

The Shape

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

“Do you have an agenda?” If you are planning to run an efficient meeting, it’s a good thing. If you’re in a leadership role, it can be perceived as a good thing to some and not so good to others at the same time. Sometimes I wonder if we miss read people’s passions and label them “agendas” with a negative connotation and don’t bother to look deeper for a better understanding of what truly lies at the heart of each one of us. Recently, I was prodded to do a little soul searching of my own. Just what are my passions and what are my agendas?

A few years back Jerry and I established a reputation, “Beware of dinner at the Fergusons!” It seems many people who gathered around our dinner table found themselves getting involved in something, a new activity at ECA, a church fellowship event, a drama, or maybe Cursillo. Were we manipulative or hospitable, enticing or encouraging? Do we have an “agenda” or do we have a passion for getting people involved and growing friendships?

Small groups and Bible studies have made a difference in my life over the years. I’d like others to give it a try. So, I insist on making their potluck contribution for them and pick them so they don’t have to drive. Am I making it hard to say “no” to our Bible study? Am I manipulative or hospitable, enticing or encouraging? Do I have an “agenda” or a passion to help others try a new path to grow their faith?

I know there are some who will quickly answer “manipulative” and keep their distance, always too busy for dinner! Others will answer “manipulative” but with a twinkle and smile because of experiences they have had and shared by saying “yes” and being involved, trying new opportunities, and growing new friendships.

I definitely have a passion for wanting people to feel connected and loved by being involved, working and serving side by side, growing friendships and knowing Jesus, personally. Where my methods for getting that to happen seem like “an agenda” and manipulative, I pray the Lord will show me new ways to build his kingdom. Anyone want to come over for breakfast?

Susie Ferguson

From the Editor



Why do we clean before company arrives? I suppose the reason really boils down to the very human failing of lying to those around us. Some may object to this parallel, but ask yourself, is your house really clean all the time? Are you trying to make your guests think that it's always clean?

The usual excuse is always that you don't want to make your guests feel uncomfortable by seeing your home in some sort of disarray. The fact of the matter is that their home is probably just as bad as yours was before you started to clean. How do I know this? Simple! Because they are not having company, you are.

I think that the most cleanly among us are those that constantly entertain. And of course, guests always marvel at the state of the surroundings using the familiar platitudes: "your house is lovely Ms. Smith" Translation: you have a 5 year old, I know you have a maid hiding in here somewhere. "Where do you find the time to do all this" Translation: ok lady, your cover is blown, who's your cook and where's the nanny?

For the average person, the dinner party is always preceded by the Special Cleaning Olympics. This is a very special type of event, where everyone is enlisted regardless of their abilities. People are rushing around like mad moping, scrubbing, dusting, vacuuming, and stuffing the rest of the crap anywhere it will fit. It's the modern flight of the bumble bee as we zip back and forth. As the hour of reckoning approaches we begin to abandon the more typical practice of "putting things away" and the act crescendos with the "stuffing process." The clean clothes end up on a bed somewhere, the dirty clothes get piled in the laundry room, or an upstairs bathroom, the closets get packed with the errata of daily life,

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ALTAR GUILD	Elaine LaVallee, Betty Wood
COFFEE HOUR	Pete Mayo
FOLK CHOIR	Andy Kerr
GREETERS	Sharon Mills
GOD SQUAD	Jenny Hoyt
GOOD SAMS	Jenny Hoyt
HANDBELL CHOIR	Maryke Williams
KIDS' BREAKOUT	Leslie Rousseau
LAY READERS	Dennis Moran
MONTGOMERY MEALS	Amy Griffith
NURSERY	Lorry Long
PRAYER VINE	Dorothy Willard
USHERS	Dave Byers
SR HIGH YOUTH GROUP	Robin & Terry Root
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SEPTEMBER EDITION	
ISSUE NUMBER	090106
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THE SHAPE IS USUALLY A MONTHLY PUBLICATION
OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

