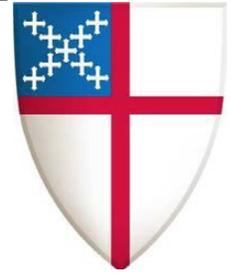


Our Vision: As a welcoming congregation, we share the transformational grace of God through worship and spiritual growth; we glorify God by building up each other and community through love, care, and outreach.

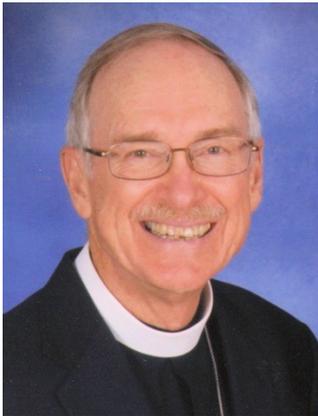


SHARING GRACE

June 2018

A Christian Newsletter of Community Caring
of Grace Episcopal Church

FROM OUR INTERIM RECTOR



Dear Friends-in-Christ,

Some time ago, Lynne Secrist asked me for a list of my favorite hymns. That has been a difficult task. Having grown up on the Western edge of the Bible Belt, I was exposed to a full range of church music from the Stamps-Baxter quartet, to the Southern Gospel songs, to the three hymns of the United Methodist Church as I grew up and to the stately hymns of the Episcopal Church. Thus far I've narrowed it to 66 hymns, but I haven't looked at the old Cokesbury Hymnal which we used for Wednesday night Prayer Meeting in the '40s and '50s. Some of those hymns are in my bones.

I can't give you an update on the Priest-in-Charge search. All I know is that we have hit a snag which has delayed interviews.

One of our own, Beth Mallon+ will be Priested on June 23rd at St. Francis, Wilsonville, Oregon. That's the church she serves, and she and Kevin live in Wilsonville. As many will recall, Beth was my mentor when I first came to Grace Church as a Field Ed student.

I've included some essays I have read over the past few weeks. The first is from the Christian Century. It was written in March! The second is a repeat from last month. It poses the question "What is the practice of Christianity in our time?" The third is a by Michael Gerson questioning the abandonment of moral principles, and the fourth is an excerpt of Bishop Curry's Royal Wedding sermon. I invite you to study the contrasts in faith and practice.

The final essay is about Memorial Day. I think it is a good reminder of sacrifice and commitment.

Blessings,

Perry+



FROM GEM.

Feedback and Future Events:

- GEM fundraiser: Corned beef and cabbage dinner. Saturday May 19, 2018. This event sponsored a very good turn-out. The raffle was entertaining and plenty of raffle items made the event a success. Thanks again to all who donated raffle items.
- Another fundraiser for GEM will be scheduled, during the fourth quarter of year 2018.
- Sacramento River Cats Faith and Family Night at Raley Field in Sacramento, CA; will be on Saturday August 11, 2018. As per last year, twenty tickets are reserved. Location of seating will be bleacher section along the third base line. Game time is 7:05PM. Ticket cost is \$20.00 per person. Advertising and ticket sales will begin the week of June 25th.
- The GEM/ECW Yountville BBQ is scheduled for Saturday August 18th. The date was approved by the Yountville Memory Center Supervisor. More information will be issued.

Next GEM Fellowship Breakfast Date: Saturday June 2, 2018. Huckleberry's Restaurant at 7:30AM.

Thank You

Ron Cupid



FROM ECW

The next ECW meeting will be Tuesday, June 12th, 11:30am in Room 6.

The ECW meeting was held May 1, 2018 in room 6 at 11:30 am. Marajeau S. called the meeting to order and Pat M. gave the blessing and opening prayer. Refreshments were furnished by Patty Butler and Pat M. and enjoyed by all. Thank you, ladies.

Our monthly donations to Heather House and the Rector's Discretionary Fund were approved and distributed.

Old Business:

Pat M. and Anna K. helped with the Community Health Fair on April 21st together with GEM. Thank you, ladies.

Anna K. reported on the Altar rail kneeling cushions. We approved ordering them and sent a deposit so work could be started. Thank you, Anna.

Lynne S. reported that work is still progressing on the lady's bathroom. Thank you, Lynne great job.

Tahoe Joe's tickets are still available for June 10th. \$20.00 donation. See Marajeau or Lynne for tickets.

