

March 2025

The Good News

A Newsletter of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Louisville, Kentucky



Wherever we are, this is how we love God and God's People

From the Rector's Study

Fr. Andrew, Rector

Beloved,

Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them." It is from Matthew 6, which we read annually on Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. I find reading this passage awkward every year because I go out publicly with the cross on my forehead, smeared in ashes made from last year's palm branches. It seems somewhat

contradictory to Jesus' message. Still, many Christians observe this tradition as you notice it everywhere, even at a bar on Ash Wednesday. Whenever I see the cross on a stranger's forehead in public, I glance at it and feel tribal. Occasionally, we exchange eye contact and brief smiles, signifying that we are on the same team. Thanks to this tradition over the years, it has sparked many conversations with strangers - some positive and some emotionally charged.

This supposed expression of humility seems to have become a symbol of our Christian pride somewhere along the line, much like flags and brand logos representing various communities. While not all Christians participate in this tradition, even these non-Ash-Wednesday types express similar pride for being *truer* Christians by defying the tradition.

Regardless, we are creatures that seek and express meaningful identities through association. We screen each other's identities through various signals and quickly judge who our real friends are or aren't. I've made friends and lost some because of it. Looking back, I wonder how many opportunities I've missed to connect with someone deeply because of my quick identity-driven, hard-set prejudice.

As I stumble with such a disconnect between Matthew 6 and our Ash Wednesday ritual and reflect on earlier missed opportunities, Lent humbles me to self-examine my righteous religiosity and faith. It makes me wonder what Jesus would think of us today. Will he be proud of us for our righteous deeds, or will he shake his head at us for being too good to be part of the broken world? Recalling Jesus' countless interactions with the apostle Peter, I can't help thinking it is the latter. Faith in Jesus is never about pride; it is not about elevating and separating us from brokenness. On the contrary, it is all about our foundation of love that throws us into the wilderness so we can boldly bring God's kingdom on earth by loving one another as Christ commanded us. Practicing such love

calls for forgiveness, compassion, and hope. Lent is an excellent season to wrestle with this concept.

Ash Wednesday begins with a reminder that *we are dust, and to dust, we shall return*. It teaches us of humility that we are no better than anybody. However righteous, we are equally as sinful as the rest. Furthermore, the ashes that mark the cross on our forehead can't be a better symbol to remind us of the limited time we share on earth, witnessing how quickly fresh green palm branches dry out and become ashes. Throughout the penitential season, we journey through the Passion of Jesus Christ to re-educate us about his forgiveness and redemption. It teaches us of our obligation to forgive and reconcile each other so that we can set our minds on love. Humility in Lent points to self-denial and takes us away from denial of others like these. It sets our focus on loving as to be loved, accepting as to be accepted, and forgiving as to be forgiven. The cross smeared with ashes on our forehead is the beginning of such humility we pledge to God in Jesus' name. It's not a fashion statement. We must try living it like we mean it.

I look forward to walking the spiritual journey of faith with you for the next 40 days. Be sure to check out all the Lenten formation opportunities. Let's act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God... together.
Love in Christ,
Fr. Andrew



From the Deacon

Pete Womack – Deacon

For this month's article, I am focusing on a secular topic rather than share a theological or spiritual perspective. With Lent approaching, there are some things around our view of morality that we need to think about. In my March 2nd sermon, I will mention/have mentioned a book called The Righteous Mind by Jonathan Haidt. Dr. Haidt is a moral psychologist who has studied and developed theories on what morals are, what they mean, and how we adopt or change them. This was a book that Father Andrew started to read last fall and recommended it to me, and we read it at the same time. It is a very good introduction to morality based on research and it takes attentive reading to capture everything in it. Most of the moral concepts have Judeo-Christian roots, so they were familiar to me and easily applicable to moral teaching in the Jewish and Christian scriptures. This book has added another dimension to my understanding of morality in general and has challenged me to look critically at my own morality specifically.

There are two main points that Dr. Haidt makes that can help understand

morality and its origin, and will help with examining your morality, even if you don't read the book. The first point is that when we describe the morality of something or someone, it is actually the second reaction we have to it or them. We are under the illusion that we can come up with rational, well-thought-out reasons for determining morality that stand up to scrutiny. The truth is that research has shown that we have an immediate, often unconscious emotional reaction to something or someone, whether it is delight, disgust, fear, or relief, and it occurs in the context of life experience and trauma. Our moral explanations come shortly afterward to defend and reassure ourselves that our emotional reaction was justified. So, our journey through life and moral situations is guided mostly by our emotional reactions, not our reasoning. This was hard for me to accept, because I believe that I can be objective and come to a rational and justified explanation for my moral judgements and actions. There is good news, though. We can put distance between our emotional reactions and the resulting rationalizations if we ask ourselves about what emotions we experience and then name them. Then, we can more easily set those emotions aside and engage in determining morality based

on fact, reason, and justice, rather than only on emotions. Emotions engage us in the moment and then provide an opportunity to apply reason.