FROM ROBIN & TERRY

To Members of Both Congregations,

Below is an excerpt sent last month to all SHYGS and their families. We want to add our heartfelt thanks to you who have faithfully lent their support in prayer, financial help, driving, and many other acts of kindness the last three years. To the families:

“First let me say that the experience Terry and I have had working with the senior high teens at ECA and AVUCC has been a deeply enriching one. We have many times been told that our work (we don't see it as work) with the group has been a blessing to the church, and while that may be true, we see this experience much more as a blessing to our lives. To anyone who wonders why we have spent 3 years with the teens at our church, when we have no children of our own involved, the answers are simple. There was a need for leadership and the Holy Spirit nudged us to answer that call. We believe in the idea of servant-hood which asks that we all find a way to serve the body of Christ. And, we love being around these teenagers. They are a joy, a mystery, a challenge, full of questions, full of answers, extremely committed to their passions, and just a lot of fun.

When we committed to a 4th year leading SHYGS I was working at a job around the corner. I now have a door-to-door work/commute schedule of 12 hours per day. I will also be asked to travel to our Boston office from time to time. This makes it impossible for me to maintain family and work commitments and also lead the senior high youth group. Please know that we have not made this decision lightly. It comes after many weeks of discussion and prayer. It is right for us at this time to step aside and let the next leader have the experiences that we've had.

You will be receiving information about the coming year from Katie, Stephen and Kevin. The Christian Education support to this new leadership and continue to participate in all of the SHYGS activities this year. We wish you all

the best and thank you again for all that you have done to support us these past three years.”

Thank you again for letting us have this wonderful opportunity to share in the life of our teens!

Robin and Terry Root

BACK TO SCHOOL HELP

It is back-to-school time, and once again, the kids served by Santa Maria Urban Mission could use our help. For the next three weeks we'll be conducting the First Step school supplies drive at ECA. If you would like to take part, we'll be collecting donations in the narthex (the hallway next to Katie's office is already pretty crowded).

If you would prefer that we shop for you, please make your check payable to ECA, with “school supplies” as the memo, and leave it in my mailbox.

Target, Mervyns, Longs, etc have all begun their back-to-school sales and these items can be found at good prices.

The following items are needed:

- Backpacks (please NO blue or red!)
- Two-pocket folders (please NO blue or red!)
- Binder paper, college-rule
- Pencils
- Pens
- Glue sticks
- Calculators
- Erasers
- Scissors
- Clothing, socks,light jackets (particularly larger sizes)

Starting the school year with the needed supplies can make a big difference to these young students. Thank you so much for your support!

Inge Bond

STEWARDSHIP

This is the 6th Stewardship article intended to inform and inspire you to a higher “living of the purpose” we are on this earth to do. This is a definition of Stewardship by the Ecumenical Stewardship Center:

“Christian stewardship is grateful and responsible use of God’s gifts in the light of God’s purpose. Christian stewards, empowered by the Holy Spirit, commit themselves to conscious, purposeful decisions.

Stewardship is lived out in:

- * Living and telling the Good News;
- * Sharing God in seeking justice, peace, and the integrity of creation in an interdependent universe;
- * Wisely employing God-given human resources, abilities, and relationships;
- * Sharing the material resources we hold
- * Providing for future generations, sharing in the life, worship, and responsible stewardship of the Church and of its mission.

Both for the individual and for the community, stewardship is a joyful act for the sake of God’s world.”

Stewardship has also been defined as:

“What I do, with all that I have, after I say, ‘I believe’. Using the gifts God has given us to do the work God is calling us to do.”

Now, after six months of these articles, this should be sounding familiar. In other words, those previous articles have said the same thing; go back and look. Let me know what you observe.

The Stewardship Ministry needs your help with the fall campaign. We will need people to call people. If you like to talk on the phone or go over to someone’s house and chat, we can use you. We will have fun preparing for the fall also. Mark your calendar to

save the date for the Harvest Festival Dinner on October 14. Please call George (408) 268-4435 to say “I will”.

