



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

"A loving congregation seeking unity with God and each other in Christ"

Newsletter for
Oct. 30 & Nov 6, 2016

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On Being Fully Present and Ending Well

I have been asked to say more about the passage of 2 Corinthians 4 which I preached this last Sunday. In particular, a parishioner wants me to say more about the ability to be fully present in the moment and the ability to end well, two of Paul's greatest attributes. First, let me recap the sermon and then I will add a few comments.

Beginning at 2 Corinthians 4:1, the author of the letter, which we presume is Paul, starts a long farewell speech to Timothy in which he encourages him to "Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction." Paul is nearing the end of his second imprisonment in Rome and he knows his end is approaching. He is deeply concerned about the state of the church, as he has heard rumors of teachers who are making the rounds to various churches teaching false doctrines. He tells Timothy, "The time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths." It is for this reason that Timothy must remain faithful to the truth, by remaining fully present in all situations, what Paul calls, "Keep your head in all situations". To be fully present doing the work God has given him to do will require that Timothy and his people "endure hardship." Yet, even in the face of this hardship, he must, "Do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry."

Being fully present is a hard thing. Escapism, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual is always a huge temptation, especially when the work becomes extremely difficult, when conflicts arise, or when we feel that our efforts are nothing more than a drop of water in an ocean of need. The temptation to become discouraged, to feel bitter and resentful, and to backslide into whining and complaining about our ministry or our Christian walk is a real problem for many of us. It would be easier to isolate in a mountain top to think holy thoughts than to enter the gutters, the highways and byways, where the neglected and disenfranchised people of God are to be found. It would be easier to "suck the marrow out of life" and make the whole world your oyster, serving and pleasing the self, in absolute detachment from the sufferings of this world. After all, Christianity is pretty hard. It forces us to care, it demands that we do the hard work of kingdom building, it compels us to meet our brothers and sisters where they are, which is often not where we wish them to be, and it places imperatives on our lives to forgive as we are forgiven and to love as we are loved.

Being fully present in the moment requires that we spend the energy and attention necessary to accomplish the task at hand, whether in season or out of season, whether in moments of high adulation and praise, or at moments of conflict when our very lives or reputations may be at stake. Being fully present requires that we show up with open arms and open hearts, and with readiness to accept what might become possible. Lukewarm-ness, arrogance, haughtiness, and an inflated sense of self are always

roadblocks to a lifestyle of full-presence. In other words, if the Lord asks you to shovel manure for the sake of one of the least in his kingdom, then shovel without resentment or bitterness. When we make the mistake of feeling ourselves superior to the work God gives us to do in the moment, we become puffed up, aloof, detached, and resentful.

Paul knows his journey is about to end. He sees his martyrdom this way, "For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near." His martyrdom will be a sacrificial offering to God who has prepared for Paul a "crown of righteousness." What we do on this earth matters to God. Our faithfulness and full engagement with life prepares us for an eternal future with God. Using metaphors from the gymnasium and the Olympic Games, Paul claims, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." In other words, Paul has done the work he was given to do with utmost integrity and dedication. Not because he was somehow earning his salvation, but rather, because he was absolutely convinced that salvation is only possible through Jesus of Nazareth and he would not rest until he made Jesus known throughout the world.

Paul's satisfaction at having ended well is not the arrogant cry of the Pharisee who gives thanks loudly that he is not "like this sinful tax-collector." It is rather the joyful cry of one who has performed an incredibly difficult task out of love and complete adoration of the one who called him, prepared him, blessed him, and sent him into the world to do his work. Paul knows that the glory belongs to no one else but Christ himself. Our offerings to God, no matter how small, are always well received by the one who loves us enough to die for us. Ending well is as important, and perhaps more so, than starting well. Ending well shows endurance, commitment, unwavering resolve, incredible love, and obedience to the one who walks alongside us and will welcome us in love at the finish line.

Christianity is a lifestyle of full engagement, but we are never alone in our walk. He who sends us remains with us to the end. May he continue to bless you. Amen!

