



The Shape

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

From Stephen

By now you have probably heard that Julianne Stokstad is leaving AVUCC and that her last Sunday will be April 18th. The reasons for her decision are varied. In her letter to AVUCC she cites her brother's illness, her desire to spend more time with her husband, Bob, and the stresses of trying to live in two communities at the same time as factors in her decision. I believe that one of the reasons Julianne is leaving is that she has a deep sense that she has accomplished what she set out to accomplish. AVUCC is a much healthier place than when she came. There is a growing spirit of cooperation between ECA and AVUCC. The success of the Sunday School and the Junior and Senior High Youth Groups, and the leadership of Katie McCormick as Christian Education Director are all signs of health and vitality. The appointment of John Leslie as music director and his energy and enthusiasm is another factor which, I believe, has led Julianne to know that she is leaving the church in capable hands. She is leaving on a high note. Yet, I cannot tell you the profound sorrow and grief, I feel at her leaving. It has been a joy to work with her for the last year and a half. The more I see of the Joint Venture, the more I believe that it was truly inspired by the Holy Spirit. The concept of two ministers working together as colleagues, is wonderful. Julianne has been for me everything I could ask for in a colleague. She has been professional, supportive and caring. By the same token, I understand her reasons for leaving and I rejoice that she has almost unlimited opportunities for ministry ahead of her. I rejoice also that she and Bob will have more time together and that the stresses and strains of their long commutes will be over. I suppose the question everyone wants to ask is what is next? What can we expect in the future. My guess is that the process will be similar to

that ECA went through a year and a half ago. An interim minister will be appointed. The congregation will appoint a committee to ask the questions: Who are we? Where do we want to go? What kind of a person are we looking for to take us there? Hopefully, the interim minister will be sensitive to the emotional issues and will help guide the congregation through their grief and loss to joy and hope. What we at ECA can do is to pray for our brothers and sisters as they go through this exciting and difficult time and have faith that the Holy Spirit will guide the selection process.

A good opportunity to pray is Lent. Yes, Lent is upon us. Ash Wednesday is February 25th. We will have two services on that day at 7:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. At both services we will have the Ash Wednesday liturgy, the imposition of ashes and the holy eucharist.

Our Lenten Study Series will begin on Monday, March 1st at 7:30 p.m.. The exact topic is not set but it will be on some aspect of prayer and spirituality and will be jointly taught by Julianne and myself. We will meet every Monday evening through Lent. (My day off will also shift from Monday to Friday at least through Lent. If you are looking for an opportunity to deepen your spiritual life, this is an ideal time.

Stephen +



A Word from the Editor

The “Human Condition” is an interesting thing. I am sometimes forced to mentally sit back and think of something I have done, or have witnessed and say to myself: “What on earth was that all about?”

The tendency we all have towards hypochondria is a case in point. Why on earth do we worry? When we boil everything down, this condition is essentially an extension of the natural propensity we all have to: worry our rear ends right off. What’s more, we often worry about things we have absolutely no control over. A lack of faith some may ask? Perhaps it is just that.

Not long ago my mother was diagnosed with porphyria, a very rare genetic disorder. I didn’t think terribly much of it until she ended up in the hospital for a week. Not that we knew she was there, she didn’t want to worry her children. (This is another thing I don’t understand. I was forced to think to myself “Well gosh dad, when mom dies, do be sure to tell us within the month”) Back on topic – My mother had an acute attack, which is apparently possible with this disorder. It manifests itself with acute pain in the abdomen, pain levels that hadn’t been felt since my birth... And I was a big baby... The “specialist” in this town hadn’t encountered a case in some 40 years. This is the time when you have to say to yourself: “**Get me out of here, I’m going to a hospital with more than one floor!**” At any rate, I was informed that since I have a 50/50 chance of being on the short end of the gene-pool, I should get tested. Off I went to my doctor, (who knew considerably more about it than where my poor mother ended up) to get tested. I was presented with the 1 ½ gallon jug and that’s right you guessed it, told to not part with it for 24 hours... They wanted it all if you get my drift. Not only that, but do be sure to pop it in the fridge it has to stay cold, oh, and it’s light sensitive so be sure to turn out the lights when filling it.

I waited an excruciating week while I began to lookup all the various things my doctor was testing for. A part of my mind was thinking to myself: “Humm, maybe I do have this, or that, or... oh, this one right here. You know.. weight loss is a symptom, and I did loose a pound compared to Sunday, I know I’ve gained at least 1 stone in the last year but the recent trend...” The nurse finally calls me back and promptly places me on hold for what seemed like an eternity. This is when our realization of our own mortality kicks in. Your heart sinks, your blood runs cold, you get emotionally silent and your mind kicks in overdrive... “Oh my God, everything came back positive. That means I’m an anemic diabetic with porphyria, hepatitis, HIV, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and my kidneys have just given out on me.”

