

The Abundant Lite

September 13, 2012 For
Sunday, September 16th

From the Rector

Tongues On Fire

School is back in session. (Only for those on “Traditional Schedules” – While “Year Round Schools” just keep going.) Students, Parents, Administrators, Support Staff, and especially Teachers should be in our prayers as they re-engage or continue in the process of education. I will admit to a prejudice - my wife is a 3rd grade teacher at an amazing school in Desert hot Springs.

Teachers appear in two of the readings we will hear this week. These are not public school teachers or private school teachers, they are teachers of God’s covenant with the descendants of Jacob, which is embodied in the “Law” - the first five books of the Bible.

The role of a teacher is a holy one. It is a sacred task and it requires a sense of vocation, training, and lots of heart. It is costly work.

In the Letter of James, the responsibility of the teacher is highlighted with the example of the tongue. The tongue is prone to errors or worse and this puts the teacher at risk. It can put the whole community at risk.

A teacher won’t be effective if their anger or prejudice drives their teaching. I have heard both revealed by “slips of the tongue.” A teacher can be destructive if those “slips” become commonplace.

For me, the tongue often represents the intentions of our hearts. As a teacher and preacher I am sensitive that what I say reveals who I am, what I value, and what I really believe.

Isn’t this true for all of us?

When I hear myself say something hurtful, hateful, or demeaning, I need to check my tongue and check my heart. If my tongue is on fire, can my heart be centered on God’s abundant love and forgiveness in Jesus?

Join us this weekend as our tongues practice praise of God and our hearts are nourished at the table of God's grace. School is in session.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

James 3:1-12

Common English Bible (CEB)

My brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers, because we know that we teachers will be judged more strictly. We all make mistakes often, but those who don't make mistakes with their words have reached full maturity. Like a bridled horse, they can control themselves entirely. When we bridle horses and put bits in their mouths to lead them wherever we want, we can control their whole bodies.

Consider ships: they are so large that strong winds are needed to drive them. But pilots direct their ships wherever they want with a little rudder. In the same way, even though the tongue is a small part of the body, it boasts wildly.

Think about this: a small flame can set a whole forest on fire. The tongue is a small flame of fire, a world of evil at work in us. It contaminates our entire lives. Because of it, the circle of life is set on fire. The tongue itself is set on fire by the flames of hell.

People can tame and already have tamed every kind of animal, bird, reptile, and fish. No one can tame the tongue, though. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we both bless the Lord and Father and curse human beings made in God's likeness. Blessing and cursing come from the same mouth. My brothers and sisters, it just shouldn't be this way!

Both fresh water and salt water don't come from the same spring, do they? My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree produce olives? Can a grapevine produce figs? Of course not, and fresh water doesn't flow from a saltwater spring either.

Godly Play returns Sunday, September 23rd

St. Paul's formal Sunday School program starts Sunday 23 September. We seek to

make a safe and welcoming place for young children where they are introduced to the gifts of our faith. We use the Godly Play program which presents the principal stories of Holy Scripture with child friendly words and materials. Sunday School is conducted by two adults, Storyteller and Doorkeeper, trained in the Diocese's Safeguarding God's People program. The children come from the church to Sunday School in the Parish Hall at 10:30 and return to the church to receive the Holy Communion and rejoin their family and friends. There is also a nursery for the youngest children. Please come have a look at our attractive rooms on the west side of the Parish Hall after the 10:30 Liturgy. Do you have children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews who might enjoy St. Paul's Sunday School, or know of someone who does? For further information please contact Bonnie Stroock, 760 324-7949, or Michael Howard, 760 323-1050.

Where is Susan Green?

Susan is not gone, but she is on a journey!

Many people have asked me where Susan Green is. She has not been at the 10:30 service for many months and folks have been wondering.

Susan has begun a discernment journey determine if she has a calling to be ordained as a Deacon in the Episcopal Church. Because I am her husband, it is not possible for her to begin this journey at St. Paul's. Everyone wants her reflection and support to be about her calling and not influenced by my position as Rector.

Susan has begun worshipping at St. Anthony's in Desert Hot Springs and Fr. Fred Myers has become her sponsor. She will divide her time between the Choir at St. Paul's and developing her discernment process at St. Anthony's.

Susan and I would rejoice in your prayers for her as she begins this journey.

Fr. Andrew

Beautiful Statue Received

This last week the Parish accepted the gift of a Statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

She is very beautiful and appears to be quite old. She was carved from the trunk of a tree with the exception of her hands.

