

The Abundant Life

December 10, 2015

For Sunday, Dec. 13th

From The Rector

Passive Worry VS Dynamic Joy

The Church and Christians can be super serious, and there are many reasons for it. There is the importance of our understanding God's salvation. There is the imperative to challenge the powers that would harm and destroy people and God's creation. And, perhaps crucial, there are things that strike us with dread fear.

I believe that so much seriousness, especially fearfulness, can confound us. We can become mired in self-examination and worry, and we need, in C.S. Lewis' words, to be "surprised by joy," to discover its strengths. The Third Sunday of Advent reminds us of the need to search out joy - to lighten up - by lightening our seasonal color. The color pink complements the traditional lesson from Philippians which begins, "Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, Rejoice."

The focus of this reflection is how fearful worry can paralyze us, and how joy can liberate us.

The world in which we live is a delightful place, but also one that is filled with occasions for worry. The spiritual place God calls us to is not one of denial, pretending, or wishful thinking. Acknowledging the reality of challenges and even danger, does not require us to abide in worry. Worry does not lead to changed thinking or renewed action. It can leave us stuck and focused on ourselves, only feeling our vulnerability, with no way out.

Joy, on the other hand, can liberate us. As worry connects our fears with our sense of vulnerability and loops us back to ourselves, Joy connects us to grace, gratitude, and God working through other people. That is what our faith tells us. Remember, faith is about our belief, trust, and hope that our current experience of loss, worry, and isolation need not be the last word for us or for the world.

Through our faith, God empowers us to reach out, to experience grace, and

choose joy. This is neither automatic or easy, but each image of God loving us and people in need can inspire us to move a little bit out of worry, and into joy.

Join with worship that encourages us to be gentle with each other and be open to joy - one step at a time.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Deaths in the Parish

Bruce Crawford

died December 1, 2015

Hank Smith

died December 4, 2015

May they rest in peace, and rise in glory.

Amen

Calling All Elves!

CALLING ALL ELVES! It's time to "deck the halls" for Christmas!

Tuesday, December 22, starting at 9:00 a.m.

We're Looking for jolly holiday volunteers to decorate the interior of the church.

If you would like to help, please call the Parish Office @ 760.320.7488 to sign up.

Christmas Schedule

Click [1]here for larger view

A Letter from the Bishop

December 9, 2015

Beloved in Christ,

Over the weekend, faith communities across the country will observe a Sabbath for Gun Violence, December 10-14. The tragedy in our nation is 400 people will be killed by guns during this period. As I have written before, our national addiction to guns is part of a culture that romanticizes violence: think of our Sunday gladiators on the football field, violence on TV, film, and in video games. As followers of the Prince of Peace, we must repent of this behavior and actively participate in change.

We must go to the core of who we are and what Jesus teaches. We are those who preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near. We love our enemies. We turn the other cheek. We respect the dignity of every human being.

[2]Read More

Giving Made Easier

St. Paul's has a new, user-friendly system for online giving and we encourage you to check it out at [3]www.stpaulsps.org. From the homepage,

scroll down until you see a link that takes you to “Donate Online” (on the right side of the page). Click on it and you’ll find instructions that guide you through a quick account set-up. You can then make your pledge payments and other donations easily online. If you have any questions at all, please contact the office and we will be happy to assist you.

Drive to Church With a Buddy

As we move into the high season in Palm Springs, Church parking is becoming more scarce. Because of renewed businesses in the neighborhood, the street parking on El Alameda is unavailable. Please think about two suggestions: First, drive with a friend. Find someone whom you know and commute to church with them. Save a parking space. Second, park on Belardo (to the west of the Church) and walk further if you are able. This saves a close-in parking place for a new worshiper or someone who has difficulty walking. On Sunday the Parish Staff do not park in our lots.

African Team Ministries

Visit the African Team Ministries today in the Parish Hall. Please visit our display of African crafted jewelry, crafts and musical instruments Sunday, December 13. Remember friends and family with gifts that help others. We also accept donations for the water systems that will help with the gardens and bringing water to the villages. If you have any questions, please see me at the display or give me a call at 760.409.8534. Thank you for your support. Rosanna Langley, Junior Warden.

Sunday Mornings at 9:15 AM

Episcopal Café in The Chapel

December

12/13 Shadows of Advent.

