

THE

Shepherd's Fold

DISCOVER 150 YEARS OF PURPOSE

March 29, 2020

The Fount of Every Blessing

Anxious and trying times can bring out the best and the worst in us. It's not easy to witness someone buying up an entire tray of ground chuck right before our eyes, leaving none for the 20 or more folks waiting in line. Meat counters are being emptied everyday and staples have become scarce. I would have never imagined this scene becoming a reality until now. The coronavirus has hit and hit hard. Anxiety is prevalent and we are being challenged like never before. Or have we?

My Grandma Bea lived with scarcity most of her life. Born in 1907 she lived through the Great Depression followed by World War II. Nonetheless, my Grandmother gave all that she had to anyone who was in need. Mostly likely she would have never been aggravated by the "meat hoarder" as I was. I can hear her now, "you never know what people are dealing with." Countless times I witnessed Grandma Bea give her last dollar to a stranger and give furniture to a young couple who had nothing, all the while she was willing to do without. My Grandfather would come home and try to toss his hat onto a chair only to find the chair was gone. She had given it away. "Bea," he would say, "you can't keep giving away everything we have!" But she did and that is who she was; kind, generous, and most of all thankful.

I can still hear my Grandma Bea humming, "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing." It was as if she had not a care in the world as she made a pot of soup fit for a king from nothing but onions and potatoes. She was my hero and set for me the example of trusting God everyday by thanksgiving in all circumstances. I wish I had sat at her feet and asked her questions about her life as a child and young adult. Grandma Bea died when I was a self absorbed adolescent. I did not realize until years after her death that the challenges she faced increased her love of God. She knew her savior lived. I saw Jesus when I watched her give all she had. Grandma Bea gave from God's abundant love.

We never know how much we need one another until we do. Now is the time to be the change we want to see in the world, loving our neighbor as our self.

When we are fat and happy we can lose sight of what is important and lasting. What is important and lasting is how we treat others. It's just that simple. Jesus gives us this example and left us with the enabling of the Holy Spirit so that we have his power to love our neighbor as ourselves. This is how we will not only survive but thrive through this challenge set before us today.

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One thing is for sure, we are all in the same boat, suffering in a way we could have never imagined; loss of savings, loss of employment, and loss of health. It's a time of testing like none other for this generation. We are being tried at every turn.

Now is the time to be a living witness of God's abundance by loving our neighbor as ourselves. This is the light that is within us, the light of Christ to be revealed, giving us the sure and certain hope to hum:

“Come, Thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.”

In His Abundant Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dm +', located below the text 'In His Abundant Love,'.

The Story Behind the Praying Hands

Back in the fifteenth century, in a tiny village near Nuremburg, lived a family with eighteen children. Eighteen! In order to merely keep food on the table for this many people, the father and head of the household, a goldsmith by profession, worked almost eighteen hours a day at his trade and at any other paying chore he could find in the neighborhood.

Despite their seemingly hopeless condition, two of Albrecht Durer the Elder's children had a dream. They both wanted to pursue their talent for art. They knew full well their father would never be financially able to send either of them to Nuremburg to study at the academy.

After many long discussions at night in their crowded bed, the two boys finally worked out a pact. They would toss a coin. The loser would go down to the mines and, with his earnings, support his brother while he attended the academy. Then when that brother who won the toss completed his studies, in four years, he would support the other brother at the academy either with the sales of his artwork or, if necessary, also by laboring in the mines.

They tossed a coin on Sunday morning after church. Albrecht Durer won the toss and went off to Nuremburg.

Albert went down into the dangerous mines, and for the next four years, financed his brother, whose work at the academy was almost an immediate sensation. Albrecht's etchings, his woodcuts, and his oils were far better than those of most of his professors. By the time he graduated, he was beginning to earn considerable fees for his commissioned works.

When the young artist returned to his village, the Durer family held a festive dinner on the lawn to celebrate Albrecht's triumphant homecoming. After a long and memorable meal, punctuated with music and laughter, Albrecht rose from his honored position at the head of the table to drink a toast to his beloved brother for the years of sacrifice that had enabled Albrecht to fulfill his ambition. His closing words were, "And now, Albert,

blessed brother of mine, now it is your turn. Now you can go to Nuremburg to pursue your dream, and I will take care of you."