[Continued on Facing Page ->]

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

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SUNDAY SERVICES

7:30 AM and 11:00 AM

RECTOR

The Reverend Stephen Mills
408-802-5347
rector@eca-sj.org

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

ACOLYTES	Taylor Wing
ALTAR GUILD	Judy Graun, Katherine Hussain
COFFEE HOUR	Pete Mayo
GREETERS	Sharon Mills
GOD SQUAD	Jenny Hoyt
GOOD SAMS	Jenny Hoyt
LAY READERS	Dennis Moran
MONTGOMERY MEALS	Amy Griffith
NURSERY	Lorry Long
PRAYER VINE	Dorothy Willard
TLC	Jan Day
USHERS	Dave Byers
WORSHIP	Francie Kerr
WEB EDITOR	Kim Petruzzelli

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TREASURER	Maryke Williams
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Tacky Luncheon & Fashion Show

In the Tradition of Ann Redman

Last year the money collected from the Tacky Luncheon and Fashion Show was enough to build the ceiling in the Women's Building in the Diocese of Muhabura, Uganda. This year we want to send money to install water and electricity. The Women's Building is used for gathering together and for training women to become breadwinners as Menders and Bakers. Please help us raise funds for a project that Ann loved: to finish the Women's Building



From the Editor

[Continued from Page 2]

The nurse finally came back on the phone, and said, "Oh dear" immediately my worst fears were realized and I was in a tail spin, I saw my life flash before my eyes (it was pretty boring) and I resigned myself to my fate. "Your cholesterol is a bit high, 230" she continued after her pause. "What was that?" I asked. "Your cholesterol, it's high." "What about everything else?!?!?" "Oh, that's all fine..."

Good thing too, I knew I was ok the whole time. Had faith and everything... Honestly...

-Alex Dykes

Tacky Lunch & Fashion Show
Episcopal Church in Almaden
6581 Camden Ave. San Jose

- Tuesday April 27th, 2004 at 11:30 am
- RSVP by April 20, 2004 to:
Mary Leal (408) 268-0230 or Sandie Mueller (408)997-1642
- Donation of \$10.00 (For Uganda Women's Building)
- Make checks payable to: Episcopal Church in Almaden
- Bring a salad for six
- Wear your tacky clothes
- (If you haven't any, borrow some)

Fashions by the Unicorn Thrift Shop which raises funds for EMQ, a leading provider of mental health and social services for children and their families.

This years theme is: "An ocean cruise"

February Financial Update

ECA finished 2003 with the ability to pay its bills, subject to deferring a portion of its Diocesan Fair Share, that is, the amount that ECA owes to the Diocese. At the end of 2003, a balance of \$19,630 remains due for 2003 Fair Share. Currently ECA is making payments of \$200 per month toward the amount owed, with the consent of the Diocese.

The Finance Committee has prepared the 2004 budget, which will be finalized at the Vestry Retreat and then distributed to the congregation.

-The Finance Committee



Outreach

Santa Maria Urban Mission

I don't know about you, but when we first joined ECA and heard the prayers for Santa Maria Urban Mission I was so amazed that the church had an outreach program so far away. Several weeks after we became members I was approached to volunteer there and I remember saying that I didn't think that I could give that much time driving all the way to Santa Maria. Imagine my surprise when I found out that the Mission is just a few miles away on Almaden Road!

Santa Maria Urban Ministry was founded as an outreach ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real in April 1983, providing emergency food to the residents of San Jose's inner city. Their programs have continued without interruption since that time, and have developed additional programs to meet the changing needs of the community they serve, promoting self-sufficiency.

In spite of good efforts and solid programs, the need is growing faster than their resources. They are a partner agency of the Second Harvest Food Bank, and have been designated to serve those in need within 8 central San Jose ZIP codes.

ECA has a long tradition of supporting the mission, not only financially, but also by supplying volunteers

and donating clothing, toiletries and school supplies. Frank May, Pete Mayo and Len Whitlock have all worked there transporting food from Second Harvest to the mission for distribution. Roger Hoyt is on the board. Many of us have worked one day a week packing food boxes for distribution. We have lost many of our volunteers: Jody, Ann, Amy Jacobs and Carol Olmstead were loyal volunteers on Wednesday mornings. The mission still needs volunteers; if you're interested, please see Terry Root or give him a call at 268-1203 and he can give you information about volunteering.

