



*The Church  
of the Epiphany*  
1839 Arroyo Avenue, San Carlos CA 94070

October 2010

Dearest Friends,

One of my favorite stories in the bible is “the feeding of the 5,000.” Actually it should be called the “feeding of the 10,000” because it says there were “5,000 men—not counting women and children.” (At Epiphany, we know that women and children definitely “count!”) Why do I love this story? Because it is so very human—and then so overwhelmingly and abundantly filled with God’s Grace!

Jesus was weary. He had set out in a boat to find a quiet place, seeking a little well-earned solitude. But the word got out and the people followed him. Scripture recounts that when Jesus saw the vast crowd, “his heart was moved for pity of them, and he cured their sick.” (Mt 14:14) Jesus spends the entire afternoon moving among the people, teaching and reaching out with his healing touch. As it grows dark, his disciples understandably grow a bit nervous. They remind Jesus (did he really need reminding?) that they were in a “deserted place” and they suggest that he “dismiss the crowds” so that the people can go off into the neighboring villages where they could buy food for themselves.

Jesus says: “There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves.” Can’t you just picture them looking at one another in amazement and wondering if Jesus had completely lost his mind? All they have are 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish—and they are surrounded by thousands of people. What can Jesus be thinking?!

Jesus knows that God’s grace is abundant and he is about to demonstrate how God’s blessings are showered upon us even in the face of what looks like scarcity. Jesus takes the bread, looks up to heaven, says the blessing, breaks the loaves and gives them to the disciples, who in turn give them to the crowds. “They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over—twelve wicker baskets full.” (Mt. 14:20)

As we enter into our Pledge Campaign for 2011, we have selected “Sharing from Abundance” as our theme. Some might look at the current economy and ask if we have lost our minds. Abundance?! Yes, absolutely and unapologetically, we proclaim: “abundance!”

God has provided us with so many gifts in the congregation. We are alive! We are richly blessed with loving friends here in our vibrant and growing congregation. We are touching lives and making the world a gentler place for those in need. I have never before served in a congregation where so many members volunteer so generously, sharing their gifts with wild—one might say with “*abundant*”—joy and abandon!

Our youngest offer their voices in song and prayer. Our teens reach out in service. Our young adults work with the younger folks and help run our diocesan camps. Our young parents support one another and teach in our Godly Play classrooms. Our adults lead our outreach and worship programs. Our seniors grace us with their wisdom and keep our prayer life going. And at every age we support our parish with our Treasure, as well as with our Time and Talents.

This is the season of our Pledge Campaign. Every member of Epiphany is asked to pledge as a “thank you” for the many ways God blesses us. We ask you to stop and look prayerfully at your own life. How has God blessed *you* with an abundance of Gifts? What are the most precious Gifts in your life? And where does Epiphany fit into your sense of being blessed by God? Think about what belonging to our wonderful church means to you, your family and our community. Ponder what it would mean to you—and to those outside our doors - if Epiphany were no longer here.

We have enclosed a new Narrative Budget for you to see just some of the many ways your pledge dollars are put to work in support of the mission of our church. We hope that there will soon be one more picture in this budget—that of a new Associate Rector to serve all of us—and to offer special service to our Children, Youth and Families. We also hope that we will be offering a new once-a-month contemporary Sunday evening service. We have much dreaming and discerning to do together!

Many of you know that we received the gift of Barron and Ruth Smith’s home this year. It is an extraordinary gift to Epiphany and in the year ahead, we will be asking you to help us discern how best to put that gift to use. What will that Stewardship look like? Will the proceeds all go into Endowment, or into maintenance and repair of our buildings or to support some of our ministries, perhaps youth or outreach? Please do not diminish your pledge because you think it is not needed this year! It will take most of next year to sell the home and make those determinations, so the Smith bequest will not impact our budget for 2011. We need to reach our goal of \$425,000 from our pledges. This goal is just a slight increase over last year’s pledge income. With your generous contributions, we will continue to share the light of Christ both inside and outside our bright red doors.

If you have questions about pledging, please contact me directly or come to one of our Q&A sessions on October 31, following both services. After prayerfully considering all the ways that God has blessed you, please fill out your pledge card (enclosed).

Please mail your pledge card to the office or bring your pledge card to church the morning of Sunday, November 7, for the in-gathering and blessing of our pledges.

May God continue to bless you.

In thanksgiving for the richness of Abundance in this place,



The Rev. Melanie Donahoe  
Rector