The second point is the five pillars that Dr. Haidt has developed to describe the morals, the sense of right and wrong that we have. These pillars are 1) providing care and avoiding harm; 2) promoting fairness and stopping exploitation; 3) expecting loyalty and dealing with traitors or apostates; 4) recognizing authority and blocking anarchy; 5) recognizing sanctity and removing degradation. These pillars are universal, rising above political, religious, or cultural categories in America, but our actions supported by the pillars look very different from person to person that are categorized politically, religiously, or culturally. Nearly everyone will agree that the five pillars describe their morals, but when we talk about what is moral or immoral, we quickly descend into disagreement and conflict over right and wrong. We constantly have to evaluate and negotiate degrees of morality as we are challenged by ideas or events.

The current American social climate is dysfunctional and politics are combative, and I feel at a loss how to address it. Maybe we need to step out of our biblical source of morality to

understand what happens to us emotionally and spiritually when we react to scripture and to daily events happening around us. Maybe we need to examine why morality looks different to us versus other people, and how to work with that difference. At the very least, we need move away from the emotions roused by manipulative manufactured outrage, antagonism for its own sake, and acts of humiliation or imposition. We need to rationally examine the reasons for our judgements of morality to create consistency and understand where right, wrong, and justice lie.



From the Vestry

Suzie Aebersold – Jr. Warden

Change happens all the time, whether we like it or not. The change in seasons. I'm sure some are ready for Winter to end. I really like how quiet it becomes when we have snow, but my bones do not like the cold. We have changed in time. Daylight savings time begins in about three weeks! My grandchildren seem to change every time I see them!

Change happens in our church too. Colors used for the seasons of the Church, the Book of Common Prayer and the

Hymnals have changed from when I was a child in the Church. People change. Some leave us to make a home with God. They are gone, but we will always remember and love them in our hearts. We have had a change in Music leadership. This has been a most wonderful change for the choir. We are learning challenging new music and learning to sing together to the Glory of God. Our Christmas music was very moving for me. Tears welling up and goosebumps were involved too!

Now, we have a change in Vestry Leadership. We have a new Sr. Warden, Kathy Dawkins, a new Junior Warden, that's me, and a new Secretary, Connie Sublett. We also have two new Vestry members, Cheryl Cabbage and Ruth Ellen Flint.

As Junior Warden, I will do the best I can to lead, whatever I am assigned. It's a little scary. I don't have an assignment as others do, but I'm sure I will have guidance from Fr. Andrew and Kathy to show me how to help. In hindsight, my first year on the Vestry as Secretary was great! This leadership position helped me learn the workings of St. Paul's Vestry. Believe me, the experience was not like any Vestry I had been on before. I would love to continue as Secretary, but that's not how this Vestry works. Again, change. Change helps us learn and grow as a person. I know this change, while challenging, will

make me learn and grow into an even better leader for St. Paul's.



From the Choirmaster

David Paul Gibson – Organist / Choirmaster

Having served the church for some fifty-plus years, I have had the opportunity to contemplate the meaning of Lent many, many times. The journey, however, never ceases to move and inspire me.

One of the ways that we, as musicians, mark Lent is in the music we offer the church family. Gone are the alleluias and big, brassy anthems. Gone are the grand festive organ preludes and postludes. The music now is sublimely contemplative. We chant the psalms, focusing closely on the texts presented. As always, we select hymns that both reflect the season and the scripture that we will hear. So many considerations, but worth every effort as we worship together at this time of reflection.

There is one exception commonly practiced by the Church: Laetare Sunday. Laetare Sunday is celebrated on the fourth Sunday of Lent (this year March 30th), marking its mid-point. On this Sunday it is traditional to

lighten the penitential mood. We will have our Chimers chiming music to welcome the congregation as they enter the church for worship and the music during mass will be somewhat lighter in nature. As exciting, we will celebrate a choral evensong at 4:00pm that afternoon. The evensong service, given by our wonderful choir and Schola, will be proceeded at 3:30pm by an organ recital. Our recitalist will be Denise Whittington, who was until recently the organist at Christ Church Cathedral. A doctoral student at the esteemed Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Ms. Whittington is well known for her excellent recital and service playing. You will not want to miss this special event, so put it on your calendar today.

