

The Abundant Life

September 15, 2011
Sunday, September 18th

For

From The Rector

A New View of Generous

This week's Gospel selection ends with the landowner responding to some workers. They have worked all day and received the same pay as others who worked only a small portion. The landowner says: "...Are you envious because I am generous?"

What constitutes generous? What were the workers being paid?

The workers were paid a standard day's wages or enough for their family to eat that day, but not much more. Some worked the whole day for their pay. The latest workers only worked an hour or two. Nobody is getting rich on this pay. No one is getting rich, but everybody has a job and everybody eats.

This flies in the face of the merit based world we assume for ourselves and the status based culture of the 1st century. This behavior in our age could lead to litigation. In Jesus' time, you can be sure that it turned expectations on their head. Most of the facts are obvious, but what do they say about the kingdom of heaven? Remember, this is a story that is not meant to give us detail on employer/employee relations in the 1st century, but understanding about the ways of God.

The story is sandwiched between two verses (one we read last week) that are virtually the same. "The last will be first and the first will be last." Therefore the heavenly realm is like a landowner who wants to see full employment no matter how infuriating it is.

We find it hard not to associate God's love and blessings with our behavior, our worthiness, or our productivity. That is the way our world is and we read it back onto God. God has a different idea. God wants to shower love and blessing all over the place. God seems to want to break the cycle that bad things happen to bad people and good things happen to good people. In the heavenly realm or divine economy, God is constantly inviting and even shamelessly seeking people to love and bless. God also invites even those who are closest, to share in the burdens and suffering of all. The cycle is broken because both are true.

Generosity is what I give beyond what is required. In Christ, God has defined

a

new generosity that gives all to every. Each of us is freed from the need to justify and is invited to receive.

Then it is our turn to be generous.

Join us as we practice generous worship and fellowship this weekend.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers

for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said

to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.'

So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did

the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would

receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily

wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me?

Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Sunny Boland 5/27/1937 - 9/14/2011

Sunny died at her Assisted Living Facility in Yucca Valley Wednesday morning

after a lengthy and difficult illness.

She was disappointed not to be nearer to friends and family, but was grateful for their visits. She will be remembered for her sweet spirit and deep love of God.

We will say goodbye to her with a Celebration of Life and holy Communion on Tuesday, September 20 at 11:00 a.m.

Rest eternal grant to her and may light perpetual shine upon her.

Our Exit Strategy is Changing!

Starting this Sunday the final Hymn will be sung a little earlier. Instead of singing the hymn as we leave, we will sing it after the prayer following Holy Communion. We will then commission the Lay Eucharistic Visitors, receive the blessing, and be dismissed.

The clergy, servers, and choir will depart as the postlude begins. You are invited to listen to the postlude or leave for the coffee hour after the procession has passed. The clergy will still greet you in the accustomed locations.

This will not change the length of our worship, but it will allow our hymns and prayers to end the worship in a different way, as indicated in the Book of Common Prayer, p. 365.

The Passing of the Peace

The Passing of the Peace in our worship service is actually part of the Confession and Absolution. It is an act of reconciliation that follows the declaration of forgiveness so that we are prepared to receive the Lord's Supper. As such, it is meant to be a time when we make sure our relationship is right with those around us. It is not intermission or the seventh inning stretch, nor is it a time for greeting our friends and strangers. We encourage you to do that at the Coffee Hour following the service.

Godly Play

The Children in our Godly Play Program will be exploring the story of Creation Sunday morning under the direction of their storyteller, Craig Ewing, and the doorkeeper, Barbara Villani. They will talk about God's first gift, the gift of light. And then they will learn about His gifts of water, land and growing things, day and night, all of the creatures that fly and swim, and all of the creatures that walk upon the earth. And, last but not least, they will talk about the seventh day, the day God gave us to rest and to remember and be

thankful for all of the great gifts of the other days.

Next week our story will be about The Flood and the Ark.

Do you have children or grandchildren who might enjoy St. Paul's Sunday School,
or know of someone who does? We would be pleased to have your children join us.

