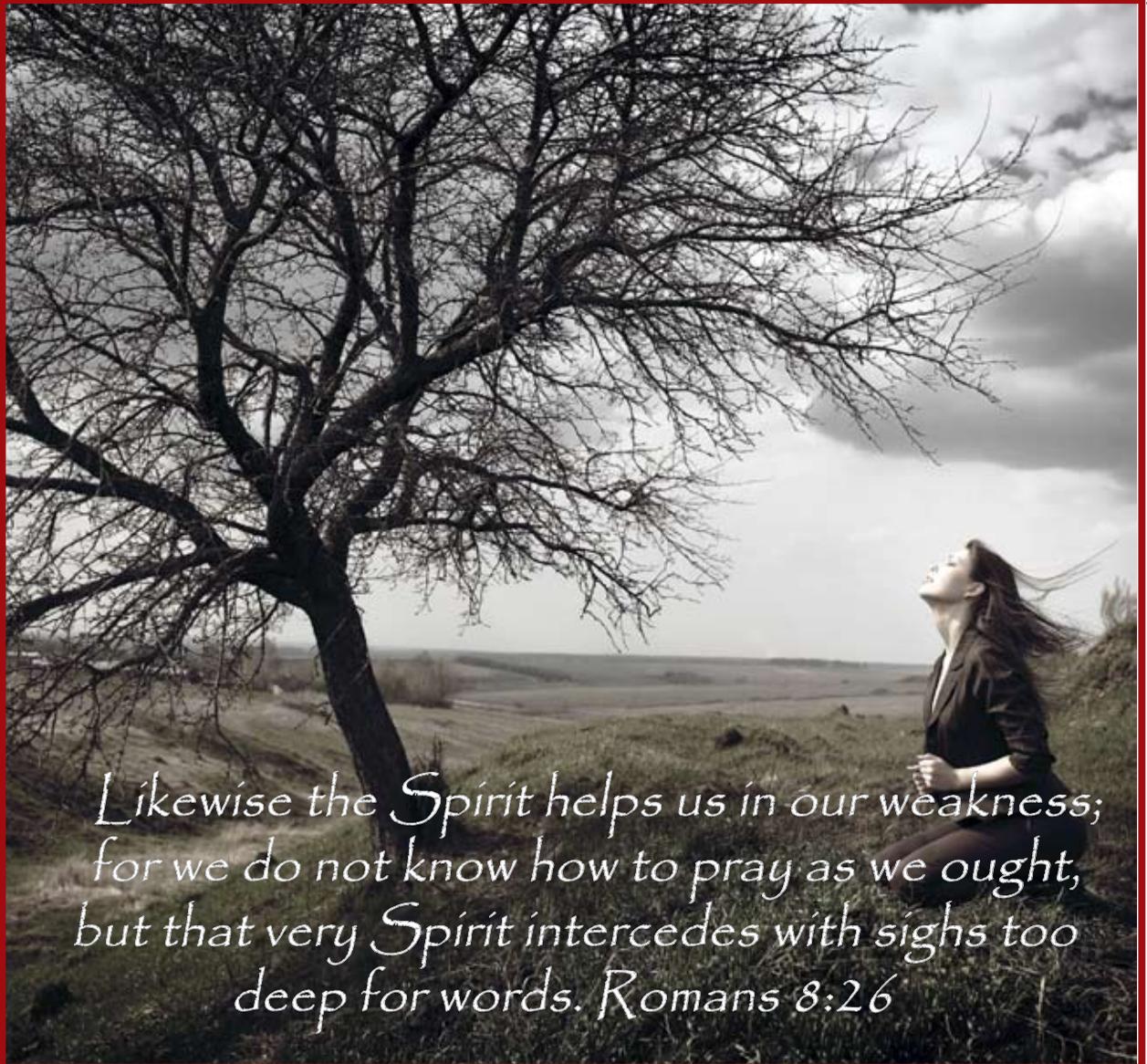


# The Shape

October 2008

## *The Episcopal Church in Almaden*

6581 Camden Avenue, San José, California 95120 408•268•0243 [www.eca-sj.org](http://www.eca-sj.org)



*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness;  
for we do not know how to pray as we ought,  
but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too  
deep for words. Romans 8:26*

