

The Abundant Life

November 9, 2017

For Sunday, Nov. 12th

From the Rector

Hopeful Grief Calls For Action

The apostle Paul encourages the community of Christians in Thessalonica with a poetic vision of enduring connection with loved ones through the risen Christ. Those who are still alive, when Jesus comes, will not precede those who have already died. All will be caught up together with the Lord in the air. As Jane Patterson points out in her commentary at Working Preacher, their anxiety is not about salvation, but about community. Will our connections with our loved ones in the community of faith be maintained? Paul paints a picture of hopeful grief - grief that sees the loss as temporary and mediated by a mutual participation in Jesus.

There are many faithful people grieving in Sutherland, Texas as a result of the horrific murder of 26 worshipers. While I can only imagine their grief, I can also imagine that for many of them, the verses we are reading this week as well as other scriptures, are giving them some measure of encouragement and reminding them of hope. The encouragement that I can offer comes in the form of prayer that reminds them and me of our connection in Jesus.

However, the habitual response of prayer should not stand alone. Sincere and regular prayer is one of the spiritual practices that facilitate our sense of belonging to God. It is where we offer our petitions to God that mass shootings like the most recent one in Texas, might cease. Yet because prayer is part of a two-way communication, we need to listen and hear what God expects us to do - how we might make a difference and work to prevent these tragedies.

I don't believe that there is only one place for faithful people to act. The problem is complex and there are several actions that might make a difference. Contact our elected officials to support reasonable steps to reduce the availability of weapons that were designed for combat, not hunting or self-defense. Demand that compliance with existing laws and procedures be carefully monitored. Advocate for Mental Health resources for perpetrators of domestic violence and be willing to support the cost of

these programs.

Paul comforts the Thessalonian Christians with the promise that their loved ones who have died won't be left behind. Through our connection with Christ we will remain connected to one another. In our prayers together we build that connection, but don't stop there. Take action to make our towns, cities, and even our churches, safer.

Fr. Andrew

Featured Scripture

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NRSV)

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

St. Paul's Gun Violence/Safety Committee

It's happened again. This time 26 killed and 20 injured. A three generation family of 8 killed when a 26 year old man with an assault weapon ,an AR15, opened fire on a Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas. There have already been 307 mass shootings in the US this year - And the year isn't over yet! That averages 1 mass shooting per day. Yes, pray, but take action, too. Get involved and join one of the programs listed:

- * [1]the [2]Brady Campaign,
- * [3]Giffordspac,
- * [4]Moms Against Violence,
- * [5]Bishops Against Gun Violence,

* [6]Faiths United.

And there are many more online. Contact our congress members and support their efforts for reasonable gun control:

* [7]Senator Diane Feinstein (203) 224-3841

* [8]Senator Kamala Harris (203) 224-3553

* [9]Representative Dr. Raul Ruiz (202) 225-5330

Craft & Jewelry Sale

African Team Ministries Craft & Jewelry Sale will be held on November 12th and 19th. The purchases or donations you make, help to feed, clothe, and provide watering devices. Each of the craftspeople get paid from the sale of their craft. Please keep these dates in mind and come visit the display. Thank you so much!

Vestry Call!!

The outgoing members of your Vestry have opened nominations for Vestry for terms beginning in 2018. The Vestry is your working government of the church. Members of the Vestry help guide the parish's growth and its service to parishioners and the community we live in. If you or someone you know would be interested or would like to learn more, please contact Steve Moore at pscars4u@aol.com or at 760.218.7667 or any of the other departing Vestry members: Alan Zimmerman, Karen Nelson and Ted Barajas. Thank you for being part of the St. Paul in the Desert Family.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

We're looking for dedicated volunteers with time on their hands during the week to help with St. Paul's new outreach to the homeless through Well-in-the-Desert, UCR Mental Health and HUD. Contact Chris Kelly at 760.406.2978 for details. Get involved, make new friends and help to serve Christ in others!

Parish Life Book Club

Parish Life Book Club meets on the first Tuesday each month at 1 PM in the Library. New members are always welcome. The Book Club meets again on December 5th. The Kitchen House: A Novel by Kathleen Grissom is the next selection. In this gripping bestseller, Kathleen Grissom brings to life a thriving plantation in Virginia in the decades before the Civil War, where a dark secret threatens to expose the best and worst in everyone tied to the estate. This book is available in paperback. For more information please contact Jackie Freeburn at jfreeburn@dc.rr.com. In January 2018, Book Club marks its first anniversary. The January selection is Before We Were Yours: A Novel by Lisa Wingate. Members are looking forward to reading this popular book.

Loving God and Neighbor

in the Jewish and Christian Traditions

Join Fr. Andrew and Rabbi David Lazar for a fascinating discussion of two basic passages for both Judaism and Christianity: “Love the Lord your God” (Deuteronomy 6:1) and “Love your neighbor as you wish to be loved.” (Leviticus 19:18). The discussion is this year’s annual Jerry Behrend Lecture.

