



Faithful Centurion Anglican Orthodox Church

Third Sunday in Advent

Commonly called Rose Sunday

Sunday Report



Today was the third Sunday in Advent, the period including the four Sundays before Christmas; the first Sunday of which is always the nearest Sunday to the feast of St. Andrew (30 November). Advent is a season of preparation and penitence. We prepare ourselves to celebrate the coming of Jesus at Christmas, but we also look forward to his second coming. The liturgical color for this season is purple reminding us of the Kingship of Jesus and that Advent is also a season of penitential preparation. Rose-color may be used on the third Sunday of Advent, signifying for us a lightening up of the penitential nature of the season as we draw closer to Christmas.

Sunrise temperature was a fairly warm 37°F on Mount Olympus with rainy skies and gusty winds. The start of church brought a warmer 44°F. The superb weather brought out three ducks for the service.

Gathering Song

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

Amazing Grace

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

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

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

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

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



Connecticut Shooting

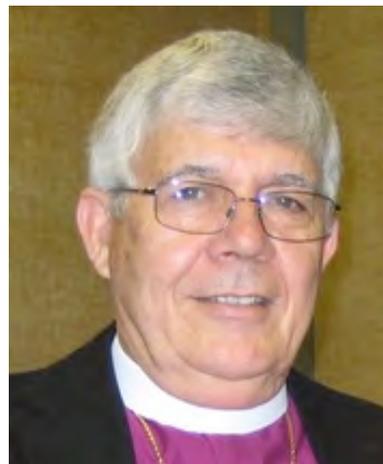
There is good in the world, there is evil. The good is lead by God, the evil by the devil. In the end, if you believe this or not it changes nothing in the world. God is still there and so is the devil. If you are not doing God's work, you are working for the devil. As we find our country growing further from God, be not surprised at the outcome.

Please take the time to read the following letter from Bishop Jerry Ogles, our leader.

Dear Friends and Family:

This church is appalled at the senseless and cruel shootings that occurred in Newtown, Connecticut on this past Friday morning. Many innocent and very young children were sent to their deaths at the hands of a crazed gunman, not unlike the deaths of millions of unborn innocents murdered in abortion mills across America.

There will once more follow a hue and cry for the ban of guns - the possession of which is protected (for a Reason) by the Bill of Rights of the US Constitution. It is a common ploy of those with a political agenda. A gun in the hands of a righteous person poses no threat to anyone. But in the hands of the lawless and maniacal, it, like an ax or a knife, is a deadly device. Instead of blaming guns, or cars, or the surgeon's knife, for unwarranted murders, why not admit that the deprivation of moral teaching to the young in our schools and at all levels of society has resulted in disastrous consequences? "*Be not deceived, God is not mocked.*" This is a sober warning from our God. Shall we heed it, or will we continue to blame our wickedness on inanimate objects.



Please join with me in praying for the families of these innocent young children who were so heartlessly murdered in their classrooms. I would hope that these young ones were able to call upon the name of the Lord in their fears and terrors, but where would they have learned His Name?

In Christ at Advent,

Jerry L. Ogles

†Jerry L. Ogles, DD, Presiding Bishop

Anglican Orthodox Communion Worldwide & Chancellor, Faith Theological Seminary

Article from Irene Teas by Christian Adams - Evil is to Blame

Pay close attention to what gets blamed for the Newtown school shooting. Evil is to blame for these horrific murders and nothing else. Listen closely to the rhetoric over the coming weeks. How often will evil be named as the cause of the horror?

Not often, I suspect.

Some dispute the existence of conscious, deliberate, unseen evil. Perhaps that's why blame for the murderous horror will fall elsewhere. Some consider the mention of evil

in public discourse to be unseemly. Belief in pure deliberate evil can be inconvenient, because it includes other necessary beliefs.

Failing to name it evil lets evil flourish. If the sight of planes slamming into the World Trade Center towers wasn't enough to comfortably believe in evil, maybe the horror in Connecticut will be.

