



Faithful Centurion Anglican Orthodox Church

First Sunday after Christmas Superseded by the Circumcision of Christ

Sunday Report



The first day of the calendar year brought clear skies with a sunrise temperature of 58°F on Mount Olympus with the clear skies and light easterly winds of the classic New Year's Santa Ana. The start of church brought a lovely 68°F. A perfect New Year's Day, with four in attendance.

Gathering Song

Jack Arnold played *Amazing Grace* for the gathering song.

Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Thro' many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun.

We try to pick our gathering songs to have a wonderful message, be easy to sing and suitable for guitar accompaniment. *Amazing Grace* is one of Hap's absolute favorites.

Propers

Each Sunday there are Propers: special prayers and readings from the Bible. There is a Collect for the Day; that is a single thought prayer, most written either before the re-founding of the Church of England in the 1540s or written by Bishop Thomas



Cranmer, the first Archbishop of Canterbury after the re-founding.

The Collect for the Day is to be read on Sunday and during Morning and Evening Prayer until the next Sunday. The Epistle is normally a reading from one of the various Epistles, or letters, in the New Testament. The Gospel is a reading from one of the Holy Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Collect is said by the minister as a prayer, the Epistle can be read by either a designated reader (as we do in our church) or by one of the ministers and the Holy Gospel, which during the service in our church is read by an ordained minister or our Deacon Striker.

The propers are the same each year, except if a Red Letter Feast, that is one with propers in the prayerbook, falls on a Sunday, then those propers are to be read instead, except in a White Season, where it is put off. Red Letter Feasts, so called because in the Altar Prayerbooks the titles are in red, are special days. Most of the Red Letter Feasts are dedicated to early saints instrumental in the development of the church, others to special events. Some days are particularly special and the Collect for that day is to be used for an octave (eight days) or an entire season, like Advent or Lent.

Today is one of those Red Letter Days, The Feast of the Circumcision of Christ. This is the Christian celebration of the circumcision of Jesus in accordance with Jewish tradition, eight days (according to the Semitic and southern European calculation of intervals of days) after his birth, the occasion on which the child was formally given his name. The circumcision of Jesus has traditionally been seen, as explained in the popular 14th century work the Golden Legend, as the first time the blood of Christ was shed, and thus the beginning of the process of the redemption of man, and a demonstration that Christ was fully human and of his obedience to Biblical law. No longer celebrated by many churches, including the Roman and TEC, it is still the Eight Day. That has not changed and so we celebrate the event as it is referred to in scripture, thus should be recalled.

"And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb." Luke 2:21 (AV)

The propers for today are found on Pages 105-106, with the Collect first:

The Circumcision of Christ.

[January 1.]

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; Grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit; that, our hearts, and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey thy blessed will; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The First Sunday after Christmas Day.

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin; Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

The Nativity of our Lord, or the Birthday of Christ,
commonly called Christmas Day.

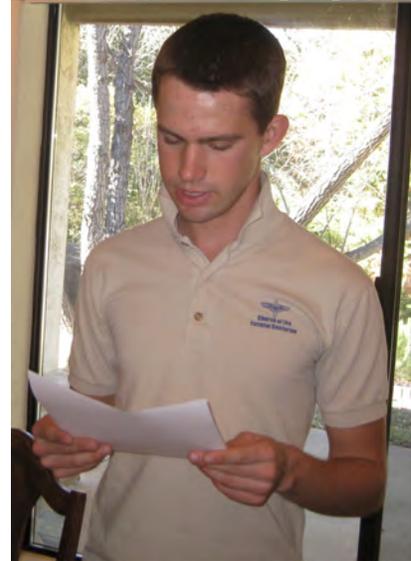
[December 25.]

The Collect.

ALmighty God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin; Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit ever, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ This Collect is to be said daily throughout the Octave.

Ryan Hopkins read the Epistle for today, which came from Paul's letter to the people of Philippia, starting at the Ninth Verse of the Second Chapter. The portion of the letter used as today's Epistle is relatively short. God has sent His Son to earth and given him a name above all others, Jesus¹. Paul exhorts his fellow followers to continue to follow the Lord, not only while he is watching them, but at all times. God will give them the will and ability to do good, but only if they do their best to follow Him.



GOD also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

The Gospel for today came from the Gospel according to Saint Luke, the Second Chapter, beginning at the Fifteenth Verse. Today's Gospel recounts the angels visit to the shepherds who came into Bethlehem to pay homage to Jesus in the manger. It also documents the circumcision of Jesus, bringing Him under the Law. He who: Is, Was and always Will be, put Himself under the Law, that He might fulfill the Law and be our salvation.



