



# The Hillside Messenger

## A Message from the Rector:

### The Unsearchable Riches of Christ: Ephesians 3

**T**his article continues my exposition of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesian church.

A mystery is thought of as something inexplicable, either temporarily or permanently. In fact, when a priest does not know the answer to a theological question, he may give the enigmatic reply, "It is a mystery." The Greek word *mysterion*, from which our English word mystery derives, certainly entails the idea of a secret, but in the New Testament, the word expresses truth which was once secret and hidden but has now been made known through the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This kind of truth could not be discovered by human reason: God alone could reveal it. *Ephesians 3* is a passage which shows that God has disclosed the mystery of Christ to the

apostles.

St. Paul declares (*Ephesians 3:3*) that God has revealed to him the mystery of Christ, a mystery not revealed to mankind in previous ages as it now stands revealed by God's holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit (*Ephesians 3:4*). What is



this mystery which was made known to the apostles and prophets? In *Colossians 1:27*, St. Paul states that this mystery, or the glorious riches of it, is Christ Himself, Who is in His people, and is "the hope of glory." It is also the truth that in Christ and through His

Gospel, the Gentiles are fellow-heirs of God's Kingdom with all Jews who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jews and Gentiles in Christ are members of the same Body of Christ and partakers of God's promise of eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ. The essence of this is that people of all nations, languages, and cultures, when they come to the Lord Jesus Christ for and eternal life, not only receive this life from Christ in receiving Christ Himself but become members of His Body throughout the world.

St. Paul explains his role in this—that, though "less than the least of all saints" (*Ephesians 3:8*), he has been given the grace to preach to the Gentiles "the unsearchable riches of Christ". These riches are called unsearchable because

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## *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ: Ephesians 3*

(Continued from page 1) they are inexhaustible and infinite. The Greek word translated as *unsearchable* is also used in **Romans 11:33**, where it describes the ways, or the paths, of God, which cannot be understood completely on earth. Similarly, the riches of Christ cannot be fully known or understood on earth. These riches are conveyed by the Gospel of Christ, by which those who hear it believe and obey and are thus brought “out of darkness into God’s marvelous light” (**1 St. Peter 2:9**). The preaching of this Gospel and the witness to Christ given by countless Christians has yet another purpose, namely to make known God’s “manifold wisdom” to the principalities and powers in heavenly places according to God’s eternal purpose set forth in the Lord Jesus Christ (**Ephesians 3:10-11**).

Because of all the above, the sharing of the Gospel and all the costs and trials associated with doing so have a far more meaningful and powerful consequence than we are at first inclined to think. We are sharing in God’s cosmic purpose of making known His purposes to all the universe.

Now, this means that tribulations and trials suffered for the sake of the Gospel are for God’s glory, so the Church must not be disheartened by them but rather rejoice. In

this context, St. Paul prays one of the most beautiful prayers in the New Testament, that, from the riches of His glory, God would strengthen the Ephesian Christians by His Spirit in their inner being; that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith; that they, being established in love, might know the love of Christ, which exceeds knowledge, and be filled with all God’s fullness (**Ephesians 3:16-19**). This prayer really sets out the ultimate wealth, the supreme spiritual treasure which Christians must realize that they have and will have because they have been baptized into union with the Lord Jesus Christ. This realization comes through prayer and faith, and it is according to the “wealth of His glory” (**Ephesians 3:16**) by which God’s Spirit strengthens the inner being of Christians in power, so that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith (**Ephesians 3:17**). It is by God’s gracious gift of spiritual strengthening and empowering that Christians exercise faith in the Lord to the point that He lives in their hearts through their faith in Him. Christ living in us is by our faith in Him, and that faith is His gift of grace to us (**Ephesians 2:8**). This is not just the faith that we showed in Holy Baptism or Holy Confirmation but the continuing faith that is necessary for Christian living.

Without faith in

Christ and His strengthening of our inner being to exercise that faith, we can all too easily be overcome by doubt, fear, pride, and all the other evils which attempt to live in Christ’s place in our hearts. The indwelling of Christ in us through the Holy Spirit leads to and accompanies a life rooted in and built on God’s love (**Ephesians 3:17**). All our thoughts, words, and actions will flow from God’s love when the Lord Jesus Christ fully reigns in our lives and orders what we think, say, or do. This means that all our relationships will be governed by the love of God, and our behavior will express this. This grounding in the love of God, as a result of Christ living and ruling in us, will lead us more and more with all the saints (God’s people) to comprehend all the dimensions of the love of Christ (although such love exceeds our knowledge) so that we might be filled with all the fullness of God (**Ephesians 3:17-19**).

