



THE APOSTLE

JUNE
2011



FROM THE RECTOR

If Mr. Harold Camping is correct, there is not going to be anyone reading this newsletter. Everybody will either be whisked off to Heaven, or undergoing unimaginable hardship. So why am I writing? Because that “if” at the beginning of this paragraph is one great big “if”.

I’ve read the information at Camping’s website. It is a mass of unfounded assumptions and tortuous reasoning. There is a technical term for what Camping is doing here. It’s called *eisegesis* – reading into the Bible exactly what you wish to find there.

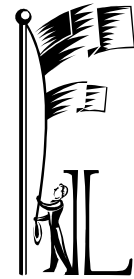
I have to tell you, this whole May 21st thing really irks me. First of all, this sort of thing makes our job as reasonable, intelligent, and progressive Christians next to impossible, for it is the extremists like Camping and so many others that grab the headlines and become the public face of Christianity.

Secondly, you and I know that for so many people in the world today – including right here in Philadelphia – life already is an unimaginable hardship. Yet the Christ who calls us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless is nowhere to be found in Camping’s version of the gospel. It is extremely disconcerting to see our society grow ever more willing to leave the poorest and most vulnerable to fend for themselves.

That certainly seems to be the mindset in Washington these days, and it is precisely echoed by fundamentalist Christians of Camping’s ilk.

Finally, Camping’s whole system only “works” by completely distorting the Biblical message, and doing tremendous violence to the very real women and men who left us this wonderful record of their experiences and understandings of God. Scripture is stripped of its poetry, its life, its beauty, and becomes nothing more than a code book to be deciphered. And, since the interpretation is totally idiosyncratic and self-referential, there is no accountability to the wider community of faith. Both the history of interpretation and the historical context can be completely ignored. There is no history except the present, and there is no context save that supplied by the interpreter.

By the time you receive this newsletter, this all will have passed. Yet the damage is done. Once again, the Church is depicted as a mass of intolerance and superstition. If I weren’t a Christian, and this was all I knew of the Christian faith, I wouldn’t want any part of it either. That is why we at Holy Apostles – and so many churches like ours – need to be ever more committed to making our story known, a story of forgiveness, reconciliation, and fellowship with and for all. We are the heralds of a generous and liberating gospel, and we will embrace in love and prayer the hurting places and people of our world. I, for one, believe that the voice of hope will always trump every prophet of doom.



FLAG DAY

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Sunday Worship Schedule

Holy Eucharist
8:30 a.m. - no music
10:00 a.m. - with music
Sunday School
10:00 a.m.
Choir Practice
9:00 a.m.

Parish News

News from Fellowship

We are looking for volunteers to chair (or co-chair) upcoming fellowship events including:

- Dinner to welcome new members (summer evening event)
- Dinner Club Reinvented (fall social events)
- Consecration Sunday lunch (November)
- Thanksgiving Eve reception
- Annual meeting lunch (January)
- Special coffee hours (as needed)

Please see Judi Kraft if you are interested in assisting with one or more of these events.

Also, our "summer series" coffee hours (lemonade, iced tea, and cookies on the lawn) begin on June 12th. Please sign up in the parish hall to host a Sunday this summer!

WELCOME CHURCH

takes place on the last Sunday every month at 3PM in Sister Cities Plaza, an open area park between Logan Circle and the Roman Catholic Cathedral. If you would like to journey down together, we meet at CHA at 3:00 p.m. Please join us!



CHA'S PIZZA CHURCH

has been moved to the **second Sunday** each month at **5:00 p.m.**



Genuardi's Club Card

Make sure you are signed up for a Genuardi's Club Card.

Every time you use the card, Genuardi's will give Holy Apostles 1%.

You must first register with Genuardi's at their service desk or at www.escrip.com.

And, you must re-register with them every fall.

Super Fresh Gift Certificates

Super Fresh will give Holy Apostles 5% of each gift certificate sold.

Please see J. T. Wertz to purchase gift certificates in \$50 or \$100 denominations. There are three families who currently participate on a regular basis netting CHA approx. \$1,000 per year. If we had greater participation, think of the possibilities!