If you have goods to contribute to Santa Maria, please leave them in the barrels over near the Christian Education office. If you would like to make a financial contribution to the mission, they would be happy to have that as well. The mission is located at:

Santa Maria Urban Mission
778 South Almaden
San Jose, California, 95110
Phone: (408) 292-3314

- Robin Root





Worship at ECA

Youth Sundays are continuing with lots of enthusiasm and encouragement from our families and our youth participants. Regularly scheduled for the third Sunday of each month, our young people are given opportunities to try different roles of service at ECA. All interested youth should be sure to let me know how they might like to be involved so I can work them into our schedule.

I am still looking for several adults to be part of our Youth Sunday Visionary Group. This will not be a “time-consuming” group, but one to help brainstorm ideas and directions for our Youth Sundays. If you have a passion for youth and meaningful worship experiences for them, this could be a great way for you to share your talents with us at ECA. Please consider this opportunity and give me a call if you could join me in this endeavor.

February 15 is our next Youth Sunday. Would anyone in your household like to usher, read the lessons or prayers, be part of a skit? Call me ASAP. Parts go fast!

Calling All Actors and Actresses: This year on Palm Sunday, April 4, we will be presenting the Passion (the Gospel for Palm Sunday) as a drama at the 11 o'clock Family Service. Some of you may remember several of our drama presentations of the Passion in the past. It does require a large cast (minimum of 14) willing to memorize their parts and being in character and costume for the presentation. There are always parts, as well, that require acting only. If you are interested in being part of this drama, please call me or catch me at a coffee hour. I will be assigning parts and getting scripts out by the end of this month. Rehearsals will be throughout March.

Help will also be needed for refurbishing our costumes, gathering props, if needed, as make-up artists, and a few miscellaneous tasks. If any of these ways to serve

suit your talents, please be in touch as well. Many hands make all our tasks easier, lots more fun, and more meaningful. Please consider joining me for this special worship offering.

Your Worship Committee will be meeting again on March 5. At that time we will be reviewing our worship plans for March (Lent, which begins Feb. 25 with Ash Wednesday) and April (Easter). We will then be planning our services for May, June and July. If you have any comments or concerns with worship at ECA, please share these ideas with any one of your Worship Committee members. We will address your issues at our dinner meeting on the 5th of March.

*-Susie Ferguson
Worship Chair
(408) 997-0107 home
(408) 452-2750 work*





Events

Music Notes

THANK YOU to all the music-makers for a wonderful Christmas Eve!

The 5:00pm Joint Venture service featured Prelude Music on piano by Susana Machado, and a special arrangement of "Feliz Navidad" by Jose Feliciano was sung by a Joint Venture family choir, accompanied by guest vibraphonist, AVUCC member Chris Dingman (home From Connecticut for the holidays). Gwen Hacker sang the contemporary Christmas song "Love Has Come."

The ECA Midnight Service began at 10:30pm with the ECA Choir presenting a one-half hour concert of Christmas carols and anthems, both meditative and joyful, which included Andy Kerr leading "Mary's Boy-Child" and the organ chimes accompanying "On Christmas Night All Christians Sing." Once again, the Processional Hymn was "O, Come, All Ye Faithful," and many other popular carols were sung through-out the service, with two more anthems by the choir, including Jack Jackman singing the solo in "The Hills Are Bare at Bethlehem."

THANK YOU to all those who presented their own special gifts on January 6, the Epiphany of Our Lord. As the Three Sages brought gifts to the baby Jesus, so, too, did many ECA members bring their "gifts" to share with the body of Christ at our Joint Venture Talent Night: a piano solo by Sandie Mueller ("Do I Love You Because You're Beautiful") and readings by Ann Mayers ("the Smoke-free Carmen") and Jenny Hoyt ("The Ant-Eater" and "January"). Kim Petruzzelli organized and presented the ECA ballet team "pas de quatre" which demonstrated several dance styles (with great humor!) Ron Ketelsen returned as a guest singer, and several members of AVUCC participated, sharing their gifts of song and hula. One highlight was the AVUCC saxophone quartet playing the jazzy (Joshua Fought the Battle of) "Jericho."

As always, additional singers will be welcomed at any

time to join the ECA Choir on Thursdays from 7:30-9:00pm, particularly as we begin preparations for Lent and Easter music. The choir provides anthems and song leadership at the 11:00am Sunday morning worship services.

