



Faithful Centurion Anglican Orthodox Church

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Sunday Report



Today was the Third Sunday after the Epiphany. Sunrise temperature on Mount Olympus was a nice 34°F under very clear blue skies which turned to a high overcast shortly thereafter. By the time church was over, it was a blistering 50°F under those same overcast skies. The weather again agreed with all as we had our customary four in attendance.

Gathering Song

Jack Arnold *played I sing a song of the saints of God* for the gathering song.

I sing a song of the saints of God

I sing a song of the saints of God,
Patient and brave and true,
Who toiled and fought and lived and died
For the Lord they loved and knew.
And one was a doctor, and one was a queen,
And one was a shepherdess on the green;
They were all of them saints of God, and I mean,
God helping, to be one too.

They loved their Lord so dear, so dear,
And his love made them strong;
And they followed the right for Jesus' sake
The whole of their good lives long.
And one was a soldier, and one was a beast,
And one was slain by a fierce wild priest;
And there's not any reason, no, not the least,
Why I shouldn't be one too.

They lived not only in ages past,
There are hundreds of thousands still.
The world is bright with the joyous saints
Who love to do Jesus' will.
You can meet them in school, or in planes, or at sea,
In church, or in trains, or in shops, or at tea;
For the saints of God are just folk like me,
And I mean to be one too.



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.

The Propers for today are found on Page 112-113, with the Collect first:

The Third Sunday after The Epiphany.

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth thy right hand to help and defend us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Ryan Hopkins read the Epistle for today, which came from the Twelfth Chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans beginning at the Sixteenth Verse.

The Epistle shows the way to Christian action in life. Paul lays out a hard path, but one that goes where we want to be in the end.

BE not wise in your own conceits. Repense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.



Deacon Striker Jack Arnold read the Holy Gospel for today which came from the Second Chapter of the Gospel of St. John beginning at the First Verse.

AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: and both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.



Sermon – Time and Action

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



Consider these words from the Collect:

... mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth thy right hand to help and defend us ...

In the Collect, we are asking God to set aside our failure and protect and aid us in all we do with His strong hand. God is perfect, thus so is His counsel. When we acknowledge our imperfection and ask Him for help, we should look to the written record of His Son, our Savior. We should do our best to follow His example, to be honest, hard working, peaceful and helpful. When we do this, we will prosper, not only in this world, but in our hearts. When we pray for His Help, we need to listen for the answer, then act on it, not ignore it because it is not the answer we wanted.

Why the continuous emphasis on action? Simple. The line of time stretches from the far distant and unknown past to the far distant and unknowable future. Yet, God is there, He has always been there and He will always be there. Where His finger touches

that line of time is today. That is where we live; it is the only place where action can happen in our time space continuum. Today.

God, our God, is a God of Action. No less is His Son one of action. All throughout the Bible, you find Jesus doing things, not just talking about them. His faith, shown in the action of His giving His Life that we might live, speaks through His actions. No matter where you turn while reading the Bible, what you find is Action, not Diction. Recall the second half of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. It is known as Acts, not thoughts, not prayers, not meditations, not wishes or anything else; The ACTS. He expects us to act in our lives, not talk.

So, when we act, how should we act? To the extent you are able attempt to do good to all. We are not Christ, but if we do our best emulate His earthly actions, we do well. If you treat your enemies with respect and kindness, you oft make them your friends. We have the right of self-defense, not of vengeance. Bring them up, don't lower yourself.

Like Jesus at the well, remember that your purpose is to help bring people to salvation. Any step you take today may have future consequence. Your witness, your testimony, your actions can bring people to the point they accept the Holy Spirit or not. Your interface may only be one small step; but do your best to make it a step towards God, not away.

Error is error, wrong is not right. But, a person's final destination is up to God, not us. Fortunate for each of us, it should be considered. During the journey of life down that time space continuum, we need to do our best to keep ourselves and those around us moving towards God, not away from Him. The direction is always clear, sometimes we just do not want to read the signs.