Publishing Deadline: Articles for the parish newsletter are **due on the third Friday of each month** (unless otherwise noted) in order to allow enough time to compile, print, and collate. Please provide any items you would like published to the office by that day. Every effort will be made to include all appropriate articles, however, editing may be necessary due to space restrictions. Thank you.

Parish News



Take me out to the ball game!

Monday, May 23, was the Diocese of Pennsylvania night at Citizens Bank Park. The Phillies trounced the Reds 10 to 3, much to the delight of all Episcopalians. In the crowd were the Cavanaugh's, the Lloyd's, and the Wertz's. On top of it all, it was Dollar Dog Night! You couldn't have a better time than that!

HAPPY HOUR at Holy Apostles!!!

All are invited for fun and fellowship on Friday, June 24, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Bring some snacks to share, lawn chairs if you have them, and something to drink. But especially consider bringing some of your friends and neighbors! Further Happy Hour dates for July and August will be announced later.

Delaware County 5.4k Walk for Hunger

When: Sunday, June 12th 2011

Where: 3625 Chapel Road, Newtown Square

Registration: 1pm-1:30pm

Walk: 2pm

See flyer on bulletin board for more details.



World News

HOW you can HELP

From The Episcopal Diocese of West Missouri

The Joplin Tornado

As I am sure you have heard, at least one, severe tornado smashed through Joplin, MO last evening, Sunday, May 22nd. As of this morning, Monday, May 23rd, news sources report 89 dead and many more injured. Unfortunately, I doubt that is the last count.

I know that many of you are wondering how you might help. Here's what we know.

I am trying to make personal and direct contact with the clergy of St. Phillip's, Joplin, but have not been able to connect yet. Fortunately, Fr. Steve Wilson of Carthage has heard from some and reports that all our clergy families in Joplin (Fr. Frank & Debi Sierra, Dn. Jeff & Chalaine Bell, Fr. Roger & Sherrie Stinnett, and Dn. Andy Fritsch) are OK. A preliminary report indicates that Roger & Sherrie Stinnett's home was damaged, but we do not yet know the extent of the damage nor have we been able to verify this report. Preliminary reports also indicate a couple injuries among our Episcopal brothers and sisters: the daughter of Judy Turner (ECW Chair) was injured, and a child parishioner of our Carthage church, but who lives in Joplin, is hospitalized. I am sorry that I do not know names and condition statuses of these injured. There are no reports of deaths from among our denomination members. May it stay that way. We know even less about the assistance that will be needed in the near future, though emergency housing will definitely be high on the list of initial needs.

More definition of needs will pour forth soon. I speak from experience when I say, "Rest assured, the needs will become evident soon, as soon as disaster response teams and community leaders are able to begin ascertaining damage and needs." I base this on my own experience of losing a church building in Jackson, TN to a tornado in May 2003 (the entire City of Jackson was also affected of course). As needs are defined, we, the Diocese of West Missouri, will respond with all speed and will muster all available resources. Financial contributions to assist with immediate and long-term needs may be sent to the diocesan office, checks made payable to Diocese of West Missouri, with note, "Joplin Tornado Relief Fund."

In addition, my office and I have already made contact with Episcopal Relief and Development, and we know an immediate response grant will very quickly be available. Your gifts are coming back to our aid!

Pray in the meantime. Pray for the repose of the souls of those taken in this terrible event. Pray for the recovery of the injured. Pray for the Joplin community, now facing the stress of recovery even as they deal with the traumatic stress of this weather induced catastrophe.

And stand ready to assist. Our charity has been much called upon lately: Haiti, New Zealand, Japan, Alabama earlier this month, etc., our Bricks for Haiti project too. I hope you can respond again. All tragedies are awful and warrant our Christian response of love and aid. This one, though, is even more personal. This time it's our people.

Thank you in advance for what you are going to do.

+Bishop Marty

World News

This report is from Mary Beyler in Obihiro, Japan. It sounds like Mary is connected with the Mennonite Church. A report from the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (Episcopal Church in Japan) is being prepared.

May 19, 2011

Obihiro's cherry blossoms were glorious last week, but now that brief season is too soon past. Next we can enjoy rhododendrons.

