

Saturday Morning Classes Resume on January 7: Three mornings to explore how the Anglican tradition shaped, and was shaped by, the modern world

When Henry VIII broke with the Roman Catholic Church, religion was not so much a matter of personal and private choice as it was a means to interpret and structure the life of a whole nation and people. In that age religion functioned as economics and political theory function in ours. As in the 20th century, the great struggles were between Communism, Fascism, and the basically capitalist Democracies, so in the 16th and 17th century Catholicism, Anglicanism, and Puritanism were the great ideological categories of the day.

Much of our world view today has its roots in the ideas and emerging behaviors of the 16th and 17th centuries—roughly from the reign of the first Tudor, Henry VII in the late 1400's through the Tudors, the Stuarts, the Puritans, until the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 with the return of Charles II.

These classes will be led by the Rector and meet in the Committee Room on the second floor of the Parish House from 10:00 am until about 11:00.

On January 7 we will look at Henry VIII, his Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer (who produced the first Book of Common Prayer), Henry's only son, Edward VI, and the first of his two daughters to reign, Mary Tudor.

Just as we often go back to childhood better to understand the behavior of adults (ourselves and others), so by going back to the early decades of the Anglican tradition, we can acquire deeper insight into what makes us who we are as a denomination and, maybe more importantly, why that matters.

On January 14 we will explore how a violently divided kingdom developed a way to go forward together under Elizabeth I; we will look at why we make such a big deal about Richard Hooker, a priest in Elizabeth's reign; and will finish by spending some time with James I, who commissioned the first classic translation of the Bible into English. The Elizabethans formed a remarkable people, nation, and culture in a nation of violently polarized factions led by a government of disputed legitimacy, so perhaps there might be something of interest to us today in their story.

On January 21 we will consider the career of Charles I, the only King to be officially deposed and beheaded at the order of Parliament; we will follow the career of Oliver Cromwell and the much maligned and, in our age, misunderstood, Puritans; and we will conclude with the Restoration of the monarchy with the return of Charles II—was it a return to normalcy, or something very different?

Please join us for this exploration of a wonderfully rich and complex era of our history whose themes and issues continue to resonate with us today.