



September 4, 2020

We Have Good News

Kaleidoscopes exist for the sole purpose of providing beauty through the art of illusion. The word comes from the ancient Greek word *καλός* (*kalos*), "beautiful, beauty," and *εἶδος* (*eidos*), "that which is seen: form, shape." The symmetry of the shape at the end is caused by multiple mirrors set in an angle to amplify whatever object is at the end as it rotates within the tube. The eye looks through one hole, but sees multiple views and shapes of such brilliant diversity.

Looking at the story of Jesus is like looking through a kaleidoscope. The mirrors that refract the story are the four gospel writers; Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John have different histories, are written for different communities, with different language and narrative techniques, and at different times. But in their diversity they each paint a portion of the story of Jesus life, death, and resurrection.

The stories beloved by Luke's readers – stories like the Good Samaritan (Luke 10) and the Prodigal Son (Luke 15) are nowhere to be found in Matthew, Mark or John. The

poetic prologue to John, *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...”* (John 1) is nowhere to be found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Mark (Mark 16) is the only gospel with two endings – a longer and shorter report of the resurrection. Matthew is the only one with the Great Commission (Matthew 28). If you’re looking for the Christmas gospel, you’ll only find that in Luke. If you’re looking for Jesus’ encounter with Mary in the garden following the resurrection, you’ll only find that in John.

If you dive deep into the stories that are replicated across several gospels, you’ll find that the details slightly vary. Take Jesus’ baptism for instance. When the heavens break open and God speaks, revealing his love for the Son – the reports come in four different ways:

Matthew 3:17 – *“This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”*

Mark 9:7 – *“This is my Son, the Beloved, listen to him!”*

Luke 9:35 – *“This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!”*

John 1:29-34 – John’s account of the baptism doesn’t include a voice from the heavens. But later in John 12:28-30 – *A voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it [thy name] and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing by heard it and said that it thundered.*

In essence, the four gospel writers are like four different reporters from four different news sources. The slight variations on the same story don’t threaten the validity of the story – but instead they give us a nuanced reading of a moment in history when our God proclaims who Jesus is. And Jesus is ALL of those things: Son, Beloved, the One with whom God is pleased, the Beloved, the One to listen to, a thundering voice.

When cries of “fake news” and “alternative facts” surface – it’s hard to know who to believe. *Confirmation bias* is rampant because we have so many options. This means that we have the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms or supports our prior beliefs before we hear from other angles into the story. What [sources](#) do we trust to give us the whole story without bias?

When it comes to the actual GOOD news of Jesus Christ, we have four different reports, with four different biases – but all those stories together give us an angle into the truth of who Jesus Christ is for us and for the world. The multiple versions do not threaten the validity of our faith – they actually do the opposite: they enhance the story so that we can find a way into the living Word as we read or hear those words.

Dear church, at a time when we are so polarized as a nation and a community, this is the time to find Christ at the center. You won’t find Jesus on your side if you draw a

line and say that Jesus is not on “that side” – and all you will find is total frustration and further belittling and demeaning of “the other.” And what’s worse is if you only listen to the voices you relate to or like – you will miss out on the beautiful diversity of the whole story.

All the more, a tiny little passage in the gospel of John tells us that the whole story of Jesus is not even contained in the gospels –

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:30-31)

Our faith takes us the rest of the way where the details drop out. And this is good news. Regardless of what we hear in the news – it will never contain the whole truth or the only truth. Like a kaleidoscope, there is “always more to the story” than what meets the eye.

As people of faith, who know and hold on to the incredible story of Jesus, we have a truth that calls himself THE Truth. Let’s bear witness to his truth – his way – by meeting each other in the center and interpreting the actions of others in the best possible light. If all we do is demonize and discredit – we will miss the beautiful diversity that God has created for us to witness at this very moment.

Pr. Jenn Collins +

DON'T FORGET! Outdoor Service on September 13

As previously mentioned, Saint Andrew will be having an outdoor service in the East parking lot on **Sunday, September 13 at 9 am**. Please click [here](#) to sign up to let us know you will be worshipping with us.

Spending Plan Snapshot

Here is an update of the spending plan, which will be included in the Wave monthly. For the month of July:

Although offerings through July 31 are down \$41,643 from the 2020 "pre-pandemic" Spending Plan, we have been able to keep expenses \$44,621 less than what was planned. This means the deficit of \$8,462 is \$2,978 less than anticipated.

