

# PARISH UPDATE

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## NEWS & NOTES

### November Birthdays

5.....Jeri Ruby  
 14.....Juliann Trischler  
 16.....Joshua Perry  
 20.....Walter Brown

### Our Deepest Sympathies ...

To the family of the Rev Don Gross who passed away Thursday, November 13. Don was the second rector of the Church of Our Saviour and touched the lives of many people. A memorial service will be held Monday, November 17 at Grace Church, on Mt. Washington at 2:00 pm.

### Anniversary Liturgy Nov. 26 to Culminate Celebrate 250

The year-long Celebrate 250 initiative, honoring two-hundred and fifty years of Anglican Christian presence in Pittsburgh, will reach its apex with two Noonday Evangelistic Services on November 24 and 25, and the Anniversary Vespers Service at 7 p.m. on November 26, the eve of our Thanksgiving holiday. Trinity Cathedral will host these opportunities to gather prayerfully as a diocese and as a wider Christian community in the city.

The Rt. Rev. Sandy Millar, Assistant Bishop of London will be the special guest presenter and celebrant at both noonday services downtown. The first, on Monday, November 24 is titled "Does God Still Act?" The second, on Tuesday, November 25 will ask and answer the question, "Does God Still Heal?" These services will begin at 12:05 p.m., and all are invited and encouraged to attend what will surely be an uplifting time of teaching, prayer and worship.



**Mark Your Calendar for December ...**

**Martin Christmas Open House**  
 December 20, 6 – 9 pm

**Christmas Eve Service (Only one)**  
 December 24, 8:00 pm

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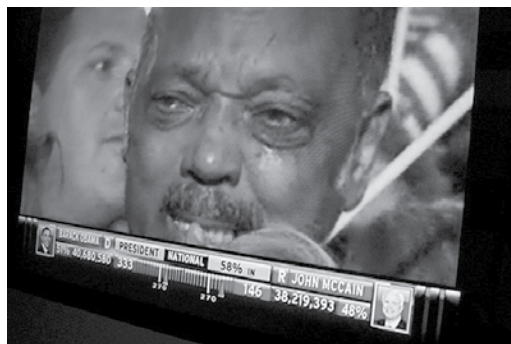
## Rector's Message:

### Religion and Politics

Dear friends,

This may be the most risky article I've ever written. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if some folks, after reading this article, accuse me of being, God forbid, a liberal. Even so, based on one observation of the election, I want to reinforce a universal theological principal.

The observation is simply that after two or three decades of Religious Right, Moral Majority campaigning in this country, it seems the movement has lost ground instead of gained, and that an even greater majority of voters is motivated by a number of issues more important than moral issues such as abortion, same sex marriage, and freedom and limited government.



So why is it that so many people have moved in the opposite direction from these moral imperatives such as the sanctity of life, the holiness of matrimony, and the dignity of personal freedom? Why have these good and godly issues not become core motivating principals for more people? One answer is found in basic Law/Gospel theology.

- **Remember:** The Law -- demands made upon a person -- judges and condemns that person, while the Gospel -- love shown to a person -- attracts and gives life to that person.
- **Put another way ...** Making demands of a person never changes the way that person thinks and feels inside, it does the opposite.

Consider a simple illustration. Say you have a teenage daughter who is a committed vegetarian. What happens when her father demands that she stop this silly crusade and start eating meat? 99% of the time she will become an even more committed vegetarian. On the other hand, if he shows love and genuine interest towards how she feels about the issue, he has a much better chance of her at least *listening* to his view.

During the Obama acceptance speech, I had unexpected experience. As the cameras panned through the audience and focused in on Jesse Jackson with tears in his eyes, I actually felt a wave of compassion for a man that I had disliked practically all of my life. Instead of seeing him as a political opponent whose position I had rejected at every turn, I got a brief glimpse at some deep and genuine emotions that I had never even considered before.

I don't pretend to know the full depth of the emotions, but I do know that as a white, upper/middle class, conservative American male, I have no idea what it has been like for a black, liberal politician to fight against a predominately white, right wing, political machine. And, frankly, I never really thought too much about it. I've always been more focused on wanting him to change and meet my demands, than caring about what it is that drives him.

Continued on next page



## Calendar of Events

### WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Sunday ..... 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I  
 9:15 Adult Education  
 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Service w/Sunday School  
 Family Service the first Sunday of the month w/o Sunday school

Tuesday ..... 6:30 p.m. Intercessory Prayer Time

Tuesday ..... 6:30 - 7:00 p.m. Girl Scouts every other week

Wednesday ..... Brownies every other week

### ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH

Nov. 7 ..... Special convention and dinner at the Marriott

Nov. 10 ..... Vestry meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 16 ..... Blessing the Operation Christmas child boxes

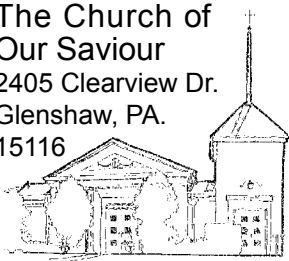
Nov. 20 ..... Healing service and lunch at 12 noon

Nov. 23 ..... Community Thanksgiving service at St. Ursula's 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 27 ..... Thanksgiving Service, Church of Our Saviour, 9:00 am