# Opportunities at ECA

## *Worship*

- October 5 – 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist  
11:00 AM Folk Sunday & Holy Eucharist  
Moved to 1st Sunday this month only
- October 12 – 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist  
11:00 AM Holy Eucharist
- October 19 – 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist  
11:00 AM Holy Eucharist
- October 26 – 7:30 AM Holy Eucharist  
11:00 AM Holy Eucharist
- October 18 - Celebrating Stewardship Event  
5:00 PM Appetizers at the Rectory  
6:15 PM Dinner & program at Church  
See details inside this Shape

## *Fellowship*

Men's Breakfast Thursday Mornings 8:00 AM at Denny's

## *Adult Study*

- Thursday Morning Bible Study at Church  
10:30 AM October 9, 16, 30
- Wednesday Evening Rector's Bible Study  
Potluck 6:30 PM, Bible Study 7:30 PM
- October 1 at Doug and Kathy Dunham's  
October 15 at Hank and Colleen DeVoss'  
October 29 at Doug and Betty Wood's

## *Outreach*

Montgomery Meals – Friday October 3, 17, 31

## *Youth*

- Ropes Course - October 24-25
- SHYGS Meeting: October 5
- JHYGS Meeting: October 12

## THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

### SUNDAY SERVICES

7:30 am and 11:00 am

### RECTOR

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

### MINISTRIES

ACOLYTES	Marcus 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	
MUSIC DIRECTOR, ORGANIST	D. Asa Stern
TREASURER	Maryke Williams
YOUTH DIRECTOR	
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	Dennis Elliott

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*The Shape*

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

## From Stephen



I remember fall in New England. The leaves on the trees would turn the most glorious shades of red, orange and yellow. The smell of wood smoke would be fragrant in the air. There would be just the hint of cold to alert you to what was coming. It was also a time for cleaning out and storing away. Whatever was outside that could not withstand the cold wet winter had to be brought inside, cleaned and packed away in a safe place for the winter. Even though there was a certain degree of sadness in the process, because it meant the summer was over, there was also a certain degree of satisfaction also. Things were cleaned up and placed in an orderly manner. They were readied for the next year. They were the assurance that spring and summer would eventually come and they would be needed. There was also the sense of simplifying one's life.

So too in the church, fall is the time for simplifying one's life. It is a time to take stock of all the blessings God has so generously bestowed upon us, not the least of which is living in what has to be one of the most beautiful parts of God's whole creation. It is time to put away the unneeded things in our lives and to return to the Lord with all our hearts and minds and souls and wealth. Yes that is the word that is usually translated as "strength". The Greek word is "mammon". Remember the verse "You cannot serve God and mammon". Same word.

Perhaps that is the greatest opportunity God gives us. To work alongside God in the bringing about of God's most gracious rule. There are people out there who have never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are people out there who have only heard a perversion of that wonderful and loving Gospel.

There are people out there who cannot hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ even when it is preached to them because their stomachs are empty. God gives us the opportunity to reach out to these and others and to bring the Gospel to them.

What is the best money you ever spent in your life? I would bet that it was either money you used to help someone else or that you used to buy something that gave you much pleasure. I can almost assure you it was not money you put in the bank or invested in the stock market. Last year we, at the Episcopal Church in Almaden, celebrated our 40th anniversary. I wonder if some of the founders coming back here looked around them and, seeing this magnificent building and all the smiling faces, thought to themselves. That money that I gave to ECA. That was the best money I ever spent in my life!

Right now the stock market is rapidly going into the tank. That happens from time to time. The same with real estate, and other investments. There is only one investment that never tanks, and that is always a "good" investment. That is the investment in God's Kingdom.

Please pledge generously to our Stewardship drive this year!

*Salaam +  
Stephen*

## From the Editor



**W**ell, this month has been a particularly busy month for me, so this article will be blissfully short.

As we are approaching our wedding date, I just wanted to thank everyone from ECA who has offered a helping hand. It is truly a blessing to be a part of this community! At every turn in this process of planning and organizing, there is someone from this ECA (and AVUCC) that has made us realize that our church is a place of endless love. My many thanks go to everyone, but especially to Bonnie & Jim McPherson and Melinda Jennings without whom, we would have been committed to an insane asylum by now.