A Note from your Coordinator of Youth and Family Services: Whew! I cannot believe it's been a month since I started my new journey here at Grace! I've been quite busy with youth ministry and the flood recovery. The youth group is off and rolling as the youth continue learning more about their faith and developing their relationship with God. Part of that journey will include a mission trip! We are using the Rite 13 and Journey to Adulthood curriculums which provide a strong yet fun filled foundation in growing their faith. We invite you to join us for our Halloween celebration on Sunday the 30th at 4 p.m. There will be food, costumes, and games. We are also planning a Thanksgiving meal together on Sunday, November 20th, please join us! THANK YOU to all the families that have cooked for the youth group and participated in our fellowship. The youth truly enjoy having a home cooked meal but even more, you are providing a wonderful example of Christ's love and fellowship for our youth.

As we know the Great Flood of 2016 devastated much of South Louisiana. Yet despite the devastation the outreach effort towards the recovery is an example of what Jesus meant when He said to love your neighbor as yourself. We have had multiple groups come from out of state and locally to volunteer. We currently have a group in from Vermont and will have two groups come to stay with us at Grace in November. Thank you to all who have helped house and feed our volunteers! I will be looking for cooks for dinners for our groups so please reach out to me if you would like to make a meal. We are able to help many families begin the rebuilding process through your contributions as well as the support of the numerous volunteers. I'm truly loving every minute of my work and am humbled by the support I have received from our congregation. Thank you to everyone that has made this possible; our Grace family is a strong and loving one! God Bless! Meg Kendrick

Your prayers are asked for the family of Carolyn Bunch who died October 17. Services were held in Grace Church followed by burial in Grace Cemetery. May the souls of the faithful departed, rest in peace.

Intercessory prayers are asked for Grace Church members who are ill:

Fern Aldridge, David Barnes, Tom Morris, Sara Nelson, Sarah Rhody, Jim Roland, Margie Sheets, Eleanor Thomas, Wendell Wade, David Walker, Pam Willson, Jake Wray, Madeline Wright.

Birthdays

Adair Cunningham, Michelle Weller-Oct. 31; Ann Leggett, Clara Beaumont-Nov. 1; Susan Davis, Paul Opperman-Nov. 2; Caroline Colvin-Nov. 3; Trey Marchive-Nov. 4; Jackson Reid-Nov. 6; Barbee Irwin, Jerry Barbers-Nov. 7; Ethan Lyon-Nov. 8; Caroline Finch-Nov. 11.

Wedding

Anniversaries

David and Valerie Barnes-Oct. 31; Jeff and JoAnne Ford-Nov. 2; David and Michelle Weller-Nov. 14.

Other persons prayers are asked for:

Charles Barham, Walker Bell, Micaela Kell Bennett, Jolie Berry, Phillip Bowen, Leo Brown, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Mac Bullock, John Caruthers, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Scott Dardenne, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Desselles, Molly Douglas, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Mark Feltner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jean-sonne, Jill Joffrion, Mary Jo Kaly, Cecil Kelly, Jody Lemoine, Bob Lewis, Jessica Liddle, Max, Paul McGuff, Ralph McKenzie, Lainece Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Robin Michel, Dorothy Anne Millikin, Jim Mire, Jimmy Mitchell, Rusty Melton, Alice Mier, Randall Nachman, Barton Platte, Susanna Prescott, Peter Purpera, Carol Ratcliff, Tammy Riggs, Cole Rourke, Joseph Savell Sr, Stephen Seale, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Cade Stapleton, Glenn Thomas III, Roland Toups, Denham Turner, Darold Whitmer, Zane Woodward.

Those serving in the armed forces: Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, James Boucher, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, Ben Colia, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Matthew Young, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped.



Grace Church Develops Mobil App: Our new app looks great. To download, please go to the sites on the picture and look for Grace Episcopal Church, Saint Francisville. The app contains up to the minute information about our programs, sermons, newsletters, etc. Please check us out at gracechurchwfp.org and let us know if you have any problems downloading the app. Blessings, Your IT person, otherwise known as Fr. Roldan+

UTO Fall Ingathering will be this Sunday at both services. Envelopes will be placed in the pews and new boxes are available on the table in the narthex.