Additional Bell Ringers are welcome to join us on Wednesdays. We will try a new rehearsal time - 4:30-5:30pm - to accomodate additional players.

-John Leslie

Weekend Escape Opportunity

Have you been craving a weekend away from all the trials and tribulations of everyday life? Doug and I have an opportunity for you. Plans are underway for a wonderful weekend at La Selva Beach from Sept 30-Oct 3, 2004. The Cursillo weekend for 2004, **Dare to Soar with Christ**, is an opportunity for you to explore your Christian faith on a three day weekend retreat. The weekend will also allow you to share your journey with other Christians and discern your Christian leadership potential. ECA has a large Cursillo community and we are always happy to have others join us. You can find out more about Cursillo on the ECA website under ministries or select the link for Santa Clara Servant Community.

If you would like to participate in a Cursillo weekend or if you have already attended a Cursillo and would like to be part of the Cursillo team, just give us a call. Our phone number is (408) 281-0468. My email address is Kathy@ddunham.org or Doug's is Doug@ddunham.org

Hope to have you join us.

*De Colores,
Kathy and Doug*

Sunday School



Sunday School Updates

The first semester of Sunday School will be ending Jan. 25. The classes have been doing great with the breakdown of grades matching the Hands-On curriculum. The only glitch has been getting one more classroom for the Senior High. Mr. Shipe and Mr. Mayo has graciously provided their trailer and motor home alternately to create another classroom. Actually the Junior High and Senior High classes have been trading off between the music/Christian Ed. Office and the trailers. Last week we tried something new. We pulled the chairs out of the closet in the fellowship hall and used that room as a classroom. It seemed kind of weird to tell the kids to go to the closet for class but it worked.

The second semester will begin Feb. 1. The new list of teachers is posted on the Sunday School bulletin board in the hallway. We have two women expecting babies this winter so they will be otherwise occupied! Some parents are switching classes to be with their other children and we have some parishioners who are joining the team just for the second semester. There is one class where we need one more teacher and that is the 1st and 2nd grade class. Please consider joining this team. If there are three teachers you only teach five times for the semester.

Sandy Mueller and Byron Henderson's fifth and sixth grade class will be performing a drama about Esther on January 18 for both congregations. The children need to arrive at 8:45AM.

Bless you all indeed,

Katie McCormick

Second Semester Teachers

3 & 4 year olds

- Tammy Nieders 268-7681
- Leslie Rousseau 927-7298
- 3. Mary Leal 268-0230

Pre-K & K

- Londa Larsen 268-9707
- Mary McPherson 268-9559
- Debbie Bishop 268-9193

1st & 2nd grade

- Nikki Pulling 927-8433
- Melanie Click 323-8283

3rd & 4th grade

- Ellie Wakefield-Mills 997-1502
- Karen Haley 268-7565
- Tom Fahlen 268-8672
- sub - Jan English-Lueck

5th & 6th grade

- Kim Petruzelli 268-1956
- Kelly Casale

7th & 8th grade

- Russ Petruzzelli 268-1956
- Sharon Mills 927-9459
- Kevin Haley 268-7565
- Ron Howie 225-0528

High School

- Jon Mills 927-9459
- Alex Dykes 839-2632
- Joyce Wing 997-0415
- Jean Cassetta 378-9494

Subs

- Jean Shipe 268-8038
- David Hough 997-7763
- Carolyn Dingman 997-7891
- Linda Nolette 997-8981



Youth Group

What's up with the Senior High Youth Group?

Our SHYGS (Senior High Youth Groupers) had a really busy December! They shopped for their adopted family and delivered a dozen bags of gifts to the mom and 5 children in the family, including a gift certificate for Safeway for their holiday meal. They wrapped presents and babysat right before Christmas and caroled at the Atrium. And after Christmas they met for a movie marathon-almost 7 hours of Lord of the Rings II and III, starting at the Root's house and ending up at the Century theaters. They have bonded into a caring, fun group and have nothing but good things ahead of them. We regularly have 12-14 teens at each gathering and it is inspiring to hear what they have to say and a pleasure to spend time with them! Ann Mayers and Jeanne Cassetta continue to be our 'angels' and support at most meetings and have succeeded in preventing any teen overthrow when Robin and Terry aren't looking!

So, how are we starting 2004? The group met at Cuetopia Family Billiards the first Sunday in January and learned the fine art of shooting pool thanks to great direction from Greg McCormick. Terry and I were taking our son John up to Arcata to attend Humboldt State, so many thanks to Katie McCormick and Jon Mills for filling in for us.

