

-A GRAIN OF MUSTARDSEED-

Dear Friends in Christ,

November 2023

Our annual patronal festival of All Saints' is once again upon us. In addition to keeping the feast on Wednesday, November 1st with a said service of Holy Communion at 10:00am, our annual "For All the Saints" choral concert and fundraiser is the Sunday before and on the Sunday next, in the octave, we give thanks to God in worship with a Festal Communion service at 10:00 am and a luncheon following. I hope that every family in the parish will attend all these events: The choir concert is a tremendously fun time and our lone fundraising concert for our music ministry in the year and our Feast of Title Service and luncheon are our principal acts of thanks, in worship and fellowship, for our corporate lives in Christ in this place. In fact this feast is a yearly opportunity to give thanks to God corporately for the blessings He has bestowed upon us as a parish and to pray His continued guidance for us in the years to come. There can be no doubt that we need His guidance now as ever: We are pressed-upon to conform to worldly standards ever-farther from the teachings of the gospel. The institutional church, at least in the West, seems to follow that lead in rejection of the basic articles of the Faith, and our own nation seems to be in a rather chaotic state. Now is not the time for compromise and half-truths: We need to seek God's will for us and our world and the grace to follow Him. And where will we find these? Precisely where God has promised: His Word written and His Holy Sacraments. Our Feast of Title ought, in fact, to be a renewing of our commitment to Christ and His Church in this parish. After all, our present lives are preparations for the world to come. The *Epistle to the Hebrews* describes us as pilgrims in this world, desiring "a better country, that is, an heavenly." (11:6) Even if the fruition of our faith can only be achieved in that heavenly realm, our effort must be to imitate the life of heaven here on our earthly pilgrimage and the All Saints' day scriptures describe that life as one of ceaseless praise and worship of Almighty God. Regular, weekly worship of God is our Christian duty, our *solemn duty*. All Saints' Day is as good a day as any to renew our commitment to Christ and His Church, to the worship and praise of Almighty God, to our parish and withal our desire for the kingdom of heaven.

Yours in Christ, Edward L. Rix

FEAST OF TITLE SERVICE & LUNCHEON

I encourage you all to attend our 10:00 a.m. Festal Communion service on November 5th, Sunday in the Octave of All Saints' Day (our patronal festival). Following the 10:00 service is our annual potluck luncheon to which all are invited: bring a dish or a bottle of wine, bring a friend (or two or three!). Set-up for the luncheon will be at 10:00 am on the 4th.

VESTRY NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Vestry will shortly appoint a Nominating Committee to oversee the election of new Vestry members for the 2024-2026 Vestry term. Until that time, names of potential vestrymen ought to be given to either the Wardens (Mr. Michael Yoh and Miss Kathleen Stephans) or Fr. Rix. Qualifications for membership on the vestry are posted around the parish on bulletin boards. Names should be submitted by the end of November so that the Committee can interview eligible nominees in December/early January in advance of our Annual General Meeting.

STEWARDSHIP 2024

The *Book of Common Prayer* encourages us to offer to God "ourselves, our souls and bodies." When we think about stewardship (both our current support of the parish and our anticipated pledge of time, talent and treasure for 2024) we ought not to think primarily about cash and how we'll do without it if we give it to the Church. We ought to think of God's claim on us; the fact that we have been "bought with a price" to quote the Apostle. Every hair on our head is known by God; His mercies are new every day; His everlasting arms support us all the day long of this troublesome life. Will we not acknowledge this by returning, in thanks, some respectable portion of our lives to Him, His Church, His service? Our pledge cards each year ask not simply for a monetary pledge, but offer opportunities to pledge our time and energy in the many service organizations in the parish. As such it is a tangible way to commit *ourselves* to God, not simply our cash. We ought, when establishing this discipline and rule in our lives (and this is how it must be considered – a discipline like praying daily, reading scripture, etc.), to consider how much of our money we give to unessential things outside of Church (luxuries, club dues, treats for ourselves) and how much time we spend in these activities each week. Then we ought to compare these to our commitment to Christ in His Church as exemplified in the amount of time, talent and treasure we share with it. Only we can determine for ourselves (perhaps with the guidance of a spiritual director and most certainly under the prayerful assistance of the Holy Spirit) what we ought to be giving. And of course the answer is always "more" for none of us (this writer included) has given himself wholly to God. Our ever-increasing attempts to do so ought to be the outward and visible signs of our inward desire for that ever-closer relationship with the Lord we ought all to covet.

CHOIR CONCERT – OCTOBER 29

As this number may well reach you before Sunday, Oct. 29th, here's one more word of reminder to attend our Choir Concert on that day. A wonderful program of sacred and secular music, keyboard and trumpet solos, show-tunes, operatic arias and motets will be offered. Bring your friends and be generous in your support.



"The kingdom of God...is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it." *St. Luke 13:18-19*