

The Abundant Lite

July 12, 2012

For Sunday, July 15th

From The Rector

Herod Hears of Who?

King Herod has heard about Jesus.

All of the healing, driving out of demons, and preaching hope have not gone unnoticed. Herod heard - and he was not happy.

The work of Jesus was not being done in a vacuum. Everything was happening in the "real" world and had an audience. Some in the audience saw an answer to their immediate needs. Some saw restoration or inclusion into the blessed community of faith. Some saw a threat.

The story in Mark proceeds to show a weak and venal king who was used to eliminate John the Baptizer. The story is all too familiar and is the inspiration for lots of popular culture. Beyond our fascination with the "Dance of the 7 Veils," there is a warning. John was calling people back to God. He was calling the leadership back to God. He was rocking the boat.

In the story of Jesus the warning is clear. The readers of the Gospel can anticipate where the preaching and activity of Jesus will take him. It is like watching a movie where the hero is walking into a trap and everyone but the hero knows it.

Jesus has heard about Herod.

Jesus knows the trap is there. He knows because he knows the story of salvation and the story of the prophets. He walks into the trap empowered by fearless love for the world God has made.

Is our world very different?

Two items have come up at our General Convention that grabbed some attention this week. Both are about an invitation to follow Jesus in his fearless love.

We passed a resolution approving provisional use of specific services for blessing [1]Life-Long Committed Relationships. It allows us to honor the values we proclaim in marriage for all the couples of our church without the local clergy inventing the services themselves.

We also approved an initiative for major [2]restructuring of the Episcopal Church. I was a part of the subcommittee that drafted this resolution and I am very proud of the work. It passed unanimously among the clergy, laity and the bishops. It is a venture in fearless love as the process has been given great

latitude to propose changes and to report directly to our General Convention, without interference.

Join us in worship this weekend as we pay attention to Jesus and discern where God is leading.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Mark 6:14-29

King Herod heard of the demons cast out and the many who were anointed and cured, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the baptizer." Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

Parish Hall Upgrades

Changes Are Happening in the Parish Hall thanks to the kind and generous gifts of time, talent and funds by numerous parishioners. The "upgrades" in Hogarth Hall include the Parlor (the room behind the sliding accordion doors) to create a user-friendly Adult Education Area. It will be painted, carpeted and have a new wall built to hide the stored chairs and tables. The closets have been cleaned and organized.

We are also making changes in the Kitchen: A new center island and new movable cabinets will provide flexibility. They are lockable to assist in assuring security.

The Restrooms are being thoroughly cleaned, painted and wallpapered. There is now a larger handicap stall in the women's room. The entry hall to the restroom will be cleared out and made more inviting.

Finally, we are installing audio and video systems in the Main Hall and in the newly upgraded Adult Education Room. The large bulletin boards are being replaced with flat screen monitors that will provide current information about St. Paul's, our programs, parishioners, and activities.

July will be a busy month for all these projects. Your participation is welcome and appreciated. Roger Allen, our Senior Warden, is coordinating these efforts, and he welcomes your contributions, comments, and support.

### Faith Building

"Sundays at 9:15"

### In The Library

### July

7/15 Characters in the Bible: John the Baptist

by David Abernethy-Deppe

7/22 Characters in the Bible: The Gentile Mother

by David Abernethy-Deppe

7/29 Characters in the Bible: St. James

by David Abernethy-Deppe

### August

Marcus Borg's new book, *Speaking Christian: Why Christian Words Have Lost Their Meaning and Power and How They Can Be Restored* will be the focus of our August Sundays at 9:15 Adult Faith Formation classes led by Victoria Hatch. The book is available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) in paperback or Kindle edition. The Faith Formation Team encourages you to order it now and read it several times before the August classes begin. It's one of Borg's better books . . . and that's saying a lot."

"Thursdays At 7"

There will be no "Thursdays at 7" meetings in July and August

"Tuesdays at 7"

Movie Nights in July & August

On Tuesdays at 7 in the Library, the Faith Formation Team thought it would be fun to watch a movie together, enjoy popcorn, chocolates, or ..., then share thoughts about the film, and discuss its ethical or life implications, if any. Here are three selections for July. We would like your suggestions for August!