During the worship service I attended on Mother's Day, a woman broke down in tears as she prayed for mothers who had lost children and children who had lost mothers in the March disaster. Along with encouraging reports of recovery efforts, we continue to be confronted with heart-wrenching scenes in the news. The situation at the damaged nuclear power plant remains serious and will affect people's lives for years and decades to come.

I feel so inadequate reporting, because I am so far from the disaster area and am only watching from outside. But news from the affected regions is a part of my daily life and prayers. Following are some numbers I remembered that may help to give you a glimpse of the recovery situation.

Some 1200 evacuees have come to Hokkaido, about half of them to the largest city of Sapporo. This is not a large number, considering the thousands affected. Towns and cities around Hokkaido have offered public housing, but without job prospects and without family and friends nearby, there have been few takers.

Temporary housing is going up in the disaster areas, and all who have applied should be accommodated by the end of August. Not as many units are needed as initially predicted, because a number of people withdrew their applications after realizing that the location would be too inconvenient for commuting. Remember that people have lost their cars and that public transportation such as local buses and trains is still limited.

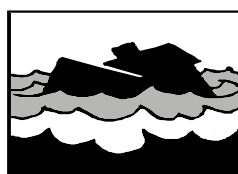
A Sapporo public transportation lost-and-found department has sent 500 umbrellas to Tohoku. Most left-behind umbrellas remain unclaimed and eventually need to be sold at welfare shops or charity bazaars to make space for more.

As with any major disaster relief, there have been problems in supply and demand. Far too many blankets and winter clothes were contributed. Even after distribution to non-evacuees, some centers still have so many blankets left over and taking up storage space that they may need to be disposed of. Are you familiar with the Japanese word *mottanai*? This is certainly a case of *mottanai*.

Progress is being made in clearing up the devastated areas, but disposal of the rubble is a major problem. One figure I heard was that the rubble from the earthquake and tsunami is equivalent to 23 ordinary years' worth of garbage.

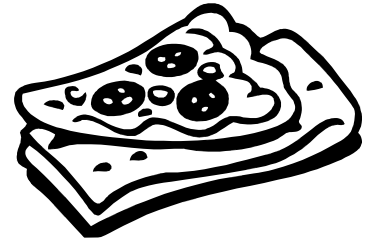
I plan to attend a meeting in Sapporo on May 26 with representatives from Mennonite World Conference and MCC as we continue to consider how Japanese Mennonite and BIC churches can help beyond monetary contributions even though we don't have direct connections in the main disaster area. You can read elsewhere about the plans of Network associates Akiko Aratani and Ray Epp to take in evacuees at Menno Village farm.

The answer Jesus gave to the question of who sinned in the case of the man born blind as reported in John 9 has been helpful to some of us in thinking about this disaster. Pray that "God's works might be revealed" in how we respond in the months and years to come.



**Relief for
Japan
You Can Help!**

Summer Marks 1st Year of Pizza Church



July 18, 2010 was Holy Apostles' first "Intergenerational Outdoor Worship" experience. Unfortunately, it rained. The service was held in the Godly Play Room, and that's where we've been ever since!

Small chairs in an open circle, around a small altar table, with pillows and stuffed bears on the floor invite even the smallest congregant to participate fully in the service. Adult-sized chairs afford a comfortable spot for everyone to see and to contribute.

This service, which always includes song, prayer, homily and Eucharist, has consistently drawn around 30 people. Several of our new families have come to Holy Apostles through this energetic service that encourages active participation from everyone. It is a place where even our youngest members are empowered to offer their gifts to God through their church. Because we always end our evening worship with a pizza & salad dinner, children started to call the service "Pizza Church" and the name has stuck!

Some comments about the service:

"If I'd known how much fun it was going to be, I wouldn't have argued about coming to church."

"Father Dennis, can I help set the [altar] table today? Please?"

"I was worried it wouldn't 'feel like church' but it totally DOES – I love being able to worship with my children."

"Grandma, today is Pizza Church day – I can't wait!"

If you'd like to find out what all that excitement is about, join us on the *second* Sunday of each month at 5:00 pm. And stay for pizza!

www.cha-pa.org



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