

Quarterly Journal



Holy Week Reflection - Fr. Boyd Evans

As we approach the end of the Lenten season, we enter the most sacred of days on our church calendar, Holy Week. The final days leading up to Easter can be emotionally and physically challenging. They are challenging because we cannot help but take a hard look at the self-absorption and callousness lurking within our hearts. It's difficult for us to admit that we are all participants in the violence and cruelty that fill our world through wars, exploitation, and brutality. Our government institutions and our own tax dollars fund weapons that result in tremendous suffering worldwide. Much of the luxury and wealth in our country comes at the expense of those who labor under inhumane

conditions, and our collective disrespect for the natural world that sustains us will affect generations to come.

Yet Divine Love enters our world despite our callous individualism (Romans 5:8). Instead of judging, condemning, or punishing us, Jesus endures the worst betrayal, humiliation, and cruelty that our human nature can inflict, and he refuses to participate in our systems of violence or perpetuate the suffering inflicted upon him. Instead, he shows us that retaliation and vengeance merely amplify the sorrows in our world, and that only love, compassion, and nonviolence can ease the pain we so often inflict on one another. In doing so, Jesus shows us the depths of our Triune God's love for all of humanity and creation.

During Holy Week, we are invited to

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walk with Jesus through the events of his final days. We do not simply remember his Passion; through our liturgies, we actively take part in the actions through which Christ saves the world. On Maundy Thursday, it is Christ who continues to live within each one of us and in our community who washes our feet and those of our friends and neighbors, and commands us to do likewise, loving our neighbor with the sacrificial love Jesus has shown us. We are invited to keep watch with him as he prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, and with the crowds we will shout “Crucify him! Crucify him!” as we succumb to our own fears and temptations. At the Easter Vigil, we gather with those from ancient times to light the new fire and recount the stories of God’s goodness and mercy throughout the ages, and on Easter morning, we rejoice with Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John that the tomb is empty.

I invite you to join us at St. Andrew’s as we journey through this most sacred week, walking together and experiencing firsthand the profound magnitude of God’s love.



Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen.

-BCP, 101

Blessings,
Fr. Boyd+



Deacon Wib reading the Gospel during Sunday Service.



Our dedicated acolytes doing what they do every Sunday under the guidance of Alicia McKim.



Sharing Who We Are

BY SCOTT COULTER, MINISTER OF
FORMATION AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

It has been almost a year since my job title shifted to “minister for formation and community engagement”. I came into this role with a lot of ideas – some were good (you’re reading one of them), and some had to be let go. And as I have moved more deeply into this formation and communication space, I’ve discovered more subtleties, better questions, and more avenues to explore. In that continued exploration, I’m starting to see one very important seed emerge. It is summed up in the closing verse of this poem from June Jordan:

“And who will join this standing up
and the ones who stood without sweet company

will sing and sing
back into the mountains and
if necessary
even under the sea

we are the ones we have been waiting for”

In our efforts to invite others into our parish, it is easy to ask ourselves, “what can we do, what can we offer, what programming will spark interest from our neighbors?”. And these aren’t bad questions – I’ve spent a lot of time over the course of this year asking these questions, and they are necessary. But when I talk to people, very rarely do I hear someone say they attend St. Andrew’s “because of our theology” (though they may love it), or “because of our music” (though it IS magnificent and a charism of our parish), or “because of our liturgy” (though it is a pillar of who we are). All of these things are important. But what I hear is deeper than that. What I hear is, “because I feel so welcome here”, “because of the profound love I encounter here”, “because of this community”.

The question, then, is how do we share who we are with the world around us? It’s a profoundly important question for the Episcopal Church. We don’t have a good track record of evangelism. We often shy away from sharing Jesus because we don’t believe we’re the “only correct answer”. And so, we hold back, aware of the arrogance and damage done in the name of religious conversion. But in the same way that we need to shift from asking “what programming can we offer?” to asking, “how can we share who we are?”, we need to reframe what it means to evangelize. The old model said, “how can we recruit people to Jesus?” This model erases other faiths, and diminishes other ways. It assumes we know better, and “those people” need saving from themselves. But a more loving model might say, “we are the bearers of a beloved community of love, and there is space for you here.”

