
What is Your Destination This Summer?

**An article from the Cathedral Times
by the Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler**

Many of us use the summer to take vacation time, whether we have children at home or not. Our destination is the beach, or the mountains. Maybe we return somewhere to see parents. Maybe we board airplanes with destinations in foreign countries. Sometimes our plan is simply to enjoy where we are. This summer, I may have some of those destinations myself.

But I have been thinking of destination in another sort of way, too. "Destination" is where your destiny is. Destination is where you are supposed to be. Destination is your next calling or vocation. It does not necessarily mean a final stop. Destination can mean simply the next place God is calling, or inviting, you to be. The early Indo-European root of "destination" is "sta," from which we get the word "stand." To travel to your next destination is to find your next place to stand.

Well, let me be very clear that my destination is the Cathedral of St. Philip. Several weeks ago, I wrote that "my ministry has changed," and concerned parishioners wanted to know what had happened. I meant simply that I was spending a lot more time on a capital campaign than I ever thought I would when I arrived here over four years ago.

But this work on our new building, and raising generous money for it, is indeed my vocation at present. It is my destination and my service. In fact, the Cathedral of St. Philip is my destination and my service. I have served some great parishes in my life, but I have given myself to this place like I have to no other church.

I know that the Cathedral of St. Philip, like any church, has problems. I know that the entire Episcopal Church has problems. There are plenty of people who have problems with me, too. But those problems-from all angles-do not prohibit me from making the Church my vocation and destination.

Bob Dylan, during the most evangelical stage of his various destinations, wrote a song titled, "You Gotta Serve Somebody." It's a great set of lyrics, stating a principle of life itself. All of us serve something, or somebody.

I serve Jesus Christ our Lord, through the Cathedral of St. Philip and the Episcopal Church. I give up things for that service, and I ask other people to give up things for that service, too. This is because I believe in what God is doing at the Cathedral, and in the Episcopal Church. I do not always know what God is doing at the Cathedral or in the Episcopal Church, but I believe in it!

One of my destinations this summer will be Minneapolis, where the Episcopal Church will meet for far too many days in General Convention. As usual, one of the issues we will discuss is human sexuality, and homosexuality in particular. It is an issue which some interpret to be threatening the unity of the church. In Jesus Christ, I refuse to believe that sexuality has the power to divide the church. I know sexuality is strong, but I refuse to allow it power to divide the church.

It is part of my service to proclaim a vision of the kingdom of God where "rich and poor come together" (on St. Philip's cornerstone), where division is reconciled, where liberals and conservatives enjoy one another, where enemies are become friends, and even where faithful people hold varying opinions about homosexuality. With the grace of God, we can do that at the Cathedral of St. Philip. That kingdom is my destination, and I invite you to make it your destination, too.

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