



Loaves & Fishes

October 2020

Looking at Love

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has focused his ministry on love. Bishop Mariann Budde often speaks of the power and necessity of love. Debie Thomas of Journey With Jesus has written a meditation on the understanding of love and obedience in John 14:15-21. Here are excerpts; you can find the entire essay at the Journey With Jesus website.

“If you love me,” Jesus tells his disciples, “you will keep my commandments.” And again: “They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me.” . . . “A new command I give you,” Jesus says. “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” In fact, this commandment—Jesus’s “Maundy Thursday” mandate that his disciples love one another—is the only recorded commandment in John’s Gospel.

Everything else we say and do as believers in Christ comes down to this. Prayer, evangelism, repentance, generosity, asking, seeking, alms-giving, truth-telling, honoring, serving, feeding, sharing. . . all of it, in the end, comes down to love. The essential



Photograph by Steve Carroll

the left-hand column

Well, here we are, another yard sale over and \$4300 profit. But that’s not the part we need to celebrate. It was a major effort by our perennial managers, Steve Carroll and Louise Snell, along with our tried and true worker bees. Among them, it was great to see, back for a visit from the wild west, Joyce Austin plus numerous other dedicated St. Andrewsians.

Thanks to everyone, not least John and Mikell Blackwell and Damon Ford, who showed up for the really awful job of closing down and disposing of the debris.

Then there were the unwelcome guests—Eden has nothing on us; we didn’t have any old serpent, we had copperheads.

So, how are you coping with all the sheltering? Here’s a thought—consider rereading (or reading for the first time if you haven’t already, what a treat) Jane Austen’s six novels. She was endlessly fascinated by humans, their foibles and self-regard. Some of us revisit her novels every year, in recognition of that quality Mary McGrory pointed out in one of her columns many years ago: “All she had was her sharp eye, her true pen and her sense of what men and women are—and what they ought to be.”

Daylight Savings ends November 1



Women and men, working together, should help make the society a better place than it is now.

~Ruth Bader Ginsburg

searing question, is this: Do we love one another as Jesus has loved us? Or do we not? . . .

New Testament scholar D.A. Carson names the irony this way: “This new command is simple enough for a toddler to memorize and appreciate, and yet it is profound enough that the most mature believers are repeatedly embarrassed at how poorly they comprehend it and put it into practice.”

When I look at my own life, it’s not too hard to name why I perpetually fail to obey Jesus’s dying wish. Love is vulnerable-making, and I’d rather not be vulnerable. Love requires trust, and I’m naturally suspicious. Love spills over margins and boundaries, and I feel safer and holier policing my borders. Love takes time, effort, discipline, and transformation, and I am just so darned busy.

But Jesus didn’t say, “This is my suggestion.” He said, “This is my commandment.” Meaning, it’s not a choice. It’s not a matter of personal preference; it’s a matter of obedience to the one we call our Lord.

Maybe now it’s easier to understand why Jesus’s conflation of love and obedience feels so jarring. Essentially, he is commanding us to love other people, whether we want to or not, whether we like them or not, and we are not used to thinking about love in terms of obedience to a command. . . .

Jesus doesn’t stop at saying, “Act as if you love.” He doesn’t give his disciples (or us) the easy “out” of doing nice things with clenched or indifferent hearts. . . .

He says, “Love one another as I have loved you.” As in, for real. As in, the whole bona fide package. Authentic feeling, honest engagement, generous action. . . .

Imagine what would happen to us, to the Church, and to the world, if we took this commandment of Jesus’s seriously? What could Christendom look like if we obeyed orders and cultivated this “impossible” love? . . .

I know how to make care packages for the homeless. Or bring dessert to the church potluck. Or send checks to my favorite charities. But do I know how to love as Jesus loved? To feel a depth of compassion that’s gut-punching? To experience a hunger for justice so fierce and so urgent that I rearrange my life in order to pursue it? To empathize until my heart breaks? Do I want to?