Led by Craig Ewing

Read about it [4]here

12/20 Speaking to the Soul: Merry Christmas.
Led by Br. John Charles
Read about it [5]here

12/27 Christmas Recess: NO SESSION

Tuesdays at 7:00 PM

December
Meets in the Church

Taizé Prayer Services

12/15 Taizé Prayer Service. Led by Nathan Ensign

12/22 Christmas Recess: NO SESSION

12/27 End of Year Celebration & Reflection:
Parish Hall 7 PM
All Program participants and Team members are invited; dine,
celebrate and reflect on the Adult Faith Formation
Program.

Christmas for the Homeless

It's time once again for our annual Christmas fundraiser for the homeless men, women and children at Roy's Desert Resource Center. In the past, we have used donated funds to buy Walmart and Revivals gift cards which Roy's residents can use to purchase essentials, and we're planning the same for 2015. Our target this year is to raise \$2,000 (for 85 gift cards) between now and December 25, so please consider a contribution to this worthy cause. Simply drop your check payable to St. Paul's into the plate any Sunday and make sure to write "Roy's Christmas" on the memo line. Don't hesitate to contact Chris Kelly at (760-406-2978) with any questions or for more information on how you can help our ongoing outreach to Roy's.

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 Tuesday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm with a lunch break from 11:30 am until 1:00 pm.

Should you call on Monday when we are closed to the public, please leave a message. In case of an emergency, a priest will return your call.

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Bishop’s Visitation

Bishop Mathes will visit St. Paul’s on December 3-4, 2016. He will Preside and Preach at our worship and will offer Baptism and Confirmation.

The Inquirer’s Class will begin in early October.

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Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Life?

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

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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 [7]here.

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TAIZÉ MEDITATION

SERVICE

Taizé style meditation services continue through Advent. Join us at 7:00 PM, on December 8th and December 15th. To learn more, contact Nathan Ensign at: 760.320.7488, Ext. 225. NOTE: we are looking for a few volunteers to assist in setting up for the services.

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CHRISTMAS FLOWER

OFFERING

If you would like to contribute toward the cost of Christmas flowers, please use the special offering envelopes found in the pew pockets.

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VESTRY NOMINATIONS

We will soon be preparing the ballot for the next vestry elections. Please give thoughtful consideration to who you would like to see serving in this capacity and submit their names (even your own!) for consideration by the

vestry nominating committee.

There's no need to ask individuals if they are willing to serve. The committee will do that. Submit names soon to any vestry member.

Click [8]here for the Vestry Member E-mail list.

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The Social Justice Committee

...meets Thursday, December 10th at 7:00 pm in the Library. Chris Kelly will join us to share ideas about possible new initiatives to help the homeless in our community and the opportunities for St. Paul's to participate in this important ministry. All are welcome.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our Sunday School sessions are active and exciting for the new school year! We look forward to having the children attend the 10:30 Sunday School Program. We are still looking for volunteers to be a storyteller or a doorkeeper. If you are interested, please contact Ted Barajas at 760-902-1014 or email at tedbarajas1@yahoo.com.

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

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COFFEE HOUR

Join us in the Parish Hall for coffee and fellowship after each service on Sunday. The Coffee Hour after the 8:00 services is hosted by Barry & Robert. The 10:30 service is hosted by Cheryl & Ray Kelley celebrating a happy anniversary and the coming of Christmas.

There are a couple of Sunday hospitality opportunities still available through the end of the year. The sign-up binders include all 2016 opportunities as well. Please consider hosting Coffee Hour with friends or family following an 8:00 or 10:30 service. Sign-up binders are on the large table, on the right, as you enter the Parish Hall.

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PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The Prayer Shawl Ministry invites you to join our circle on Wednesday's from 10 am-1 pm 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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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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References

1. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Christmas-schedule.pdf>
2. http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Bp-Mathes-letter_12-9-15.pdf
3. <http://www.stpaulsps.org/>
4. http://www.episcopalcafe.com/shadows_of_advent
5. <http://www.episcopalcafe.com/speaking-to-the-soul-merry-christmas/>

6. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/The-Abundant-Life-December-3-2015.pdf>
7. <http://www.facebook.com/EPISCOPALIANSAGAINSTGUNVIOLENCE/>
8. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Contact-Info-Vestry.pdf>