
Here's to the Mechanics Around Us!

**An article for *The Cathedral Times*
by the Very Rev. Sam Candler, *Dean of the Cathedral*
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Fortunately, I grew up around mechanics. My father toyed with engines; and I enjoyed, as a boy, exploring his workshop in our garage. Down the hill in the big farm workshop were even larger and grimmer tools, for tractors and heavy machinery.

In my father's workshop, I decided one day to take apart a set of binoculars. I wanted to see how binoculars worked. I have long been fascinated with lenses, ever since that day in the fourth grade when I put on a pair of glasses for the first time. The world was changed, right before my eyes! One might say I am addicted to lenses now, from glasses to binoculars, and cameras to telescopes.

So, I took apart the binoculars, but I made a complete mess of the parts. I ended up with glass and prisms, screws and random pieces, that I could not successfully reform. It was a disaster. I learned, of course, that there are mechanics around me who can do a much better job than me. I need them! I need the people who have taken the time and energy to be skilled. I salute them!

This past summer, I have re-engaged my fascination with lenses and telescopes and stars, and I have also re-engaged my need for mechanics. I have been constantly re-arranging lenses and tiny brackets, fiddling with so many various sizes and inches and millimeters. It has been tedious, and it has been fun. I appreciate, again, those around me who do this work so well.

So, I raise a toast to the true mechanics around us! Here's to the men and women around us who fix things! They know screws and bolts and nuts. They know various screwdrivers and wrenches, from the tiniest to the heaviest. They know saws and drills and knives, lubricants and oils, sockets and hammers. They even know wires and transistors and capacitors. They know the difference between volts and watts and amps!

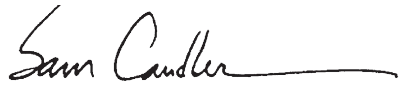
They handle the rugged shapes of iron and steel that hold together the necessities of our lives, from cars and planes to refrigerators and trains. They know engines and motors, coils and rotors, pads and plates, shafts and tubes. They fix heating and air conditioning equipment. And they fix tiny arrangements, like computers and software, and technological hardware.

Mechanics are the people in our lives who like challenge, whether the challenge is physical or mental. Or even spiritual, I suppose (they sure know patience!). They know how to put things together, and they are not afraid to take things apart.

And so I come to the subject of church (of course! As you know I usually do!). The church needs mechanics, too, those devoted saints who know how to fix things, and who are not afraid of tedious work. They arrange sacred items, of course; but they also arrange things, like chairs and tables, that sometimes do not seem so sacred. They arrange schedules and lesson plans, sermons and musical compositions. They fix landscaping equipment and locks and computers and sound systems. They tend to tedious details. They are the mechanics in our sacred community.

I salute all the mechanics! When the mechanics of our lives are successful, miracles occur. Machines run. Heating systems run. And, in church, worship services run. Sermons and music happen. Education classes happen. Good news is delivered. And, somehow, at church, a sense of the Holy happens. Yes, the Holy shows up in our lives, and I give thanks to the mechanics who set the stage for that holiness. Thank you!

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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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