

# St. Paul's Episcopal Church

M A Y 2 0 1 7



**MAY 7**

**HOLY EUCHARIST**

**The Rev. Eric Anderson  
Lay Reader: Don Kiefer**

**MAY 14**

**MORNING PRAYER**

**Lay Reader: John Tarver**

**MAY 21**

**HOLY EUCHARIST**

**The Rev. Eric Anderson  
Lay Reader: Kate French**

**MAY 28**

**MORNING PRAYER**

**Lay Reader: Sam French**

**ALTAR GUILD**

**whoever is available**

## **SERVICES**

**9:00 A.M. - Sunday School  
10:00 - Worship Services**

## **A Word from the Bishop's Warden**

Here we are in the last part of April, Easter season. I find that I have a tremendous amount of things to be grateful for. Not the least of which is our Church. Yes, we come together to worship for that alone I am thankful. However, you, the members of our congregation are what I am most thankful for. Over the years I have found that the members of a congregation support each other, celebrate those things in each other's lives that should be celebrated and socialize. These things are being lost in a culture where people do not talk they text. I wish we could find a way to share this love with more people.

Wishing all to experience God's love and the Peace that comes with it.

Wishing God's Peace for All,

John

## **CHURCH INFORMATION**

**Mailing Address: P. O. Box 453 Clinton, MO 64735**

**GPS Address: 181 East Division Clinton, MO 64735**

**Priest in Charge: The Rev. Bill Fasel; [frbillnerm@hotmail.com](mailto:frbillnerm@hotmail.com), 816-803-4010**

**Bishop Martin Field, Diocese of West Missouri**

**Bishop's Warden: John Tarver [tarverjohn1@gmail.com](mailto:tarverjohn1@gmail.com)**

**St. Paul's Website: <http://stpaulsepiscopal.diowestmo.org/>**

**NERM WEBSITE**

**<http://www.nermwestmo.org/home0.aspx>**

## AWAKENING THE SPIRIT IN WEST MISSOURI

Come hear one of today's most charismatic speakers talk about "The Jesus Movement".

The Jesus Movement. A way of life that is not self-centered. A way of love grounded in compassion, and goodness, and justice, and forgiveness. That is the way of Jesus, and that way of love can set us all free.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will be leading this event. All are welcome and bring your friends.



### \*IN KANSAS CITY\*

Saturday, May 6, 2017

12:00 Noon Kansas City Power & Light Stage:  
Awakening the Spirit in West Missouri.

3:00 p.m. Post event 'Meet the Presiding Bishop' opportunities.

### \*IN SPRINGFIELD\*

Sunday, May 7, 2017

12:30 p.m. Gates and concession stands open

1:30 p.m. Hammons Field, Springfield:

Awakening the Spirit in West Missouri.

4:30 p.m. Post event 'Meet the Presiding Bishop' opportunities.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

Canon Steve Rottgers

([canonord@diowestmo.org](mailto:canonord@diowestmo.org)) is looking for up to 20 volunteers for the **Awakening the Spirit** event with Presiding Bishop Michael Curry on

May 6th at KC Live. These volunteers are needed to usher and help persons navigate the KC Live venue. They will receive a brief orientation on the day, and will also be given a diagram of the venue. Volunteers will be needed from 11 AM when the venue opens until (at the latest) 3 PM. If interested in volunteering, please notify Father Bill Fasel (email and number on bottom of page one), or contact Canon Rottgers directly.

## CARE NOTES:

Kurt Gretzinger had shoulder surgery on April 25 and is doing well.

Rick Miller is in Golden Valley Hospital with gall bladder and intestinal issues. He *may* have surgery this next week.

Howard Johnson is undergoing bi-weekly treatment for colon cancer.

Shut-ins: Louise Crouch, Nancy Gaines, Allen Nau (Sheryl's step-father)

## BLESSING FOR HOUSE OF HOPE

Sunday, April 30, a blessing was held for the new shelter for pregnant women at 109 W. Rogers.