New business:

ECW will help GEM with the BBQ at Yountville Veteran's Home Aug. 18 at noon. ECW to furnish potato salad and cookies (no nuts please). Debbie Cupid agreed to be our public Relations Person. Thank you, Debbie.

Marajeau closed the meeting by leading us in the Lord's Prayer.

Our next meeting will be June 12th, Tues. in room 6 at 11:30am. We had to change from the 5th because the church is a polling precinct. All women of Grace are members of ECW. Refreshments will be served. Come join the fun and service.

Love and Belief

Safety Corner:

Fire and Safety Checklist

- ✓ Are smoke detectors installed and functioning properly?
- ✓ Are smoke detector batteries regularly replaced?
- ✓ Are fire extinguishers in place and serviced regularly?
- ✓ Are flammable liquids stored in appropriate containers?
- ✓ Are "No Smoking" signs posted?

Classification of Portable Fire Extinguishers

Portable fire extinguishers are classified to indicate their ability to handle specific classes and sizes of fires. Labels on extinguishers indicate the class and relative size of fire that they can be expected to handle.

Class A extinguishers are used on fires involving ordinary combustibles, such as wood, cloth, and paper.

Class B extinguishers are used on fires involving liquids, greases, and gases.

Class C extinguishers are used on fires involving energized electrical equipment.

Class D extinguishers are used on fires involving metals such as magnesium, titanium, zirconium, sodium, and potassium.

Multipurpose Extinguishers

Most portable extinguishers are rated for use with more than one classification of fire. For

example, an extinguisher with a BC rating is suitable for use with fires involving flammable liquids and energized electrical equipment. An extinguisher with an ABC rating is suitable for use with fires involving ordinary combustibles, flammable liquids and energized electrical equipment. An extinguisher that is rated for use with multiple hazards should include a symbol for each hazard type.

Ron Cupid

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Operating:		
March Income	April Income(unofficial)	YTD Income(unofficial)
\$10,293	\$13,763	\$42,070
March Expenses	April Expenses(unofficial)	YTD Expenses(unofficial)
\$10,774	\$14,603	\$50,278
Net Income/Loss	Net Income/LOSS(unofficial)	Net Income/LOSS(unofficial)
\$(481)	\$(840)	\$(8,208)

Coming Events



- June 2nd, Sat., GEM Meeting, 7:30am at Huckleberry's in Fairfield
- June 3rd, Sun., Last day of choir
- June 5th, Tues., Polling place at Grace
- June 10th, Sun., Last day of Sunday School
- June 10th, Sun. ECW fundraiser Tahoe Joe's Dinner (Tickets \$20)
- June 12th, Tues., ECW Meeting, 11:30am in Room 6

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Ron Cupid 06/01 | Millie Celoni 07/03 |
| Warren Sheldon 06/09 | Jan Heise 07/03 |
| Tad Riley 06/28 | Vivian Hogle 07/06 |
| | Tom McKinney 07/07 |
| | Carolyn Sheldon 07/08 |
| | Mary Aiu 07/10 |
| | Jack Ryan 07/20 |
| | Kelly Ryan 07/20 |



From the publisher

Peter W. Marty

American idol

The death-by-gun crisis in America is not just a political issue. It's a spiritual issue of the highest order. Having all but enshrined the divinity of guns, our culture has created an elaborate public liturgy for every mass shooting. Flags go to half-staff. Counselors turn out. Thoughts and prayers pour forth. We continue to make a sorry mess of the distinction between loving God and being charmed by idols that seek to thwart the glory of God. Our national infatuation with firearms has reached crisis proportions that should trouble every believer.

All of us get sad, of course, when bullets eviscerate the joy in innocent victims' families. If our eyes don't water up when a tearful dad on the evening news alternately weeps and screams because a gunman senselessly mowed down his kid, some serious compassion is missing from the empathy chamber of our hearts.

I have a new sadness these days. It's focused on the legislators who cannot bring themselves to vote for even the most modest gun legislation. I've moved from anger to sadness, deciding that many of them are simply trapped. They're beholden to powers they're not even fully aware of. What started for many of them as a respectful decision to cherish one understanding of Second Amendment rights has morphed into a colossal idolatry of lethal weapons, including rapid-fire assault rifles.

Many of these decision makers are people of faith who are stuck bowing at an altar they never intended to reverence, at least not with ultimate allegiance. I'm positive they don't

like what assault rifles do when in the hands of neighborhood killers. There's no way these senators and representatives rationally believe that it should be harder to obtain a passport or buy pseudoephedrine than to purchase an AR-15 magazine-fed rifle. But when you are in the thrall of the National Rifle Association and gun rights absolutists, what are your choices?

