

CANTERBURY TALES

∞ AUGUST 2018 ∞

Spy on the Sahara

By the Reverend Timothy True

What follows is a parabolic sermon I composed and preached at the seminary chapel during my recent visit to Sewanee. By “parabolic sermon” is meant, essentially, a modern-day parable, told much like Jesus presented parables in his day—a relatively simple story with an element of surprise and no explanation. The text for the day was Matthew 5:43-48. Let me know what you think.

Andrew was a real-life spy.

An officer in the U. S. Navy, on September 11, 2001, he'd only recently begun studying Arabic at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. He showed remarkable linguistic aptitude and was thus soon stationed on the island of Crete. His assignment: Reconnaissance. From 70,000 feet above North Africa, he intercepted radio communications from suspected terrorist outposts. On the fly—pun intended—Andrew translated these communications and passed them along to U. S. intelligence.

Andrew loved his job. Somehow, interfering with the twisted plans of terrorists gave him a tremendous sense of satisfaction. We were the good guys, after all, the victims; whereas they, the terrorists, were the perpetrators, the enemy. They'd killed thousands of innocent citizens. And now he was able to thwart them!

You can sense it, can't you? Andrew loved his job; but he hated the enemy just as much—if not more.

Now, as is the case with the rest of us, Andrew tried to have a life beyond his job. He owned a motorcycle, for one thing—loved to ride around the twisty roads of Crete during his free time. He liked to hike, too—learned the terrain of Crete well while living there.

And he loved to read, especially classical military history—Caesar's conquests; Hannibal's attempt to overthrow Rome; the Peloponnesian Wars. He lived his life fully.

So, it came as no surprise to his friends when he told them his plan to spend his vacation riding his mountain bike across the Sahara Desert. “Two weeks,” he said. “Anyone want to join me?” “Um,” the politer ones answered, “no, thanks.” And the franker ones said, “You're nuts!” Off he went anyway, on his own, catching a ferry to Benghazi. His plan was to ride east, about fifty miles a day, ultimately to Alexandria, where he'd catch a return ferry.

But you know how plans can go—even when you're a smart and savvy officer of the U. S. Navy. It was hotter than anticipated, his water supply was running low, the next town was still a long way off, yada, yada, yada. And—wouldn't you know it?—slowing at the side of the road to take a break, he tried to dismount but was not able to release his foot from the pedal mechanism. And that's the last thing he remembered—until he woke up two days later with a throbbing migraine. (Continued on Page 2)

*Love your enemies
Bless those who curse you
Do good to those who hate you
And pray for those who
persecute you*

Matthew 5:44

Strangely, curiously, after overcoming the initial intensity of the pain and accompanying nausea, he realized there were voices nearby—and he could understand every word! —two men having a conversation in Arabic. Determining then to remain silent, he gained his bearings. He was lying on a mat on the floor of a relatively cool room, barely wide enough for him, sparsely furnished, no decorations on the walls.

He listened more closely. And, with sudden shock, all at once he understood: he was inside one of the very terrorist outposts whose communications he'd intercepted. He was captive, in the hands of the enemy—at the mercy of terrorists!

Now panicking internally, I'm happy to say Andrew managed to keep his cool. He never let on that he could understand even a word they said.

And, I'm happy to say too, nothing bad happened. They didn't run him through with a sword. They didn't bind him in a cell and torture him. They didn't even ask him for his passport.

Instead, Andrew remained in this hut for a couple more days, with various turbaned men coming and going, smelling of coffee and garlic, one of which, turns out, was quite handy with ointments and bandages, who tended to Andrew throughout, carefully—almost, it seemed, lovingly—until at last he said, in broken English, "You better now. Go home. Good luck."

Andrew made it back to Crete safely—with quite a story to tell! But he always hated being a spy after that.



August 12th at both services.

With the new school year starting, all children can bring their backpacks to either service on Sunday for a blessing. This will be a great way to make sure the school year starts off well.



A mission of the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego, St. Thomas is a "pet-friendly" church that cares deeply for our beloved pets. We work with local senior citizens to provide food for their pets and support the Animal Friends of the Valleys. We also hold a blessing for the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, and welcome well-behaved pets to attend

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UPCOMING EVENTS

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP—Monday August 6

Meets in the St. Benedict Conference room. The group is reading *Rightly Divided Answers to Frequently Asked Questions* by Pastor Ricky Kurth of the Berean Bible Society. Please come and share your views and interests. This informal group meets on the first Monday of the month and is open to anyone interested in lively discussions on diverse subjects. Please call or email Bill Liesman asiabill@aol.com for more info or to get a copy of the Kurth book.

