

The Abundant Lite

January 23, 2014

For Sunday, January 26th

From The Rector

The Value of Otherness

One word that is at the heart of this reflection, "Ethnos," is translated as "Gentile" in this week's Gospel reading from Matthew. But in the 1st Century, "Ethnos" could be used by a Jew to describe a non-Jew. It could be used by a Roman to describe a non-Roman. I am following [1]Brian Stoffregen in understanding the word in its most general sense to mean someone who is different from "us."

This difference is very important in understanding the context of Matthew's Gospel. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, just outside Jerusalem, but at the beginning of his public ministry, he is in the midst of Gentiles, Ethnoi, "Others" - people who are different from him and devalued by "his people."

If that does not make the reader stop and think, Matthew tells us that this otherness fulfills what Isaiah spoke centuries earlier: the Messiah is to be revealed to those people who are not "us" and whom we devalue - the "Others."

Reading this week's Gospel lesson, I thought that I was blessed to understand how God values Otherness - but only for a minute. Then I questioned, "Am I any more open to people who are different than the first readers of the Gospel were?" I don't really think so.

When I regard how Jesus lived, preached, and healed among the "Ethnoi," I want to be more like him. I want to, but my lifetime of habit chains me. So I come to church and I pray. I pray that the words I see and hear which reveal God's love and good intention for both "Us" and "Other" would take root and grow in me. Then I might hear Jesus call me, "Andrew. Follow me and I will show you how to "fish" for the Others - how to recognize and value them and share God's blessing.

We are all Others to someone: join us as we worship and praise the God who calls us by name and loves us absolutely equally.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Matthew 4:12-23

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

"Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles--
the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned."

From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea-- for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

Come to Convention!

All are welcome and encouraged to attend the 40th Annual Diocesan Convention on Friday, February 21 and Saturday, February 22. This year's gala dinner will be special because it kicks off the diocesan capital campaign, Build the Serving Church, and will serve as the 40th birthday party of the diocese. We have fun surprises planned! A festive Eucharist at St. Paul's Cathedral is open to all. Convention is the biggest diocesan event of the year. Come hear speakers, worship with other Episcopalians and take advantage of these opportunities. For times and locations visit: [2]www.edsd.org/diocon2014. Contact Hannah Wilder

with questions: hwilder@edsd.org, 619.481.5456.

Faith Building

"Sundays at 9:15"

In The Library

Lights in the Dark Ages, a DVD series based on "Lives of Great Christians" by William R. Cook. Hosted by Craig Ewing
1/26 NO CLASS (Annual Meeting)

Sundays throughout February

The Divine Feminine

Led by Victoria Hatch and Audrey Spencermorris.

Recovering the Feminine Face of God as we explore various spiritual traditions around the world, renewing and integrating our relationship with the Divine Feminine.

"Tuesdays at 7"

In The Library

Controversies in the Early Church, a DVD series based on "The History of Christianity" by Luke Timothy Johnson. Hosted by Bob Hettinger
1/28 Theological Crisis and Council—

Christology (God-Man . . . or Not?)

Old Testament - a continuation with Amy-Jill Levine on DVD; hosted by Jerry DiNoto and Craig Ewing

2/04 From King Solomon to Pre-classical Prophecy

2/11 The Prophets and the Fall of the Northern Kingdom

2/18 The Southern Kingdom

2/25 Babylonian Exile

Roy's Desert Resource Center

Roy's Desert Resource Center is an outreach of St. Paul's that serves the homeless by providing clothing and desserts on Monday evening served by our volunteers. You can help by contributing desserts, donating to our SOS Fund, adding to our donation baskets in the Narthex or joining our volunteers on Monday evening. For more information, call Hap Blaisdell at 760.323.5726.

Report Misconduct.

Report Misconduct. As part of our ongoing commitment to creating a safe haven for everyone, our diocese trains people in the prevention of misconduct and encourages all to report misconduct. All reported incidents are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly and confidentially. If you believe you have experienced misconduct of any kind, please contact the John Seitman, at jseitman@pacbell.net or 858-793-4426.

Bullying Behavior Not Welcome Here

At St. Paul in the Desert we 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.

[3]"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.

[4]"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.

“A Welcoming, Empowering, Supportive”

Ministry!

Our mission statement calls us to be “a welcoming, empowering and supportive community.” We are currently forming a new ministry at St Paul's to support that

mission. Volunteers are needed from all three services to donate approximately 90 minutes of their time per month. That time is split into 3-30 minute segments: 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after the service you attend, once per month, to support the Welcoming Table located in the Narthex and another 30 minutes a month assisting with name badge organization. If you are able to lend a hand, please contact Mike Funke at 760.-409.0986 or mike.funke@yahoo.com!

Help us live our mission statement!

Episcopalians Against Gun Violence

. . . is an ad-hoc group of bishops, clergy and lay people disseminating information about Episcopalians who are working, collectively and individually, to curb gun violence. For further information, click [\[5\]](#)here.

Our Partnership

with

Katherine Finchy

Elementary School

. . . continues through our donations of classroom supplies. Please take a blue classroom supply wish list, available from the ushers, [\[6\]](#)(or view and print), to use when you go shopping. Please place your donations in the basket marked "Katherine Finchy Elementary" located in the Narthex. You may also bring your purchased supplies to the Church Office during business hours. If you are unable to shop, but would like to help financially, please make your check out to "St. Paul in the Desert" and write "Katherine Finchy" on the memo line.