Denial of conscious, deliberate evil makes it easier to deny the existence of conscious and deliberate good. If deliberate evil exists, then deliberate good must also. Otherwise human history would be one long ruinous loop of Stalin's gulags and Pol Pot's murder factories. Thankfully, those black times are broken up by goodness.

Evil seeks to destroy human life, human dignity, and even civilizations. Goodness and light offer an alternative. The sort of world we have is determined by what you and those around you choose. A man in Connecticut accepted evil.

Conditions, rough upbringings, or worldly objects are convenient explanations when evil manifests itself for all to see. Find any news account today and inventory what is being blamed for the mass killing of children.

But the systematic and deliberate slaughter of innocents is not a new story. It happened once before, after the arrival of an alternative way. It was also featured in the industrial scale eradication of European Jewry.

Spare no child of light, and usher in an age of darkness.

How vile that the evil in Connecticut arrived in this season of light and season of lights. All of those innocent smiles and joyous expectations destroyed by a black wretched thing.

We'll hear lots of bluster about how to prevent more school house murders. Nearly all of it is meaningless. The only way to prevent such horror is to choose to love your neighbor as yourself, to respect the dignity of human life, and to follow familiar laws thousands of years old.

Easier said than done, right? How could the goodness in many prevent the evil in one?

A culture that values goodness is a necessary prerequisite to discouraging evil. A culture of light and life relegates evil to the diminishing margins. This is a story as old as time. A culture of violence toward life and toward the dignity of every human eventually produces violence toward life, period. What else would you expect to happen?

The Romans were dumbfounded by the strange stubborn Jewish sect that prayerfully martyred themselves to Roman savagery. The intoxicated and bloodthirsty roars of the coliseum could not overcome the transformational power of the new alternative. Rome crumbled while the philosophy of those martyrs transformed the world.

That's the story of this Christmas, and that's why the evil in Newtown must be called by its true name.

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. If you have a hard time remembering, "Do I read the Collect from last Sunday or next Sunday during the week?" Remember Sunday is the first day of the week. There are also two Bible readings, the Epistle and the Gospel. While they are "lessons", they are not the First Lesson and the Second Lesson, they are the Epistle and the Gospel. 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 our minister or deacon.

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 are found on Page 93-94, with the Collect first:

The Third Sunday in Advent *The Collect.*

O LORD Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

The propers for the First Sunday in Advent can be found on Page 90-92:

The First Sunday in Advent *The Collect.*

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.

¶ This Collect is to be repeated every day, after the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Day.

Dru Arnold read the Epistle for today, which came from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, starting at the First Verse of the Fourth Chapter.



Paul calls on those who would be the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God to be good and faithful stewards leading their flock rather than commanding from the rear. He tells them not to be fearful of the judgment of man. In fact, he tells he is not concerned of the judgment of men, or even that of himself, but rather that of God. God knows our hearts and when He judges, He "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

Let it be fully understood that when Paul writes of ministers and stewards, he is talking of each of us, not just those who are "ordained ministers." We each must be good and faithful stewards of the gifts God has entrusted to each of us. We each must help those around us benefit from the gifts which are freely given.

LET a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

Deacon Jack Arnold read the Gospel for today which came from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the Eleventh Chapter, beginning at the Second Verse. Now when John the Baptist "had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" John was Jesus' cousin and the one who baptized Him and heard God say, THIS IS MY SON IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED." Yet, he and the rest of the Jews of the time expected the Messiah to come into Jerusalem in triumph, sit in the temple and rule, commanding, nay compelling the Romans to leave. No doubt marveling at the question, for it was asked of Him who had performed countless genuine miracles, healing the blind, the deaf the lame, "Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." As John's disciples parted, Jesus talked to those about him. He asked them



concerning John, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet?" He was counseling them, trying to help them fully understand the implications of what was around them. He was there! So, he explained that John was not "just" a prophet, but the messenger of God, the man with the flag running before the locomotive. He went on, "For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Because Jesus came into this world, not to be the King of the Present, but rather the King of that to Come.

