



HARK! THE HERALD

The Newsletter of St. Luke's Anglican Church, Merced, CA

May 2016



From the Pastor's Desk

I have been thinking about the Epistle to the Hebrews lately. This anonymous Scripture was mostly likely written to an audience of Jewish Christians. While the Roman Empire was often intolerant of the Jewish people, Judaism had some recognition, allowing Jews to avoid persecution when they did not participate in the pagan worship of the Roman civil religion. Being Christians, these people were in uncharted territory. They lost the resources of the Jewish community (from synagogues to worship in to the business and family networks they might be shunned from). This created great temptation. Some desired to return to the public identity of being “simply” Jewish. That is, they might continue to believe in Jesus privately, but publicly they would return to Judaism. They might not renounce Jesus, but they would simply make Him private. Others, in a variation of this, might simply give up any public worship or religious gathering. Individuals might continue to believe in Jesus, but they would avoid taking that belief past the doors of their homes. These might not return to Judaism, but they wouldn't stay with Christianity either.

The Epistle to the Hebrews writes relatively little about the practical effects of all this (in fact, this context is merely an educated guess, since the author says very little about the audience). Instead, the focus is relentlessly theological. The primary message is this: Jesus is superior to everything. No one, nothing, can substitute for Him. If we can understand this theological truth, it becomes the most practical message in the world. Don't turn back to Judaism, because neither Abraham nor Moses, neither the Law nor sacrifices, nor even the angels can do what Jesus has done and what Jesus is doing. This is a foundational message about how we are saved, but it also establishes the daily truth about our lives. If we walk with Jesus, we have all we truly need, and without Him we are lost. It really is that black and white. If we understand that, we won't lose hope and faith and love.

The passage that drew me to thinking about Hebrews lately is found in chapter 10:32-36

But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which

(cont.)

has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

I don't know yet whether or not we will end up with the "plundering" of our property. As I'm writing this, I have just heard that the counsel for the diocese has submitted the paperwork for a retrial, which will be followed by an appeal to the California Supreme Court. But I do know that we have a "better possession and an abiding one," whether we keep or lose the possession of land and a building.

Like the audience of Hebrews, we need to keep our eyes on Jesus. He is better than anything else we might put in His place. He is the only way to salvation. His word is true and has authority. His love is perfectly trustworthy, and His glory is the most beautiful thing to pursue. So, like the Hebrews, we are called to "consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another" (10:24-25).

Church Growth Commission

Our next meeting will be held Saturday, May 21st at 10:00am in the Emma Hunt Room. Please feel free to join us, even if you can't always attend every monthly meeting. We do meet on the third Saturday of each month. Our format is based on discussion and brainstorming. Check the bulletin Board in Norvell Hall for our Monthly Minutes and Agenda.

Add yourself to Shirley's email - Luke22936@aol.com or call 722-4782.

Diocese of San Joaquin Defense Fund

Make check payable to St. Luke's Church, earmarked for the Defense Fund.

By representing the Diocese, they are representing us.

Remember them in your prayers during the appeal process.

News from the Diocese may be found at:
www.dioceseofsanjoaquin.net.



Christian Nurture at St. Luke's

Sundays

Children's Church meets in Norvell Hall during the worship service and is for children in the primary grades. They follow a liturgy designed for them that is based on the gospel lesson for that Sunday.



Graduates 2016

Do you have a relative in your family that will be graduating from High School, College or Jr. High in May or June this year?

St. Luke's would like to honor them on Sunday, May 22nd. Please let Patti or Shirley know.

eScrip
3 Easy Ways to Earn for Our Group
1. Sign Up/Add Cards
2. eScrip Online Mall
3. eScrip Dining by Rewards Network
Click to learn how!

Up-Coming Events

May 6 – First Friday Location TBA

May 8 – Mother's Day

May 10— Men's Night Out
6—8 pm

Food, fellowship, sharing, worship.

