
Who Do You Know?

An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by the Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler,
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*Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds,
not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some,
but encouraging one another"*
(Hebrews 10.24-25)

Did you notice any strangers at church last Sunday? Did you notice any faces that were not among the regulars at the service you attended? I hope you did! They were not members of some other church's clergy search committee. They were not spies. In fact, many of the folks you thought were strangers were actually members of our own parish.

Members of our Cathedral chapter took seriously an important part of our "in-house retreat" last weekend: to attend as many of our Sunday services as possible-especially services which are new to them. So they were at 7:45 am, at 8:45 and at 9:00, at 11:15, at 1:30, at 4:00, and finally at 7:00 p.m. We have eight services of worship on a typical Sunday at the Cathedral, and each liturgy gathers a different sort of faithful community.

It's hard to know every soul at any church, but it is especially difficult in a larger place. Thus, one of our challenges here at the Cathedral this year is to get to know one another. On Friday evening of our chapter retreat, we spent time sharing our "spiritual autobiography" with one another. On Sunday, I repeated the same exercise for those attending the Dean's Forum Sunday School class. We did not sit and listen to a long presentation; instead, we turned our chairs and shared a small piece of our spiritual histories with each other.

We have three new senior ministers with us this year. Do you know them yet? **George Maxwell** (whose photograph graced the cover of *The Cathedral Times* last week!) is our new Canon for Congregational Life. He will enliven our small group ministries, and his role will definitely enable us to get to know each other this year. **George will share his spiritual autobiography, and his credo and vision, this Sunday at the Dean's Forum class (10:10 a.m.). Come hear him!**

We have also engaged the ministry of two "priest associates." **The Reverend Bill Payton** is a retired priest, having served as rector of Episcopal churches in Lawrenceville, Georgia, in Hartford, Connecticut, and in Baltimore, Maryland; he has also served as an associate at St. Bartholomew's here in Atlanta for a time. He is a fine community builder, liturgist, teacher, and spiritual director. **He will present his spiritual autobiography and credo at the Dean's Forum class on January 23, 2005. Get to know him!**

Finally, **the Reverend Bill Harkins** has already spoken to our "Old Fashioned Sunday School" class, and **he will present his life and credo to the Forum class on February 6, 2005 (there is no Forum class on January 30, due to set-up for the Cathedral Antiques Show.** Bill is also a private therapist and a professor at Columbia Theological Seminary. Get to know him, too!

I have asked one of our newer parishioners, **Ed Fuller, to chair our new Outreach Committee**, and I am thrilled by his vision and energy. He has a heart for the poor and the dispossessed, and he also has a holy and enthusiastic sense of the gospel. These characteristics are why he is exploring a call to the vocational diaconate; it is natural that he shares these

leadership skills with this parish. **Join him-and others-on Saturday, January 22, to explore our new outreach and mission work.**

Did you notice any folks smiling this past Sunday? I certainly did. We were packed all day, with friends and strangers alike getting to know God and getting to know one another. They were "showing hospitality to strangers, , and thus entertaining angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13.2).

Oh, there was another reason people were smiling. They had actually returned their generous pledge card to the Cathedral for the 2005 year! Yes, that's the one; the card on your desk, on your dresser, in the kitchen drawer. We still need it, and we need you. We need you be among the smiling parish of the Cathedral of St. Philip. Make that pledge this year. Get to know one another. Share your lives here. And God will indeed be faithful.

Sam Candler signature



The Very Rev. Sam Candler