



Saint John's Spirit

St. John's Episcopal Church • Crawfordsville, Indiana
The Rev. Todd Kleffman, Rector (765) 362-2331

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www.stjohnscville.org

Editor: Cindy Turner
newsletter@stjohnscville.org

Rector's Article

Depth Perception on the Heart of God

Too many of us take having two eyes for granted. I know because my closest friend has sight in only one eye, and I am daily reminded of the gift of depth perception provided by the gift of binocular or two-eyed vision. My friend has trouble parking. He can't catch a baseball, because he has no ability to judge how near or far it is from him, and for goodness sake, don't ask him to play a game of darts!

Two eyes give us far greater ability to judge depth, distance, and perspective on objects, and it is just this ability that Christians lose when they read their Bibles carelessly, by often focusing on only one story at a time, forgetting other stories that when compared with the one being read, can give us a greater sense of the depth of God's love and desire for compassion to those in need.

On this Sunday many churches will hear the story from Luke 16 about the rich man and poor Lazarus. The rich man parties daily, and Lazarus, an ill beggar, covered with sores lies outside the back door of the rich man's house, hoping to share table scraps with the local wild dogs. Poor Lazarus dies and in time receives the justice of heaven, while the rich man's lack of compassion for this helpless beggar earns him a seat in the flames of hell. Do we bemoan poor Lazarus, even as we give, not from compassion, but from a fear that we might end up sitting next to the rich man? Do we give, but only enough to feel good, but ensuring that our vacations can still be taken, that our hobbies can still be paid for, and that our clothing is still in style? Do we see God's compassion for the poor – but see it without depth perception. If so, why? Perhaps because we can justify holding some giving back if we let this story stand alone. Lazarus is the "deserving" poor. He can't help his condition, and this truly draws our compassion!

But now for a little depth perception: Just one chapter earlier in Luke 15, Jesus tells three stories about the lost – a lost sheep, a lost coin, and a lost or "the now famous Prodigal Son". The Prodigal Son is rich and chooses to walk away from his father's love. He chooses to squander his share of the family wealth. The Prodigal is in every way the cause of his own misery, but when he comes walking back home, hoping for a handout, does the Father (God) say, "Get lost and accept what you deserve." No! Dad throws the biggest party ever, and dresses this loser in the finest clothes money can buy complete with bling and a Rolex, and he hugs the worthless fellow, crying with joy, continuously exclaiming, "My son was lost, but now is found! He was dead, but now is alive!"

Little wonder we like the loser's big brother would have no trouble celebrating for Lazarus, but not for this loser. The real problem is that Big Bro, and us, had no depth perception. Had big brother seen how loving and life-giving Dad (God) is, at any moment he could have asked Dad for a party and would have received the same treatment as the Prodigal got. Alas! Big Bro just went around noticing how compassionate Dad was and nursing his resentments. Too bad, Big Bro, and we, so often fail to choose to take part in the party God wants us to share with all those in need of compassion, whether they deserve it or not. However, there is a grace note to end this column on. If we haven't given as much as we could, have put ourselves in misery's path, have withheld some of the joy God wants us to share, or have spent too much time focusing on sinners rather than forgiveness – this same God who welcomed both Lazarus and the Prodigal Son into his loving arms, will forgive us, embrace us, and welcome us back into the party that is God's compassion.

Father Todd Kleffman+

Wednesday Night Live

David Blix will conclude his presentation/discussion on Karen Armstrong's book A History of God, which discusses Judaism, Christianity, and Islam on October 13 and 20. Beginning On October 27, WNL will begin looking at Fundamentalism/literalism in each of these religions based on K. Armstrong's book The Battle for God. Reading the books is not required but helpful. Our discussion of the effects and potential solutions to dealing with the dangers created by fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam will continue on the following dates: 10/27, 11/10, and 11/17. If interest is strong enough, we may schedule more discussions focused on solutions in the coming year. Remember, the entire community is invited!

Outreach

The United Thank Offering (UTO) provides a way for you to give thanks for your daily blessings with a simple spiritual discipline of dropping coins in a blue UTO box as you say "thanks." These coins add up to thousands of dollars churchwide that are provided in the form of ministry grants both locally and globally. St. John's Fall ingathering will take place on **Sunday November 7th**. You may turn in your boxes of coins that day, or use the envelopes that will be in the bulletins. For those who don't have boxes, they will be available on the credenza in the foyer for use until our next ingathering in the Fall of 2011.

BUV Event

Did you know that a Basic Utility Vehicle (BUV) can: transport children to school; haul water for villages and for drip irrigation gardens; work as a light tractor; pull a scoop to build ponds or dig ditches; haul crops to market; serve as an ambulance; and go just about anywhere and do just about anything. It literally is an engine of economic growth: an inexpensive, easy-to-operate form of people-moving, load-carrying transportation that can transform the lives of those with no access to mechanized vehicles.

Six Crawfordsville churches are working together to send a BUV to the Congo. Help this dream come true! Be at the October 31 party from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. to transform the life of an African village. To see what a BUV can do, view the following 3 minute video: <http://www.youtube.com/driveBUV>

For more information, see your Pastor or Jim Suren. There is a starter fund for the St. John's donation which has come from the Kent Meyer memorial outreach fund. If you would like to donate to this city-wide project, you may make a check out to St. John's and make a notation on the memo line "For BUV".