CONFIRMATION CLASS—Sundays through August 26

Call the office or email Fr. Tim at vicar@episcopalchurchtemecula.org for more info.

MEN OF ST. THOMAS (MoST) – Saturday, August 11 at 8:00 AM

MoST is an informal fellowship that meets each second Saturday of the month at 8:00 am in Julian Hall for a potluck breakfast, brief Bible Study, and sometimes assisting afterwards with maintenance and property projects at the church. All are welcome including friends and neighbors. The emphasis is on fellowship. Come join the fun!

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS – Sunday, August 12 at Both Services

BEANIES FOR KIDS—Monday August 13, from 7-9 PM

At Barbara Bundy's home. Contact Barbara at bjbundy@verizon.net See page 14 for details

BISHOP'S COMMITTEE MEETING—Thursday, August 16 at 6:30 PM

All Congregation members are welcome to non-executive portion of the meeting. In St. Benedict Conference Room.

SAVE THESE SEPTEMBER DATES: Sunday, September 9: Assisting Bishop's Visitation with Confirmations and Baptisms
Saturday, September 22, 8:30 AM: Women of Worth (WoW) Meeting



PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION S.T.E.P. fall registration continues but space is limited. We offer parishioner and other tuition discounts. For more information please call Darlene Karnes-Versteegh at 951-302-8498. www.steptemecula.org

Food and Feelings at the Temecula Mosque

A Personal Experience of Islam

By Congregation Member Pam Bowen



I was on the scene when the Muslim community of Temecula Valley broke the Ramadan fast at the Islamic Center on Nicolas Road. My friend Stephenie Khan invited me. I had been receiving nudges from God for months (maybe years) that I needed to get over my fear of Muslims.

Recently, someone said to me, “Fear is not of the Lord. Fear is the Accuser’s way of keeping the house of God divided.” Father Tim preached on “A house divided against itself cannot stand” the very Sunday after I had been to the mosque. Do you see what I mean about nudges? I decided to take a risk and brave the mosque.

First, I had to dress appropriately with sleeves to wrist, hem to ankles, and scarf covering hair. I managed those parameters, but not stylishly. It was obvious that I was a visitor, but that didn’t bother my Muslim “sisters” who welcomed me warmly.

The Islamic Center lacks a social hall and kitchen, but that doesn’t stop them feeding a very large crowd. Long tables set up on the pavement behind the building were separated, male and female. We sat down but didn’t touch the water and small bites already laid out on the tables. We had to wait till sunset.

At sundown, we ate from the appetizers, starting with a date. I also tried potato and onion turnovers, a savory pancake, and crunchy bits of fried garbanzo flour. This broke the fast of Ramadan for those who had fasted 16 hours that day.

Next, we went in the women’s door of the mosque after shedding our shoes. I sat off to the side while Stephenie joined the other women on the lovely turquoise carpet, the only beautiful element in the otherwise plain room. Bands of floral motifs in the carpet help the worshipers line up straight: men in the front, women in back, and kids romping all over. I didn’t find the separation of sexes offensive. Some women prefer to attend a women’s gym. Muslim prayers are such a workout, I flashed on a women’s exercise class

as the sisters stood, bowed, knelt, stretched face-down, and stood up again.

All the time the imam intoned in his resonant Arabic prayers I couldn't understand. His words signaled movements and vocal responses in the congregation. I imagine I would have been just as lost at a Roman Catholic mass delivered in Latin. But I felt the presence of God in the room, and I was struck by the humility of Muslim prayer: barefoot, prostrate on the floor, surrendered entirely to the deity. It reminded me of priestly ordination services I had seen in our church.

Later, Stephenie told me that worshipers are to line up shoulder-to-shoulder. Leaving a gap between yourself and the next person is not appropriate. I felt brotherhood and belonging at the mosque.

Hospitality matters to Muslims, if the dinner we enjoyed after prayer is an indication. We had rice with lamb, chicken curry, chick-peas, salad and naan bread. I couldn't finish all the food, but I had room for the delicious dessert of mango rice pudding and baklava.

A magician-puppeteer-musician entertained the children in a nearby tent, and the youth dined on pizza. The demographic of the membership is all ages, many ethnicities, and about an equal number of women and men.

