

The Abundant Lite

April 23, 2015

For Sunday April 26th

From the Rector

The Abundant Shepherd

Our Scriptures are so rich that it is possible to feast on different aspects of the same reading and always be satisfied with new insight. On this traditional "Good Shepherd Sunday" I have added one verse to our assigned reading, and it gave me a new perspective. Jesus is the Abundant Shepherd. He is the one who is focused in every way on giving life, building life, fulfilling life for all his sheep.

His definition of which sheep are his is detailed. They are the ones who know him, who hear his voice, who follow him, who are in this enclosure - totally protected and sustained - and who are in other enclosures unknown to the rest of the sheep. He knows them all. He knows them abundantly.

A key component of Jesus' abundance is gathering and leading all the sheep. The differences in Christian groups has often led us to label and divide. Jesus gathers and leads. He gathers the sheep together, into a fold and there are other folds into which other sheep are gathered.

There are two ways we get this wrong. First, we think that we are in the only fold. Jesus is "our" shepherd - and ours alone. The abundant shepherd has folds we do not know about, perhaps we cannot imagine, and he gathers and leads all of them. The abundant shepherd brings them into life shared with him and ultimately with all the other sheep - with all of us.

Second, we think of Jesus as a personal shepherd, where "I" need not be connected to the other sheep. Yes, Jesus knows his sheep - has deep relationship with them - and he gathers them that they might share that relationship with others - sustained and mutually supported.

I met a friend yesterday who talked about going to a 12 step meeting called "the Cornfield." A part of their self-identity is that the corn growing at the center of the field is stronger and more robust than the corn at the margins. Members who invest in the group and participate are mutually

strengthened and supported in ways that are unavailable to the edges and to loners. I think the same is true for the metaphor of sheep being gathered by the abundant shepherd.

Join us as ones gathered by the abundant shepherd this week, where we practice knowing and being known, identifying those at the edge and bringing them to the center, and feasting together at the Shepherd's Table.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

John 10:10-18

Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

The United Thank Offering Returns!

The United Thank Offering is making its return to St. Paul's. The UTO is a ministry, started in 1871, where Episcopalians give thanks to God for special gifts. Blue cardboard boxes or envelopes are used for coins, bills or checks that are sent to the UTO offices in New York. The money that is collected then underwrites grants that are requested for ministries in the USA and overseas. One local example is a church in San Diego that was

granted money for the purchase of a portable shower. It has been used by the homeless in their area and is now a part of the "Showers of Blessings" program at the Episcopal Church Center. Please think about your blessings and plan to bring an offering to put in the special UTO baskets at church on May 24th, the Day of Pentecost. Blue envelopes will be available during the month of June in the pew pockets or a limited number of blue boxes will be available from the Sunday School, Bonnie Stroock or the Parish throughout the month of May. Please help support this ministry and take a blue box home this week. Please think about your blessings and plan to bring an offering of thanksgiving to put in the special UTO baskets on Saturday May 23rd or Sunday, May 24th.

Faith Formation

"Sunday Mornings at 9:15 AM

Episcopal Café returns in The Chapel"

4/26 Gospel Seven Words: Led by Victoria Hatch
[1][Click here to read the article](#)

5/3 If God Isn't Enough, What Is?

5/10 Used People

5/17 Confirmation Sunday- Bishop's Visit: NO SESSION

5/24 The Power of Pentecost

5/31 What Is Your Story?

"Tuesdays at 7:00 PM in the Library"

4/28 Renewing the Face of the Earth:Environment/Sustainability,

Part 2: Facilitator: Audrey Spencer

5/5 Instructional Eucharist.

Presented by Rev. Canon Victoria Hatch.

Open to all parishioners.

Why we do what we do on Sundays.

We will meet in the church for this date only.

5/12 The Psalms: Orientation.

Presented by Rev. Canon Victoria Hatch

5/19 Accessing the Psalms.

Presented by Jerry Di Noto

5/26 A Zen Perspective on the Psalms.

Presented by Bro. John Charles Westaway

Our Homeless Brothers and Sisters

Still Need Your Help

Our goal now is to resume monthly deliveries of new underwear and socks to Roy's residents – a gift that is both urgently needed and much appreciated. Please help feed the hungry and clothe the naked with a financial contribution this month. Simply drop your check, payable to "St. Paul in the Desert," in the collection plate or hand it to an usher with a notation on the "memo" line that it is for the "Roy's Fund." For more information contact Chris Kelly at 760-406-2978. Both the Roy's team and residents are truly grateful for your support.

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!

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.

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, [2](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.

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

The church office is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm with a lunch break from 11:30 am until 1:00 pm.

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.

Taizé Worship

. . . service returns on May 7th at 7 PM. This is a contemplative, candle-lit service of chanting, prayer and meditation. All are welcome to join us. Bring a candle and a friend! Our last Taize service before summer break will be on June 4th at 7 PM.

Children's Baptisms

. . . will take place Sunday, May 17th at the 10:30 service with Bishop Mathes presiding. If you would like to have your child baptized, please call Marco Barrios in the Parish Office at 760.320.7488, ext. 227, to schedule an appointment with Fr. Andrew.

The Daughters

of the King

(DOK) will meet on Tuesday, April 28th at 1:15 PM in the Chapel of the Parish Hall. Come and join in the planning of our hospitality for Fr. David Caffrey's special class on intercessory prayer this coming Saturday, May 2nd from 9 AM to Noon. See article below.

Save the Date:

Saturday, May 2nd, from 9 AM to Noon. Fr. David Caffrey will present a workshop on Intercessory Prayer in the Parlor of the Parish Hall. The Daughters of the King host this event and invite all interested Parishioners to attend.

Save the Date:

May 5th at 7 PM in the Church for The Instructed Eucharist: Why do we do what we do? Presented by Rev. Canon Victoria Hatch. This Eucharist Service is an opportunity to learn more about the worship we experience every Sunday. In lieu of a sermon, Rev. Canon Victoria Hatch will offer verbal explanations throughout the service of the various components of our liturgy. It is designed to offer a deeper understanding of our worship and its meaning. All are welcome!

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 May 13, at 10:15am. The Presiding Priest always welcomes assistance from parishioners.

COFFEE HOUR CELEBRATION

Please consider hosting a Coffee Hour celebration. A binder at the entrance to the Parish Hall indicates available Sundays throughout 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.

[6]"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.

[7]"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.

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.christiancentury.org/article/2012-08/gospel-seven-words>
2. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Finchy-Supply-list.pdf>
3. <http://www.facebook.com/EpiscopaliansAgainstGunViolence>
4. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/The-Abundant-Lite-April-16-2015.pdf>
5. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/The-Abundant-Lite-April-16-2015.pdf>
6. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24>
7. <http://scg-wakeupcall.blogspot.com/2010/10/blessing-for-those-who-are-bullied.html>