In the case of my own senator, Joni Ernst, to whom the NRA has contributed more than \$3.1 million, you tweet gratitude for the first responders. If you're Marco Rubio, senator in the home state of the Parkland, Florida, school massacre, and you've received in excess of \$3.3 million from the NRA, you offer thoughts and prayers. You definitely can't call for meaningful measures of gun legislation.

We're in golden calf country here, elevating a loyalty to the gun over a fidelity to God's desire for abundant life. More than a hunting or safety device, the gun has become an object of reverence. We bow in devotion at its altar. "Sacred stuff resides in that wooden stock and blued steel," onetime NRA president Charlton Heston said. And when a gun becomes an idol, it demands loyalty even if it regularly disappoints. Like other small g gods that offer false consolation, a gun's guarantee of ultimate safety and security is a myth.

The Lord said to Moses, "they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshipped it and sacrificed to it . . . [and] the LORD sent a plague upon the people, because they made the calf."

We're living our own modern plague: 15,592 gun-related deaths last year alone. And it's a plague of our own making.

Reclaiming Jesus

A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis

We are living through perilous and polarizing times as a nation, with a dangerous crisis of moral and political leadership at the highest levels of our government and in our churches. We believe the soul of the nation and the integrity of faith are now at stake.

It is time to be followers of Jesus before anything else—nationality, political party, race, ethnicity, gender, geography—our identity in Christ precedes every other identity. We pray that our nation will see Jesus' words in us. "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

When politics undermines our theology, we must examine that politics. The church's role is to change the world through the life and love of Jesus Christ. The government's role is to serve the common good by protecting justice and peace, rewarding good behavior while restraining bad behavior (Romans 13). When that role is undermined by political leadership, faith leaders must stand up and speak out. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state."

It is often the duty of Christian leaders, especially elders, to speak the truth in love to our churches and to name and warn against temptations, racial and cultural captivities, false doctrines, and political idolatries—and even our complicity in them. We do so here with humility, prayer, and a deep dependency on the grace and Holy Spirit of God.

This letter comes from a retreat on Ash Wednesday, 2018. In this season of Lent, we feel deep lamentations for the state of our nation, and our own hearts are filled with confession for the sins we feel called to address. The true meaning of the word

repentance is to turn around. It is time to lament, confess, repent, and turn. In times of crisis, the church has historically learned to return to Jesus Christ.

Jesus is Lord. That is our foundational confession. It was central for the early church and needs to again become central to us. If Jesus is Lord, then Caesar was not—nor any other political ruler since. If Jesus is Lord, no other authority is absolute. Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of God he announced, is the Christian's first loyalty, above all others. We pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Our faith is personal but never private, meant not only for heaven but for this earth.

The question we face is this: Who is Jesus Christ for us today? What does our loyalty to Christ, as disciples, require at this moment in our history? We believe it is time to renew our theology of public discipleship and witness. Applying what "Jesus is Lord" means today is the message we commend as elders to our churches.

What we believe leads us to what we must reject. Our "Yes" is the foundation for our "No." What we confess as our faith leads to what we confront. Therefore, we offer the following six affirmations of what we believe, and the resulting rejections of practices and policies by political leaders which dangerously corrode the soul of the nation and deeply threaten the public integrity of our faith. We pray that we, as followers of Jesus, will find the depth of faith to match the danger of our political crisis.

I. WE BELIEVE each human being is made in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). That image and likeness confers a divinely decreed dignity, worth, and God-given equality to all of us as children of the one God who is the Creator of all things. Racial bigotry is a brutal denial of the image of God (the *imago dei*) in some of the children of God. Our participation in the global community of Christ absolutely prevents any toleration of racial bigotry. Racial justice and healing are biblical and theological issues for us, and are central to the mission of the body of Christ in the world. We give thanks for the prophetic role of the historic black churches in America when they have called for a more faithful gospel.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the resurgence of white nationalism and racism in our nation on many fronts, including the highest levels of political leadership. We, as followers of Jesus, must clearly reject the use of racial bigotry for political gain that we have seen. In the face of such bigotry, silence is complicity. In particular, we reject white supremacy and commit ourselves to help dismantle the systems and structures that perpetuate white preference and advantage. Further, any doctrines or political strategies that use racist resentments, fears, or language must be named as public sin—one that goes back to the foundation of our nation and lingers on. Racial bigotry must be antithetical for those belonging to the body of Christ, because it denies the truth of the gospel we profess.