NOW when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

Sermon – Reverend Deacon Jack Arnold - Time and Action

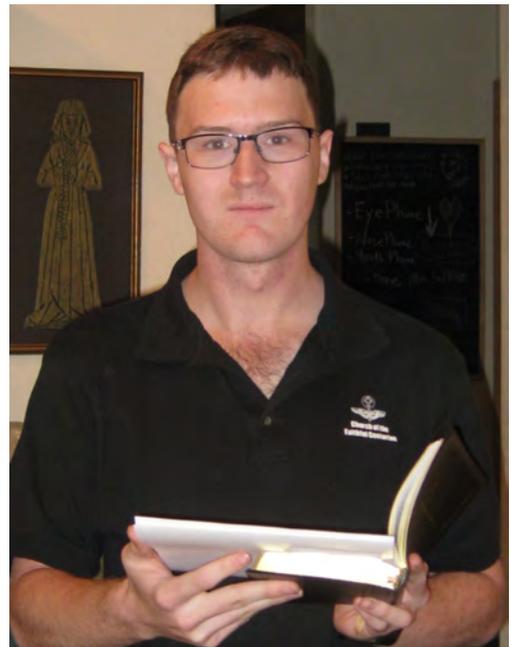
Today's sermon brought the Collect, Epistle and Gospel together and is partly contained in the forewords above.

The Third Sunday in Advent The Collect.

OLORD Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

The First Sunday in Advent The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.



¶ This Collect is to be repeated every day, after the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Day.

In the Collect for the Third Sunday in Advent, we are referred to as the ministers and stewards (caretakers) of the mysteries of God, which are the Scriptures and His Word. We ask for help in getting the hearts of the disobedient, by the wisdom of the just, to turn and look to the Kingdom of God for answers and not this world. In view of the recent events in Connecticut, how timely can this prayer be? When we look to the world for solutions, we find the solutions of this world. This world, ruled by the Prince of this world, the Prince of Air, the devil himself! But, what will people think when we reject worldly solutions to worldly problems. There is an answer for that, conveniently following the Collect.

In the Epistle, Paul says that we must not fear of what others would think of us, but rather be concerned about what God would think of what we are doing and what direction he wants us to go in.

In the Gospel, Christ asks the crowd of what they expected to see? Some great big flashy sign He was going to overthrow the Romans and unite the Jews to conquer the world? No, He did not come to do this, for that would be only a temporary and in fact temporal thing to rule the world. He came for far more than that; to prepare our hearts for eternity and change us from unjust to just creatures, worthy of God's creation and His Hands. He came to mould and to shape us from being roughly made to something very valuable.

To be worthy of the charge and care of His mysteries, we must willing to listen to Him and do whatever we need to do to line ourselves up with what He wants for us, not what we want for ourselves. We must think of others, instead of thinking of ourselves all the time. I must confess that I am guilty of this, but I am always working on trying to reverse this, as we must, in order to walk with Him. We must be willing to never give up and persevere, and if we follow this, we will keep getting better and better all of the time.

Life is a continual process of learning in every aspect of our lives, not least of these aspects is our spiritual growth and development. The Japanese have a word for this, introduced into their industry by the American engineer W. Edwards Deming, **Kaizen** (改善?) that is to say continuous improvement. Never perfect, but always endeavoring to improve. Day by day.

To care for the mysteries of God properly, we must keep learning in our spiritual lives and if we do this, we will keep growing more and more every day. Reading the Scriptures is one way to further our spiritual development, as well as helping others without thought for ourselves. We must keep doing a combination of these and similar things, if we expect to be able to facilitate our spiritual growth and change the minds of the disobedient and the unjust.

As He came to change us for the better, Paul and the Collect remind us to do the same for the others. We often resist this change, when perhaps we should not. We must put our hearts and minds together and think about what God wants us to do in the end rather than what we want to do. Put God first and all will be well, is what can be taken from today's collects and lessons, ultimately. We must be willing do to this, then we can be properly caring for the mysteries of God.

