

LUMINARY

August 2017

The Rev. Canon Timothy M. Dombek



THE PARADOX OF GENEROSITY – A guest author book review

[*Note from Canon Timothy:* For most of my time on diocesan staff in Arizona, I worked on developing methods of helping clergy and lay leaders improve all forms of stewardship in congregations, including financial generosity. It is one of my great passions in ministry. The authors of the book in this review, Christian Smith and Hilary Davidson, have been very influential to me; this review of their most recent book is outstanding, and the Rev. Chris Sicks has graciously granted permission for us to use it. *Enjoy!*]

When my son was six years old, he told me: “I want to give my friend George some of my Star Wars Legos.” I replied, “That’s great!” Then he said, “But there’s sin in my heart that doesn’t want me to give them!”

That’s a universal dilemma, don’t you think? We know generosity is a good thing—in *principle*. It’s the doing part we often struggle with. However, generosity, when consistently practiced, is actually a source of health and happiness untapped by most Americans.

That’s the message of *The Paradox of Generosity*, a new book by Christian Smith and Hilary Davidson that presents their fascinating research on generosity. Their 2010 interviews with nearly 2,000 Americans revealed that:

1. **Happiness comes from giving, not getting**

Everyone would rather be happy than sad, right? So we seek happiness where we expect to find it. Unfortunately, too many of us think material wealth is the source of happiness, so it eludes us.

As King Midas learned, chasing after possessions cannot lead to happiness. Quite the opposite, in fact. **To be happy we must commit to giving, not just getting.**

Smith and Davidson consistently found that people reported being “very happy” more often if they give away 10 percent of their income, volunteer five hours per month, or frequently help their neighbors. Those who did not do those things were more likely to report being “very or somewhat unhappy” in life.

One of the book’s in-depth profiles is about the Arnolds. Devoted to their own self-interest, the Arnolds don’t ask others for help, and therefore feel no obligation to use their “limited” resources to help others. “Live and let live” is their functional motto.

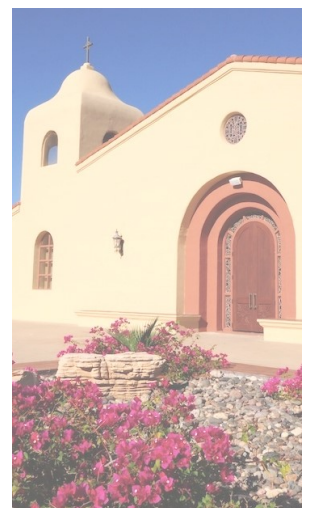
The Arnolds “regularly and unhappily borrow money at high interest rates to appease their quest for better and more.” Interviewed soon after installing a new deck, the Arnolds say they want to add a swimming pool to their backyard. “But you have a neighborhood pool, right?” the authors ask. Mr. Arnold replied, “We have a neighborhood pool, but we want a pool on our property...because it’s private” [Smith & Davidson (S&D), pp. 137].

The Arnolds remind me of Jesus’ parable about the rich fool in Luke 12:13-21. Not content with the wealth and barns he already had, he planned to tear them down and build even larger ones—hoarding the bumper crop God blessed him with rather than giving the surplus away.

Why? Because that man’s goal in life was to: “have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.”



Timothy M.
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But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God. (*Luke 12:20-21*)

Although *The Paradox of Generosity* quotes the Buddha and numerous proverbs from various cultures, I found that the Bible's wisdom predates and affirms their research repeatedly.

Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. (*1 Timothy 6:17*)

2. Generosity is a win-win

As defined by Smith and Davidson, generosity is "the active practice of purposefully giving away moderate portions of dearly held resources. That is the basis upon which we categorize people as generous or ungenerous"[S&D, 121].

On the face of it you might think that "donating one's own limited time, energy, and attention to someone else's concerns represents a loss." Instead, Smith and Davidson found that "generous people tend to receive back goods that are even more valuable than those they gave: happiness, health, a sense of purpose in life, and personal growth"[S&D, 12].

In contrast to this, the authors observe that: "personal autonomy, self-preservation, and rugged individualism are key and sacred words in the vocabulary of the ungenerous people we interviewed"[S&D, 123]. In other words, people are less generous if they make their own security and comfort their highest priorities.

