

THE EPISTLE

Saint James' Episcopal Church
Livingston, Alabama

Volume XXV, Number 7

July/August 2018



July/August 2018

This Month's Cover

Our cover painting this month is a detail from Rubens' *The Transfiguration* (August 6). Typical of Rubens, the full painting is huge, measuring 13'4"x22'. Our detail represents the full height and about half the width. It is oil on canvas, and was completed in about 1605. It is currently displayed in the Museum of Fine Arts in Nancy, France. It depicts the event described in the gospels (Matt. 17:1ff et al.) when Jesus left most of his disciples at the foot of the mountain and went to the top with Peter, James and John. There he was transfigured (in effect he temporarily assumed his body of resurrection) and conferred with Moses, representing the Law (upper left, with the tablets of the Law), and Elijah, representing the Prophets (upper right). At Jesus' feet are the terrified Peter, James and John, and at the foot of the mountain are the rest, equally terrified by the burst of blinding light that they undoubtedly saw. The full painting shows more disciples and landscape.

Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) was unquestionably the most influential painter of the Baroque era, and with over 1400 paintings to his credit, he was one of the most prolific. The Baroque style emphasized movement, color and sensuality, and was strongly encouraged by the Counter-Reformation in opposition to the cold, drab and stiff style favored by the leaders of the Protestant Reformation. Rubens was born of Flemish parents in what is now Westphalia, Germany. He was born on June 29, 1577, the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, after whom he was named. His father was a staunch Calvinist, and became the legal advisor to Princess Anne of Saxony, the second wife of William I of Orange. When it was discovered that he was also Anne's lover and the father of her daughter he was

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imprisoned. He died in prison two years later. Rubens' mother moved to Antwerp and raised him as a Roman Catholic.

Rubens' artistic talent was recognized early in his life. He apprenticed under Tobias Verhaeght, and then studied under Adam van Noort and Otto van Veen. In 1598 he was acknowledged an Independent Master and entered the Guild of Saint Luke. In 1600 he went to Italy, where he studied the great Renaissance masters and was strongly influenced by their works. While in Rome he completed his first altarpiece commission, *St. Helena with the True Cross*, for the Church of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem. With the exception of a brief diplomatic mission to Spain, where he studied the works of Titian and Raphael, he remained in Italy until 1609, when he returned to Antwerp to care for his dying mother. She died before he arrived, but he remained in Antwerp where he built a studio. That same year he was appointed court painter to both the Archduke of Austria and Princess Isabella of Spain, but he received permission from both to remain in Antwerp to do his work. During that time he was sent to Spain several times on diplomatic missions. From 1621 to 1630 he spent almost as much time as a diplomat as he did as a painter, contributing much to the détente between Marie di' Medici, Spain, France and Belgium. His last decade, 1630-40, was spent primarily in Antwerp as a painter. He was increasingly afflicted with chronic gout, which finally brought on heart failure. He died in Antwerp on May 30, 1640 and was buried in St. James' Church there. He left eight children. Most of his descendants married into noble and royal families of Europe.

Richard R. Losch+

A Word from the Editor

Even though the summer did not officially start until June 21, in most people's minds Memorial Day rolled out "those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer" which the song goes on to call "those days of soda and pretzels and beer." Unfortunately, for all too many people they are not the day of sacraments and study and prayer. They seem to be the days when the Church

and any serious consideration of God are laid aside until Sunday School starts up again in the fall. An acquaintance recently asked if I could recommend something good for summer reading, and I suggested a couple of C. S. Lewis's works. She said, "No, no. I meant something for summer reading, not something that will make me think too much." With a silent sigh I just told her that nothing came immediately to mind. Well, at least she wanted to read. I guess that's a start.

The fecund spiritual laziness of those hazy crazy days can easily grow and take over our lives until it becomes the norm. It is true that we can pray on the golf course, but it is also true that we rarely do except perhaps to pray for a good putt. It is also true that most of the ecclesiastical words heard on a golf course are in a very unecclesiastical context. Without the participation in the corporate worship of the Church we quickly lose the strengthening spiritual interchange that comes through worshipping together as one. And without that our whole spiritual motivation begins to erode. As we enjoy the relaxation and pleasures of the summer—and there is nothing wrong with enjoying them—we need to remember that we still have a responsibility to God and to ourselves to continue to worship, to study, and to pray. God does not take a summer vacation om us, and we are treading on perilous ground if we think we can take one from him.

