



Faithful Centurion Anglican Orthodox Church

# The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Sunday Report



Today was the Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany. Sunrise temperature on Mount Olympus was a nice 44°F under very clear blue skies which turned to a high overcast shortly thereafter. By the time church was over, it was a blistering 62°F under once again clear skies. With Ryan Hopkins in bed with a neck problem, we had three 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.

T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear.  
And Grace, my fears relieved.  
How precious did that Grace appear  
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come;  
'Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far  
and Grace will lead me home.

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

## *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 114-115, with the Collect first:

### **The Fourth Sunday after The Epiphany.**

#### *The Collect.*

**O** GOD, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright; Grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

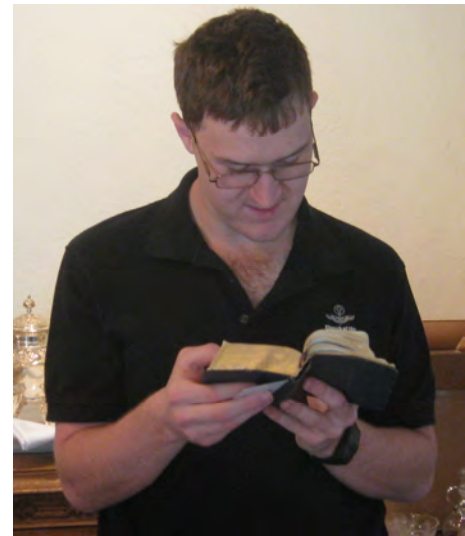
Dru Arnold read the Epistle for today, which came from the Thirteenth Chapter of Saint Paul's letter to the Romans beginning at the First Verse:

**L**ET every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves condemnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.



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

**W**HEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.



### *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:

... who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright; Grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations ...

In the Collect, we acknowledge that God knows the dangers, toils and snares with which we must contend, which so often keep us from the upright acknowledgement and defense of that which is true and correct. With these infirmities, our only hope is that certain hope of his help to support us, not to get out of the problems, but to make our way through them to His Glory.

Christianity is not a solitary religion, one all about the individual, though it certainly depends on individuals as part of the Team lead by Christ to carry it out. God has given each of us varying talents and varying capabilities. We must each of us do that for the Church that which we do better than others and respect those who we work

with. No power comes from God, leaders who lead with His Will in mind must be accorded the respect they are due by virtue of their position. They must also lead with His Will in mind, for a leader following the Prince of Darkness is not worthy of respect or followership. We must put faith in those to whom faith is due.

Faith, and acting on it, is what Christianity is all about. Christ's faith accounts us as perfect before God because of His Actions. The centurion of this week's Gospel is a symbol of faith and what appears to be inaction is his action. He is also the person for whom our parish draws its name. The centurion was the basic leader symbol of the Roman Empire. A group of eight to ten soldiers was led by a Contubern. Ten Contubernium formed a Centuria, which was led by a Centurion. Six to ten of these formed a Cohort, also led by a Centurion. He was an important man, able to reward or punish at will. He knew power and how to wield it.

When the centurion came to Jesus, he knew who He was and His Power. When the centurion told Jesus of his servant's illness, the centurion knew all Jesus had to do was will the wellness and it was done.

There was no question in his mind, the centurion knew Jesus. His action was the seeming inaction of acknowledging his unworthiness and telling Jesus, "I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed."

We are all unworthy. The best of us is no worthy that He should come under our roof; yet we know if He will speak The Word only, our souls shall be healed and all will be accounted well before God. That is all He asks, "Let Me speak The Word only."

### *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 a portion of the Gospel according to Mark for this week:



#### **Fourth Sunday after Epiphany 29 January 2012 Anno Domini**

*"And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened. And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him, And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And*

*whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole."* (Mark 6:45-56)

### The Collect

#### *The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany*

**O** GOD, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright; Grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Collect for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany is a model prayer constructed in the manner in which we should all pray. Acknowledging the fact that God knows our present circumstances in trials and temptations, He allows us to struggle against the elements until we are forced to petition His intercession. The prayer states our case but does not plead that we be spared trials and temptations but, to the contrary, implores only that God will strengthen us for the trail and fortify us against every temptation. This will make our souls grow muscle in enduring the abuse of the world and in overcoming the temptation of the devil. The text fits perfectly the attributes of the Collect as the disciples find themselves in a great mess at Sea. In the darkest hour, Jesus comes to them and calms the angry billows. He demonstrates His Sovereignty over His Creation in defying the nature of the water upon which He walks.