For further information please contact Bonnie Stroock, 760 324-7949, or Michael Howard, 760 323-1050.

Faith Building

Adult Faith Building - "Sundays at 9:15"

Today we continue with the Fall Adult Faith Building Program. There are three weeks left of "An Introduction to Understanding Islam", to be held September 18, 25 and October 2. This series is led by Jerry DiNoto. Islam is the second largest and fastest-growing world religion! Join us Sunday in the Library, at 9:15am

Adult Faith Building - "Sundays at 9:15"

October 9, 16, 23, and 30, The Rev. Canon Victoria Hatch will guide us in Understanding the Hebrew Scriptures. This series provides an overview of what we traditionally call the "Old Testament." We'll explore [1] the Torah (or Pentateuch); [2] the Former Prophets; [3] the Latter Prophets; and [4] the Poetic Books and Wisdom Literature. The course will give us a valuable background for any future study of individual writings from the Hebrew Scripture. Be sure to bring a Bible and a friend!

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Adult Faith Building - "Thursdays at 7:00"

Continuing "In the Footsteps of Paul: An In-Depth Study of the Apostle's Missionary Travels and Writings." The focus now turns to the Apostle Paul as the earliest Christian writer and his Epistles. So, bring your Bible and join us in the Library on September 22, and 29 at 7pm.

Adult Faith Building - "Thursdays at 7:00"

In October, Jerry DiNoto will explore with us "The Creeds of the Church." Historically, Christian creeds have included everything from brief affirmations to comprehensive statements. The earliest Christian creed is found in the New

Testament, which declares, "Jesus is Lord". We will examine the historic creeds, as well as contemporary confessions of faith. "Thursdays at 7" in the Library, October 6, 13, 20 and 27. See you there!

Roy's Desert Resource Center

Please Continue to Aid the Homeless - The population of men, women and children

being cared for at Roy's Resource Center has increased 30% this year. These clients are in need of the basic necessities of life. The SOS Fund needs YOUR support to continue to help our homeless friends who are trying to break the cycle of homelessness. Each month \$300.00 comes from the fund to provide undergarments, socks and other necessities. If you are interested in supporting this outreach ministry, drop a check in the collection plate. Make the check payable to: St. Paul's, and in the memo area, write: SOS Fund.

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Just ONE Extra Item!

In your grocery cart is what we ask of our parishioners to get in the habit of purchasing for the Desert SOS Dessert Ministry of St. Paul in the Desert.

While

accomplishing your weekly grocery shopping, buy ONE extra item. This ONE extra item would assist us in providing dessert for the children, their parents, plus

the rest of the 90+ clients, of Roy's Desert Resource Center. Dessert (box of cookies, doughnuts, fruit, cheese or any other special treat) is provided every

Monday evening by St. Paul volunteer servers and providers. These same 8 parishioners, week after week, from their own pockets, make sure that the St. Paul's Dessert Ministry provides for these special people who look forward to this once a week treat, especially the children. Parishioners can bring items to church on the weekend or deliver desserts before 4:00 p.m. on Monday. Place the perishable desserts in the Parish Hall refrigerator (labeled clearly "SOS"). Contact Hap for more information at 760.323.5726.

Well In The Desert

Now Serves Lunch at St. Paul's on Wednesdays

The Well in the Desert has moved its meal service at St. Paul's from Fridays to

Wednesdays. In order to support the retail businesses in our neighborhood, we requested a change in the day of our meal service. Now a hot meal is served at St. Paul's from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. every Wednesday.

The Well needs volunteers to carry out their services and they need financial support to provide them. You can call (760) 327-8577 to volunteer. If you want to contribute to the Well, just write "Well" in the memo portion of your check.

[1]
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Announcements

Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Lite?

[2]Click here to receive a Printer Friendly (text only) version.

A Holy Communion Service

. . .will be held, Wednesday, September 21st at 10:00 a.m. at Premiere Health Care, presided over by Fr. Andrew Green. Fr. Andrew welcomes assistance at Communion.

Blessing of the Animals

Saturday,

October 8th at 10 a.m.