Father Rick Rosch

Be Wordly Wise

Ghetto

This is a common term today for any inner-city community made up primarily of a single socio-economically deprived ethnic or racial group. Throughout most of 16th to late 19th century Europe, however, it referred mainly to Jewish communities, although by the beginning of the 20th century the word was rarely used. Under Nazi rule it was revived, the most famous of such communities being the Warsaw Ghetto. The word was originally Italian, but it quickly entered most European languages unchanged.

By the early Middle Ages most European cities had established restricted areas where Jews had to live. In London it was called Jewry. In eastern Europe they were known by the Yiddish word *shtetl*, meaning little village. In *Fiddler on the Roof* the village that Tevye lived in was a classic shtetl. In 1516 the Republic of Venice designated as such a place the area where an old foundry had once stood. The Italian word for foundry is *getto*. In Italian a subdivision of a city is a *borghetto*, little borough. Etymologists are divided as to whether the word ghetto comes from *getto* or *borghetto*. In either case, the Jewish section in most cities in Europe soon came to be called a ghetto, regardless of the language. As an aside, for all his reputed tyranny, Napoleon was the first to forbid ghettos and allow Jews to live wherever they wanted.¹ Today the term ghetto is used to identify any area, usually in an inner city, that is populated mainly by a single ethnic or religious group.²

Richard R. Losch+

Fourth of July Evening Prayer & Supper

On Wednesday, July 4th, Independence Day, we will have a service of Evening Prayer at 6:00 p.m. with a barbeque supper following in the parish house. Pulled pork barbeque will be furnished. Signup sheets for baked beans, salads, buns/bread, desserts other items, and tea are posted on the bulletin board in the vestibule as well as a sheet for those planning to attend (so that we may know how many to plan for). So that we may know how much barbeque to order, you are asked to sign up no later than Sunday, July 1st. As always, there will be plenty of good food and fellowship. Please make your plans to attend.

Hiram Patrenos

¹ The Russian Orthodox Church designates Napoleon an Antichrist not because of his invasion of Russia, but specifically because of that ruling.

² Similarly, in Spanish *barrio* simply means neighborhood. Today, however, the word has entered most European languages as a synonym for ghetto, more commonly a Hispanic one.

Parish Directory

Copies of the updated Parish Directory are available on the table in the vestibule and in the parish house. If, as you are using your directory you discover an error, please give the corrected information to Hiram Patrenos in writing or by e-mail to patrenoj@bellsouth.net. The Parish Directory will be updated again in November.

Hiram Patrenos

Altar Flower Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to provide Altar Flowers through the season following Pentecost. A sign-up chart is located in the sacristy. You may use flowers from your yard or, if you wish, make arrangements with a florist to provide them. For more information, please speak with Carolyn Patrenos.

Hiram Patrenos

Community Fifth Sunday Service

The 5th Sunday Community Service this month will be hosted by First Presbyterian Church on July 29th at 11:00 a.m. Please make your plans to attend and help to continue this unique Livingston tradition.

Hiram Patrenos

Mount Sinai

Although ancient tradition locates Mount Sinai in the Sinai Peninsula, in fact no one knows where it actually was. Scholars have identified three places as the most likely location, and the least of these is the mountain that is usually called Mount Sinai. They are Jabel al-Lawz (Mountain of Almonds) in Midian in Arabia, Har Karkom (Hill of Saffron) in the southern Negev desert in Israel, and Jebel Musa (Mountain of Moses, commonly called Mount Sinai) in the southern Sinai Peninsula.

