

ADOPTION BY GOD

The Rev'd Canon David Pucik | Canon for Cathedral Operations

Kristen and I have two boys, an 8-year-old and a 4-year-old. They were both adopted at birth, and growing our family in this way has richly deepened my understanding of what it means to say that we are children of God.

The Old Testament is full of images of God's saving grace: deliverance from disaster, miraculous victories, divine safety in a promised land. While St. Paul does describe salvation in these terms, he resorts to a different image to depict his most intimate descriptions of salvation. In *Romans 8:15*, which is among Paul's most intimate descriptions of the hope of salvation, he writes, "*You did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'*" He uses this image several times, in these chapters and others. I would argue, then, that we cannot really understand what it means to be children of God without understanding what it means to be adopted.

Adoption takes a child and makes them a new member of a family they were not born into. They did not join the family by right of birth. Instead, their status as a child is granted solely through the free choice of the parent. In other words, an adopted child is not a child by nature, but by grace, which permanently alters their natural status. We have no right or claim to call God our Father. Only one has ever had that claim by nature, and that's Jesus. But because of the death and resurrection of Christ, a way has been opened for each of us to receive by grace all that belongs to Jesus by nature, including his sonship.

And yet, as crucial as adoption is to understanding the gospel, the practice sees very little airtime in many Christian churches. I do not believe the omission is intentional. Rather, if you have not participated in adoption or walked closely alongside those who have, it is difficult to understand its significance. It is a lengthy, expensive, difficult, and often painful, process. But once you've seen the process work, it becomes clear that adoption does not just impact the child and parents. The whole social fabric is impacted by each participant. The birth mother often acts with great courage and conviction in the midst of tragic and difficult circumstances. Her courage initiates the process. The adoptive parents' free choice to take a child and call them by their name completes the process, usually in a legal setting where the adoption is finalized. But there are countless others: those who supported the birth mom, those who supported the birth parents, those who facilitated the adoption (agencies or attorneys depending on the state), and oftentimes those who donated to fund the adoption. And of course, the child not only becomes a son or daughter—they become grandsons and granddaughters, brothers and sisters. When a child is given a home, countless people across multiple communities are impacted. And considering that both of my boys were baptized as soon as their adoptions were finalized, adoption can even have an eternal impact. All through a simple act of grace.

This is only the beginning of the conversation. You will hear more about adoption in the coming months. It is something that God has placed on my heart and Kristen's, for obvious reasons. But I also believe it is a call that is being increasingly heard in our church. To help the helpless. To serve the fatherless. As children of God by grace, we are empowered to extend the same grace to others. The more we grow in understanding and supporting people through the adoption process, the better we will understand our own status before God: creatures by nature, but children by grace.

MISSIONS & EVANGELISM

EACH OF OUR EIGHT CORES HAS A SPECIFIC MONTH OF THE YEAR IN WHICH IT WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED.
FEBRUARY IS INTERNATIONAL MONTH.

CAMPUS: HOST LEON HS YOUNG LIFE! |

Young Life is looking for homes where Club can be hosted on the following dates: 2.27, 3.6, 3.27, 4.3, 4.17, and 4.24. This is an opportunity to allow approximately 25 high school kids to hear about the love of Christ, play games, and have a lot of fun! Club starts at 7:26pm and ends around 8:30pm.

For more information, or if you are interested in opening your home on one of these dates, please contact Ellen Reid, Midtown Young Life Team Leader, at 904.803.9203.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND: SAUSAGE DOGS FOR NICARAGUA & UGANDA |

Next Sunday, February 12th | Help support our upcoming Nicaragua and Uganda Mission Trips by enjoying a sausage dog on the lawn while you meet our various ministry partners who will be with us for World Mission Sunday. *If there is inclement weather, sausage dogs and ministry fair will be in the Parish Hall.*

INTERNATIONAL: WINGS FOR CHANGE |

WFC is collecting unwanted, but functional laptops, tablets, cell phones and camcorders for our partners in Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Please bring any donations by next Sunday, World Mission Sunday. Laptops and tablets are used to show educational videos. If you can clear your information, please do, otherwise we will get it done.

