



The New Epistle

a newsletter of

The Progressive Episcopal Church

Volume I Number 6

August 2015

August (*Sextilis*)



August trivia

August is the eighth month of the year in the Julian and Gregorian calendars and one of seven months with a length of 31 days. In the Southern Hemisphere, August is the seasonal equivalent of February in the Northern Hemisphere.

This month was originally named Sextilis in Latin, because it was the sixth month in the original ten-month Roman calendar under Romulus in 753 BC, when March was the first month of the year. About 700 BC it became the eighth month when January and February were added to the year before March by King Numa Pompilius, who also gave it 29 days. Julius Caesar added two days when he created the Julian calendar in 45 BC giving it its modern length of 31 days. In 8 BC it was renamed in honor of Augustus. According to a *Senatus consultum* quoted by Macrobius, he chose this month because it was the time of several of his great triumphs, including the conquest of Egypt.



Crosses 'n' stuff

The cross is such a ubiquitous symbol of Christianity, yet it has a very ancient history. It appears as a symbol in alphabets before 2000 B.C. The Egyptians used the Ankh, which was a symbol of eternal life, and symbolized also the union of the feminine and masculine. The solar cross (a cross within a circle) has been continuous use for at least 9,000 years. It represents the life-giving sun, and also the four cardinal directions and the four elements.

As a Christian symbol, there are hundreds of forms, many with profound symbolism. Here are a few for consideration.

The Jerusalem cross originated with Godfrei de Bouillon during the first Crusade (1096-1099). The symbolism of the five-fold cross is variously given as the Five Wounds of Christ, Christ and the four quarters of the world, or Christ and the four evangelists. Although this cross is quite popular, many Progressive Christians today choose to avoid it, citing its origin and use as the symbol of the Crusades, which is viewed by many as the Christian persecution of Muslims.



The Maltese Cross was first associated with the Knights Hospitaller, who were on the island of Malta in the 16th century. The eight points of the Maltese cross represent the eight lands of origin of the Knights Hospitaller: Auvergne, Provence, France, Aragon, Castille and Portugal, Italy, Germany, and England. The eight points also symbolize the eight obligations or aspirations of the knights: to live in truth, to have faith, to repent one's sins, to give proof of humility, to love justice, to be merciful, to be sincere and wholehearted, and to endure persecution. The Orders of St John also teach that the eight points allude to the Eight Beatitudes.



The Fleury Cross (Lily Cross) In Christian symbolism, the lily is viewed as a sign of Christ's Resurrection, and is therefore the traditional flower of Easter. White lilies also represent purity and chastity, virtue and innocence, particularly in reference to Mary, the Mother of God. The Archangel Gabriel is painted presenting the Virgin Mary with a white lily when he announces to her that she is to bear the Son of God.



The Huguenot Cross This is perhaps one of the most profound crosses in terms of symbolism. It was designed in Nîmes, France in the 1680s. Its basis is the Maltese cross as the four-petaled lily of France, and representing the Four Gospels. The eight rounded points (*boutonné*) represent the eight Beatitudes. Between the arms of the cross appears a three-petaled Fleur-de-lis, the total of twelve petals represents the 12 Apostles. The open space below each fleur-de-lis forms a heart, the symbol of loyalty. The lily is a symbol of purity. Below the cross is a dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit and of peace.



The sleeping giant of progressive Christianity

By Rev. Andrew Downs,
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Terre Haute, Indiana

(Reprinted by permission.)

Is this the end?

Phyllis Tickle has long argued that the fight over human sexuality and marriage is the last battle of the culture war. It is the last plank of the cultural conservative political platform; and the plank is crumbling. That is why the fight has been so brutal. She argues that conservative Christians see this as the end, and are therefore willing to fight to the last breath to defend the status quo.

In the last decade, wide scholarship has lent the progressive argument for marriage equality and equal treatment of LGBTQ persons far more consensus among Christians and scholars than even a decade ago. The "clobber passages" have been decimated in recent years and so thoroughly debunked that their influence over the discussion has little effect any longer outside the confines of the extreme corners of the faith and in their residue in our traditions.

The tide has clearly shifted, and did so years ago. We're just feeling the currents now.

So it is no wonder that the culture warriors would feel so disturbed and threatened, given the dramatic and seemingly rapid,

(though it has been through decades of groundwork that has led to this) change in the culture. The Supreme Court ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* isn't an isolated moment, of course, but a watershed in the midst of a half-century struggle for recognition and participation.

