

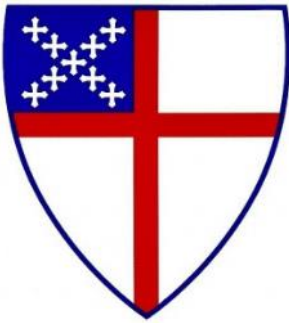


THE ANCHOR

FEBRUARY 2021

St. Clement's by-the-Sea
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Welcoming all since 1929



**Member, Anglican
Communion
PARISH MISSION:**

Follow Christ through the way we live and love, spreading the good news of God in Christ, opening our hearts to all, and experience and spread joy in the process.



“This Church of Ours is Open To All...There Will Be No Outcasts.”

-The Most Rev. Edmund Browning Emeritus
Presiding Bishop



Sharpening...

Recently I read a provocative comment in a eulogy for the amazing Henry “Hammerin’ Hank” Aaron who died last month. Aaron was a truly gifted athlete and a stellar human being, who succeeded in 23 seasons with Major League Baseball in spite of death threats and cruelty hurled at him for the color of his skin. Aaron’s 755 career homeruns most famously broke the record held by Babe Ruth, and lasted until Barry Bonds beat it 33 years later, but beyond that his accomplishments could probably fill this page. “Aaron holds the MLB records for the most career runs batted in (RBIs) (2,297), extra base hits (1,477), and total bases (6,856).”¹ If you are not really into baseball, just know that’s a ton!



Aaron started with the Braves in Milwaukee in 1954 and stayed with the team when it relocated to Atlanta (in 1966). Like many African American professionals, Aaron faced tremendous prejudice and discrimination in this period, yet he persevered. He later became the first African American executive of a Major League Team. And regarding all those accolades listed above, they didn’t seem to motivate him as much as simply playing to “the best to one’s potential.”² Which brings me back to the comment which led me to write this article in the first place. At his memorial service, a former president said that “Aaron’s achievements were due to rare skills and strength...and he worked hard to nurture his abilities and to be consistent over the three decades of his decorated career.” And then he added, “You have to train your grace.”³

“You have to train your grace.” I never heard it put quite that way before, and it got me to thinking on a subject that I have thought about many times, the relationship of God-given talent to God-inspired hard work. There are some areas where this duality is especially marked. Professional sport is certainly one, but also in the arts. Not everyone is Mozart! Who played more than one instrument and composed by age five. Or Picasso, who did a pretty nice painting at eight! And there are certainly some who simply take our breath away by their elegant grace in other areas.

...Continued on next page

Have you ever watched a figure skater or gymnast whose performance is simply so sublime that you have tears flowing from your eyes after they finish their routine? Watching Simone Biles a few years ago did that for me. And I'm not alone. Former first lady, Michelle Obama, once told the gymnast, Nadia Comaneci, that after she saw her perform that she believed for the first time that she could do anything. Were these performances the result of pure, natural talent or was it the result of nurture and truly determined hard work? Surely both!

I have had this conversation many times, when it comes to some of the icons of Jazz music for example. I'm of the school that hard work will always win out over just natural talent. But I admit that hard work will not give you a voice that is as delightful to listen to as Ella Fitzgerald or Nat King Cole. Hard work will give you a voice that is *more pleasant to listen to*, yes, but not necessarily as pleasant or melodious as those. So, I have to concede somewhat. While all are given gifts, some are given gifts that are exceptional or apply them in a way that is.

For those who have been watching the series on Jazz on PBS, perhaps you saw that famous scene when Fats Waller (who was no slouch on the piano!) is playing in a club when he sees Art Tatem enter. Waller stops playing and says something like, "friends, I just play the piano, but *God just walked in the room.*" He gives over the piano to Tatem who plays, by many accounts, as if he had four hands! I think that Waller was speaking to this difference between the result of great and hard work and that of God bestowed grace. There is a purpose in these things, as I will speak to in a moment. Nonetheless, many have pointed out, as former President Bill Clinton did at Hank Aaron's funeral, that you need to "train your grace." Yes, God gives some talents that others do not have by birth, but that talent must be nurtured and encouraged, it must be exercised and challenged in order to develop into its full potential.

We lost our beloved, Earl "Duke" Welliver in 2019 and he was a great inspiration to me. He did things that I only hope to ever achieve. You are surely aware that he started our Peaceful Warrior Tae Kwon Do program here (and led it for more than a decade). Duke had a sign on the door to the dojang that I admired. Students passed this sign on their way in and on the way out. As I remember it, the sign read something like "hard work beats talent, when talent is unwilling to work hard." I could get behind that! Duke understood something that he had probably seen in countless students. Some of those students arrived with perhaps a more natural talent for martial arts than others. Yet, those who were willing to work hard outperformed those who were naturally gifted but didn't have the willingness to struggle, to strive, *to suffer* for their objective, whether it was for the next belt or for the other things that they wanted in life. Of course, when God-given talent meets a God-inspired willingness to work hard, amazing things can happen, and most of us look on as we see things that seem beyond human.