Please pray for the all the parishioners and friends of Church of Our Saviour

The Church of  
Our Saviour  
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### For More Information:

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### Rector's Message (Continued)

The Law/Gospel principle has similar results in the church. Fifteen years ago, the seminary hosted a Sexuality Forum to which a notorious liberal, and lesbian, woman was invited as a main panel speaker. The "two sides" would present their case, and questions would follow. The only line I remember from the entire event was from the liberal, lesbian lady who said, "Do you know what it feels like to be told that the deepest emotional feelings and inclinations you possess are wrong?" As a conservative, heterosexual, bible believing male, I certainly didn't know, and really didn't care. What was important was that she changed her way of thinking and started believing the bible and behaving the way we (conservatives) did. During the question and answer period she was treated kindly but heard mostly bible quotes and reasons why her position was ungodly. Do you think she considered changing her mind? I doubt it. Why? One reason is because making moral demands of people never changes the way they think and feel inside ... only love and the gospel can do that.

In conclusion, let me be clear that both Law and Gospel are valid components of the Christian life, but we need to know the difference between the two, and understand that we tend to use law and demands much more naturally than gospel and love. One talk show host said after the election that we need to "redouble our efforts" if we want to bring this country back to its moral roots. Is it working? We may feel good about being right and rallying like minded people, but we will never win the hearts and minds of anyone by demanding that they change. We need a new strategy.

May God give us the grace to know and love his law, and to show genuine love and care towards people who, like us, are not keeping it the way they should.

Grateful for God's mercy, Joseph

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph".

### Bishop Robert Duncan Re-Elected Diocesan Bishop

Bishop Robert Duncan is once again the bishop of The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Clergy and lay deputies to a special convention of the diocese on November 7 voted to invite Bishop Duncan back into leadership of the diocese 50 days after the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church voted to remove ("depose") him.

"It is good to be back. God has clearly watched over the diocese and watched over me and Nara as we have walked through these challenging days together. God willing, I look forward to many years together sharing the good news of Jesus Christ," said Bishop Duncan.

"The most important thing now is to move beyond our conflict with the leadership of The Episcopal Church and turn all of our energies toward living as Christians and effectively sharing the good news of God's love and mercy for all people in the places God has put us. I am looking forward to hearing what Mike has to say to us tomorrow (at the Moving Forward in Mission Conference)," said Bishop Duncan.



### Bishop Sandy Millar to Discuss 'Passionate Discipleship'

On November 26, The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh will be hosting local Christian clergy and leaders for a gathering with Bishop Sandy Millar as he discusses pastoring congregations from nominal Christianity into deeper and more passionate discipleship. Bishop Millar is a dynamic speaker who was instrumental in the founding of the Alpha Program, which seeks to enable people to explore the Christian faith in a relaxed setting over a series of weekly sessions.

This special free event, which runs from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., was made possible through cooperation with the Christian Leaders Fellowship and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh, which offered the use of Saint Paul Seminary in Crafton as the day's venue. A two-page brochure detailing the event can be downloaded at [www.pitanglican.org/news/local/filesforposting/Brochure%20Ecumenical%20Clergy%20Day.pdf](http://www.pitanglican.org/news/local/filesforposting/Brochure%20Ecumenical%20Clergy%20Day.pdf). Anyone interested in registering should email [malarkey@pitanglican.org](mailto:malarkey@pitanglican.org) or call 412-281-6131 (ext. 135) by November 17.



### A New Item on the Menu

By Deacon Kathy Walzer

This past week Fr. Joseph shared with the vestry his vision for us as a parish to become a people who know and understand the Christian gospel and are able to communicate that gospel to others. When the gospel touches our lives and we are able to understand and put into words what God has done, we are much better prepared to have that blessing overflow to others. As Joseph said in his letter to the community – no one can hear the good news of the gospel enough. We all need to be continually learning and reinforcing the basics of the gospel, in order that we don't lose sight of the wonderful thing that God has done for us in Christ, and to keep the message moving to others.

In order to help us in this reinforcement, the Church of our Saviour is offering a new item on our gospel teaching menu - The Gospel Teaching CD's Checkout Center - This colorful pocket holder full of excellent teaching cd's from a wonderful ministry called the White Horse Inn, will be hanging in the foyer of the church for us to use. All we have to do is check out a cd, listen and learn in our car, and return it for another. Previous sermons are available on the various topics.

We also still have the online teaching series on the Creed and Martin Luther's treatise, "The Freedom of a Christian" which lays the basis of the doctrine of justification by faith and the place of works in the life of a Christian. Really good stuff. You can still participate in this course discussion at the following link:

[www.groups.google.com/group/anglicanchristianbasics](http://www.groups.google.com/group/anglicanchristianbasics)

In our adult education hour on Sunday mornings, we have begun to follow this teaching up with a study of some of the basic doctrine or teaching of the Church regarding God, man, sin, Christ and salvation. We are in the midst of this study now.

In January, Fr. Joseph would like to begin a series of Sunday evening "fireside chats" at the rectory to teach and discuss gospel material. Look for more information on that to come. We hope everyone can plug in to one or more of these opportunities to learn about the great gospel of Jesus Christ. If you are unable to take advantage of any of these outlets, please let us know how we can make it happen for you.