

THE PIPER

AUGUST 2020



Newest installation of stained glass window in memory of
George and Tillie (Carolyn) Cunningham.

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Rev. Rob's Corner

Fellow Parishioners:

Happy Summer to you all. When you are reading this I will be on vacation. Don't really know where I'll be day to day and travel is not overly appropriate and a bit risky given the latest surge. Maggie and I will probably be packing up our picnic basket and heading either into the mountain trails near you all or to the beach well away from others. I'm sure there will also be a honey-do list as there is for us all when we get some time to free up.

This brings me to the topic I'd like to talk about this August. We are now entering our sixth month of this pandemic, at least from a spiritual and emotional sense. How are you taking care of yourselves? Our region is seeing an up-tick as we reopened and this has been a blow to many of us who want to re-engage with each other. As I've mentioned to you in other headings we completed a plan for in-person morning prayer worship along with the rest of our deanery. All the plans are approved yet we still have determined it is not safe yet to gather given the upward trend of cases in our area. The plan can and probably should be amended over the coming month or so because there may be a chance that like restaurants outdoor gathering at safe distances may be allowed. Our physical plant is restrictive in a couple of ways so I will talk to our committee to see what we want to do. In the meantime we have Zoom Morning Prayer and YouTube Videos available.

If you can click on the links in the email I send out and view the YouTube I suggest you subscribe to the channel so you can find it at anytime later.

Still I repeat how are you taking care of yourselves? As the days turn into weeks reaching out to others, praying, using your Book of Common Prayer to share prayers with your family for a few moments can refresh and restore you and your spiritual connection.

Continued on pg 4

In Memoriam

It is with extreme and profound sadness that we tell you of the sudden tragic passing of our Brother in Christ, Brigadier General David Greer. David joined God on July 30th in the ER after having suffered a massive brain hemorrhage. David was a member of the vestry here at St. Andrew's, a loyal Episcopalian, Mason, Shriner, and Executive Director for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East (a Christian group providing education training and healthcare). As an army officer he served at the American Embassy in Baghdad, and was past commander of the Tennessee National Guard. More than all that, David was a Christian who was an example of Christ's love in this world. His guidance, friendship, and care will be missed by all those at St. Andrews and all those whose lives he touched throughout the world. He is with God now in eternal peace.



1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;

he leads me beside still waters;

3 he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths

for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I fear no evil;

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff—

they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord

my whole life long.

I know a good number of us use gathering together in our building as a vital part of our spiritual lives. Use something to fill that gap. If formalized praying is not your thing search for moments of beauty and renewal at least weekly. Maybe a quiet cup of tea each afternoon on the patio, maybe a walk in these wondrous woods. Create a space for you and God to meet up. Make the date. God is waiting.

Try to unplug at least a little bit. I find that the bombardment of news and the shouting of politics adds to my frustration and anxiety. There are legitimate reasons to be stressed but we don't need more. Mask up. This is not political. This is a gift to yourself and those around you. We care about you and know you care about us so we can show it through the small act of keeping our germs to ourselves. Tell God and those around you that you love them whenever you can and remember. It is something we all need to hear and God will most probably reply – I love you too!

Stay safe and see you when I get back in mid-August.