Our salvation from the Law came from the perfect sacrifice one time for the sins of all mankind for all time. It could only come from one who was perfect, to enter in to the Law, one had to be subject to the Law. Thus, Jesus submitted Himself unto the Law that he might in the end

have dominion over the Law.

¹ The name Jesus, savior, is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, which was originally Hoshea (Num. 13:8, 16), but changed by Moses into Jehoshua (Num. 13:16; 1 Chr. 7:27), or Joshua. After the Exile it assumed the form Jeshua, whence the Greek form Jesus. It was given to our Lord to denote the object of his mission, to save.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Sermon – Time and Action

Today's sermon brought the Collect, Epistle and Gospel together and is partly contained in the forewords above.



Today we recall the circumcision of our Lord and Savior. He is God, yet He is under The Law. Not all those 613 laws were those called Moral, that is to say the Ten Commandments, but there are those which are moral and there are also laws of God or physics. God, the Ultimate Being, is subject to the laws He made. While He can, and does on the very special occasion, disregard them such as when the shadow went backwards, for the most part He, too, is subject to The Laws². Why? Because they were made for the general good of this world. Without a system of order, there is chaos. God is not chaos. God never brings confusion. God never tests, but

when we are tested by this world, He monitors the results. He brought the new covenant or new agreement to us through His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Knowing we cannot ever be perfect, He gave us a way to be accounted as perfect at the Judgment Day – One Sacrifice, Made One time, by One Man who was God, for All Mankind for All Time. Jesus is our light and our life. Through Him all things are possible.

All salvation takes is the simple understanding of a child or a shepherd. The simple truth that is Christ. He was not complex. His message was not sophisticated. He is the way. The One Way!

This is the first day of the New Calendar Year. Remember also, it is the first day of the remainder of your life here on earth, let it count for something. We live in the present, the past will never come again and tomorrow never comes. Take the right path starting right now!



² Yet, do not misapprehend, we know but little of His Laws and the laws of the universe as He made them. Our grasp of the space time continuum is little beyond that possessed by those at Moses time. He is, was and always will be. We live in the present, remember the past and prepare for what will be, the best we can.

Bishop Ogles' Sermon Notes

Bishop Jerry sent his sermon notes. As always, it is a very interesting and enlightening read. I think that you will find his exposition on the text of today's propers meaningful. I know that it was very helpful to me.



Circumcision of Christ

1 January 2012, Anno Domini

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle

wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:11-22)

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; Grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit; that, our hearts, and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey thy blessed will; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Today, in accordance with the western calendar, we observe the beginning of a New Year. This is not the beginning of the year as mandated in Holy Scripture, for it begins at the season of Spring the first day of the Hebrew month of Nisan. "And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Ex 12:1-2) (see also Deut 16:1 for Abib which is now Nisan). This month of Nisan was the month of the Passover (14th). It was the ecclesiastical New Year in the Bible. It has been suggested as the month of Christ's birth and, therefore we celebrate Christmas some nine months later.

We have been recently reading from the Gospel of John and his Epistles about what John calls "in the beginning." This beginning relates to the Space-Time-Matter continuum that defines our understanding of the created universe. Any day of our

lives, however, is a new beginning. If we arbitrarily choose January 1st to be our reference point for a New Year, so be it. Today is the first day of the rest of our lives on earth not unlike every beginning day.

Christ was in the beginning of the Creation of God, but He was also the Creation itself. Today we observe in the Gospel text the Circumcision of Christ. This will formalize His legal reception into the Household of Israel, and the putting off of sin. Just as our Lord needed not to be baptized into newness of life (for He had eternal life in Him), He neither needs the circumcision in the flesh for He was without sin; but Christ will acknowledge and endure every stipulation of the law as an example and enlightenment to us. His Creation of the world (John 1:1-3) was a new beginning. His circumcision represents a new beginning, and His baptism also reflects a new beginning. In reality, His baptism replaces the circumcision for us. Our true life in eternity began at our baptism at which we publicly proclaim, or have it proclaimed for us, our newness of life in Christ.

We now turn to today's Epistle from Ephesians to get an understanding of what the new circumcision means in our own lives and in Christ. In this epistle to the people of faith of Ephesus, Paul refers to them as 'saints.' This is consistent with the fact that none of us can merit our salvation through our good works, but only by the unmerited grace of God. After coming to Christ, we are washed clean of our sins and are considered, on the merits of Christ, to be saints – not in the sense that we are to be venerated as in the case of Rome – but considered righteous in the eyes of God based on the Redemption made available in Christ.