Nowhere is it more essential to share who we are than in the digital space. I heard someone say recently, “if Jesus were here today, he’s be on twitter”. And that’s probably true – parables were the original short-form content. And while the social media landscape is rife with problems and misinformation, it is also a space of discovery. And we need to understand it as such. Father Boyd, Tim and members of our social justice ministry have already been roped into making videos at my request, and soon, my dear fellow congregants, I’ll be asking all of you to step into the Instagram studio to share. We must become comfortable sharing our genuine selves in this space. And in a social media world of perfectly manicured influencers, manufactured outrage and information overload, genuine presence is powerful. It is what people are seeking, even if they don’t know it.

Yes, we are the ones we’ve been waiting for. And the more we can learn to share who we are with others, the more they will feel the call to join us. Because we are a community of love, acceptance, conviction, kindness, and care. We are the Kingdom Jesus talked so much about – imperfect, but full of the grace of the Gospel and the Love of Jesus whom we worship and adore.

Amen.

Where We've Been, Where We're Going



“What is the future of the Episcopal Church?” is a question that never seems to retire. Each new financial cycle, each new report, each new projection, we find ourselves asking this same question. None but God know the answer (and even then, it's not so simple as that - God knows the story, but that doesn't mean the details are predetermined). But here's what we do know: St. Andrew's is an alive, vibrant place. We are a loving, engaged and beautiful community. We are a place where the deep well of Christ's Gospel lives, and where ALL people are welcome to drink from it together. What has that looked like these past 3 months? And what where will that lead us going forward? Here are a few highlights....

- Our charism of music continues to shine. We hosted a fantastic community concert featuring Jim Hurst. Our Friends of Music committee has continued to host wonderful musical events. And every week we are blessed by one of the most breathtaking choirs in the state of Colorado.
- Our Social Justice Ministry has continued its work of advocacy. They recently hosted a 3-night formation series, and they are working closely with other neighborhood parishes to expand our voice for equality, justice and love. Events like our March 25th Stations of the Cross Service at the GEO detention center are a reflection of the power of this ministry.
- Under the direction of Kathy Evans, “Building Bridges: Beloved Community” has organized a number of social outreach events in our neighborhood, including “Holy Donuts” and caroling in the park. These “experiments in building community” have been a breath of fresh air, re-engaging St. Andrew's with the community that surrounds us.
- We have seen more young adults coming through our doors, a trend we hope to see continue. In pursuit of this, we are applying for a grant through “Caffeinated Church” that will give us the opportunity to learn digital media strategies from the best in the biz. They will also help us create a video sharing all of the beauty of St. Andrew's, shareable across a multitude of digital platforms.

Looking forward, there are so many seeds waiting to be nurtured. Our spiritual formation offerings will continue to expand and evolve. Our collaboration with St. Barnabas, St. Lukes, and the other Denver area parishes involved in the social justice efforts will continue to build. Our digital communications will greatly expand as we partner with caffeinated

The church is it's people, and we are blessed at St. Andrew's. From top to bottom: **1)** our incredible vestry, **2)** volunteers installing the kneelers for Lent, **3)** Judie James putting the finishing touches on floral arrangements in the sanctuary.



Church. Our outreach into our surrounding neighborhood will deepen.

St. Andrew's, like all mainline denominations, faces a challenging spiritual landscape. The vision of Christianity we hold dear is a minority voice these days, but there is power in it. There is power in the genuine light of love, the light of Christ. The power of the nationalist movement coopting Christ's name is a fleeting power, a house built on sand. It will wash away. The power of the light of Christ - that is a power that can persevere through these times. And everywhere we look, there are signs. Seeds are beginning to emerge, to sprout leaves. Such growth is *never* as quick as we might want it to be, working on God's time and not ours. But there is reason for hope at St. Andrew's. Amen.

The Seeds of the Kingdom Are Alive at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

SCOTT COULTER - YOUR REPORTER IN THE FIELD 



My grandfather was a "country club Episcopalian". In Elmhurst, Illinois, working in Sears corporate offices, he approached church more like a social club than a space for deep spiritual practice. Thankfully, that is not the spiritual life of St. Andrew's (or our Colorado Episcopal Diocese).

Yesterday, I was part of something that reminded me of the fullness of our spiritual life together. One of our young adult parishioners - who came up through Godly Play, attended youth group, then stepped away from church for a while to find his own spiritual voice, and who has recently joined us again - helped organize a Stations of the Cross Vigil at the Aurora GEO detention center. He worked with Father Boyd, coordinated with other churches and advocacy organizations, and helped lead this beautiful expression of Christ's love in the face of suffering. I would estimate more than 50 people attended, joining from multiple Episcopal parishes.