More prayers followed dinner, before the "fundraiser" started. The Islamic Center needs about a million dollars to build phase 2 of their center, and the imam got \$105,000 from the congregation that night. No bake sales, no silent auction, just a direct verbal appeal, on the spot, with the incoming donations projected on the wall graphically in real time. I was impressed.



Breaking the Ramadan Fast at the Temecula Mosque

According to the imam, the Koran says that Allah promises never to let anyone fall into poverty because of charity. He promises to replace all money donated and pledged.

I came away with my fears gone and a warm feeling of connection to my Muslim sisters and brothers. I look forward to returning on the weekly sabbath (Friday) to hear one of the imam's sermons, in English!

St. Thomas Family
**FAREWELL TO PETE
AND JEAN HICKS**



Friday, July 20 St. Thomas congregants gathered at La Cocina in Temecula for a farewell dinner for Pete and Jean Hicks who are moving to Parks, Arizona.

Pete and Jean have been coming to St. Thomas for more than 10 years and we will miss them.





The congregation also gathered on Sunday, July 29 for a special coffee hour on what was Pete and Jean's last day at St. Thomas.

We celebrated with cake and other goodies and the Hicks' were presented with a special clock.

Good luck Pete and Jean and we hope you visit often!



Member Spotlight

Meet Jo Anne Dreyfus,

Stephen Leader and Member of Prayers and Squares

A relatively new member of St. Thomas, I joined the church in September of 2017 and attend the 8 AM Service most weeks.

My daughter found St. Thomas by doing an Internet search of Episcopal churches in Temecula and I joined the week after arriving. The church suits me because I prefer a liturgical approach to the services. And although I consider myself an Anglican due to my

Prayers & Squares



The Prayer Quilt Ministry

affiliation with an Anglican church in Maryland, this church works for me.

The first morning I attended, I met Deb Mitchell who encouraged me to fill out a little questionnaire about my skills and interests. When I mentioned that I was a commissioned Stephen Minister for my former church in Roseville, CA, it began a longer dialogue. I also joined Prayers and Squares. My vision is poor, but I enjoy the fellowship.

Since then, I volunteered to help teach the Stephen Ministry classes, so that St. Thomas could participate in the outreach efforts of the Stephen Ministry, which serves those whose lives have become unraveled by chance or mishap. What

we are learning to do is to bring the love and grace of Christ to those who are in need of caring and support from their fellow Christians.

I love the idea of serving as an instrument of God's love in the world. It has made me a better person, more caring and sympathetic to the people around me. Thanks to Stephen Ministry, I've learned to listen

with care and compassion to others when they speak.

Sometimes, it's about things that trouble them, but the skills carry over into everyday conversation. I not only hear what others say. I

care. *(Continued on page 9)*



stephen
MINISTRY.

This has made me more popular than I could have ever imagined among my friends and even among strangers. People are desperate to be heard. They need to hear that they are important and that their cares and concerns are important not only to them but to God and their fellow parishioners. More than any other thing I've learned or done, Stephen Ministry had made me a true sister in Christ to the members of my church family and even the larger community.



The training is hard. It takes 50 or 60 hours of intense training to learn the skill sets necessary to become a Stephen Minister. But it's worth it. We currently have three people in training who will be ready to share their skills with others in the new year. After that, we'll probably begin another class. We'll need people who are willing to share their time and compassion with others. If you think you might be such a person, contact Deb Mitchell dhmitchell17@verizon.net



We are looking for Youth to be more involved with our services. For all youth 4th grade and older, please consider volunteering to either acolyte or being a reader. Lessons for new acolytes will begin in September. Please contact Tom Reid if you are interested in either. His email is treid44@bellsouth.net

Fun and Fellowship

DINNERS ALL AROUND

Saturday, July 28 more than 40 St. Thomas congregants celebrated the return of Dinners All Around at the Temecula Pizza Company.

Everyone enjoyed great pizza, stromboli, and salads at this popular Temecula eatery.

Special thanks to Virginia Patton for organizing this wonderful event.

Stay tuned for the next Dinners All Around!

Health Update

Dr. Rather Addresses Some Topical FAQ's

Hello, everyone. I will do a potpourri for this month to answer various questions many of us have.

1) A few parishioners have once again asked about the sunscreens that are chemically all right. In June I wrote that Hawaii's legislators had voted to ban oxybenzone and octinoxate due to coral reef damage. Sunscreens which are OK contain zinc oxide, titanium dioxide, and avobenzone, but avobenzone is not nearly as good as the others.



2) Sunscreen pills don't work, so do not let yourself fall for this gimmick.