- * Date & Time: Sunday, November 12th from 4:00 to 6:00 pm.
- * Place: Temple Isaiah, 332 West Alejo Road, Palm Springs.
- * Admission: \$18.00. All are welcome.

Help Discern the Next Bishop for Our Diocese

Would you like to have a voice in selecting the new bishop of the diocese? Well, now is your chance! The leadership and parishioners of the eastern areas of the Diocese of San Diego, Mission areas 6 and 7, are invited to participate in a Listening Session to make your thoughts known. Sessions will be held at these locations:

- * Saturday, Nov. 18, 9 a.m.: Good Shepherd, Hemet
- * Saturday, Nov. 18, 9:30 a.m.: Ss. Peter and Paul, El Centro
- * Saturday, Dec. 2, 9 a.m.: St. Margaret’s, Palm Desert

Members of the diocesan Nominating Committee will be present to guide discussion and answer questions. The Listening Session will last approximately 2 hours. It is a gathering of all interested members of the diocese to answer a set of pre-determined questions. Responses to these questions will provide the basis for the Diocesan Profile to be posted on-line by February 2018. We hope you can attend and participate in this important process of calling a new bishop.

Hey, St. Paul's Hikers!

The Parish Life Hiking Group is starting its Fall/Winter schedule with a hike on Saturday, November 18, 2017, at the Whitewater Preserve. Please sign up by using the sign up sheets in the back of the church or Parish Hall over the next week or contact Chris Kelly at (760) 406-2978 if you're interested in joining the fun. An announcement with more details will follow.

Save the Date – Saturday, November 18

Saturday, November 18, join The Rev. Canon David Caffrey as

he facilitates a timely workshop on “Back to Basics in Times of Crisis” from 9 to noon in the Parish Hall. Our Baptismal Covenant is central to our faith and action, and Fr. David will relate to it several Benedictine and Daughters of the King rules and vows which can enrich our Covenant faith and ministries in contentious times. Everyone is invited to join us. Please sign up after services or in the office so DOK can plan for refreshments. You can also call Sharon at 760.285.8910 for further information.

Communion at Windsor Court

The next communion service at Windsor Court is Wednesday, December 13th at 10:15 am. The priest and the residents are always happy to have parishioners attend.

Taizé Services

Mark your calendars now for the first 3 Tuesdays in December (5th, 12th, & 19th) to attend our Taize style service at 7:00 in the Church. As one person said, "Taize is a deeply spiritual service by candlelight with music, quietude and prayer. It is a wonderful opportunity to center your day and your life while expressing gratitude." For more information, contact Nathan Ensign at 760-320-7488 x225.

Hospitality Ministry

Please join us in the Parish Hall after each Sunday service for coffee and refreshments.

This Sunday, The Children and Families Ministry sponsors the 10:30 coffee hour!

Please consider sponsoring a coffee hour!

FAITH BUILDING 2017

Sundays @ 9:15 am

AT ST. PAUL'S IN THE LIBRARY – The Episcopal Café

November

11/12 1 Thess. 4:13-18 -We all long to hear a good word!
Led by Alan Zimmerman [10]Read about it

11/19 Zeph. 1:7, 12-18: Complacency -the Opposite of Faith.
Led by Ron Geikow [11]Read about it

11/26 Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24: Failed Kings and the Good Shepherd.
Led by Gary Scott [12]Read about it

Tuesdays @ 7PM

AT ST. PAUL'S IN THE LIBRARY

November

An Overview of the Reformation: Key figures and issues:
Commemorating the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's posting of the
Ninety-five Theses.

11/14 Henry's Reformation. Led by Craig Ewing

11/21 Elizabeth's Reformation. Led by Gary Scott

11/28 Revolution & Restoration. Led by Rev. Canon Victoria Hatch.

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 incidences are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly and confidentially. If you believe you have experienced misconduct of any kind, please contact Mr. John Seitman, jseitman@pacbell.net, 858-793-4555 or the Rev. Janet Wheelock, jwheelock@edsd.org, 952-240-8067.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Office Hours are 9 am – 4:30 pm Tuesday through Friday. The office is closed on Mondays.

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.

Print a copy of The Abundant Life?

[13]Print a copy

Sunday Worship Childcare

Childcare is available for both the 8:00 a.m. and the 10:30 a.m. services.

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.

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.

The Church of St. Paul in the Desert

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References

1. <https://www.bradycampaign.org/>
2. <https://www.bradycampaign.org/>
3. <https://giffords.org/>
4. <https://momsdemandaction.org/>
5. <http://bishopsagainstgunviolence.org/>
6. <http://faithsunited.org/>
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10. https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1053
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12. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/ezekiel-34-christ-the-king-sunday-on-scripture_b_1097125.html
13. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/The-Abundant-Life-November-9-2017.pdf>