How are we identified today as the people of God? We were once considered people of the Uncircumcision – the unwashed, the unbaptized, and the unholy. We were strangers to God because He was unknown to us. How has that status changed in Christ? "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." We were Gentiles in the past years because we were aliens to the commonwealth of Israel. We were strangers to God and not entitled to the covenants and promises made available to the people of God (Israel). Being forlorn and without hope, our lives were impoverished by ignorance, darkness, violence, and shame. Being without God in the world is tantamount to being without God in eternity. How sad was our state!

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Thank God for this 'BUT!' The 'buts' in scripture signify a reversal. "Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper." (2 Kings 5:1) Naaman was a fairly nice, well-to-do gentleman BUT he had a problem. He had a deadly, odorous, humiliating disease. Notice the contrary side of the coin in Christ. We were a destitute, diseased and dying people. We had the deadly, odorous and humiliating disease of sin, BUT Christ has made us whole! We are no longer aliens and foreigners to the commonwealth of Israel, but are now brought nigh by the blood of Christ! We have become naturalized citizens of the Household of God through the process of adoption of sons and daughters. Those adopted into God's family enjoy every privilege of the natural

children and, in most cases, far greater, for He has called us the true children of Isaac by way of God's promise. Those who were considered the Household of Israel by accident of birth and genealogy, and who rejected the Lord, are no longer the children of promise. They yet have the privilege of returning to God by the reception of His only Begotten Son as their Lord and Savior. This promise in Isaac is open alike to all peoples.

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." In the Temple was a stone wall that separated the court of the Gentiles from the Holy Place. It was certain death to cross that wall. The real wall that separated us from God was the wall of sin. Sin separates us from God and from those, even, that we love. Christ is not our peacemaker, but peace itself to us. He has not become our means of observance of the Passover, but the Passover itself to us. He has not become our means of Rest (Sabbath) but our Sabbath itself (for in Him we have rest from our labors if it is He who works in us). For now there is no dividing line between Jew or Gentile, male or female, bond or free – for all are One in Christ Jesus.

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." Christ has not annulled any Commandments of God but those ordinances in the commandments of men that enforced a division between the worldly Israel and the worldly Gentiles, making them One in Christ if they be His in Spirit and in Truth. Christ fulfilled the Laws of God and made them even more binding in love. The spiritual pride that would divide across stone walls has been demolished by Christ to those who receive Him. The stone tablets upon which the commandments of God were written have been abolished – but not the Commandments themselves. They are, rather, now written on the soft sinews of our hearts. The popular notion that the Commandments of God were "nailed to the cross" is a seditious lie! It is still a grievous sin to commit murder, adultery, bear false witness, to covet, to steal, or to have other gods before God. How ridiculous to have it preached that these Commandments are no longer binding. How can the believing Jews and Gentiles be ONE new man? It is because all believers are One in Christ Jesus. It was the ordinances of the commandments that were nailed to the cross.

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh." There is no chosen people apart from those whom God has chosen and who have chosen God in Christ! No matter the depravity and sins of a people, God would have us carry the Gospel message to all alike. We may consider, as did Jonah, a people to be too far from God for hope of redemption, but we are quenching the efficacious influence of the Holy Ghost to draw His people from every condition of life. We would surely have judged the old Paul (Saul) to be without hope of salvation until his experience of the Damascus Road. We plant the seed and allow the Holy Ghost to work its miracles under the dark soil of the earth. God's Word is a life-bearing seed that can break through stone.

"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." The Holy Trinity is not divided against Itself, but is One in purpose, will and action. If we are in Christ (the Son), we have access to the throne of Grace of the Father by one Holy Ghost. ...and all three are ONE! And so are we One with God the father and God the Holy Ghost if we are One with Christ!

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." We have an increasing number of illegal aliens in our midst in America today. These are not citizens because they have come to our shores through ways other than the right way. We have many in our churches today who are illegal residents in Israel. They have come for the wrong reasons and by the wrong means. The only access to the kingdom is through Christ. He is our sponsor and our means of adoption. If we have come in any way other than through Christ, we shall not enjoy the privileges of the promise!

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." The prophets of the Old Testament, and the Apostles of the New, are the foundation of our faith. We are an apostolic church in that we adhere to the doctrinal apostolic succession of the Church. That is our foundation, and the chief corner stone, like that represented above the Great Pyramid at Giza on our one-dollar bill, from which all authority descends and is maintained together in unity, is Jesus Christ!