**YOUR GIFTS
RETURNED TO
GOD**
\$415,820

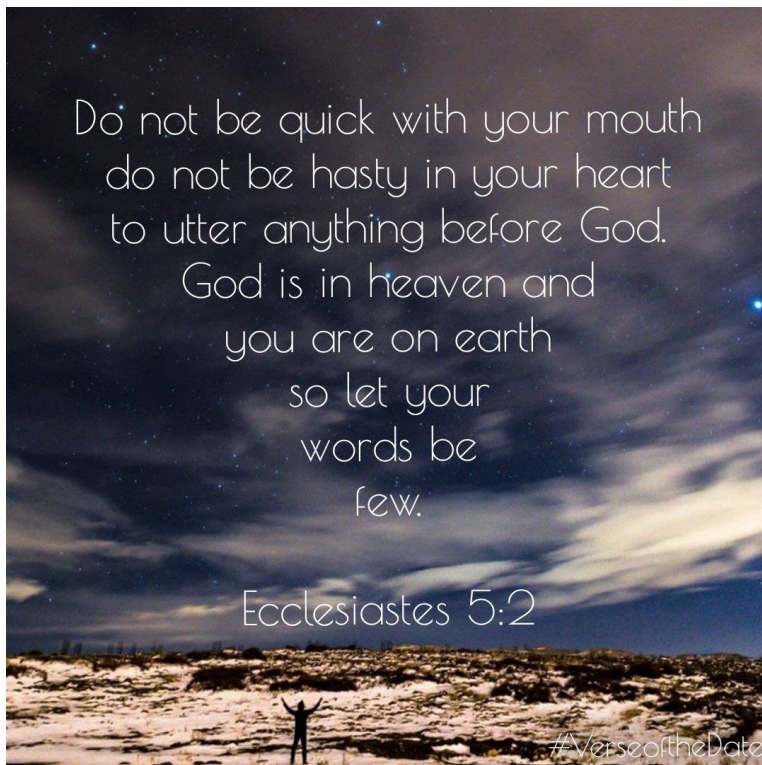
**MINISTRY
COSTS FOR
SAINT ANDREW**
\$424,282

Spending Plan Snapshot:

July 2020

**GIFTS GREATER
(LESS) THAN
COST**
\$(8,462)

**SPENDING PLAN
PROJECTION
THROUGH JULY**
\$(11,440)



Mindfulness and Internet Comments

In today's media, we are filled with the opinions of those who oppose us. We consistently read, watch, and listen to people taking sides, pointing fingers, and attacking those who disagree with them. In many ways, social media gives a whole new idea to "the man behind the curtain". It is often easy to find ourselves taking advantage of the anonymity being behind a web browser provides; from computers, to iPhones, to even smart refrigerators (yes,

[these really do exist](#)), it suddenly becomes easy to throw out harsh words that seemingly enter a coded abyss into which we do not look the recipient in the eye, let alone be able to identify them. No harm done, right?

I've seen many Christians utilize the internet and social media to spread hate to those who think differently than them. No matter the issue, I see people condemning each other left and right – when, in reality, we KNOW who the ultimate judge is. As Christians, we are called to love one another as ourselves. This includes when we are online.

The Holy Spirit led me to Ecclesiastes, the fifth chapter, second verse:

“Never be rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be quick to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you upon earth; therefore, let your words be few.”

Lately, in an online world that is so tension-filled, I find myself struggling to hold back my fingers from typing out a rude comment. When we feel so passionate about something, we jump to a defense that can be rude, harsh, and hurtful, when God specifically tells us to never be rash with our mouths (or in this case, our fingertips).

Jesus fought for the outcasts, the disenfranchised, and the most vulnerable people, and that is what we are called to do. Whether we know it or not, we might be directing harsh comments to people in these groups. When you are ready to comment something online, I pray that you take a moment to thoughtfully contemplate what you are about to type, especially if it is specifically directed toward someone: do I know this person? Do I have common ground with them? Are they struggling with something I am unable to see, or something that is out of their control?

I can guarantee that no matter your answers to these questions, you share something with that person: you are both Children of the Lord, known, loved, and created by the hands of God.

I ask you the next time you are about to comment something that might be difficult for someone to receive, you pray for a purer heart, a clearer mind, and compassion for whomever your comment will reach. Replace this rashness with quiet reflection and close the browser. Shut your laptop, set down your phone, and pray. Be thoughtful in what your heart will utter to God.

Michelle (she/her)

Bibles to be Distributed on Rally Day

Second grade families and families of children who have yet to receive a bible,

Now is the time to fulfill a promise made in your child's baptism *“to place in their hands the Holy Scriptures.”* We invite you to formally present a Bible to your child

during worship on ***Sunday September 13*** at the beginning of the 9:00 am worship service which will take place in the east parking lot at church. Registration for that service is necessary and can be made through [this form](#) to register.

If you are not comfortable attending in person worship, or are not available on the thirteenth, Bibles will be available at church for pick-up the following week. The Bible is a gift from Saint Andrew to you and your child and there is no cost to you. Through God's Word, we read and hear stories about God's love for us and for all of God's people. We are excited to share in this special milestone with you and your family.

Plan to Gather Weekly

Update: 9/2/2020

For now, Saint Andrew remains in Phase One of the Plan to Gather. As soon as there is a consistent downward trend, we will move forward to Phase Two.

SALC COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 9/2/2020

Date	Burden #	Trajectory	SALC Status
8/12	111.3	No change	Phase One
8/19	83.1	No change	Phase One
8/26	59	No change	Phase One
9/2	53	No change	Phase One

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