If we understand we are less than perfect, actually far less than imperfect, we have a good start. We know we need God in our lives to give us direction. We need His guidance to direct our ACTION.

Read the Bible, find out what He wants you to do, then Do It. What can you do today to carry out His Will? There are a multitude of things you can DO to carry out His Will, but the question is, "Will you?"

Bishop Ogles' Sermon

We are off fortunate to get copies of Bishop Jerry's sermon notes. Today is one of those Sundays. Today we get a brilliant analysis of the Gospel for this week:



Third Sunday in Epiphany

22 January 2012, Anno Domini

St Andrews Anglican Orthodox Church

"When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about

*the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, **Give me to drink.** (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, **If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.** The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, **Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.**" (John 4:1-14)*

Though the Gospel text today covers only the first fourteen verses of chapter 4 of the Gospel of St John, we may not do justice to the text without covering the first 42 verses.

Thirst is a powerful hunger – a hunger for water. A man or woman cannot live more than a few days, or even hours, without the benefit of water. Water is necessary for life. This principle holds true across both the physical and spiritual realms. Men will run, walk, and finally crawl across the desert sands to find water. The desire for physical life is quite strong. Should the desire for that spiritual life that is eternal not be more so?

Water is a compound comprised of two elements – Oxygen and Hydrogen. Oxygen is essential for fire (combustion) and hydrogen is an explosive gas, yet, when combined as H₂O, water is capable of extinguishing fires. Spiritual Water can extinguish the fires of Hell itself.

You may recall poor Hagar, the concubine of Abraham, being sent out alone with her young son into the desert Wilderness with only a bottle of water upon which to survive. *"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down*

over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept. And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink." (Gen 21:14-19)

It is noteworthy Hagar was oblivious to the well of water until God opened her eyes to see it though it was there all along.

In today's text, we see that Jesus has made it a particular point to divert the journey from the usual circumvention of Samaria to go directly to a city at the base of Mt Ephraim called Sychar (Shechem in the Old Testament) . This is the burial place of Joseph and the city of Jacob to whose Well Jesus arrives at the noon hour and sits upon the stone casing of the Well. He came to this place wittingly for He knew that He would meet a particular Woman here today. "And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour."

A Samaritan Woman of ill-repute approaches at the unusual hour of noon with her water bottle to draw from the Well. Jesus asks the Woman for a drink of water. The woman is taken aback by the request of Jesus because He appears to be a Jew and the Jews hate the Samaritans. But this man seems somewhat mysterious. She wonders at His appearance. "There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

Have you ever wondered why Christ, the Lord of Heaven cares for you and will request your love? Have you wondered why He would bother to give you the time of day?

We may learn from the approach of Christ to this Woman in personal evangelism which resulted later in broader evangelism to the entire village at Sychar. We may sometimes feel 'uncomfortable' in raising the subject of Christ to a stranger. Here, Christ points the way. Put the person at ease with a casual remark as Jesus' request for water. We all want to share the blessings of Heaven. Here is our best example of personal evangelism.

There seems to be seven principles of personal evangelism represented in this exchange with the Woman:

1. We must have **face-to-face contact** with the sinner. Though the Jews had no contact with Samaritans, Christ harbored no such prejudice or resentment. He traveled across a great distance and over dry and dusty roads for this meeting. If Christ did not go to the place where the Woman was, she would never have received Him or known Him.
 - a. If we are to be fishers of men, we will catch few in a barrel. We must go to

