

The Rev. Randy Callender

The Rev. Randy Kyle Callender was born on January 22, 1983 in the City of Philadelphia to a tight-knit family from the Island of Barbados. Fr. Callender was baptized at the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas (*the first black episcopal church*) and later attended St. George/St. Barnabas Church where he found his true calling. As a child, he would call himself a “church nerd” because he loved everything about the church. As a young person, he was very active in the diocesan summer camps and he was also a member of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania’s youth council. He attended Voorhees College in Denmark, South Carolina where he was asked to be the chaplain for many organizations. Fr. Callender then transferred from Voorhees College and graduated from Cheyney University in Cheyney, Pennsylvania. (2007) It was at the diocesan camps where Rev. Callender experienced the wider church beyond his parish. As the camps influenced his church life, so too did the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE), the group of Afro-American Episcopalians within the Episcopal Church that advocates for Black Episcopalians. Some of the multiple leadership opportunities within the UBE which the Rev. Callender held were: National Board Youth Advisor, one of the founders of the Philadelphia UBE Youth Chapter, and he also served as the first National Board Young Adult Advisor for the organization. He continues to serve as the Mentor for the Young Adults Advisor.

In 2005, an introduction to the wider world of the Anglican Communion occurred when the Rev. Callender attended the Third International Conference on Afro-Anglicanism in Canada. The conference provided opportunities to be introduced to future mentors and to the complexities and challenges that the Episcopal Church faces in the 21st century. Those experiences and the influences of significant people in his life such as: The Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris, Very Rev. Frank T. Griswold, The Rev. Canon Edward Rodman, The Rt. Rev. Franklin D. Turner and the Rev. Canon James Wynn, along with many others, provided a rich mix for vocational discernment. It was these influences that led him to choose Contemporary Society as an area of special competency at the Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) where he received his Master of Divinity on May 20th, 2010. While attending EDS, Fr. Callender completed his Clinical Pastoral Education at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.

On June 5, 2010, Fr. Callender was ordained as a transitional deacon and on January 22, 2011, he was the first African American male priest to be ordained in the Diocese of Pennsylvania in twenty-five years. During his time in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, Fr. Callender served as the Assistant Rector at Grace Church and the Incarnation. (2010-2012) Fr. Callender was also a member of the following organizations in the Diocese of PA: The President of The Episcopal Clergy Association of Pennsylvania, The Black Clergy, Diocesan Nominating Committee, The Anti-Racism Committee, The Youth Advisory Committee and a volunteer chaplain in the Graterford Prison Ministry.

Presently, Fr. Callender is the Rector at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Annapolis, MD and serves as a member of the following organizations: Diocese of Maryland Youth Leadership, Design Team for the 2014 & 2017 Episcopal Youth Event (EYE), one of the Adult Leaders for the 2012 & 2015 General Convention Official Youth Presence (GCOYP), Episcopal Church Youth Liason Committee, Diocese of Maryland Reconciliation for Race, Mentor for Sutton's Scholars & A member on the Diocese of Maryland Commission on Ministry.

He is the father to Jaivyn Niall Randy Callender, who was born on September 26, 2013.

Fr. Callender has stated that his ministry, through teaching and preaching, is to build relationships. He feels called to help people, young and old, inside and outside the institutional church and to make it understood that all are welcome in the Episcopal Church.