



The Shepherd's Voice

August 21, 2012

By Fr. Joe Rees

“The Spirit Gives Life”

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” John 6: 63

Jesus had just been speaking to His disciples since they were grumbling about what He had said concerning “eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood”, and “Whoever feeds on Me, he also will live because of Me”. Jesus asks them if they are offended by what He said. They say that it’s a ‘hard saying’. Many of the followers, outside of the 12, drop away and no longer follow. But notice, Jesus refers all of what He said back to the quote above. “It is the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, who gives life!” Jesus was speaking about the new reality, a heavenly reality, of the Spirit. And, He was asking that they ‘believe’. “But there are some of you who do not believe”, He says. That is still true today.

There are those who are not able to believe because they have not released their proving, fact-finding, and ‘unless I see it I won’t believe it’ mindsets. This fleshly mindset is just “no help at all”! The way of Jesus is the way of faith. Faith is “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”-- Hebrews 11:1. Yes, the Spirit of God enables us to have that trust in a truth that is spiritual and not physical. I’ve never seen Jesus personally, yet I totally believe in Him! Why? Because for me, all the saints down through the centuries link personally back to one of the apostles like Peter who simply said, “For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eye-witnesses of His majesty.” 2 Peter 1:16ff. They were *eye-witnesses* of Jesus! They saw His resurrected Body. They ate with Him. They were touched by Him. They heard His voice. They walked with Him. He was and is real. So, I released that ‘prove it to me’ mentality long ago.

When Jesus said that His words are ‘spirit and life’, I believe Him. Each day I need to be fed with real physical food. But I need heavenly food too. I need to feed on Jesus daily—“three squares”, as my dad use to say about Navy food. In order to really live, I need Jesus. The Spirit gives me His Life. This is what Jesus was trying to impart to His disciples. He was saying that His Words were food for them to bring them Spirit and Life! That is why I write the Shepherd’s Voice, so that more and more people will eat the Words of Jesus our Great Shepherd. When we do we are treated to His Life within us and made much more alive than we ever dreamed of. We are alive to our heavenly eternity. We live into the joy of Jesus’ life in us. After years of feeding on Jesus, if we don’t get His Word daily then we’re truly famished. That’s why we are concentrating on Bible studies and the Word of God to build our faith for every day life.

When Jesus said these things many people “turned back and no longer walked with Him.” Too bad! They missed out on the main course. Jesus would eventually take His disciples to the foot of the cross where His final words were spoken before His death. In one of those words He said, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” How true. They left His side because they didn’t understand the spiritual reality of eternal life that He was attempting to give them. He forgives them though. They really didn’t know what they were doing. The Father surely answers Jesus’ prayer, and many are relieved of their burden of guilt. Such a gift! As Peter says in this passage for Sunday’s Gospel, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that You are the Holy One of God.”(v. 69) I simply say, ‘Go to Jesus, feed on Him, receive His gifts’!

When faith is hard; go to Jesus, He is there with you. He will show you the way, for He is the Way. Believe today, believe tomorrow, and believe in all your tomorrows and you will find that the Spirit has given you life and peace. The Spirit will give to those who truly believe the very Life of Jesus in their hearts and minds all their days. For me, I look forward to my “three squares”—the daily food of

Jesus’ life that enrich my soul and fuel my body and inspire my spirit. Try it, you’ll enjoy every Word that you devour of Jesus’ Holy Life. Peace to you my friends.

Blessings in Christ’s Love,
Fr. Joe

Sunday Servers this week...

August 26, 2012	BCP- Proper 16	8:00 a.m. Service	10:15 a.m. Service
First Reader	Joshua 1-25	John Lipnicke	Petey Seibold
Psalm Reader	Psalm 16	Choir	Frances Slaughter
Second Reader	Ephesians 5:21-33	Jani Dubski	John Gerhart
Intercessor		Acolyte	Chris Kilby
Lay Euch. Ministers		Joan Jacobs, Doug Hall	Carolyn Blumberg, Cline Handy
Acolytes		Mitch Dubski	Chris K (C); Caitlin B (T1); Zachary J (T2)
Welcomers		Myrna Lipnicke	Myrna Lipnicke, Judi & Bill Collins, John Gerhart
Ushers		Rob Ackerman, Dick Sholly	Dink Nash, Ted Vallas, JR Fox, April Knowles
Vestry Person of Day			JR Fox
Healing Ministers		Jan Simon, Thor Strom	Petey S, Kari C, Connie F, Donna S
Counters			Cline Handy & Michael Murphy

Did you know?