I have wondered how any man could question the existence of God in light of all evidence in nature, in history, in science that screams that such doubters are liars. I truly doubt that there are genuine atheists. I believe the wicked know there to be a God but refuse to acknowledge the fact because they wish to continue in their self-wills to travel by their own darkened lights. Many years ago, an old man lay desperately ill in bed. He was a wicked old man who did not believe in God. Over his bed he had written 'God is NOWHERE!' One day a little granddaughter came into the bedroom to see him. She was just learning to read so he asked her to try to read what was written over his bed. Slowly she began, and what she read was: "God...is...NOW HERE!" God is now here. In her innocent and childlike mind, there was no possibility for the sign to read otherwise. The old man trembled. For the first time he had to admit that there is a God. This points to our first cardinal principle in Creation – "*In the beginning, GOD!*" We should not be surprised that the One who created the waters should also WALK upon the waters!

Jesus has been speaking to the multitudes that He miraculously fed with bread. They now attempt to take Him by force and make Him their king. We are not frankly told that the disciples were also complicit with the desires of the multitude in a common response to mob rule, but there is some hint that at least something had caused Christ to send them across the Sea apart from the multitudes. We are told in the middle of the text today: "*For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.*" Men will most often opt to the blessings of the 'here and now' to the detriment of the blessings of the 'yonder and eternal.' The multitudes considered the guarantee of bread without labor as the ultimate goodness. History has proven that even the wealthy that labor not end in gluttony and die in misery. "*For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*" (2 Thess 3:10) – a fitting rebuke to the welfare mentality pervading our land.

"And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people." After the tumult with the multitudes, Christ sent His disciples apart to cross the Sea of Galilee (Tiberius). He perhaps did so for two reasons: 1) He sent them intentionally into a brewing storm to test a faith which may have been lacking in the attempt of the multitudes to make Him an earthly king. 2) He desired to separate them from the passions of the world manifested in the desires of the crowd. *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"* (2 Cor 6:17) Have you, as well, separated yourself from the crowd mentality being influenced in the styles and labels of even the clothes you wear, the places you go, the friends you keep, and the wickedness in which they call you?

"And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray." When I was a child, I grew up in the shadow of a great mountain (Fort Mountain). It struck a stark contrast to the surrounding terrain, and was sometimes obscured by clouds. During the heat of the summer months, I would look to the mountain and hope that I could go to the top where the air was cool and pristine. It would have been a place apart from the heat and throbbings of everyday life. As you ascend that mountain, the entire world begins to recede to a distant blur. The higher you climb, the less human traffic surrounds you. You feel closer to God as you stand there on top of Fort Mountain and, indeed, you are. To be apart from the body of civilization is to be a step closer to God. And so Christ sought the solitude of the mountain for the purpose of prayer. He could have prayed below among the people, but He sought a PLACE WHERE His prayers would be a personal Communion with His Father. He also would have a commanding view of the Sea and all who travelled in ships across the Sea.

"And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land." When we begin to be too self-righteous or doubtful, God will often send us into peril, seemingly apart from Himself, so that we may learn of our complete dependence upon Him. He may send storms into our lives to challenge our faith and, once overcome by faith, made stronger. In the text before us, He has sent His disciples across the Sea and into a storm of His making. He withholds the terrifying winds until the ship is in the very center of the Sea, yet, His watchful eye, as that of a mother eagle, is on us all along from the mountaintop. He is alone in His solitude, while we are on our own strength in the center of a storm together with our company of doubters. "And he saw them toiling in rowing." It would be akin to a father watching his young child, the apple of his eyes, toiling to build a sand castle but using dry sand, and becoming all the more frustrated with each collapse.

"...for the wind was contrary unto them." When we sail the seas of life under our own strength, the winds of the world will always be contrary to us. As Christian has no power to control the winds, but he certainly has the power to adjust the sails so that he travels a good route and not one into destruction. Quite normally, we must sail against the wind!

