

The Abundant Lite

November 27, 2014

For Sunday November 30th

From The Rector

Suffering and Hope

As Advent begins, we shift from reading from Matthew to reading from Mark, but it feels like not much as changed in the last several weeks. The emphasis is still on the "end times." Jesus is speaking to his followers about suffering that is to come and hope about what will follow. The hope is this: Even in the midst of suffering, even if nature itself should be turned upside down, God will be with you. Keep alert and wait on God's increasing presence.

Suffering and hope are connected. But the response to them depends on the life each person lives and the context in which their life is lived.

I live in a community where I take for granted the blessings and power that belong to my place in society. I, like everyone, experience loss and personal suffering. However, I don't suffer as a result of my status. This is not so for the disciples of Jesus or for the early church. In their world, they were the minority, their message that love and blessings must be shared by all threatened the established power. The powerful perceived that the world was just as it "should be" - the powerful had the advantage of position, family, status and connections.

Christians then had few advocates with the government or with any institutional power brokers. Jesus acknowledges the suffering of this community, and he lets them know that it will get worse. But if they can stay watchful for the signs of change, they can participate in God's faithfulness. They can be a part of blessing and power shared, not hoarded.

There are many people in our world and community who don't share the access to power and advantage that I enjoy today. I see this as a complex web of history, prejudice, and sin. I am a part of that web and I don't see a simple answer.

As a Christian, I understand Jesus was speaking to a minority who were not

understood or valued by the people in power. Because I follow Jesus, I feel a responsibility to listen to the stories of people who are not understood or valued by people in power and who suffer as a result. I need to withhold judgment and learn an inclusive vision of truth.

In our worship together, we renew a relationship with Jesus that calls us to deeper relationship with others. We practice living that same call outside of worship - juggling power and inclusion. It is not simple or easy, but God is faithful and we can all learn how. Join us.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Mark 13:24-37

Jesus said to his disciples, "In those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake-- for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

AFRICAN TEAM MINISTRIES Sale

November 30th and December 7th after both services.

This is a not-for-profit organization which helps our brothers and sisters in Africa build water wells, educate children, offer employment and other humanitarian projects. This is done by the sale of crafts and jewelry made by those employed. When you purchase an item you are helping the individual who created it by giving them the income they need to survive. Last year we raised \$1,470.50. Thank you so much! If you have any questions, please call Rosanna Langley at 760.409.8534.

Calling All Elves - Two Decorating Events

Time to Deck the (Parish) Hall for Christmas and string lights in advance of the Palm Springs Festival of Lights. All interested folks are invited to come help on Saturday, November 29th at 9:00 AM. Morning snacks and beverages will be served.

Christmas decorations will go up in the church after the last Sunday in Advent. Please join your fellow parishioners to decorate the church on Monday December 22nd at 9:00 AM.

Please call the Parish Office @ 760.320.7488 to sign up.

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,

During the 4 Sundays of Advent - A Journey Through the Music and Customs of Advent led by Rick Tinsley and Rev. Canon David Caffrey.

11/30 - Hymns for Advent 1, The Advent Wreath - its Theology and Practice"
12/7 - "Hymns for Mid-Advent, the Jesse Tree - its Symbols and the Bible

story that forms It."

12/14 - "More Hymns for Mid Advent Season. Advent Customs for Home and Family."

12/21 - "Hymns for the Climax of Advent and the Incarnation: The Great O Antiphons - The Intersection of the old and New Covenants."

12/28- NO SESSION: Christmas Break

"Tuesdays at 7"

December ~ In The Church

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

No service on December 23rd or Dec 30th.

“Christmas at Roy’s Desert Resource Center”

It’s that time again! For the past several years, St. Paul’s has raised money to buy Christmas gift cards for the men, women and children at Roy’s Desert Resource Center – a tradition of giving we want to continue. Through the generosity of our parish, each Roy’s resident will receive a \$25 gift card that can be used to purchase clothes and other essentials at a local retailer. Please join in showing your support for this important outreach with a donation – simply make your check payable to “St. Paul-in-the-Desert” and put “Roy’s Christmas” in the memo line. Drop it in the plate on Sunday or bring it to the church office. Contact Chris Kelly 760.406.2978 for more information on how you can help. Our target this year is to raise \$2,500 by the end of December, so give early and give often!”

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!

Help us live our mission statement!

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.

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 [3]here.

Announcements

Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Lite?

[4]Click here to receive a Printer Friendly (text only) version[5].

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.

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.

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 December 10th, at 10:15am. The Presiding Priest always welcomes assistance from parishioners.

COFFEE HOUR CELEBRATION

Coffee Hour hosts after the 10:30 service are the Children's & Family Ministry.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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://www.facebook.com/EpiscopaliansAgainstGunViolence>
4. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/The-Abundant-Lite-November-20-2014.pdf>
5. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/The-Abundant-Lite-5-8-2014.pdf>
6. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Finchy-Supply-list.pdf>