II. WE BELIEVE we are one body. In Christ, there is to be no oppression based on race, gender, identity, or class (Galatians 3:28). The body of Christ, where those great human divisions are to be overcome, is meant to be an example for the rest of society. When we fail to overcome these oppressive obstacles, and even perpetuate them, we have failed in our vocation to the world—to proclaim and live the reconciling gospel of Christ.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT misogyny, the mistreatment, violent abuse, sexual harass-

ment, and assault of women that has been further revealed in our culture and politics, including our churches, and the oppression of any other child of God. We lament when such practices seem publicly ignored, and thus privately condoned, by those in high positions of leadership. We stand for the respect, protection, and affirmation of women in our families, communities, workplaces, politics, and churches. We support the courageous truth-telling voices of women, who have helped the nation recognize these abuses. We confess sexism as a sin, requiring our repentance and resistance.

III. WE BELIEVE how we treat the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick, and the prisoner is how we treat Christ himself. (Matthew 25: 31-46) "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." God calls us to protect and seek justice for those who are poor and vulnerable, and our treatment of people who are "oppressed," "strangers," "outsiders," or otherwise considered "marginal" is a test of our relationship to God, who made us all equal in divine dignity and love. Our proclamation of the lordship of Jesus Christ is at stake in our solidarity with the most vulnerable. If our gospel is not "good news to the poor," it is not the gospel of Jesus Christ (Luke 4:18).

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the language and policies of political leaders who would debase and abandon the most vulnerable children of God. We strongly deplore the growing attacks on immigrants and refugees, who are being made into cultural and political targets, and we need to remind our churches that God makes the treatment of the "strangers" among us a test of faith (Leviticus 19:33-34). We won't accept the neglect of the well-being of low-income families and children, and we will resist repeated attempts to deny health care to those who most need it. We confess our growing national sin of putting the rich over the poor. We reject the immoral logic of cutting services and programs for the poor while cutting taxes for the rich. Budgets are

moral documents. We commit ourselves to opposing and reversing those policies and finding solutions that reflect the wisdom of people from different political parties and philosophies to seek the common good. Protecting the poor is a central commitment of Christian discipleship, to which 2,000 verses in the Bible attest.

IV. WE BELIEVE that truth is morally central to our personal and public lives. Truth-telling is central to the prophetic biblical tradition, whose vocation includes speaking the Word of God into their societies and speaking the truth to power. A commitment to speaking truth, the ninth commandment of the Decalogue, "You shall not bear false witness" (Exodus 20:16), is foundational to shared trust in society. Falsehood can enslave us, but Jesus promises, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32). The search and respect for truth is crucial to anyone who follows Christ.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the practice and pattern of lying that is invading our political and civil life. Politicians, like the rest of us, are human, fallible, sinful, and mortal. But when public lying becomes so persistent that it deliberately tries to change facts for ideological, political, or personal gain, the public accountability to truth is undermined. The regular purveying of falsehoods and consistent lying by the nation's highest leaders can change the moral expectations within a culture, the accountability for a civil society, and even the behavior of families and children. The normalization of lying presents a profound moral danger to the fabric of society. In the face of lies that bring darkness, Jesus is our truth and our light.

V. WE BELIEVE that Christ's way of leadership is servanthood, not domination. Jesus said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles (the world) lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant" (Matthew 20:25-26). We believe our elect-

ed officials are called to public service, not public tyranny, so we must protect the limits, checks, and balances of democracy and encourage humility and civility on the part of elected officials. We support democracy, not because we believe in human perfection, but because we do not. The authority of government is instituted by God to order an unredeemed society for the sake of justice and peace, but ultimate authority belongs only to God.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT any moves toward autocratic political leadership and authoritarian rule. We believe authoritarian political leadership is a theological danger that threatens democracy and the common good—and we will resist it. Disrespect for the rule of law, not recognizing the equal importance of our three branches

of government, and replacing civility with dehumanizing hostility toward opponents are of great concern to us. Neglecting the ethic of public service and accountability, in favor of personal recognition and gain often characterized by offensive arrogance, are not just political issues for us. They raise deeper concerns about political idolatry, accompanied by false and unconstitutional notions of authority.