This facility will have 24 hour supervision and will house women in need for up to a year.

## NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER BREAKFAST

May 4 the city of Clinton will have a prayer breakfast at 6:30 a.m. at the Senior Center.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

### BIRTHDAYS

2-Kristen French

19-Lori Morgan

### ANNIVERSARIES

none

## **An Easter Story - May 2017**

The Reverend Eric A. Anderson

Easter, for me, is not a day or a season. Easter is an everyday event. I wish I could say that this statement of faith occurred with no hardship, wilderness experience, or focused spiritual exercises, but this statement of faith took nearly everything I had to offer. Today is my birthday and as this day has progressed I have given thanks for the gifts which shaped me to become me. I have given thanks to God for the best present I have ever or will ever receive and that gift is life. Also, I have given thanks to my family of origin. I truly believe that before I was, God placed my soul in their care.

I grew up in California. I thought I had a normal childhood, but it was anything but normal. I was the third and youngest child. My dad, now retired was a Professional Engineer, and my mom chose to be a stay at home mom. I grew up in my early childhood in our Southern California home next to the ocean with a swimming pool and a boat in the marina. In my later childhood we built a ranch in the foothills of the gold country of Northern California. Our ranch had farm land, horses, cattle, chickens, dogs and cats. We ate dinner around the dining room table and went to church every Sunday as a family. I always knew I would go to college and went to a California State University immediately after high school. I graduated with a BS in Agricultural Economics. Hindsight is wonderful, it was only upon graduating I realized I had no interest in working in economics. An art history professor, political science analyst, or a director of a large metropolitan museum probably would have been more suited to my talents at this period of time.

Prior to beginning my time as a seminarian, I honestly had a good, carefree and stress-free life. I had a good home, good food, good family and friends. Every goal I set for myself I achieved and enjoyed the academics and process. Living was easy and I probably believed that I controlled my life destiny and my faith I took for granted. However, inside myself I longed for knowing the truth, but I did not know what it was I was seeking other than the truth that John wrote about in the Gospel 8:32, "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free". I received my first Bible on Christmas 1974 when I was nine years old. In all the Bibles I have had I have never written or underlined in my Bibles, but only once and it was John 8:32. I did not know it when I began my priestly career that I was being sent on a journey to know the Truth. This Truth is closely connected with Jesus; it's not a philosophical truth but a truth that leads to salvation. This truth sets us free from sin not from ignorance. When I began my life journey as a spiritual seeker of Truth, I was unaware that this would be the cross I bear!

I went to seminary in Iowa in 1987, a new part of the country for this Californian. Seminary academic were not very challenging or stimulating. The process was to train us to think inside the box and knowing the rubrics of the Church and be good professional players. Most of my life had been lived in the institution of church and academics, so this was simple training. I received very good education and training in the seminary, but I was not learning about the Truth that John wrote about, so I went exploring for it. I soon received the nick-name the "traveling seminarian" as I was on the road as much as the classroom. I traveled the blue highways from California to New York to Minnesota to Texas. I did a year of internship in Hawaii, and a semester in Washington D.C. I met wonderful people from all over the world with fascinating life stories and spirit-filled life. I met people from every walk of life and a part of their stories became a part of me and I lived life fully. By the time I was ready to graduate seminary and seek ordination, it became obvious to me I had grown beyond my Lutheran learning and God was calling me elsewhere, as I still had not discovered the "Truth that sets us free".

