

The Shape

August 2008

The Episcopal Church in Almaden

6581 Camden Avenue, San José, California 95120 408•268•0243 www.eca-sj.org



Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

Opportunities at ECA

Worship

- August 3 – 10:00 AM Only – Holy Eucharist
This will be a JV Service honoring John Leslie
- August 10 – 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Folk Sunday & Holy Eucharist
- August 17 – 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist
- August 24 – 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist
- August 31 – 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

Fellowship

- Men's Breakfast Thursday Mornings 8:00 AM at Denny's
- SHYG's Thursday Evenings – Volleyball & BBQ starting at 6:30 PM

Brunch for John Leslie – August 3 following 10 AM service

Family Event – Friday, August 8th: BBQ, Movie Night, & Camping (details within)

Study

Vacation Bible School – Surfing the Scriptures: August 11 – 15th, 9 AM to 12 Noon

Rector's Bible Study begins on August 20th at the home of Ron Howie & Melinda Jennings. Potluck starts at 6:30pm, study at 7:30pm.

Outreach

Montgomery Meals – Friday August 8, 22

Musical Entertainment

Sound of Music – August 1 & 2@ 7 PM in the Sanctuary

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

SUNDAY SERVICES

7:30 am and 11:00 am
(10:30 am Summer Schedule)

RECTOR

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

MINISTRIES

ACOLYTES	Taylor Mills & Marc Bond
ALTAR GUILD	Margaret Halliwell, Anna Spanjaart
COFFEE HOUR	Pete Mayo
FOLK CHOIR	Andy Kerr
GREETERS	Sharon Mills
GOD SQUAD	Stephen Mills
GOOD SAMs	Kelli Casale / Brenda McHenry
HAND BELL CHOIR	Maryke Williams
KIDS' BREAKOUT	Leslie Rousseau
LAY READERS	Jenny Hoyt
MONTGOMERY MEALS	Amy Griffith
NURSERY	Dot Allfrey
PRAYER VINE	Dorothy Willard
USHERS	Dave Byers
SR HIGH YOUTH GROUP	Jon Mills
STEWARDSHIP	HANK DeVoss, George Romer
JR HIGH YOUTH GROUP	Bonnie McPherson
WORSHIP	Andy Kerr
WEBMASTER	Kim Petruzzelli
YOUTH SUNDAY	Jim McPherson, Bryan Bond

ECA STAFF

CHRISTIAN ED. DIRECTOR	John Leslie
MUSIC DIRECTOR, ORGANIST	Maryke Williams
TREASURER	Dennis Elliott
YOUTH DIRECTOR	
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	

CONTACTING

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

From Stephen

For those of you who were not in church on Sunday, July 13th and who do not receive or read the Midweek Bulletin, I announced that on July 1, 2009 I will begin a two month sabbatical leave. When I return from that leave on September 1, 2009, I will retire as the Rector of the Episcopal Church in Almaden and from full time ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church.

My decision has nothing to do with John Leslie leaving. We made an outstanding choice last time and I believe we will do so again. Nor does it have to do with the turmoil at AVUCC. I would like to tell you that this decision was the product of much prayer, but it was not. One day I awoke and it was simply there. I feel comfortable with it and believe it is God's will for me at this point in time in my life. I have been either a full time student or working full time for the last 56 years of my life. I have been continually engaged in the ordained ministry of the Episcopal Church on a full time basis for the last 24 years. It is enough. I have made promises to myself and Ellie along the way. When I encountered something I wanted to devote further study to, I told myself that, it would have to wait until I retired. Ellie has made many sacrifices for me along the way, so I could do that which I love. She has suffered my absence two, three and sometimes four evenings a week. She has a dream of coming home to a clean house and dinner on the table. It is now time to fulfill those promises. I have informed the bishop of my decision and I will be meeting with her in September to discuss the next steps for ECA's search for its sixth rector. As I begin my final year with you I will be meeting with our Senior Warden, Susie Ferguson and the Vestry

to determine what we can reasonably accomplish in our last year together. I would also very much like to hear from you as to what you believe we can accomplish together. My plan is not to retire today and actually leave a year from now but to make my final year as productive as possible.