7/17 "Priest" hosted by Jerry DiNoto

7/24 "Chocolat" hosted by David Abernethy-Deppe

7/31 "The King and I (By request)

Keeping the Doors Open at Ahli Hospital in Gaza

[3]Ahli Hospital has operated since 1882 and continues caring for desperately poor Gazans, even though the United Nations Relief and Works Agency has halted funding. Ahli is operated by the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, an independent, non-political 501c3 which helps sustain the diocese's many humanitarian programs. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. Visit [www.afedj.org](http://www.afedj.org) to learn about or contribute to their important work which sustains the Christian community.

Sign Up for Flowers,

Coffee Hour and

Desert SOS

To make it easier for parishioners to sign-up for Flowers, Coffee Hours, and the Desert SOS Dessert Ministry, the sign-up sheets are in binders that are on the entrance table in the Parish Hall. The 2012 binders are filling fast, so if you have a special date that you want to commemorate, be sure to sign up early.

Announcements

Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Life?

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

Holy Communion Service for

Local Care Facilities

Holy Communion will be hosted by the Nursing Home Ministry on the second Wednesday of each month at Windsor Court. For July, this will occur on

August 8th at 10:15 am. Father Dick Merrill will preside and welcomes assistance

from parishioners.

Holy Communion will be hosted by the Nursing Home Ministry on the fourth Tuesday of each month at Premier Health Care. For July, this will occur on

July 24th at 11:00 am. Father Dick Merrill will preside and welcomes assistance from parishioners.

St. Paul 's Campers

are reserving campsites in Idyllwild County Park for August 16th-17th for our 8th annual trip. Individuals, as well as families, are invited to join us. Dogs are permitted. We'll do our spectacular BBQ dinner by sharing salads, deserts, etc., on Friday, the 17th. Call Bonnie Stroock at 760.324.7949 to make a reservation. Come and enjoy the cool mountain air!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

... meets every Wednesday from 10 am - 1 pm in the Parish Hall. This peace-filled stitching circle gives members fulfillment and spiritual sustenance in creating prayer shawls to comfort those in need of prayer. For more details contact Valerie Ferguson at 760.799.5927, Barbara Hawkins Villani at 760.322.3987, or Audrey Spencermorris at 760.835.5506.

Coffee Hour

Our host after the 8:00 service is Susan Green; the hosts after the 10:30 service are Judi Cribbs & Terri Miller. Coffee Hour hosts are still needed for several services this summer. To sign up to host a Coffee Hour, please use the binder on the entrance table in the Parish Hall. If you have questions, please contact Ray or Cheryl Kelley at 760.778.1725

Volunteers from St. Paul's continue to serve dessert to between 70 and 100 homeless men, women and children at Roy's every Monday evening. The desserts consist of baked goods and other goodies (store-bought or homemade) from our parishioners. As well, we deliver each month sox and undies purchased from our SOS Fund or placed in the SOS basket on Sunday. which is funded by special donations from parishioners. All of these efforts are deeply appreciated by these people who are earnestly striving to get back into the main stream.

If you would like to participate in this program, you can:

- \* Sign up to Volunteer
- \* Write a check to St. Pauls (marked for SOS Fund)
- \* Bring new white socks and/or large underwear for the Basket
- \* Place baked goods in the center section of the Fridge (again, marked For SOS)

Please call Hap Blaisdell at 760-323-5726 for additional information and ideas.

## Report Sexual Misconduct.

As part of our ongoing commitment to creating a safe haven for everyone, please remember 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 and to encourage all to report any misconduct. All reported incidents are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly and confidentially. If you believe you have experienced sexual misconduct of any kind, please contact the Rev. Canon Suzann V. Holding immediately: [sholding@edsd.org](mailto:sholding@edsd.org)

or 619-481-5452.

## 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.

[5]"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.

[6]"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.generalconvention.org/resolutions/download/133-1336412216-original>
2. <http://www.generalconvention.org/resolutions/download/269-1341953682>
3. <http://www.peace-with-justice.org/Gaza%20Blockade%20Protests/Al%20Ahli%20Hospital.htm>
4. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/The-Abundant-Lite-7-5-2012.pdf>
5. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24>
6. <http://scg-wakeupcall.blogspot.com/2010/10/blessing-for-those-who-are-bullied.html>