I won't name him here, though some of you may know who I'm talking about. But anonymity aside, I couldn't let this quarterly be published without giving voice to what I witnessed. Because what I saw yesterday

was everything we love about St. Andrew's. It reflected the openness, curiosity and deep dedication of our Godly Play storytellers and door people. It reflected the work of our youth group, co-led with Aaron Sefton of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church (several of who's youth were also in attendance!), where every week we strive to honor the unique spiritual journey of every youth, helping them explore the questions rather than enforcing our own dogmas. It reflected the collective dedication to social justice and Big L LOVE that animates our spirituality. It reflected our willingness to think *deeply* about our faith, about scripture, and about Jesus and his teachings.

What I saw yesterday was the Kingdom. Walking from station-to-station behind the cross, reading through the scriptures and the poetry, God's Kingdom was no abstraction; it was present. It was in every one of us, in the space between each of us, in the air around us. Someday, the Kingdom will envelope the whole world. And until that glorious day, we will continue to plant the seeds of love, mercy, compassion and justice. Amen.

The Day-to-Day Work of Social Justice

BY SUE TORFIN - SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY



As I write this reflection during Lent in anticipation of the Easter season, the social justice ministry is deep into our season of state advocacy. We're tracking nine bills right now in hopes of helping to make Colorado a safer, kinder, more just place for people to live, especially those on the margins. If you would like to add your voice to this work of social justice, you can receive advocacy alerts on a regular basis. Go to our website or contact Sue Torfin for more information.

During three evenings this Lent, we have hosted a series on how to keep talking across boundaries, maintaining our own integrity, while trying to really listen to those of different views, recognizing that each person is made in the image of God. The conversations have been lively, supportive, and inspiring as we all try to live into our calling to be kind in our polarized world.

In support and prayer for our immigrant brothers and sisters, we will, in conjunction with several other congregations, be hosting a Stations of the Cross at the GEO detention facility in Aurora. It will end with communal singing within vision and earshot of those incarcerated in the facility. It is one way we can stand for our values of treating all with dignity, respect, and justice as we watch much cruelty and injustice affecting the immigrant community.

In response especially to the immigration crisis, multiple Episcopalian congregations are organizing for taking a loud and visible stand against the indignities and injustices we see taking place around us. We will make a showing at the No Kings Event on March 28th as we navigate the ways in which we can jointly make an impact on our current culture of cruelty.

This is the ongoing work of the social justice ministry. This is where the broad vision for a more just world meets the day-to-day details of advocacy work. If you'd like to be directly involved in this vital work, we invite you to become a part of our advocacy efforts and make your voice heard.

SOCIAL JUSTICE FORMATION SERIES

Join St. Andrew's Social Justice Ministry for conversation following videos from some of the most important voices in progressive Christianity. Sunday's, noon to 1:30pm.

- Oct 19 - "Immigration and Faith" with Dr. Daniel Carroll**
- Oct 26 - "Christians and Climate Change" with Bill McKibben**
- Nov 2 - "Exploring Christian Nationalism" with Jim Wallis**

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
2015 Glenarm Place, Denver, CO



Senior Warden's Corner

FROM MIKE OGBORN



Welcome to the Spring Edition of St. Andrew's Journal. As we enter Holy Week this year, it is good to remember it is a time for reflection on the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It invites us to reflect on themes of sacrifice, and renewed faith. It also allows us to focus on walking with Jesus from His time of darkness to His time of resurrection and hope, reminding us of the need for radical love, transforming our hearts through prayer and worship. This time of reflection will allow us to think about planting "new seeds" of faith through intentional spiritual habits, community, and service. As it is written in 2 Corinthians 9:6: "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."

Over the years since the Pandemic, this Parish has indeed thought about and undertook planting new seeds. It has focused a lot in building a church deeply woven together in faith and purpose. It has worked on addressing fractious times and issues by meeting them with creativity and hope. Witness, for example, the work of the Mission and Outreach Ministry in assisting its partners in need through service and funding and the work of the Social Justice Ministry 's work with immigrant challenges and advocating for justice.

Internally, we have planted new seeds by welcoming our new Rector Fr. Boyd and Kathy Evans, who have lead us in new spiritual ways, such as formation activities, Bible studies, community engagement, and education programs to deepen understanding. Our Junior Warden Roger Kilgore worked hard to address items such as needed repairs and updates to our physical structures and our Vestry has focused on supporting the activities of the Parish and strengthening our financial wellbeing. Our Stewardship Journey Chair Margaret Flint ran a very successful pledge season and you, our faithful members, answered that call for support with great enthusiasm.