St. Paul's team is forming for the AIDS Walk for the Desert AIDS Project.

We want to have a team of 50 members walking on October 29th. We want to raise \$20,000.00 to help people with HIV/AIDS.

You can help by walking with us, by raising support from sponsors and by giving.

You can join the team by following [3]this link or by signing up in the Parish Hall during the Coffee Hour.

AIDS is affecting more and more senior men and women, people who never thought it would be their problem.

We can help. Join the Team.

Saturday, Oct. 22nd

SAVE THE DATE!

ST. PAUL AT THE FOLLIES

Sun., December 4, 2011

1:30pm. 50 tickets available.

Christmas Show starring

John Davidson.

\$49 each. (\$84 value.)

Questions?: call Mike Carson

(760) 318-6377

Coffee Hour

The hosts for the 8:00 a.m. Coffee Hour are Eileen Upton and Don MacLean. The hosts for the 10:30 a.m. Coffee Hour are Shannon and Rosa Zingg in thanksgiving for Christopher's birthday.

The 2011 coffee hour sign-up sheets are posted on the north wall at Hogarth Hall. Find an empty slot and fill it with your name. For more information, call Ray Kelley at 760.778.1725.

Daughters of the King

DOK's next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 27th at 1:00 p.m. in the church condo. The discussion will be on the book, "Heaven is Real" by Todd Burpo. Bring completed prayer shawls as the availability of them is extremely low. We extend an invitation to all parish ladies and newcomers to join us and join in the fellowship of this worthy ministry. Call Bonnie Stroock for directions or questions at 760.324.7949.

The St. Paul Columbarium Niches are over 60% sold out. If you are interested in a specific niche, please do not wait to purchase it or reserve it. Deposits are required for all niche reservations. Please contact Jonathan Abernethy-Deppe, at 760.320.7488, ext. 224 for further information.

The Bishop's Appeal

The Bishop's Appeal supports the mission of the diocese through gifts that are used for support of our ongoing programs and ministries: congregational support and development, leadership development, pastoral care, ministry development,

and Christian formation. 100% of your gift goes to supporting our ministries. To make a gift, to the secure website at www.edsd.org or mail to: Episcopal Diocese of San Diego, 2728 Sixth Ave., San Diego, CA 92103.

Report Sexual Misconduct

As part of our ongoing commitment to creating a safe haven for everyone, please be reminded that our diocese values the tenet of our baptismal covenant to "respect the dignity of every human being." Part of the way we live into that is to train people in the prevention of sexual misconduct. Another part that goes hand-in-hand with training is reporting incidences of sexual misconduct. Our bishop, the Rt. Rev. James R. Mathes, takes reports seriously and investigates them thoroughly and confidentially. If you believe you have experienced sexual misconduct of any kind, please contact Bishop Mathes immediately: bishopmathes@edsd.org, 619-481-5450.

NEWCOMERS

Are you receiving the latest mailings and the Abundant Life weekly newsletter? If not, then we probably don't have your correct mailing and/or email addresses. We want to make sure that you receive the invites to join us in a series of Newcomer events that we believe you will find to be informative and enjoyable. Please fill out the form in the pew pocket and place it in the plate, give it to an usher, or send your contact information by email to: valerie.winters@stpaulsps.org

Bullies Not Welcome Here

At St. Paul in the Desert we want to welcome all worshipers to a place that is free of violence and bullying.

Physical, verbal or emotional violence against others or against oneself is not acceptable.

[4]"It Gets Better" is a series of video messages to encourage Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender youth and let them know that they are loved as they are.

[5]"A Blessing for Those Who Are Bullied" was written by the Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, a Bishop of the Episcopal Church.

It is not enough to say "NO" to bullies. It is important to stand up for people and to provide resources for those who have been the targets.

References

1. <http://www.wellinthedesert.org/>
2. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/The-Abundant-Lite-9-8-2011.pdf>
3. <http://www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/andrew-green/palmspringsaidswalk2011>
4. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24>
5. <http://scg-wakeupcall.blogspot.com/2010/10/blessing-for-those-who-are-bullied.html>