With respect to our staff vacancies, the Music Search Committee has prepared a job description, and ad, has begun posting them in various newsletters, and on various websites. We have already received several resumes. Please remember that the committee made an outstanding choice last time.

The Christian Education and Youth Committee has a more difficult task. Funding for a full time position for a seminary trained candidate would cost substantially more than we have budgeted in the past. An ordained position would cost even more. The turmoil at AVUCC casts doubt on the future level of funding they will be able to meet. By the same token, if we want a quality program for our youth and children, if we want to remain competitive in the "religious marketplace" of today, we need to offer a top quality program with trained leadership. It is doubtful that we can find the right person on less than a full time basis. Right now we have excellent interim leadership in Melanie Click, Jon Mills and Bonnie McPherson. They are prepared to continue on throughout the next school year with your help and assistance. We believe the right person will appear and we are prepared to wait and pray for that to happen. Our plan right now is to advertise the position as full or part-time depending on experience, and then budget and negotiate accordingly when we find the person we believe God is calling to this position.

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From the Editor



Whenever you are studying a work of literature, be it the Bible or a secular story, context has a great role to play in our understanding. Only by understanding the world that existed when the work was written can we hope to understand the reasons why something was written, or, as oft is the case: why it was written the way it was.

Perhaps the way I study was influenced by my parents and my education... actually, I know this to be true. I was raised to question, based on the belief that only via open questioning can learning and greater understanding take place. Why is the sky blue? What keeps the moon in orbit? Why did Jesus speak in parables? What's all this about slaves in the Bible?

At times I am a bit concerned when people don't question the stories in the Bible, or perhaps occasionally I am a bit jealous I don't have that kind of faith. Often my continuing study takes me in tangents off the subject to discover what was happening in the world around Israel when the Bible was written. Society was different, the world was different and the challenges faced by people are hard for us even to imagine today. Disease and death were not only commonplace, but highly visible, today we make it very clinical and out of sight. The possibility of dying young, in childbirth, or from a common cold was very real. The fear of invasion was very real since Israel stood between Egypt and whatever empire (Roman, Ottoman, etc) was to the north or east, the Israelites found themselves in the midst of constant turmoil and destruction. (Think modern Iraq without any hospitals and you might have a good picture of what

it was like at times.) What do we take from this? Well, at the very least it is no wonder that everyone thought the end of the world was drawing nigh. If you read the New Testament, it is obvious that the writers thought the end of days was imminent, most likely within their lifetime and the sense of urgency was extreme. 2,000 years later we look on that and don't understand at face value, but when you look at their world, it becomes obvious that destruction was something real for them (just look at how often the temple of Jerusalem was raided and destroyed).

Similarly, even those of us who prefer a stricter interpretation of the Bible find themselves involved in looking at the past for understanding. Today we no longer use the Bible to justify slavery, despite it being very clear that there are slaves and nobody ever questions that in either the Old or New Testament. Today we find it socially unacceptable to have more than one wife, yet there are many in the bible that had several. Today we think twice about some of the other things Paul wrote about like women being silent in church, or not wearing jewelry in church, and the application of these directives seems absurd to most of us today. Beyond the major theological discussions are more interesting "whys", like: why is it that priests were/are not allowed to be married? I'll let you research that on your own.

Without knowing where we have been, how can we hope to understand why and where we are today? Moreover, how can we sift through the Bible to find the essential truths and lessons and then find the method to apply them to our lives? Expand your mind: shop on Amazon.com in their Biblical History section, you won't be sorry you did.