In the fourth century A.D., when Christian monasticism was growing rapidly in the early Byzantine Empire, a group of

monks established Saint Catherine's Monastery at the base of a mountain in the southern Sinai Peninsula. They called the mountain Jebel Musa, the Mountain of Moses, and identified it with the Mount Sinai of the Bible.¹ That identification stuck, although there is no archaeological or biblical evidence whatever to justify it. For centuries archaeologists have scoured the Sinai Peninsula for evidence of the Israelites' forty-year wanderings there and have found none. Most scholars agree that the Exodus took place in about the 13th century B.C. Modern technology can locate paleolithic campfires dating back 50,000 years, yet there is no evidence of Israelites' 13th century campfires anywhere in the southern Sinai. The Sinai Peninsula at that time was Egyptian territory. It is highly unlikely that the Israelites could have wandered there for forty years without being discovered and recaptured by the Egyptians. The Exodus was a terrible humiliation to the Egyptians, who had long memories and no compassion for anyone who humiliated them. The only reasonable conclusion, despite ancient tradition, is that Jebel Musa is not the Mount Sinai of the Bible.

In 2003 in Israel there was a colloquium whose main subject of debate was the location of Mount Sinai (or Mount Horeb, as the Bible also calls it). The Italian archaeologist Emmanuel Anati made a strong case for Har Karkom in the southern Negev desert. He has identified over 1300 archaeological sites and over 40,000 rock engravings dating between 4300 and 2000 B.C., many of which could possibly have been Israelite sites. The biggest problem with this is that it would require moving the generally accepted date of the Exodus from about 1200 B.C. to before 2000 B.C. This would change the generally accepted Pharaoh of the Exodus from Rameses II to Mentuhotep II or III, and would precede the Hyksos dynasty. That in itself is a problem, because by far the most likely time for the Israelites to have moved into xenophobic Egypt would have been during the Hyksos reign. In other words, Har Karkom,

¹ The cover photo on my book *All the Places in the Bible* is a view of Jebel Musa in the distance.

although it has much evidence in its favor, also has strong evidence against its being the biblical Mount Sinai.¹

The third, and I believe most likely candidate, is Jabel al-Lawz in Midian in what is now Saudi Arabia. It is located northeast of the northern tip of the Red Sea, east of the Sea of Reeds. Most scholars believe that it was the Sea of Reeds, not the Red Sea, that the Israelites crossed.² The Bible tells us that when Moses fled Egypt he went to Midian, which is in Arabia (Ex. 2:15). He would have gone across the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula to get to Arabia, but there is no reason for him to have gone into any of the inner part of the peninsula. It was in Midian that he met his future wife Zipporah and her father, the priest Jethro, who instructed Moses about the God of Abraham. He remained with Jethro for several years tending his flock (3:1). It was there that he saw the burning bush on the mountain and first conversed with God (3:2), who commissioned him to go back to Egypt and free his people. It is entirely reasonable that when he led the Israelites out of Egypt he would have taken them back to the place where he had first met God, the place of the burning bush in Midian.

The Bible refers to the Desert of Sin being near Sinai (Ex. 16:1). This is not a reference to iniquity, but to the pagan moon god Sin (after whom Sinai is named). Archaeological evidence has shown that Jabal al-Lawz was sacred to Sin, and that the region was dedicated to him. Another bit of evidence is that it is likely that Mount Sinai was volcanic. It is described as being wrapped in smoke and shaking violently (Ex. 19:18). There is

¹ The Hyksos were a Semitic or Asiatic people who conquered Egypt in 1640 B.C. (possibly by an internal coup) and reigned until they were overthrown in 1532 by Ahmose I. We do not know much about them—we do not even know their real name. The name Hyksos is Egyptian for Foreign Invaders. The Egyptians were highly xenophobic, and never would have welcomed the Hebrews in, let alone appoint a Semite (Joseph) as Vizier. The Hyksos, on the other hand, would have had no such misgivings.

² The Bible calls it *Yom Qof* (יָם קָף), Sea of Reeds. It is a salt marsh between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. Wycliffe mistranslated it Red Sea and that translation has stuck, though most scholars reject it.

no volcanism anywhere near the southern Sinai Peninsula or in the Negev. Although Jabal al-Lawz itself is not volcanic, it is made up of igneous rock and is in a volcanic region. It is reasonable that descriptions of nearby volcanic activity became conflated with the story of Mount Sinai during the six centuries that the story was passed down in oral tradition before being written down in the 6th century B.C. All this evidence points strongly to Jabal al-Lawz being the most likely candidate for Mount Sinai, although there is still much disagreement about that among scholars.

