

The Shape

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

FROM STEPHEN

One of the great things about living in the Santa Clara Valley is that you get to enjoy fall without the prospect that it is the herald of winter snows. My memories of fall in Massachusetts were that it was a bittersweet season. On the one hand there were the beautiful colors as the leaves turned from green to red and yellow and there was the warm weather with just a bit of a nip in the air. But there was also the reminder that where fall was, winter was not far behind. Fall was also a time where life began to slow. The storm windows went up and people literally and figuratively buttoned down for the winter. There was, if you will, a God imposed, nature driven rhythm to life. Here these limitations are much less onerous and while much of the country is gearing down, I think we are beginning to gear up. There is much activity and excitement in the air as God continuously makes all things new again.

Some of the new things I am excited about are:

We are beginning a new youth band. We have some very talented singers and musicians among our youth. With the help of John Leslie, Mike and Desi Brown and Tim Miller, we are putting together a youth band to play at the youth Sunday services. I am really excited about this. Our youth bring so much vitality, and energy to our worship and for them to take the leadership and ownership of the music gives them a sense of investment and ownership of our common worship.

Another exciting development is our Senior High Sunday School. With the encouraging, wheedling, cajoling and bribing with donuts by Debbie Bishop we have had a good turnout for the last three Sundays. We are still in search of

a format that will nourish and ground our youth, but we are on that road. It has given me a chance to get to know some of our high school youth better and will hopefully also give them a chance to know some of the other adults in the congregation better.

Change is also occurring at the diocesan level. By the time you read this the diocese will have a new structure and a new method of calculating our "fair share" (the money each congregation sends the diocese). These have largely been grassroots reforms, and I am hopeful that the Diocesan Convention will act on them wisely and prayerfully.

I am amazed by the Bishop Search Committee. There are about 20 of us and the backgrounds and points of view are incredibly diverse. In addition, no one is afraid of expressing their opinion. But it works! It works because there is a spirit of compromise, listening and mutual respect. The Diocesan Profile is now complete as is the application form. Now we need your help. If you know someone who you believe is called to be the Third Bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real, there is a nomination form as Appendix B of the profile. You can fill it out online.

Finally, we have set up a new children's play area in the narthex for people who are visiting the church office. I hope and pray it sees a great deal of use.



Salaam,
Stephen

From the Editor



Megachurches are all the rage these days. The bigger the church, the better it is in a great deal of minds. It seems that many of the smaller churches are struggling to emulate the formula in an attempt to touch the Devine. The Devine would be large budgets, lots of cash, and very much a modern business. It seems to me that many of the churches strive toward the goal of increasing the congregation count more than most businesses seek customers. It's as if they plan on going public at some point: the Church Of the Last Day, now on NASDAQ as ticker: COLD

I have to say I am not quite able to grasp the reasoning behind church expansion. The usual reason given is that the church that does not grow eventually withers and dies. What happens when the church outgrows its founders? Its long time parishioners? It seems that the problem with megachurch growth is that it alienates all sorts of people.

What can be done to combat the problems that the small church faces? What can be done to bring in money and talent? From a purely selfish and financial standpoint, the ideal target audience for church membership at the moment is the baby boomer generation. When you grow a church with the young, your parishioners don't have as much "disposable income" with which to tith. The hope in bringing in the young is that you can bring in large numbers to offset the small income per person. While this sounds rather clinical, it is in the end all a matter of finance to keep the doors open. The high percentage of very young (teen and early 20s) members tends to displace the older members of the congregation.

When you take into account church growth, ministry and evangelism, then your target audience of course is focusing on the un-churched and the unbelievers rather than the financial. Then the game becomes, how do we grow the church to include this group? The answer usually is to include hints of the secular in the service so that you water down the message to be palatable to the masses. This ultimately causes alienation by the original parishioners, who were used to the way things were, idealized by the 90 year old couple by themselves at the back of the megachurch as the rock band plays away and the disco lights flash.