In some ways, the conservative concern is right. Things have changed. But not suddenly, and not for the ill. In many ways, it was the culture war itself, launched in the 1980s upon a so-called enemy who has itself rarely fought back which has brought us here. The organizing and rallying to a unified conservative cause against, not liberal oppressors, but a moderate and normalized culture struggling with postmodernity and wrestling with the issues of our world constructed this framework, this war, and all of its battlefields. A war for faith, for the very definition of truth.

This means the only target left in this discredited war is other Christians. Of course a strange move, given that this seems like decidedly un-Christian behavior.

It is also illogical in purpose. No portion of the church has been hit harder by the fall of modernity than the progressive and center-

holding mainline. It has struggled to name its voice and claim its Christian ethic with strength and clarity, getting too mired and mixed up in philosophical puzzles, diction, and doctrine.

Conservative Christians have pilloried the progressive and mainline churches for their struggles, criticizing and humiliating the churches in public forums for decades, always suggesting that its decline coincides with the decline of liberalism. Sometimes going so far as to call it GOD's punishment. At the last census, we had the biggest numbers gap and rates of decline between conservative evangelicalism and the mainline in 50 years. Though conservative Christianity was quite a bit stronger a decade ago, the mainline has really never been weaker.

Why, then, have conservatives chosen to be the bully? By their own measures and self-assessment, they are winning. If trends continue, they will have won in a matter of decades.

So how could this, the weakest member of the Christian family be in actuality, the most dangerous? Progressives, the ones so insignificant as to be ignored and ridiculed is simultaneously the scariest enemy the church has ever faced (apparently – and unlike, say, any other point in the last 50 years). And both insignificant and terrifying at the same time, I guess.

But what if Conservatives do know something we don't? What if they actually sense something about the rest of us that we aren't

noticing about ourselves? Or, more importantly, have been unwilling to acknowledge and name about our churches?

The mainline has played the sleeping giant, refusing to be roused, even after 9/11. Refusing to be roused after Abu Ghraib and torture. Refusing to be roused after an economic meltdown. Refusing still to be roused in the midst of Black Lives Matter, generational inequality, rising infant mortality, and frustratingly unequal systems of injustice and access to education and healthcare.

Or perhaps it is that the sleeping giant is slow to wake, roused decades ago and much slower to get to its feet, harder to rein in, and impossible to stop.

And maybe, just maybe, they are right to name the giant, the true giant of transformation; that it isn't the mainline churches themselves, but the progressive ethic and theological awakening many in the mainline have embraced. For it is the giant itself, rather than its churches that conservative Christians fear.

The giant, so terrifying to the privileged and the comfortable; to the wealthy and the ignorant alike; it has come to bring the Kingdom, turning things upside down and inside out. The big churches brought low and the tiny churches raised up. A giant of transformation and innovation the likes of which humanity hasn't seen in generations, with new expressions and reflections of grace we have yet to name. This giant comes in love

and hope. But it won't be kind to white supremacy, unequal justice, and the bank accounts of the wealthy.

Conservative evangelicals are right: a more powerful and transformative faith is being born. A faith that is eager to include us all.

Those things are toast.

But it won't. Because I suspect that many hate the thought of losing more than they like the thought of sharing in winning.



On the Lord's Prayer

A Meditation by Ven. Thurlow Weed

Prayer – it has been an integral part of public & private worship for tens of thousands of years. Prayer exists in nearly all theistic societies & cultures. The Inca & Aztec prayed and offered blood sacrifices to their deities in thanksgiving for, or to request for, some need, often for rain for crops and harvest, or with regard to conflicts with their enemies. In Judaism, blood sacrifices were part of prescribed Temple ritual; all were required by law to offer a particular animal to be sacrificed, along with the rendering of prayers.

Jesus taught a different form of prayer. He viewed the Temple's blood rituals with disdain. In order that the animals for the blood sacrifices were available to those who might not have the required animal to bring, one could purchase the required critter from the Temple, but this required payment in Temple currency. To this end, money-changers had also set up shop inside the Temple whereby one could convert one's local currency to Temple currency, just as we do today when travelling to a foreign country, where we must visit and exchange bank to convert our US dollars for the equivalent value in local currency.

The profiteering money-changers and animal salesmen in the Temple had so distracted from the worship of God, corrupting worship into a business for profit, that Jesus had had enough. He was so angered that he committed the sin of violence & destruction in the Temple, which led to his arrest.

