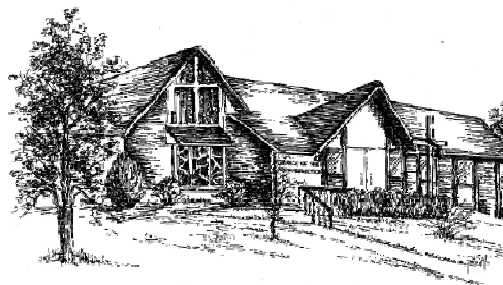


# CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION



Wednesday, October 4, 2017

Dear sisters, brothers and friends of Resurrection Church:

I share this writing from the Dean of St. Mark's Cathedral in Minneapolis, MN. It is to the point of my feelings and an appropriate message for the whole church. I have been with my fellow priests and the bishop since Monday and am just now presenting this letter.

Time for prayer and words of hope will never cease, but speaking about such things rings hollow in light of this most recent act of evil. Our current society has allowed, what had been held underground, to raise its ugly head in actions such as these. Street violence in our cities is the worst it has been in decades. The racial tension, that has really never gone away, has been fueled by a political system that is complicit with prejudice, malice and indecency. I can no longer be silent as your spiritual leader. I ask not only your prayers, but also your actions to speak out in deterrence to the evil that continues around us.

Please read what The Very Rev. Paul J. Lebens-Englund wrote for his cathedral parish and diocese:

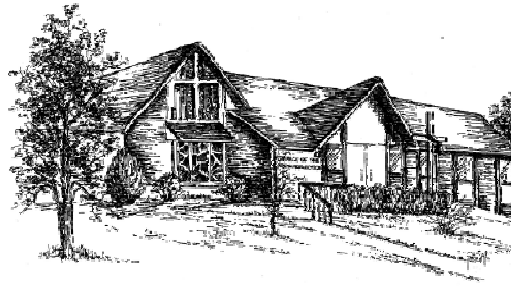
“While our grief is still raw, it is right to seek consolation and clarity in prayer - holding each other close in the presence of God. It is good and right, but also incomplete. Prayer has always been the basis for creative, compassionate, and constructive action. At this moment, as we pray for the souls of the departed and for strength and perseverance among friends and family left behind, we must pray, too, that our moral outrage move us to clear speech and action in the face of this unfathomable violence.

Sunday night's tragic events in Las Vegas remind us, yet again, that we, as a nation, have lost our way. We've allowed ourselves to be held hostage to a culture of rampant and increasing violence, the product of a crass manipulation of our fear and of our Constitutional guarantees to self-defense against tyranny, which has, ironically, created its own kind of tyranny.

We continue to privilege the right to bear arms over the right to peaceably assemble, perhaps because the former is more profitable than the latter. The profiteers of these weapons of mass destruction have convinced us we'll only be safe with more weapons, not less. So, like lemmings, we've run to the cliff.

But our Lord, the one whose rule supersedes any rationale we may give ourselves to hold the course, has, in fact, given us a different Way - the vision of a peaceable kingdom in which the beloved community has beat their swords into plowshares, their spears into pruning hooks - God's economy of Life supplanting our economy of Death. One cannot claim Jesus as Lord and continue to believe and act otherwise. As Jesus says in Matthew's seventh chapter: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of heaven - only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven."

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The Way before us is clear - and has been clear for years - it is our Will, we must concede, that has failed us. It is the Devil who convinces us peace is possible without justice - and it is the Devil, as we know, who dwells in the details: the disparate rationalizations we cobble together to form a perfect constellation of complacency and complicity. The problem is not 'out there,' but 'in here.' WE are the people God needs today - those who refuse to abide by the radical disconnect and dissonance between God's dream and our current nightmare.

Perhaps you, like me, are heartbroken and heartsick at the daily blood-letting demanded by the gods of Empire. Perhaps you're ready to pull up stakes and organize a walk-out, to risk disrupting the delicate ecology of 'peace through violence.' Perhaps tonight is the night you bloody your lintels one last time and forever forbid Death's dominion over your household, choosing, instead, the flourishing of Love and of Life. Perhaps today is the day we ready ourselves to act.

History has proven - as the Exodus narrative predicted - that not all will get up and move. That's fine. But those who ARE ready to act will no longer be held back by the misgivings of others. We can agree to disagree. Those who think everything is fine can continue on as if nothing ever happened. Those who are fed up can organize to make a difference. We will have both under this one roof. And that's okay. We will love each other, challenge each other, pray and learn with each other, and, God-willing, work with each other to build a more just and peaceful society."

As long as we live in a free society that tolerates the evil that is destroying us, events like what happened in Las Vegas on Sunday will only continue. This is NOT a "Second Amendment" issue. This IS an issue of identifying how to live according to moral, ethical and real standards/practices of justice and respect. If we are complicit with these events, and just bury our heads in the sand, and pray something like this will not reach our families and friends, then we are part of the problem and not the solution. Seek what are the right things to do, and yes, continue to pray!

*Fr. David*