"...and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them." Not only was the little ship in the very midst of the sea, it was also during the very midst of darkness. The fourth watch would have been three o'clock in the morning. The greatest darkness is just before dawn. "...weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psalms 30:5)

There is a beautiful morning coming whose splendor shall rend the eastern sky as we shall behold the Sun of Righteousness arise on the Sea of our Storms. When the peril of the disciples seemed greatest, and their power to overcome that peril the very least, along comes a sight that should have cheered them, but, instead, it struck terror in their doubtful hearts – Jesus walking on the Sea. He was not walking with great care, but casually as a pedestrian on the seashore. Would they know the object of their salvation as He passed by? Have you always recognized His guiding and helping hand in the midst of your own storms? What would have happened had the He simply passed them by? My mother used to sing a beautiful old hymn that made me wonder about its meaning. Now I understand:

*Pass me not, O gentle Savior,  
Hear my humble cry;  
While on others Thou art calling,  
Do not pass me by.*

*Refrain*

*Savior, Savior,  
Hear my humble cry;  
While on others Thou art calling,  
Do not pass me by.*

*Let me at Thy throne of mercy  
Find a sweet relief,  
Kneeling there in deep contrition;  
Help my unbelief.*

*Refrain*

*Trusting only in Thy merit,  
Would I seek Thy face;  
Heal my wounded, broken spirit  
Save me by Thy grace.*

*Refrain*

*Thou the Spring of all my comfort,  
More than life to me,  
Whom have I on earth beside Thee?  
Whom in Heav'n but Thee?*

*Refrain*

The hymn was written by dear Fanny Crosby, blind from childhood, but full of the vision of the Lord. Unfortunately, we not only fail to seek the face of the Lord in our hard troubles, but do not even recognize Him when He draws near.

**"But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: For they all saw him, and were troubled."** Are we in the same boat with King Herod who was troubled at the news of His Coming? Do we mistake God to be a malevolent spirit? Does He often "get in the way" of our own "free wills"? He is the very source of the salvation of those men in the midst of a storm, in the midst of the Sea, and in the very midst of darkness – yet, His coming terrifies them. They "cried out" in terror. Men are often willing to believe in ghosts that do not exist, and deny the God that

DOES! "*For they all saw him, and were troubled.*" There shall come a Day when "*every eye shall behold Him*" – some in fear and trembling, and others with joy. Which shall it be for you, friend?

Christ will not leave us to fester in our fears. He speaks to us out of the midst of the storm: "*And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I be not afraid*" If it be Christ, there is always cause for us to be of good cheer and not possessed of fear. Fear is unbecoming of a Christian. Though 'fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom' (Ps 111:10), we are not to make our beds in fear. When we have reached the security of the Ark of Christ, our fears of the flood shall cease.

"And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered." Yes, it is amazing how soon the storms subside when Christ steps into the little ark of our hearts. The storm ceased immediately when Christ stepped in. They still wondered at the miraculous event. "*For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.*" This verse remains somewhat of a mystery to me, but I believe it does suggest their complicity with the multitudes in making Christ an earthly king. Their hearts were hardened at the miracle of bread. The result of that miracle was that the crowd wanted to take Him by force and make Him king. Jesus separated His disciples at that time from the crowds and sent them into a storm. I believe this is the right explanation for their hardened hearts. Have you, too, hardened your heart against the Lord when you did not follow His Will but insisted on your own free will (that is never the will of God)?

"And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore." We are given further description of this moment in the Gospel of St John: "*Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.*" (John 6:21) When Christ is with us, we are immediately at the place we are supposed to be!

"And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him," that is, those people on the shore. Often it is the profane and lost who may recognize Christ more readily than those who should know Him best. At first sight, the people on the shore KNEW Him!

"And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole." The faith of these people on the shore was a shallow faith that extended only to the physical needs of their diseased, but even a shallow faith is far better than no faith at all. That kind of faith will, in the least, profit them in this world, but may fall short of profiting them in eternity. They desired to only touch His garment to be healed – and they WERE healed thereby. Their faith in His power to heal was not in His garment, but in Him alone – and that is where our faith should be centered – not simply for blessings in the life, but more so for blessings in the life to come. At every petty need, do you trouble God for relief? How often do you simply pray a prayer solely to thank Him for His grace and benefits and ask nothing more than that His Will be done? The Lord's Prayer is a good place to start if you are unaware as to form.



## *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.



**Joyful in the Lord - Psalm 66**  
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany  
29 January 2012

### Psalm 66

**MAKE** a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:

2Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

3Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.

4All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.

5Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.

6He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

7He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

8O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

9Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

10For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

11Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

12Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

13I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows,

14Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.

15I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

16Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

17I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.