But some time before this, Jesus' disciples had become aware of his differing approach to prayer & worship. They asked of him, as we find in Luke 10, "How should we pray?" Jesus responded with what we call today the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer has become a dangerous prayer, and a foolish one. It has become so because of how it is used. We recite it mindlessly, without even thinking about it, these words we learned – memorized – as young children. We mindless rattle off the words without any real cognizance of what the words are actually saying. We then proceed to go about with whatever is next, and completely ignoring the words we have just mindlessly recited. This is what make the prayer dangerous, for the words are empty.

Thus, let us carefully examine this magnificent Prayer and consider what it is actually saying.

OUR. Us. All people of God's Creation. You. Me. All people. Those before us, those after us, those yet to be born. OUR.

FATHER. Father. Mother. Genesis tells us in the 26th & 27th verse of the first chapter that God is both male & female. A parent. Who loves us. Who created us. In their image.

OUR FATHER. The Creator to whom all of us belong as their image.

WHO ART. The Great I AM. The Great Oneness.

IN. Existing. Being.

HEAVEN. The kingdom of heaven is within you, is within each of us, as Jesus tells us in Luke 17:21. God is in us, we are Their image.

OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN The Creator of all of us, who lives within us, as we in Them. Father-Mother God, all-Harmonious.

HALLOWED/HOLY. Sacred. Y-H-V-H. Consecrated. Blessed.

IS. God is, and always has been, and always will be.

THY NAME. The Great I AM. Y-H-V-H. The name so holy, so sacred, it could only be uttered by the Great High Priest of the Temple once a year, and even then, only in the Holy of Holies and at low breath.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME. Worthy of adoration.

THY KINGDOM. All Creation. All things. All that is, seen and unseen. That place, and state of peace that passes all understanding. Perfect Love.

COME. Thy Perfect Peace & Perfect Love. We invite it to be with us, *in* us. That we may love one another as God has loved us.

THY KINGDOM COME. God's kingdom *is* come, and God is ever-present.

THY. God's, not ours.

WILL. God's will of Perfect Peace and Perfect Love –UNCONDITIONAL. Not our will, which is imperfect and conditional.

BE DONE. Let God's Love prevail as a state of being.

IN EARTH. Here in this physical realm

AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. – that spiritual realm, that spiritual house not made with hands. The kingdom of heaven within us.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Enable us to know, — as in heaven, so on earth, — God is omnipotent, supreme.

GIVE. Provide. Offer.

US. All people. All before us, all with us here, all yet to come.

THIS DAY. Today. These present hours in which the earth makes one complete revolution.

OUR. All people, collectively.

DAILY. For this day.

BREAD. That which is needed for life.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD. Provide for us this day that which we need, not that which we want. Give us grace for today. Feed the famished affections. That our *needs* are supplied, not our *wants*.

AND FORGIVE US. Pardon us.

OUR TRESPASSES. Those wrongs we have done to those around us, to God's People, to God's Earth

AS WE FORGIVE. We must also forgive, pardon.

THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US. God does not forgive our wrongdoings unless we forgive others who wrong us. Be at peace with your neighbor.

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS. Let Divine Love be reflected in our love for others.

AND LEAD US. God leads us, so far as we allow Him.

NOT INTO TEMPTATION. God leads us to what is good. We desire that God lead us away from temptation, and that He will also

DELIVER US FROM EVIL. Evil is that which is not good for us, that which harms us or our neighbours, or any part of God's Creation.

FOR THINE. Belonging to God.

IS THE KINGDOM. All Creation. The Universe and all that therein is.

AND THE POWER. Omnipotent. With God, all things are possible.

AND THE GLORY. For his Love and his Gifts, we give thanks.