Moses died on Mount Nebo just before the Israelites entered Canaan, and no one knows where he was buried (Ex. 34:6). There is a reason for that. If his grave were known someone would have built a shrine there, and in time people would have come to worship him.¹ It may well be that for the same reason it is not meant for us to know the true location of Mount Sinai.

Richard R. Losch+

Masada

One of the most stirring events in the series of Jewish rebellions against Rome was the siege of Masada, and today that fortress is the most visited tourist attraction in Palestine. In his early days as King of Judea, Herod the Great's throne was not secure. His own subjects hated him, and it looked like the Roman Republic, which had appointed and supported him, might fall during the civil war between Octavian (later the emperor Augustus) and Mark Antony. At one point in an early uprising Herod's favorite wife and children were almost starved to death in a long siege. He swore that he would never let this happen again. On the peak of a steep mountain at the edge of the Dead Sea there was an old Jewish fortress called Masada.

¹ On the Mount of Transfiguration Peter wanted to build three shrines, one for Moses, one for Elijah, and one for Jesus. Jesus obviously ignored the suggestion, which was made out of sheer terror and without thinking (Mark 9:5ff). In fact, some think that the Mount of Transfiguration might have been Mount Nebo, where Moses died.

Herod rebuilt it into an almost impregnable citadel, and on the same site built a residential palace that was as luxurious as any that he owned. The entire structure not only was almost impossible to attack, but also was so well supplied with food and water that he, his family, and a significant defense force could live there literally for years without needing supplies from outside. The only access was a narrow stairway up the side of the cliff wide enough that only one man at a time could go up it, and the entrance at the top was so narrow that a single soldier could defend it. The mountain was so steep and the walls of the complex so high and thick that a handful of soldiers could easily repel any attempt to scale and break through. There were enough weapons in the armory to supply a full army for over a year. The storage bins were buried deep inside the mountain, and held countless tons of grain and dried meats, fruits and vegetables. A system of channels brought water from nearby underground springs, and it was stored in a cistern that held millions of gallons. Even if an enemy cut off the water supply, which would have been a formidable task, there was still enough stored to last for years.

There had been a couple of major rebellions and almost constant small uprisings in Judea ever since Pompey the Great first captured Jerusalem in 63 B.C. Finally, in A.D. 69, there was a rebellion in Jerusalem that was the final straw for the Romans. They had had enough. The emperor Vespasian, who had been the commander of the Roman forces in Judea until he was made emperor that year, authorized his son Titus, now commander (and later emperor), to put down the rebellion and in retribution destroy Jerusalem. The Roman army, who were expert at leveling cities, razed Jerusalem and left not one stone of the Temple upon another.¹ On the Arch of Titus in Rome

¹ The only exception was the western retaining wall of the Temple Mount. That still stands today and is a controversial site in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is called the Western Wall, and is often known as the Wailing Wall. Prayers lamenting the destruction of the Temple are chanted there daily, and the ancient chants sound like wailing.

there is a frieze depicting the Romans looting the Temple.¹

Although the rebellion was effectively quashed in 70, the leaders, a Zealot group known as the *Sicarii* (Daggers), escaped and made their way to Masada. Masada's impregnability was its downfall. The Roman guard there were so overconfident that they took it for granted that it could not be captured. There were no residents there other than a small guard who protected it for Herod. Herod was a valued protégé of the Romans, and they were happy to keep Masada ready for him if he should need it. The guards would have been fully capable of defending it even against a besieging army, but were careless in not watching for a band of guerilla raiders. A handful of *Sicarii* scaled the cliffs and the walls at night and gained entrance, easily catching the guards by surprise and killing them. They then brought in all the surviving rebels and their families, numbering almost a thousand men, women and children.

It did not take long for the Romans to realize what had happened, but at first there was not much they could do about it. They were fully aware of the impregnability of Masada, and they knew that the rebels there would not make the same mistake that the Roman guards had made. They also knew that they could not starve them out the way Caesar had done with the Gauls a century earlier. The one thing they could do, however, was contain them so they could not escape Masada or have any communication with rebels elsewhere. They built what is called a circumvallation wall. This was a wall about 2½ feet thick and 10 feet high with a circumference of about 2½ miles that completely encircled the site. Guard towers were placed at intervals all around it. Much of it still stands today. There is no way that anyone could get into or out of the site without the Romans' knowledge and permission. Although they were in no danger of attack or starvation, the rebels were trapped. Their only hope was that since they could stay there for years, the

¹ The treasure from the Temple covered a considerable portion of the cost of Vespasian's building of the Roman Coliseum. The rest came from the dismantling of Nero's Golden Palace.

