

The Abundant Lite

November 13, 2014

For Sunday November 16th

From The Rector

Just Good Business?

As we approach the end of the Church Year - one more week - we have gotten used to troubling passages from the Gospel. Traditionally, believers are expected to find a way to accept the violence, dishonesty, and "gnashing of teeth" that populate these stories about "the end" as straightforward teaching. Several of these stories, like our Gospel for this week strike me as cruel, and I sympathize with "teeth gnashers."

The story about the Talents is a difficult passage. Understanding the historical and cultural background may make sense of the Landlord's actions, but it does not help to gain insight about living in a time of prolonged waiting. The 25th chapter of Matthew has several troubling stories, and until we have read all of them (stay tuned for next week) it is hard to make sense of them for growing in faith. After all, isn't that growth the point?

In the story of the Talents, we are treated to an insider's view of how money was made in a culture very different from our own. As Malina and Rohrbaugh point out in "[1]A Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels," the 1st century world understood money as finite. There were rules that dictated how much wealth or success different people deserved to have. If a person "got" more than their share, they must have done it dishonestly. They must have taken it from others. Servants were used as proxies, to protect the landowner's honor. While doubling your investment sounds great to us, in their world view it was dishonorable.

What is really going on here?

This passage is often interpreted to mean that faithful Christians should take what they have received from God and multiply it. I have no objection to this traditional wisdom - faithfulness requires good stewardship of God's gifts and God's creation, and even money. Money itself is not the problem. The problem in this story is that the rewards and judgements come

down very differently than we have been lead to expect from Jesus.

It does not fit in my understanding of Jesus, that he would take the person with the least ability and least connections and judge him against others of greater ability. I would expect him to be lifted up and honored. I would expect him to bring the marginalized person to the center.

Join me in being troubled this week and wait. Wait for the end of the story next week and then reread each of the troublesome texts in light of that. Get ready for Jesus to turn our understanding of honor and faithfulness upside down.

Our worship and fellowship as a community does not shy away from troublesome scriptures or difficult relationships, but we practice being a people of faith who work at it. Join us.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus said, "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where

you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "

### The Stewardship Appreciation Brunch

The Stewardship Committee invites you to The Stewardship Appreciation Brunch to celebrate your generous contributions of time, talent and financial support on Sunday, November 23, 2014, immediately following the 10:30 am service in Hogarth Hall. The brunch is free but you must have a ticket to attend and seating is limited. Tickets are available after each worship service or in the Parish Office.

### Faith Formation

"Sundays at 9:15"

### In The Library

Welcome to The Episcopal Café Discussion Group! Sessions will be held in the Chapel Room in the Parish Hall. These discussion/sharing sessions are based on online topics from Episcopal websites,

### November

11/16 & 23 Church Hall. 2 sessions-the Ministries of St. Paul's will make presentations on how stewardship is demonstrated. Facilitated by Craig Ewing

"Tuesdays at 7"

### November ~ In The Library

Spirituality for the 2nd Half of Life-The Best is Yet to Come!

Led by Rev. Canon David Caffrey

11/18 The Seven Life Tasks that must be Negotiated.

11/25 Signpost of healthy & mature spirituality.

December ~ In The Church

12/2, 12/9 & 12/16 - Taize Services

Volunteers Needed - Roy's Desert Resource Center!

Our Outreach Ministry to the homeless at Roy's Desert Resource Center needs your support. There are various ways you can help. Donations of homemade desserts (cakes, pies, cookies, etc.) are especially welcome, but so are "store-bought" items and fruit. In addition, our Roy's Fund is always in need of your tax deductible donations which enable us to deliver about \$400 worth of new underwear and socks to Roy's residents every month. Simply bring dessert items to the Church kitchen (leave perishables in the refrigerator space reserved for Roy's). They will be taken to Roy's for Monday dinner by one of our teams of volunteers. If you have any questions, just call our ministry leader, Chris Kelly, at 760.406.2978.

A WELCOMING, EMPOWERING, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

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](mailto: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 [2]here.

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.

## 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](mailto:jseitman@pacbell.net) or 858-793-4426.

Announcements

Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Lite?

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

## 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.

The Social Justice Committee

. . . will meet Thursday, November 13th at 7 PM in the Library.

#### A Death in the Parish

Louise Packham died at home in hospice care.

May she rest in peace.

Her funeral will be at St. Margaret's, San Juan Capistrano - tentatively Nov. 15. Her remains will be placed in our Columbarium sometime thereafter.

#### Camp Stevens Visit

Dec. 6

Many people at church contribute to our beautiful Diocesan camp in Julian. To thank you, a lunch and tour has been arranged on Dec. 6th, a Saturday. Time away is 9 AM to 3 PM. If you are interested in coming along, contact Bonnie Stroock, St. Paul Camper's Coordinator at 760-324-7949.

#### Our Adult Choir

. . . will be singing at the annual Palm Springs Anti-Violence Vigil to be held Thursday, November 20th at 7:00 PM at Francis Stevens Park (corner of Palm Canyon and Alejo). This event is to commemorate all the transgender people lost to violence in the past year. All are welcome.

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL

(FORMERLY "GODLY PLAY")

NEEDS --> YOU

We are looking for volunteers to be Story Tellers and/or Doorkeepers (observers) for our Sunday School program during the 10:30 service. This is an opportunity to teach children through biblical readings and activities selected by the Sunday School Team from an Episcopal curriculum. If you are interested in volunteering or want more information, please contact Ted Barjas at 760.902.1014.

Our Taize style meditation service is returning for 3 Tuesdays in Advent. Our next Taize service will be held on Tuesday, December 2nd at 7:00 PM.

In a setting of icons, candles and low light, and, using short songs repeated again and again with a few words to express a basic reality of faith, this service of prayer and meditation becomes a way of listening to God. All are invited. To learn more, contact Nathan Ensign at: 760.320.7488 Ext. 225. We are also looking for a few volunteers to assist in setting up for the service.

## 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 November 12, at 10:15am. The Presiding Priest always welcomes assistance from parishioners.

## COFFEE HOUR CELEBRATION

Michelle Hathaway is the hostess for Coffee Hour after the 8 AM service. In honor of their 1st Wedding Anniversary, Mark Legget & James Kyle are the hosts for Coffee Hour following the 10:30 Service.

Please consider signing up to host a Coffee Hour in 2014. A binder at the entrance to the Parish Hall indicates available Sundays throughout the year. There are several Sundays available through the end of the year. If you have questions, call Ray or Cheryl Kelley at 760.778.1725.

## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The Prayer Shawl Ministry invites you to join our circle on Wednesday's from 10am -1pm in Hogarth Hall. Whether you wish to learn to knit or crochet or are an expert needleworker, we welcome you. Needles, hooks and yarn are provided. Please drop in to create and enjoy our prayerfully made

creations.

## 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.

[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.

## 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, [7](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.

## References

1. <http://tinyurl.com/k5xas2p>
2. <http://www.facebook.com/EpiscopaliansAgainstGunViolence>

3. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/The-Abundant-Lite-November-6-2014.pdf>
4. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/The-Abundant-Lite-5-8-2014.pdf>
5. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24>
6. <http://scg-wakeupcall.blogspot.com/2010/10/blessing-for-those-who-are-bullied.html>
7. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Finchy-Supply-list.pdf>