Not knowing where God was directing my path, I asked God in a prayer two months before I would leave Iowa and my seminary life, "Where do you want me to go?" God answered in a dream. "Go East". That was it. Go east. I thought to myself how odd, I am from the west coast. However, I trusted the truth of these words. I reached out to people I had met on my travels networking with them. Before I knew it I had landed a job as an Assistant to the Rector in a large inner city Episcopal church in Paterson, New Jersey in the Diocese of Newark and Bishop Jack Sponge also commissioned me to be a chaplain to The Oasis, an outreach ministry to the LGBT community of New Jersey to people who were not welcomed into the Church. I met my friend, who offered me a home to live in, and I settled into a new life working for the church and the diocese and I also worked as a supervisor in a stainless steel factory. Life continued to be good and after two years of personal discernment I felt the call to seek ordination in the Episcopal Church.

Then the unthinkable happened in 1995. I was a passenger in my friend's car driving on the New York Parkway to upstate New York to say final good-bye to a friend of mine who was dying. On the way there I had a full blown focal-point seizure. Once it stopped I continued on and thought not much about it until the next day I had another one. My doctor put me immediately into the hospital where it was discovered I had a mass on my motor-cortex. My doctor, who was also a friend, told me that this did not look good and very likely could be life threatening.

The first night in the hospital I must have had fifty visitors and twice as many flower arrangements. My room looked more like a floral shop than a hospital room. I was so happy when the last friend left and I could be alone. I rolled over in my bed and began to say my bedtime prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep I prayer the Lord my soul to keep, if I should live another day, I pray the Lord to guide my way". Then a gentle feeling like a soft voice came over me and said, "You will not die from this, but you will be sick for a long time." I trusted what I heard and said okay, thank you, and fell into a sound sleep. The next morning my Jewish doctor came into my room with the result of the CAT scan and told me I had a brain tumor. I looked at him and said, "A brain tumor, I have a brain tumor? Thank God only a brain tumor! He smiled and winked at me, knowing I was praising God.

A biopsy was done on my tumor and it was discovered to be a level 2 out of 3 and an astrocytoma, one of the most deadly forms of brain cancer. I was given at best eighteen months to live. I was also given prescriptions for seizure control medications and sent home to die. I lost most of most of my motor functions in my left arm and hand, I also lost some motor functions in my left leg, and I had palsy on the left side of my face. Seven weeks passed and this felt like a long time to wait anxiously. I realized I could not control my illness so I just simply handed it all over to God to control of my illness and I focused on living life in the moment. In my new understanding and acceptance of myself I became more spiritual than physical. Light hurt my eyes, noise like the television or radio hurt my ears. It took about four years before I would be selected for a newly designed surgical procedure and I would be the first patient to undergo this experimental 12 hour surgery and experience the miracle of this surgery that removed my astrocytoma tumor from my brain.

That first year of my brain tumor all I accomplished was lying in bed with my dogs and cats surrounding me with their love. This by far was the most wonderful spirit filled time of my life. I felt the presence of God constantly surrounding me and the nearness of Heaven right there. Lying in bed that year, I sometimes pondered the words I felt in the hospital, that I wasn't going to die from this. I began to think maybe what God meant had a deeper spiritual eternal meaning? My soul would not die but live with God in Heaven. With this understanding it became a win/win situation. If I die, I get to go home, and if I live, I will be able to proclaim the Word of God. Heaven became so real to me that I

waited eagerly to enter that door and go to my true home, but this was not God's path yet. In that year in bed, as I call it now, I became a true student of God, sitting at the feet of Christ and talking with him without ceasing about all I had learned in seminary and from life discerning the Truth from the fiction. Spiritually, through the Holy Spirit, I knew the Truth of Jesus Christ and Salvation and how God's full presence is always with us in every moment of our daily life. Being set free, I completely surrendered my will for God's will.

Today I continue to proclaim Christ's light to a world that prefers darkness. I know I am and you are people of the Resurrection and for us Easter is every day because Christ is in us and we are in Christ. We are spiritual beings living in mortal bodies. Death has lost all of its power and sting over us. It is in the gift of abundant joy we live this life and wait expectantly for the eternal life of salvation to welcome us home for the True Easter Celebration.

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
P.O. Box 453  
Clinton, MO 64735**