## Senior Warden

**H**ow do you know it's the Holy Spirit leading you? Frequently during my time as your Senior Warden I have asked you to prayerfully discern how you are being called by the Holy Spirit to serve or to act. Then I have challenged you to step up and act upon that call. Well, recently, someone asked me, "How do you know it is the Holy Spirit leading and directing you? How do you know the Lord is speaking to you?" Well, that was pretty straight forward. And more than that...I was being called to "answer to the truth within me."

I was being called to witness to the faith I profess, disciple another searching Christian, while being "an Episcopalian." (Episcopalians, I believe, often hide their strong and deep faith behind very private façades.) I had a choice as I always do: share the truth as I know it or not. I had to make a decision to risk being misunderstood, maybe even ridiculed, to share something as personal as "hearing God speak." I chose to share this:

Have you ever felt some unsettledness within you that seems to linger? Have you ever found yourself coming back to a topic, idea, or decision over and over again in your mind, not exactly knowing why? Have you had people come to mind for what appears no good reason and you just can't let the thoughts go? Have you ever experienced "words of wisdom" or a "scripture verse" that, all of a sudden, has some special meaning or understanding and you wonder why you didn't see it all along? The Holy Spirit may have been present. Yes, the Lord may have been speaking but were you listening?

For me, personally, the Lord speaks to me directly through prayer, scripture, Bible study, fellowship, and worship. Some days I hear clearly and recognize the Holy Spirit's intervention in my life. Some

days I wonder, "Is anyone out there?" A question may have been haunting me. I may have been looking for direction. One day I am reading a scripture verse I have read many times before and on this very day it speaks to me in a new way and gives me an answer and course on which to go forth. That's the Lord speaking. That's the Holy Spirit intervening in my life.

Someone comes to mind, maybe not someone I see everyday or even once a week. But they stay on my mind; I just can't get them off. Finally, I call them or send a note or attempt a communication of some sort. That was the Lord speaking to me. That was the Holy Spirit intervening in my life. More times that not, I later learn, that they needed that "communication," some for more serious reasons than others. How thankful I am that I was listening and then acted not really knowing why I needed to do so.

I participate in two different small groups where we do Bible study, pray and share our lives with one another. The more I study and learn of the scriptures the more I am changed personally, emotionally, and spiritually. The more I fellowship with the members of my groups the more I am changed personally, emotionally, and spiritually. The bottom line is that the more I know Christ, the more I find Him in my life. The more I find Him in my life the more I hear Him speak.

Hearing and recognizing the Lord speak has taken time and transformation of my heart and mind over many years. It has taken years of worshipping, study, prayer, fellowship, and being in community with other Christians. It didn't happen overnight. It has been a journey over time.

*[Continued on page 8]*

## Stewardship

**W**hat is Stewardship in the life of ECA? Several ECA members were asked to share their thoughts on the subject and their responses ranged from the practical to the spiritual. Here are a few selections...

*Stewardship for us meant an investment. An investment in our future, in our sons' futures, and a certain feel for community presence in our lives. ECA became a place for us to learn, meet lifelong friends and make commitments. One of the biggest commitments was what could we give back to those in our community, the community at large, and others who could benefit from our time and talents. Giving, to us, was not just monetary.*

*I feel that the investment we have made at ECA begins with our church, all those things that make it run. And if we have some left over, programs that benefit others outside of ECA. We need to take care of our immediate responsibilities before we venture out to other areas. ECA is a very giving family.*

*Of equal importance is the sanctuary of the church, and how it helps us deal with personal grief when we lose a loved one or incredible friends or colleagues. The love that is expressed by our church family when we are in need is phenomenal. We find it difficult to think it can be matched elsewhere.*

*We believe that our investment in ECA is the best thing we could have ever done in our lives. We have been rewarded handsomely.*

David Byers

*Stewardship means  
and listening to my he  
ber lessons of the past:*

*Give right now wh*

1. You might mis

2. The right timin

*I want to be both  
what we need to do to  
can volunteer for work  
my heart) and give mo  
priest, dedicated staff,  
a meeting place to hea  
a regular time to gath  
and encouraged. We n  
to be forgiven and to b  
all, blessed to be a bles*