I am thankful to each and every one of you for your faithful support of our beloved Parish. Together we can continue to emphasize the importance of community engagement and outreach, the promotion of education and formation programs to deepen understanding, and the support mission work that addresses social justice and service. We can be Sowers of seeds. If each of us sows a seed through a kind word, a smile, a compassionate conversation, a help in a time of trouble, a shared experience of the divine, and a powerful moment together, the possibilities for planting the loving kindness God intends for us are endless and will reap care, inclusion and compassion.

Faithfully,
Mike Ogborn



Our choir during a candlelight service. It can't be said enough: music is at the very heart of St. Andrew's.



The procession preparing for Sunday Service.



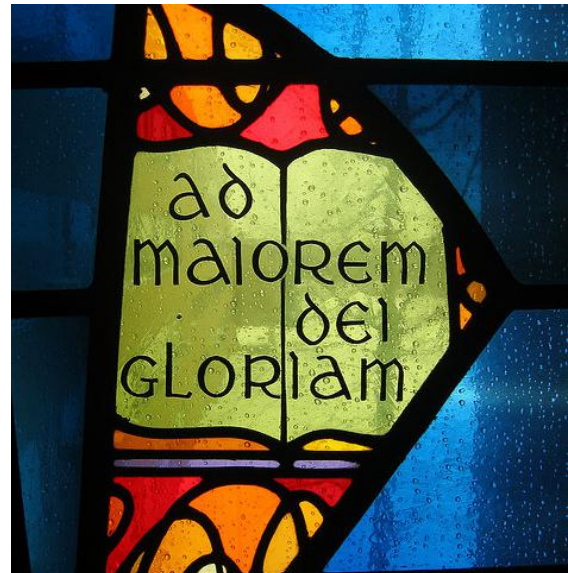
Deep conversation at a recent Sunday formation series exploring the Gospel of Matthew.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam

FROM KATHLEEN SCHMIDT, ST. ANDREW'S CONGREGANT AND
CURRENT SEMINARIAN AT YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL

What is sustaining you during this time? If you are feeling weary from the weight of the world, or from the burdens in your own life, sustaining yourself can feel pretty daunting. Maybe the weights and burdens are making things feel really unsustainable. Maybe the sustenance you've been relying on isn't cutting it anymore.

Our bodies, our hearts, our beings are so resilient. We are capable of so much. Frieda Kahlo famously said that "at the end of the day, we can endure much more than we think we can." But even the strongest muscles will tear with too much strain, and I'm not sure any human heart is so hard that it cannot be broken.



When I consider that question, "what is sustaining you?", it brings to mind miniature things, seeds of things. Granular things. It's not often that any of us comes across something so singularly sumptuous and satiating that it can sustain us the way we feel we need to be sustained. In my life, sure I've had feasting. But I've had famine, too. And the famine times have taught me to look for the seeds of sustenance. They're often so tiny as to be unrecognizable at first. If I stepped wrong I might miss them entirely. What I've found, though, is that they are everywhere. Once I start seeing them, I realize that I am utterly surrounded by them.

My seeds are what you might expect. A hug. A text. (Even an emoji.) Fun patterns on my socks. Little labyrinths hidden throughout my apartment. Bright colors. Birdsong. Flowers. Snow on a lazy Saturday. Music by a favorite artist. I bet many of you would claim these as your seeds too.

Since I'm writing this on the verge of Holy Week, let me share some of the rare and jeweled seeds that sustain me, that appear only at this time of year. All Glory, Laud and Honor. Waving palms along the streets of the city. The settings of Psalm 51. Fifteen candles dwindling. Washing someone's feet. Someone washing my feet. At St. Andrew's, Downward to Darkness. The new fire. The Exsultet. Perhaps the Biggest Chia Seed of them all for me: the all-night vigil, sitting alone with Jesus in the garden at the Altar of Repose, for an hour, or four, trying to stay awake as the tombstone of the clockface rolls into the Fourth Watch, sitting with our honored dead in their graves inside our altar, hiding and seeking with the full moon in the clerestory windows.

Alone, these granules, while they flavor and fleck my life, cannot sustain me entirely the way I need sustenance. Until I consider the way the bread of life was made. First granules ground into flour, then mixed and kneaded and proved, then held in the fire until that night when Jesus was at supper with his friends, and he took bread, blessed and broke it, and said, "Take. Eat. This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Dear friends, this Holy Week and Eastertide, I hope you have moments to consider your sustaining seeds. Count them. Gather them. Take them and eat them. Behold them. Become them. Watch how they grow.

-Kathleen Schmidt