Most of the time—I’ll be honest—I don’t. I want to be safe. I want to keep my circle of affection small

and manageable. I want to choose the people I love based on my own affinities and preferences—not on Jesus’s all-inclusive commandment. Charitable actions are easy. But cultivating my heart? Preparing and pruning it to love? Becoming vulnerable in authentic ways to the world’s pain? Those things are hard. Hard and costly. And yet Jesus’s words in this Gospel are crystal clear. It is NOT sufficient (or even meaningful) to profess love for Jesus while we hold ourselves apart from our fellow human beings. To love Jesus is to love others. All others. The lover, the friend, the neighbor, the companion. But also the alien, the stranger, the misfit, and the enemy. The ones with whom we agree, and the ones with whom we emphatically disagree. The ones we naturally like, and the ones we don’t. . . .

We don’t have to love all by ourselves. We don’t have to do the impossible on our own. Jesus’s desire is not that we wear ourselves out, trying to conjure love from our own meager resources. Rather, his commandment is accompanied by a promise: “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.”

The Advocate is God’s own Spirit, God’s own heart, living within us. This Spirit, Jesus promises us, will be in us, making possible the startling, counter-intuitive obedience which is love. This Spirit will abide within and among us, creating holy places where authentic, self-sacrificial human love can take root and flourish. The Spirit’s resources are inexhaustible. Long after our natural stores are depleted, the Spirit of God will love in, among, and through us.

As is so often the case in our lives as Christians, Jesus’s commandment leads us straight to paradox: we are called to action via rest. Called to give the love we receive. Called to become the beloved children we are. The commandment — or better yet, the invitation— is to drink our fill of the Source, spill over to bless the world, and then return to the Source for a fresh in-filling. This is our movement, our rhythm, our dance. Over and over again. This is where we begin and end and begin again.

Love me by keeping my commandments, Jesus says. These are finally not two separate actions. They are one and the same. We love because we are loved. We obey Christ because we are in Christ. The love we are commanded to share is the love we are endlessly given. “You in me, and I in you.” The definition of love.

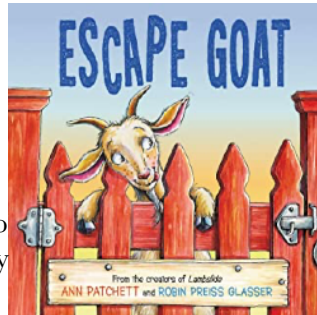
~~from “*Love and Obedience*” by *Debie Thomas*

Thinking About Christmas—and Books

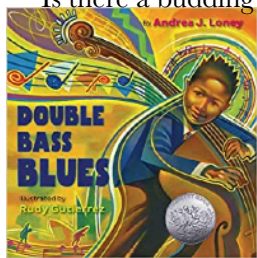
Christmas this year probably will be a bit different, possibly very different. Maybe, though, we'll all use our unfortunate situation as an opportunity to create new traditions.

And, as always, books are here to help. Now, more than ever, the gift of a special book should delight. So, here are a few titles.

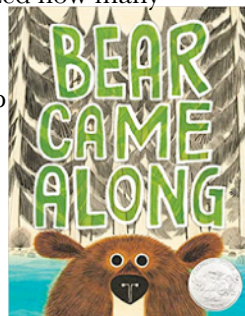
We all know of the Yom Kippur custom of sending a goat, the scape goat, into the wilderness to bear all the sins of the people. But how about an *Escape Goat*? Like most members of genus *Capra*, this lovable rascal has a way of getting out of his pen and into trouble. In this case, mainly by taking the blame for everyone else's mistakes, accidents and general mischief-making. *Escape Goat*, Ann Patchett, illustrated by Robin Preiss Glasser, Harper, 2020. \$18.99 (Amazon says \$18.36). Recommended for ages four to eight, but who doesn't love a good picture book?



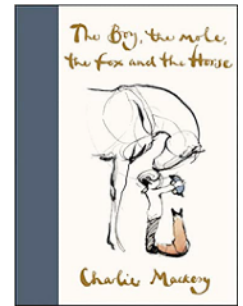
Is there a budding musician in your life? Young Nic plays the double bass, or as some prefer, the bull fiddle. It's as big as he is, and getting it from school, where he plays in the symphony, to Granddady's, where he joins a jam session, is quite a chore. But so worth it. Not so many words here, but a lot of movement and delight. *Double Bass Blues*, Andrea J. Loney, illustrated by Rudy Gutierrez, Knopf, 2019. \$17.99 (Amazon lists it at \$13.49). Four to eight years. A Caldecott Honor Book.