So, why do some have talents that others don't seem to possess? Why aren't we all equally provisioned? Well, to quote St. Paul, "if all were an eye, where would the hearing be?" We all have talents, but those talents are varied and that is purposeful. Yet all those talents are inspired and motivated by the same Spirit of God. All of these, according to Paul, are for the building up of the body of Christ, and that as each of these gifts are exercised to their full potential, so the body functions to its full potential. On the next page is how Paul says it.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit *for the common good*... All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses...Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11, 14-21 (emphasis mine)

So, we are given a variety of gifts. Yet, all of these graces need quickening, sharpening. They need to be exercised in order to live to their full potential. They need to be challenged. It is fine for me to believe I have a compassionate heart, for example, but if that heart is never challenged to be more compassionate, if it doesn't lead me to more fully live out that compassion in real life, what benefit is there? It needs to be utilized every day. I would add to what Paul said above, that those who are especially talented in various ways, and who work hard to "train their grace," inspire us to live up to the full potential of our God-given talents as well. They make the unimaginable seem within our grasp. They encourage us to use our gifts.

I've seen over this past year, as I hope I made clear in our Annual Meeting, our people using their talents and gifts in inspiring ways. I've seen amazing acts of faithfulness and many living up to their potential even in a very challenging time. And it is true what Paul says about all of our members of this body, working together, all are needed and none can say of another that they are not. All of us doing our best, with what we have been given, makes us the parish we are. I pray no one ever believes that they don't have something to contribute to our common life, for the building up of our common good. Some may be more gifted in one area than another, that is true, but all are necessary! Or the body doesn't live up to its potential. We have been so blessed by the many whom God has drawn here and inspired by his Spirit to fully live into their calling as part of this body.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Patrick

1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hank_Aaron

2 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hank_Aaron

3 <https://www.npr.org/2021/01/27/961258105/funeral-for-hank-aaron-the-marvel-from-mobile-is-honored-in-atlanta>

You are God's Beloved...

In the back corner of my former parish, the Church of the Messiah, an area that in the Anglican tradition is called the *Lady Chapel*, there stands a plaster cast image of the Virgin Mary holding the child Jesus. This is a folk-art piece c. 1880 from Rouen, Normandy, France. At the back of that image, you can see restoration of damage that happened during the D-Day Invasion of 1944.



Every time that I have contemplated this spiritual artwork, my heart is touched by the presence of God. The child Jesus holds Mary's veil, turning his gaze of adoration toward his mother. His little hand caresses her cheek. As Jesus looks upon his mother with deep affection: this is how Jesus looks upon you and me. May the Christ Child awaken in us true awareness that we are God's beloved, and the faces of persons in our world that we gaze upon are also the beloved of the Lord.

In the challenging work of healing that our country faces in 2021, in an extremely divided and conflicted nation over politics and core values, it is very difficult to look upon those whom we condemn, judge, demonize and deeply dislike as **also** beloved children of God. We can call to account actions that seem to be wrong and unjust, but we must not write off the Others in our life as human refuse and hateful.

"Hate the sin, love the sinner." Jesus' teachings awaken us to see the beloved in the Other, in the notorious and reviled.

Let us pray for each other and our country as we do our Jesus work of awakening others to see their true selves as also among the beloved of God.

Father Brad Karelius



COVENANT GROUPS FOR LENT

Are you hoping to make this Lent a special time of preparation for our Easter celebration? Why not join a Covenant Group for those six weeks?

Currently, three groups (Co-ed, Women and Men) meet weekly (via Zoom) for Fellowship, Bible Study and Prayer. Everyone (around 25 folk now) finds our time together, getting to know each other, learning, and encouraging each other to be a real blessing.

If you have missed the connectedness St. Clement's in-person worship provided before Covid distanced us from one another this just could be the opportunity you've been looking for – getting together in community with those you already know and those you would like to meet!

For more information or the Zoom link to join our Lenten series

(see below):

WOMEN: Monday, 7 p.m. Contact Laura Casellas: Laura.casellas@yahoo.com

(203)451-7598 or Hilary Viscount: hviscount@gmail.com (714)932-2210

MEN: Wednesday, 7 p.m. Contact Beto Casellas: betolaura@mac.com (704)661-6994

CO-ED: Thursday, 7 p.m. Contact Ken and Laurie Baxter: kbaxter@choc.org

(630-674-5017)

Columbaria

Parishioners with a niche in our columbaria and who are now ready to have ashes of a loved one interred are invited to contact the church office. A supply of urns that fit within the spaces is on hand, and the granite nameplates can be inscribed.

Several niches are now inscribed and can be seen in the Memorial Garden. There is a lead time to have the nameplates inscribed as they are sent to the manufacturer. The church office and Father Patrick are also available to discuss your wishes for a service associated with the inurnment of the ashes.



The Memorial Garden is Open for Prayer...