- the Sea of Life.
- b. Our problem in planting seed may not be the lack of good ground, but that we have left the seed in the silo. "*Is the seed yet in the barn?*" (Hag 2:19)
 - c. Do not equate separation with isolation. Christ talked to sinners far more than those who were Godly. Even in war, we must mix with the enemy in battle. However, "*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness.*" (2 Cor 6:14)
 - d. Our contact must be across age considerations as well as social concerns. Jesus said in Mark 16:15 – "*Go into all the world.*"
2. Establish a common interest. See how Christ does so with the Woman. She came desiring water to quench her thirst. Christ also indicates a desire for water. "*Give me to drink.*" This demonstrated to the Woman a common interest shared by the two of them.
 - a. Christ immediately **built a bridge which connected the interest of the Woman with His own.** Once a bridge is built, much traffic may cross thereon.
 - b. One common interest may expand into others of greater import. Jesus has a special kind of water – the Water of Life. It is precisely the kind of water this Woman thirsts after even without knowing.
 3. Emphasize the spiritual over the physical. Every human needs temporary benefits for life but, to a greater extent, we need everlasting provision for eternal life. We may accomplish this through
 - a. Our example – Jesus speaks with courtesy to the woman and she can detect His great sincerity.
 - b. Our actions – Christ treated even abject sinners with compassion and respect. The words of Christ drew at first on the physical, but transitioned smoothly to the spiritual (from physical water, to water of life).
 4. Measure your pace – do not get ahead of the understanding of your party. See how Jesus teaches from the known to the unknown: Well Water to Heavenly Water; Worship at Mt. Ephraim to Jerusalem; the perfect means of worship (Spirit and in Truth)
 5. Do not be judgmental.
 - a. Jesus did not dwell unnecessarily on the fact that this woman was an adulteress. **He came to save and not to condemn.**
 - b. Preach against sin, but do not close the door to salvation to the sinner. The Door belongs to Jesus. The emphasis must be on the seriousness of sin, but also the availability of forgiveness.
 6. Keep the **Main Thing** the **Main Thing!** Be persistent in adhering to the point.
 - a. The Samaritan Woman tried to turn the conversation from her sins and need of forgiveness to worship
 - b. Christ answered her question but went straight back to her need of Him as the Savior.
 7. Be Direct – people appreciate honesty. If we try to be politically correct, we will not be good witnesses of Christ. He is exceptional and exclusive (not common and inclusive). Direct is not the same as mean.
 - a. Do not argue over issue beyond the party's ability to comprehend (ie prophecies of Revelations).

Please consider the result of Jesus' encounter with the Woman at the Well: it led to

many of the Samaritans accepting Christ. One Seed planted begets much fruit.

Remember, sharing the Gospel releases us from personal liability for a soul. We plant the Seed. Leave its germination to God and His Holy Spirit. We may witness to one today and seemingly lose that person to the devil, but years later, the seed sprouts and that person comes to Christ because of that word you shared years ago.

Have you shared with one at the Well of Christ lately?

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. This year's sermons are drawn from the book of Psalms, or, as it is known by Anglicans, "The Psalter" which begins on page 343 of the Book of Common Prayer.



A Thirst for God

Psalm 42

Third Sunday after Epiphany

22 January 2012

Psalm 42. *Quemadmodum.*

LIKE as the hart desireth the water-brooks, * so longeth my soul after thee, O God.
2 My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: * when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?
3 My tears have been my meat day and night, * while they daily say unto me, Where is now thy God?
4 Now when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart by myself; * for I went with the multitude, and brought them forth into the house of God;
5 In the voice of praise and thanksgiving, * among such as keep holy-day.
6 Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul? * and why art thou so disquieted within me?
7 O put thy trust in God; * for I will yet thank him, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.
8 My soul is vexed within me; * therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, from Hermon and the little hill.
9 One deep calleth another, because of the noise of thy water-floods; * all thy waves and storms are gone over me.
10 The Lord will grant his loving-kindness in the day-time; * and in the night season will I sing of him, and make my prayer unto the God of my life.
11 I will say unto the God of my strength, Why hast thou forgotten me? * why go I thus heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me?
12 My bones are smitten asunder as with a sword, * while mine enemies that trouble me cast me in the teeth; 13 Namely, while they say daily unto me, * Where is now thy God?
14 Why art thou so vexed, O my soul? * and why art thou so disquieted within me?
15 O put thy trust in God; * for I will yet thank him, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Psalm 42 is the cry of a soul in deep sorrow. Many believe it was written when King David's son, Absalom, raised an army and attacked Jerusalem, forcing David to flee for his life. It certainly expresses the kind of thoughts and feelings a person would have in that kind of situation. Listen to the grief in the words. "My tears have been my meat." "My soul is vexed within me," "all thy waves and storms are gone over me." "My bones are smitten asunder as with a sword, while mine enemies that trouble cast me in the teeth," "when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?"

