

Rector's Report October 2023

- Soon after returning from my friend's memorial gathering in Occidental (Sept 16), I happened to receive a signed copy of a new book titled *Choosing Life after Tragedy: An Experience-Based Theological Journey* by Rabbi Anson Hugh Laytner, who had asked me to write an endorsement for the book last Spring. In the endorsement, I wrote, "Rabbi Laytner approaches the problem of suffering with refreshingly personal and raw candor. As a pioneering scholar of the Jewish tradition of arguing with God, Laytner knows both the spiritual benefits and limits of expressing authentic anger in prayer. Whether it be in discovering the Dao of Torah, hearing a personally transformative message in a Bob Marley song, or even fainting in synagogue, Laytner's journey compels us to reflect on our own spiritual journey with naked honesty." (Pic of Rabbi Anson and me in Seattle in Aug 2022).



- On the morning of Saturday September 30, I participated in the online Deanery Convocation with fellow clergy and lay delegates of the Semper Virens Deanery, which included preparations for the Diocesan Convention in Cameron Park November 3 – 4.
- In the afternoon of Saturday September 30, I participated in the Virtual St. Jude Walk/Run by walking to the Three-Mile Bridge and back at Headwaters Forest Reserve with Seabury and Gubbio. In the end, I raised \$625 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Thanks again to everyone who helped me to first reach and then exceed my fundraising goals! St. Judas Thaddeus would be proud.





- Sunday October 1 saw our first Joy Mass Family Service, which was a roaring success, with eight children and eighteen adults! Subsequent Joy Mass services have also been well attended. Please continue praying and spreading the word!



- On October 4 – 6, I dragged Ashley to Las Vegas to see U2 perform at the Sphere in what turned out to be the most spectacular concert I have ever attended.
- On Saturday October 7, I joined the clergy of the deanery for the Clericus Dinner at the St. Francis Fortuna parsonage with Bishop Megan Traquair. I loaned our white chasuble to St. Francis for Bishop Megan to wear as they celebrated their patronal feast day on October 8, hoping that it will be returned in time for Christ the King Sunday, which we might consider our own patronal feast day (along with Transfiguration and Christmas?).



- On Monday October 9, I participated online in a panel hosted by Church Divinity School of the Pacific titled “Canon, Communion, and Controversy” which included Bishop Megan, Br. Simeon Powell, the Rev. Jim Richardson, and the Rev. Dr. Stephen Shaver, discussing the controversy surrounding the Episcopal Church canon that states, “No

unbaptized person shall be eligible to receive Holy Communion in this Church” (Canon I.17.7).

- On Tuesday October 10, I participated in a breakfast gathering at the Village Pantry Restaurant hosted by Gideons International. I met several “Gideons” and other local pastors and then ordered 100 free copies of the Life Book, a version of the Gospel of John geared towards students. I was disappointed that the Life Book also includes a section on human sexuality with a verse taken out of context that perpetuate a conservative agenda that is at odds with The Episcopal Church. <https://thelifebook.com/>
- On Thursday October 12, I met with the Worship Planning Committee for the Revival (scheduled for April 27, 2024). Among other things, we discussed the possibility of asking Bobby McFerrin to join us as a guest artist. I also finally uploaded the recording of Bobby McFerrin’s live version of the 23rd Psalm, which I mentioned in my sermon on October 15: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yei0azTGnJk>
- On Friday October 13, Ashley and I attended the memorial service for the Rev. Nancy Streufert’s late husband Dick at St. Alban’s Arcata, where Pam and Paul Gossard performed a truly jubilant version of Israel Kamakawi’ole’s “Over the Rainbow.”
- On Saturday October 14, I participated online in the California Joint Deputations Gathering at CDSP from 9 AM to 4 PM, along with the President of the House of Deputies Julia Ayala Harris (the first Latina and woman of color to hold the position) and the Executive Officer of the General Convention, the Rev. Dr. Michael Barlowe. As the second clergy deputy alternate to GC for our diocese, I participated with other deputies and alternates from the dioceses of Northern California, El Camino Real, San Joaquin, Los Angeles, and San Diego. I obviously had to excuse myself from around 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM to participate in the wonderful and delicious Stewardship BBQ.



- On Monday October 16, I met online with the students of Dr. Ashley London Bacchi's "Introduction to Christian Scriptures" course at Starr King School for the Ministry to speak about the Gospel of John and to answer questions that the students had about a lecture I recorded for them earlier in the month.
- I was invited by Dr. Rod Dugliss, former dean of the Episcopal School of Deacons, to lead a five-hour online retreat for the Pacific Center for Spiritual Formation on Saturday December 2, similar to the one I led for them in March 2022, based on *The Cloud of Unknowing Distilled*. However, after prayer and reflection, I realized I would not be able to adequately fulfill this task during such a busy time of the year.
- I was also invited to teach an online course on Diaconal Theology for Bexley-Seabury seminary's "Deacons Formation Collaborative" program. I have agreed to take on this task and I am expected to have the course complete by February 14, 2024.
<https://www.bexleyseabury.edu/deaconsformation/>
- On Tuesday October 17, I met with Leslie Allen (who now plans to be received into The Episcopal Church when Bishop Megan visits) and was given the watercolor painting that she made of Ashley, Seabury, Gubbio and me, a painting project that we won at the silent auction at last year's stewardship dinner. The painting is based on a photo that Perry Gray- Reneberg took of us at the Transfiguration House during the vestry gathering on August 5, 2021, the Eve of the Taboric Feast. I love that the painting was made by a Christ Church parishioner based on a photo taken by another parishioner at a vestry gathering.