At the

Church of St. Paul

in the Desert

. . . we welcome all worshipers to a place free of violence, bullying, and abuse. Physical, verbal or emotional violence against others or against oneself is not acceptable because of our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus. Please let Jesus' command to love your neighbor as yourself be your

guide.

Announcements

Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Lite?

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

Church Office Hours

Please observe that the office is not open for walk-ins on Mondays. If you call, please leave a message. In case of emergencies, a priest will return your call.

PLEDGE UPDATE

Pledge update. As of January 19th, 166 pledges for a projected income of \$313,264 have been received for the ministry of St Paul in the Desert in 2014.

The Parish Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, January 26th, after the 10:30 service as a Brunch. We will conduct Parish business and elect a new slate of members to the Vestry. The Brunch is complimentary, seating is limited and you must have a ticket to enjoy the brunch. Some additional seating may be available on a first come basis. Check at the door of the Parish Hall. You are welcome to the business meeting even if you can't attend the brunch.

The Order of Daughters of the King will meet on Tuesday, January 28th, at 1:15pm in the Condo located behind the Church office. So that we have a closer bond with all the ladies at St. Paul's, we invite you to attend to see what DOK is about. We are a Prayer, Service and Evangelism ministry. Please pause for a couple moments to look at the DOK bulletin board at the right side of the entrance to the Parish Hall

****SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT****

The annual Daughters of the King Tea will be held on Sunday, February 9th, at 2 pm at the home of Bonnie Stroock. We invite and welcome all ladies to attend in order to learn more about DOK, and enjoy a closer fellowship. Any questions, call Valerie Ferguson at 760.799.5927.

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, will be our keynote speaker at the Diocesan Convention gala dinner. Bishop Jefferts Schori will bless the Episcopal Church Center in Ocean Beach as the new diocesan center.

Taizé services will resume February 6th at 7 p.m., and will be presented the first Thursday of the month thereafter.

For Epiphany, we are using the Sanctus and Agnus Dei from the Sewanee Mass by Malcolm Archer, English Church Musician, Conductor, Composer and Recital Organist. Since 2007, Archer is Director of Chapel Music at Winchester College in the heart of England, where he trains and conducts the Choristers and Chapel Choir. He also teaches organ and composition. He has a distinguished career in Cathedral music, which has taken him to posts at Norwich, Bristol, and Wells Cathedrals, as well as Director of Music at the famous St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

The Episcopal Church Women feature a Valentine's Day "hearts and flowers" luncheon on Thursday, February 6th, at 11:30am in the Parish Hall. Parishioner Rick Tinsley will talk about "Angels—God's Messengers." Mr. Tinsley was ordained in the Lutheran Church and has attended St. Paul's for nine years. He is Altar Guild Director and a Worship Coordinator. He is married to George Holliday and is Director of Food and Nutrition at Desert Regional Medical Center. The order of the day begins with a brief business meeting, followed by a salad luncheon at noon, and the program. All women of the parish are invited, and those attending (except newcomers) should bring a salad to serve 6-8, rolls, or dessert to share; beverages are provided. For additional information, contact Kathy Briski at 760.864.7145. Hostess will be Arlene Baker.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Please join Prayer Shawl Ministry to create Prayer Flags on Sunday, January 19th, while sipping coffee. Bishop Mathes has invited us to create Prayer Flags to explore and express prayer through fabric, color, words, and thoughts. Prayer Flags are a universal symbol of peace, love, and compassion. They will be displayed at convention, February 21st & 22nd, and at dedication festivities for our first Diocesan Center. Prayer Shawl Ministry would appreciate offerings of embellishments for the flags, such as ribbons, buttons, fabric scraps, beads, fabric paint and permanent markers.

Holy Communion Service for

Local Care Facilities

Holy Communion at Windsor Court, 201 South Sunrise Way, Palm Springs, is hosted by the Nursing Home Ministry on the second Wednesday of the month, next, on February 12th, at 10:15am. The Presiding Priest always welcomes assistance from parishioners.

Coffee Hour Celebration

No Coffee Hour Sunday because of the Parish Annual Meeting.

Sign up to host a Coffee Hour by using the binder at the entrance to the Parish Hall. There are lots of opportunities in 2014. If you have questions, call Ray or Cheryl Kelley at 760.778.1725.

THE CHILDREN'S CHOIR

...every Wednesday at 6pm in the Choir Room. All children age 4 and above are invited to participate in this activity learning musical skills while having fun and assisting in the congregation's worship. For more information please contact Nathan Ensign at 760.320.7488 ext 225.

References

1. <http://www.crossmarks.com/brian/matt4x12.htm>
2. <http://www.edsd.org/diocon2014>
3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24>
4. <http://scg-wakeupcall.blogspot.com/2010/10/blessing-for-those-who-are-bullied.html>
5. <http://www.facebook.com/EpiscopaliansAgainstGunViolence>
6. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Finchy-Supply-list.pdf>
7. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/The-Abundant-Lite-January-16-2014.pdf>