George Romer

BENEFICIO COFFEE

More than once, someone has come to me, crying (well, so-to-speak) because they’ve run out of Beneficio More Than Fair Trade Coffee. Some of those same people have decided to order more than one bag each time, since 24 bags comprise a total order. You just may want to do that, too. Please contact Phyllis Chai with questions or your request at 226-7150.

PATRIOT DAY PRAYER

September 11 6:00pm

Music at Joint Venture Churches of Almaden Valley will host a Taize-style prayer service on “Patriot Day,” Monday, September 11 at 6:00pm, the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. All are welcome to attend and share prayers for those who died, and for those family members and friends who lost loved ones in those plane hijackings. The service will be a brief 30-40 minutes long, and you are welcome to come either before or after your family supper. Please consider sharing this time of quiet remembrance and prayer with your community.

JR. HIGH YOUTH

Our first meeting for JHYG’s is on Sept. 10th, 6-8pm in the youth center. All 6th-8th graders welcome. We’ll play volleyball from 6-6:30, eat dinner 6:30-7:00 and go over our calendar and general info until 8:00pm.

Katie McCormick
Christian Education Director

ECA Life

THANKS DESI!

Let's hear it for Desi...worth her weight in gold! Did you know that about a month ago she performed a miracle on the too long-time sick paper-folding machine in the church workroom? And voila! Now it's back, up and running! Desi also unjammed the stuck church kitchen drawer not long ago, and knew that dear Pete Mayo might be able to help further. Nevermind that Desi was not feeling well in June; her help was needed again, and she got the cantankerous kitchen can opener to function. And we always hear this response from Desi when she has given assistance..."Not a problem".

THANKS!

Thanks to Kimberly Axtell for leading us in prayer, enthusiastic Psalm-reading, and for assisting Pastor Kevin Smith at ECA worship in Fr. Stephen's absence due to Ellie's incapacitation in Hawaii. What a blessing to us all that Kimberly followed the Spirit's call to become a seminarian.

Many thanks to younger Bill Allfrey and his son who once again gave the Joint Venture Churches the gift of cleaning all the carpets on Thursday, July 27th.

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Terry & Cindy Francis	1
Todd & Ellen Lukanc	1
Matt & Kelli Gundersen	3
John & Mary McPherson	3
Allan & Virginia Jones	4
Graham & Lynne Kelly	20
Jerry & Susie Ferguson	21

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Brenda McHenry	2
Louis Stephan	3
Margot Estrade	4
Ted Fahlen	5
Katie McCormick	5
Kelli Casale	8
Dorothy Willard	9
Debbie Bishop	14
Marc Bond	16
Trish Reilly	16
Elizabeth Stevens	16
Maryke Williams	17
Pat McGarvin	19
Jerry Long	20
Gary Cassetta	24
Kathy Mastre	24
Lorry Long	26
John Leslie	27
Joe Machado	28
Nancy Romer	29
Jean Cassetta	30

ECA Life

MUSIC NOTES

FALL ADULT CHOIR

The ECA Adult Choir will have a combined rehearsal with the AVUCC Shalom Choir on Monday, September 11 at 7:00pm in the sanctuary. Regular Thursday night rehearsals will resume on Thursday, September 21 at 7:30pm.

ADVENTURES IN THE ARTS

The Joint Venture Churches Concert Committee is busy making plans for the 2006-07 Almaden Adventures in the Arts concert series. The committee is planning to have a season brochure in the mail by the end of September, with the first event, a "Soup & Sound Organ Concert," scheduled for a Saturday night in early November. The concert series is an effort to provide first class entertainment events for our own church communities as well as a vehicle for attracting newcomers to our churches. The series would not have survived into this upcoming seventh season without the support of our loyal audiences through subscriptions and other forms of encouragement. We are most grateful and hopeful for continued success. And we're looking forward to some great concerts!