VI. WE BELIEVE Jesus when he tells us to go into all nations making disciples (Matthew 28:18). Our churches and our nations are part of an international community whose interests always surpass national boundaries. The most well-known verse in the New Testament starts with “For God so loved the world” (John 3:16). We, in turn, should love and serve the world and all its

inhabitants, rather than seek first narrow, nationalistic prerogatives.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT “America first” as a theological heresy for followers of Christ. While we share a patriotic love for our country, we reject xenophobic or ethnic nationalism that places one nation over others as a political goal. We reject domination rather than stewardship of the earth’s resources, toward genuine global development that brings human flourishing for all of God’s children. Serving our own communities is essential, but the global connections between us are undeniable. Global poverty, environmental damage, violent conflict, weapons of mass destruction, and deadly diseases in some places ultimately affect all places, and we need wise political leadership to deal with each of these.

WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED for the soul of our nation, but also for our churches and the integrity of our faith. The present crisis calls us to go deeper—deeper into our relationship to God; deeper into our relationships with each other, especially across racial, ethnic, and national lines; deeper into our relationships with the most vulnerable, who are at greatest risk.

The church is always subject to temptations to power, to cultural conformity, and to racial, class, and gender divides, as Galatians 3:28 teaches us. But our answer is to be “in Christ,” and to “not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable, and perfect.” (Romans 12:1-2)

The best response to our political, material, cultural, racial, or national idolatries is the First Commandment: “You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). Jesus summarizes the Greatest Commandment:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, and your mind. This is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:38). As to loving our neighbors, we would add “no exceptions.”

We commend this letter to pastors, local churches, and young people who are watching and waiting to see what the churches will say and do at such a time as this.

Our urgent need, in a time of moral and political crisis, is to recover the power of confessing our faith. Lament, repent, and then repair. If Jesus is Lord, there is always space for grace. We believe it is time to speak and to act in faith and conscience, not because of politics, but because we are disciples of Jesus Christ—to whom be all authority, honor, and glory. It is time for a fresh confession of faith. Jesus is Lord. He is the light in our darkness. “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). ■

Signers: Bishop Carroll A. Baltimore, *President and CEO, Global Alliance Interfaith Network*; Rev. Dr. Peter Borgdorff, *Executive Director Emeritus, Christian Reformed Church in North America*; Dr. Amos Brown, *Chair, Social Justice Commission, National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.*; Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann, *Professor Emeritus, Columbia Theological Seminary*; Dr. Tony Campolo, *Co-Founder, Red Letter Christians*; Dr. Iva Carruthers, *General Secretary, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference*; The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, *Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church*; Rev. Dr. James Forbes, *President and Founder, Healing the Nations Foundation and Preaching Professor at Union Theological Seminary*; Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, *General Secretary Emeritus, Reformed Church in America*; Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale, *Senior Pastor, Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur, GA*; Rev. Dr. Richard Hamm, *former General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*; Rev. Dr. Joel C. Hunter, *Faith Community Organizer and Chairman, Community Resource Network*; Rev. Dr. Jo Anne Lyon, *General Superintendent Emerita, The Wesleyan Church*; Bishop Vashti McKenzie, *117th Elected and Consecrated Bishop, AME Church*; Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., *Co-Convener National African American Clergy Network*; Dr. John Perkins, *Chair Emeritus and Founding Member, Christian Community Development Association*; Bishop Lawrence Reddick, *CEO, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church*; Fr. Richard Rohr, *Founder, Center for Action and Contemplation*; Dr. Ron Sider, *President Emeritus, Evangelicals for Social Action*; Rev. Jim Wallis, *President and Founder, Sojourners*; Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, *Director, NCC Truth and Racial Justice Initiative*; Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, *Co-Convener, National African American Clergy Network; President, Skinner Leadership Institute*; Bishop Will Willimon, *Bishop, The United Methodist Church, retired, Professor of the Practice of Ministry, Duke Divinity School*

ReclaimingJesus.org

The massive failure of Christian political leadership

Michael Gerson on May 29, 2018

WASHINGTON -- Three recent news items:

-- At the Catholic Prayer Breakfast in Washington, House Speaker Paul Ryan said: "We see moral relativism becoming more and more pervasive in our culture. Identity politics and tribalism have grown on top of this." Ryan went on to talk about Catholic social doctrine, with its emphasis on "solidarity" with the poor and weak, as "a perfect antidote to what ails our culture."

-- In the Oval Office, according to The Washington Post, President Trump boasted about how easy it is to appeal to audiences with an anti-immigrant message: "Acting as if he was at a rally, he then read aloud a few made up Hispanic names and described potential crimes they could have committed, like rape and murder. Then, he said, the crowds would roar when the criminals were thrown out of the country." In the Post's account, "[Stephen] Miller and [Jared] Kushner laughed."