All heads were turned in eager expectation to the far end of the table where Albert sat, tears streaming down his pale face, shaking his head from side to side, while he sobbed and repeated, over and over, "No...no...no...no."

Finally, Albert rose and wiped the tears from his cheeks. He glanced down at the long table at all the faces he loved, and then, holding his hands close to his right cheek, he said softly, "No, brother, I cannot go to Nuremburg. It is too late for me. Look...look what four years in the mines have done to my hands! The bones in every finger have been smashed at least once, and lately I have been suffering from arthritis so badly in my right hand that I cannot even hold a glass to return your toast, much less make delicate lines on parchment or canvas with a pen or a brush. No brother...for me it is too late".

More than 450 years have passed. By now Albrecht Durer's hundreds of masterful portraits, pen and silver-point sketches, watercolors, charcoals, woodcuts, and copper engravings hang in every great museum in the world. However, the odds are, that you, like most people, are familiar with only one of Albrecht Durer's works. More than merely being familiar with it, you very well may have a reproduction hanging in your home or office.

One day, to pay homage to Albert for all that he had sacrificed, Albrecht painstakingly drew his brother's abused hands with palms together and thin fingers stretched skyward. He called this powerful drawing simply "Hands," but the entire world almost immediately opened their hearts to his great masterpiece and renamed his tribute of love, "The Praying Hands."

The next time you see a copy of that touching creation, take a second look. Let it be your reminder, if you still need one, that no one – no one – ever makes it alone!

Schedule Update

Good Shepherd does not anticipate gathering for worship before the end of April.

WAGS will not meet again until the Fall, and there will be no mid-week services.

Join us online at 10:00 am on Sundays and Wednesdays at 8 p.m. for a Live Streamed service of prayer and worship via Facebook: [facebook.com/COGSAugusta](https://www.facebook.com/COGSAugusta)

Ways to Stay Connected

- Read the weekly newsletters: [goodshepherd-augusta.org/media/newsletters/](https://www.goodshepherd-augusta.org/media/newsletters/)
- Join us on social media - twitter.com/cogsaugusta, [instagram – cogs_augusta](https://www.instagram.com/cogs_augusta), or [facebook.com/COGSAugusta](https://www.facebook.com/COGSAugusta) - for *The Shepherd Speaks*, a daily word of encouragement from the Clergy
- Compline will be Wednesday evenings beginning at 8 pm. Once again, you can access it [facebook.com/COGSAugusta](https://www.facebook.com/COGSAugusta)
- Use **Zoom** for meetings or to connect with friends. Zoom is a powerful tool that allows several people to video chat.
- **The Church is open for prayer and meditation** Monday - Friday from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm and on Sundays from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm.

Servers of the Shepherd

As our services will be held online, please note the service times and servers have changed as well. We will continue in this manner until we resume our regular scheduled meetings.

Sunday, March 29

10:00 AM

Officiant..... Lynn Prather
Preacher..... Robert Fain
Organist & Choirmaster Jim Nord

Readings

Ezekiel 37:1-14, Psalm 130,
Romans 8:6-11, John 11:1-45

Monday, March 30

Morning Prayer 8:00 am Jim Price

Tuesday, March 31

Morning Prayer 8:00 am Mary Howard

Wednesday, April 1

Morning Prayer 8:00 am Jack Speese
Compline 8:00 pm Robert Fain

Thursday, April 2

Morning Prayer 8:30 am Al Metzler

Friday, April 3

Morning Prayer 8:30 am Neal Dickert

Saturday, April 4

Morning Prayer 8:30 am Tom Smyth

**Please don't forget to turn in your
stuffed easter eggs!**

Easter Altar Flowers

Worship in Holy week and on Easter Day has been suspended throughout the Episcopal Church. Nonetheless we will celebrate Easter Day online and adorn the altar with some Easter Flowers. Currently we are considering making our first Sunday back together our Easter Day celebration. Your gifts will be used to modestly adorn the Altar on April 12 and gloriously on the Sunday when we gather again.

Contribute to the altar flowers at Easter by completing and returning the form below. Make your gifts payable to Good Shepherd marked as *Easter Flowers*. Forms must be received by April 3 in order to appear in the order of service.

Name: _____

Telephone: _____ Enclosed Amount: _____

In honor of/memory of (circle one) _____

By: _____