

The Abundant Lite

September 20, 2012
For Sunday, September 23rd

From the Rector

Who Wants To Be First?

I picture a scene from a generic old cowboy or army life comedy. The sergeant asks for volunteers to take one step forward. Immediately, everyone but the central character takes one step - backwards! He becomes the volunteer! Who wants to be first?

Jesus is engaged in a difficult interaction with his disciples. He has a hard truth to tell them - He must die. They don't understand. They are afraid to speak up. Then it gets worse.

They caught on that Jesus would die, but then they choose to argue with each other about what comes next, or rather, who comes next. If Jesus must die, they reason, who will take over? Who will be first among the disciples? Who will take the Rabbi's mantle?

We infer this, and although I am imagining what happened, it seems clear from the rest of the story: The part about welcoming children.

For the disciples, being first means having status. Having status means not having to welcome unimportant people. Jesus brings them up short. The way to welcome God is to welcome the lowliest, the most status deficient, even a child.

I think Jesus offered the disciples, and he is offering us, a different path. Each of our very different cultures have ways of valuing and seeking status. Each has a path to being first. In each the path includes selective attention - pay more attention to the one who controls more status (power, money, celebrity...).

Jesus frees us from having to take the measure of everyone before we give our attention. Attend to each. There was a story on NPR this week about how what teachers believe about a child affects how they attend to the child. Those who are believed to have more potential are given more and higher quality attention.

The report goes on to demonstrate how teachers are learning to give that higher quality attention to each. The student previously thought to have less potential often rises to meet the higher level of quality attention.

My dream for our parish community is each of us would offer our best attention to each other when we speak and interact, and would attend with the highest quality of care to those who need welcome.

Join us as we worship and practice quality attention to God and to those images of God around us, so that we might serve Christ in each other.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Mark 9:30-37

Jesus and his disciples went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

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

PMS: THE RECITAL

(A Benefit for the Music Program at St. Paul's)

Our soprano section-leader, Patricia Minton Sivcovich, along with special guest musicians, will present a concert on Sunday, October 21st, at 4 PM. Serious songs, sacred songs and silly songs will be included in the program. There will be a reception following in the Parish Hall hosted by the choir. For more information contact Patti at: 760.778.6016 or Nathan at 760.320.7488, ext. 225. Donations are graciously expected at the door.

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

Judaism

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

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

The Orthodox Church

10/14 DVD: Catholic-Orthodox-Protestant, led by Rick Tinsley

10/21 Interview with John Granet, led by Rick Tinsley

10/28 DVD: Eastern Orthodox Theology

"Tuesdays At 7"

In The Library

(Tuesdays in October, beginning Oct. 2nd)

10/2 The Story of the Episcopal Church: From Jamestown into the 21st Century. The class looks at how our Church's past merges with the present, with a focus on our Call to Mission. Led by Victoria Hatch and Craig Ewing.

"Thursdays At 7"

In The Library

The Story of Anglicanism

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

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

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.

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.

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 was held on Wednesday, September 19th.

Saturday, Sept. 22nd, 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 September, this will occur on September 25th at 11:00 am. Father Andrew Green will preside and welcomes assistance from parishioners.

The St. Paul's Campers

. . . are going to the mountain on October 5th to 7th. We had to reschedule our original plans due to a thunderstorm. We have equipment to lend, a great dinner planned, and lots of fresh mountain air! Please call Bonnie Stroock at 760.324.7979 to reserve a spot.

The Episcopal

Church Women

. . . welcome the Fall season with a luncheon on Thursday, October 4th. A business meeting at 11:30 a.m. will be followed by the traditional salad luncheon. All women of the parish are invited to attend as plans for 2012-2013 will be discussed. Bette Knutson, group president, will chair the discussion and host the luncheon with Harriet Yost. Those attending are asked to bring a favorite salad, rolls or dessert to share; beverages are provided. For additional information about the event, contact Bette at 760.416.5739.

SAVE the DATE for our NEXT STEWARDSHIP EVENT!

October 13th, from 11-2, will be our all parish Bar-B-Q! The fun will begin with a mystery activity! While the event is complimentary, you will need to acquire your tickets after worship services, beginning Saturday and Sunday, September 29 & 30.

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.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

OPEN HOUSE

Sunday in the Parish Hall after the 10:30 service. with the start of Godly Play Sunday School. Please come by the Godly Play room in the Parish Hall to see the wonderful lesson materials and meet the teachers.

Daughters of the King

The DOK will start the fall season on Tuesday Sept. 25th 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 for the 10:30 service are Ron Shepherd, celebrating his 72nd birthday, and the SOS Team. 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.

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.

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.

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/AI%20Ahli%20Hospital.htm>
4. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/The-Abundant-Lite-Sept.-13-2012.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>