Here is a man who feels deserted by God. Here is a man who prays, but feels like his prayers aren't reaching God, as though God is not listening. He even says, in verse 11, "Why hast thou forgotten me?" There is here a warning about trusting our feelings. We may feel something is right when it is actually very wrong. We may feel good about something we should actually feel very bad about. We may feel like we are very close to God when we are actually very far from Him, and we may feel like He is very far from us when He is actually here with us, dwelling in us by His Spirit. We must trust the Scriptures rather than our feelings, and I think this is one of the great lessons of Psalm 42. Notice that a refrain appears twice; once in verse 7 and again in verse 15. "O put thy trust in God; for I will yet thank him, which is the help of my countenance, and my God." This refrain is a declaration of faith over feeling. David is making a conscious decision here to trust God instead of his own feelings. He is deciding to trust the Word of God, not his own fears or emotions, or even his circumstances. It is so important for us to remember that our God will never desert us. "I am with you always," Jesus said, "even unto the end of the world." You may feel alone, but God is with you. You may feel deserted, but God is with you. In the deserts and caves, God was with David, and He is with you always if you are His by faith. He dwells in you, whether you feel it or not, and you know He is there because He said so, not because you have a feeling He is with you.

It is the same in other areas of life; we must trust the Scriptures rather than our feelings. When tempted we can easily make ourselves "feel" something is right. We tell ourselves "it can't be wrong if it feels so right." It's O.K. for me to be rude because I've had a hard time. It's O.K. for me to drive like a maniac because everyone else does." It's O.K. for me to be selfish because I'm worth it. It's O.K. for me to..., and you can fill in the blank with the things you talk yourself into, because..., and you can fill in the blank with your own lame excuses. And you can convince yourself, your friends, and even your minister, that it's O.K., but you can't convince God. When He says, "Thou shalt not," thou shalt not! We must obey Scripture, not our feelings.

In David's case, it is his circumstances that make him feel far from God. A large number of his own people have turned against him. His own son leads the rebellion and desires to kill him and become king in his place. He has been forced out of his palace to live in the fields and wastelands. The attack by enemies is stated plainly in verses 11 and 12; "the enemy oppresseth me," "enemies that trouble me cast me in the teeth." It is stated more poetically in verse 9; "One deep calleth to another, because of the noise of thy water floods." The deeps are troubles, specifically enemies that trouble David and they are pictured as mighty waves tossing him about and threatening to drown him. It is as though the waves of the sea call to one another and counsel together on how to destroy a small and battered ship. The Bible often uses water and bodies of water to represent the unGodly, especially when they attack or trouble the Church.

Thus, the beast of Revelation 13 rising out of the sea, means it comes from the pagan nations and cultures; it rises out of the unGodly people.

When David cries out that he thirsts for God as a hart thirsts for water in the desert, he means he wants God to change his circumstances. He wants the good old days back. He remembers when he lived in the palace and led the people into the house of God in worship, and his land was at peace, and things were good, and he wants it to be that way again. And he has a question; where is God? Or, more to the point, why doesn't God do something? Why does He allow my enemies to cause me so much trouble?

Is there anyone who has not asked this question at some point in his life? Haven't we all wondered where God is when we hurt, and why He doesn't do something about all the pain and suffering of life, and why He allows His own people, we who seek Him in faith, and who strive to live according to His teaching, to be trouble and oppressed by those who care nothing about Him? Truly it is not only our enemies who taunt us in our trials asking, "Where now is thy God?" For we ourselves ask, "Where now is my God?"