3. Generous people lead healthier lives

Perhaps the most interesting thing I learned was that generous people have a more positive view of themselves and others, and are more optimistic about the possibility of change. The ungenerous, on the other hand, typically do not believe they have an ability to affect change, either personally or socially [S&D, 201].

"Ungenerous Americans are not as happy, healthy, or living life with as much purpose. Ungenerous people are less likely to believe they can accomplish much in life and seem largely uninterested in personal growth. As a group they are less physically healthy and more pessimistic about their problems [S&D, 118].

Generous people have challenges in life and are frequently busy, but they are less stressed out. The generous are also less likely to suffer depression or anxiety, and more frequently eat home-cooked meals with other people.

In other words, generous living is part of the fabric of life. Smith and Davidson discovered, therefore, that only generous *practices* had substantive positive effects on the giver. Being an organ donor, loaning possessions, and estate giving did not have the same effect. Such one-time or hypothetical decisions don't have the same impact on the giver, because they aren't reflective of an overall attitude of the heart.

Again, this is consistent with scripture:

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. (*Luke 6:45*)

It seems that love of self is actually harming the ungenerous, who “hold on to their resources out of self-protection and the fear that they may not have enough in a time of need”[S&D, 121]. Not surprisingly, a heart that is full of self-interest cuts off other kinds of communal connections as well:

“Ungenerous Americans recoil from imposition of all kinds, not only those of needy people. They prefer to live without authoritative moral codes, religious traditions, or even close non-familial friendships that might ask them to act in ways that cut against their self-interest [S&D, 180].

Smith is a sociology professor at Notre Dame and Davidson is a PhD candidate there.

I’m grateful for their extensive research and careful presentation of the results. The charts, data, and lengthy interviews found in *The Paradox of Generosity* should satisfy skeptics and scholars.

They have employed the language of academia to describe in new ways something that has always been true: That generosity feels good, and is good for you, because it’s how we were designed to behave. God has made us in His image, and has been abundantly generous with us.

How generous? He has given us far more than silver or gold.

“You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. (1 Peter 1:18-19)

The Rev. Chris Sicks serves as Pastor of Mercy at Alexandria Presbyterian Church in Virginia. Formerly an atheist who rejected the very existence of God, Chris has worked to make God's love tangible to homeless men, addicts, and needy children in Washington, D.C.

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WELCOME DEACON DEBBIE!

Among the new members we have welcomed to Advent Episcopal Church this summer is the Rev. **Deacon Debbie Greenleaf**, recently moved with her husband, a retired police officer, to Sun City West from Boise, Idaho. Debbie was ordained to the diaconate in December 2015 in the Diocese of Idaho, and has been licensed by Bishop Kirk Smith to serve in the Diocese of Arizona. She now has been assigned to Advent Episcopal Church. We are delighted to welcome her, and have her serve among us. Deacon Debbie is a regular at the 8:00 AM service, but you will see her from time to time at 10:00, as well. So when you next see her, please welcome her to Advent!

The Blessing of Assisting Clergy

With Deacon Debbie’s arrival, that makes six clergy who are officially assisting at Advent: four priests and two deacons, depending on the time of year. We are blessed by their gifts for ministry, and that they offer them to us so freely. But please remember: Assisting clergy are non-stipendiary, meaning they are not paid by Advent nor the diocese.

As retired clergy, Brian, Janet, Geoffrey, Debbie, Meg and Gary serve and preach among us voluntarily, because they still wish to exercise their ministry, in some small way. So please be sure to thank them regularly for the gifts that they so freely share among us. We are blessed to have the variety of preachers and celebrating styles that we do have at our church.

Thank you, to our assisting clergy, for your gifts of ministry that you share with us!

Canon Timothy

Kitchen Korner

Coffee Hour after the 10:00 AM Sunday service has a new name: Food and Fellowship! Please join us in Paine Hall after worship at 10:00 each Sunday for a bite to eat and time for visiting with your friends, neighbors and fellow parishioners. If you have been at Advent this summer, you have had the chance to sample some new food offerings! It is our hope to have healthier choices and to provide time for you to linger at Advent and make new friends. The food selections will change on a rotational basis so you'll get to see your favorites again. Thank you for your helpful feedback!