Alex Dykes

Senior Warden

Everyone has a different tolerance for change. Some find it easy to deal with and just “roll with the circumstances.” Some avoid facing change by moving away or retreating. Others meet change with resistance and sometimes even with anger. Some find change exhilarating with the hope of something new and exciting before them. Change in our lives as individuals and corporately as a church is inevitable and is happening right now before our very eyes. How will we choose to face it and grow with it positively for the glory of God’s kingdom?

In the last month I have been overwhelmed with the prospects of change that lie before our congregation, my church family. Some of these changes are happening immediately and some are in our near future. The tapestry that has been ECA is once again being redesigned. Some of the threads are being clipped or rewoven into a new pattern. Some of the colors are being muted while others are being blended to make new shades. The tapestry will still have bold and strong elements along with soft and supportive ties. It will still have its serious components as well as its lighter side. But why must we have this new tapestry? Because we have changed!

Yes, instead of looking forward and fretting over change that has yet to be realized let’s celebrate how each of us has been changed and transformed over the last 5 or 6 years. Let’s honor how each of us has been changed by God, whose hand is in this. Let’s celebrate the changes we recognize in ourselves and in others that John, (who is leaving us now) and Stephen (who will be leaving us in a year) have facilitated. Both of these men know

God and are filled with the Holy Spirit. They have both impacted our lives in many ways too numerous to list. They have been and will continue to be, wherever they are, instruments of God’s love and transforming possibilities.

I may find myself on a pendulum of emotion these days swinging up and down trying desperately to find some sort of equilibrium. On one hand I grieve with a sense of loss I cannot explain. On the other, as an optimist, I long for a hope and a better future for all of us, for those leaving and for those staying. I do know that God’s grace and love has seen each of us through changes in the past. I know His grace and love can and will transform each of us into better witnesses of his love and grace if we just allow Him to do so as we move into our future.

Susie Ferguson
Senior Warden



Rector

[Continued from page 3]

So, why am I telling you all of this? Because we need your help. First and foremost, we need your prayers for God to send the right people to these two positions. We also need your prayers that the committees may have the discernment to recognize that person when they arrive. The other thing we need you to do is to help us with advertising these positions. I was on the bishop search committee for the diocese. We had five times more applications for the position than the Diocese of Northern California had for their search and almost twice the number of applicants as the Diocese of California. The primary reason is that one of the members of the search committee called a number of his friends and asked them if they knew anyone they believed would be an excellent bishop. We need the same from you. If you know anyone who you believe would be an excellent Music Director, or an excellent Christian Education and Youth Director, please let us know and please encourage them to apply.

We are in God's hands!

*Salaam,
Stephen +*

Chick Flicks

More than 40 ladies of ECA and their friends came together on July 10th for fellowship, dinner and to watch the movie *Enchanted April*. In keeping with the theme, the fellowship hall was transformed into an Italian dining experience. Everyone agreed that there was a very special spirit about the evening and that "something magical" did indeed happen. Our dinner together was followed by the movie and a lively spiritual discussion. The church was filled with laughter and wonderful fellowship all evening, in spite of the extreme heat. It would not have been possible without the help of many hands. Thanks to Dennis Elliott, Doug Dunham, Francie Kerr, Kathy Mastre, Amy Griffith, Anna Spanjaart, Mary Leal, Bonnie McPherson and other angels for everything you did to help out. Thank you to all who attended to make it such a special evening. For those of you, who were unable to attend, don't miss the next one! Three wonderful ladies have stepped forward to organize the next Flick Chick Night Out. Watch for information from Jenny Hoyt, Beth Proudfoot and Sharon Mills concerning the event.

Nancy Romer, Susanne Moore, & Susie Ferguson

August Anniversaries

Jack & Winnie Jackman

20

Gifts of Gratitude

John Leslie: For all the wonderful gifts he gives us

Pete Mayo: Thank you for all you do to maintain the buildings & grounds

Nancy Romer, Susanne Moore, & Susie Ferguson: Thanks for leading our first Chick Flick evening. Great job and great organization.