Romans might eventually simply give up and go back to Jerusalem. They did not count on the Romans' vindictiveness being exceeded only by their persistence and patience.

Roman engineering was nothing less than ingenious, and their soldiers were master builders. There is a limestone promontory facing Masada that is known as the White Rock. From it the Romans built a ramp using stone, gravel, and timber retainers. They built huge moveable wooden walls, almost like war machines, to protect the workers from arrows shot from the citadel. The project took well over two years, but when it was completed they were able to move an enormous war machine up the ramp to the very walls of the fortress. The machine contained a massive battering ram and several catapults.¹ With the battering ram they were able to break a hole through the casemate wall large enough that an overwhelming invading force could enter.

When the Romans broke through the wall they faced no opposition. Upon entering the fortress they found the bodies of over 960 men, women and children who had all died by the sword. The rebels knew that if they were captured the men would be crucified and the women and children sold into slavery, and they chose rather to die. Since suicide was anathema to the Jews, it is likely that they killed each other. We do not know exactly what happened, but from other incidents, supported by the writings of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, it is likely that the parents killed their own children, and then the adults drew lots to see who would kill whom. The last individual alive, rather than bear the curse of suicide, may have willingly suffered a mortal wound that would leave him alive long enough to deliver the fatal blow to the one who had wounded him. Whatever actually happened at the end, Masada has gone down through two millennia of history as an example of extraordinary courage and determination.

Richard R. Losch+

¹ Missiles from the catapults can still be seen in the remains of the fort.

The Church Expectant

I must admit that I shudder every time I go to a funeral and hear something to the effect that Uncle Harry is now in Heaven happily playing golf or fishing or whatever it is that he most loved doing. In the first place there is no golf or fishing in Heaven —there is no need of such earthly pleasures there— and in the second place it is highly unlikely that Uncle Harry is already in Heaven unless he was one of the purest of the saints. That does not mean he won't be there eventually, but he is not ready yet. This earthly phase of our life is only the first step in our preparation for Heaven. Entry into the full presence of the Glory of God (theologically called the Beatific Vision) requires that we be fully prepared, but once we are it will be an experience of joy so great that it defies human comprehension. It is like the mathematical concepts of zero and infinity. We can discuss them and use them in practical mathematical and technological applications, but they are so far beyond human experience that we cannot truly comprehend them. Neither can we comprehend the joy of Heaven, of which “the peace of God that passes all understanding” (Phil. 4:7) is only a hint. We can talk about it and use it in metaphors and similes, but we can never really wrap our minds around it.

In reflecting on our preparation for Heaven, consider the third grader who is so good at math that he is excused from his math classes so that he may attend the fifth grade math class, where he excels. If at that point he were to be put into a college calculus course he would be totally unprepared, and it could be psychologically disastrous for him.¹ Once he is properly pre-

¹ There are some third graders who might be able to handle it. William James Sidis (1898-1944) is deemed to have had the highest IQ in history. He applied to Harvard at the age of six (by which time he was fluent in seven ancient and modern languages) and was rejected. They said he was academically qualified but emotionally immature. He was accepted at age eleven. He was capable of the intellectual demands but he couldn't take the social pressures, and left. He died at age 46, an insignificant office clerk in Kansas City. This might be the worldly equivalent of one who is spiritually unprepared for the demands of holiness that he tries to embrace.

pared for it, on the other hand, it might be a source of great joy for him. If we were taken directly from this life into the glory of Heaven we would be so unprepared for it that it would be a destructive and terrifying experience. It would be Hell for us.