The Bible addresses these questions in many places, but not in Psalm 42. The Bible gives answers, which are the only possible answers to these questions, but not in Psalm 42. Psalm 42 gives no answers. It only issues a call to trust God. "O put thy trust in God." I think this is significant. We like to have all the answers and know the plan. We like to have input into the plan. We want to know the destination, the food stops, and the motels reservations, and the cost all aid out in front of us before we start the journey. In many ways and in many things, that's good. But with God it is not always possible. Sometimes He calls us to follow Him "unto a land that I will shew thee," as He said to Abraham. Sometimes He just calls us to trust Him. "O put thy trust in God," He said to David, and He says the same, the very same thing to us. We can never know all the answers in this life. We see through a glass darkly. There is much about God that is mysterious, even hidden from us because our finite human minds cannot comprehend the infinite God. A thimble cannot contain the Atlantic no matter how long you pump water into it. But we can trust Him whom we have met in the Word and Sacrament, whose Spirit dwells in us, who promises to give all that He has "declared "unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord" to "all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel." And He promises that nothing in Heaven or earth can prevent Him from fulfilling His promise.

--

tR. Dennis Campbell
Bishop of Diocese of Virginia
Rector, Holy Trinity Anglican Orthodox Church
Powhatan, Virginia
www.HolyTrinityAnglicanOrthodoxChurch.org
www.lifeinthescrptures.blogspot.com

New Nametags

We had no new nametags today.

After Church Hospitality

Today we had no snacks as once again no one notified Jack, so he is on the list for next week! Anyway, we went right from the service to Mexican food at Manañas in the next village. Maybe next week the fatted dog nut!

After church goodies providers as currently signed up:

Date	Name
29 January 2012	Jack Arnold
5 February 2012	Opportunity Available
12 February 2012	Opportunity Available
19 February 2012	Opportunity Available
26 February 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.

Tuck Arnold is on travel this week.

Shamim Gray 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.

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.

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

Ruby Hauf, 7 month old daughter of Jerod and Amy (grandson of Lew and Dotty Valkenaar) had a large growth on her liver. Surgery on 16 January 2012 resulted in the removal of a large tumor surrounding the one kidney, the kidney, adrenal gland & urethra tube. Born 3 June 2011, she is now recovering at Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane, WA. Either her mother or her father will be holding her during most of her waking hours. Test results will determine whether chemotherapy is going to be needed. Lew and Dotty ask that you continue to pray for God's help in healing and appreciate all who have done so. Lew will report again once the decision on further treatment is made. Please give thanks for the apparently successful result, a quick recovery and peace of mind for her family.

Bashir Ahmed, father of Shamim Gray, fell whilst getting out of bed, and gashed his head

badly. He has been admitted to the Mayday University Hospital, Croydon, UK. The CAT scan revealed no serious damage, however doctors diagnosed him as having pneumonia, and also a heart defect, which they only just found. I am beside myself. Please pray for the medical team treating Bashir and for trust in God and peace of mind for Bashir and his loving wife, who cares for him. Pray also for their two young nieces living with them who see no real need to help, that God might enter their hearts. Above all, pray for his entire family to open their hearts to accept all God's love will bring them.

Jim Thornell was hospitalized on 6 January 2012 for expected gall bladder surgery on 10 January 2012. Please pray for guidance for the surgical team treating Jimmy, a good result, quick recovery and peace of mind for him and his wife Mary. Give thanks for his trust in God.

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 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 has his phone and can be reached at (909) 499-3665. 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. There were complications in the recovery, but she is home. She has a shoulder problem that must be dealt with; but for now she is doing well. Please pray for continued recovery and 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.

Hal Campbell (Lew and Dotty's Son In Law) is still battling complications from his Oral Cancer Surgery with possible nerve damage in neck so going thru more tests and evaluations, but latest Cat Scan showed no sign of Cancer - PRAISE THE LORD.

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 15), reoccurrence of Osteosarcoma, 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.

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

Sara asks that you pray for guidance for her as she deals with the stresses of her family and life. Pray that she can separate those things which she can affect from those things which she cannot and give her grace to accept the two.

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

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.