Be of God - Live of God - Act of God

Bishop Dennis Campbell's Sermon

Bishop Dennis is a brilliant speaker. He is able to take biblical precepts and make them perfectly understandable, even to me. Oft he provides the text of his sermons and I take the utmost pleasure in passing them on:



God Is Faithful

Psalm 99, Jeremiah 1:4-19, Luke 1:57

Third Sunday in Advent

December 16, 2012

On the first Sunday in Advent we looked at verses in Luke's Gospel that tell of Zechariah in the Temple. Confronted with the message of God through the angel Gabriel, he was told a son would be born to Elizabeth; a miraculous child who would do wonderful things in the service of God. I said that we miss the point of the story

when we focus on the people, for it is what God is doing that is the point of the story. I also said one of the things we see in the passage is that God has a plan. Today's reading in Luke takes us to the birth of Elizabeth's son; the fulfillment of God's promise to Zechariah. I want to draw two points from the passage.

First, God's plan comes to pass. In more theological language we would say there is an unseen hand that guides events and people, such that history is actually the unfolding of the plan of God. Isaiah, the prophet of Advent, shows the truth of this. In the fourteenth chapter he writes of the coming destruction of Assyria. His words make it clear that Assyria's fall is not just something God knows about because He knows the future; it is something that will happen because God has purposed it. It will happen according to God's plan. Isaiah 14:24 says, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Again He says in Isaiah 46:9-10, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

If what God plans comes to pass, we need to know what His plan is, and how we fit into it. I think there is probably no passage in Scripture that expresses this as well and succinctly as Ephesians 1:3-12. The heart of the passage is verses 9 and 10, which, after stating that God made known to us the mystery of His will, "according to his good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself," says, "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ." God's plan is, and has always been, to gather all things together in Christ. This is the purpose for which God created all things. This is the plan laid before the foundation of the world. This is the purpose for which the Lamb of God was slain.

We see God's plan unfolding in the Old Testament. He announced it in the Garden. The Saviour will come. The devil will bruise His heel, but He will bruise the devil's head. From the Garden God moved toward calling and separating to Himself a people through whom the Saviour will be born. We see God's plan unfolding in the call Abraham; "in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2). We see God's plan unfolding in the rise of Israel, the Temple, the Law, and the prophets, all looking and pointing ahead to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." Isaiah gives some of the best known Old Testament pictures of it; "a virgin shall

conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Is. 7:14). "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53:6). One of the fullest Old Testament statements is found in Isaiah 2:1-4:

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

In the New Testament we see the birth and ministry of the Saviour. He is the One whose day Abraham saw and rejoiced; the One of whom Moses wrote. He is the One whose sacrifice accomplishes the redemption and purification of His people. He is the One who ascended into Heaven, and will come again to judge the quick and the dead, to bring into completion the new heaven and new earth. When God is ready, He will bring to completion His plan. All who oppose Him will be cast into the lake of fire. All the redeemed will be finally and fully gathered together under Christ and in Christ forever. You and I fit into this plan in one of two ways. We are either among those who oppose God, and whose end is the lake of fire; or we are among those who are with God through faith, whose end is to be in Him forever. Here is what makes the difference. Those in Christ have trusted Christ to save them. They have seen their sin and their unworthiness, yet believe Christ died to pay for their sins and to give them forgiveness and peace with God forever.

The second point I want to draw from our reading in Luke is simply this; God keeps His promises. Looking back at Luke 1:13 we see a promise, Elizabeth will bear a son. In verses 15-17 we read that he, will be great in the eyes of the Lord, filled with the Holy Spirit from the womb, will go before the Lord in the spirit of Elijah, and will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord.

What do we find in Luke 1:57? "Now Elizabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son." In verses 60 and 63 his parents are emphatic, "he shall be called John." In verse 76 we read that he is the prophet of the Highest, who prepares the way of the Lord. In verse 80 we see, "the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts til the day of his showing unto Israel." God keeps His promises.

