

President's Note for July & August

"What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness" John Steinbeck

Ah, Steinbeck. I read quite a bit of Steinbeck over my high school and college years. My great-aunt Ivron Bryan was a fan and particularly enjoyed his not so literary, but more just for fun book *Travels with Charley*. Ivron, Auntie Squidge to the family, and her husband Bill loved to travel, particularly here in the west, so Steinbeck was a natural fit. Of course Steinbeck is right in that if every day were idyllic we would have nothing to measure our days against and wouldn't appreciate perfection for being the exception rather than the rule. We are lucky and blessed to have many nice days to enjoy here in California and I give thanks for that comfort. I also find it a bit ironic that some of the poor farming and fishing communities Steinbeck wrote of now have some of the state's highest real estate values in the state and nation.

We've lost a couple of good friends in Christ recently with the passing of Steve Harris and John Eastman. They were good men, faithful servants of our Lord and we will truly miss them. A celebration of life service for Steve will be held at St. Paul's on Saturday July 11th at eleven am with a reception to follow in the hall.

On a less somber note the Dias family hosted another splendid barbeque and potluck with delicious food and drink and even better fellowship. Thanks Rick, Punky and family for your hospitality. We had a great time.

With Pastor Schedler out of the mix, at least for now, we've had a bit of a new mix of homilists with Pastors Olsen, Carlson and retired Bishop Mullen. I told Bishop Mullen that I particularly enjoyed his story of a North Dakota family that bickered almost continually, but felt a real love for one another and God when they held hands and prayed in silence at the graveside of a brother who had met an untimely death. After a long silence a surviving brother proclaimed, "Why can't it always be like this?". Yes, why do we bicker over so many petty, foolish things?

This story reminded me of the story of Elijah waiting for God on Mount Horeb. God was not present in a great wind, a violent earthquake or a fire. God revealed himself in the silence that follows, 1Kings19, 11-13. I've felt that divine presence in the solitude of the mountains or by the sea, even right here at home.

We watch the news, read newspapers and online and can become jaded with all of the negativity in the world around us. I recently had an experience that was quite the opposite and helped remind me that there are good, honest people in this world. A friend of mine and I were at Dimple records on Arden Way, yes it is sad these stores will be closing, and I purchased a highly discounted movie DVD or two. I had just come from an ATM that had given me a one hundred dollar bill instead of the typical twenties. Apparently when reaching in my pocket for a movie and grocery list I had dropped the one hundred dollar bill which I did not discover until later while grocery shopping. I assumed that money was gone forever, but then noticed on my cell phone I had received a call from Dimple. Naturally, I returned their call; they had discovered the one hundred dollar bill on the floor, ran surveillance video and because I have a Dimple card they were able to determine it was mine. Yes, there are still good people doing good deeds in this world. Thanks be to God....and to Kaylie from Dimple!

In the upcoming events department, on August 17th from eight until noon our friends from Lutheran Church of the Cross, where Rev. Dee Emmert is interim pastor, will host their now annual Hot August Mornings pancake breakfast and car show in our church parking lot and in Saunders Hall. Bring your appetite, love for cars and show your support to our fellow believers. You might even end up on television like our own Ward Berke did last year!

Stay tuned and check the September newsletter for specifics on our annual Oktoberfest and for a neighborhood craft faire to be held on our corner lawn area. See Dede McKinnon if you can help with the Oktoberfest which will take place on Saturday October 19th from six until nine as she is assembling a committee list for helpers. Check with Sandy Wolpert for details on the craft faire which will take place on Saturday October 05. Despite our somewhat less than mega-church numbers we do our best to remain active and visible within the community.

We have a milestone event on the horizon as St. Paul's and Pastor Townsend will be celebrating fifty years of mutual ministry this fall. Save the date of Sunday September 22nd to mark this event. Details are in the works, but as it stands now we will have a joint worship in our sanctuary with Grace Presbyterian and then will gather in the hall for a celebratory luncheon.

Back when Father Michael Kerrick was our interim pastor he emphasized that members of the early church saw faith and salvation in terms of community. Bishop Eaton in her June Living Lutheran article states: "We gather in Jesus' name and we gather as the body of Christ." She affirms this statement with a quote from St. Paul, "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members of one another" (Romans 12:5). Bishop Eaton contemporizes this long standing belief by referring to Bishop Desmond Tutu and the African concept of Ubuntu, "I am because we are." Our own national currency reflects this concept with the maxims, In God We Trust and E Pluribus Unum (out of many one).

Those of you who know me well will know that while take great pleasure in being with friends and family, I also need my quiet alone time. Despite that desire and need for quiet space I and we do need to gather in the Lord's house on the Lord's day as we worship together and partake of the sacraments. After we leave and go our separate ways for the week we continue to pray for one another and be there for one another to strengthen each other and show our love for fellow believers and our Lord. We pray for those on our prayer list, our family, friends, nation and world as we also pray for our little church, our community of faith and hope here in Tahoe Park. We are a people bound by faith, hope, love and community; ubuntu. Have a blessed summer.

"Do your little bits of good where you are; it's those little bits of good that overwhelm the world." Bishop Desmond Tutu

Chuck Prewett

Council President