Sandie Mueller

*To be a steward means to se  
sharing our time, talents, and tre  
a way that we can help our church  
on the work that the Lord would v  
do. Stewardship means for us to re  
others within ECA and the commun  
love our ECA family and we thank t  
for all the blessings that we have receiv  
over the 34 years that we have been me  
here, and so we try to give back the love  
port and friendships that have been given  
us in so many ways.*

Pete and Suzanne Mayo

... listening to God's prompting  
... really listening. I remem-  
... as in  
... when the call comes because  
... the opportunity, or  
... ng. God's timing is so good.  
... proactive and responsive in  
... support this community. I  
... k needed (again listening to  
... oney to pay for outreach, our  
... the building - in order to have  
... r the Word, in order to have  
... er together to be strengthened  
... eed a place and a community  
... earn to forgive. We are after  
... ising. (Genesis 12:2.)

Stewardship is exceedingly important or ECA  
wouldn't exist. It is hard to put it into little box. Each  
person has to give according to the way they feel. We  
review every year to do the best we can and send that.  
Our church projects don't get done out of the blue. Of  
course, no one likes to be pressured or obligated. People  
like to feel that they would like help, so giving should  
be a voluntary and joyful thing. Some might possibly  
want to pick out a special project to support. It is a  
good idea for people to choose a project they especially  
want to help.  
Betty Consorte

... ve others. In  
... easures, it is  
... h to carry  
... want us to  
... ach out to  
... nity. We  
... he Lord  
... ved  
... embers  
... sup-  
... n to

During the Fall, ECA asks our church community to make a commitment of money and ministry. The opportunities are plentiful, the reward is heavenly. Please prayerfully consider what time and talents you have to offer to ECA.

Pledge materials will be distributed during October and will be presented as a gift to ECA on November 2.

*My favorite way of Stewardship is how Nolan did it. He encouraged us to: "Do whatever is deepest in your heart."*

Belinda Byerly-Robins

Thank you for joining us in ministry.

The Vestry

*Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. James 1:17*

## Steak & Stein

I would like to thank all the men from ECA who joined in this Joint Venture event, with the men from UCC. This year we were able to return \$557 to the general fund of the Joint Venture Churches.

I would like to specifically acknowledge the assistance of co-Chair Mark Ciccirello and Dwight Dorsey in the kitchen. Co-Chair Joe Dingman and Dave Sanders from UCC, and Mike Reilly from ECA managed the grill and cranked out some great sausage, tri-tip and marinated chicken.

Arnold Moore provided the table decorations, and Ron Howie and Roger Hoyt from ECA were assisted by Dick Okamura from UCC in setting the tables. Alex Dykes and Rob McClaine lended assistance in setting up and cleaning up, with help from Chuck Smith and others from UCC. I would also like to thank Jerry Ferguson and Pete Mayo, as the usual suspects who always pitch in, along with Father Stephen and Todd Lukanc who were there to help with clean-up. If I missed anyone, which I know I did, I apologize and I will try to take better notes next year. It was a great time, great fellowship and some money for Joint Venture Churches general fund.

The Blankenheim - Griffith donated Kegerator did its usual good job of what it was designed to do. Nuff said there.

My only complaint was that the weather was too hot. I'll try to consult Mother Nature for cooler temperatures for Steak and Stein 2009. Hopefully she'll listen.

*David Byers*

## San Jose Prepared

**Free 2 hour  
Disaster Preparedness Presentation  
At the Almaden Community Center  
November 13 from 6 to 8pm**

## Senior Warden

*[Continued from page 5]*

Sadly, however, I don't always respond to His voice. I am stubborn and strong-willed. I am sometimes fearful and anxious. Yes, sometimes I am scared to follow His voice. I know what He is asking and I am afraid to go the course. Sometimes I even think I know better.

But best of all, the Lord and I are in communication. He hears me and I hear Him. I know Him in all his glory and He knows me in all my follies. It is exciting to imagine what we can do together if I listen and act? Imagine what you and the Lord could do if you would listen and then act?

Go the journey. It is worth it.