Ron Howie, Hans Spanjaart, Bryan Bond, George Romer, Jenny Hoyt, Bonnie McPherson, Arnold Moore, Jerry & Susie Ferguson: Thanks for your team spirit and help with our Family Event in July: getting the BBQ going, providing games for the kids, the movie set up and run, late night clean-up after the movie, and other miscellaneous tasks making the event a success.

August Birthdays

Kristen Petruzzelli	6
Kele Lavery	7
Bethany Nollette	11
Sarah Dunn	13
P.J. Gallego	13
Jessica Skowronski	14
Roget Hoyt	16
David Byers	17
David Hoyt	19
Robb Moore	22
Eric McCormick	23
Allan Jones	24
Jim Wooldridge	25
Erinn Hoyt	29
Frances Sandrock	30

VBS is Coming!

It's almost time for Vacation Bible School! VBS will take place August 11-15 from 9:00-12:00. Our theme is "Beach Party - Surfin' Through the Scriptures." We'll have tons of fun for children who are 4 years old up through entering 5th grade. Older than that? We need plenty of leaders to make VBS super fun for the children. We need junior and senior high youth to lead the groups of children through their adventures, and we need senior high youth and adults to lead the various stations. Please contact Melanie Click at (408) 323-8283 or Kelly Yamanishi at (408) 997-3373 for more information or to let us know you want to be a part of the party!

As VBS comes up, it is also time to plan Sunday School. I am pleased to announce that we will be using a new curriculum for preschool through 4th grade. We tested "Living the Good News" in the 3rd/4th grade class last year, and the teachers and students loved it.

Over the next month or so, I will be recruiting Sunday School teachers and substitutes. I plan to structure things a little differently from the past. The age groups have been changed slightly, and we now have room for all the classes. We will have five classes - preschool/kindergarten, 1st/2nd/3rd grade, 4th/5th grade, junior high, and high school. I plan to have two teachers in each classroom for each lesson. With four teachers for each class, this would mean teaching every other week. If you are interested in teaching Sunday School, please contact me at church (408) 268-0243 or at home (408) 323-8283. I am looking forward to the new Sunday School year.

Melanie Click
Interim Christian Education Director

Fellowship in August

Friday, August 8 – BBQ, Movie and Camping in the Tree Lot: this event is open to all ages from both churches, ECA and UCC. First, everyone can join in for dinner starting at 6 PM. Bring your own meat to BBQ, a dish to share (appetizer, salad, side dish, or dessert), your favorite beverage (lemonade, water and coffee provided) and your spirit of fellowship.

How about a volleyball challenge? Could we possibly put together a team to challenge our Senior High Youth who practice every Wednesday evening?

After dinner and when it gets dark we will be showing a movie under the stars. You may want to bring your own lawn chair for that part. We will have a couple choices of movies and will select the best for the audience we will have that evening.

Are you bold enough to camp? Bring your tent to pitch in the tree lot. For our campers we will have a “fire pit” perfect to make s’mores and to gather around for ghost stories. For those who do stay the night our breakfast chef, Bonnie McPherson, will have a tasty treat for you in the morning.

Join us for all or part of this event. Consider bringing friends and other families to share in our church fellowship. This event promises to be low on cost and high on fun and fellowship.

Would you like to help on this one? Give Susie Ferguson a call and volunteer. Your help will be welcomed and appreciated.

Son & Sun Day for August – Is there anyone who might be willing to take the lead on this? We have several Sundays open for possibilities. We have noticed a few people have continued biking to church

since our first one. Can we get more to try alternative transportation or forming carpools?

What is Son & Sun Day? It is a day of praise and worship, fellowship, fun & relaxation. After worship, we share lunch. Our first one was a Salad Bar. Everyone brought a favorite contribution to the salad bar, with lettuce and spinach provided. After lunch some relaxed and visited with church friends, others went for a bike ride or hike. Other options could include dominoes or bridge, volleyball or basketball, or even a puzzle.