When you look at churches that have trouble growing, then you begin to understand the fears of the churches so focused on growth and the incredible drive to that end. There are Anglican churches in Brittan
[Continued on next page]

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN
6581 Camden Avenue, San José, CA 95120
Tel 408-268-0243 • Fax 408-268-4207
www.eca-sj.org

SUNDAY SERVICES
7:30 AM and 11:00 AM

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

MINISTRIES

ACOLYTES	Valerie Tysanner
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	Desi & Mike Brown
STEWARDSHIP	George Romer
JR HIGH YOUTH GROUP	Katie McCormick
WORSHIP	Sandie Mueller
WEBMASTER	Kim Petruzzelli
YOUTH SUNDAY	Jim McPherson, Bryan Bond

ECA STAFF

CHRISTIAN ED. DIRECTOR	Katie McCormick
MUSIC DIRECTOR, ORGANIST	John Leslie
TREASURER	Maryke Williams
YOUTH DIRECTOR	Katie McCormick
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	Desi Brown

CONTACTING

NOVEMBER 2006 EDITION	<i>The Shape</i>
ISSUE NUMBER	11012006
EDITOR	Alex Dykes
TELEPHONE NUMBER	408 268-0243
EMAIL ADDRESS	shape@eca-sj.org

THE SHAPE IS USUALLY A MONTHLY PUBLICATION
OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

*Oh, how good and pleasant it is, when
brethren live together in unity!*
Psalm 133:1

It has been the practice this year with our vestry to begin every meeting with a time of mediation, reflection, and prayer around a particular scripture selected for that meeting. At our last meeting we reflected on Psalm 133, the joys of being “in unity” and when and where we have witnessed that at ECA in the past year. Though our list was long, I will only mention a few here.

One place your vestry has seen unity is within itself. Though your vestry has differing views and ideas on various aspects of our church life, we are united in the spirit of Christ and living out His commands as we lead in our various ministries. Unity within your vestry is a stabilizing force from which we can make good decisions and grow into the people God wants us to be.

Another place we acknowledged unity in being People of God was through various activities where we work, play, and fellowship with members of UCC (the Summer Musical as one example.) Knowing and caring about our UCC friends, as extended family, is a blessing and a great example of Christian unity. Or drop in the kitchen on a “Montgomery Meals” day and you can witness still another example of Christian unity as members and non-members of ECA work together engaging the gospel by providing for those less fortunate. Unity within a larger Christian community is a powerful force from which we can know and experience Christ’s Kingdom on earth.

Your vestry also acknowledged there are areas where we could do a better job of bringing our members together in unity. One such area mentioned involved how we welcome and get new comers connected and integrated

[Continued on page 5]

EDITOR: MEGACHURCH?

[Continued from previous page]

that have seen their membership drop as the elderly die because there have been no new members in 30 years. Everyone knows one another in the little village church, and nothing changes, so the 12 people that show up on Sundays are the end of the road for the little church. This is the end of a particular era in many areas. Is this the fate of all small churches? Or just the fate of those unable, or unwilling to change? A fond thought of mine when thinking about the Episcopal Church is that we do change; we change slightly every 90.8 years (the average time between updates to the Book of Common Prayer). Is this enough? Or too much? How many of us still lament over the 1928 Prayer Book? The 1916 Hymnal? I know I still miss Eucharistic prayer A, the chanting, and have a particular fondness for the 1916 and 1982 Hymnals. I guess that means that I am a true Episcopalian at heart: unable to accept change.

What is the moral here? I don’t think there is one. Church growth is a hot topic, one that divides the best amongst us and tends to be very polarizing. Churches must grow to survive, or do they? In growing does the essence of the church have to change? When the church is on a “modern” track, change is the constant and that results in leaving people behind. The turnover rate at megachurches is high, today’s modern is tomorrow’s old. This returns us to the \$64,000 question: root yourself and wither slowly without alienation, or do you prosper by constantly leaving a trail of those you’ve left behind? Perhaps the fate of the Episcopal Church, and by extension ECA, is to remain a niche church. Being Episcopal, and being ECA does not need to change as long as the niche needs to be serviced. To thine own self be true.