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The Temple is Christ – the same Temple which He told the Jews that if they destroyed, He would rebuild in three days (which He did at His resurrection). He is both the Temple and the Chief Corner Stone of the Temple. If we are in Christ, each of us is a stone in that Temple. All of His precious stones added together constitute the Temple of His Body. Some of us are quite irregular in shape, and some are round, square, or jagged; but God has a precise place in the Temple for our peculiar shapes and forms. All joined together, we constitute the One Temple with Christ as our Head. Constructed together in Christ, we shall be a fitting abode for God to abide with us through His Spirit.

There is a beautiful old Gospel song written by Wm. O. Cushing and George Root, and sung most commonly by Burl Ives, entitled 'Jewels:'

**When He cometh, When He commeth,
to take up His jewels
All His jewels, precious jewels...
His loved and His own**

**Like the stars of the morning
His bright crown adorning
They will shine in their beauty
Bright gems for His crown**

**He will gather, He will gather,
the gems for His kingdom
All the pure ones, all the bright ones
His loved and His own**

**Little children who love,
their Redeemer and Savior,
All the jewels, precious jewels
His loved and His own...
Bright gems for his crown**

This song seems to be inspired by the following verses:

"And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." (Mal 3:17)

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt 24:31)

"And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land." (Zech 9:16)

How comforting to know that even stones are precious to God and such blessed stones as we are!

Jerry L. Ogles

+Jerry L. Ogles, DD
Presiding Bishop, Anglican Orthodox Communion Worldwide
Chancellor, Faith Theological Seminary

Bishop Dennis Campbell's Sunday Sermon

As is oft the case, we are honored to present Bishop Dennis' Sunday sermon presented to his parish. Dennis has an excellent command of scripture and is able to present it in a manner which is completely understandable to the rest of us.



A God Worth Praising

Psalm 101
First Sunday after Christmas
1 January 2012

The sermons of 2011 were mostly drawn from the Epistle readings for Sundays. The sermons for 2010 came primarily from the Gospel readings. This year, God willing, I intend to concentrate on another rich and edifying portion of the word of God, the book of Psalms, or, as it is known by Anglicans, "The Psalter."

The Psalter was the "Hymnal" of Israel, and continued as the primary source of song in the Church for nearly two thousand years. In it can be found prayers of hope, as well as expressions of despair; joy as well as sadness, and anger as well as forgiveness. There is hardly a hope, fear, feeling, or emotion known to man that is not expressed in the Psalter, and it is this complete honesty before God that has endeared it to God's people for nearly three thousand years.

Our Lectionary contains morning and evening readings in the Psalter for every day of the year, taking us through the Psalms several times each year. Yet I find many Christians do not understand the meaning or see the relevance of the Psalms. By God's grace, I hope to help us see both in the coming year.

And while we're preaching and hearing sermons from the Psalter, I hope we will recover some of them as part our own "hymnal." I hope we will learn to sing the Psalms as expressions of our faith and hope in God. I hope we will learn to love them so much we will sing them in our cars and in our homes as well as in our Church.

We are already doing this in a small way. In Morning Prayer, for example, we turn to page 9 of the Prayer Book and sing the wonderful invitation to worship known as the Venite exultemus Domino, or "Come let us exalt the Lord." When we turn to page 459 of the Prayer Book we see we have been singing the first seven verses of Psalm 95 coupled with verses 9 and 13 of Psalm 96. When we turn to page 15 and sing the Jubilate Deo we can also turn to page 463 and see that we are singing Psalm 100. Our hymnal contains many references to and quotes from the Psalter, and many of our hymns are based on a Psalm. Hymn 277 is based on Psalm 117. Hymn 278 is based on Psalm 100, and hymn 282, which happens to be one of my favourites, "Praise my soul, the King of Heaven," is based on Psalm 103.

I say these hymns are based on the Psalms, because the words and word order of the Psalms are changed to make them fit the rhyme and meter modern people expect in music. But the Psalms we actually sing "word for word" such as Psalm 100 are not rearranged, they are sung more closely to the way the Psalms were originally sung, in what we sometimes call, "chanting." This has two advantages. First it allows us to actually sing the Psalms, rather than simply read them; the words "chant" and "Psalm" both mean sing or song. Second, it allows us to sing them without altering the words or word order of Scripture.

One of the frequent themes of the Psalms is worship, or praise, and our Psalm for today exhorts us to worship God in the very essence of our being. To praise the Lord means to give reverent respect to God, by humbly kneeling before Him. It is to recognise Him as our King and our God, to profess obedience to Him and to recognise that He is infinitely worthy of our deepest love and highest obedience. The picture painted in the Psalm is very similar to that in Revelation 4, where, moved by the glory of God, the creatures and the elders kneel before Him in reverence that borders on fear, praying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour," meaning, Christ is worthy to be glorified and honoured by them.