There’s a new service of Evening Prayer and Healing on Friday evenings at 6:00 p.m. Stop by on your way home from work and decompress for the weekend.

Get ready for the Ministry Faire on Sept. 16th.

Ministry leaders, it’s time to make posters to put up around the church to let people know about your ministry. Call the church office if you have any questions.

Our Grace Congregation -from Robbin Gates

Fr. Joe would like to try a change in the way we currently do our announcements in our services and has asked me to coordinate and implement something new. Fr. Joe would like to have a "Lay Announcer" for each service, a simple yet effective spin on the way we’ve been doing things, and it’s also a great opportunity to plug a particular event, fund raiser, etc.

We’ll keep it short, simple, and all information would be provided to the Lay Announcer prior to the service. **Would you be interested in volunteering?** To accommodate an Announcer and back-up for both services every week (and the occasional 5th Sunday), we’ll need at least 16 people for the "team".

It’s a great opportunity to help out in a most unique way and an especially good forum for small group or event leaders that would like to convey information associated with their group activities or upcoming event. All announcer details would be provided to you in advance. I’ll be the main team coordinator and also a participant. We’re hoping to have volunteers in place and begin the announcements early September. Feel free to contact me any time. Thank you for your consideration and many blessings to you. Call the church office for my contact information.

Robbin Gates

Sunday at Grace

8:00 a.m. – Traditional Service
9:30 a.m. – Fellowship
10:15 a.m. – Family Service with
Worship Team

Fund Raiser for Grace at
Chick-fil-A

September 13, 2012

From 4 to 7 p.m.

Pick up a coupon at church
and plan to have your dinner at
Chick-fil-A that evening.

Readings for Sunday

Joshua 24:1-25

Psalm 16

Ephesians 5:21-33

John 6:60-69

We are using the English Standard
Version of the Bible and the Lectionary
from the Book of Common Prayer (Year B)

This Week at Grace –August 21-August 28

Tues. August 21

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study -Revelation
4:30 p.m. Healing Eucharist at the Oasis
6:00 p.m. Cursillo music team practice

Wed August 22

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thurs. August 23

7:00 a.m. – Bible Study
8:00 a.m. Clergy Meeting
10-Noon Play Group
11:30 a.m. Healing Eucharist – Oasis
6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Fri. August 24

Fr. Joe's Day Off
6:00 p.m. Evening Prayer and Healing

Sat. August 25

8:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study

Sun. August 26

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service with choir
9:30 a.m. Fellowship
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Worship Team

Mon. August 27

6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer

Tues. August 28

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study at Grace
4:30 p.m. Healing Eucharist at the Oasis

Weekly – There are over 25 small groups meeting during the week. Check our newsletter for a list of all the groups or you can find the list on our website: www.graceanglicanchurch.com.

Rector's Bible Study

Tuesdays

11:30 a.m.

Fr. Joe is leading the group through a study of the Book of Revelation. Everyone is welcome.
B.Y.O.L. (Bring your own lunch)

Sunday Refreshments Between Services

We have a group of faithful volunteers who provide the refreshments each Sunday on a rotating basis. We need more people to offer to help as some of these people are getting tired. Please call the church office if you would be willing to provide some of the Sunday refreshments on a once-a-month basis.

Save the date!

Sept. 3 Labor Day – Church office closed.
Sept. 5 Healing Prayer Service
Sept. 9 Register for Sunday School
Sept. 12 Soaking Prayer Service
Sept. 13 Chick-fil-A church fund raiser
Sept. 15 Diocesan Convention
Sept. 16 Ministry Faire at Grace
Sept. 16 Sunday School starts
Sept. 19 Vestry meeting
Sept. 20-23 Men's Cursillo
Sept. 23 Benefit Concert at Grace for CHC
Sept. 27-30 Women's Cursillo
Oct. 3 Healing Prayer
Oct. 6 Blessing of the Animals
Oct. 10 Soaking Prayer
Oct. 17 Vestry meeting
Nov. 10 2:00 p.m. – Helen Fritz Memorial Service
Nov. 12 Mike Endicott – OSL Healing Conference at Grace Anglican Church