-- At the American border, the brutal separation of confused, weeping children from parents who cross illegally is being implemented. According to The Arizona Republic: "The Office of Refugee Resettlement reported at the end of 2017 that of the 7,000-plus children placed with sponsored individuals, the agency did not know where 1,475 of them were." Some could be lost to abuse or trafficking.

What do these incidents add up to? A political, moral and religious failure of massive, discrediting proportions.

It is often difficult to apply theological doctrines to public policy. But if there is one area where the teaching of the Christian faith is utterly clear, it is in the requirement to care for the vulnerable stranger. According to the Hebrew scriptures: "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born." In the New Testament, Jesus employs compassion for an abused, reviled foreigner (a Samaritan) as the test and definition of neighbor love.

The dehumanization of migrants and refugees has been one of the most consistent themes of this president - including using the fact that some criminals enter the country illegally to fan a generalized hostility to Hispanic immigration. Can you imagine what would have happened if a White House staffer attending a policy meeting on family separation had said, "This is cruel. This is immoral. This is

wrong." They would have been quickly cleaning out their desk. The rejection of Christian teaching on this issue is pretty much a job requirement in the Trump administration.

And how did Ryan address the issue of Trump's habit of dehumanization at the Catholic Prayer Breakfast? By avoidance, under a thick layer of hypocrisy. He complained that politicians are too often in "survival mode" -- trying to "get through the day," rather than reflecting on and applying Catholic social teaching.

Ryan was effectively criticizing the whole theory of his speakership. He has been in survival mode from the first day of Trump's presidency, making the case that publicly burning bridges with the president would undermine the ability to pursue his vision of the common good (including tax reform and regulatory relief). This, while a weak argument, is at least a consistent one. But by making the Christian commitment to human dignity relative to other political aims, it is no longer an option for Ryan to speak of "moral relativism" as the defining threat of our time.

In the name of survival, Ryan has ignored and enabled the transformation of the GOP into an anti-immigrant party. This does not reflect his personal views. But it will be remembered as the hallmark of his time in office -- the elevation of survival above solidarity.

My tradition of evangelical protestantism is, if anything, even worse. According to a recent Pew poll, white evangelical protestants are the least likely group in America to affirm an American responsibility to accept refugees. Evangelicals insist on the centrality and inerrancy of scripture and condemn society for refusing to follow biblical norms -- and yet, when it comes to verse after verse requiring care for the stranger, they not only ignore this mandate but oppose it.

This represents the failure of Christian political leadership -- not only from the speaker, but from most elected religious conservatives. Even more, it indicates the failure of the Christian church in the moral formation of its members, who remain largely untutored in the most important teachings of their own faith.

Ryan concluded his remarks by quoting Mother Teresa on God's call to "be faithful," not to "be successful." But what if one is neither? Perhaps silence is the best option.

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The Living Compass Wellness Initiative

May 25, 2018

There is Power in Love to Show Us the Way to Live

We know that if we are sick with a cold or the flu that what we have may be contagious. I have used this as a metaphor before when I have written about how we can also be contagious concerning our moods and energy, spreading them to those around us. I think most of us would agree that negative moods and critical energy are contagious, sometimes infecting a whole family, group, or organization. The good news though is that joy, along with the enthusiasm of love are also contagious, and likewise, we can feel it when love and joy have infected those around us.

I don't know about you, but I don't need more reminders that negative news is contagious, as I am bombarded with evidence of this every day. What I do need are reminders that love and joy are also infectious. And that is precisely what I received this past week when someone shared with me some of the highlights of the royal wedding.

While the ceremony, including the readings and the music, (Did you see that performance of Stand By Me?!) were beautiful, it was the sermon from Bishop Michael Curry that lit a fire in my spirit. In case you missed it, here are a few excerpts from this sermon:

There is something right about it (love). And there's a reason for it. The reason has to do with the source. We were made by a power of love, and our lives were meant - and are meant - to be lived in that love. That's why we are here.

There's power in love to help and heal when nothing else can. There's power in love to lift up and liberate when nothing else will. There's power in love to show us the way to live.

Think and imagine a world where love is the way.

Imagine our homes and families where love is the way. Imagine neighborhoods and communities where love is the way.

Imagine governments and nations where love is the way. Imagine business and

commerce where this love is the way.