3) Obesity, and the even worse severe obesity, have been recently reevaluated, and it is found that more rural locations seem to have people with more obesity. ? Why? Proper diet and exercise continue to be the best and simplest methods of controlling our weight, avoiding heart problems, and helping our lives in general.

4) Cardiologists using large studies to review blood pressure levels are now telling us that 130/80 is our goal. The old level of 140/90 may have been too high, particularly with our poor diet and lack of exercise. Also, a lower blood pressure seems to decrease our chances of developing a dementia.

5) Exercise, particularly jogging or walking with friends, helps not only our heart but also in decreasing depression and anxiety. Professors at Boston University have shown conclusively that exercise has all the positive mental benefits with none of the negative side effects that can be associated with medications. Obviously, sometimes medications are necessary anyway, but often seem to be avoidable.

6) Remember ABCDE In thinking about moles or growths that may be a developing melanoma. Also, remember that we have talked about the ugly duckling sign or the skin change that is different from everything else.

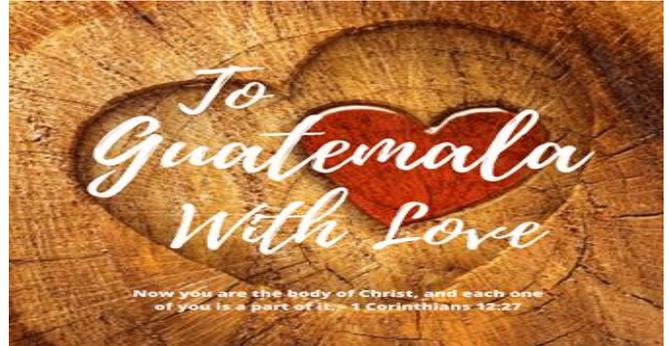
7) Nosebleeds are common. Quick treatment at home is to sit up straight or stand up and lean your head forward, not back. Use pressure on both sides of the nose and hold the nose area which is bleeding for 5 minutes without looking. This seems like a long time but will give the best results.

8) If you get into poison oak, ivy, or sumac, the best thing to do is wash asap with cold water, using lots of soap if you have it. If blisters are already present, wash gently and use cold water compresses. Remember that the clothes you have on can have the oils in them as well.

Until next month, as always,

Ed, your friendly, but retired, Dermatologist.

Canterbury Youth Group (CYG)



At the end of June, our CYG members Felix Sipra and Lauren Walton participated in an eight-day Mission trip to Guatemala sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego Youth Ministry. An amazing video on the trip has been posted on the EDSD Youth Ministry Facebook page. Here are a couple of candid shots of our own youth in action with some of their new Guatemalan friends.



CYG Part 2

The “Walking with Angels” Mission to Downtown Los Angeles

In early July two of our youth, Frankie Rojas and Elizabeth Sipra, participated in the EDSD Youth Ministry trip to Los Angeles. The youth spent two full days encountering the problems of the homeless and others in need, including visiting and working at The Union Rescue Mission, My Friend’s Place (a drop-in center for homeless teenagers), and the Los Angeles Food Bank. See the EDSD Youth Ministry Facebook page for some fantastic photos.

**SAVE
...THE...
DATE**

*Canterbury Youth
Group*

Saturday, Aug. 11th 5-8pm-Ixtacapa,
Guatemala Fundraiser to purchase
computers @Good Samaritan Episcopal
Church

Saturday, Aug. 25th 9-1pm-CYG Service
Day with Lunch @St Thomas Church

Saturday, Sept. 8th-Quidditch Cup TBD
@St Paul's Cathedral

See Sunday Bulletin for Flyers and Details

Episcopal Night at the Padres

On July 27 a small but hearty group of St. Thomas baseball fans joined a band of diocesan brothers and sisters in cheering on the Padres against the Arizona Diamondbacks. The home team lost 6-1 but a good time was had by the attendees as well as an acknowledgment on the Petco Park message board.



BEANIES FOR KIDS

Do you like to knit or crochet?

Want to help kids undergoing chemotherapy?

Join us in making Beanies* for Kids!

(and other things, too!)

You can knit or crochet beanies at home and/or join fellow stitchers

Monday, August 13th, 7 – 9 pm

Barbara Bundy's home

Contact Barbara at bjbundy@verizon.net for more information

New knitters are welcome – instruction provided!



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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturday

5:00pm Holy Eucharist

Sunday

8:00am Holy Eucharist

10:15am Holy Eucharist

10:15am Children's
Chapel/Sunday School

Wednesday

7:00pm Evening Prayer