Theologically there are three stages of the Church: the Church Militant, the Church Expectant, and the Church Triumphant. The Church Militant is the Church in this world, and as the name implies it is armed and in battle with the powers of evil that attempt to destroy us. The Church Expectant is the body of all the faithful departed who have passed on from this phase of their lives and are in a state of spiritual growth whose end is perfection and entry into the full glory of God. The Church Triumphant is what is commonly called Heaven, where all the saints of God (those whose preparation is complete) are in a state of eternal joy that passes all worldly understanding. The only alternative to the Church is Hell, the nature of which has been a subject of theological argument for centuries. The descriptions of its nature range from an eternity of fiery physical torment, through the unending abject misery and loneliness of being totally cut off from God, to the very cessation of existence itself. A more thorough discussion of this is beyond the scope of this article, but suffice it to say that at death every soul will find himself either bound for Hell (eternal damnation) or bound ultimately for Heaven (resurrection and eternal salvation). If you die and are not plummeting into Hell, rejoice. It may take a while, but you have nowhere to go but up.

The nature, and even the existence, of the intermediate state between death and Heaven is every bit as controversial as the nature of Hell. Many Protestant traditions reject it altogether, believing that upon death one immediately faces judgment, and then goes directly to Heaven or to Hell. Roman Catholicism calls the intermediate state Purgatory, while the Anglican, Orthodox and Lutheran Churches prefer to refer to it by its formal theological name, the Church Expectant. The reason they do not like the term Purgatory is that this carries with it the image of having one's sins purged in fiery torment much like the torment of Hell, and that image implies punishment. The Church

Expectant is not a place of punishment, but of preparation and purification.¹ There is surely terrible torment in the Church Expectant, but it is not a torment of punishment. It is the mental and spiritual torment one suffers with the realization and remorse for his terrible failure to respond adequately to the love of God. The final purification is one of penitence and atonement preparing one for ultimate entrance into Heaven. In Hell, on the other hand, the torment is simply punishment that never ends. Whether this punishment is willed by God or self-inflicted and allowed by him has been discussed for centuries.

The justification for a belief in an intermediate state is based on many biblical passages, but one of the most important is Jesus' statement to the penitent thief at his crucifixion. When the thief (whom the Church calls Saint Dismas) asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom, Jesus replied, "Today you shall be with me in paradise" (Lk. 23:43). Jesus, however, died that day, rose three days later, and did not ascend into Heaven until forty days after that. What, then, was the paradise of which he spoke to Dismas? We believe that it was the Church Expectant, the place of purification and preparation for Heaven. During the time his body lay in the tomb, Christ was with the departed spirits to open to them the acceptance of his gospel because they had not before had an opportunity to accept him.² It is paradise because despite the remorse and mental torment of our full recognition of our inadequacies before God, it is nonetheless a place of hope and promise.

This is why we pray for the dead. Just as we pray for those who in this life struggle to attain a state of grace, so should we also pray for those who in the next phase of life are also striving for spiritual growth. We should not only remember in our prayers the departed whom we knew and loved, but we should also

¹ This image of a fiery Purgatory, like most of the modern images of Hell, is deeply rooted in the images of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

² In the Apostles' Creed we say, "He descended into Hell." This refers not the Hell of eternal punishment, but the place of departed spirits awaiting salvation.

pray for the souls of all the faithful departed, and especially for those unknown or forgotten souls who have no one on earth to pray for them. Similarly, just as we ask our friends (and sometimes strangers) to pray for us, so should we ask the prayers of the saints in Heaven. They have attained perfection, so their prayers are powerful! There is a tremendous unifying power in prayer. Praying for others strengthens our bonds to them—not only the personal bonds, but even more importantly the spiritual bonds that unite us all through the Church, the Body of Christ. Thus even our prayers for strangers and strangers' prayers for us have great power. As we unify ourselves through prayer with those we love, so should we unify ourselves with all the faithful, living and departed, who are one in Christ through his Church, Militant, Expectant and Triumphant.

“May the souls of the faithful departed through the Mercy of God rest in peace, and let light perpetual shine upon them.”

Richard R. Losch+

Kanuga

Kanuga Episcopal Conference Center and Camp in Hendersonville, North Carolina has long been on my bucket list. In early June, I went to the Province IV Episcopal Church Women's Conference at Kanuga. It was everything I had imagined and more! Set in the mountains with Hendersonville right there, we were near civilization yet secluded. Because my phone had no service, I was able to mostly take a break from technology! That was nice.