Psalm 103 is about why we worship God. While other Psalms encourage worship because of the attributes of God, like His infinite power, knowledge and goodness, Psalm 103 tells us about the actions of God for our sake. I should say, "action," rather than, "actions," for this Psalm is about one thing, the forgiveness of sins. All of His benefits referred to in the Psalm are references to and symbols of forgiveness. He "forgiveth all thy sin." He is "full of compassion and mercy." "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our wickedness." His mercy is as high as the heavens are above the earth, and He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. He loves us as a father loves His children and His mercy "endureth forever and ever." This is the message of the Psalm; this is why we worship God.

We cannot read this Psalm without our minds turning to a scene of a Man dying on a cross near the ancient city of Jerusalem. He has done nothing worthy of death. He has committed no crime. His entire life was about doing good to everyone. His teachings were simply that the Kingdom of God is for all who will receive it by faith. There was no sedition, no heresy, no harm in Him. Even Pilate found no fault in Him. He died for one reason, to bear our sins in Himself and to suffer the wrath of God for them in our places. He gave Himself on the cross, and in Him "we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col 1:14). As our Epistle reading for this morning states it, He came "to redeem them that were under the law."

It is no accident that our thoughts turn to the cross when we read Psalm 103, for the sacrifice of Christ is the means by which God forgives our sins. The cross is the means by which the forgiveness celebrated in the Psalm is accomplished in reality. As we look at the Psalms in the months ahead, we will see that there is a Christological, a Christ centered aspect to them, in which they point us to Christ and His work of redemption. It is this aspect of the Psalms which is the real reason for giving them such prominence in our daily readings and worship. I hope to help us see Christ in the Psalms, and, thus, help us love the Psalms more.

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New Nametags

We had no new nametags today.

After Church Hospitality

Today we had no snacks as we participated with another parish in a Christmas Dinner for those with no home for Christmas. Maybe next week the fatted dog nut!

After church goodies providers as currently signed up:

Date	Name
8 January 2012	Jack Arnold
15 January 2012	Opportunity Available
22 January 2012	Opportunity Available
29 January 2012	Opportunity Available

People in our Prayers - <http://faithfulcenturionprayerteam.blogspot.com/>

Why? Prayer is an extremely important activity.

It is not that God knows not our needs, for He surely does. Yet, Jesus commanded us to ask God for those same needs. In addition to the obvious of asking God for help, offering thanksgiving and the like, prayer helps us focus our thoughts on how we might do God's work.

The Prayer Team of the Church of the Faithful Centurion was established to help our members and fellow Christians pray for those in need and to give thanks as well for the blessings we have been granted.

Who can be on the list? Do I have to be a member of the Church of the Faithful Centurion to be prayed for?

No! The only qualification to be on the list is that you want our prayer team to pray for you. We are Christians and are happy to pray for you, no matter who you are. If you want help from God, you are our kind of people.

What is the commitment from the prayer team?

Each member of the team will pray for the desired outcome at last once per day.

How do I get myself or someone else on the prayer list?

You can email one of the prayer team leaders: Jack - jack@faithfulcenturion.org or Dru - dru@faithfulcenturion.org, or call the church office at (619) 659-3608 or fill out a prayer card at church.

What should I ask for?

Depends on what you want. Some people merely want God to be asked to heal their ills and be mentioned by their first name, others want a specific outcome and / or have more of their personal information known to the team. Ask for what you want. It is your desire and need for prayer the team is attempting to meet. For typical examples, see the list below.

Updating the Team

If you are on our prayer list, or if you have submitted a person that you have asked us to pray for, please update one of the team members or Hap in person, by telephone or email. It helps to be able to pray specifically for these individuals including their specific needs; plus if they get better, it is nice to give thanks!

Please note that on the yellow (maybe green or orange if you get an old one) cards at church, you can ask that those to be prayed for have their names disseminated to the prayer team. Those names will be said in church and appear here. Or, you can ask that their names and purpose be kept confidential, then only Hap will know to pray for them.

Prayer List Notice – If you have someone on the prayer list and their needs have changed, please let us know. We'd like to update our prayers to reflect the need and most important to give thanks!

Travel

Sara and Bill are on travel this week.

Hap is on travel this week.

Move

The Thomas Family is on a short tour assignment in Guam for the next two years. Please pray for the assignment to go well for Kurt and for Mary and the kids to make new friends and Kristyna and Mitchell in particular to develop good friends and school mates there so as to further their development. Things seem to be going well where the sun rises on the United States, so keep praying! Give thanks and ask for continued good developments.