18If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

19But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

20Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

Psalm 66 is a beautiful and generous invitation from God. Its theme is well stated in its very first words, "O Be joyful in God." It is an invitation to enter into the source and being of all that is real and true and beautiful, and joyful in this life and forever; God I said God is the source of all the is beautiful. Most of us have noticed that as Western culture gets further from God its art becomes more ugly. It is no accident that a culture attempting to base itself on Christian values gave the world Handel's "Messiah", while a culture attempting to "free" itself of Christianity gave the world "Purple Haze." Debussy was not a Christian, but he lived in a culture still shaped by Christian values, and you can hear that in his music. Much Rap is the unmusic of a culture that has no memory or desire for Christian values, and you can hear that in it. We see this pattern followed throughout culture, from economics to interpersonal relationships. In economics, people are reduced to wage slaves making useless products people only want because they have been told to by manipulative advertisements. Work, in this kind of setting, becomes ugly because there is very little beauty in working on an assembly line to make overpriced toys that will soon break, wear out, or need to be replaced due to planned obsolescence.

Let's look at interpersonal relationships. Our culture likes to congratulate itself on the way it values people, yet interpersonal relationships are shallow and fluid because people are not willing to make serious commitments to other people. Commitment is viewed as inhibiting personal freedom, meaning, and self fulfillment. We can't let other people get in the way of our self fulfillment, so we drift in and out of relationships on the basis of whether we find them useful or not, based on the question, "do they meet my needs." In this system people become tools and toys for our own amusement and use. That's ugly. There is no beauty in it. It is selfish and abusive and cruel. But what else can we expect in a culture that teaches us to love ourselves rather than to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves?

In contrast to what we see in this fallen world, Scripture teaches us work can be meaningful and relationships can be happy and lasting sources of joy, when pursued according to God's wisdom given to us in the Bible. His ways are the ways of life, His laws are more valuable than gold, His truth sets us free. We can "Be joyful in God" because in the there is joy in God.

Psalm 66 is especially appropriate for the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany because we continue to celebrate the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles, and Psalm 66 invites all people, Jews and Gentiles, into the joy of the Lord. "O Be joyful in God **all ye lands.**" We see this invitation repeated several times in the Psalm. "All the world shall worship thee." "O come hither and behold the works of God." "O praise our God, ye peoples." There is not one person who is excluded from this invitation. It is not for Jews alone; not for "religious" people alone, not just for "good" people, or rich people, or poor, or male, or female people. It is for all people in all places in all times. Thus, our Lord Himself said in our reading from Matthew, "many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." It was Christ Himself who commissioned His Church to send His invitation around the world, saying, "Go ye therefore and teach **all nations.**" "Nations" does not refer to political entities. It refers to groups and families of people. In Greek, it is the word from which we get our English word, "ethnic," so the invitation is to all people of every ethnicity, every race, tribe, language, nationality, and identity. It is a major part of the Church's mission to invite them to receive the forgiveness of sins in Christ, and peace

with God through the blood of His cross. Christ invites all to dwell in God and to walk with others in a new Kingdom and a new humanity that is a foretaste of the oneness with God and each other we will enjoy forever in Heaven.

Verses 5-11 of the Psalm recount what God has done for Israel as an example of what God wants to do for all people. Specifically, they retell the story of God delivering the Hebrews from their slavery in Egypt, and bringing them into the land of Canaan. Yes, God allowed ancient Egypt to oppress Israel for a while. He allowed men to ride over their head; they went through fire and water (vs. 11). But He also parted the sea so they could go through on dry land (5) and brought them into a place where they could live life as God intended all mankind to live, in peace and freedom and righteousness. Verse 11 describes this place as a "wealthy" place, meaning a place of joy and wealth in the soul.

The Church has always seen the Exodus as a picture of the spiritual freedom purchased for God's people in Jesus Christ. We also see the work of Christ implied throughout Psalm 66. We rejoice in God because Christ is our joy. He parted the water for Israel and He baptized us into Himself as He baptized Israel in the sea. He is the Passover Lamb whose blood saves His people from the destroyer. He brings us out of the slavery and oppression of sin into a wealthy place that is not defined by political or geographical boundaries, but by His love and peace and grace, for He Himself is our dwelling place now and forever. Had this Psalm been written in the New Testament era it would have explicitly recounted Christ's life and death and resurrection. As it is, these events are implied throughout the Psalm. We may always find this Christological meaning in the Psalms.

