

The Abundant Life

January 7, 2016

For Sunday, Jan 10th

From The Rector

Uncommonly Common

Peoples' expectations are high in this week's Gospel. They are looking for, waiting for, hoping for God to act. In the midst of the lives they are living, they hope for connection with a power greater than themselves. Their sacred history and sacred stories direct their search in a time of public conflict and suffering.

As John preaches in the wilderness, a very diverse group of people comes to re-connect with their history, their story, and with the God to whom they belong. The common yet significant act of acknowledging their need to turn around – symbolized by baptism – promises a new beginning for individuals and for a movement. God's sacred story was evolving and building.

Each of those baptized by John was connecting to this new chapter of God's story. Their elevated and sharpened expectations centered on a dramatic event or powerful leader: God would raise up a new Moses or David who would take direct action to unify the people and deliver them.

Into this time of such an expectation, on a day of many baptisms, Jesus comes and is baptized – unexpected by all but John – unremarkably, unnoticed.

God noticed, and entered the day, the Spirit gently filling Jesus as with the slight touch of a small bird lighting upon a branch. And God was delighted! Jesus' common act of piety secured his uncommon connection to God, and reaffirmed him as God's own son.

Events in our world make us fearful and in want of resolve. We are filled with apprehension about what will happen next, each individual or group having specific fears and expectations. Enter the common act of baptism – still an act of turning and beginning again, of reconnecting with the sacred story, still a sign of uncommon hope.

This Sunday, at 8:00 a.m., Finn will be baptized and we will renew our

vows. This will be a common event, yet with uncommon potential as we remember and again commit to what we as a church believe. We will turn again to God to live out our promises of faithful Community, Accountability, Sharing the Good News, Service to others, and of Striving for God's Peace and Justice. We will be filled with God's Spirit, as Jesus was, and we will delight our God! Join us in joyful community.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Funeral Service

Funeral services for long time St. Paul's parishioner and former vestry member, Harriet Yost will be held at St. Paul's on Saturday, January 16th at 11:00 am. Harriet and her husband Ray, who pre-deceased her, were active, vital members of St. Paul's. Both served on the vestry and were active in many committees and ministries. Harriet is remembered as an enthusiastic member of the choir and ECW and as a faithful, warm and welcoming greeter as people gathered for worship.

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.

Sunday Mornings at 9:15 AM

Episcopal Café in The Chapel

January

1/10 Why Do We Worship?

Facilitated by The Rev. Canon David Caffrey

Read about it [\[1\]here](#)

1/17 The Privilege of Belonging.

Facilitated by Craig Ewing

Read about it [\[2\]here](#)

1/24 A Christian Response to Gun Violence.

A Church Next on-line presentation in the Library.

Tuesdays at 7:00 PM

January

Faith Building classes resume in January with discussions on the

Gospel of Luke.

1/12 Luke 1:39-56 The Announcement of the Birth of Jesus.
Led by Br. John Charles.

1/19 - Luke 4:1-30 The Temptations: Who is Jesus, Part 1.
Led by Br. John Charles.

1/26 - Luke 5:1-9:50 The Galilean Ministry: Who is Jesus, Part 2.
Leader to be determined

Thank You From Roy's

We've been asked to pass along the gratitude of our homeless brothers and sisters and their children at Roy's Desert Resource Center for your generous support of St. Paul's annual Christmas gift card drive, which raised enough money to provide 80 Walmart gift cards of \$25 for Roy's residents this year. We hope everyone will help continue this good work in 2016 by donating baked goods and funds for new underwear, and by watching this space for other ways you can become engaged with those in need at Roy's. Your help makes a real difference, and is genuinely appreciated. For more information, contact Chris Kelly - 760.406.2978.

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.

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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Giving Made Easier

St. Paul’s has a new system for online giving and we encourage you to use it (see the right hand column on this web page.)

If you have any questions, please contact the office. Our online system makes it easy to direct your donation to a specific fund.

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Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Life?

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

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February 4th

Taizè Service

Our next Taize service will be Thursday, February 4th at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to this quiet service of music and meditation. For more information, contact Nathan Ensign at 760-320-7488 x225.

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Save the Date

Our Music Director, Nathan Ensign, will present a talk and photos about his sabbatical Pilgrimage in the Cotswolds at a potluck dinner on Sunday, January 24th beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. The Church will provide the main entree, so please bring your favorite salad, vegetables or dessert. Come and find out just how many miles Nathan walked last summer and what a "kissing gate" is all about! Sign up sheets for this event will be in the narthex and at the large table at the entrance to the parish hall. You may also call the church office to sign up.

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

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COFFEE HOUR

Sunday's Coffee Hour after the 8:00 service is hosted by the Altar Guild. John & Lena Granet host the coffee hour after the 10:30 service in honor of their anniversary. There are opportunities to host future Coffee Hours. Please sign up in 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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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.

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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!

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References

1. <http://www.episcopalcafe.com/why-do-we-worship/>
2. <http://www.episcopalcafe.com/privilege-of-belonging/>
3. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/The-Abundant-Life-December-31-2015.pdf>
4. <http://www.facebook.com/EPISCOPALIANSAGAINSTGUNVIOLENCE/>