Yet, as important as it is to see God keeping His promise to Zechariah, it is even more important to see the birth of John as part of the fulfillment of a far greater Promise; a Promise which fulfills all the promises of God in the Bible. God promised a Saviour. God promised One would come who would save His people from their sins, and who would complete the plan of bringing all things together in God. The message of John is this; the Saviour is Coming. God keeps His promises.

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+Dennis Campbell

Rev Bryan Dabney of Saint John's Sunday Sermon

We are fortunate to have Bryan's Sunday Sermon. If you want people to come to The Truth, you have to speak the truth, expound the truth and live the truth. This is really a good piece and I commend it to your careful reading.



Sermon for the Third Sunday in Advent

John the Baptist was born into a priestly family. He was a miracle child in that his conception and birth brought him to parents well passed the age for such things. He was also a cousin of our Lord through his mother's side of the family (St. Luke 1:5-25, 39-45 and 57-80). Like our Lord, John the Baptist's early life is a closed book. We next hear about him in the gospels in his role as the forerunner of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke (see Isaiah 40:3-11) and which was fulfilled as noted in all four gospels (see St. Matthew 3:1-12; St. Mark 1:1-6; St. Luke 3:10-18; St. John 1:19-27), for in these we are told of his calling to proclaim the coming of the Messiah and to baptize those who came to him seeking remission of their sins.

Observe the manner of baptism and the preconditions for it: water with repentance. The Jews had pools called mikvahs, which they used for ritual bathing prior to entering the Temple precincts. And so it was not uncommon for them to immerse themselves, either whole or in part for religious purposes. Ergo, these baptisms performed by John the Baptist would not have been viewed by the Jews as strange or foreign, but quite in line with their faith. And we may safely deduce that hundreds, perhaps even thousands of them were baptized by John as the Scriptures do not tell us how long he had been preaching and baptizing prior to the coming of our Lord to him.

John said his baptism was one unto repentance which came about from those who heard him preach on the subject. Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (St. Matthew 3:2). But what does it mean to repent? The biblical understanding of this word speaks of having a change of mind. John, being filled with the Holy Spirit, had called on those around him to turn from their wickedness, and to have a mind that sought after God because the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Very soon thereafter our Lord appeared on the banks of the Jordan River seeking to be baptized of him (St. Matthew 3:13-17). Only after that, did our Lord begin his ministry, preaching that very message of John with this difference: for our Lord is the King of kings and Lord of lords who had come to bring salvation to those who would believe on his name.

Unfortunately, many of today's theologians and seminarians have taken John the Baptist's question in St. Matthew 11:1-6 as proof of his uncertainty about our Lord. They have taken this position because a sizable number of them doubt the divinity of Christ, the veracity of the Bible, and, in some cases, the very existence of God. They also have selectively forgotten those passages which affirm our Lord's bona fides such as John's affirmation, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, after me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me (St. John 1:29-30). John the Baptist knew that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, and it is too bad that many of today's pastors do not.

John's ministry began to decline the moment he baptized our Lord, and lasted but briefly until his death at the hands of Herod Antipas (St. John 3:22-36). Such was chronicled in St. Matthew's gospel (14:3-12) wherein we are informed that he suffered martyrdom for his criticism of Herod's adultery with his brother's wife. But even as death took him, the gates of heaven swung open wide to receive this great and humble

man who was sent by God to prepare the way for him whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:2b).

Our Lord paid tribute to John the Baptist upon hearing of him being cast into prison saying, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily, I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he (St. Matthew 11:7b-11).

God called John the Baptist to go before the face of the Messiah and proclaim him openly before men, calling them to repentance and to be baptized. Our Lord then built upon that message, and if we are to learn from him, then we too must come to God with humble and contrite hearts, seeking his pardon and receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

John did not have it easy. John did not have a multitude of earthly resources to utilize in his efforts. He did not have a mega-church building. He did not wear fine robes. He did not have a band of musicians pounding out secular rhythms. He did not demand a tithe. He did not make promises of healing that he could not perform. He did not have a custom hair-do.