Blessings

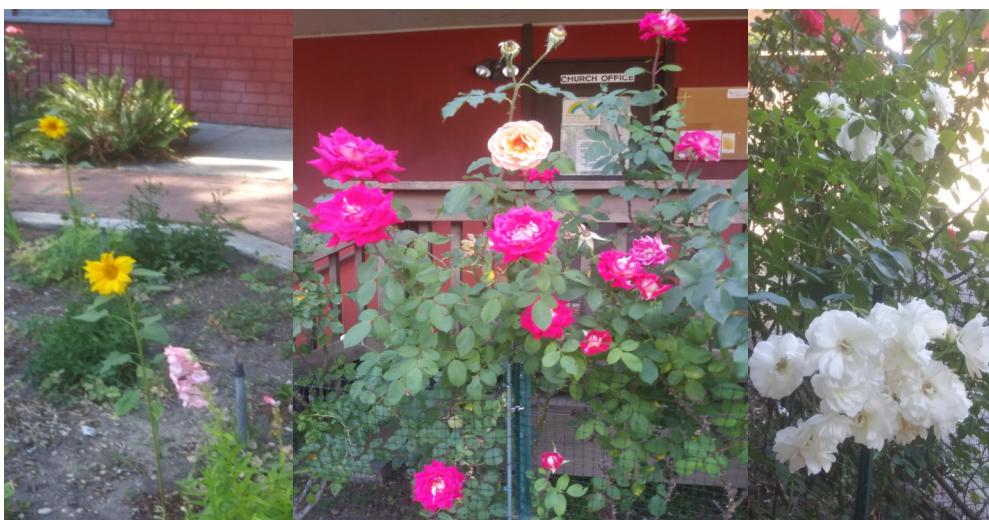
Rob+

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HUMAN DUALISM

Steve LaFever

I watched two movies recently: Becket and Brother Sun Sister Moon. What else is there to do these days of pandemic paranoia? They triggered some thoughts I have been formulating for some time -- the dual nature of our humanity. On one hand you have Francesco di Assisi who gives up worldly ways and his father whose greed motivates him to amass wealth at the expense of others. Becket is about King Henry's friend Becket who he tries to use as a tool to extract taxes from the church by appointing Becket as the Archbishop of Canterbury. However, both Becket and Francesco discover you cannot serve God and money (Luke 16:13). I then realized that we all have two parts to our soul. One represents goodness and love (If I do not have love, I have nothing – 1Corinthians13). The other side of our soul is desire – for money, for possessions, for property, for claiming possession of others lives. During our lives, most try and find a middle ground between the two paths while others allow one side to dominate. For years I have tried to fathom the meaning of life. I have tried to follow a path of love for all people. Sometimes I fail, sometimes I succeed in my efforts.

I look at history – both past and recent. There are clearly two sides to humanity and each side stretches in both directions.

The first half of the twentieth century, Germany established several private country clubs during World War 2, Among them were Auschwitz, Dachau, Treblinka, Bergen Belson. Buchenwald, and 17 others. Admittance, like many Country Clubs , was for a select few. On entrance to the “clubs”, you were given a badge which indicated why you were there. Red triangles went to socialists, communists, liberals and social democrats. Green to convicts and criminals, Blue to emigrants (legal and illegal), Purple to Jehovah’s Witnesses, Pink to gay males, bisexual, and trans, Black to Gypsy (Romani) men, Mentally Ill, Alcoholics, pacifists, prostitutes and Lesbians, and uninvited red triangles to POW’s spies, traitors, and deserters. African men and women mostly never made it to these camps as they were “dealt with” in other ways. And those blacks who were not killed were sterilized or used for medical experimentation. WW2 wasn’t the first attempt to exterminate selected people. History records the first deliberate effort to systematically exterminate an entire group was by the Germans in Southwest Africa, 1904–1908.

Mission San Diego de Alcala was the first of the California missions to be established by Father Serra, a Franciscan friar. The primary tenant of Franciscan philosophy is Respect for Life. As he journeyed up the coast of California, he established 21 missions. The theory was that a traveler would never be more than a day's ride from a mission. However, along the way he needed converts to work the fields, maintain the missions, and be a congregation. Therefore, he converted the Native Americans to Christianity. What if you didn't want to be converted and preferred worshiping your pagan gods? Serra learned from the Spanish Inquisition that the solution was simple – eliminate the heathens, their souls are destined for hell anyway. Serra's missionaries converted 80,000 Native Americans. And the rest were disposed of. However, by 1834 60,000 died from disease brought to them by the Spaniards. By 1900 that number was down to 800. However, California does have missions and Father Serra has been made a Saint and the Franciscan order still advocates respect for life.

