

The Abundant Lite

September 3, 2015

For Sunday, September 6th

From The Rector

Jesus Learns

The Gospel for this week includes two healings, which we expect from Jesus. It also includes Jesus being taught by an immigrant woman, which we don't expect. In general, we have a hard time thinking of Jesus learning, of him as anything but perfect. There is a scriptural history of divine/human encounters where God has made a decision, and is convinced to change - where God learns. Moses, Abraham, and the people of Nineveh are examples of people who have convinced God to change direction.

In Mark's story of Jesus, he is accosted by a foreign, non-Jewish woman. She begs Jesus to heal her daughter. He dismisses her with an insult.

This is not the Jesus we have come to expect. This is so different that we work hard to make the insult defensible or innocent. We have decided that "Jesus wouldn't do that" and find a rationalization. Except that any rationalization robs the woman's response of its power. She understood it as the insult it was, even if Jesus did not, and she responds, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

In the face of insult she presses on with a reminder of the Kingdom that Jesus has been proclaiming, where everyone has a stake in God's mercy. And Jesus learns. He hears the truth and acts to give her the mercy she requested. He got over himself and returned to God's mission.

The question is, can we learn?

This Sunday, the Episcopal Church has agreed to join with the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and others in calling all Christians to participate in [1]Confession, Repentance, and Commitment to End Racism Sunday.

This is one step to respond specifically to the shootings at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, and generally to the evil of racism.

We will be offering prayers, confession, and forgiveness. We will be inviting our congregation of very good and caring people to learn, to learn about the reality of racism and the ways in which we participate without intending or thinking, but with devastating effect. Here is the Jesus we know as perfect and complete, realizing he spoke from unthinking and blinded bias toward a woman he and his culture were usually unconscious of, and disrespected when noticed.

With Jesus' help we can learn, too.

Join this week in a community that wants to be like Jesus and wants to make our immediate and the larger world more what God intends.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Mark 7:24-37 Common English Bible (CEB)

Jesus left that place and went into the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know that he had entered a house, but he couldn't hide. In fact, a woman whose young daughter was possessed by an unclean spirit heard about him right away. She came and fell at his feet. The woman was Greek, Syrophoenician by birth. She begged Jesus to throw the demon out of her daughter. He responded, "The children have to be fed first. It isn't right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

But she answered, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

"Good answer!" he said. "Go on home. The demon has already left your daughter." When she returned to her house, she found the child lying on the bed and the demon gone.

After leaving the region of Tyre, Jesus went through Sidon toward the Galilee Sea through the region of the Ten Cities. Some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly speak, and they begged him to place his hand on the man for healing. Jesus took him away from the crowd by himself and put his fingers in the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the

man's tongue. Looking into heaven, Jesus sighed deeply and said, "Ephphatha," which means, "Open up." At once, his ears opened, his twisted tongue was released, and he began to speak clearly.

Jesus gave the people strict orders not to tell anyone. But the more he tried to silence them, the more eagerly they shared the news. People were overcome with wonder, saying, "He does everything well! He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who can't speak."

Help Others Beat the Heat

This summer, St. Paul's is helping our brothers and sisters in need to find relief from the heat. In collaboration with the Social Justice Team, St. Paul's has purchased and is distributing free bus passes to clients of Well in the Desert, and others, so they can have access to the cooling center, showers, bingo and crafts workshops. If you would like to contribute, please make checks payable to "Church of St. Paul in the Desert", with "bus passes/Social Justice" in the memo line. Or, put cash in an envelope, identified in the same way, and place it in the offering plate.

Sunday Mornings at 9:15 AM

Episcopal Café returns in The Chapel

August

8/30 If you're not part of the solution,
you're part of the problem.

Led by Louisa Young-Caffrey.

September

9/6 How Do I Address A Conflicting

Belief With My Neighbor?

No website preview-handout given at session.

Led by Alan Zimmerman.

9/13 Getting Beyond Hateful Acts & Labels-Part 1.

Led by Br. John Charles.