If you and your friend would be willing to help organize such a Sunday for us, please contact Susie Ferguson. It is really an easy event to help plan. Please consider volunteering.

Susie Ferguson



Reflections

Sometimes, when out walking Cody, our dog, I walk past Hacienda school. I am always amazed that here, in the middle of the suburbs, I can walk past redwood trees. This local elementary school has an enclosed area, with a pond and a garden. And where there are trees, there are squirrels; and Cody is a squirrel dog.

So we linger in the redwood grove, with Cody barking the squirrels back up into the tree boughs. Looking up, I notice that the tree tops are moving. And I realize that though today is a warm day, with light winds moving the dust around, the trees are tall enough to catch the stronger winds moving across the rooftops. There is a difference in the wind strength between walking along the sidewalk and that which dances higher up.

The wind that moves the branches is like the breath of God, moving the branches of our lives. I pray that we all might grow as tall as the REDWOOD trees, able to reach above the sidewalk and move freely in the wind. Our individual lives are unique, causing branches to grow differently, turns and bends to harden from tender tips to solid branches. Yet the winds of the Spirit are moving among us. The wind might seem faint where we walk our daily paths. But maybe by reaching to the heavens, we might catch the stronger wind that blows above us.

Listen to the Spirit; reach high to catch the wind. In doing so, may the inspiration of God come and dance among us.

Kimberly Axtell

SHYGS

Sunday afternoon June 29th, 16 youth and four adult chaperons headed in fully loaded vehicles for Half Moon Bay. Upon arriving, sunshine and blue skies greeted us—something that we had not seen much because of the smoke from the forest fires. The campsite was quickly set up in order to enjoy the beach before the sun starting setting. Our Head Chef, Bonnie, kept us well-fed throughout our stay with large portions of pork tenderloin, beef tri-tip, clam chowder, mash potatoes, homemade cookies and brownies, breakfast burritos, fresh fruit, etc.... Of course, at night there were campfire somores. First-time campers realized and experienced campers remembered the true value of a lowly quarter at the beach for it got you a few minutes in hot a shower after coming out of the very cold shoreline waters. Musical chairs around the campfire were an ongoing activity as we were a few chairs short of the number of campers attending. Special thanks to Rob and Alex for enduring the brisk winds and cold ocean spray so that the youth could fellowship on beach into the wee hours of the morning. By Tuesday morning most had sunburn somewhere and were ready to return home. Unlike the ride up the ride home was quiet as most passengers slept. Next year we'll see if we can bring or rent bikes—there looked to be some fun trails.

Wednesday, July 9th, was the SHYG's first volleyball & BBQ of the summer. A good group of 17 showed up—which included SHYG members, their friends, and an alumnus. I know some cannot attend Wednesdays so we'll try to schedule a few on a different day—changes will be announced. All SHYGs are encouraged to attend (starts at 6:30pm) and to bring friends.

Jon Mills
jmills@relypsa.com; (408) 316-0182

JV Cleanup & Events

The JV Board is planning a work day for Saturday, August 23, the work day will be followed by a BBQ lunch at 11:00, please come help us maintain the church and grounds.

Have you noticed the new windows in the Fellowship Hall? Many of the old ones were leaking and fogged over so they needed replacement. Monte and Debbie Bishop of A&B Energy Systems (and ECA) gave us a great deal on the replacement windows, the JV Board appreciated their generosity. Thank You Monte and Debbie.

Andrew Yen will updating the play ground with a sandbox, benches and a table for his Eagle Scout project in August. This continues a long tradition of Eagle Scout projects benefiting our churches. If you see Andrew, please thank him for his hard work.

There is a list of jobs posted on the JV bulletin board in fellowship hall. If you need something done, feel free to add it to the list. If your moved to do one of the jobs, please sign up and Git-R-Done.

Alan Nieders