Alex Dykes

DEANERY DELEGATES

Deanery delegates like people. They like the sense of belonging to the larger Episcopal Church community, the excitement of learning what is happening in the church in our part of California (Palo Alto to San Luis Obispo,) and what the general direction is in other parts of the state and country. Delegates like networking, hearing how they can get their church involved in helping parts of the diocese, be it a fledgling neighbor congregation or the Santa Maria Urban Mission (SMUM.)

Our South Santa Clara Deanery meets about once a month for two hours at a nearby church (quite often St. Edwards.) We discuss new things happening in the area, how we can help SMUM, and lately the newly proposed Diocesan structure and Fair Share Funding. We share news with each other and learn from each other how to participate better and work together on projects. We report back to our Vestry and churches.

We attend a yearly one or two day Diocesan Convention (this year October 20, 21 in San Luis Obispo; other years in Seaside, Monterey) to vote on changes and proposals and budgets and programs. In the year to come we will be selecting a new bishop (our third bishop in this Diocese of El Camino Real.)

Is this your cup of tea? Talk to Stephen Mills, or the Mueller's, or the Axtels.

BENEFICIO COFFEE

Will you need extra Beneficio more than fair trade coffee for your Thanksgiving holiday entertaining needs? Phyllis Chai (408) 226-7150 plans to place an order which can be expected to arrive in time for the holiday. Please contact her with your requests.

Phyllis Chai



ANNUAL TURKEY DRIVE

Yes, it's that time of the year again! Calling all volunteers that can give time and/or \$ donations to help this Thanksgiving week to cook and freeze turkey for the meals we prepare in our kitchen to feed the homeless every other week in the Montgomery Meals program. The dedicated MM volunteers do a tremendous job in this fine example of ECA outreach, providing meals for close to 200 hungry people each time. As to where the turkeys will be cooked, we were thrown a big curveball this year with the recent closing of the nearby Almaden Pizza Company. However, that ever-intrepid MM stalwart, Craig Stephan, scoured the valley for another place to cook 75 turkeys and scored! Turns out that there is a Stuff Pizza in Campbell that has the same kind of oven and a willing manager (he used to manage the Amaden Stuff so he's familiar with our Thanksgiving operation). The Lord does work in mysterious ways! So be looking for the signup sheets in Fellowship Hall around the first of the month and volunteer to be a part of this annual event. A big THANKS is in order for all MM participants the year round.

*Steve Wing
(aka the Big Turkey)*

EXCEPTIONAL VISITORS ON ORDER

We have a new Visiting group that has been blessed and sent out by the Vestry. We're calling it Exceptional Visitors on Order (EVOO) or as others prefer The Exceptional Visitors on Order (TEVOO). I like the oil version myself because it has overtones of the oil of kindness and of healing.

Those who have volunteered right at the start are Amy Griffith, Mary Leal, Joan Wagner, Sandie and Ed Mueller, Margaret Halliwell, Pauline Gilligan, Pete Mayo, Rob Moore, and Betty Wood.

So we have a caring group who will visit shut-ins and those who would like a church visitor. A telephone call to the church or to Stephen and we'll send one or two of these good people right out at a time convenient to you. This is Amy Griffith's brain child and we applaud her.

Sandie Mueller

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

[Continued from page 3]

into the life of the church. This certainly is a very important area if we want to grow our church in the coming years. This is also important as it touches on the very heart of "engaging in the gospel," building a stronger community prepared to serve others.

Yes, while there is a great joy in unity, there is even greater joy in building more avenues of unity. Let's pray for each of us to be open to those new avenues and step boldly forward when the Lord shows us the way.

*Susie Ferguson
Senior Warden*

SEEKING USHERS

Calling all members! We need volunteers to become ushers. Anyone over 18 is welcome. Please call David Byers at (408) 268-0448.



GIFTS OF GRATITUDE

George and Nancy Romer, Susanne Moore, and Jim McPherson: Thank you for your energy and organization in planning our Harvest Dinner event and Stewardship Kickoff.

John Leslie, Mike and Desi Brown, and Tim Miller: Thank you for working to help our youth form a youth band.

Tom Fablen's "Free Fablen" band: Thank you for playing at the Harvest Festival Dinner.

