

The Abundant Lite

February 6, 2014
February 9th

For Sunday,

From The Rector

How Does Your Light Shine?

Jesus begins teaching his disciples with encouragement and challenge.

He tells them that they are "the light of the world" in the present, not future, tense. Since they are just beginning their walk with Jesus, being the light of the world is not the result of long and devoted discipleship. It is something they have become just because they follow him. It is a gift. Then he reminds them not to hide that gift, but to let it break forth - let it shine!

This progression from gift to action is important for those first disciples and for us today. It defines an important aspect of our faith. We are loved and valued by God, in the present tense, by God's initiative. Being loved is not the reward for doing good, but the heart of our relationship with God.

Jesus tells them that this gifted light is not opposed to the Law, but seeks the heart of the Law - its fulfillment. In the same way, he honors the scribes and Pharisees for their righteousness, but asks more of his followers. Matthew Skinner, on Sermon Brainwave, reminds us that the Kingdom of Heaven is not primarily about a reward after death. Rather it is about living into fully being God's people now. It is not about the future, but about the current life of following Jesus.

So, here and now, how does your light shine?

As a follower of Jesus who has been assured of your place in God's love and care, how is the light you have received from God being shared? What are you already doing that is letting "your light shine"? How are you available to others, to those in any kind of need, or to projects that help and care for people?

Be aware that your light may shine in quiet ways. Are you a careful listener when others share their story? Do you write letters to advocate for social justice? Do you stand beside people who are the object of insult or humiliation?

Do you offer a smile to strangers? Do you turn over the hurts that you find to God? That is, do you pray about them? I am not calling for us to give ourselves report cards, but to prayerfully attend to how we respond to Jesus' challenge.

As we worship this weekend, may we attend to the light we have received and the light that is shared; so that we are full participants in God's work in the world.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Matthew 5:13-20

Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

Come to Convention!

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.

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. Come hear speakers, worship with other Episcopalians and take advantage of these opportunities. For times and locations visit: www.edsd.org/diocon2014. Contact Hannah Wilder with questions: hwilder@edsd.org, 619.481.5456.

The Experience of Confirmation:

Accepting God's Gift of Faith

- * Are you worshipping with our community and ready to take a further step into becoming an Episcopalian?
- * Are you confirmed in another denomination and want to be received into the Episcopal Church?
- * Are you already an Episcopalian and have been inactive and want to reconnect?
- * Are you interested in exploring your faith in the context of St. Paul's community?

Then our Confirmation Program is for you! This journey will lead you through your own spiritual life story as well as through the history, theology and worship of the Episcopal Church. It is an opportunity for you to grow spiritually in and through the community of faith at St. Paul's. Our first meeting will be on Sunday, February 23rd, at 5:30pm, here at St. Paul's and will include dinner. Thereafter, there will be five weekly sessions, all including dinner, on Sundays during Lent in preparation for Confirmation/Reception by Bishop Mathes on Sunday, April 6th.

Please RSVP your interest in attending by signing up in the Parish Hall or by calling Susan Jacob at 760.320.7488 ext 227.

Faith Building

"Sundays at 9:15"

In The Library

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

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

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, special Monday night desserts and other volunteer services to one of the Coachella Valley's largest transitional living facilities. You can help by contributing desserts, donating to the SOS fund, adding to the donation baskets in the Narthex or by joining our volunteers to assist our Monday evening outreach. Several new services are planned, and new volunteers are both needed and welcome. For more information, contact Hap Blaisdell at 760.323.5726 or Chris Kelly at 760.406.2978.

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.

[1]"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.

[2]"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!

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.

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, [3](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.

Announcements

Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Lite?

[4]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.

Social Justice Wisdom:

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only Light can do that. Hate cannot not drive out hate; only Love can do that” - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The next Social Justice Ministry meeting will be held on Thursday, February 13 @ 7PM in the church Library.

Our discussion will be about “Systematic Oppression and the Roots of Fear”. Angela Alley, a motivational speaker, will our guest. Please just us for fun,

fellowship and tasty treats.

PLEDGE UPDATE

As of February 6th, 169 pledges for a projected income of \$313,264 have been received for the ministry of St Paul in the Desert in 2014.

SAVE THE DATE!

Please save the date of April 6th for Lunch with the Bishop after the 10:30 service! It's an opportunity for us to get to hear from our Bishop, James Mathes. Details will follow at the beginning of March.

The Daughters of the King will host their Annual Tea on Sunday, February 9th, from 2-4 PM, at the home of Bonnie Stroock. We invite and welcome all ladies at St. Paul's to attend to learn more about how the DOK started, its growth to an international organization and to enjoy a closer fellowship together. The Tea is a lovely way to meet new people, to learn how as a daughter you can deepen your quiet prayer life and to hear about the prayer, service work and evangelism of our Chapter. For more information, please call Val Ferguson: 760.799.5927.

A Taizé service is held on the first Thursday of the month. Currently the service schedule is February 6th and March 6th at 7:00 pm.

The Annual Parish Spaghetti Dinner

and

ECW Bake Sale

... are on the horizon! It will be held in the Parish Hall on Saturday, March 22nd from 5-7 PM. Tickets will go on sale Sunday, February 23rd, after each worship service, and each Sunday thereafter through March 16th, and in the Parish Office until the event. Proceeds will go to the Desert Blind & Handicapped

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.

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.

Spiritual Reflection Retreat at Camp Stevens! Do you need a weekend of spiritual reflection and Christian company in a beautiful, natural setting? Camp Stevens in Julian offers the Gary Hall annual retreat for men and women on Feb. 28th - March 1st, as well as Women's Retreat on March 28th -30th. For more information go to the website for Camp Stevens: [5]www.campstevens.org/adult.

Coffee Hour Celebration

Please join us for Coffee Hour after Sunday's services in the Parish Hall. The hosts are: Lisa Colton after the 8:00 service and Ray and Cheryl Kelley & The Family & Children's Ministry after the 10:30 service.

You may 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.

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.

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.

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 [6]here.

References

1. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24>
2. <http://scg-wakeupcall.blogspot.com/2010/10/blessing-for-those-who-are-bullied.html>
3. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Finchy-Supply-list.pdf>
4. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/The-Abundant-Lite-January-30-2014.pdf>
5. <http://www.campstevens.org/adult>
6. <http://www.facebook.com/EpiscopaliansAgainstGunViolence>