Men's Prayer Breakfast is Nov. 2 at 7am. Who would like to cook? Please call Fr. Roldan if you are willing to cook.

St. Mary's Chapel, Weyanoke will have a "blessing of the graves" on Sunday, Nov. 6 at 3pm. Everyone is invited. Light refreshments will be served after the service .

The St. Francisville Symphony Association presents the Baton Rouge Symphony Chamber Series' first concert *Benjamin Britten: A Retrospective* on Friday, October 28 at 7:00pm in Grace Church. Internationally acclaimed tenor Paul Groves introduces us to one of the 20th century's greatest composers, Benjamin Britten, with works that celebrate his life, loves, friendships and artistic genius. Groves will be accompanied by Angela Bagnett Finley, horn and Diane Frazer, piano. Tickets are available at Bank of St. Francisville, or at the door.

The Over-50 group will visit the beautiful home and gallery of Murrell Butler on Friday, November 4. Please sign-up in the Narthex and be at Grace by 10am. Lunch will be provided for all who sign up. This event is open to the public. Please bring friends. For more information call Maria Gerry, 245-1062.

Lunch with C. S. Lewis: Come with us to serve over 200 hungry college students on Wednesday, Nov. 9. We will leave Grace at 9:30am. Cupcakes are welcome. Call Kathryn Ward, 721-2271, if you're able to join us!

Origins and History of the Bible will be the class The Rev. Dr. Peter Kang is offering on Wednesday mornings at 9am and again that evening 6:00-7:30 pm, October 26-November 16. We will look at how the many texts of scripture came to be included in the Bible, the history of transmission and translation of the scriptures from ancient times to the present. We will also look at some of the books of the Apocrypha and more. Join the class, either in morning or the evening.

FINA (Families in need of Assistance) will have a fund raiser on Thursday, November 3, 11am-1pm, a fried fish plate which includes fish, french fries, potato salad and bread, for \$7 per plate. Purchase tickets in advance from Maria Gerry. The lunches may be picked up at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church. Thank you for your support.

Grace Church
of West Feliciana Parish
P.O. Box 28
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St. Francisville LA 70775

Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday, October 30, 2016

Acolytes: Hayden Howle, R. E. Barrow,
Lily Higgins, Ella Corinne Howle
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Sharon Gauthier
10:00am: Richard Kendrick, Rucker Leake
Ushers: Will Plettinger, Rob Reinhardt
Lectors: David Barnes, Dixie Blue
Vestry Rep: Christian DeJean
Altar Guild Team 3
Altar flowers: Bobby and Jane Daniel
Sanctuary candle: Kenneth and Dixie Blue
Coffee Hour: Rob and Heather Howle
Babysitters: Madie Kane, Shelby Griffin

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Acolytes: Mary Elizabeth Barrow, Mathilde
Fox-Smith, Charles Fox-Smith
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Lucie Butler
10am: Sara Klein, Mark Mulkey
Ushers: Ethan Rhody, Austin Roldan
Lectors: David Bunch, Missy Higgins
Vestry Rep: Dare Didier
Altar Guild Team 4
Altar flowers: Colleen and Jean Hill
Sanctuary Candle: Anne Klein
Coffee Hour: Rachel and Zed Howell
Babysitters: Lorna Klein, Emma Olsen

October 30, 2016

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour
4-6pm Youth Group

November 6, 2016

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour
4-6pm Youth Group

Wednesday, November 2

7:00 Men's Prayer Breakfast
9:00am - Bible Study
5:15pm - Holy Eucharist
6:00pm - Bible Study

Thursday, November 3

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor

Friday, November 4

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, November 6

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour
3:00pm - Blessing of Graves, St. Mary's
4-6pm Youth Group

Wednesday, November 9

9:00am - Bible Study
5:15pm - Holy Eucharist
6:00pm - Bible Study

Thursday, November 10

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor

Friday, October 28

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study