

The Shape

March 2010

The Episcopal Church in Almaden

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



*If any want to become my followers,
let them deny themselves and take up
their cross daily and follow me.*

Opportunities at ECA

Worship

Mar 4 - 7:30 AM Lenten Morning Eucharist
Mar 7 - 7:30 & 11 AM Holy Eucharist
Mar 11 - 7:30 AM Lenten Morning Eucharist
Mar 14 - 7:30 & 11 AM Holy Eucharist - Folk Sunday
Mar 18 - 7:30 AM Lenten Morning Eucharist
Mar 21 - 7:30 & 11 AM Holy Eucharist - Healing Service
Mar 25 - 7:30 AM Lenten Morning Eucharist
Mar 28 - 7:30 & 11 AM Holy Eucharist

Fellowship Events this Month

Mar 11 - Lunch & Museum (See page 5)

Fellowship – Teens

Mar 13 - SHYG Overnight/Catacombs starts at 6:00PM
We have two youth groups, the JHYGs (Junior High) and SHYGs (Senior High). Both groups meet on a regular basis for Sunday night fellowship and activities in the community. Check our web site for current information.

Study - Adult

Adult Thursday morning bible study 10:30 AM to Noon
Mar 21 - “Perplex the Professor” after each service (Page 17)

Study – Children and Youth

Sunday School meets Sunday at 10:10 AM to 10:50 AM
Ages 4 years through high school.

Other

Mar 7 - The Shape of Things to Come Forum 11:30AM - 3PM
Mar 14 - JV Handbell Concert at 3PM

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

SUNDAY SERVICES

7:30 am and 11:00 am

INTERIM MINISTER

The Reverend Dr. Frank Hegedus

SENIOR WARDEN

Kimberly Axtell
(408) 623-6076

JUNIOR WARDEN

Alex Dykes
(408) 839-2632

MINISTRIES

ACOLYTES	Marcus Bond
ALTAR GUILD	Anna Spanjaart
COFFEE HOUR	Pete Mayo
FOLK CHOIR	Andy Kerr
GREETERS	Sharon Mills
GOOD SAMs	Kelli Casale / Brenda McHenry
HAND BELL CHOIR	Ruthanne Adams
KIDS' BREAKOUT	Leslie Rousseau
LAY READERS	Jenny Hoyt
MONTGOMERY MEALS	Amy Griffith
NURSERY	Dot Allfrey
PRAYER VINE	Ann Avoux
USHERS	Dave Byers
SR HIGH YOUTH GROUP	Jon Mills
JR HIGH YOUTH GROUP	Bonnie McPherson
STEWARDSHIP	HANK DeVoss, George Romer
WORSHIP	Andy Kerr

ECA STAFF

CHRISTIAN ED. DIRECTOR	Melanie Click
MUSIC DIRECTOR, ORGANIST	D. Asa Stern
TREASURER	Bill LaVallee
YOUTH DIRECTOR	Melanie Click
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	Dennis Elliott

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The Shape

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

Father Frankly Speaking

As a priest, I have many times wished I could be a holier person, that prayer came easier, and that good deeds were as natural for me as they seem to be for many of my parishioners. Alas, my best efforts have produced but mediocre results, as you can readily judge for yourselves.

For a long while, I thought I just had to try harder. After all, I am a fairly bright guy and a good worker. Surely, I could get this holiness business down – as a career move, if nothing else. Well, bright or not, it finally dawned on me one Lenten season many years ago. Duh...

It's the economy, stupid! No, not the economy of Bill Clinton's now famous presidential campaign slogan years ago. Not even the economy everyone is worried about today. I was thinking of the economy of God. It is what saves you and me from ourselves. In God's economy, we can relax. Mortgages, interest rates, and unemployment are never a problem. No need for fancy financial software either. You see, in God's economy all the hard work and heavy lifting has already been done for us.

In the world's economy, of course, we have to work hard to achieve something for ourselves and for our family. We worry about job security and the next big financial meltdown. We put in overtime. We worry about promotions and bonuses. We save our money in 401Ks and pension plans and wonder if we are ever doing enough.

But God's economy is different. In God's economy we do not have to work or worry at all. That is because the gross domestic product of God's economy is the cross, and it is of infinite value. Everything we could ever really need or want has already been purchased for us through Christ's death on the cross.

In other words, our MasterCard bill has been paid in full by, well, the Master himself. At the cross, God emptied himself of all his riches and gave everything to us – lock, stock, and barrel. Christ not only set us free from all debt of sinfulness; he also gave us an endowment that will last an eternity.

So we are all very wealthy people in God's economy. We are so rich that we in turn can well afford to give away everything God has given us. In fact, the more of ourselves we give away, the richer we become in God's upside-down – or right-side-up – economy.