We've got more great talks ahead of us on topics such as prayer, parents, friendships, and faith. A ski trip in February, a mission trip to Heifer International in March and an end of school raft trip in June add to the at home activities that we've got planned.

I've heard great things from the folks who have already cashed in on the items they won at the servant auction. The teens have enjoyed doing the work they donated and the buyers have been enthusiastic about the results they've seen. So if you haven't had a chance to 'cash in' yet, don't forget to do so. It will be a great experience for both buyer and servant. Thanks again for all of your support!

If you are in high school and you haven't attended one of our meetings yet, you might want to give it a try in 2004. All are accepted in SHYGS and we have a great mixture of fun, conversation and outreach. If you're a little nervous, bring a friend, lots of folks do. Any questions, I am always available at robinroot@yahoo.com or (408) 268-1203. We would love to have you!

- Robin Root

Garden News

The Junior High harvested, broccoli, califlower, and green onions from our garden last Friday night. They worked by the light of the Lukanc and Mills car headlights and got the job done. Unfortunately, the slugs were not easy to spot or avoid and there were a few screams. But we did end up with several pounds of vegetables that were then delivered to the Second Harvest Food Bank.

Great job kids!

- Robin Root



Youth Group



Youth Group Activity Calendar

February

1st

4:30 Homework Center,

6:00 dinner

6:30-8:30 -Talk Sheet on "parents"

7th (Friday)

Adventure in the Arts concession stand-We will provide baked goods at church during intermission.

15th

4:30 Homework Center

6:00 dinner

6:30-8:30 Personal Prayer - Is anyone listening? How do I do it? Foosball and air hockey;Ski trip planning if necessary.

20-22

Ski Trip

24th (Tuesday)

Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner (time announced later)

29th

4:30 Homework Center

6:00 dinner

6:30-8:30 planning for Mission trip

Calendar Continued

March

5-7th

Three-day Mission trip – Heifer International – Ceres, CA

21st

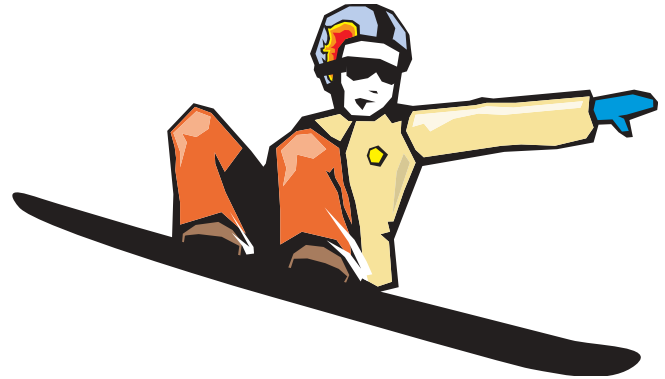
4:30 Homework Center

6:00 dinner

6:30-8:30 talk sheets

27th (Sat)

Adventure in the Arts concession stand-We will provide baked goods at church during intermission.





Fellowship

Alternative Christmas

Alternative Christmas was a Success!

I know it's January and we don't want to revisit Christmas quite so soon, but it's important to recognize how powerful a single event can be in other's lives. Here are the results of our Alternative Christmas this year.

Donations to Heifer-\$1,215

Donations to Habitat for Humanity-\$550

Youth Bake Sale to benefit a family from Santa Maria Urban Mission-\$350

UCC feeding program-\$230

UCC mittens and gloves for the women's shelter-\$170

Scarves knitted by Sharon Mills raised over \$200 to buy shoes for the mission

African Team Ministry Orphan programs-\$1307

Youth Calendar Sales-Get this from Katie

White Angel Christmas Tree-Over 50 gifts and 15 gift certificates were delivered for the children of Santa Maria Urban Mission

Small acts of generosity and kindness by individuals add up for big results to those in need. Thank you to all who participated in any way this year.

Fellowship Planning Party

The Fellowship Planning Party for 2004 will be held on Friday, February 6. Belinda Byerly-Robins has graciously volunteered her home for this year's planning party. We appreciate her stepping forward to host this event. The planning party is open to all adults. Please bring a hearty appetizer or dessert to share and your beverage of choice for the evening. We will gather at 7 o'clock for fellowship and brainstorming events for the coming year. We will also set up tentative dates for the events we decide to put on this year's calendar. Consider attending this adult planning party and share in the creation of another exciting, fun-filled year of fellowship at ECA. A sign up poster can be found in Fellowship Hall.

