



The St. David's Epistle

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SUMMER 2016

A Place To Belong

If you have been around me at all in the last few weeks, you may have heard me talk about my experience at an event called "Playa Del Fuego". Playa del Fuego is one of a number of regional events patterned after the yearly Burning Man festival held a few hours outside of Reno, NV. One of my closest friends is a part of the burn community, and a few years ago he began inviting me to join him. I had a lot of questions going in, but I'm so glad I gave it a shot. It was an incredible experience-- one that, surprisingly, re-energized my understanding of what the church is, provides, and ultimately promises to be.

Many of the videos and descriptions of Burning Man make it seem like an enormous party, a tent-city Mardi Gras celebration. I found that aspect undeniably present over the course of the weekend, but as I spend time with the people who were there, I saw that an awful lot of them were there for more than a party. Over and over I saw and heard people who were sincerely, passionately looking for a place to belong, be accepted, and be loved. I went to Burning Man and found a people looking for, and in some ways finding, a church.

In costuming, music, and art, I saw people hungry to express themselves and communicate creatively with their community. They were there because they felt like they were safe to be themselves, or just safe to admit that they didn't know what that was yet. And the response of their community seemed to go beyond acceptance to appreciation-- the idea

that every contribution could add to the sense of the whole, no matter its size or shape.

I found a community invested in gift-giving and sharing, in offering their talents and goods freely but also calling others to do the same in their own way. In one conversation, I learned that every event in this community is a little different. While much is the same from gathering to gathering, no two burns are identical because the people in it are always changing and being changed from one gathering to the next.

The echo for me, in what our Sunday worship is designed to be, was palpable.

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he says, "What should be done then, my friends? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up", (1Cor 14:26). The Episcopal liturgy is built around this idea. This is why we are always looking for new volunteers to be a part of worship - everyone has a gift to bring to the gathering.

Realistically, one person could probably do everything needed to prepare and present church on Sunday morning on their own: set up the altar and hospitality table, read all the readings, play the music, distribute communion, etc. It might take twice as long, and be ten times as exhausting, but there's no reason it couldn't be done.

Inviting each other to share those roles is not about lightening a burden, but about each of us sharing with each other, and participating more deeply in our wor-

ship, together. A church service is meant to be an experience we share, not an event we witness. Even the most fundamental, simple components of worship, like the call and response of the liturgy, are designed to encourage participation in our worship together.

In participating and helping to create the worship that we share, it becomes a part of us and us of it. St. David's is changed every time someone new joins in worship. My hope is that we continue to be a community that allows and welcomes that change. In doing church together we have the opportunity to dig deep into ourselves and discover who God has created us to be, and we were not designed to do that alone.

God is building the church, and we are a part of it. Through Word and Sacrament we enter into the holy work of God and are transformed. In this transformation we are meant to find peace and joy and new life. When we invite others into the life of the church we are inviting them into this transformative love. We work to make ourselves present and open to the rest of our community so they too are invited to explore what God has for them in the middle of an affirming and supportive environment.

In the burn community, festivals are a central part of people's lives. They find acceptance and love there, but it only exists for a handful of weekends each year. We have the power to offer it every day, and we are called by and with God to do so. To do that, we will have to be open to a new way of church from the one we often see now. I find that prospect to be both challenging and scary, and I am excited at the thought of being a part of it with you.

Kris+

Announcements

Garden Volunteers are needed for weeding, watering and harvesting food. Please call the church office.

Centering Prayer Group continues to meet on the first Wednesday of the month throughout summer.

Surf Shack VBS is coming August 9-12. Flip over newsletter to register.

Children's Corner : Are You Ready For Summer?

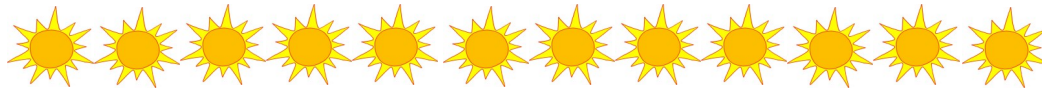


Listening to Ms. Jen during VBS last year

Are you ready for summer? Summer is a time of fun and adventure at St. David's. We continue our great

school year Children's Church program through the summer months. We also offer Kamp David mini-camps through June and July for children 1-10 years old. These are available on Monday and Wednesday from 9-12 or 9-2. You may choose a few days or all the

days, and everything in between. August 9-12, Surf Shack VBS takes place from 9:30-12. Children ages 3-10 will "Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love". Volunteers and junior volunteers (age 10 and up) are needed to prepare in the weeks before VBS, and serve the week of. There are many opportunities and all are invited to lead and help with this fun outreach to our community. See Ms. Jen for registrations for these summer programs or join as a volunteer.



Surf Shack-VBS 2016

Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love!

Family Last Name _____ Name of Parents _____

Address _____

Phone 1 _____ Phone 2 _____

Email _____

Camper 1 _____ Age _____

Up-to-date on vaccinations? yes/no Allergies/special Needs _____

Friends requested to be in group _____

Camper 2 _____ Age _____

Up-to-date on vaccinations? yes/no Allergies/special Needs _____

Friends requested to be in group _____

I do / do not (circle one) give my permission for St. David's to use my child's picture without identifiers in print or other media advertising or promotions.

Kamp Sunday is a chance for the children to reunite, attend church, and sing our songs for the group.

We plan to attend Camp Sunday on Aug 14th yes / no Number of people attending _____

Please enclose \$20 per camper, and mail registration to:

St David's VBS, 905 E McMurray Rd, Venetia, PA, 15367

Please be sure to dress children for play, with closed toed shoes and sunscreen. Please have children leave stuffed animals and toys in the car.

Please mail registration by July 27! There will be no walk in registration.