

The Abundant Life

February 11, 2016
For Sunday, Feb. 14th

From The Rector

Release and Grow

Another Ash Wednesday is behind and Lent's 40 days lie ahead. Even though I prepare as professional clergy for this season, sometimes personal preparation takes its own path – never automatic and sometimes surprising.

Traditional preparation can bring into play respected Lenten disciplines: self-examination and repentance, prayer, fasting, alms-giving, self-denial, and reflective reading of scripture. We are given the choice of a deeply challenging wilderness experience which can join us to Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection. But I grew up with short-hand expectations and selected simple self-denial from the traditions - I "gave up something for Lent." My choices did not reflect deep challenge.

Now I have an evolved short-hand that I am using, and offer it to you for your Lenten reflection. God is calling me to release and grow. How can I release what is binding me and damaging my relationships with people and with God? And how is God calling me to grow, to learn, to maybe change?

Prayer will bind me to these questions, God's call, and his answers. My prayer is that I listen well, see clearly the truth of my life, experience the abundance of God's love, and follow Jesus on his desert path. I want to become aware of the burdens that I am carrying of my own making, those I have received from others to carry, and those I have burdened others with. I want to release these burdens.

This prayerful awareness – making me attentive to the quality of my relationships – is preparing me for surprise, for joy, for new life, and for growth as well as release. As God's spirit pushes me into wilderness and supports as if by angels, these gifts will bless me. I want that awareness and its fruits for all of us.

This weekend two signs will be offered to those who choose to join me in this Lenten discipline of Release and Growth. There will be baskets of small rounded stones available for you to select one and carry it with you

during Lent. As you discover things to release – brokenness or resentments, sins or losses – touch the stone you chose and carry and vow, “This is something I choose to release.” During Holy Week at any service, return your stone to one of the baskets, releasing the stone as well as those things you have vowed to release from your life.

The second sign is found in the cross-shaped planter in the Memorial Garden, just outside the church building. There will be grass seed to scatter in the planter. During Lent the seed will be watered and tended, and God will nurture it. Whereas our parish lawns reflect wilderness drought, the grass in the planter’s cross will be a developing sign of growth and hope we can share week by week.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

Luke 4:1-13 Common English Bible (CEB)

Jesus returned from the Jordan River full of the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. There he was tempted for forty days by the devil. He ate nothing during those days and afterward Jesus was starving. The devil said to him, “Since you are God’s Son, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.”

Jesus replied, “It’s written, People won’t live only by bread.”

Next the devil led him to a high place and showed him in a single instant all the kingdoms of the world. The devil said, “I will give you this whole domain and the glory of all these kingdoms. It’s been entrusted to me and I can give it to anyone I want. Therefore, if you will worship me, it will all be yours.”

Jesus answered, “It’s written, You will worship the Lord your God and serve only him.”

The devil brought him into Jerusalem and stood him at the highest point of the temple. He said to him, “Since you are God’s Son, throw yourself down from here; for it’s written: He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you and they will take you up in their hands so that you won’t hit

your foot on a stone.”

Jesus answered, “It’s been said, Don’t test the Lord your God.” After finishing every temptation, the devil departed from him until the next opportunity.

Donate Winter Coats

for the Needy

The target date for our coat collection is February 14, 2016. Bring your own used warm-weather gear or purchase a used outer garment at Goodwill, Angel View or Revivals – leave your items with the church ushers on Sunday or contact Chris Kelly at (760) 406-2978 to arrange a drop-off. Your generosity will help many.

Ushers, Altar Ministers and Altar Guild Member Training:

PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE

There will be hands-on training for Ushers, Altar Ministers (Acolytes, Chalice Bearers and Worship Coordinators) and Altar Guild members, on SATURDAY, MARCH 5TH, 2016. The training will be delivered separately for each ministry: 9:00 am - Worship Coordinators; 10:30 am - Altar Ministers and Ushers; 1:30 pm - Altar Guild. We ask that all current and prospective members of these ministries attend - even those who have extensive experience serving. And we also invite participation by those who simply want to learn more about these ministries. You may find one is just right for you! Please RSVP to the parish office (760.320.7488).

Sunday Mornings at 9:15 AM

Episcopal Café in The Chapel

[1]Check it out

February:

The Prophets: Then & Now.

Led by guest presenter Rev. Dean Lueking.

2/14 Amos – Prophet to Society and contemporary examples.

2/21 Isaiah – Prophet of the Holy and contemporary examples

2/28 Jeremiah - Prophet of Torment and contemporary examples

Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 PM

Faith Building - In the Library

February

2/16 & 2/23 Lenten Taize in the Church at 7:00 pm.

3/1, 3/8 & 3/15 Lenten Taize continues in the church on .

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.

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 because of our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus. Please let Jesus' command to love your neighbor as yourself be your guide.

"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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Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Life?

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

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Year-end statements will be mailed by Friday February 12th.

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“Harpichord Spring”

Even instruments can be resurrected - the harpsichord being among the many instruments of the Baroque and Renaissance whose original voices can be heard today. A series of 3 concerts - solo, ensemble, and two - yes, two - harpsichords, performed by celebrated international performers, will surprise you.

[3]Click here for details

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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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Next Taizé Services

There will be no Taizé service this week. Our next Taizé service is Tuesday, February 16th 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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HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE FOR LOCAL CARE FACILITIES

The next COMMUNION SERVICE at Windsor Court is scheduled for Wednesday, March 9th at 10:15 am. The priest and residents always welcome parishioners to join in the worship. The priest will impose ashes in observance of Ash Wednesday for those attending this service.

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COFFEE HOUR

Sunday's Coffee Hour after the 10:30 service is sponsored by Cheryl and Ray Kelley. Please consider hosting an upcoming Coffee Hour. The sign-up book is on the table to your 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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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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References

1. <http://www.episcopalcafe.com/privilege-of-belonging/>
2. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/The-Abundant-Life-February-4-2016.pdf>
3. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Spring-Concerts.pdf>
4. <http://www.facebook.com/EPISCOPALIANSAGAINSTGUNVIOLENCE/>