The unsearchable riches of Christ are Christ Himself: He is the fullness of God Whose love cannot be fully comprehended on this earth. At this point, one might think of these riches as practically unattainable on earth, since the love of Christ surpasses human knowledge. One might

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## *New Life with Christ: Ephesians 2:1-10*

(Continued from page 2)  
also ask how St. Paul, while a prisoner of Rome, could come to this wonderful insight in circumstances which might cause others to despair, being imprisonment from which release was uncertain. It is a sure testimony to the spiritual nature of the riches whose Gospel he was proclaiming that instead of despair, he had himself come to know some of the fullness of Christ and was living a life rooted in the love of God and growing daily in his comprehension of the love of God.

This great prayer for the Ephesians leads him into thankfulness and praise. This is because he knows that God will not only answer his prayer but answer it by doing far more than he or all Christians can ask or think, according to His power at work in us (*Ephesians 3:20*). To God, then, he gives the glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages (*Ephesians 3:21*).

The unsearchable riches of Christ, I conclude, can be found in Christ no matter in what circumstances we find ourselves since St. Paul could find them, teach about them, and— while a prisoner of the Lord (*Ephesians 4:1*) — could pray that the Ephesian Christians might comprehend them. Therefore we should aim to comprehend the love of God.

But there are so many whose ambitions are not to attain to the unsearchable riches of Christ but to obtain the wealth, the honors, the material things of this world, and its glory. We Christians must not do this. As Thomas à Kempis wrote:

Glory not in wealth if thou have it, nor in friends who are powerful; but in God who giveth all things, and above all desireth to give thee Himself.

*Thomas à Kempis: The Imitation of Christ*  
Rosalie De Rosset  
(Ed.)

What wealth, then, do you seek? Does your life reflect your desire for the unsearchable riches of Christ?

— *The Reverend Christopher Parrish*

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***Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ,  
Wealth that can never be told!  
Riches exhaustless of mercy and grace,  
Precious, more precious than gold!***

***Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ!  
Who shall their greatness declare?  
Jewels whose luster our lives may adorn,  
Pearls that the poorest may wear!***

***Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ!  
Freely, how freely they flow,  
Making the souls of the faithful and true  
Happy wherever they go!***

***Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ!  
Who would not gladly endure  
Trials, afflictions, and crosses on earth,  
Riches like these to secure!***

*Hymn by Frances J. Crosby, 1882*

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## Suggestions Wanted!

*I'd* like to propose a new feature for our parish newsletter. My thought is that we need to encourage participation from every member to



increase our Chapel Family. I hope to just start people thinking so that we can talk and share with each other our different thoughts and ideas. We all have a responsibility to help the Church— and our Chapel as part of the Body of Christ!— thrive (*St. Matthew 28:19-20*). I thought we could start a list of different ideas and post them in the *Hillside Messenger*. That might open communication, and then something solid could come out of it.

I have made a short list of ideas to get us started. Not all these ideas may be workable. Those that are don't have to be implemented all at once. No idea is bad. I just want to encourage conversation!

1. Theme Sundays: We already celebrate a Pancake Supper in Pre-Lent, British Day in April, and International Day in August. We could expand to more and different Theme Sundays and invite people to join us to see what we
2. Subject Sunday: We could advertise with banners like we do for holidays but maybe for special sermons with a particular subject that might be of interest to passersby. These sermons could possibly be a two- or three-part series. Possible topics could be "Why we need God in our lives" (detailing how life is better under His grace and peace) and "How God's Law goes hand-in-hand with man's law (showing the Judeo-Christian foundation of the United States Constitution and the Ten Commandments are the basis of our court system).
3. Interfaith exchange: I thought it would be nice if we could invite Congregation Beth Am" for a *Shabbat* Service and have them explain what they do and why.
4. There used to be a group called Concerned Churchmen of Silicon Valley that met once a month. I don't know if this group is still active, but we possibly have something similar with churches in the area just for an exchange of ideas and concerns.
5. Invite a friend Sunday with a potluck: We all have friends, and we all enjoy our potluck fellowships.
6. First Responders Appreciation Sunday: We could in-

have to offer.

vite first responders and the Chapel's neighbors to a special service to thank our police, sheriff, firefighters, and EMTs for their service and then have tea, coffee, cake, and conversation afterward.