The scene took place during the apartheid in South Africa. This was shared in a sermon by Sister Miriam Brasher of the Episcopal order of the Sisters of Charity. “The scene is a courtroom trial in South Africa. A frail black woman, over 70 years old, gets slowly to her feet. Facing her are several white security police officers. One of them, a Mr. van der Broek, has just been tried and found guilty in the murders of the woman’s son and husband. He had come to the woman’s home, taken her son, shot him at point-blank range, and burned his body while he and his officers partied nearby. Several years later, van der Broek and his cohorts returned for her husband as well. For months she heard nothing of his whereabouts. Then, almost two years after her husband’s disappearance, van der Broek came back to fetch her. How vividly she remembered that night. They took her to a riverbank where she saw her husband, bound and beaten, but still strong in spirit, lying on a pile of wood. The last words she heard from his lips as van der Broek and his fellow officers poured gasoline over his body and set him onfire were, “Father, forgive them . . . ” When the woman stood in the courtroom and listened to the confessions of van der Broek, a member of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission turned to her and said, “So what do you want? How should justice be done to this man who has so brutally destroyed your family?” “I want three things,” said the old woman calmly and confidently. “I want first to be taken to the place where my husband’s body was burned to gather up the dust and give his remains a decent burial.” She paused, and then continued, “My husband and son were my only family. So I want Mr. van der Broek to become my son. I want

him to come twice a month to my house and spend the day with me so I can pour out on him whatever love I have remaining in me.” “Finally,” she said, “I would like Mr. van der Broek to know that I offer him my forgiveness because Jesus Christ died to forgive. This was also the wish of my husband. So, I would kindly ask someone to come to my side and lead me across the courtroom so that I can take Mr. van der Broek in my arms, embrace him and let him know that he is truly forgiven.” As the court assistants came to lead the woman across the room, van der Broek fainted, overwhelmed by what he had heard. As he struggled for consciousness, those in the courtroom— family, friends, neighbors, and all the victims of decades of oppression and injustice— began to sing softly and assuredly, “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.”

I had over 200 books on History before I moved here. Most chronicled wars and the sad things people have done to each other over the years. George Santayana was a Spanish philosopher who received a degree from Harvard. His most famous quote is “ Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Perhaps this is why some people still exhibit a triangle with the words Never Again.

How do we stop injustice? Education helps. People on both sides of the issue believe their way is right. Someone asked me, “How can we fill the pews at St. Andrews?” No one knows the answer, for if we did, the pews would be full. Conversely, if we had the answer about how to stop injustice, this would be a just world. However, recorded history begins 4000 years before Christ. During the past 6020 years, I have to question whether we have made progress or just repeated our past mistakes. One of the proponents of slavery was the church. The Bible says so. After laws were changed and people’s conscious raised, the church got in at the tail end of the debate. Slavery fell, but the Bible verses remain. Most people were educated. Mark twain said “If humanity continues in the direction of enlightenment, his religious practice may, in the end, attain some semblance of human decency.”

1890

When this pandemic is over and life and death have taken their tolls, some of us will still be here, sitting in our homes, asking the same questions. and wondering how to change things for the better. I am thankful that I am an Episcopalian whose church advocates inclusion, acceptance and understanding of all people. I asked my 16 year old (great) nephew what he thought would help most, and without hesitation he said “education.” What am I going to do to make this a better world? Thoreau believed we are not mere specks of sand on a beach, but a majority of one can make a difference --- one person – crying out, helping to educate others, trying to make a difference. Or you can

sit at home, listen to the news, condemn or applaud others actions, and let the chips fall where they have always fallen. My boss used to say, if you're not part of the solution, you are part of the problem. What are you going to do?

James the Just, brother of Jesus told us that faith without some positive action is dead. And as I said before Paul reminds us that if we have faith that will move mountains, but do not have love, then we are nothing.

Peace and love, His and mine! Christianity demands forgiveness. Justice demands an eye for an eye. Is it possible to be a Christian and still seek today's justice?

