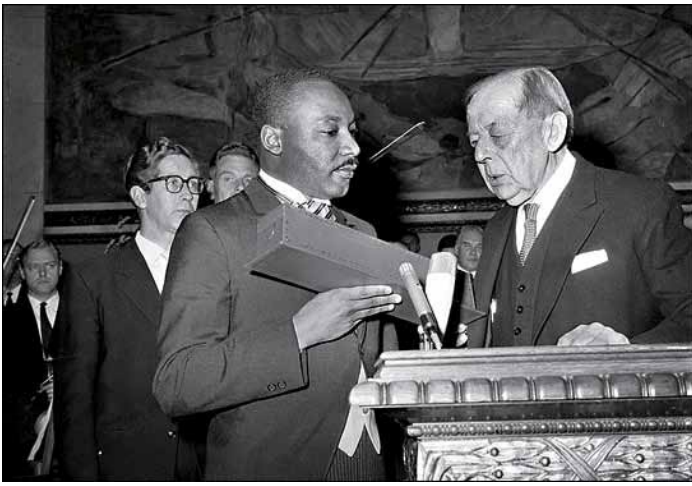


## Weekly Musings ✚ January 17, 2011



Dr. King receives the Nobel Prize in 1964

Today is the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. He is on the Episcopal Calendar which includes saints (mostly) and others commemorated. No doubt some would tell me Dr. King is far from a saint (I suspect he would agree) but remember that was said of most of the saints on the calendar. When someone says of someone, “he didn’t have an enemy in the world” I always think, “ha!” It never ceases to amaze me how often people look at the small picture of personality and refuse to look at the big picture of what someone did for the world and in this case for the Kingdom of God. This is an offshoot of pietism which is the curse of American religion. Pietism dates back as far as the latter 17th century. Pietism despairs of doctrine and dogma and concentrates on the inner religious experience of the believer. It cloaks its self-absorption in aphorisms about “saving one’s soul.”

Most of you have heard my story of seeing Dr. King on the escalator at the Chicago Airport in 1967 (not too many months before he was assassinated). He was by himself and at that time lived in Chicago. I remember my distinct impression of him as a man. Not a man in the John Wayne image (“A man has gotta do what a man has gotta do” – whatever that means) but a man made in the image of God. It radiated from him and I remember being able to feel that and wondering how that worked. It was and remains, one of my most important spiritual experiences.

If you want to see how a Christian really uses scripture appropriately, read his “Letter from the Birmingham Jail.” When you enter into that splendid letter, the Old Testament prophets come alive. Time ceases to be chronology and becomes kairos, the appointed time of the liberation of God’s people. Unfortunately, two of the people to whom the letter was addressed were Episcopal bishops, the Ordinary (head bishop) Bishop Carpenter was clueless, something that characterized his understanding of racism as a whole, and the Suffragan, Bishop Murray, who may have been well intentioned but his timing was fatally off. Whatever else they did, this is how they are remembered, an object lesson for all.

It is tempting to separate the saints of God from us by vast clouds of time, radically different cultures, and the powerful drug of romanticism, but Dr. King will not let us do that.

### HOW TO MAKE CHURCH BRILLIANT



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### St. Luke’s News

At the Annual meeting we elected Dr. Lisa Malody, Leo Gutierrez, P.J. Willett, and Malcolm Goodrich to the vestry. Dr. Laura Rathe was elected as Senior Warden and Holly Brown as Junior Warden. Delegates to diocesan convention in Big Sky (October 7 – 9) are Ted & Bess Lovec, K.C. Funk, Nancy McManus, Libby Laird, Lee & Carla Stadtmiller and P.J. Willett. The proposed budget for 2011 is \$244,351 with a deficit of \$29,351 coming from trust funds. There were no raises again this year. Fr. Waddingham’s address talked about the loss of Fr. Jasmer last year and how this has resulted in some work going undone. He also talked about the three potlucks we had and our plans for the future. Jim Thompson made a report on the Memorial Foundation. Ted Lovec and Jim Thompson were nominated for the Memorial Foundation Board.

*The Rev. Canon Gary Waddingham • Rector, St. Luke’s Episcopal Church • Regional Canon, Diocese of Montana*