As we travel together through Lent, I wish each of you the blessings of this beautiful, contemplative season.

David Paul Gibson
Organist-Choirmaster



From the Preschool

Erin Dykes - Director

St. Paul's Family,

I'm certain that you are as ready as we are for the weather to turn from this exceedingly long winter we've been enduring. All the snow, ice, and frigid

temperatures have worn out their welcome at the Preschool! We structure gross motor activities inside for the children when we can't get out, but the children are ready to get outdoors! They're ready to run off the winter "blahs" and we grown-ups are ready to spend more time outside as well.

February was busy but an opportunity to share a lot of love through our Doughnuts with Dads events and Valentine's Day parties. The children always enjoy bringing their fathers (or other special adults) in to enjoy some doughnuts, and the stick horses they decorated for Derby are adorable!

March will be equally busy and fun. We are preparing the Preschool for a "Garden Party" Morning with Mom experience for the children and moms to enjoy. This event will take place on March 20th and 21st, and we can't wait to have the moms (or other special adults) join us for breakfast and some Derby hat-making fun.

We will partner with Goodwin Greenhouse of LaGrange again in April for our annual Flower & Vegetable Plant Sale. Our order form for 2025 is being fine-tuned and will be available in late March. Orders will be due on Friday, April 11th. We'll take delivery of our entire order on Wednesday, April 23rd, with pickup opportunities ensuing. I will make sure to

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have the order form to Robyn in the Parish office in plenty of time to get your copy. As always, we appreciate your support of the Preschool via this fundraiser.

We continue with steady tours and enrollment for the '25-'26 school year, but still have limited availability left for all age groups if you know anyone interested in preschool placement. While we're never ready for our current kiddos to move on, we always look forward to getting ready for a fresh crop of students each year!



Pray, Learn, Serve, and Rejoice at St. Paul's

All newsletter articles are due on the 15th of every month to be placed in the monthly newsletter. Bulletin announcements are due every Monday at noon. Please provide an event title, and a description of 75 words or less.

We Pray

Pray for All

During this challenging time, please be intentional about setting a time to pray. Pray for those on the prayer list. (pg. 10)

Ash Wednesday Service: Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Imposition of Ashes & Holy Eucharist at 12:15 PM and 7:00 PM



We Learn

Sunday Adult Forum

Our Sunday adult forum will begin a new reading and discussion of *Misquoting Jesus—The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why*, on Sunday, March 2, 9:00 A.M. -10:15 A.M.

Ecclesiastical Bits & Bytes

Technology and Theology with Fr. Andrew

Are you feeling intimidated with your computer, tablet, and smartphones? Are you frustrated with virtual meetings? Greetings, favored one. Do not be afraid for the Lord is with us. Contact the office to set up an appointment.



We Serve

Calvary Episcopal Church Food Pantry

Please join us at St. Paul's Episcopal Church each Sunday from 9 am – 12 pm for the Sunday Service food collection.

All food is counted and delivered to Calvary on Thursday morning after collection. If you would like to volunteer to help with driving and delivery, contact Ray Brown or David Dawkins.

Current Total: 155,240 items donated.

Please be a part of this amazing ministry by bringing items to the Sunday “SERVICE” at St. Paul’s or sending in your monetary donation!

St. Paul’s parish has generously donated over \$14,151.35 to the Calvary Food pantry since June 2020. Make checks payable to St. Paul’s.



We Rejoice

Website

Communication is the key to a successful ministry. Be sure to check out the website to keep up to date on church activities.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Join us for fun, fellowship, and food on March 4, 2025, from 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm.

The annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be served downstairs in the parish hall. The menu includes pancakes, sausage, applesauce, milk, and coffee. Suggested donation is \$6.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children under 10, and a maximum of \$25.00 per family. Dinner will be followed by the traditional service to prepare the ashes for Ash Wednesday.

St. Patrick’s Day Dinner

The annual St. Patrick’s Day dinner is Saturday, March 15th from 5:30 -7:30 PM.

Both carry-out and dine-in options are available this year.

\$15.00 per adult meal and \$5.00 for 12 and under. No advanced tickets will be sold.

Pay at the door.