I went with the Diocesan president of the ECW, Pearl Slay, and the Diocesan vice-president, Linda Kennedy. I went as Diocesan UTO chair and learned a great deal, not only about UTO, but also about the workings of ECW. In addition, we were preparing for Triennial and the General Convention which will be held next month in Austin, Texas. The three of us will attend as delegates, and I am quite excited about that!

The Province IV Altar Guild representatives were meeting at the same time as we along with the Province IV Bishops. Kanuga was a busy place indeed! I did not even know that the altar guild had meetings like this! I also learned that men are now able to

serve on the altar guild! The premise is that since women are doing many jobs that used to be reserved for men, men can now do jobs that were relegated to the women.

The subject of the conference was mission work, and our speakers had been missionaries in Africa. We learned a lot about what missionaries do when the people being helped really need other things. For example, they don't need walls painted over and over. They don't need mattresses when there aren't enough for everyone. Then you have the problem of who will get the mattresses and who won't. Also, there usually isn't enough room in the huts for mattresses. These are things that I had never thought of before. A lot of these African people expect gifts and lots of money, because that is what missionaries have taken before. What they need is to learn how to help themselves and how to become independent.

Help someone one time, and it is gratefully appreciated. Continue and it becomes expected. The next step is dependence. This makes sense in all aspects of life and in many circumstances. With our children, for example. Many parents today do so much for their children that many cannot even begin to take care of themselves; they expect to be taken care of. The same is true in mission work.

The closing worship service was wonderful! The chapel was absolutely beautiful, the music was inspiring, and the closeness to God was felt. We ended the way the missionaries told us is the African way. The priest and deacons went out and lined up. As each congregant exited, she shook the priest's and deacons' hands and took her place at the end of the line. Upon the last person's exit, every woman had shaken every other woman's hand. It was a blessing and a ritual I would love to see here in America!

Because of the Province IV meeting's being held at Camp McDowell last year and my attendance at Kanuga this year, I have made many new Episcopal friends who think more as I do than not. I look forward to going to the Province IV meeting next year which will be held on the coast of North Carolina.

Maggie Noland

July Birthdays . .

- 6 Madelyn Mack
- 7 Milburn G. Lamb
- 7 Meredith Underwood Shah
- 13 Chris Thompson
- 14 Lindsey Moore Thompson
- 14 Abby Rankin
- 16 Carl Sudduth
- 27 Ethel Garth Scott
- 29 Mira Muñoz



. . . and Anniversaries

- 8 Charles & Linda Muñoz



August Birthdays . . .

- 8 Garland Scott
- 12 Harris Marks
- 25 Joe Moore
- 26 Hannah Rankin



. . . and Anniversaries

- 27 Mitesh & Meredith Shah



SAINT JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH LECTOR AND USHER SCHEDULE

July 2018

	Old Testament	New Testament	Ushers
1	Roy Underwood	Madelyn Mack	Roy Underwood
8	Mary Helen Jones	Rosalie Dew	Roy Underwood
5	Linda Muñoz	Jesse Muñoz	Jimmy Collins
22	Jimmy Collins	Ethel Scott	Charles Muñoz
29	Fifth Sunday at Presbyterian Church		

ALTAR GUILD: Sharon Underwood

August 2018

	Old Testament	New Testament	Ushers
5	Madelyn Mack	Mary Helen Jones	Jimmy Collins
12	Rosalie Dew	Roy Underwood	Joe Moore
19	Jesse Muñoz	Linda Muñoz	Roy Underwood
26	Ethel Scott	Jimmy Collins	Charles Muñoz

ALTAR GUILD: Odell Collins

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL IS IN RECESS UNTIL SEPTEMBER 9

If you cannot serve on the day assigned, please
exchange with another server and call Hiram Patrenos
at 205-499-0506 as soon as possible.

A Touch of Trivia

Vladimir Putin is noted for his machismo, and justifiably so. He holds several martial arts black belts, including three in karate, a fifth-degree belt in judo, an “Eighth Dan” in kyokushin-kan karate, and a ninth-degree belt in taekwondo. This is the highest possible rank, giving him the title Grand Master. He is a personal friend of American actor and martial arts grand master Steven Seagal. Now you know why no one told him he can’t have another term as President of Russia.

Richard R. Losch+

JAMIE by Richard R. Losch



*“The party broke up early
when Gary’s mom flipped out
and started screaming.”*

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