Bishop Ogles on Baptism

This past week one of Bishop Jerry's daily scriptural analysis pieces he refers to as "devotions" covered the subject of baptism. We found it very interesting and are pleased to pass it on. If you would like to be on the subscription list for these, let Hap know:

Devotion for Tuesday after 2nd Sunday after Epiphany 17 January 2012 Anno Domini

"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but



that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (St. John 3:22-36)

The text addresses the issue of baptism as a sacrament and its absence of value in the absence of faith added thereto. There are certain prominent denominations of our day that insist that man can do no works to improve himself or his chances for salvation. These same churches make a major issue of the MEANS of baptism and condemn all who do not follow, implicit, a prescribed (by them) mode. Any who is not completely immersed in water, they say, is not properly baptized and not a member of Christ's Church. I do not know how such religious can reconcile their belief that no works of man can add any measure to his salvation and yet persist in demanding a certain mode of baptism as a delineation between saved and lost? The Articles of Religion of our Anglican Faith have direct scriptural bearing on the subject of Baptism:

"Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of Regeneration or New-Birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; Faith is confirmed, and Grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God.

"The Baptism of young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ."

The Prayer Book Rubric for Baptism directs (on pg 279): (The minister) ***"...shall dip him in the Water discreetly, or shall pour Water upon him, saying, N. I baptize thee In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.***

You will note that the recommended form of baptism does not distinguish between pouring or emersion. In the Anglican Faith, either form is acceptable for it is only an outward form, and not the substance, of baptism. Though the text does not delve into the particular issues surrounding baptism, I feel today is a good time to look a bit deeper into its purpose and meaning.

"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized." It is a real comfort to know that the servant of the Master may exercise the authority of the Master when He is away. The verse at hand tells us that Jesus baptized, however, the actual meaning is that His disciples baptized on His behalf. When an officer of the US military gives an order to a subordinate, the order carries the authority of the President of the United States. Christ has given His Church the Authority to act in His name and with His Authority. Baptism is not, in and of itself, a saving act; but it is more than just a symbolic gesture too. It represents, in its outward form, an inward, spiritual grace when performed in the spirit of the believer. If there is no spiritual component to our baptism, it has no means of grace for us. Jesus allowed His disciples to baptize in His stead: *"When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though*

Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) (John 4:1-2)

The mode by which Jesus, or John the Baptist, baptized is not clearly stated. Certainly, complete immersion would have sufficed, but sprinkling or pouring would also be consistent with the cleansing which the Lord describes in the Old Testament: "*Then A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*" (Ezek 36:25-27)

"*And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.*" John was baptizing to the west of Jordan Waters in Judaea when Christ left Jerusalem to administer baptism in the country of Judaea. This is proof that the ministry of Christ did not begin at the moment of imprisonment of John the Baptist. "For John was not yet cast into prison."

"Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying." This verse may be stark evidence that Southern Baptists existed in Judaea at the time! Who else would make a fuss over the means of washing, or purifying? Though I am only joking, the Jews were of that same mindset that the outward form was of the greatest importance. Please remember that the outward form is only a SIGN of whatever inward spiritual grace exists, or is symbolically conferred on the heart – not by the sign itself, but by faith! "

"And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." These men were concerned for integrity, perhaps, of their own baptism at the hands of John. Here is the One of Whom John bore record now baptizing MANY people. They wondered, first of all, if this was proper. Secondly, they probably wondered if their own baptism by John was superseded by that of Christ's?

"John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." Without the efficacy and working of the Holy Ghost, baptism would have no meaning for all spiritual benefits come from heaven and not the hands of men. There is no benefit of baptism simply for the sake of being immersed in water else every soul that has walked in the rain would be changed to a child of God.

"Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." There is a depth of meaning here that may escape the casual reader. John tells us, as before, that he is not Christ, but the prophesied forerunner of Christ to prepare the way before Him. He takes no honor for being more than mere man, anointed and set apart as a man of God to perform the purpose of God who called him. All men flocked to Christ – more than came now to John. This represents in actuality, the increasing of the Church following Christ. He is the One to whom all men and women of faith will gather for He is the Bridegroom. The Bride is defined as the Church in all its constituent parts. Where two or three are gathered in His Name, there the Church will be too for the Bride is never without the Bridegroom. But who is the friend of the Bridegroom?

The friend of the Bridegroom during the time of Christ was responsible for arranging every detail of the Marriage. He organized the Supper, the Reception, and the Introduction. On the night of the Wedding, the friend of the Bridegroom escorted Him

to claim His Bride. Once that role was satisfied, the friend of the Bridegroom rejoiced that his efforts had been consummated. He was no longer a significant player in the Marriage. John the Baptist was just such a friend of the Bridegroom. He had met the bride (in the Wilderness) and prepared the Way for the Bridegroom. He made all things ready. He introduced the Bride to the Bridegroom at Jordan Banks, and now, his mission accomplished, he rejoices in the success and hope of the marriage – but no longer as an active agent of it. **"He must increase, but I must decrease."** Yes, it is true, John was not worthy – nor is any man – to loosen the lachets of His shoes. Christ will grow more and more in the esteem of men, and John less and less.

"He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all." Every upper rung of the ladder is above every lower rung of the ladder. Heaven is above all else of Creation. Christ is the Light of Heaven and Earth and above every creature that He fashioned at the dawn of time. He is so exalted above us that we could never have understood had He not deigned to be born as a man like unto us and show us by His own walk, the face of God.

"And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony." Christ has been with God in the glory of Heaven. He knows all that is to know about His Father, and He is, in every detail, just as the Father in Will and Purpose. He has seen it all, and He has shown us as much as we are able to comprehend of Him. **"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him..... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness."** (John 1:18, 3:11)

"...no man receiveth his testimony." John is perhaps desiring that it really were so that all men came to Him – not only with their feet, but their hearts, too. But John, too, knows the shallowness of men's hearts and many are willing to make a cheap confession that is not genuine or lasting.

"He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." Men who receive Him by faith have the seal of God on their hearts that God is true, however, our faith falls far short of the absolute and fullness of knowledge with which Christ was imbued from the Father. **"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."** Jesus Christ spoke the very Words of God for Christ is also God. Every Word He spoke was, and is, Scripture. He did not receive the Spirit of God by measured amounts, but fully and completely.

"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." This is a wonderful truth for us, for Christ, having received all things from the Father (including His Father's perfect Love), is now willing to share all with those who love and follow Him. In this way, we become joint-heirs with Christ.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." God has nothing but contempt and scorn for sin and, when it is present in man, His wrath is kindled against that man. If we believe the Lord Jesus Christ, we need do no more for we have everlasting life already. But those who reject the Lord Jesus Christ have remained in their sin and condemnation having rejected the only remedy that could reconcile them to the Father. When men despise, hate, hurt, torture, and reject the darling of their mother's womb, how do you suppose the mother will feel about those enemies of the child? If we have despised, tortured and murdered the only Begotten and Beloved Son of God, do you

suppose that God will simply overlook our rejection? Loving us, He sent the darling of His Heart to pay the price for our sins that we would have rightly had to pay. If we have rejected that remedy, the Father will be even more incensed at our rejection than when we were found in our sins before the offer of a Redeemer. Have you taken stock lately of where you stand in relation to Christ?

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
29 January 2012	Ryan Hopkins
5 February 2012	Ryan Hopkins
12 February 2012	Ryan Hopkins
19 February 2012	Ryan Hopkins
22 February 2012	Ryan Hopkins – Ash Wednesday
26 February 2012	Ryan Hopkins

The near future, as well as Next Sunday

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**

21 February 2012 – Pancake Breakfast – **0800 (8:00am); Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

22 February 2012 – Ash Wednesday - Service start time 1900 (7:00 pm); **Time 1900 (7:00 pm); Location – 10603 Burrell Way, Descanso, CA**

26 February 2012 – First Sunday in Lent – 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**