The Memorial Garden has been greatly improved during the past year, with the purpose of transforming it into a beautiful place for quiet reflection and prayer. The grounds have been upgraded to provide simple, lush landscaping with plants reminiscent of those in the Holy Land. The two benches have been positioned to face inward to the sanctuary wall and the two columbaria.

We have noticed some of the neighborhood residents are using the space, which delights us to serve our friends and neighbors.

Especially during this time when many of us have a deep longing to be back worshipping inside our beautiful church, you may find this space brings comfort and peace.



Reconstruction

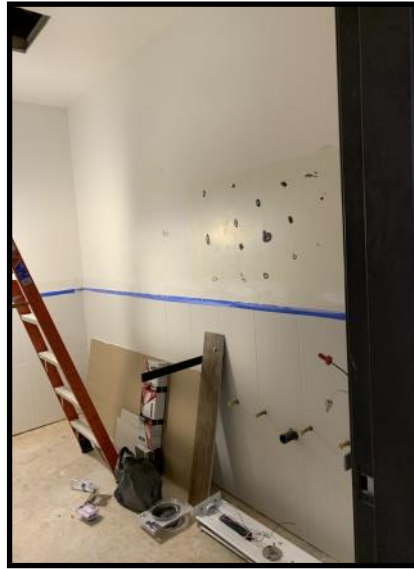
Reconstruction is well underway and it is progressing quickly.

Take a look a few pictures of the work in progress.



All the appliances were removed from the kitchen so the damaged linoleum could be removed. The new kitchen floor is much safer and looks great!

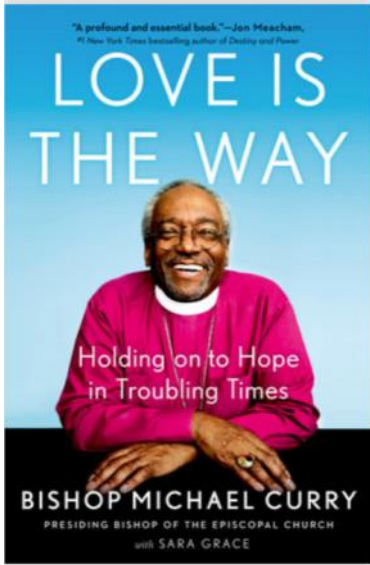




Soon we will have a completely renovated men's room, to match the recently renovated ladies' room.



The downstairs education wing is being restored from the flood in the spring last year and it is progressing quite nicely. Extensive drywall work is done and now painted. Next comes the flooring and the restoring of all things to their proper place.



The Social Justice Book Club

February 25th @ 7:00pm

We will be discussing Love Is The Way by Bishop Michael Curry.

Summary: Walk the path of love with one of the warmest, most beloved spiritual leaders of our time, and learn how to put faith into action. His message of hope is an inspirational road map for living the way of love, illuminated with moving lessons from his own life.

Contact Francis Viscount (fviscount@gmail.com) or Laura Casellas (Laura.casellas@yahoo.com) for the zoom link.



Bible Studies



Join us on Wednesday's at 11am for our weekly Bible Study. We presently meet by Zoom. You need not be a biblical scholar to participate. Just come with a desire to learn more.

Here is the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84765551451?pwd=UXdNYUxtT29FNU1YRolkNFdPQmxqdzo9>

Meeting ID: 847 6555 1451

Passcode: 823922



Vestry Meetings

Tuesday, February 16th

7:00 pm

Currently meeting via Zoom.

- *February* -- *Birthdays* -

2-Karina Jaimes

19-Leticia DeLeon

2-Elizabeth White

19-Tatia Wallett

6-Hilary Viscount

20-Sean Casey

12-Rosemary Bradley

24-Karen Anderson

13-Jorge Berber

24-Duggan Neville

14-Michael Tomeo

- *February* -- *Anniversaries* -

8-Pat & Robert Kensler



FAM Food Distribution...

Join us for our Friday food distribution with FAM. Many are facing economic hardship right now, and FAM has been blessed with food donations from farmers (who formerly sold to restaurateurs). A crew of volunteers has been here on Fridays, putting the food which FAM provides into bags and then placing those bags in the trunks of people's cars as they drive through our parking lot. **Our distributions take place from 2:00 pm - 4:00pm, with volunteers turning up at 1:30 pm. Upcoming distribution dates are: February 12th & 26th.** Thank you to all of the amazing volunteers that have been serving. If this is a ministry that would appeal to you, please let us know that you can serve. We'll need volunteers to set up our tables in the parking lot every other week, help to unload the food and sort it into boxes, to distribute it, and to clean up afterwards. Please sign up today (info@scbythesea.org)!

St. Clement's by-the-Sea EPISCOPAL CHURCH

San Clemente's First Church

Welcoming all since 1929



SUNDAY WORSHIP

Currently being hosted on our FB page and YouTube channel

202 Avenida Aragon
San Clemente, CA 92672

OFFICE HOURS
Vary during these times.

Phone: 949.492.3401
E-mail: info@scbythesea.org
Website: www.scbythesea.org
The Rev. Patrick Crerar, Rector