Prayers and Thanksgivings

Please contact the office to include names on the prayer list by the 15th of each month. Names will be listed for 30 days (short term prayers) or if requested 3 months (long term prayers). Fr. Andrew and the weekday prayer group prays each person by name every day.

Healing, Comfort, Relief, Protection, and Hope

Sharaan McDounough (Friend of Barbara Adams), Mitchell Miller (Grandson of Glenda Blair), Carol Fitzpatrick, Ginny Hutchens (Friends of Becky Meyer), The family of Dr. Jim Coliz, The family of Dennis Ingham, Christian Filkins-Brown, Katlyn Harrison (Friends of Kathy & David Dawkins), Andy Phillips, The Family of Esther Cain, Danielle Lower (Niece of James & Mae Fleming), Rick Dacey (Friend of James & Mae Fleming), Linda Carter (Mother of Scott Carter), Jill Nief (Sister-in-law of Linda Snyder), Brody (Friend of Linda Snyder), Arlene Buckner, Fr. Roger Walker, Chad Rediker (Former St. Alban's Member), Merle Gipe (Friend of Sue Benner), Bunny & Allen Parnell (Friends of Sue Benner, Donna & Al Smith), Paul Given (Brother in law of Nancy Northrop), Alan & Barbara Johnson, Russell Burnett, Diane Poffenberger (Friends of Sandi Pierie), Sally Wheatley (Ellie Stump's Cousin), Diane Hart (Sister of Dale Miner), Bobby Goldman, Lynn Green Brad Beard, Donna Hartsoe, Jerry Nazarro, Susan Henderson (Friends of Cindy Miner), Brian Reisenberg (Friend of Luke Miner), Ron Jones (Brother of Rex Jones), Liz Babcock, Donna Wieber, Bill & Diana Motsch, Dena Rogers, Rebecca Rupp (Friends of Peggy Pryse), Chuck B. & Sandra P. (Friends of Cheryl Young), John Jackson (Friend of Glenda Blair), Ethan & Marsha Reed (Friends of The Miner Family), Larry Bates, Sue Brotherton, Maureen & Joe Solan (Parents of Jason Solan), Emily (Daughter of Ruthe & Jim Holmberg)

Serving in the Military

2nd Lt. Kyle Sears (Grandson of Arlene Buckner), Christopher Neal (Son-in-law of Monica Bell), Anthony Polio (Grandson of John and Wanda Wiegand), John Phipps (Nephew of Ray Keller), Matt Hartmann, Luke Hartlage (Son of Linda Hartlage, preschool teacher), Jennifer & Joe Venghaus, Lt. Erin Jones (Niece of Rex Jones)

Homebound

Betty Reed, Mary Ellen Pinto, Mary Langseth, Jo Stuebe
Lorna Larson, Donna Coliz, Jane Delgado-Shadid, James & Mae Fleming

Anniversaries

Barbara & Alan Johnson (3/11), Rick and Kathy Robbins (3/27)

Birthdays

Glenda Blair (3/1), Morgan Allen (3/4), Betty Waddell (3/4), Richard Baker (3/6), Abby Moulton (3/12), Jennifer Ballinger (3/14), Peggy Pryse (3/14), Steve Derossett (3/16), Lori Smith (3/23), Ellie Stump (3/26), Kelly Yurt (3/26), Alex Miner (3/27), Kaden Moore (3/27), Nancy Piedmonte (3/29), Eric Heun (3/31)

Leadership



Back row L to R: Deacon Pete Womack, Jason Solan, Tom Yurt, Fr. Andrew Shiota.
Middle row L to R: George Busch, Kathy Dawkins, Suzie Aebersold
Front row L to R: Cheryl Young, Ruth Ellen Flint, Connie Sublett, & Pam Dickmann

Senior Class ('26)

Kathy Dawkins
George Busch
Jason Solan

Senior Warden
Buildings and Grounds
Formation

Middler Class ('27)

Suzie Aebersold
Pam Dickmann
Tom Yurt

Junior Warden
Worship
Stewardship

Junior Class ('28)

Connie Sublett
Ruth Ellen Flint
Cheryl Young

Secretary
Outreach
Fellowship

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DMLO Firm

Treasurer/Accountant

Robyn Fischer
David Paul Gibson
Erin Dykes

Parish Administrator
Choir Master
Director of Preschool

The Rev. Pete Womack
The Rev. Roger Walker Priest
The Rev. Andrew Shirota
The Rt. Rev. Terry White

Deacon
Associate
Rector
Bishop of Kentucky

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