Imagine this tired old world where love is the way. When love is the way - unselfish, sacrificial, redemptive.

When love is the way, there's plenty good room - plenty good room - for all of God's children.

When love is the way, we know that God is the source of us all, and we are brothers and sisters, children of God.

As powerful as these words are, it is the spirit with which he delivered and embodied these words—a spirit of love and joy—that the world has found to be so highly contagious. Some two billion people watched the sermon while viewing the wedding ceremony, and since then there have been millions of views of it on social media. If you are one of the few people who hasn't heard it yet, you can experience it [here](#).

Even if you have already watched the sermon, you might want to watch again next time you need a little infusion of love and joy. And then, having been influenced by that spirit of love, go and find a way to spread some of it in your corner of the world.

Weekly Words of Wellness
by Scott Stoner

Monday Matters (May 28, 2018)

by [RenewalWorks Admin](#)

FOR MEMORIAL DAY 2018:

A prayer for heroic service, from the Book of Common Prayer

O Judge of the nations, we remember before you with grateful hearts the men and women of our country who in the day of decision ventured much for the liberties we now enjoy. Grant that we may not rest until all the people of this land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines. This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

An excerpt from the poem "The Fallen" by Laurence Binyon, written in 1914.

Memorial Day

It's been said that praying shapes believing. So here's what I'm wondering on this Monday morning, as our weekend has been extended with a holiday to remember those who, over the centuries, gave their lives in service to the country. What does the prayer for heroic service, found in the Book of Common Prayer and included above, say about what we believe, about how we live our lives as people of faith?

Like many Monday holidays, Memorial Day becomes a day of relaxation and celebration, a day for parties and fun. For some, it's a day with retail enticements. Stores will be crowded. The summer is launched. Finally. That's good.

But it's also probably a good idea to grab a few minutes to think about the day's intent, to say prayers for those we love but see no longer, to focus on courage and sacrifice, to see what we all can do to "study war no more."

As the prayer calls us to observe the day, it asks us to do four things: to remember, to resist rest, to share benefits, to accept disciplines.

First of all, we remember. We would not have a day called Memorial Day if we weren't so prone to forgetfulness. There's a part of the Episcopal liturgy which, during the eucharist, recites the good things God has done for us. It's got a technical term: *anamnesis*, which literally means not amnesia. Not forgetting. In our bubbles of time and space, we may well forget the great cost. Today, how can

we take moments to remember with gratitude the cost of the promise of our common life?

And today, we consider what it would mean to be restless. One of the great challenges I find in our work with congregations is complacency. The sense that we are done, completed. It can be a spirit of self-satisfaction. It can be a spirit of resignation. We honor those we remember by refusing to rest, striving as they did to ensure a better world, to go deeper, to know that God is never finished with us yet, to include more and more people in the experience of God's justice and freedom, peace and love. How can we embrace that holy restlessness?

Today, we consider what it would mean to share benefits. When Jesus called his disciples to meet him in the least of our brothers and sisters ([see Matthew 25](#)), maybe he was talking about sharing the benefits of our common life, recognizing that we are in this together. As we observe a day in which we remember those whose efforts and offerings were intended to lead us to greatness, we note with thanksgiving the gifts and privileges of our common life. Freedom to vote. Freedom of expression. Freedom to worship. Freedom to protest. Freedom to learn. Fighting for such benefits cost lives over the course of our nation's history. How can we share those benefits now as widely as possible?

Finally, today, we consider what it would mean to accept disciplines in our common life. We have been graced as a nation. Such grace is not cheap. A life of freedom calls for us to live into that grace, with intention, vigilance, practice, prayer, effort. This prayer calls us to accept those disciplines gladly.

Have a great time today. But also take time today to remember. Reflect on holy restlessness. Make a commitment (even a small one) to share benefits you have received. And prepare to accept disciplines that come with being a disciple.

-Jay Sidebotham

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RenewalWorks is a ministry of Forward Movement.

<http://www.renewalworks.org>

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Summary of spiritual inventory findings of RenewalWorks: A Ministry of Forward Movement



DATA FROM 2013-2017

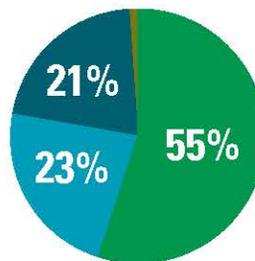
200 RENEWALWORKS CONGREGATIONS

12,000 EPISCOPALIANS

47% OF THESE CHURCHES HAVE 101-250 PARISHIONERS

54% OF RESPONDENTS HAVE ATTENDED THEIR CHURCH 10+ YEARS

THREE PRIMARY CHURCH ARCHETYPES



Troubled: Restless and hungry for greater spiritual growth.