God brought Israel out of Egypt to invite all people to learn of Him through the Jews. Christ died on the cross "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." These things are for all people. These things are for "whosoever believeth." But Psalm 66 also tells you what He wants to do for you individually, what He wants to do for your soul (14). He hears your prayers according to verse 17, which is the same as saying He welcomes and receives you. He does not cast out your prayers and He does not cast you out of His presence. Some of the greatest words ever heard by human ears or read by human eyes are the words of Christ found in John 6:37, "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This MAN, Christ Jesus, who is God incarnate, who created and sustains this vast universe and also the unseen spiritual worlds we can only glimpse in Scripture but which are more vast and real and solid than the one we see, wants to hear your prayers, wants your love, wants your fellowship, and wants to bless you in ways that go exceeding abundantly beyond all that you are able to ask or think (Eph. 3:20). He has invited you to come to Him, and has promised that He will receive all who come to Him. He will hear your prayer.

He will not turn His mercy from you. David, for all his accomplishments and success, was a sinner whose only hope was the mercy of God. He was just like the rest of us, for all humanity is united in sin, and the only hope for receiving anything good from God is to receive it as a free gift from Him. A few moments ago I quoted the words of Christ, "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Now I turn your attention to the last verse of Psalm 66, "Praised be God who hath not cast out my prayer, **nor turned His mercy from me.**" God does not turn His mercy away from those who come to Him in Biblical faith. He is always ready to receive penitent sinners. He is always ready to forgive, always ready to bless, always ready to pardon and absolve "all those who truly

repent and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel." He died on the cross to bring His mercy to you. He will never take it away from those who truly want it.

"Wherefore let us beseech Him to grant us true repentance, and His Holy Spirit, that those things may please Him which we do at this present; and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy; so that at the last we may come to His eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

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tR. Dennis Campbell  
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### *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 hamburgers at Fred's in the next village. Maybe next week the fatted dog nut!

After church goodies providers as currently signed up:

Date	Name
5 February 2012	Jack Arnold
12 February 2012	<b>Opportunity Available</b>
19 February 2012	<b>Opportunity Available</b>
26 February 2012	<b>Opportunity Available</b>

*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 least 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](mailto:jack@faithfulcenturion.org) or Dru - [dru@faithfulcenturion.org](mailto: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**

No 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 62<sup>nd</sup> birthday 27 December 2011.

*Don Patton* celebrated his 49<sup>th</sup> birthday 13 November 2011.

### **Homebound or Infirm**

*Sara's mother* is in a state of deteriorating health, both physically and mentally. On 30 January 2012, she broke her hip and had a partial hip replacement. Please pray for a rapid recovery for her, as well as 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*

*Ryan Hopkins* pinched a nerve in his neck, to the point he lost feeling in his lower body, and is currently bedridden, although the feeling has returned. Please pray for guidance for the medical team treating him and good spirits for Ryan.

*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 89<sup>th</sup> 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***

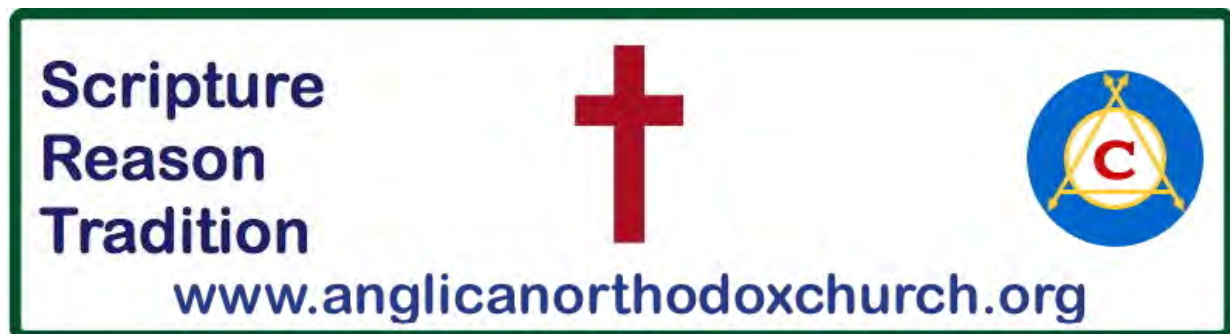
*Hap Arnold* gives thanks for safe and interesting travel this week.

### ***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](mailto: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.

### *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](mailto: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.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reader</b>
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*

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**