

St. Andrew's Church – April 4, 2010

Sermon "God said 'yes!' – a Brief Meditation" – The Rev. Doug Kendall

Let us pray.

Lord God of new beginnings and fresh starts,
God of the unbelievable,
God of hope and life.

Speak to us today in ways we can understand,
through the familiar and the unfamiliar,
the words and the music of your people and in the silences we give you.
In Jesus name, Amen

This is the day that defines us as Christians.
Easter Sunday.

After the growing darkness and betrayal of Maundy Thursday,
After the pain and the sadness of Good Friday,
Comes Easter Sunday.

When this world seems to have had the last word,
when it appears as though fear and anger and suspicion and hate
and sadness have won out
over love and forgiveness and the Good news of the Gospel.
When this world says no to the Love and forgiveness and joy,
God says yes.

But it was and is an uphill battle for God,
People didn't understand Jesus,
most of the time even his own disciples didn't understand him!
The Jewish leaders were afraid Jesus might cause a riot,
the Roman authorities were suspicious of the Jewish authorities,
they were all angry with Jesus because he did not follow the rules.
They were all angry with Jesus because they didn't understand.

And what if people did listen to Jesus?
What if people took him seriously and did the things he said to do?
This world would be turned upside down.
The poor being lifted up out of the dust and the poverty,
the rich and the powerful being brought down from their comfort
and their excess.
What if the people actually listened to Jesus and did what he said!
It would be havoc!

Better that one should die rather than having the whole world turned upside down.

And so fear and suspicion and anger and hate won out and Jesus died.
This world said, "No. Not now, not yet, maybe not ever."

But God said yes.

Anger and fear and suspicion and hate and sadness would not win.

God said yes to Love and forgiveness and the good news of the Gospel.

God loved us too much, to let us ruin this beautiful world God made for us.

God said no to death, and yes to life, to new life.

God said, "***I am*** going to turn this world upside down.

One day those who are poor will be lifted up out of dust and poverty,

One day the rich and the powerful will be brought down from their comfort
and their excess.

One day love and forgiveness will dominate this world.

And God in his wisdom

chose those simple and flawed men and women

who had lived with Jesus,

and worked with Jesus,

and traveled with Jesus,

and who never really seemed to understand Jesus.

God chose them to be his church,

To carry on Jesus work,

To share God's unbelievable good news about love and forgiveness

And new life that is not conquered by death.

And look what happened!

Somehow that good news was shared,

From those few men and women,

One person at a time,

And then a few people,

And a few more.

And now thousands of years later we gather here

to hear that good news shared with us.

The good news that anger and fear and suspicion and hate and sadness
will not have the last word.

That in this beautiful world God has given us,

Love and forgiveness and joy will prevail,

That even death itself has lost its sting and has been swallowed up.

And God in his wisdom again

has chosen flawed and imperfect human beings,
to be the people to share this good news.
God has chosen us to share his good news.
Not because we are eloquent and perfect.
Not because we have great organizational and fundraising abilities.
Not because we understand marketing and how to reach the mass audiences.
But because we have experienced something
that is too good to keep to ourselves.
We have another way of looking at our world and other people,
That is needed in our society.
Hope and love and forgiveness and joy,
And those simple things can turn this world upside down.

God is already turning this world upside down,
and it all began with the end of death.

May God bless us all this Easter Season
with Hope and love and forgiveness and joy,
and that is the good news of the Gospel we have to share.
In the name of the risen Lord, AMEN