2419 Koehn Ct., Atwater
RSVP to Jim Hill, 357-0782
Invite a friend.

May 19—Vestry Meeting
5:30 pm

May 21—Growth Commission meets 10 am

June 3—First Friday
7—9 pm

Bring an appetizer and drink.
610 El Portal, Merced
RSVP to the Causa's
383-1431

Pantry News

Thank you to those who donated last month from giving financial aid to bags of groceries. This really helps to keep the Pantry active as a resource for those families sent to us from Love, Inc. We always can use canned soups, meats, fish and stews, vegetable, fruit as well as cereal, peanut butter and jelly, and hamburger or tuna Helper. Or bring what you think people would like in terms of packaged or canned goods. Blessings to all of you and to those who find themselves in need.

Dear Friends

To our dear, dear friends at St. Luke's,

We miss you! As many of you are aware, my illness brings much fatigue so I've had to restrict my outings considerably. Since Christmas, Curtis and I were blessed to be able to do our last musical together, one we'd wanted to do for the last ten years! So even though I'm now on disability retirement, when the offer came from Cal-State Stan to do The Fantasticks, I came out of retirement a little bit. It was like a lovely little nod from the Lord that this bucket list wish could be accomplished. Father Ryan and many parishioners attended the performances (thank you!) and we almost lost our beloved priest (okay, an exaggeration) when the top of a sword broke off during a fight scene and went flying. Fr. Ryan reached up and caught it as it flew through the air -- ZOT!! like a frog catching a bug -- and became the superhero who saved the day! It's an adorable memory.....

A couple of weeks ago, they doubled my chemotherapy, and it's one of the strongest immunosuppressants, so my immune system is highly compromised. I'm under doc's orders to avoid the public, so it will be a while before we'll be able to return to worship. Please know we haven't give up on our beloved St. Luke's! We'll return just as soon as we can, and Fr. Ryan is gracious about bringing communion to us and Mom, Lorraine.

Thank you for the cards, calls, and help -- especially to Jani Clarke for running to the store for me (and loaning me eggs!) and to you many lovely people who bring flowers and send cards and emails. We love you all!

Blessings,

Patrice Nelson (and Curtis)

Coffee Hour Ministry

MAY 1 Nevin & Stephanie Koepnick, Linda Meyer

MAY 8 Karlyne Paul, Victoria Schuller, Jani Clarke

MAY 15 Maria Laurel, Joan Brammer, Ann Bean

MAY 22 Darlene Clouse, Cheryl Mayo, Loretta Stuart-Edgerton, Justine, Susie

MAY 29 St. Luke's Men

Weekly Services

Sundays

9:00 a.m. Holy Communion [Children's Church meets during the Service]

Church Staff

The Most Rev. Dr. Foley Beach, Archbishop,
Anglican Church in North America

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Eric Vawter Menees, Bishop

The Rev. Ryan Bradley, Rector, E-mail: rector@stlukesmerced.org

Mrs. Mady Montague, Choir Director; Mrs. Marilynne Isenberg, Organist

Mrs. Patti McClain, Administrative Assistant; Mrs. Sue Linardos, Sexton

Members of the Vestry

Class of 2016

Mrs. Sylvia Bankson, Mr. Richard Blank, Mr. Fred Dutton

Class of 2017

Mrs. Linda Meyer, Sr. Warden; Mr. Mike Waite, Jr. Warden; Mr. Rob Mercurio

Class of 2018

Mr. Ed Gardner, Mrs. Kathy Hill, Mrs. Maria Laurel

Mrs. Karlyne Paul, Treasurer; Mr. Jim Hill, Clerk

Diocesan Convention Delegates

Norman Montague, Calvin Nixon, Shirley Vaughn-Hulbert; Karlyne Paul, alternate.

Contact Us

St. Luke's Anglican Church

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ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR
HARK! THE HERALD IS THE
20TH OF EACH MONTH.

Send articles to:

office@stlukesmerced.org

Visit us at our website:

www.stlukesmerced.org

A Welcoming Family...Worshipping Christ...Sharing His love with others

St. Luke's Anglican Church

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