This chart is from “The Living Church.” It is titled The Fastest Growing Episcopal Churches. It states that the commonality or ingredients which grow these churches are (but not limited to) 1. Be located in a growing town, 2. Be Hispanic, 3. Have strong lay leadership, 4. Have a pre-school, and 5. Have a lot of money. While there might be a commonality among these churches, it doesn't mean that churches won't grow if they don't fit into the 5 categories. It means that we have to think out of the box and come up with the right recipe which will attract people to us. He never said it wouldn't be difficult, only possible! Therefore, its time to put our collective heads together and figure out how we can grow. ASA = Average Sunday Attendance

Diocese	Year org.	Name	City	State	ASA 2013	ASA 2018	% Increase
Oklahoma	1994	Grace Church - Episcopal	Yukon	OK	32	144	350%
Dallas	1967	St Barnabas Episcopal Church	Garland	TX	128	325	154%
Dallas	2012	San Francisco de Asis	Dallas	TX	146	292	100%
Oklahoma	2005	Christ Episcopal Church	Tulsa	OK	107	207	93%
Long Island	1847	Grace Episcopal Church	Brooklyn	NY	239	449	88%
Dallas	2008	St Pauls Episcopal Church	Prosper	TX	121	226	87%
Virginia	1732	The Falls Church Episcopal	Falls Church	VA	165	304	84%
Newark	1854	Calvary Church	Summit	NJ	306	553	81%
Washington	1696	St Matthews Episcopal Church	Hyattsville	MD	345	612	77%
Los Angeles	1903	Church of the Messiah	Santa Ana	CA	190	300	58%

Dear Friends in Christ,

I had hoped by this August Piper that we would all be full of good news of the pandemic waning. Obviously, that is not the case and it is getting worse.

On top of that, we have lost our dear David Greer.

When I am especially sad or afraid I turn to the following verse and keep it in my heart.

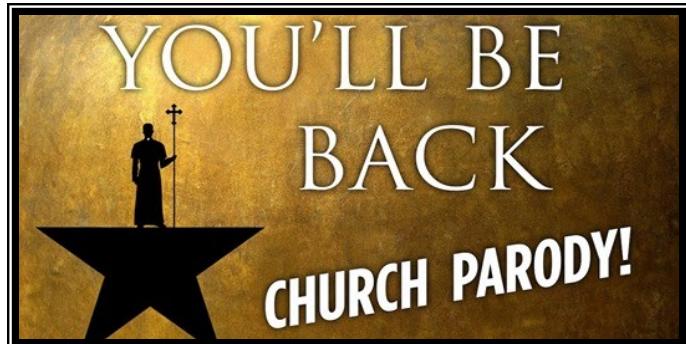


Deuteronomy 31:6 “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Please remember that we are a family, keeping each other in our prayers with hope and love. We will meet again, face-to-face. In the meantime let us all keep our faith and connection to each other in every other way possible.

With love and hope,

Rochelle



Dancing Priest Does Hamilton | CHURCH PARODY | "You'll Be Back"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFduNE4pXAQ&fbclid=IwAR2Q7tT188wMpfAsKeoz-zizI7UKMF8PCpmoBQymR_oEk3TVsDV7QRQIY8

Habits of Grace, July 7, 2020: An invitation for you, from Presiding Bishop Curry

reprinted from [The Episcopal Church website](#). Check out Bishop Curry's weekly videos.

The 4th of July weekend has just concluded and a new week has begun, but the titanic struggles of the old world continue. The struggles to face painful truths of our racial past, the struggles to find ways to fashion a new future, the struggles for racial justice and human equality and true human reconciliation. Even in the midst of these struggles, we still face a pandemic that is worldwide. Now the United States itself is gravely threatened and affected by COVID-19. And even in the midst of all of that, we enter a season of electioneering, campaigning, a presidential election that could well be a profoundly polarizing and divisive election for our country.

In this time, I remember the words of Howard Thurman, who I often go back to. Dr. Thurman was one of the founders of probably the first interracial and interreligious church in the United States in San Francisco, back in the forties and fifties. He was the author of *Jesus and the Disinherited*. He was one of the people who went and met Mahatma Gandhi in the 1940s, and brought back his teachings of non-violent social change that influenced an entire civil rights movement. He was quietly, if you will, the spiritual director of many of the leaders of the civil rights movement. Whitney Young, Roy Wilkins, Martin King, many others went quietly to Howard Thurman to talk, to reflect, to pray. He wrote this in one of his meditations about times of great transition and turmoil:

Look well to the growing edge. All around us, worlds are dying and new worlds are being born. All around us, life is dying and life is being born. The fruit ripens on the tree, the roots are silently at work in the darkness of the earth against a time when there shall be new leaves, fresh blossoms, green fruit. Such as the growing edge. It is the extra breath from the exhausted lung, the one more thing to try when all else has failed. The upward reach of life when weariness closes in upon all endeavor. This is the basis of hope in moments of despair, the incentive to carry on when times are out of joint and men have lost their reason. A source of confidence when worlds crash and dreams whiten into ash. The birth of a child — life's most dramatic answer to death — this is the growing edge incarnate. Look well to the growing edge!