August 2015



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Churchman's Ordo Edition

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>READINGS Mass — Year B Office — Year One</p> <p>Weekday Eucharistic Readings for use throughout the year are found in LFF, pages 498-528.</p> <p>See Notes on Reverse</p> <p>[] - In some Places</p>	<p>Glo.—Gloria Cr.—Creed Prf.—Proper Preface of Adv.—Advent Inc.—Incarnation Epi.—Epiphany H.Wk.—Holy Week Eas.—Easter Asc.—Ascension</p>	<p>Pen.—Pentecost Tri.—Trinity Sunday A.S.—All Saints St.—Saint Ap.—Apostles Ded.—Dedication Bap.—Baptism L.D.—Lord's Day</p>	<p>Days of Special Devotion are noted with ✱</p>	<p>NOTE The Transfiguration is the feast of title of churches dedicated to the "Savior" or called "Christ Church".</p>	<p>✱</p>	<p>Joseph of Arimathea [St. Peter's Chains - Lammas Day]</p> <p>1</p> <p>Prf. Dead [Glo. Cr. Prf. Ap.]</p>
<p>The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>2</p> <p>Proper 13 Glo. Cr. Prf. L.D.</p>	<p>[Nicodemus, A Teacher of Israel, Martyr, 1st Cent.]</p> <p>3</p> <p>[Common of a Martyr III, Glo. Prf. St. 3]</p>	<p>[Jean-Baptiste Vianney (John Vianney), Cure d' Ars, 1859]</p> <p>4</p> <p>[Common of a Pastor I, Glo. Prf. St. 1]</p>	<p>[Oswald, King of Northumbria, Martyr, 642]</p> <p>5</p> <p>[Common of a Martyr II, Glo. Prf. St. 3]</p>	<p>THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST</p> <p>6</p> <p>NOTE Glo. Cr. Prf. Epi.</p>	<p>John Mason Neale, ✱ Priest, 1866</p> <p>7</p> <p>Glo. Prf. Ded.</p>	<p>Dominic, Priest and Friar, 1221</p> <p>8</p> <p>Glo. Prf. St. 2</p>
<p>The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>9</p> <p>Proper 14 Glo. Cr. Prf. L.D.</p>	<p>Laurence, Deacon and Martyr at Rome, 258</p> <p>10</p> <p>Glo. Prf. St. 3</p>	<p>Clare, Abbess at Assisi, 1253</p> <p>11</p> <p>Glo. Prf. St. 2</p>	<p>[Hippolytus, Priest and Martyr, 235]</p> <p>12</p> <p>[Common of a Martyr I, Glo. Prf. St. 3]</p>	<p>Jeremy Taylor, Bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore, 1667</p> <p>13</p> <p>Glo. Cr. Prf. St. 1</p>	<p>Jonathan Myrick ✱ Daniels, 1965 [Maximillian Kolbe, Priest, Martyr, 1941]</p> <p>14</p> <p>Glo. Prf. St. 2 [Common of a Martyr I, Glo. Prf. St. 3]</p>	<p>SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN [B.V.M. in Glory (or the Assumption)]</p> <p>15</p> <p>Glo. Cr. Prf. Inc. or BVM (TASB)</p>
<p>The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>16</p> <p>Proper 15 Glo. Cr. Prf. L.D.</p>	<p>Feria</p> <p>17</p> <p>Proper 15</p>	<p>William Porcher DuBose, Priest, 1918 [Helena, Queen and Widow, 330]</p> <p>18</p> <p>Glo. Prf. Epi. [Common of a Saint I, Glo. Prf. St. 1]</p>	<p>Feria</p> <p>19</p>	<p>Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, 1153</p> <p>20</p> <p>Glo. Cr. Prf. St. 1</p>	<p>[Abraham of ✱ Smolensk, Abbot, 1221]</p> <p>21</p> <p>[Common of a Monastic II, Glo. Prf. St. 2]</p>	<p>[Queenship of the BVM]</p> <p>22</p> <p>[Propers for May 31 Glo. Cr. Prf. Inc. or BVM (TASB)]</p>
<p>The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost Proper 16 Glo. Cr. Prf. L.D.</p> <p>23</p> <p>30</p> <p>The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost Proper 17 Glo. Cr. Prf. L.D.</p>	<p>SAINT BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE Glo. Cr. Prf. Ap.</p> <p>24</p> <p>31</p> <p>Aidan, Bishop of Lindesfarne, 651 Glo. Prf. Ap.</p>	<p>Louis, King of France, 1270</p> <p>25</p> <p>Glo. Prf. Bap.</p>	<p>Feria</p> <p>26</p> <p>Proper 16</p>	<p>Thomas Gallaudet, and Henry Winter Syle, 1902, 1890</p> <p>27</p> <p>Glo. Prf. Pen.</p>	<p>Augustine, Bishop ✱ of Hippo, 430</p> <p>28</p> <p>Glo. Cr. Prf. Bap.</p>	<p>[The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist]</p> <p>29</p> <p>[See Propers for Jun. 24, Glo. Prf. Adv.]</p>