in the mystical Body of Christ our Lord." It is a good day to sing or say the Litany of the Saints, calling on many of the saints whose names we know to pray for us.

All Souls Day, Soulmas, November 2nd

This is an important day which has fallen out of fashion. We live in an age which does its best in so many ways to deny the reality of death. The word itself is avoided at all costs. No one dies any more. We "lose" them. They "pass away." We do not bury the dead or have funerals. We have "memorial services" at which fond remembrances, extended eulogies, and amusing anecdotes about the deceased replace the preaching of the Gospel. The effect of this is to avoid not only the reality of death and legitimate grief, but also the truly comforting message of the Gospel.

There is no doubt that grief, like any other emotion can be overdone. But the truth is that there is a place for realism with regard to death. For Christians that realism includes both grief and a profound hope that tempers grief in time and allows us to move forward. All Souls' Day is an occasion to address our grief at a distance from its first intrusion. And it is an occasion to recover the context of the Gospel that puts grief into a proper perspective.

In Central America, *Día de los Muertos*, the Day of the Dead, brings all of this right into the home where families set up an altar (*ofrenda*) to be a focal point of their celebration of All Souls' Day. Typically, items on the *ofrenda* include pictures or statues of saints (Our Lady of Guadalupe is popular), as well as photographs of dead relatives and friends. There are also candles, skeletons and skulls made of sugar and often arrayed in wild costumes, *papel picado* (elaborate tissue paper cutouts), marigold flowers, toys for children who have died, and the favorite foods and drinks of the deceased adults, including tequila and other liquid spirits that are shared by the living. The food is shared by those who gather to celebrate the living and the dead. There is also a special bread, *pan de muertos*. The tone of the celebration that ensues is joyful. It is a family reunion and there are many stories to tell, many good times to relive. Sometimes, there is even a mariachi band and fireworks--a far cry from the creepy demons who once dominated the night.

The Day of the Dead is easily adaptable into non-Hispanic settings. It is a very homely version of All Souls' Day and we recommend it as a wonderful way of bringing together two cultures that have different customs but a common understanding of the ultimate goal. It not only brings death home, it completes the domestication of death that began when the risen Lord appeared for the first time in the Upper Room on the first Easter. When we can welcome death into our homes, and laugh and joke with it and about it, we know that we have truly put on

Christ who, in an old carving over the entrance to his own sepulchre, is seen dancing on his tomb. The spirit of the Day of the Dead is captured in a modern hymn by Sydney Carter, The Lord of the Dance:

I danced on a Friday and the sky turned black;
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back;
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone,
But I am the dance and I still go on.

The dance signifies the restoration of the order of creation and the joy of all creatures when death no longer holds sway. The Day of the Dead does not look backwards. Rather, it looks forward to the day when the living and the dead are reunited and dance together with the Lord of the Dance in the Kingdom of God.

Ministers in Today's Service

Crucifer and acolyte: Carl Lockamy; **Readers:** Jane Linton, Deb Carr; **Chalicians:** Barbara Macri, Melinda Torreyson; **Altar Guild:** Dian Lockamy. **Flower Contact for November:** Cindy Hampton.

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Bernard Torreyson - Junior Warden

Roy Squires - Secretary of the Vestry

Members of the Vestry:

George Chisholm, Bill White, Tom Saxton, Rick Posey

Carl Lockamy - Parish Treasurer

The Rev. Arnold Taylor - Rector Emeritus

The Rt Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde, Bishop of Washington

Established 1661 - Chartered 1692

The Prayers of the People are adapted from Praying the Scriptures. The eucharistic preface is drawn from Laughbird.net

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