*Susie Ferguson  
Senior Warden*

## Turkey Drive

**Y**es, it's "only October" but Turkey Day is not that far away. Please keep in mind our Annual Turkey Drive, especially if you're going to be in town over the long weekend. This is the first call for volunteers that can give time and/or \$ donations to help the Montgomery Meals team cook and freeze turkey for the meals we prepare in our kitchen to feed the homeless every other week throughout the year. 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. Be looking for the signup sheets in Fellowship Hall around the first of November and volunteer to be a part of this annual event.

*Steve Wing (aka the Big Turkey)*



## Annual Meeting

**M**ark your calendar for Saturday, November 1st. This will be our Annual Meeting with election of new vestry members, JV reps, and Diocesan Delegates. Watch for details on bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

Are you feeling called to serve ECA in any of our needed areas? If so, please speak up. Contact Tim Miller, Steve Wing, Jim McPherson, or Ron Howie. They are officially our "nominating committee." They would love to hear from you.

## Gifts of Gratitude

Pete Mayo, Issac Tysanner, John McPherson, Joan Wagner, Mary Leal and everyone else who participated in the recent JV work party

Thanks to Dave Byers for heading up our Men's Steak and Stein so well.

## Anniversaries

Charlotte Boileau	4
Gary & Jean Casetta	4
Dom and Betty Consorte	30

## Birthdays

Daniel Beacher	3
Roland Darnell	4
Linda Nollette	8
Ron Howie	10
Bonnie McPherson	13
Susanna Machado	14
Carol MacDonald	15
Judy Blankenheim	16
Jennifer Taylor	17
Bill Hird	18
Jan English Lueck	28
Josephine Tshibola	28
Earl Griffith	29

## New Music Director!

The Joint Venture Churches Music Director Search Committee is very pleased to announce that D. Asa Stern will become Music Director starting October 1.

Asa will make his debut on Sunday, October 12. Folk Sunday for this month is being moved to Oct. 5. Choir rehearsals begin on Oct. 1 and 2 at 7:30 for AVUCC and ECA respectively.

A local whose family lives in the area, Asa was most recently Music Director at St. Catherine's Episcopal Church in South Florida, where he moved to continue his education. Before leaving the Bay Area, he served as Music Director at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Mountain View and Good Shepherd United Methodist Church.

Asa was also director of the Sunnyvale Singers from 2003 to 2005, before heading to Florida for advanced studies in music. He received a BA in Music from the University of California at Davis in 1997. During his time at UCD, he studied the oboe, English Horn, and choral conducting.

After playing the oboe and piano professionally for two years, he returned to the University of the Pacific where he graduated in 2002 with a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction in Music Education.

Asa taught at Pioneer High and Herbert Hoover Middle Schools here in San Jose. He has served as music director for theaters throughout the Sacramento area including UC Davis, Tokay High School, and the Davis Musical Theater Company. Asa also sings in The Choral Project.

The Music Director Search Committee is excited to have found a new Music Director possessing Asa's considerable talent and compelling background as a music educator, church music leader and choral director. We look forward to the excellent music that will emerge under his leadership.

The Music Director Search Committee is composed of Sandy Baldwin, Lynn Widmann and John Hawes from AVUCC; Betty Consorte, Andy Kerr and Todd Axtell from ECA; as well as Pastor Kevin Smith and Rector Stephen Mills from the respective churches. The members of the committee were appointed by the Pastor and Rector.

The committee would like to thank all those who supported our efforts and for the kind words they have expressed about our conduct of the search and selection process.

In the end, it is our belief that God's will is being done.

*The Music Director Search Committee*



## Youth Groups Ropes Course - October 24-25

Let me start this article with many thanks to absolutely everyone at both churches--as this newsletter is coming out after the JHYGS and SHYGS Carwash, that occurred on Sunday, 9/21. Thank you in advance for those who labored and cleaned the cars, thanks for those who paid us to wash, (or not wash) their cars, thanks to those who dried our towels and brought us food, and lastly thanks to those who cheered us on, or prayed for the adults to survive the affair, we (the Youth), are so blessed to have your support. Thanks again!