-Susie Ferguson

Christmas 2003

ECA's Christmas Party was a great success and lots of fun for all who attended. Our Fellowship Hall was packed with joy-filled parishioners sharing a delicious dinner catered by Café Primavera of Willow Glen and Los Gatos. It was a wonderful evening to make new friends, renew friendships from "the other service, and celebrate the Christmas season with our ECA family. After dinner, Fellowship Hall resounded with Christmas carols led by John Leslie, who was listening closely for potential choir members.

We want to thank Betty and Dom Consorte for their excellent take-charge leadership of this annual event. We also want to thank all of you who helped in a variety of ways, setting up and decorating, serving and cleaning up. You all made the evening a warm and cherished memory of our Christmas season.

-Susie Ferguson

Gift of Gratitude



ECA is blessed with people who give generously of their time and talents; some with a big fan fare that everyone notices and others with a whisper. In both cases, ECA is grateful for their gifts. Perhaps, you will notice someone during the next month that you would like to give the “gift of gratitude.” If so, please just submit their name and what they did to the Shape Editor by deadline so they can receive their gift right here.

John Leslie: Thank you for your “Epiphany gift.” The talent evening on January 6th was very special and lots of fun. Thank you, also, for sharing your time and talent with us at ECA at our Christmas party. Caroling was spirited and fun.

Betty Consorte: Thank you and your committee for a wonderful evening in December. Everything was delightful. We appreciate all your hard work in putting it all together for us.

Elaine LaVallee for taking care of the altar linens for eight years. And for all those people, you know who you are, who assist in cleaning up the communion table after the 7:30 service - Thank you!

Andy and Francie Kerr, and Winnie and Jack Jackman - Thanksgiving for two couples who have served ECA for over 30 years, for their ministry of music and general faithfulness and leadership over a very long period of time. We are blessed to have such fine musicians and strong leaders among us.

Mary Leal, Joan Wagner, Jan Day, Carolyn Hennings, Robyn Dorsey, and Dottie Alfrey. Because of your help during the holidays, we were ahead of schedule with our bulletins this Christmas, and our office was more serene!





St. Stephen's Episcopal School

The Episcopal tradition of education is more than an alternative to public education. While the success of public education over the years is apparent; many of us are a product of that institution, the presence of independent schools is a true representation of the American value system of "choice."

Bound by common goals, the students and families of St. Stephen's Episcopal School are present by choice; they want to be there. Drawn together by the desire to see children become accomplished academically and, directed by a moral and ethical code delivered by teachers and a Deacon/Chaplain, parents find a commonality that adds comfort and confidence to the business of being a parent.

While peer pressure is generally presented as a negative concept, peer pressure at St. Stephen's School is an advantage. Coming from families with similar expectations for children, the community of St. Stephen's grows strong because it is positive and inclusive. High academic expectations alone are not enough, in the same sense that a spirit of caring and kindness is not enough. The developing child absorbs all that surround them; spiritual concepts, social challenges, the call for self confidence, and emotional and social models. The classroom is just one of the learning opportunities a child experiences.

St. Stephen's Episcopal School stands for the tradition of excellent instruction; the atmosphere of trust that empowers children, and the belief that every child will achieve to their highest capability. Supporting each child's confidence to express themselves well and with conviction is of the highest importance. St. Stephen's is a choice that becomes part of each family's future and success.

Question:

Given a world in which the market makes the rules, how do we intend to educate for justice, tolerance, confidence and independent thinking?

If our young people are to improve on the "gifts" we have bequeathed them (i.e., political hostility, hunger, disenfranchisement and greed) how are we encouraging their social progress?

If ranking students through testing and re-testing is seen as encouraging schools to leave no child behind, where does understanding come into play? Wisdom?

Answer:

Episcopal education, where faith, reason and tradition carry academic weight and where confidence and understanding are the goals.

It is simply necessary that we educate for the qualities with which we hope to seed the coming generations. If we educate for highly competitive, performance driven young people, that is the society we will create. That's not necessarily bad unless you are also concerned with the character of the child. If the ability of a young person to act on social dysfunction is important, a personal understanding of their own spiritual worth is valuable. Where do these qualities of spiritual self-worth, confidence and understanding come together? Episcopal education.

Find a way to get involved in and support Episcopal schools. It's about our future.

Paul Wenninger

St. Stephen's Episcopal School

Ski February!

Skiing is the "fellowship" of choice for February. SECA's youth and adults will be finding their ways to the ski slopes during February. We wish them all safe travel, great snow, and safe returns with nothing more than sore muscles and lots of great stories.