Birthday

Hap Arnold celebrated his 62nd birthday 27 December 2011.

Don Patton celebrated his 49th birthday 13 November 2011.

Jack Arnold celebrated his 19th birthday with us 26 October 2011.

Homebound or Infirm

Sara's mother is in a state of deteriorating health, both physically and mentally. Please pray for peace of mind for her and the ability for both Sara and her mother to put their cares and worries on God's shoulders so they can deal with the many problems involved.

Departed

William F. Dean a great Christian disciple of Rawalpindi, Pakistan, passed away. Mr. Dean was father-in-law to Eileen Jacob, wife of Bishop Ernest Jacob of the AOC of Peshawar, Pakistan. Until recent circumstances of age, he was a regular and active member of UP Church, Raja Baazar, Rawalpindi. Mr. Dean served as Librarian for Gordon College for a period of thirty years. Mr. Dean's funeral service was 25 November 2011 Anno Domini.

Colonel Don Frisbee, USAF passed away on 12 October 2011, after bowel surgery, infection and pneumonia. Please pray for comfort for his wife Bev and their family.

Colonel Don Durbin, USAF passed away on 12 October 2011, after what appeared to be an abdominal problem. A visit to the hospital found that he had congestive heart failure and liver problems. Shortly thereafter, he developed multiple blood clots and dementia. Don passed away shortly thereafter with his family by his side. Please pray comfort for his wife Lynn and their family.

In need of a miracle or understanding of God's Plan

Todd and Kenny have both been fighting osteocarcinoma for over five years and have been told their time here on earth is nearing its end, absent a miracle from God. Both are ready to go home and leave the pain, but would like to stay. Please pray for them and their families.

Healing

Bill Aitken had a third abdominal surgery on 22 November 2011. This time the tumor was removed. The surgeon said pathology indicates the tumor with all margins os out, along with a few lymph nodes and fatty tissue. The tumor is an intermediary (risk) sarcoma, but should not come back. There is a new chemotherapy pill Bill can take for extra precaution; he recommends Bill see an oncologist. Bill has an appointment on 13 December 2011, with the surgeon for follow-up and recommendations going forward. Please give thanks for the surgical team doing their very best, a successful surgery and pray for a good end result. Please pray that Bill might live a long and healthy life to the honor and glory of God. Pray also for peace of mind for Bill and his wife Sara.

Ed Malcomb, Bishop in the Church of England had a major heart attack Thanksgiving week, fell, hit his head on the floor. He seems to be past major coronary issues for the present. However, there are apparent memory issues associated with the head trauma. Please pray for the medical team treating him and for his recovery.

Walt Dexter had a stroke the week of 12 September 2011 and is still mostly half paralyzed. Please pray for a full and complete recovery for Walt and for peace of mind for him and his wife Fran.

Gil Garcia was back in the hospital for a re-do of his colostomy and a couple of relatively minor skin surgeries. Kaiser transferred him to the Community Extended Care Hospital of Montclair, supposedly because they had two doctors on staff there. In just over a month, Gil saw them once after he was admitted. After a formal written complaint, he was transferred back to Kaiser Hospital in Fontana. They

were able to get him stabilized and moved to Reche Canyon Rehabilitation, an excellent facility. He can be reached at (909) 370-4411. Gil is hopeful he will be treated and released shortly. He has lost some weight and looks forward to going home. Please pray for peace of mind for Gil and his wife Mary.

Dotty Valkenaar has been diagnosed with a reoccurrence of breast cancer and had a double mastectomy and no reconstruction on 23 August 2011 in Seattle. Seemingly everything went very well, however there were complications in the recovery, but she is home. Now a torn muscle has surfaced in her shoulder, perhaps as a result of positioning during surgery. There is concern over a reoccurrence of the cancer and some question as to whether to do chemotherapy or not. Dotty is also having problems with fluid building in her upper body area. Please pray for guidance for the medical team treating her and for her to make the correct decisions regarding treatment and pray for continued peace of mind through trust in God for Dotty and Lew, her husband, as well as their entire family.

Lew Valkenaar developed ankle and leg pain and swelling in his lower right leg due to a blood clot. The blood clot taken care of he is on Cumadin for six months and wearing a cool compression stocking on one leg, kind of a Michael Jackson thing.

Morris Martin, 91, was hospitalized with pneumonia and lost his ability to swallow; he is still trying to regain his ability to swallow. He is in excellent spirits and is looking forward to cooking a prime rib roast for his family for Christmas. All is pretty well. Give thanks for his great attitude and trust in God. Pray for strength and peace of mind for Morris and his family, in particular his son Paul. Pray for his trust in our Lord and for both him and his family to let God carry their worries while he recovers.