The next big upcoming event is the Ropes Course on Oct 24th and 25th. This is an event that we are hoping to have as many JHYGs & SHYGs go to as possible, as it encourages team building, facing and working through challenges, meeting goals, and hopefully building individual self esteem and self reliance. The plan is to leave on Friday, (the 24th), at about 4pm, when everyone is out of school, and head to Coarsegold, CA--where there is a Christian Camp called Camp Oakhurst (~20 miles south of Yosemite). For additional info about the camp their web site is [www.campoakhurst.org](http://www.campoakhurst.org). We will eat dinner on the drive and arrive at approx 7pm. The plan is to have a campfire, feast on smores, and discuss the next days events, before heading to our cabins for a good night's sleep. There could be van traveling up later Friday night to allow those with Friday evening commitments to participate in the course. The cabins sleep 12 and have bathroom facilities; so it's easier than the campouts at the church--no pitching tents or sleeping on the ground! The next morning

we have breakfast, get a safety lecture, and we're off to the high ropes course. The staff is highly trained in how to keep our kids safe. The chaperones will be working with the kids as they help with belaying and such during this activity. After we have braved this course, we will come back have lunch and then move on to the Giant Swing and Climbing Wall. We should get done with enough time for a quick swim, before having a group dinner at the camp, a debriefing about the day's events, and then we head home...tired, but elated, after a truly awesome day! So that's the story--now we need your help JHYGS and SHYGS parents. We need to know which kids can come (we want them all if possible!), as we need to send in a deposit, and give them a headcount by the end of September! The cost of the trip is \$100.00, but at least some of it will be picked up by the churches. We will need a deposit from you of \$50.00, so we can pay the deposit to the camp. Please email Bonnie at [mamasaur@comcast.net](mailto:mamasaur@comcast.net), or Jon at [jmills@relpsa.com](mailto:jmills@relpsa.com) with either a YEAH or a nay, as soon as possible! Thanks for your support; we couldn't do it without you!

*Jon Mills*



## October Reflections

I must admit, this month I am at a loss for words. The manifold shocks that have run through our economic system over the last few weeks have left me apprehensive. I am concerned about the effects on our local economy, our community's jobs, and ECA. With pledging season coming upon us, I also wonder what my financial future will be, about how much to pledge financially and what to give of myself and my time.

While sorting through some paperwork, I ran across this short reflection from Jan Wood, the Dean of Students at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, which appeared in the weekly school newsletter. And while she wrote this two years ago, I thought it was especially relevant for this month.

“We are called to “pray all ways”

Pray all ways

Pray always

Pray

“Pray from the book and pray from the heart. Pray with grace and pray with imperfection. Pray in silence and pray in tumult, Pray in safety and pray in panic. Pray alone and pray with thousands. Pray while walking and sitting, while sleeping and dreaming, while working and playing. Pray with your breathing. Pray with your body, mind, soul and heart. Pray all ways.

“When prayer is the thread that runs through every aspect of our living, we realize that prayer is not something we do. Prayer is what we are. Prayer is turning to God. Prayer is opening up to the Holy Spirit. Prayer is living in the way of Christ. Prayer is attitude, Prayer is orientation. Prayer is all.”

To which, I can only add: Amen.

*Kimberly Axtell*

## Rectory is PAID OFF!!

October 18th is our day to celebrate all the wonderful stewardship of our church family and move ourselves into the future. First, join us at the Rectory from 5 to 6 PM for appetizers. Here we will rejoice and celebrate the “burning of our mortgage.” Yes, at last ECA owns the Rectory free and clear.

At 6:15 PM we will gather in Fellowship Hall to celebrate another act of good stewardship at ECA. We will enjoy a delicious dinner, a meal fit for the finest, and a meal from our Montgomery Meals Ministry. Yes, whether you serve faithfully every other week or when you can, whether you give of your treasure to help purchase turkeys and other necessary supplies, or pick, pull, slice, dice and measure the day after Thanksgiving, you are part of this ministry of stewardship to those less fortunate. Come, be thankful and celebrate.

During dinner share with one another your thoughts and ideas revolving around stewardship at ECA and share a dream or two you may have for us. We want to take time as a church family to consider what stewardship is and means to each of us individually and corporately.

This will be an adult event, \$5/person. Look for the sign up poster in Fellowship Hall. If you need a babysitter for the evening check the poster for suggestions. With Dave Byers as our emcee there is no telling what might be in store. So come and celebrate with us and help us kick off our season of stewardship for ECA.

*Susie Ferguson & Tim Miller, Fellowship*