DISCIPLED EVANGELISM: FAMILY PRAYER WALK |

Saturday, 18 February, 9am | Kids and adults alike are invited to join us on our next prayer walk! We will be visiting our parishioners and their neighbors. This is a wonderful opportunity for families with young children, as we shape the next generation into the missionaries of the future. We will meet in the cathedral parking lot at 9am and be sent out from here. Contact our Missional Curate, Andrew Beluk, at ABeluk@StPetersFL.com with any questions.



WORLD MISSION FRIDAY WITH THE REV'D HERB BAILEY! | *Friday, 10 February, 6-8:30pm* | Join us at The Hub (548 E Bradford Rd, behind ECHO), for an evening with our World Mission Weekend guest and speaker, Herb Bailey. He'll be joined by his wife, Angel, and they will share their experiences as evangelists and of trusting in the Lord's providence as well as lead us in an interactive Bible study. Dinner will be provided. Come prepared for a truly special experience with God and our neighbors!

THE GREAT COMMISSION PLEDGE

All commitments to the Great Commission Pledge will go toward increasing the budgets of the Charles Simeon Institute and Missions & Evangelism—or 'external spending' of St. Peter's.

WHAT FALLS UNDER THESE BUDGETS?

All Missions & Evangelism work and the Charles Simeon Institute, including the recent addition of the Missional Curacy—read more in the GREAT COMMISSION NEWSLETTER!

Pray.
Give.
Partner.
Go!

ACNA
GLOBAL
MISSION
INITIATIVE
The New Wine

If you feel led to participate in this initiative, we will all turn our GREAT COMMISSION pledge cards in **TOGETHER** on WORLD MISSION SUNDAY!

DISCIPLESHIP & PARISH LIFE

KINTSUGI A VISUAL LAMENT

\$35/person | March 4th
Session 1 | 9am–Noon
Session 2 | 1–4pm



ST. PETER'S ARTISANS | LENTEN ART CLASS

Saturday, 4 March | Kintsugi is the ancient Japanese art of mending broken pottery. Participants will learn basic steps to mending a hand thrown tea bowl, and have a visual keepsake from the day. These workshops will help set the tone for Lent—a season of repentance & sacrifice. Join us on the journey from brokenness to beauty—Register at StPetersFL.com/kintsugi

UNITED ADORATION RETREAT AND CONCERT

Friday–Saturday, 17-18 February | Join other artists and musicians for the United Adoration Retreat at Trinity Church in Thomasville! This retreat will be a multi-art retreat, so all artistic disciplines are welcome—choreography, songwriting/composition, visual art, poetry, writing, and more! Chris Hall and Sally Hernandez and the good folks at Trinity will be hosting, and Ryan & Melissa Flanigan and their children will lead us in worship *Friday night at 7pm* for a free Liturgical Folk Concert open to all. Learn more at StPetersFL.com/liturgicalfolk

MEN'S BREAKFAST | \$10 CASH OR CHECK

Saturday, 18 February | 9am | Our February breakfast will be on a Saturday, but fret not, the March Men's Breakfast will be on a Thursday. Join us for fellowship with other Christian men and hear a personal testimony of faith from one of our very own, CHRIS GARVEN! RSVP to reserve your breakfast at StPetersFL.com/mensbreakfast

LADIES! REGISTER FOR THE WOMEN'S MINI-RETREAT | *Friday–Saturday, 24-25 February*

Our speakers are Allison Lawrence and her daughter, Chelsea Hamshaw. Allison is married to Bishop Mark Lawrence, retired bishop of South Carolina. She is a mother of five and a grandmother of twelve. Chelsea will also be leading us in worship! Register now at StPetersFL.com/miniretreat2023!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! LENT TRADITIONS CONVERSATION WITH THE DEAN (ZOOM CALL) | *Thursday, 16 February* | 8:30–9:30pm

Parents of Children and Youth, you are invited to join Father Marcus on a zoom call about Lent. The topic of discussion is “How do you use Lent to help your family prepare for Easter?” Do you do something different as a family during this season in prayers, devotions, or worship? Is this the year to start? If you have something you love, please come prepared to show and tell. This call is all about inspiration and encouragement for Christian parents Interested, please email AmyS@StPetersFL.com for the link.

