



**About the Author**

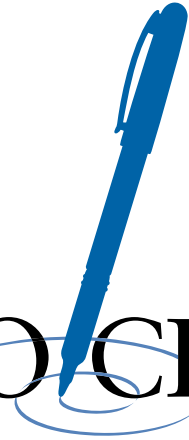
Nelson and Marian Pinder reside in Orlando, FL. They are the parents of two children: Gail, who is deceased, and Nelson, who is a public schools administrator. They have four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Marian is active in many church, community, and civic organizations. She is a retired public school teacher.

Nelson is a retired priest and honorary Canon in the Diocese of Central Florida where he still serves. He is the recipient of over 150 awards and honors including four honorary degrees. In Orlando, a monument to the “Pinder Kids” was erected in his honor for his work leading youth in the 1960s civil rights struggle in his community. His parish church, which he served for 35 years, named their parish hall in his honor. He presently serves as diocesan Chaplain of The Order of the Daughters of the King, and is diocesan coordinator for Episcopal Relief and Development. He was the 15th National President of the Union of Black Episcopalians. He has served as a deputy to the General Convention, and as Trustee to the University of the South and Bethune Cookman University.

**About Vintage Voice**

Vintage Voice is a monthly publication written by beneficiaries of The Church Pension Fund. We hope you enjoy these articles and find them helpful. Articles are published with the authors' permission.

# VINTAGE VOICE



**We Are Thankful**

**By the Rev. Canon Nelson W. Pinder**

On August 15, 2014, my wife Marian and I celebrated our 55th wedding anniversary. On that day, we reflected on the years of our marriage. As we talked, our conversation grew to include all the years we have lived. The blessings bestowed upon us were prominent in our minds. Those of us who were born in the 1930s have much to be thankful for. We have seen the world change before our eyes. As Marian and I sat together and shared, as we often do, we said to one another that at our age, especially for me as I have passed my 82nd birthday, every day above the ground is Thanksgiving.

As Americans, we collectively, as a nation, celebrate Thanksgiving in November. Marian and I celebrate Thanksgiving every day through ‘thankful living.’ For us, as Christians who are Episcopalians, this act of ‘thankful living’ reaffirms the vows of our baptismal covenant, our belief in the creation story, and the gift of the Resurrection and the life eternal.

As children of the 1930s we have lived through terrible wars. We watched as the atomic bomb was dropped on Japan on the Feast Day of the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of you, like me, may have fought in war; I served in the Army during the Korean War. We now sit in our easy chairs in front of our flat screen television sets and our computer screens and view second-hand the death and destruction of wars that continue to be fought throughout the world. And we are deeply saddened that the violence continues. And yet we realize that from the technology that supported the violence and destruction of the wars of our youth, much good has come as well. From the nuclear energy that was harnessed to kill hundreds of thousands of people has also come healing. X-rays, MRI scanners, CAT scans, and other developments in nuclear medicine help identify and cure diseases from which people routinely died in our youth. We are thankful.

The ravages of the Great Depression years we lived through also incited the development of programs such as the CCC and WPA which helped our families survive. A major program created back then, Social Security, benefits us today in our senior years.

The Medicare legislation of the 1960s and other federal and state programs make it possible for most of today's seniors to live without worrying about having access to food, housing, and medical care. We are thankful.

We have lived through the administrations of fourteen Presidents, seven Republicans and seven Democrats — of which the most recent is black. We saw our nation grow, with the addition of Alaska and Hawaii, from forty-eight states to fifty states. The Pledge of Allegiance was amended to add the words “under God.”

We witnessed the legislative fight to create a society where “separate but equal” was ruled unconstitutional. We saw, and many of us participated in, marches, boycotts, and demonstrations and felt first-hand the violence that occurred on the way to making equal rights more of a reality in our great nation. The struggle continues. But we have been blessed to have been witnesses to less separateness and more opportunity, and less discrimination because of race, sex, national origin, or age than existed in the decade of our birth. We are thankful.

America and our own Church still face challenges in attempting to resolve many social, economic, and legislative concerns. These concerns involve civil rights for all; access to healthcare for all; improved access to healthy foods and reduced obesity for those who are economically challenged; eliminating domestic violence; reducing the unequal imprisonment of blacks and other minorities; and increasing economic and educational opportunities for that same segment of our society. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King challenged our nation to unite as one people regardless of where we have come from and where we are now. His words continue to inspire us.

As we continue to live into this 21st century, Marian and I are thankful for every advance we have witnessed. We are reminded daily that, as Christians who are Episcopalians, the acts of ‘thankful living’ *and* standing up to do all we can to improve life for all of our brothers and sisters in Christ do not end when retirement begins. They remain strong within us always, reaffirming the vows of our baptismal covenant, our belief in the creation story, and the gift of the Resurrection and life eternal.



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