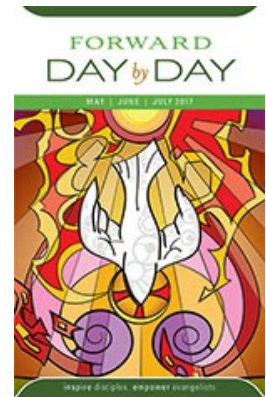


Hospitality is a gift we all can extend to parishioners, visitors and guests. Would you be willing to help serve coffee and tea one Sunday this summer to our food and fellowship attendees? *Thank you in advance for your willingness to help!* Please sign up on the clip board just inside the kitchen.

As always, your generous donations are sincerely appreciated, as this is the means by which these new food items are provided. The donation baskets are located on most tables, and by the coffee and tea table.

Many, many thanks to all those who have helped on past Sundays and made this transition smoother: Sharon Navratil, her daughter Cheryl and the two grandkids, Logan and Onya; Sharon Paine; Dotty Eubank; Lowana Denniston; Charlie Smock— and if we've forgotten your name, please forgive the oversight!

Day by Day publication has arrived for Aug. Sept. & Oct. and are available in Paine Hall and the Narthex. The Forward Day by Day publication has arrived for August, September and October, and are available in the narthex of the church, or in Paine Hall, for a donation of \$1.00. The Forward Day by Day daily devotional is an excellent resource for fostering the habit of daily prayer and reflection upon scripture. Pick up your copy this week, and begin a simple, daily journey into greater closeness with God, your neighbor and yourself.



Did you know?

"When the mission church was under construction, there were no funds for a bell for the tower... Fr. Price's goal was to find the best bell for Advent.

"Jim and Joyce Rude stepped forward and donated the bell as a gift to Advent. It is a 42-inch high, 1540 pounds cast bronze bell that plays an f sharp note. It was ordered in December 1985 and cast by John Taylor & Co. in Loughborough, England. The tower bell was transported by ship through the Panama Canal to the Port of San Francisco... The bell was delivered and installed in Advent's bell tower in July 1986. The following sentence is inscribed on the bell: 'May God's sound be heard over the land'"

For more about the history of Advent, pick up a copy of the book, Our Story 1979 to 2016, The Church of the Advent Episcopal, Sun City West, Arizona, published just last year, for only \$12.00. Stop by the church office for your copy, or see Jody Lawrence or Dotty Eubank to get a copy on Sunday.

Marketing News

FEEL THE CONNECTION – What does these three words mean to you?

Five years ago when the Marketing committee was formed, a marketing consultant was hired to help with various marketing ideas. The logo for Advent was implemented at that time as well as Feel the Connection. Over the years, people have asked what does those three words mean? When you come to church on Sunday, what do you feel? Is it about our Lord Jesus Christ, the liturgy, sermon, priest, bible study, music, stained glass windows, icons, the inside of the church, friends, sense of community or coffee social? **Maybe it's all of the above.** So, it can mean whatever is in your heart at that time. If a friend should ask you about Advent, I would hope that you would express what your heart is feeling when you think of those three words, **FEEL THE CONNECTION** and how it makes you feel about your spiritual experience at Advent.

Flavia Nomicos, Marketing Chair





This is Addie Advent of the
Advent Attic Shop Committee

Your donations have been fabulous so far.
Our attic shop and rummage sale
are off to a great start.
We have some items on display
in the parish hall for you to see.

This week we are in need of:
Purses, belts and shoes

These donations of gently used, clean items

July Donations



St. Mary's
Food Bank
ALLIANCE ®

Food	= 58 lbs.
YTD Food	= 720 lbs.
Dollars	= \$ 105
YTD	= \$ 1845



Marie Boyd August 01	John Jacobsen August 14	Bonnie Jacobs August 22
Marie Farmer August 01	Jeanne Sulley August 14	Jean Sax August 22
Donna Continis August 02	Janet Adams August 15	Michael Swallow August 22
Kenneth Jacobson August 03	Susan Kelln August 17	Nancy Grout August 23
Dorothy Ayan August 05	Donald McCune August 19	James Forrest August 28
Victor Quinet August 08	Nancy Snow August 19	Alice Goss August 29
Loretta Blewett August 09	Olivette Miller August 20	Emily Peterson August 29
Cecily Sola August 09	William Navratil August 20	Dorothea Reinerth August 30
Janet Shaw August 10	Elise Stewart August 20	Judith Couvillion August 31
Robert Carson August 11	Nancy Bell August 21	Ernest Mills August 31
Sigrid Cox August 11	Carl Deiner August 21	
Michael Thurstlic August 11	Shirley Katter August 21	