You may ask: What about currency fluctuations? Not to worry. The currency of God's economy is called grace, and the denominations are measured not in dollars and cents but in degrees of gratitude. The only proper change to have in our pockets, and in our hearts, is thankfulness for all God has given us.

Balloons and payback periods? Again, not to worry. If we are truly thankful for the abundant treasure we have been given, we will also preserve and develop our gifts... And learn to give back in the measure that has been given to us. This is the economy of the cross, and it is especially important to remember during this Lenten season.

Lent after all is all about God's economy – the economy of salvation. Let's take inventory then during this holy season and throughout the year, and make sure we have put our treasure where our heart is. Never forget the purchase price of your salvation. Now, there is a price-earnings ratio for you!

Father Frank
The Rev. Dr. Frank Hegedus, MBA

Senior Warden

March Fellowship

The planning for Fellowship events took place on February 12th. There were dozens of suggestions and we'll try to do as many as we can fit into our calendars. Please bring guests to any of the Fellowship events!

Join us for lunch on Thursday March 11th! Lunch and Museum in Los Gatos. Lunch will be at Andale Restaurant and then on to the Tait Museum. We will meet at 12:00 in the church parking lot and carpool to Los Gatos. Sign up sheet is in the Fellowship Hall. The Tait museum is a art museum in a historic fire station.

Upcoming events to mark on your calendar:

Chick Flicks - April 23th and Sept. 24th
Hike/picnic at Point Lobos - April 17th
Chili Cookoff in April - Details next month
Lobster Dinner/Fundraiser - June 18th

Pancake Supper

As a result of our Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, the Junior and Senior High have recently raised \$500, half for Santa Maria Urban Mission and half for the Red Cross for relief in Haiti. Good work, youth! Thank you to our generous congregations. Upcoming events include bowling in March and a cruise with the Sea Scouts in April! Look in your email for more information.

Bonnie McPherson & Melanie Click

Christian Ed News

Big events are coming up in Sunday School!

On March 7 we will have Sunday School open house at 10:10. This will be an opportunity for everyone to sample the activities and see what's going on with the new structure. I hope you will all join us.

Questions, comments, suggestions, concerns? Feel free to call.

Bonnie McPherson & Melanie Click



From the Editor



When I was a child I spoke as a child, reasoned as a child and longed for expensive name-brand merchandise as a child. When I became a man I spent like a child on an adult expense account.

When you are a teenager, your sense of value is wrapped up in what you own, what you can collect, what you can *possess*. By the time you get a day job you start calling this process “the rat race.”

Last November I attended the Los Angeles International Auto Show covering the press conferences for TheTruthAboutCars.com (For the uninitiated, before major auto shows the press descends upon the convention centres like vultures for the unveiling of new and slightly-new cars while scantily clad “booth babes” prostrate themselves on the hoods of said cars and pass out champagne, wine and hors d’œuvre.) At the Porsche press conference I was standing in the beverage line behind the owner of a “cars for mothers” publication and we struck up a conversation on cars [imagine that]. She was trying to decide what car to get for her husband. It “*bad*” to be something more expensive than a BMW 750i (\$82,000 starting MSRP) because some guy lower than him on the corporate ladder just got a 750i and you couldn’t *possibly* drive the same car as your direct report. She then proceeded to ask what I drive (um, a Volvo wagon), after she regained her composure, she asked where I lived and when I said the San Francisco Bay Area, it was as if a light went on in her head. “That explains it!” She exclaimed, “down here we drive our pay-checks around.” I stood there dumb-struck for a moment, realising that while she obviously is more direct about the display of wealth, I too am trapped in this cycle as we all are.

One of my favourite shows of all time is “The Good Life” known in the USA as “Good Neighbors.” Besides being a wonderful show because it stars Penelope Keith and Richard Briers, the content is quite amusing as well. The main character is Tom Good who lives in a fairly affluent suburb (think: Almaden) and works downtown as a draftsman. Tom turns 40 and decides his life is lacking something. To gain the “something” he decides to quit his job, simplify his life and be 100% self-sufficient in every way. Aside from the hilarity of raising goats and a cow in a suburb, Rob and I like one of the concepts that the show pokes a light sense of fun at: leading a simple life.

