

THE SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S

ST. MARK'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

From the Rector's Desk



Jade cicada amulets. I recall learning at a Wildlife Show that the Chinese would place the amulets under the tongues of their deceased as a means of promoting their resurrection. I guess that the symbolism relates to their observing an immature cicada emerging fresh from its exoskeleton. You may have seen those dried cicada exoskeletons fastened to trees in the summer.

As Christians, we have no need for our nearest and dearest to place jade cicada amulets under our tongues when our time to enter glory arrives. That is because as Christians we are an Easter people. There is no place at which we affirm that truth more fully than at the time of our death. 'Yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia' is a line from our funeral rite (*BAS, p. 595*). Good Friday and Easter Sunday together are the celebrations around which the rest of the Church calendar revolves. That is because the death/resurrection of Jesus Christ is the focal event of our lives and indeed of all the created order. God raised Jesus from the dead, and in so doing, has provided us the means to participate in God's own life through the gift of his Holy Spirit.

What does this mean for us? What Jesus' death/resurrection means is that God can be counted on. God is true to God's promises. God has delivered on his promise to do a new thing, to heal and reconcile his creation, to restore you and me to friendship with him. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God has birthed this new creation and set in motion his plan for the perfection of all things. From the earliest of times, Christians have allowed this living hope for tomorrow to shape their lives today. It has given them renewed vision and a fresh vitality in whatever circumstances they find themselves. They have tasted personal transformation, and through that transformation have made a difference in the world around them.

I delight in stumbling across powerful ways in which this transformation is being worked out. Fr. Greg Boyle (known as Fr. G to his 'homies') is the founder and executive director of Homeboy Industries in LA, the world's largest gang rehab and re-entry programme. The lives of thousands upon thousands of former gang members have been transformed. Their motto is 'Nothing stops a bullet like a job.' What a joy to read not only of what God is doing in the lives of those coming through the programme, but to hear of God's transforming work in Father Greg's life as well in an interview he gave with L. Gregory Jones at Duke Divinity School. He used to think that his ministry was about saving lives, saving the world.

But now I think saving lives is for the Coast Guard... Our choice always is the same: save the world or savor it. And I vote for savoring it. And, just because everything is about something else, if you savor the world, somehow - go figure - it's getting saved.

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Listen to what he says about the value of kinship.

I talk a lot about kinship, and I say, "No kinship, no peace; no kinship, no justice; no kinship, no equality." We've become focused on peace, justice and equality, when the truth is, none of those things can happen unless there's some undergirding sense that we belong to each other, that we're connected, that we matter. But the good news is, if we focus on kinship, the byproduct of that effort is peace, justice and equality. It's how it happens.

And again about the value of tenderness.

But I learned a long time ago that no amount of me wanting that guy to have a life is the same as that guy wanting to have a life. So in the meantime, what do you do? You wait and you love and you cherish and you know that all mature spirituality is about tenderness. That's the mark of mature spirituality, because tenderness is the connective tissue. It's the only thing that joins us together.

God raised Jesus from the dead. By his Spirit, God has now unleashed that same power to transform our lives and to make a difference in the world here and now. It's not about jade circada amulets under our tongues at death. At St. Mark's we are learning to walk with Jesus, not to save the world, but to savour the world. Together we are living into this new way of being, of belonging to each other and connecting in tenderness. We invite you to join us in our resurrected life together through our worship during Holy Week and the Easter season and may God continue his glorious work of healing and reconciliation of his beloved, beautiful and broken world in us and through us all.

A blessed Eastertide to you all.

Tim+

<https://www.faithandleadership.com/gregory-boyle-save-world-or-savor-it>. Retrieved March 7 2016.

Some Notes and News

It is a delight to welcome Alison and Ian back into our lives and it seems that Alison is picking up just where she left off four years ago. The building now reverberates on Thursdays with tones from the chimes choir and with feisty choruses from the children's choir. Praise God!

I am deeply grateful for the ways in which folk are offering to contribute to the life of St. Mark's in various ways. The Christian Generosity team is reflecting on ways in which we can continue to promote a culture of generosity as a community. Their focus is on helping us to share the gifts God has entrusted to us for the expansion of God's reign of peace and justice for all – gifts of time, talent and treasure. You will find a Pre-Authorized Deposit form (PAD) included with this mailing. The team has been inviting us these past three weeks to consider moving to PAD. The predictability and regularity of PAD helps our wardens and treasurer to better meet our monthly financial commitments. It also makes our counting and receipt process more secure. Please feel free to discuss this option further with Anne and Dan Walker, Lloyd Symington or with Rick Newson, Keith Potts or Carrie Roth. Our thanks to Rick, Keith, Carrie and Dan for their leadership.



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Reaching Up Reaching Out



figure! What a gift it is to have a team of caring and competent folk who are looking out for us. The team has also agreed to help us follow up with newcomers. My heartfelt thanks to Debbie and to Lois Darby, Carol Howarth, Sylvia Learn and Rev. John Ogilvie for their support. If you are aware of anyone who may be in need of a phone call or a visit, please be in touch with Debbie, Christine Pizzey in the office or with me personally.

We are looking forward to two events with our young people. On Maundy Thursday (March 24) at 7pm, our communion class will be taking part in the service and receiving their certificates. Our congratulations to: Anna-Lee Corke, Cameron Fennell, Mya Hann, Nevetta Kucik, Tyson Menard and Olivia Walker. Thanks again to Pat for making the sessions as creative and informative as they have been. On the Second Sunday of Easter (April 3) at 6pm, God willing, Bishop Bob will be confirming our candidates: Courtney Bell, Emily Cooper, Joshua Dejong, Samantha Hill, Connor Lilbourne and Keegan Ogilvie. We have run classes in conjunction with St. James' Paris this year and I am grateful to Rev. Victor Kischak for his leadership.

As you know Erin and Adrian are expecting... and very soon! We uphold them in prayer and enfold them in our love as they prepare to welcome their baby in mid-March. Adrian will be taking over the reins as youth pastor while Erin is on maternity leave.

Holy Week and Easter Worship Services 2016

During this holiest of weeks, we retrace the last hours of Jesus' life and reflect on the significance of his life, death and resurrection. Plan to attend these times of worship during Holy Week and let God's spirit move in and through you as God wills.

Palm/Passion Sunday - Sunday, March 20th

9:00 am	Holy Eucharist	10:30 am	Holy Eucharist
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Mid-week Eucharist - Wednesday, March 23rd

10:00	Holy Week Service with Communion
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Maundy Thursday - Thursday, March 24th

6:00 pm	Pasta Supper	7:00 pm	A Celebration of Jesus' Last Supper
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Good Friday - Friday, March 25th

10:00 am	Intergenerational Worship	2:00 pm	The Way of the Cross
	<i>A family event suitable for all ages.</i>		

Easter Eve - Saturday, March 26th

7:00 pm	The Great Vigil of Easter
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Easter Day - Sunday, March 27th

9:00 am	Holy Eucharist (BCP)	10:30 am	Holy Eucharist (BAS)
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Senior Easter Eucharist - Wednesday, April 6th

11:00 am	Eucharist and Lunch
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