Rev. Canon Britt Olson: Thank you for being our Keynote Speaker for our Stewardship Campaign.

ECA Life

TEA AND HISTORY

How would you like to learn more about the history of the city in which we all live in conjunction with the fashions of the times? On Sunday, November 12 at 3:00pm in Fellowship Hall, Portraits of the Past will present brief historical sketches of the period from 1840 to 1940 accompanied by carefully researched, accurate portrayals of authentic costumes.

This presentation will be followed by High Tea (well, maybe only Medium Tea). The cost for all of this is only \$15 if you sign up and prepay or \$20 at the door. All of the proceeds will benefit Ugandan orphans. This event is definitely not for women only. Real men do eat finger sandwiches and scones, and they certainly can enjoy a lively and entertaining history lesson.

Please sign up in Fellowship Hall or call Amy Griffith (408) 268-0920 or the church office.

E-SCRIP

Now is a good time to sign up with E-scrip and have ECA benefit from a percentage of your purchases. November is generally the time to renew your Safeway Club card, but if you are not registered yet, you can go on-line to www.escrip.com and follow the instructions to have your Safeway and Macy's and other bank cards registered.

Those of you who are already registered should have either received an email from E-scrip or a letter from me. Call me if you have a problem renewing.

Maryke Williams
(408) 997-1761

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

November Anniversaries

Doug & Kathy Dunham	7
Warren & Dorothy Willard	9

November Birthdays

Mary Moran	1
Liz Criner	4
Liz Maestre	4
Aaron Parker	7
Todd Lukanc	10
Alex Dykes	12
Brad Bond	14
Amy Griffith	21
Evan Reilly	21
Mary Leal	22
Eilene Lueck	22
Joan Wagner	24
Helen Beacher	27
Monte Bishop	27
Joyce Wing	29

Adventures in the Arts

2006-07 CONCERT SEASON ANNOUNCED, SEASON TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE

Almaden Adventures in the Arts, a joint musical venture of the Almaden Valley United Church of Christ and the Episcopal Church in Almaden, is proud to announce that its seventh season will begin on Saturday, November 11, 2006, at 7:30 p.m. with local singer-songwriter Jeff Strametz performing in concert.

Music at Joint Venture Churches needs your support to continue to present the Almaden Adventures in the Arts concert series. We have fashioned a number of attractive season ticket packages to help entice your support. They are summarized below. Our season subscription package hopefully will arrive by the time you read this article. Please consider supporting this effort to bring music to our church community.

As an added bonus, season ticket holders will be able to purchase reduced price tickets to next summer's musical production.

Single Performance prices:

Adult: \$15 advance and will call, \$20 door; except organ recitals \$10 advance and \$15 door
Students: \$10 advance and will call, \$12 door; organ recitals \$8 and \$5 respectively
Children: \$5 all performances (childcare also available)

Season Ticket Packages:

One Adult	\$ 80.00
7 shows for price of 6	
One Student	\$ 50.00
7 shows for price of 5	
One Child	\$ 25.00
7 shows for the price of 5	
Soup, Salad & Sound Pack	\$ 15.00
1 adult, 2 recitals	

Here is the 2006-07 performance schedule:

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2006 7:30 P.M.

JEFF STRAMETZ

"Music is a part of everything we do, and touches lives one at a time." Whether penned through his own personal experiences or through the experiences of artists that have touched generations, Jeff Strametz weaves his way through decades of familiar favorites and originals in an intimate acoustic guitar and vocal format. From the great bands like America and The Eagles to contemporary Folk Rock influences such as Jim Croce, James Taylor, Simon and Garfunkel, Gordon Lightfoot and many more. "I look for songs with special meaning as well as the ones with great stories. You'll hear your favorites, and you'll hear songs that you will rarely ever hear live. These are songs that will get your toes tapping, touch your heart, dust off old memories, make you laugh, and make you cry. That is what music does, and it is my intention to do more than just entertain."