Extroverted: Committed to service, mission, and outreach; limited correlation between service and spiritual beliefs.

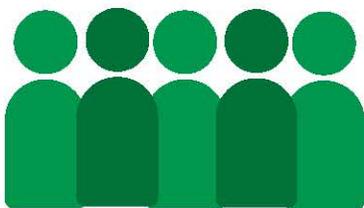
Complacent: Low expectations of transformation, and resistance to change and challenge.

WHAT WE HEAR BY THE NUMBERS

60% want the church to help them develop a relationship with God in Christ.

57% percent want to be challenged to grow and take next steps spiritually.

Only **14%** of the 12,000 respondents say they reflect on scripture daily.



Only **42%** are extremely satisfied or very satisfied with the way their church helps them develop a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Only **38%** felt they were extremely or very satisfied with how the church challenged them to grow and take next steps.

42% have never met with members of their church clergy individually, and **48%** have never talked with a spiritual mentor.

WHERE ARE WE SPIRITUALLY? THE FOUR STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

EXPLORING



GROWING



DEEPENING



CENTERED

Affirmed belief in God, though not sure what faith claims they would make about Christ. Generally, faith is not significant in their day-to-day life.

They are committed to the Christian faith but still have many questions and have not developed a personal relationship with God in Christ.

Transition to value a personal relationship with God over their church membership. They feel close to Christ and depend on him daily for guidance.

A personal relationship with God in Christ is the most important relationship in their lives, but that doesn't mean their spiritual journey is over.

18%

55%

23%

4%

72%

Consider themselves to be at an early, less mature stage of spiritual growth. Parishioners that fall into the first two stages are highly dependent on the church—and specifically the clergy—to help teach, guide and mentor.

FOUR CATALYSTS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH



1. Engagement with scripture
2. Transforming power of the Eucharist
3. A deeper prayer life
4. The heart of the leader

RenewalWorks™
A Ministry of Forward Movement

Download the full report:

**RenewalWorks:
What We're Learning**

www.RenewalWorks.org

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June 2018 Sunday Altar Schedule

Position	Jun 3	Jun 10	Jun 17	Jun 24
	8AM	8 AM	8 AM	8AM
EM	Charles Karnopp	Gretchen Smith	Evelyn Wickham	Jim Klopstock
Acolyte				
Lector	Ron Cupid	Carol Allen	Veronica Cupid	Gary McEachnie
Usher/Greeter	Gary McEachnie	Ron Cupid	Carol Allen	Ron Cupid
Campus Monitor	Joe Harper	John Ryan	Linda Chandler	Scotty Hodges
	10AM	10 AM	10 AM	10AM
EM	Scotty Hodges	Janet Heise	Matt Thomas	James Fulmer
Acolyte		Marissa Grimes	Wyatt Thomas	Jack Flynn
Lector	Pat Benaquista	Shane Tyler	Lynn Thomas	Heidi Lindsay
Usher/Greeter	Peter Minkel	Suzie Peterson	Tom and Mary Ann McKinney	Nora Del Ross
Campus Monitor	Larry Lindsay	Lynn Thomas	James Fulmer	Janet Heise
Altar Guild	May 26-June 8	Jun 9-Jun 22		Jun 23-Jul 6
	Scotty Hodges & Sue Pokorny	Anne Prather		Pat Minkel & Marajeane Scarfe
June Counter	Anne Prather			

GRACE CHURCH STAFF

Interim Rector	The Rev. Perry W. Polk
Associate	The Rev. David Cavanagh
Organist	Lynne Secrist
Senior Warden	Jim Klopstock
Junior Warden-	James Fulmer
Treasurer-	Gretchen Smith
Vestry—	Linda Chandler , Janet Heise, Scotty Hodges, Ellie Kulseng, Suzie Peterson, Lynn Thomas, and Shane Tyler
Staff: Office Mgr./Bookkeeper:	Kim Worthen

Our Mission:

Welcome • Transform
Build Up • Reach Out • Glorify God

PLEASE NOTE :

Sharing Grace Articles are due by the **20TH OF EACH MONTH**. Please email submissions to gracechurchff@sbcglobal.net as the office staff is consolidating information for the rector.