Lobster Sale

The Lobster Sale has been set for October 30th. Tickets can be picked up by contacting Robbie Little at michaellittle@hughes.net or (317) 625-8471. Volunteers will be needed for the morning and evening cooking crews. Pick up of lobsters is from 8 AM to 11 AM. Volunteers will need to arrive by 7:30. Lobsters will be \$13.00 a piece. There will also be a special Great Crate Rate of \$132.00 for 12 lobsters (\$11.00 per lobster). This year there is a Lobster Basket Givaway, a four piece set for eating lobster and crab. Which includes reusable napkins, crackers, malts, wet naps, and plastic bibs. The price per raffle ticket is .25 each or 5 for a \$1.00. Drawing is Night of Lobster potluck 6:00pm

A Unique Invitation

If you were offered the chance to earn a million dollars by simply attending approximately 26 two-hour brown bag sessions from 12-2p.m. on most Sundays, would you do it? Okay, we are St. John's, and there is definitely no million dollar prize, BUT what if attending these sessions could promise you the JOY and the RENEWAL, the sense of VITALITY, and the TOOLS to gain a DEEPER, FRESHER EXPERIENCE OF GOD that a million dollars or something like it might offer, would you give it a try? That's what Saint John's is offering starting September 26th: "Living the Christian Life with an Episcopal Flavor". Weeks have been spent preparing sessions to: 1) Prepare people to Reaffirm or Renew their Baptismal Covenant, 2) Help people apply the basics of Christian faith to their daily lives in practical, meaningful ways, and 3) Help people learn how to CELEBRATE their faith and live it with JOY, and not as one more obligation in our already overly busy lives.

If you miss the first session, don't worry, you can catch up with the second. Bring a brown bag lunch and a beverage. Bring a pen, a pencil, and a highlighter. And bring a willingness to find deeper meaning and purpose in life by deepening your faith. The group meets in the library from 12 to 2pm most Sundays after Church. **Child care will be provided and you do not have to be a member of Saint John's or any church, nor do you have to make any commitment to join St. John's if you come. Many Sunday breaks are provided, so don't feel overwhelmed. Friends are most welcome!**

Current members wishing to renew or deepen their faith are encouraged to come. If we outgrow the library, we will meet in Whitlock Parish Hall upstairs. To register: or ask any questions: E-mail revtoddkleff@yahoo.com by Wed September 29th at the latest.

You will find this a life-changing experience!
Father Todd Kleffman+

Sunday Servers

Service	Lector	LEM	Crucifer/ Acolyte(s)	Greeters	Altar Guild	Offering Tally	Altar Flowers
10/3 8am	Jim Suren	Jim Suren	Joe Green				
10/3 10:30	Barb Easterling	Paul Ludwig & Elaine Pickering	Ashtyn Warren/ Austin Warren & Kristen Albrecht	Vern & Barb Easterling	CJ Charles & Kim Roberts	John Culley & Nancy Bennett	Claude & Linda Johnson
10/10 8am	Mark Kussmaul	Meribeth Kussmaul	Teresa Anderson				
10/10 10:30	Ed Fain	Larry Baumgardner & Robert Cooley	Joe Green/ Steve Charles & Chas Cooksey	John & Betty Culley	Betty Culley & Meegan Reidy	Cindy Smith & Jim Smith	David & Jerilyn Yerkes
10/17 8am	Barbara Penney	Barbara Penney	Ben Green				
10/17 10:30	Sue Fain	John & Betty Culley	Robbie Little / Peggy Lohorn & Paul Moehling	Mark & Meribeth Kussmaul	Shelia Evans & Jane Gallagher	Ellen Ball & Barb Easterling	Meegan Reidy
10/24 8am	Mike Scime	Mike Scime	Joe Green				
10/24 10:30	Helen Hudson	Vern Easterling & Jane Gallagher	Bill Patterson/ Andrew Patterson & Ashtyn Warren	Tom Twarek & Ellen Ball	Terry Lawrence & Jerilyn Yerkes	Vern Easterling & Tom Twarek	John & Kim Roberts
10/31 8am	Judy Wynne	Larry Baumgardner	Teresa Anderson				
10/31 10:30	Alex Lebedeff	Marc Hudson & Steve Gillan	Chris Redmaster/ Austin Warren & Susan Albrecht	Larry & Nancy Bennett	Bethany & Cindy Fields	Nancy Bennett & John Culley	John & Betty Culley

Calendar

October 30

Lobster Sale

November 6

St. John's serves lunch at the Friendship Kitchen 11:00 – 1:00

Ongoing Events

Wednesday 30-Minute Eucharist from 6pm-6:30pm

Thursday Choir Practice 7pm

The next Newsletter submissions are due by Wednesday evening, 6:00 p.m October 20

St. John's Episcopal Church

212 South Green Street

P. O. Box 445

Crawfordsville, IN 47933

Return Service Requested

Dated Material — please deliver by—October 1