
Varieties of Taste and Varieties of Members

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by the Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler,
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip**

In our Sunday lesson last week, St. Paul wrote, "Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it with Christ." (1 Corinthians 12:12)

I love that passage, just as I love this past week at the Cathedral of St. Philip, a week when the Cathedral once again hosted our annual Cathedral Antiques Show. It has been tremendous! I don't always have time to linger with the various dealers and all their wares, but I truly appreciate their presence and participation here. The excellence, beauty, and service that they represent truly serves the Cathedral well.

Of course, another service is that all proceeds from our Antiques Show goes to one beneficiary each year, and that money becomes a substantial part of our outreach effort. This year, we have given thanks for the work of Family Refugee Services. That outreach also represents the Cathedral well.

However, another feature of the Antiques Show serves the Cathedral well, too. I mean the amazing diversity of skills and tastes on display. Consider, for instance, this year's "Inspiration House," which is really our Lanier House, but with each room used as a showcase for various interior decorators and designers. Each room is well done, but so completely different!

Yes, each room of our Inspiration House, and each booth of our Antiques Dealers, is very different from every other one. Yet, they all participate in our one Antiques Show. In fact, my own, individual taste is similar to some of them, but not to others. We are all different.

It is the same with the wider identity and ministry of the Cathedral of St. Philip. During any given week, throughout the year, this holy place hosts a tremendous variety of meetings and ministries. Look how different they are from each other! Bible studies meet in one room, and exercise classes meet in the same room an hour later. We have prayer groups, and bookstores, and counseling centers, and spaghetti suppers, and sing-alongs, and lunch meetings, and investment meetings, and building committees, and actual worship services, all in the same facility.

What do they all have to do with each other? Well, they represent the many expressions of this community's faith. They represent the many members of the Body of Christ. To a casual visitor, one with no prior experience of church, all those events might appear to have little in common. But they do. Each of them shares something of the identity of the Cathedral.

I understand that every cell of our human bodies carries DNA with the same genetic code of every cell. Even though some cells make up our liver, for instance, other cells with the same DNA become another organ. That is the same way with the Church. Even though one meeting looks very different from another meeting, each of them shares Cathedral DNA.

In fact, each of our various ministries shares Christian DNA. We are one in Christ, but we are many, many members. That is the genius of St. Paul's message to the Corinthians. Each of us witnesses to the grace and the love and the truth of Jesus

Christ, but we have many tastes and talents and gifts. Only one taste or talent won't do it. It is together, in our wild diversity, that we make up the one Body of Christ.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Candler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip

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