George Larsen & Pamela Mulac	August 08
Jerry & Grace Overton,	August 09
John & Muriel Erickson,	August 11
Louis Albright & Patricia Baltins	August 12
Gene & Janis Giordano,	August 12
Max & Jane Hawk,	August 12
Rex & Sharon Mather,	August 15
William Headden & The Rev. Meg Lewis,	August 21
Harry & Grace Roumell,	August 22
Lawrence & Patty Deutsch,	August 25
Warren & Jean Sax,	August 25
Phil & Mary Reister,	August 27

August 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Altar Guild 9:00 AM Parish Visitors - North hall 10:30 AM Balance & Strength exercise class 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist with Anointing	3 10:00 AM AI Anon - North hall 8:00 PM AA Variety Group	4 7:30 AM Win & Lose - Paine hall 2:30 PM JaniKing Cleaning services	5 8:30 AM Altar Guild
6 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist- no music 9:00 AM Lectionary Bible Study - Paine Hall 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist with Music & Sermon	7 8:30 AM Helping Hands Kitchen & Paine Hall	8	9 Altar Guild 10:30 AM Balance & Strength exercise class 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist with Anointing	10 10:00 AM AI Anon - North hall 8:00 PM AA Variety Group	11 7:30 AM Win & Lose - Paine hall 2:30 PM JaniKing Cleaning services	12 8:30 AM Altar Guild
13 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist- no music 9:00 AM Lectionary Bible Study - Paine Hall 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist with Music & Sermon 11:30 AM Outreach meeting - North Hall	14 8:30 AM Helping Hands Kitchen & Paine Hall	15 LUMINARY DEADLINE - adventlunary@cox.net 9:00 AM Men's club social breakfast - Tivoli Gardens	16 Altar Guild 10:30 AM Balance & Strength exercise class 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist with Anointing	17 9:00 AM Finance Committee Conf. Room 10:00 AM AI Anon - North hall 8:00 PM AA Variety Group	18 7:30 AM Win & Lose - Paine hall 2:30 PM JaniKing Cleaning services	19 8:30 AM Altar Guild
20 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist- no music 9:00 AM Lectionary Bible Study - Paine Hall 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist with Music & Sermon 11:30 AM DOK meeting - North Hall	21 8:30 AM Helping Hands Kitchen & Paine Hall	22	23 Altar Guild 10:30 AM Balance & Strength exercise class 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist with Anointing	24 10:00 AM AI Anon - North hall 8:00 PM AA Variety Group	25 7:30 AM Win & Lose - Paine hall 2:30 PM JaniKing Cleaning services	26 8:30 AM Altar Guild
27 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist- no music 9:00 AM Lectionary Bible Study - Paine Hall 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist with Music & Sermon 11:30 AM Vestry Meeting - North hall	28 8:30 AM Happy Hat Hookers	29	30 Altar Guild 10:30 AM Balance & Strength exercise class 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist with Anointing	31 10:00 AM AI Anon - North hall 8:00 PM AA Variety Group	1 7:30 AM Win & Lose - Paine hall 2:30 PM JaniKing Cleaning services	2 8:30 AM Altar Guild

Return address
Advent Episcopal Church
13150 Spanish Garden Drive
Sun City West, AZ 85375

Church Leadership

The Rt. Rev. Kirk S. Smith, Bishop of Arizona
The Rev. Canon Timothy M. Dombek, Rector
The Rev. Janet Gooltz, Assisting Priest
The Rev. Meg Lewis, Deacon
Sharon Mather, Licensed Lay Pastoral Care Minister
Karin Williams, Licensed Lay Pastoral Care Minister
Carrie Macon, Parish Administrator (623) 584-0350
Jill Tabata, Organist/Music Director
Carrie Macon, Luminary Editor adventluminary@cox.net

Advent Vestry Officers

Dianne Diaz, Senior Warden	623- 734-7180
Harry Roumell, Junior Warden	360-580-9202
Neil Haskell, Treasurer	402-677-9226
Paula Bachman, Clerk	476-8989

Members

Jan Hendrix	785-224-3559
Pat Kindle	623-202-3505
John Long	928-252-6438
Joe Marquis	623-584-4648
Sharon Navratil	623-544-4390
Herb Norton	623-975-6896
Sharon Paine	623-512-2616
Diane Prueher	623-258-9133

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