God love you. God bless you. And may God hold us all in those almighty hands of love.

St. Andrew's is a welcoming affirming accepting and understanding parish where you will never experience shame and always be lifted up regardless of who you are!

This is a story from the life of Dick Gregory, an American Comedian and Civil Rights activist.

... memories of Richard Gregory (died August 20, 2017, age 84)

It was on a Thursday, the day before the Negro payday. The eagle always flew on Friday. The teacher was asking each student how much his father would give to the Community Chest. On Friday night, each kid would get the money from his father, and on Monday he would bring it to the school. I decided I was going to buy a daddy right then. I had money in my pocket from shining shoes and selling papers, and whatever Helene Tucker pledged for her daddy I was going to top it. And I'd hand the money right in. I wasn't going to wait until Monday to buy me a daddy.

I was shaking, scared to death. The teacher opened her book and started calling out names alphabetically: "Helene Tucker?" "My Daddy said he'd give two dollars and fifty cents." "That's very nice, Helene. Very, very nice indeed."

That made me feel pretty good. It wouldn't take too much to top that. I had almost three dollars in dimes and quarters in my pocket. I stuck my hand in my pocket and held on to the money, waiting for her to call my name. But the teacher closed her book after she called everybody else in the class.

I stood up and raised my hand. "What is it now?" "You forgot me?" She turned toward the blackboard. "I don't have time to be playing with you, Richard."

"My daddy said he'd..." "Sit down, Richard, you're disturbing the class." "My daddy said he'd give...fifteen dollars."

She turned around and looked mad. "We are collecting this money for you and your kind, Richard Gregory. If your daddy can give fifteen dollars you have no business being on relief."

"I got it right now, I got it right now, my Daddy gave it to me to turn in today, my daddy said. .."

"And furthermore," she said, looking right at me, her nostrils getting big and her lips getting thin and her eyes opening wide, "We know you don't have a daddy."

Helene Tucker turned around, her eyes full of tears. She felt sorry for me. Then I couldn't see her too well because I was crying, too.

"Sit down, Richard." And I always thought the teacher kind of liked me. She always picked me to wash the blackboard on Friday, after school. That was a big thrill; it made me feel important. If I didn't wash it, come Monday the school might not function right.

"Where are you going, Richard!"

I walked out of school that day, and for a long time I didn't go back very often.

There was shame there.



Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Proverbs 31: 8-9



Angel in the Kitchen
*Feel'n good when cook'n
 Sharing the love of God through your love of
 cooking*



Thai Cucumber Salad from the Kitchen of Susan Greer

3 large Cucumbers, peeled, halved lengthwise, seeded, and cut into 1/4 inch slices
 1 TBSP Salt
 1/2 cup White Sugar
 1/2 cup Rice Wine Vinegar
 2 Jalapeno Peppers, seeded and chopped
 1/4 cup Cilantro (fresh), chopped
 1/2 cup Peanuts, chopped

Toss the cucumbers with the salt in a colander, and leave it in the sink to drain for 30 minutes. Rinse with cold water, then drain and pat dry with paper towels.

Whisk together the sugar and vinegar in a bowl until the sugar has dissolved. Add the cucumbers, jalapeno peppers, and cilantro. Toss to combine. Refrigerate a half hour or so. Sprinkle chopped peanuts on top when serving.

Note: I used only one pepper and there was basically no heat to it at all. We only ate half of it the first night so I covered it and kept in the fridge. The next day I chopped a fresh tomato and added it. Really yummy!!!

In the Beginning....

there were seedlings.

Here's how some of those seedlings from our plant sale are shaping up .





*"Sorry for the racket.. there are billions of dogs up here,
 and they get a little excited when someone's at the gate."*