"SOUP, SALAD & SOUND" ORGAN RECITAL
SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2007 7:30 P.M.
(6:30 SUPPER)

JAMES WARREN

James Warren is a classical organist with over forty years of experience in service playing, choral conducting, recital and concert performance, lecturing and compact disk recording. His two CD recordings for Regent Records (UK) have received critical acclaim. He has played recitals at St. Mary's Cathedral (San Francisco), Grace Cathedral (San Francisco), Notre Dame Cathedral (Paris), and St. Paul's Cathedral (London). He is a management consultant and owns his own San Francisco-based consulting firm.

"SOUP, SALAD & SOUND" RECITAL
SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 2007 7:30 P.M.
(6:30 SUPPER)

RUTHANNE ADAMS

Multi-instrumentalist Ruthanne Adams will play organ, harp, piano and handbells in her recital. Ms. Adams has

Adventures in the Arts

performed previously at Joint Venture Churches as part of the orchestra for the 2004 summer production of "South Pacific." Recently Ruthanne earned her B.A. in Music and a B.S. in Business from Santa Clara University and is now working at San Jose State University on her Masters Degree in Music with an emphasis on Harp Performance. She is a member, and performs often at Saratoga Federated Church.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2007 7:30 P.M.

A TOUCH OF BRASS

A Touch of Brass is an 18-piece Big Band which incorporates brass, woodwinds, rhythm and two vocalists to cover all styles from Swing, Latin, Blues, Rock and Ballads to Swinging Gospel. Some of the more prestigious San Francisco Bay Area (and beyond) companies and organizations the band has performed for include; Nestle, Del Monte, Hills Bros., Monterey Bay Aquarium, Mark Hopkins Hotel, USS Hornet, San Francisco Chamber Symphony, Santa Clara University, Make a Wish Foundation, March of Dimes, Diabetes Association, The Dolphin Club, and many others. The band also makes frequent appearances at local music festivals including the San Jose Jazz Festival.

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 2007 7:30 P.M.

CELTIC HEART

Bringing together a truly unique combination of experiences and talents, Celtic Heart is one of the true rising stars on the Celtic and acoustic music scene in California's Bay Area today. Celtic Heart performs a hybrid of traditional and contemporary Irish and American folk music, combining and moving skillfully between ancient melodies and cutting edge original songs, fiery instrumentals and pristine four part vocals, serious composition and engaging humor, all presented with a warm, approachable and friendly stage presence. The combination of guitar, fiddle, banjo, mandolin, tin whistle, and bodhran (Irish drum) has long been recognized as the essence of the Irish sound, but Celtic Heart have managed to bring new meaning to the old music pleasing the ear and stirring the heart.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, APRIL 20-21, 2007
7:30 P.M.

AN EVENING WITH COLE PORTER MUSIC REVUE

Joint Venture Churches Music Director John Leslie offers an evening highlighting the songbook of one of America's great songwriters, Cole Porter. Cole Porter made a name for himself in Europe during the Jazz Age and for the Broadway stage before he was "discovered" by the movie moguls and transported out to Hollywood. Some of his most popular stage musicals and movies include "Kiss Me, Kate," "Red, Hot and Blue," "High Society," "The Pirate," "Can-Can" and "Anything Goes," which was our 2006 summer musical. Many cast members from our summer musicals will participate in the show, as well as members of the Joint Venture adult and children's choirs, and some of your favorite JV instrumentalists! You'll hear lots of Cole's wittiest lyrics, his greatest love songs, and see people "clowning" around, with a possible recreation of our "Anything Goes" tap dance – by popular demand!

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 2007 7:30 P.M.

PENINSULA BANJO BAND

"We play the happiest music there is." Says the Peninsula Banjo Band. They've been around for forty years and have thousands of fans in the San Francisco Bay area. Their mission is to preserve the four string banjo and the music associated with it. They offer scholarships to learn to play the four string banjo and the "gutbucket" (wash tub bass.). A non-profit corporation, they have made significant contributions to local charities. Over the years, they have given over \$182,000 to various charities. The Peninsula Banjo Band played their first concert at Le Petit Trianon, in downtown San Jose, taking the audience on a trip through the history of the banjo by giving bits of music and banjo history between numbers. From Oh Susanna to Washington Square with stops for songs from all eras, including the classic Bumble.