Steve Sundberg had a heart attack after Easter. After some time, the medical team treating him decided he was not a candidate for stents and a five-way heart bypass was performed the week of 6 June 2011. Please give thanks for an apparently very successful surgery and also pray for his complete recovery and for his three children and family who are very worried about him, pray also for his trust in our Lord and for both him and his family to let God carry their worries while he recovers.

Matt Alcantara, age 15, has Osteosarcoma (bone cancer), a very rare and often lethal form of cancer with limited treatment options. This is a disease that is about 90 percent fatal in a couple of years. He has no hip joint on one side, but he walks and swims! Courage? Guts? You bet! Matt is set up for bone scans at the end of December. Please pray for a good outcome. Thanks be to God for the way things have gone. Thanks also for the great faith of Matt and his entire family. Their faith and trust is a wonderful example for each and every one of us. But, now is not the time to stop praying. Actually, it never is the time to stop praying!

Shamim Gray underwent a lumpectomy on Saturday 6 November 2010 at Bethesda Naval Hospital, with apparent great result. Please pray for a complete remission of the cancer. Pray also Shamim will maintain her great attitude and trust in God.

Judith Clingwall, is afflicted with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). She is currently in Laurel Place, an extended care facility in Surrey, British Columbia. Judith's condition seems stable a present, although the medication levels have been increased. Please pray for her to take an active part in her own life, for her strength, peace

of mind, trust in God and remission of the disease so she might return home to her family. Pray also for strength for her husband Martin as he deals with all the problems and stress of Judith's situation.

Becky Madden is paralyzed from the neck down as the result of a tragic shooting accident. She has made it home and to church in a new donated magic wheelchair. Please pray for further recovery for Becky, as well as strength and guidance for each of those involved.

Betty Macauley, Tim's mom, is currently in a state of failing health. Please pray she will gain interest in life around her and actively pursue life here on earth. Please pray for her family, in particular her son Tim, as they try to help her.

Lauralee underwent a lumpectomy on Friday after Thanksgiving. A further anomaly has been discovered and she had additional preventative radiation treatment. Please pray for a complete remission of the cancer. Pray also Lauralee will maintain her great attitude and trust in God.

Luca, 5 years old, from our church family in Perth, Western Australia, who has just been diagnosed with leukemia. And for his Mum and Dad and extended family.

Greg Chase asks that you pray for his family:

Diane, Greg's wife, has a positive attitude dealing with the ongoing treatment of her ulcerative colitis. They are grateful for a positive attitude and would be pleased to see physical progress.

Phyllis, Greg's mom, has stabilized as the result of the good home care she is receiving and recently celebrated her 89th birthday.

Vince (age 13), reoccurrence of cancer, recent testing found a nickel sized tumor in his lungs. The doctors are consulting with a specialist in Houston. Please pray for guidance for the medical team and for peace of mind for Vince and his family.

Obra Gray continues to take day by day. Please continue to keep Obra in your prayers, and give him the strength of knowing the Lord is with him and will never forsake him. Obra needs security of what lies ahead of him, and only the Lord can grant the solace to answer his prayer.

Bashir Ahmed, father of Shamim Gray, has been blessed with the Lord's breath of life to stay on this earth for the time being. But, things are hard for him and his loving wife, who cares for him. They have two young nieces living with them who see no real need to help, pray for God to enter their hearts. Above all, pray for his entire family to open their hearts to accept all God's love will bring them.

Kay Denton (Mrs. Kay) is still home and doing pretty well considering the bones in her neck and hands are degenerating as a side effect of her kidney failure. Her thumbs are not particularly useful any more. Mrs. Kay asks everyone who is praying for her know how grateful she is for their prayers. As always, she retains her trust in the Lord and her positive attitude

Guidance

Steve asks that you pray for difficulties he is having with his family. Please pray that the Holy Ghost will enter into his heart and provide him with the heaven sent inspiration that he needs to see clearly and deal with problems and the courage to do what needs to be done in the manner it should be done.

Jacquie to open her heart to God and accept His Love and Grace.

Hap and Ryan both ask you to pray they might be able to trust God will help them make

the right decisions at the right time and not to worry uselessly, to change those things they can change, accept those things they cannot change, sleep well to be able to do the correct things with a clear head and that they will open their hearts to the Holy Ghost.

