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Friday, April 14, 2017

## A Time "Meet and Right" for Prayer and a Vergers Prayer List



By The Rev. Canon Matthew TL Corkern, Chaplain to The Vergers Guild of The Episcopal Church

This Good Friday as we look toward the dawn of The Resurrection, it is a time "meet and right" to go forth from the last forty days of our wilderness journey wherein we prayed often and engaged in self-examination. But just perhaps, it is a holy time to consider how prayer may play a role in our everyday lives as those living within an intentional community set systematically in support to the Church.

The poet George Herbert pondered this same question of praying in everyday life and exercised exquisite prose: "Prayer, the Church's banquet, angel's age, God's breath in man returning to his birth, The soul in paraphrase, the heart on pilgrimage, The Christian plummet sounding heaven and earth... something understood." More simply stated, our contemporary psalmist Mary Oliver has written, "Praying is not a context but the doorway into thanks, and a silence in which another voice may speak."

At the heart of one particular illuminated manuscript, an artisan monk devoted to the daily offices of prayer and reasoned matters of the creative world, pondered:

*A hedge of trees surround me,  
A blackbird's lay sings to me,  
Above my lined booklet  
The thrilling birds chant to me.  
In a grey mantle from the top of the bushes  
The cuckoo sings;  
Verily – may the Lord shield me!*

From the Celtic Age, this liturgist evokes our place of ministry suspended between our Creator and His created world. As the Children of God and People of the Resurrection, we live into our very ethos through prayer and service – we marvel at the essential nature of Hope made real in acts of offered thanksgiving, mourning, and healing.

Therefore, I invite all vergers and servers in God's church into a time of new life in prayer. Our work is to uphold one another and to set our own examples for others in need of companionship and solace as well as measured wisdom. Working with the VGEC Board and the Communications Committee, we are launching a "Vergers Prayer List" through the Vergers Guild of The Episcopal Church website at [vergers.org/prayer](#). As your chaplain, this will allow me to help us all reengage each other and to advance our developing relationships as vergers and servers.

Instructions about the Vergers Prayer List is available at [vergers.org/prayer](#) as well. We have built a small form that you can fill out for prayer requests and I get a confidential email with that request. I will contact every person who submits a request and if we determine together that it is appropriate, we will add your request to the public prayers list. From time to time we will place

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  - ▼ [April 2017](#) (3)
    - [Saturday Events at the 2017 VGEC Annual Conference...](#)
    - [A Time "Meet and Right" for Prayer and a Vergers P...](#)
    - [2017 VGEC Annual Conference Profile: The Most Rev...](#)
  - ▶ [February 2017](#) (1)
  - ▶ [January 2017](#) (1)
- ▶ [2016](#) (17)
- ▶ [2015](#) (46)
- ▶ [2014](#) (50)
- ▶ [2013](#) (17)
- ▶ [2012](#) (12)
- ▶ [2011](#) (10)
- ▶ [2010](#) (15)
- ▶ [2009](#) (2)

### Past issues of the Printed Vergers Voice

- [2010 VGEC Archives](#)
- [2009 VGEC Archives](#)
- [2008 VGEC Archives](#)
- [2007 VGEC Archives](#)

prayers in the list anonymously when appropriate and please know that I will add all requests to my own personal prayer list as well.

In a bidding prayer context, the renowned preacher and prayer-warrior Henry Sloane Coffin, echoes this sentiment to engage, bear with, and encourage each other in daily prayers:

*Almighty and ever-living God, you are beyond the grasp of our highest thought, but within the reach of our frailest trust: Come in the beauty of the morning's light and reveal yourself to us. Enrich us out of the heritage of seers and scholars and saints into whose faith and labors we have entered, and quicken us to new insights for our time; that we may be possessors of the truth of many yesterdays, partakers of your thoughts for today, and creators with you of a better tomorrow; through Jesus Christ, the Lord of the ages. Amen.*

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*Abstract:* The Rev. Canon Matthew TL Corkern, Chaplain to The Vergers Guild of The Episcopal Church introduces the new Vergers Prayer List now found online at [vergers.org/prayer](http://vergers.org/prayer).

Posted by [Scott Smith](#) at 10:30 AM



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