— Julia McNeely

## Our Chapel Family Prayer List

**O** God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for Thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by Thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to Thy fatherly goodness:

Archbishop Foley Beach;

Bishop Bill Ilgenfritz;

Canon Michael Penfield;

Father Chris Parrish;

Deacon Peter Vogel; and

Deacon Linda Bracken;

also all those who serve as Thy ministers in governing our nation and state, particularly:

President

Donald Trump; and

Governor Jerry Brown;

as well as all those who are any ways afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; especially those for whom our prayers are desired:

the soldiers, sailors,

marines, airmen,

police officers,

firefighters, and pilots

who protect us every day;

our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world;

the thousands who are homeless after severe monsoon rains and flooding in the state of Kerala in India;

Jim and Edna Davis;

Estelle Wilson;

Julia McNeely;

Joya de Rossett;

Sharon De Souza;

Debbie;

Scott;

Brittany;

Chuck;

Don Cottam;

James and Tanya Theiler;

Christian McKagan and his parents;

Dale Quinn;

Lisa;

Ben;

Marion;

Max;

Bishop Richard Boyce;

Dorian;

Kate Ward;

Dan and Kendra Pack;

Ernst Hernandez;

Ray and Elodia Boreham;

Jan Martins;

the Stanko family;

Yoshihiko and Hideko

Ikegami;

Elizabeth Ann and her husband;

Stephen;

Craig Cameron;

Lori Anderson;

Ali Hemphill;  
Lori Hemphill;  
Pennel Magaw;  
Tracy Magaw;  
Lourdes Fernandes;  
Mary Frances Reeves;  
Maryanne Sanchez;  
safety on the highways for all who commute, especially during rush hour;  
the life and continuing longevity of St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills; and for all those who are in our hearts,

that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities; giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.



*Please note:* This prayer list was current as of August 27th. Please contact Father Parrish to make corrections.

## *Remember These Four Rs*

**R**eliance upon God.

**R**espect for self.

**R**espect for others.

**R**esponsibility for all your actions.

## *Parish Postings*

The Vestry will meet on Sunday, September 16th, immediately following the worship service. Interested parishioners are invited to attend.

**VESTRY**



The seasonal Ember Days are Wednesday, September 19th, Friday the 21st, and Saturday, the 22nd. Please pray these days for the increase of the ministry.

Martha's List reminds everyone that files detailing our parish ministries are located under the table between the kitchen doors. Have a look!



## *Upcoming Events*

### **Sunday, September 2nd**

The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

*Bible Study: I Thessalonians 2*

9:15 AM

*Holy Communion with Healing Service*

10:00 AM

### **Sunday, September 9th**

The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

*Bible Study: I Thessalonians 3*

9:15 AM

*Office of Morning Prayer*

10:00 AM

*Holy Communion*

noon

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## Upcoming Events

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### Sunday, September 16th

The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

*Bible Study: I Thessalonians 4*

9:15 AM

*Holy Communion*

10:00 AM

*Vestry Meeting*

immediately following the worship service

### Wednesday, September 19th

Ember Day

### Friday, September 21st

Ember Day

### Saturday, September 22nd

Ember Day

### Sunday, September 23rd

The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

*Bible Study: I Thessalonians 5*

9:15 AM

*Office of Morning Prayer*

10:00 AM

*Holy Communion*

noon

### Sunday, September 30th

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

*Bible Study: Ecclesiastes 1*

9:15 AM

*Holy Communion*

10:00 AM

### Sunday, October 7th

The Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

*Bible Study: Ecclesiastes 2*

9:15 AM

*Holy Communion with Healing Service*

10:00 AM





# The Hillside Messenger

A PUBLICATION OF  
ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL IN THE HILLS  
ANGLICAN CHURCH

A PARISH OF  
THE CONVOCATION OF THE WEST,  
PART OF THE  
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IN NORTH AMERICA

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## Worship Schedule

# St.

Luke's Chapel in the Hills is a traditional Anglican parish which uses the 1928 edition *Book of Common Prayer*. We invite you to join us for worship soon!

***"A place  
where the Bible is taught."***



*Biblical in teaching.  
Liturgical in worship.  
Loving in practice.*

### **First, third, and fifth Sundays of each month**

Holy Communion  
(with Healing Service on First Sunday)  
10:00 AM

### **Second and fourth Sundays each month**

Office of Daily Morning Prayer  
10:00 AM

Said Holy Communion  
noon

Please note that both services on Feast Days occurring on these Sundays will be Holy Communion.