No, John's message was plain, simple and without dissembling. It was the unvarnished truth of God: Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. If we would be wise in the Lord, we will heed his calling to do the same.

Let us pray,

FATHER God, we thank thee for thy servant John the Baptist, whose ministry heralded the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and grant us such a will that we would from hence forth watch and pray for the coming of that great day when we, and all thy saints, shall all meet in thine heavenly kingdom and rejoice together in glory everlasting; and this we ask in the name of thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Have a blessed week,
Bryan+

New Nametags

We had no new nametags today.

After Church Hospitality

Sadly, no after church snacks. The same story every week, is it not? The fact is that we are supposed to be on a low carb diet and there really aren't any low carb snacks that appeal to us. So, with no fatted dog nut in sight, we were out of luck! Please someone, between now and next Sunday invent some no-carb dog nuts.

After church goodies providers as currently signed up:

Date	Name
23 December 2012	Opportunity Available – Fourth Sunday in Advent
25 December 2012	Opportunity Available – Christmas Day

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 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!

Hurricane Sandy

Please pray for all those affected by Hurricane Sandy; for the more than 50 people who lost their lives, for hundreds injured, for the tens of thousands whose homes and businesses were destroyed. Pray that they might return their lives and world to

a sense of normalcy and peace. Give them strength to rebuild their places in the world and the understanding that they and their friends and associates need to do the heavy lifting and not look to government.

Travel

Dru and Hap are on travel this week.

Move

Ryan Hopkins has moved to Dillsburg, Pennsylvania, to study Dressage Riding through June 2013. Please pray for God's guidance in his life as he works and studies.

The Thomas Family is on a short tour assignment in Guam through August 2013. Please pray for the assignment to continue to go well for Kurt and for Mary and the kids to make new friends. In particular pray that Kristyna and Mitchell will develop good friends and school mates there so as to further their development as both Christians and citizens. 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

Betsy Lane celebrated her 86th birthday today.

Marriage

Elizabeth and *Gunnar* were married on 17 November 2012. They ask that you pray for God's guidance in their lives as they move from being two individuals to a single unit and help them to form their new family.

Departed

Mr. Jairaj, a fine Christian gentleman is now with our Lord. Please pray for his wife, sons, and daughter. Pray that they will cast their grief for their loss onto the Lord and He shall sustain them.

Suz passed away the week of 18 November 2012. Please pray for family members who remain behind.

Don passed away on 1 December 2012 after a hard battle with cancer. Please pray for family members who remain behind and help them to come closer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Joy passed away on 1 December 2012 after leaving hospice to return home to spend her final days with her family. Please pray for family members who remain behind and help them to come closer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Homebound or Infirm

Norma, Sara's mother is in a state of deteriorating health, both physically and mentally, with both onset dementia and Alzheimer's. She is slowly drifting away, though she still recognizes Sara. Please pray 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.

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

Larry Howes suffered a fairly severe stroke. 4 December 2012, doctors replaced a valve in a shunt that had been put in about two weeks ago, and Larry responded very well. He was able to go home. He is now back in Mass General hospital. Please pray for the medical team treating him to pay attention and do their very best; pray also for confidence in our Lord for Larry and his family. Larry needs a

miracle, pray for one. Please.

Colleen has been battling pancreatic cancer over the last year and it has now spread to one of her lungs. Please keep her and her family in your prayers.

Christine has cancer of the colon, which spread to her liver; she is receiving chemotherapy and is having difficulty eating. Please pray for the medical team treating her to pay attention and do their very best; pray also for confidence in our Lord for Christine and her family.

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.

Colonel Bud Day's cancer has returned. The outlook is not favorable. Bud has been an inspiration to all of us for years, this changes nothing. He is well at peace with our Lord and we all hope he stays with us for a while longer.