-Susie Ferguson



Habitat for Humanity

Our local Habitat affiliate, Silicon Valley Habitat for Humanity (SVHfH), is the outgrowth of the Habitat West group started at AVUCC in 1978 as a fund raising and informational group. That group developed into the Western Regional branch, which now includes the 13 western states. They have built more than 4159 homes for working people who needed help to get out of slum housing and buy a simple, well-built home. The California affiliates have built more than 935 homes and our local affiliate, has built 25 of those homes. However, SVHfH is growing and expanding its horizons rapidly. Last year SVHfH built three houses in Campbell, restored a 100-year-old house in San Jose and built a house in Los Gatos for deserving families.

Currently, with a favorable climate for building low cost housing, cities are being very supportive in giving land and money to SVHfH to build new homes. Immediate plans are to build 3 houses in Santa Clara; final paperwork is all that is holding up the start date. San Jose City Council has approved the transfer of 4

parcels, where 12 houses can be built. SVHfH also has 2 two story Victorian houses to restore in San Jose. Totally SVHfH has 17 projects in its sites. It is SVHfH's intent to build 10 houses a year. They now have two construction supervisors (contractors) leading the construction projects. This is an exciting prospect. SVHfH's staff and Board of Directors have been working hard to find new construction sites and are doing quite well. More building sites will be identified before the 17 sites now in planning, are finished.

With continuous building assured for the next 2 years or more, workers are needed and finances are needed. AVUCC and ECA have supported SVHfH very generously throughout the years. To continue this support, please donate through your church, specifying Silicon Valley Habitat for Humanity, and/or to work on a project. For more information contact Bob Green at (408) 268-6506 or contact the SVHfH office at (408) 294-6464.

- Bob Green

Mystery Mug

Many, Many months ago...November, 2002...there was a fundraising auction. Someone out there purchased a gift basket full of Christmas and other items including a pair of china Christmas cocoa mugs. Here is the news: your set is not complete. There are 2 spoons which go with it, which turned out to be in a box inside an item that I purchased. You can tell how long I've been holding on to them! So another Christmas has come and gone and I still have them. If the rightful owner will let me know, I will tell you where in the building you will find them.

-Brenda McHenry (408) 270-5133
bmchenry@symphonysiliconvalley.org

Toiletries

Our toiletry collection project was so successful that the senior high group will continue collect items throughout the year, and make a distribution about 3 times a year. Look for the new box in Fellowship Hall the first Sunday in February. Please donate only unopened items! We donated the first 35 bags and boxes of items to Next Door-Solutions for Domestic Violence. Thank you for your continued support of this outreach.

- Robin Root



Looking Ahead

My friend Susie sends me a copy of 'Our Daily Bread' every quarter, and I keep this daily devotional either in my purse, or at my desk at work. I don't read it every day, but I try to. The message on January 13 struck me particularly as things do from time to time. Isn't it interesting how the Holy Spirit nudges you at just the right time when you need to hear something? In case you don't read 'Our Daily Bread', I am copying it here for you, and maybe you too will find it helpful.

As I read the devotion I thought of many scenarios that are close to me right now. There are young people who are worried about relationships that ended badly or tests that they didn't prepare for completely or arguments they've had with their parents and siblings. Then there are my 'diet buddies' and others who went out and splurged and feel that now the whole process is a disaster. There are acquaintances that have had misunderstandings and can't get beyond them. There are church members who feel that they have been snubbed in some way and can't get beyond the injured feelings to gain understanding of the situation and be free of the hurt. I worry about the way I've handled situations with my children badly and I revisit these scenarios over and over. And there are family members who are holding on to old 'hurts' and lose the opportunity each new year to have a loving and caring relationship with me and me with them. This reading helped me to see these in perspective and I hope to do as Paul did and press on with confidence and trust in God. I hope this helps some of you as well.

Looking Ahead by Richard De Haan (Philippians 3:7-14)

"The month of January is named after Janus, the Roman god of beginnings. He was symbolized as a man with two faces, one looking back and the other looking ahead.

Some people have trouble looking ahead with hope because they keep looking back and moping over the

mistakes of the past. Their outlook for the future is dimmed, and their enthusiasm is dampened. But there is no use "crying over spilled milk". History is likely to repeat itself if they keep on brooding over failures of the old year, or continue complaining about the injustices they suffered during the last 12 months. Nothing is gained by continually grieving over the past.

On this day early in the new year, begin by confessing your sins to the Lord and accepting the gracious forgiveness He offers (1John 1:9-10). Make right what needs correcting, and then, "forgetting those things which are behind", press onward with confidence and trust in your heavenly Father (Philippians 3:13-14). That was Paul's secret, and it worked.