Rob Albrecht is a new parishioner who made this gracious gift. The statue has been in Rob's home since he bought it in 1956. The antique dealer had purchased it in Regensburg, Germany. He knows nothing else of the origin, the sculptor, or the story of this beautiful piece. Now her story will begin to be woven with ours.

Thanks, Rob!

Survey in September

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Feasibility Study: Your Opinion Matters

Our diocese is conducting a survey to discern future steps toward a diocesan-wide capital campaign to support the mission plan. This is a great opportunity to give important feedback about plans for the future. The study will be emailed to all members of the diocese and will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. One survey per household, please. Thanks in advance for your participation. If you have any questions about the survey, or the proposed initiatives, visit:

[2][gif]

or call Canon Howard Smith at 619-481-5451

or email him: canonsmith@edsd.org.

Faith Building

New Program at St. Paul's by the
Older Adult Forum...

"Building Community & Socialization"

3rd Friday Breakfast 9am-10am

Come join us the 3rd Friday of each month to enjoy a great program and have a bite to eat. Our first event will be Friday, September 21st at 9am in the Parish Hall.

"Sundays at 9:15"

In The Library

9/16 - Judaism: Stages of History, DVD led by Rick Tinsley

9/23 - Judaism: Jewish Library, DVD led by Rick Tinsley

9/30 - Judaism: Emergence of Rabbinic Judaism, DVD led by Rick Tinsley

"Thursdays At 7" (Returns)

The Story of Anglicanism

9/13 - Reformation & Its Consequences, led by Craig Ewing

9/20 - Creating a Global Family, led by Craig Ewing

9/27 - The Anglican Way of Life, led by Jerry DiNoto

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 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[5].

Calling all interested

Adult Singers

The choir has saved a place for you! Our first rehearsal will be held on Wednesday, September 19th at 7 PM. The following Saturday will be our all day retreat. For more details, contact Nathan Ensign at 760.320.7488, ext. 225.

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 October, this will occur on October 10th 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 August, this will occur on

September 25th at 11:00 am. Father Andrew Green will preside and welcomes assistance from parishioners.

Picture Directories

If you had your picture taken for the directory, there is one reserved for you and it is available in the Narthex, and is available in the church office during regular hours..

Dine for the Desert Blind

Oct. 3, 5-8:00 p.m. at Nicolino's. The [6]Desert Blind and Handicapped [7]Association has a long relationship with St. Paul's. They host a monthly luncheon for their clients in our Parish Hall. We are invited to join them at Nicolino's on October 3rd to benefit the services they provide. Tickets are \$20. More information and tickets are available in the Parish Hall. You may also call

760-778-8552 to order your tickets.

Family and Children's Ministry Committee

We'll meet after 10:30 service on September 16th in the Godly Play room. Come and share the joy of working with our children at St. Paul's.

Daughters of the King

The DOK will start the fall season with a Sept. 25th meeting in the condo at 1:15. Women who enjoy praying together and learning in a Christian community are invited to attend. All our meetings will be at St. Paul's this year as St. Margaret's has formed their own chapter. Call Bonnie Stroock at 760.324.7949 for information.

Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour hosts after the 8:00 service are Eileen Upton & Don MacLean and after the 10:30 service are the Hampsons (John and Lucinda). Coffee Hour hosts are still needed for several services the rest of the year. 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.

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.

Volunteers from St. Paul in the Desert serve dessert to 70-100 homeless men, women and children at Roy's every Monday evening. The desserts are baked goods and other goodies (store-bought or homemade) from our parishioners. We also deliver socks and undies purchased with donations from or placed in the SOS basket by parishioners. The people who are striving to get back into the main stream deeply appreciate your efforts.

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

- Sign up to Volunteer

- Write a check to St. Paul's (marked: SOS Fund)
- Bring new white socks and/or large underwear for the SOS basket
- Put baked goods marked SOS in the right-hand section of the Parish Hall fridge

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

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.

[8]"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.

[9]"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.edsd.org/feasibility%20>

2. <http://www.edsd.org/feasibility%20>
3. <http://www.peace-with-justice.org/Gaza%20Blockade%20Protests/A1%20Ahli%20Hospital.htm>
4. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/The-Abundant-Lite-September-6-2012.pdf>
5. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/The-Abundant-Lite-August-23-2012.pdf>
6. https://www.desertblind.org/Nicolino_s.php
7. https://www.desertblind.org/Nicolino_s.php
8. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24>
9. <http://scg-wakeupcall.blogspot.com/2010/10/blessing-for-those-who-are-bullied.html>