JV BELL CHOIR

JV Bell Choir will resume meetings in mid-September. Rehearsals in the past have been on Wednesdays from 4:30-5:45 or 6:00pm. If you are interested in joining us, and the rehearsal time is not convenient for your schedule, please talk with John Leslie, and we'll see if we might be able to find a better rehearsal time. Also, if you have never played handbells before, and would like to be part of a Bell Choir training group, let John know. You can always reach John by calling the church office (408) 268-0243 or E-mailing him at music@jointventurechurches.org.

JV CHILDREN'S CHOIR AND BELLS

A new group of young handbell and handchime ringers is forming. Rehearsals will be Saturday mornings

from 10:15-11:00am. Young people will learn about music note-reading, counting rhythms, and the appropriate ways to ring handbells and handchimes. No experience is needed. In late October we will add one half hour of rehearsal time for singing, to prepare music for the upcoming holidays. Please sign up, or talk to John Leslie if your child is interested in the student handbell choir.

*Lord, I lift Your name on high;
Lord, I love to sing Your praises.
I'm so glad You're in my life;
I'm so glad You came to save us.
You came from heaven to earth to show the way,
From the earth to the cross my debt to pay.
From the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky;
Lord, I lift Your name on high!*
- Rick Founds

To God alone be all the Glory!
John Leslie

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Welcome to Sunday School. Our first session is on September 17 at 10:10am. We have classes for children ages 4 years old through Junior High

Come join us for:

Hands on Bible Curriculum for 4 year-olds through 2nd grade, Seasons of the Spirit for 3rd & 4th grades, Bible basics for 5th and 6th grade and "Dares from Jesus" for Junior High

Katie McCormick
Christian Education Director

SHYGS HIT THE BEACH!

SHYGS had their last summer fling before school started by camping for 3 nights at Half Moon Bay State Beach in August. We had a core group of 8 teens who were there the whole time, and then others who came and went as they worked the beach trip around school activities. We really lucked out with the weather as the fog cleared and we had two fabulous days on the beach. Half Moon Bay also has miles of bike trails that many of us took advantage of.

Winning the 'I'm turning blue' award for staying in the water the longest has to be Matt LaRochelle, who not only rode the waves once, but returned to the sea multiple times. Terry and Marcus Bond were close seconds, but they were wearing wetsuits! David Hoyt wins the 'Best Giggle while Bodysurfing award' for his awesome assaults on the waves while laughing. The Lukanc brothers Greg and Doug came up for a day and packed in the activities both biking and swimming, with Greg definitely winning the 'Best Recovery of a Swimsuit' award after getting hit by a pretty big wave! Kristen Petruzzelli joined us for the last afternoon and evening and was first to rise and hit the beach on Friday morning.

Engineers Guido Spanjaart and David Hoyt led the 'on the beach Jacuzzi' building project that elicited many turns at the shovel from other SHYGS. Also digging in were Marcus Bond and Matt who had a shallow resting area in the sand. We have inducted new additions to the core cook's team since we're losing Greg to college- Matt and Taylor Mills are expert at cooking grilled cheese, French toast and bird's nests and join David Mastriana as cooking pros for the group. Hannah Ward, Val Tysanner, and Ryan Hall held down the fort playing lots of cards and staying OUT of the water. David and Hannah led us in Mafia and David started off a game of Zorch that saw many changes in the role of Zorcher, and we had lots of laughs at the campfire with 'Would You Rather...' and 'Have you Ever...'.

The group had a wonderful time having lazy days and nights just hanging out, talking, laughing and playing. It was such a good picture of the group that they have become: tight-knit, accepting, fun and imaginative. David Mastriana made two trips up between shifts at work to hang out with the group and we thank him for picking up extra wood for our campfires. We want to thank Pete Mayo who made 2 round trips with his truck so that we could bring our bikes, and to Kathryn McAbee and Anna Spanjaart who helped us haul the rest of the gear and bikes. As always, Jon and Sharon Mills loaned what we are now calling 'The SHYGS van' to the group so that we could get everyone there. Thanks to all who helped make this our best beach trip ever!

Robin Root



SHYGS Beach Trip