9/20 Getting Beyond Hateful Acts & Labels-Part 2.

Led by Craig Ewing. [2][Read about it here.](#)

9/27 Can Mindfulness Reduce Racism?

Led by Br. John Charles. [3][Read about it here.](#)

Tuesdays at 7:00 PM

Meets in the Library

Tuesday evening Adult Faith Building sessions resume on September 1st at 7 PM with a series on “DeMystifying the Book of Revelation”.

9/1 Apocalyptic Literature and How to “Read” It.

Led by Br. John Charles

9/8 What Inspired Revelation’s Author?

Led by Rev. Canon Victoria Hatch.

9/15 Basics: Who wrote Revelation? When?

What does the Book say?

Led by Craig Ewing.

9/22 What Makes this Book So Attractive to So Many?

Led by Br. John Charles.

9/29 The Erroneous “End of the World” Interpretation.

Led by Jerry Di Noto.

Baked Goods Donations for

"ROY'S DESERT RESOURCE CENTER"

St. Paul's ongoing outreach to the homeless at Roy's Desert Resource Center needs donations of cookies, cakes and other baked treats for our Monday night dessert service at the North Palm Springs facility. Homemade items are especially popular and appreciated. You can bring donations with you to church and leave them with an usher before the service. For more information, contact Chris Kelly – (760) 406-2978. Thanks for your help.

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.

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.

“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.

“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.

Baked Goods Donations for

ROY’S DESERT RESOURCE CENTER

- See more at: <http://stpaulsps.org/#sthash.je9rkb97.dpuf>

Announcements

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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.

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PARKING LOT

A small portion of St. Paul's parking lot will be used during the evenings for valet parking for our new neighbor, Eight4Nine Restaurant. Our staff will be monitoring the usage to be sure it does not cause any conflicts with our needs.

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AN OPEN INVITATION

All Altar Guild and Altar Ministers, and any parishioners who may be interested in joining one of these ministries, are cordially invited to a gathering for fellowship and refreshment at the home of Richard Wells on Sunday, September 13th at 5:00 pm. Watch this space for more details in coming weeks.

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COME AND BRING A JOYFUL VOICE

Soon it will be time when St. Paul's Parish Choir reassembles for weekly rehearsals. Wednesday, September 16, 7-8:30 pm is the date and time, and the choir room of the Parish Hall is the place. If you'd like to join the choir this fall, please contact Meg Irwin-Brandon prior to the rehearsal. Meg will serve as Interim Director for Nathan Ensign, through October. She can be reached at 413-285-6881 or mibrandon@verizon.net Newcomers are welcome!

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SAVE THE DATES

Saturday and Sunday, October 10 & 11, Diocesan Day of Service, following the 4:00 pm, 8:00 am and 10:30 am services.

Sunday, October 18th, St. Paul's Parish Open House and Ministry Fair, between the 8 am and 10:30 am services and following the 10:30 am service.

Details to follow!

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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 September 9th, at 10:15am. The Presiding Priest always welcomes assistance from parishioners.

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COFFEE HOUR

Sunday's coffee hour following the 8:00 am service is hosted by the Green family in honor of Fr. Andrew's 60th birthday.

There are several Sunday hospitality opportunities available through the end of the year. Please consider hosting a Coffee Hour after the 8:00 or 10:30 services with family or friends. Sign-up binders are on the large table on the right as you enter the Parish Hall.

If you have questions, call Ray or Cheryl Kelley at 760.778.1725.

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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.

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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 [4]here.

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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 John Seitman, at jseitman@pacbell.net or 858-793-4426.

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Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Life?

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

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References

1. <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/posts/publicaffairs/letter-episcopal-church-presiding-bishop-president-house-deputies>
2. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-v-taylor/get-beyond-hateful-acts-a_b_7764188.html
3. <http://www.tutufoundationusa.org/2015/08/can-mindfulness-reduce-racism/>
4. <http://www.facebook.com/EPISCOPALIANSAGAINSTGUNVIOLENCE/>
5. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/The-Abundant-Life-August-27-2015.pdf>