Armed Forces & Contractors

Airman Donny Patton (Kadena AB, Japan), Jordan (USMC – 29 Palms), Neal (USN-Afghanistan), Trevor (USAF - KC-10 Boom Operator), Trevor (USN – Whidbey Island, EF-18 Pilot), Kurt Thomas (USN – Guam),

Persecuted

Around the world, Christians are under attack, not only in the Muslim world, but from Hindus and others in India. Also, they are under continual attack in the name of “Separation of Church and State” in the western world, as it becomes actively atheist or pro-devil buddy. Please pray for God’s guidance and protection for all persecuted Christians and those around them.

Thanksgiving

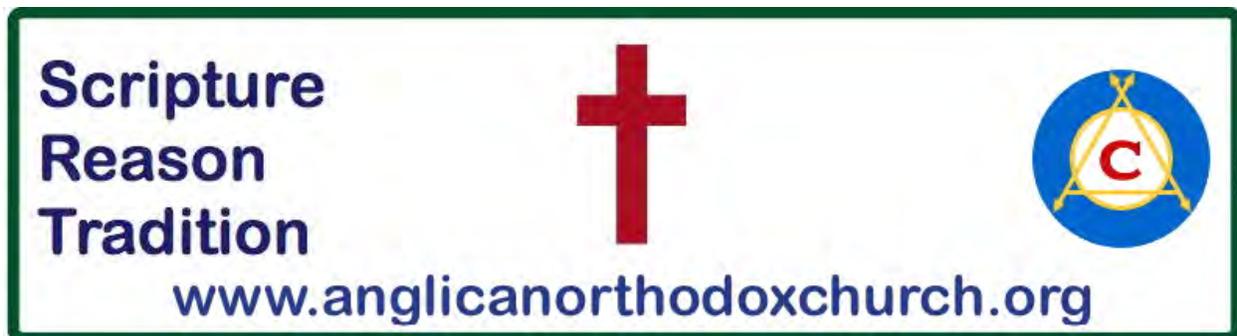
Hap gives thanks for safe and interesting travel this week.

Various Special Requests

We ask that you pray, please ask God that the Holy Ghost might give you insight into how you might make the lives of your friends and family better. Remember helping others is not just those who you don’t know!

Please join us in praying that the *Free Teen Guitar Class* will be continue to be an opportunity for God to work in the lives of the kids and their families. Please ask God to guide the class to new opportunities to make Him known to others. Help us to let the love of our Lord shine through us into their lives, putting Him first, so that He might enter in to their hearts and lives.

Need a Bumper Sticker?



The church has some very nice Bumper Stickers. If you would like one, email Hap at hap@faithfulcenturion.org

**Merry Christmas from all of us at our Lord’s
Church of the Faithful Centurion**

New Years Wishes from Bishop John in India

Dear All,

We wish you a Happy and Peaceful New Year-2012

**Bishop John, Mrs.Rosy,
Lavanya, Sravanthi and John Leo, India.**



Question that only you can ask

What would you like to know about our history, what we believe, what we do or how we operate? Hap is looking for material for the continuing education class and *Thought for the Day* material. Help us help you. Please send your question to Hap so we all can get an answer. Just because you don't know the answer to your question doesn't mean you are the only one who doesn't know. But, if you don't ask, no one will know.

I'd like to get a different point across or announce something

If you have a different point of view, I would be happy to give you room to get your point across. While this publication is my perspective on events, I recognize not everyone may agree and that some people would like to express their own opinion. If you want to write something, please forward your item to Hap (with a note as to whether or not you would like editing help) to: hap@faithfulcenturion.org.

Epistleers

We post the list of Epistle Readers in the Sunday Report each week so you can either plan your attendance or your pre-reading as the spirit so moves you.

Date	Reader	
6 January 2012	Ryan Hopkins	Epiphany
8 January 2012	Ryan Hopkins	
15 January 2012	Ryan Hopkins	
22 January 2012	Ryan Hopkins	
29 January 2012	Ryan Hopkins	

The near future, as well as Next Sunday

6 January 2012 – Epiphany Day – Evening Prayer - Service start time **1900 (7:00 pm)**; **Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

8 January 2012 – First Sunday after Epiphany – Morning Prayer - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am)**; **Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

15 January 2012 – Second Sunday after Epiphany – Holy Communion - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am)**; **Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

22 January 2012 – Third Sunday after Epiphany – Morning Prayer - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am)**; **Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

29 January 2012 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany - Morning Prayer - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am)**; **Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

5 February 2012 – Septuagesima – Morning Prayer - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am)**; **Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

12 February 2012 – Sexagesima – Morning Prayer - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am)**; **Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

19 February 2012 – Quinquagesima – Holy Communion - Service start time 1000 (10:00 am); welcome or gathering songs before the service at 0945 (9:45 am); **Time 1000 (10:00 am)**; **Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**