Let's stop looking back and brooding over past failures. Rather, with a forward look, let's move ahead with hope and joy."

- Robin Root

Taize Field Trip

Any interested folks are invited to join us (Pastor Julianne and John Leslie) on Friday February 6 to attend Mercy Center Taize Service. This is one of the oldest and largest services in the Bay area with hundreds of people attending and singing. Sister Susanne Toolan, who leads the service, has been often to Taize, France.

Meet at church at 5:45 pm to car pool. If you know you want to go, please call the church and leave your name.

Directions to Mercy Center in Burlingame: 280 north to Trousdale (which is north of highway 92). Go east on Trousdale, downhill towards the Bay. At El Camino Real, turn right and go through 2 or 3 traffic lights to Adeline Street. Turn right and go 6 or 8 blocks until you see Mercy Center.

Adventures in the Arts



Matthew Dirst - February 21

Highly acclaimed harpsichordist Matthew Dirst performs in concert on Saturday, February 21, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. as part of the Almaden Adventures in the Arts concert series at Joint Venture Churches of Almaden.

The recital will feature solo and pieces accompanied by a small string ensemble with a program that will include two of Johann Sebastian Bach's solo harpsichord concerti.

Matthew Dirst is Associate Professor of Music and Director of the Collegium Musicum at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston. He holds degrees from the University of Illinois, Southern Methodist University, the Conservatoire National de Rueil-Malmaison (France), where he spent two years on a Fulbright scholarship, and a Ph.D. in musicology from Stanford University.

Matthew Dirst will perform at Joint Venture Churches of Almaden. The concert starts at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 General and \$8 Student in advance (including will call) or \$20/\$10 at the door. Child care will be provided. For more information or to make reservations, please call (408) 268-0243.



Nuclear Whales - February 7

The Nuclear Whales Saxophone Orchestra performs in concert on Saturday, February 7, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. as part of the Almaden Adventures in the Arts concert series at Joint Venture Churches of Almaden.

The entire "Family of Saxophones" is featured - the tiny soprano, the soprano, alto, tenor, baritone, and bass and the rare and monstrous 6'8" contrabass (described by The Los Angeles Times as "...an instrument with the stature of a power forward in the NBA and a pitch that makes a foghorn sound effeminate.") Together they create incredibly innovative music with a rich ensemble sound covering an amazing range of over six octaves.

The Nuclear Whales repertoire includes classical, jazz, swing, and a plethora of original works as well as a tribute to the ocean's whales which inspired the Orchestra's name. From Bach, Mozart, and Strauss to Ellington, Gershwin and Sousa, the Whales leave no musical genre unexplored.

Nuclear Whales will perform at Joint Venture Churches of Almaden. The concert starts at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 General and \$8 Student in advance (including will call) or \$20/\$10 at the door. Child care will be provided. For more information or to make reservations, please call (408) 268-0243.





Vestry 2004

From Our Senior Warden

2004 is going to be a great year at ECA. The new Vestry is in place with our new members, having met twice already and looking forward to our Vestry Retreat on January 31st. Our 2004 budget analysis is completed and we will soon have the budget published for all parishioners. Our 2004 stewardship campaign came up short of our projected goal of \$300,000 (to date our pledge offerings total \$209,000). I want to thank our finance committee (Elizabeth Ward and Pat Rimroth) along with Maryke Williams for all of their hard work in reviewing all of the accounts and working on our 2004 budget. The finance committee will be publishing the new budget and a recap of last years financial report. We have so much to look forward to in the coming year. Our Sunday School program is off and running with a lot of enthusiasm. Our Junior High and Senior High Youth programs are also gaining

a lot of momentum and both groups are participating in some very exciting activities. We have some fun fellowship events planned and new families joining our church. Lastly, I believe in the phrase "All of us are smarter than anyone of us". Your contributions of time and talent as well as your opinions/questions are very important to the successful growth of our congregation. There are many avenues available to you to express yourself. Every vestry member is available on a personal level, phone call or e-mail to address your questions and/or concerns. In 2004 we want to make sure all voices are heard and we all work together to continue our church growth.

*-Ken McCormick
Senior Warden*

ATTENTION! Help Wanted!

Seeking Vestry Clerk

The Vestry is seeking a parishioner to volunteer to be their Vestry Clerk. Duties include attending the monthly Vestry Meeting (second Tuesday of the month), taking, typing and distributing the minutes.

This is a great opportunity to work with the Vestry and then become a voting member of the Vestry.

All interested parishioners please contact Stephen or Ken McCormick for more details.