Upcoming Testing and Diagnosis

Brian has had some lung problems for a while. Recent tests appear to show abnormalities in the upper lung and bronchial area beyond what might be expected. He is to see a pulmonary specialist on Wednesday, 19 December 2012, to provide a preliminary diagnosis and expected course of treatment. Please pray for peace of mind for Brian so he can rest and gain strength through the appointment time; pray also that he will quit smoking.

Upcoming Surgery

Traci has just discovered she has colon cancer and must have her whole colon removed; the surgery is set for 27 December 2012. As you can imagine, she is in need of prayer. Please pray for her faith in God, for Him to enter her heart and comfort her; for the medical team treating her, that they might pay close attention and do their best; for her family as they worry, that they might not worry but support her. Pray for a good result.

Thanksgiving and Continued Healing

Ernest had a successful angiography and stent emplacement on Saturday 15 December 2012. He is now home and resting peacefully. Please give thanks for the successful surgery, the medical team doing a great job and also pray for his continued recovery.

Lou an elderly woman in the hospital with pneumonia, is improving and will be moving to an Assisted Living Home on 28 December 2012. Please pray a prayer of thanksgiving and for continued recovery.

Liz Strauch had surgery for a pineal cyst on 4 December 2012. The surgery was very successful, she was having nausea and pain from the surgery, which has now subsided. Please pray a prayer of thanksgiving for the successful surgery and the cessation of the nausea and for continued recovery.

Bob Smouse had shoulder surgery on 28 November 2012. He would appreciate your thanksgiving prayers. While the surgery apparently went well, he is still in pain and would also appreciate prayers for continued healing and the pain to subside. He promises to work very hard on recovery therapy.

Tore, of Oslo, Norway recently had a kidney transplant. Unfortunately his body rejected the kidney, infection had set in. Without God's healing touch he would soon die. According to his wife Inga, shortly after the prayer request, he began a prompt recovery and is now home. Tore and Inga give thanks for God's Grace and your prayer.

Carol Stone, the sweet wife of Mike Stone, longtime friend and colleague of Sara Simmons as well as Hap, was helicoptered to hospital with an ultimate diagnosis of severe bleeding on the left side of her brain. She remains hospitalized, but seems to be making some progress.

Please pray for peace of mind and trust in God for Mike, guidance for the medical team treating Carol and strength for Carol as well as faith and trust. No one can ever understand the why of these things here on earth. Sara who passed this request on asks that you pray in both faith and hope.

Muriel Pappin broke her hip in a fall and had surgery on 21 November 2012; please give thanks for a successful surgery and a rapid and full recovery.

Healing

Nicolas is in the hospital with serious symptoms of a heart disorder. Please pray for peace of mind for him and guidance for the medical team looking for the cause and cure.

Mrs. Baek an elderly women fell and injured her spine. Doctors cannot repair the spinal injury due to her age. She fell again the morning of 12 December 2012, breaking her collar bone which is also untreatable. Mrs. Baek is in severe pain and will appreciate your prayers.

Gil Garcia is hospitalized with a slow healing skin injury at the Long Beach Veteran's Spinal Cord Injury Center. Please give thanks for Gil's incredible attitude, as well that of his wife Mary and their family. Pray for the rapid healing of the skin injury so Gil can go home soon.

Juanita is a young girl who was in a coma because of a blood disease. She has not come out and is gaining strength. They are awaiting results from blood samples. Her family thanks you for your prayers and asks that you continue.

Barbara had a accident while cooking and the pressure cooker blew up in her face, causing second and third degree burns over her face and upper body. Because of this she has incurred kidney problems and may need a transplant.

George had foot surgery. Please give thanks for the surgery and pray for a full and rapid recovery.

Nellie is in the emergency room of a hospital in a great deal of pain. Please pray for peace of mind for her and guidance for the medical team looking for the cause and cure.

Lauralee Meade 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.

Kevin Gerhart discovered cancer on his neck. He underwent radiation and chemotherapy. Please pray for the medical team treating Kevin that they might pay attention, do their very best and find the source; that the treatment might be

successful and he might live a long and healthy life to His honor and glory. Pray also for trust in God and peace of mind for Kevin, his wife and family.

