



And Also With You

February 2017

Grace Anglican Church 817 Estella Street Fairhope, Alabama 36532
251-929-1606 www.visitgrace.net Facebook/GraceAnglican

Theological Reflection on the Women's March

FEBRUARY SUNDAYS

10:00 am

Worship
(nursery provided)

6:30 pm

The Union's
Worship Service

MONDAYS

10:45AM

INTERCESSORS
706-897-6381

6:30pm-Graham
Cooke Group-
Information: 455-
5940

WEDNESDAYS

10:30 am

Women's Bible
Study-Information:
990.2973

FRIDAYS

8:15 am

Men's Group-
Information:
751-5266

CHALICE BEARERS

Feb 5

Jane and Bob
Grafe

Feb 12

Becky Johnson
Jan Bogue

Feb 19

Maggie Rockett
Susan Jones

Feb 26

Kitty Barksdale
Janic Terry



The Rev. M. Scott Davis

I am about to risk a number of relationships and use a politically charged example in order to make a spiritual point. (You, are worth the risk!)

There was a women's march the day after the inauguration. The march displayed a great deal of energy conveyed by women in pain from all over the country. Fear and hurt expressed themselves through anger, verbal abuse, and some destruction. The question for me was, "If these are the symptoms, what is at the core?"

The women's march is symptomatic of deeper issues and many hoped that expressing them would make them feel better. Unless the core problem is addressed, however, the same women will continue to hurt, be angry, and worse still, gain no resolution.

When a person's response carries with it more energy than is warranted to resolve the situation, it usually means that there is a deeper issue under the surface. A symptom is an irritation manifesting from a deeper problem. The march exhibits quite a bit more energy than simple unhappiness with a political figure who makes inappropriate and/or sexist remarks. I am not minimizing the damage made from inappropriate and/or sexist remarks, but am merely making that observation. When there is more energy expressed than the situation warrants then it reveals that there is something deeper at play that is driving the situation.

Now for the spiritual analysis—my read is



that earlier in life, many of the protestors were deeply hurt by men. The hurt is legitimate and the pain lifelong. Perpetrators are wrong and deserve to be punished. Wounds to the core are real and painful, and God wants to heal them all. However, we often attempt healing ourselves and/or justify why we have a right to enact talionic punishment. Often, therapy has not helped (and I greatly value therapy). A therapist will encourage a client to maintain strict boundaries so that perpetrators cannot further wound, and this is good. Therapists encourage clients to stand up for themselves because their personhood has worth, and this too is good. However, it too often stops here. Taking these steps pro-

protects but does not heal the victim. They must go one step further in order to find peace. These healthy steps are finalized with forgiveness because if not, we become what we do not forgive.

Satan targets most people when they are young and vulnerable. We receive wounds in childhood that Satan then contaminates with bitterness or inner vows that only make it worse in the future, not better. The wound gets infected, creating a hurt that festers, making the wound a life long sore. Men and women seek relief from the pain as the infection spreads through the soul. Some seek to alleviate the symptoms with counseling revenge, or addiction. Most make inner vows to NEVER let the wounding happen again in hopes of finding some relief and inner peace. These, however, are not the ways to heal, and the wound festers until the blood of the Savior is applied to the wound's core. Part of Jesus' procedure involves forgiveness which

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extradites the perp to the higher court of heaven rather than keeping them imprisoned in the lower court where we are both judge and jury. This is forgiveness which is painful but necessary. Perpetrators never deserve our forgiveness but then the spiritual life is never about *deserves*, is it?

I began seminary in 1977. The women's ordination battle had just ended and seminary was filled with hostile women straight from the battlefield. They were angry with men in general for having kept them from the priesthood for 2,000 years. That was the symptom. Men were the enemy, no matter how much they liked you as an individual. Men were considered abusers and misogynists. I naively went to seminary thinking that it would be a caring community that loved God, desiring to serve Him. *Silly boy...* The tension during the three years was bitter. The constant anger was exhausting. Women hated men while men, in turn, resented women. This merry-go-round was pumping out the future leaders of the church. I think Satan won that round.

This will give you a sense of how sensitive the situation was. Once during worship, an elderly and very proper English bishop was the guest preacher.



During his homily he used the phrase, "*the fraternal love shared between the Holy Trinity...*". Upon hearing these words, my theology professor, who was an active feminist

and favorite of mine, slammed her kneeler into its upright position and stomped out of church. We discovered later that the bishop had used the word *fraternal* and therefore had excluded every woman present. Why would a seminary professor and theologian of the Episcopal Church behave in such a way? My guess is that she had been a victim of misogyny and that



Pictures (top to bottom clockwise): Father Scott is practicing for the rapture; Jerry Schussler is amazed, watching him go up into heaven; Alan Pate is thinking, "I knew he could do it."; Maggie Carnes says, "Oooo, I want to go next"; Chris Jones says, "Me next or I will hit you with my stick."; Montfort Jones says, "Ginger and I are waiting until the Second Coming—no way we are getting on that ladder! Thanks to our yard team for a great clean up day!"



February Journaling Retreat
Saturday, Feb 18
Sue Anne and Scott
will lead a retreat on
how to maximize
your use of a
spiritual journal.



9:30am to 12:pm



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now that she was in a place of influence was not going to subject herself to further abuse. Blessedly, all of this was lost on the poor octogenarian bishop! He got to leave while I had to stay.

There is always that *one more step* necessary for healing—*forgiveness*. When we move past our hurt and forgive, the negative energy begins to lessen. We cease to become like those we have not forgiven.



I hope you do not think that I am sitting in judgment of the professor, the women at seminary, or the women's march participants. The three years of seminary left me angry like the angry women I had encountered. (We were becoming like those we had not forgiven.) I had gone to learn about God and I left angry and feeling unfairly judged. I had not hurt anyone, but I had been hurt. When I saw the women's march, it triggered that un-forgiveness within. I was not a woman. I was not protesting, but I had been the object of discrimination as well, and I too was mad. It was then that the Holy Spirit brought me to a fork in the road. Would I justify why I had a right to be angry or would I forgive and extradite the perpetrators to the court of heaven, leaving justice to God?

The march is an expression of something deeper that Jesus wants to do in all of us. If we stop short of getting it right then we will continue to hurt from earlier wounds, and worse still, we will become like those we do not forgive. Our wounds are real and valid. Perpetrators can be dangerous, seriously damaging others. There is also an enemy that encourages us to respond to the hurt by demanding our rights and enacting our own vigilante justice rather than seeking healing through *forgiveness*. You will never feel like forgiving a perp. It has to be a decision. Feelings are fickle. Forgiveness is about deciding to forgive, not feeling like forgiving. The question that the march leaves with me is, "Will I forgive the angry and unjust abuse from women professors and students from seminary days or will I cling to the right to be right as a victim?"



Sabbatical Corner

To the left is the Sabbatical map. Each week during the Sabbatical, a travel line will show where Scott and Sue Anne have been and where they are at the moment.

You can also see the Sabbatical calendar that shows where Scott and Sue Anne are at any given point during their time away. Both of these are located in the Lobby.



SABBATICAL

Fair



Our thanks to Sandy Sinclair who has coordinated the power point team for a number of years. This ministry operates the power point software from the sound booth



each Sunday. The team is responsible for displaying the words of songs and liturgy on the front wall. Sandy has been heading up this team for quite some time and is now passing the baton to Eddy Bals. We greatly appreciate her dependability and servant spirit.



Also joining the power point team is Stella Martin. The power pointers are Gracie Roth, Cheri Kriner, Sandy Sinclair, & Eddy Bals.