Then there's Bear, who never realized how many friends, a veritable zoo, one can have, until he happened upon the river and drifted downstream on a log, picking up passengers/friends along the way. This wild ride ends in a spectacular cascade over the waterfall into a wonderful swimming hole. *Bear Came Along*, Richard T. Morris, illustrated by Leuyn Pham, Little Brown, 2019. \$17.99 (but Amazon lists it for \$13.76) Preschool to three. A Caldecott Honor Book.



"The boy is full of questions, the mole is greedy for cake. The fox is mainly silent and wary because he's been hurt by life. The horse is the biggest thing they have ever encountered, and also the gentlest." This extraordinary, wise little book is, its author says, for "everyone, whether you are eighty or eight." It's mostly a conversation—a boy and his very unusual friends. And it's beautiful. *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*, Charlie Macksey, Harper One, 2019. \$22.99 (Amazon lists it for \$13.49)



Okay, so we've all had to do things, go places we didn't want to. And it's so much worse when it's going to a new school, and worse yet when you wanted to go to an entirely different one. Here's a comic-and-text look at that daunting prospect. *New Kid*, Jerry Craft, color by Jim Callahan, Harper, 2019. \$12.99 (Amazon lists it for \$8.74) Ages eight to twelve. A Newberry medalist.



If going to a new school is nervous-making, imagine what it must be like to leave your country, your closest friend, your father and beloved brother, and come to wholly new land. Your cousin is embarrassed by your accented English, just wishes you hadn't come, and isn't much help learning to get around your new school. To make matters worse, your brother hasn't been heard from for months. He's joined a band resisting President Bashar al-Assad's repressive government. Jude rises above it, small triumph by small triumph, musing at one point, "I am learning how to be sad and happy at the same time." *Other Words for Home*, Jasmine Warga, Balzer+Bray, 2019. \$16.99 (Amazon lists it for \$10.35) Ages eight to twelve. A Newberry Honor Book.

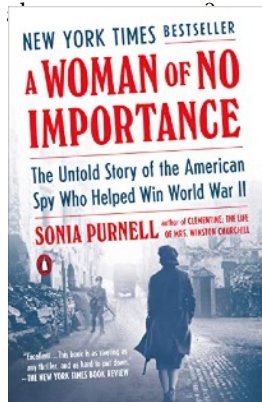


Maybe you remember wanting to hide when the thunder and lightning started dancing around. Mica Mouse had a special reason to be worried about storms; she had seen a storm destroy her home once already. But Papa has a story to soothe her. There once was a little rhinoceros whose valley was wrecked by a terrible storm. Little Rhino was very angry,

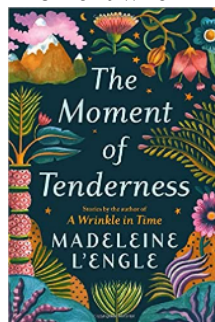


so angry he swallowed the storm. This is a slightly older book, but if you have a fearful friend, it's just the thing. *The Rhino Who Swallowed a Storm*, LeVar Burton and Susan Schaefer Bernardo, illustrated by Courtney Fletcher, Reading Rainbow, 2014. This book now lists for \$37.94 new at Amazon, but used copies are available from \$21.91. Recommended for five to seven years.

For the adults on your list, how about this one is a biography, more breathtaking (if only because it really happened) than any of Ian Fleming's fictions. Virginia Hall, daughter of a Baltimore banker, groomed to be a socialite, hadn't least interest in that life. Naturally, the State Department only offered a clerical job—she was a woman, after all. But Virginia was determined. And, working for England's Special Operations Executive, she organized spy networks throughout France. Hunted by the Gestapo, she escaped over the Pyrenees, and kept going. After the war she joined the CIA. *A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win World War II*, Sonia Purnell, Viking, 2019. \$28.00 (Amazon has it for \$20.95, or \$13.99 in paperback)



Are you, or is someone on your list, a Madeleine L'Engle fan? Remember that wonderful moment when you encountered *A Wrinkle in Time*? Granddaughter Charlotte Jones Volkli has put together a collection of L'Engle's stories, some previously published, some incorporated into novels, some never published, not few autobiographical. Many of them are sad, stories of loneliness and disappointment. Together, though, they track L'Engle's development as a writer, and they give insights into the author's own troubled childhood. *The Moment of Tenderness*, Madeleine L'Engle, Grand Central Publishing, 2020. \$27.00 (Amazon offers it for \$20.19).