Bill, Sara's husband, had a third abdominal surgery on 22 November 2011, to remove a tumor. Bill is doing better keeping the doctor's instructions, for which we are all grateful, including taking chemotherapy once a day for two more years. He has radically decreased the consumption of alcohol and eating at least mostly properly. Please pray for help for him to continue do all this. Please pray also that Bill might turn his heart outward to help those around him, as well as 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.

Kay Denton (Mrs. Kay) hip has deteriorated to the point walking is a slow and painful process, but she manages. Please pray for continued peace of mind for Mrs. Kay and her family. Give thanks for her trust in the Lord and her positive attitude.

James L. Cavanah had surgery the afternoon of 10 February 2012, to remove two small but cancerous tumors. James is a minister with the AOC in Savannah, Georgia. Please pray for his recovery and remission from the cancer. Give thanks for the surgery and pray for both him and his family to allow God to carry their worries while he recovers.

Steve Sundberg had a heart attack after Easter 2011. 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 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 and his mom just came back from Houston at the Cancer Center for what was hoped to be a routine every four month bone scan. The scans were done on schedule, but a couple of new spots showed up. After Matt's San Diego doctors conferred with the Houston doctors to figure out what these spots mean, it turned out they are new and old injuries with no bad meaning. In effect they are CLEAN SCANS. Matt and his family ask you to give thanks for the super results. Please also give thanks 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!

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 has worsened recently. She is no longer able to stand, in fact she has a lot of trouble sitting upright. Judith is depressed and wants to go home to watch her birds, which given everything seems unlikely at present. 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. Her husband is doing his best to take care of her; it is hard and he is learning the best he can. Please pray for further recovery for Becky, as well as strength and guidance for her husband.

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.

Employment

Sarah is concerned about the future with her company. She would appreciate prayers for her continued employment and that her firm might find more and better ways to use her help.

Financial Guidance and Healing

David and Lorna are having financial problems. They are trying to find a smaller home which may be more affordable. *Lorna* has had an ongoing battle with brain cancer, her trips back and forth to the hospital have drained their finances to the point they sometimes struggle to have enough food in the house. Please pray for Lorna's healing and guidance on how they might handle the financial difficulties in which they have found themselves.

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 that she cannot do everything and can only change those things within her control.

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.

Guidance for Ministers

Ken Howes has been invited to St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada to preach. There is a possibility of a call to that church, a 600-member church with weekly services in German and English. His ability to speak German was what prompted their interest in Ken; he preached in both languages last Sunday. Please pray for Ken, my family and St. Peter's. Pray also for Ken to not worry about his brother Larry.

Rev LTC Al Ryan has been appointed Deacon-In-Charge of the mission parish of St. Augustine of Canterbury Anglican Church, Anglican Church in America (ACA) parish in Old Orchard Beach, Maine. It is a small but growing mission, which has been plagued by clergy change. Al, the diocesan pilot, has been appointed for one year, during which time he is to help them identify what their needs are for a vicar. He has done this before and asks you to pray for God's help one

more time; not only for himself, but for the parish.

Armed Forces & Contractors

Airman Donny Patton (Kadena AB, Japan), Jordan (USMC – Fleet Marine Force - Pacific), 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 travel the past 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.

Question that only you can ask

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

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

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

Epistleers

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

Date	Reader
23 December 2012	Dru Arnold – Fourth Sunday in Advent
25 December 2012	Dru Arnold – Christmas Day
1 January 2013	Dru Arnold – Circumcision of Christ
6 January 2013	Dru Arnold – Epiphany Day
13 January 2013	Dru Arnold – First Sunday after Epiphany
20 January 2013	Dru Arnold – Second Sunday after Epiphany

The near future, as well as Next Sunday

23 December 2012 – Fourth Sunday in Advent – 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**

25 December 2011 – Christmas Day – 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**