A SEASON OF PRAYER WITH THE DAUGHTERS OF THE HOLY CROSS | You are invited to join with the DHC–Trinity Chapter, in a season of prayer (February 1-28). The Holy Spirit has laid it on our hearts that we are called to an intentional, persistent season of prayer. The ancient practice of Lectio Divina or divine reading will be our guide. This practice uses scripture to guide us in praying and listening for the will of God. If you'd like to receive the resources to participate, email Terri Sue Aldridge at tsaldridge@gmail.com

MARY & MARTHA | FEBRUARY GATHERING
Monday 13 February | 9:45am | The Mary & Martha Guild will meet at Astrid Reynolds' home, 3859 Moriarity Court. Our guest speaker is Father David Pucik. Our social time starts at 9:45am and Father Pucik's presentation starts at 10:30am. All women are invited to attend.

WORSHIP

VISITING THE CATHEDRAL?

Welcome—we're so glad you're worshipping with us today! Our nursery is available during Sunday morning services for children newborn through Kindergarten. We hope you'll join us on the lawn for coffee & other refreshments between morning services! Whether today is your first time or you've been coming for awhile, we are so glad you're here!

CATHEDRAL PRAYER LIST & CARE MINISTRIES



If you have any pastoral needs or know of someone who needs pastoral care and prayer, please contact Care Ministries Coordinator, Alice Sanderson at ASanderson@StPetersFL.com

Please call the Cathedral Office at 850.701.0664 or email ASanderson@StPetersFL.com to be added to the Cathedral Prayer List. **YOU CAN ALSO SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST OR CARE MINISTRY NEED AT [STPETERSFL.COM/PRAYER](https://StPetersFL.com/PRAYER)**

Military: Lucas Bell, Jose Betancourt, Lt Col. David Chichetti, SSG Corey Daws, Lt. Col. Daniel Dean, Capt. James Dilworth, Capt. John Easterbrook Jr, Airman Drew Edwards, Sgt. Michael Gaskins, PFC John P. Warren SSgt Corey Owen, Capt. Griffin Jax, Capt. Savannah B. Jax, 1st Lt. Parker Jax, Capt. Chandler B. Jax, 1st Lt. Carson Jax, 1st Lt. Rebecca Jax, Gabriel Melendez, Col. Burt Newman, Major Gen. John Richardson, Capt. Oliver Rushing, Spc. Andrew Sanderson, Lt. Cmdr. Chris Smith, SFC Dewey Spence, Private Sam Henri Lt. Patrick Swain, Capt. Parry Thomas, Lt. Cmdr. Blake Van Brunt Jr, Tommy VanLandingham MM3, Seaman Benjamin Waddill

Parishioners, Relatives, and Friends: Sally Patrenos, John Peckham, Kathleen Smith, Quinn Toulon, Burt Mead, Rob Garcia, Don Ovi, Bert Fletcher, Dave & Mary Alma Lang, Brady Jax, Richard Ward, Mary Anne Howard

CATHEDRAL TOUR

Saturday, 11 February, 10–11AM | From stone to spire, arch to altar, the traditional Gothic architecture of St. Peter's reflects the orthodox truth of Holy Scripture. Take a tour and be inspired!

HOLY RECYCLING - PALM CROSSES

Due Sunday, 19 February | Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the penitential season of Lent. Did you save your palm crosses from last Palm Sunday? Please leave them in one of the baskets marked "Palm Crosses" at the Visitor's Desk or at the Parish Life Desk in the Narthex no later than **19 February**. After the crosses are collected, they will be reverently burned and used for the Imposition of Ashes during the Ash Wednesday services on *22 February*.



FINANCIAL MINUTE

Total Operating Budget: \$TBA | % Collected YTD: TBA% | Debt Retired in January: \$12,044.18
For more information about making a pledge, visit StPetersFL.com/Give