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am profoundly grateful for your cards and letters expressing your prayers for me during this, my unexpected health challenge. And too, thank you for all your generous contributions to the ongoing dinner delivery efforts which have so raised our spirits. To have a steady stream of kindness and love poured over me has shaped my recovery and has strengthened me for whatever lies ahead.

While a very slight "brain bleed" was discovered and treated, it was that finding that fully uncovered an underlying blood disorder that needs attention and investigation. And so, now, resting at home comfortably, I am getting the recovery treatment necessary and certainly following doctor's orders. At the same time, with a team of specialists, we are currently learning about and working on a treatment plan that addresses the specifics of my condition.

With bonds of affection I send you this note of thanksgiving, and give thanks for your continuing support of the community of St. Andrew's, your Wardens and Vestry. As we pray for those ravaged by hurricanes, wildfires, COVID-19, grief and distress, please know that I hold you close in my thoughts and prayers daily.

"May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit." Amen. *Romans 15:13.*

Faithfully, *Beverly+*



A certain percentage of those who have survived near-death experiences report catching a glimpse of life's basic lesson plan. We are all here for a single purpose: to grow in wisdom and to learn to love better. We can do this through losing as well as through winning, by having and by not having, by succeeding or by failing. All we need to do is to show up openhearted for class.

~~Rachel Naomi Remen



October at St. Andrew's

We have moved back into the church, but restrictions still apply. Let the office know you plan to attend, wear a mask, and, of course you need to have a signed copy of the Covenant for Regathering on file. Remember that for the time being there is one service, at 9:00 a.m.

The best news is that Rev. Beverly is doing well and hopes to rejoin us this month—our October blessing. .

October 4

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 *or* Isaiah 5:1-7
Psalm 19 *or* Psalm 80:7-14
Philippians 3:4b-14 Matthew 21:33-46

October 11

Exodus 32:1-14 *or* Isaiah 25:1-9
Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23 *or* Psalm 23
Philippians 4:1-9 Matthew 22:1-14

October 18

Exodus 33:12-23 *or* Isaiah 45:1-7
Psalm 99 *or* Psalm 96:1-9, (10-13)
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 Matthew 22:15-22

October 25

Deuteronomy 34:1-12 *or* Leviticus 19:1-2,15-18
Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17 *or* Psalm 1
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 Matthew 22:34-46

Prayer for a Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced
remember those whose lives are at stake.
May we who have no risk factors
remember those most vulnerable.
May we who have the luxury of working from home
remember those who must choose between
preserving their health or making their rent.
May we who have the flexibility to care for our children
when schools close
remember those who have no options.
May we who have to cancel our trips
remember those who have no safe place to go.
May we who are losing our margin money
in the tumult of the economic market
remember those who have no margin at all.
May we who settle in for a quarantine at home
remember those who have no home.
As fear grips our country,
let us choose to love during this time when we
cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,
let us find ways to be the loving embrace
of God to our neighbor. Amen.

~Cameron Wiggins Bellm

When he spoke at the meeting of the House of Bishops on September 16, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry spoke of the power of love to heal. You can find his entire sermon at the Episcopal Church website, episcopalchurch.org

When Jesus says that the entire law and will of God is summed up in the words, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself," that's precedent. . . . When he tells the parable of the Good Samaritan, of somebody who helps somebody else even though they were a different religious tradition, even though they were of a different ethnic group, even though they may have differed in their politics, differed in their worldview, differed in virtually everything except the fact that they inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. Even with all of those differences he helped him because that person, that man was a human child of God created in the image of God. Jesus says, "Now, who was neighbor to the man?" This is what loving your neighbor looks like. And then Jesus says, "Go and do likewise." That's precedent.

When, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, "blessed are the poor and the poor in spirit"; "blessed are those who are compassionate and merciful"; "blessed are the peacemakers"; "blessed are those who hunger and thirst and labor for God's righteous justice to be done on the earth for all"; "do unto others, as you would have them do unto you"; "love your enemies, bless those who curse you, pray for those who spitefully use you"; my sisters, my brothers, my siblings, that is the precedent for what it means to follow in the way of Jesus in the first century or the twenty-first century.

Saint Paul heard and knew these teachings of Jesus. And he summarized their meaning. Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good. Henry David Thoreau, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, all spoke of this as the nonviolent way of love.

The task of the church in the first century or twenty-first century is to live by the precedent, to bear witness to the precedent and lift up the values of the precedent of Jesus in our time. Because as the book of Hebrews says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever."

COVENANT FOR REGATHERING IN WORSHIP

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I promise, with God’s help and to the best of my ability, to abide by the guidelines of the Diocese of Washington for participation in the life of my congregation according to the regathering phase in which my congregation is authorized to carry out its mission and ministry.

In fulfillment of our Baptismal Covenant, I will strive to:

Love my neighbor as myself

-Wear a mask or scarf over my nose and mouth at all times in church buildings, except momentarily to receive the sacrament or lead worship through an assigned speaking part.

-Only attend worship and receive communion if I am healthy and non-symptomatic with the novel coronavirus or any other transmittable disease that could compromise the health of another congregant.

Respect the dignity of every human being

-Make no physical contact with people beyond the members of own household.

-Maintain a six foot or more distance from others in the congregation.

-Respect any requests for distance, masking and cleaning to ensure the safety and comfort level of others, even as restrictions are reduced,

Seek and serve Christ in all people

-Trust and support the decisions of our congregational leaders.

-Stay connected with others in my community by telephone, email, video chat, or mail.

Signature

Email Address

Phone

Family Household Members Included



Photograph by Susan Bennett



Photograph by Steve Carroll

Welcoming Autumn With a Wedding

- 3 John and Kathryn Brigham
- 11 Bob and Maureen Emery

What? Not One Halloween Birthday?

- 1 Carol Wilmore
- 3 Elinor Mattingly
- 5 Bonte Pepper-Hicks
- 8 Ian Biggerstaff, Nicholas Wagner
- 10 George Walls
- 13 Rick Werrell
- 14 Bob Emery
- 15 James Meade
- 16 Savannah Bergen, Mary Wheeler-Kennett
- 19 Jesse Everett, Blayre Vallandingham
- 23 Steve Labows
- 25 Jill Garrett
- 27 Anne Vallandingham

Looking for Someone?

Rector: The Rev. Beverly Weatherly 301 862-2247
Parish Administrator: Donna Triplett 301 862-2247

rector@standrewsleonardtowntown.org
parishadmin@standrewsleonardtowntown.org

Vestry, Senior Warden: Mary Maker
Vestry, Junior Warden: John McKendrew.
Treasurer: Brent Johnson
Vestry, Fundraising Steve Carroll
Joyce Austin, Fundraising
Amy Foster, Minister of Music
Sarah Freese, Preschool Director
Jerry Frank, Thrift Shop
Dee McRae, Newsletter
Director of Sanford Concert Program:
Lyn Schramm

To give flowers for the altar 301 862-2247 parishadmin@standrewsleonardtowntown.org
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church 301 862-2247 <http://standrewsleonardtowntown.org/>

The Right Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde 202 537-6550
The Diocese of Washington 202 537-6555 <http://www.edow.org/>



Yes, the Thrift Shop is closed now, but we'll be open for business again in a month or so, and we need volunteers. Sorting (your chance to have first dibs) is done every Tuesday. Selling is every Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. Selling days are also an opportunity to take advantage of the great bargains that come our way, but, even more, they're an opportunity to meet some interesting people you might not otherwise know. And, working in the Shop is a ministry; we are the face of St. Andrew's to many people. We are able to hear their stories, to respond in many ways, to contribute to our St. Andrew's family and to the community. What's not to like?