Leading a simple life is something that’s hard to describe and can be different for everyone. Obviously I have no plans on taking it to the extreme that was posed in “The Good Life,” but the reality of living for a good long period of time in 500 square feet on 9 acres of forest that initially filled me with foreboding, now brings a certain sense of relief to me. We have been spending the past few months downsizing everything we have, donating clothes we haven’t worn in years, donating books to the library so others can enjoy them, recycling kitchen gadgets by giving them to friends, and getting down to the “essentials” of our lives. (Mind you, I find my LCD TV an essential) I have found that the constant pursuit of “stuff” has separated me from the world around me rather than giving me a sense of belonging. My only hope is that leading a simple life turns out to be a life’s mission rather than a phase. I would encourage us all to seek that simplicity in life, value what is truly essential rather than what we are told we must have or do; in doing so you just might find God.

-Alex Dykes

Lent

Welcome dear feast of Lent: who loves not thee,
He loves not Temperance, or Authority,
But is compos'd of passion.
The Scriptures bid us fast; the Church says, now:
Give to thy Mother, what thou wouldst allow
To ev'ry Corporation.

The humble soul compos'd of love and fear
Begins at home, and lays the burden there,
When doctrines disagree,
He says, in things which use hath justly got,
I am a scandal to the Church, and not
The Church is so to me.

True Christians should be glad of an occasion
To use their temperance, seeking no evasion,
When good is seasonable;
Unless Authority, which should increase
The obligation in us, make it less,
And Power itself disable.

Besides the cleanness of sweet abstinence,
Quick thoughts and motions at a small expense,
A face not fearing light:
Whereas in fulness there are sluttish fumes,
Sour exhalations, and dishonest rheums,
Revenging the delight.

Then those same pendant profits, which the
spring
And Easter intimate, enlarge the thing,
And goodness of the deed.
Neither ought other men's abuse of Lent
Spoil the good use; lest by that argument
We forfeit all our Creed.

It's true, we cannot reach Christ's forti'eth day;
Yet to go part of that religious way,
Is better than to rest:
We cannot reach our Saviour's purity;
Yet we are bid, 'Be holy ev'n as he, '
In both let's do our best.

Who goeth in the way which Christ hath gone,
Is much more sure to meet with him, than one
That travelleth by-ways:
Perhaps my God, though he be far before,
May turn and take me by the hand, and more:
May strengthen my decays.

Yet Lord instruct us to improve our fast
By starving sin and taking such repast,
As may our faults control:
That ev'ry man may revel at his door,
Not in his parlour; banqueting the poor,
And among those his soul.

George Herbert
1593–1632

School for Deacons

It's not just for Deacons anymore!

The School offers a variety of programs for those interested in deepening their faith and serving in the Church. You can even find out about the ministry of deacons! Come and learn what it is all about.

Annual Inquirer's Day

Interested in exploring a deacon's ministry? Interested in learning more about your faith and developing gifts for ministry?

Come to the School of Deacon's inquirer's day on Saturday, March 13, at the Church Divinity School in Berkeley

Check their website www.sfd.edu for more information, or contact the School at (510) 848-1723.

Yard Work

Think you're handy with a hoe and a rake? Have a leafblower that you are dying to use? Like mowing your lawn? Have I got a great deal for you! If we don't get more help maintaining the church grounds we're going to have to spend some precious cash to get a company to do it for us. Budgets are tight these days and ECA and JV need to keep out finances in order so we can prosper and spend money on outreach and fellowship instead of gardeners. So if you're willing to help, even if it's just a one-time deal, please contact me. We'll be having work days set up soon and we need all the help we can get!

Alex Dykes
alex@dykesfamily.net



JHYG

The Junior High Youth Group has been working hard and having fun, and we have more planned. The cookies we baked for Montgomery Meals were very much enjoyed. We got rave reviews! The pancake dinner netted \$250, which we will be sending to the Red Cross for assistance in Haiti. Thank you to all the generous people who donated to our cause and all the youth and adult leaders who came together to provide a wonderful meal.

Activities coming up include bowling in March and a cruise on the bay with the Sea Scouts in April! Watch your email for dates and times. Remember, we get together every other Friday for a meal, discussion, and games or sometimes an awesome outing. We look forward to seeing you, and feel free to bring friends!

Bonnie McPherson & Melanie Click

Birthdays

Tim Miller	1
Hayley Moore	1
Anna Spanjaart	1
Bill Taylor	1
Jack Jackman	3
Judy Graun	4
Luke Appleton	6
Julia Machado	6
Jackie Whitlock	6
Jason Ferguson	16
Len Whitlock	19
Ainsley Jaciow	21
Gloria Skowronski	24
Edie Keck	26

Anniversaries

Dave & Gayle Byers	10
Henry & Judy Blankenheim	14



Search Committee Update

“Dear Lord, Grant us patience and faith to use your glorious gifts to build up the body of Christ, not only at ECA but in the world. Help us use these gifts to promote unity while celebrating and honoring our diversity. Help us create a profile that reflects our love of Christ and each other to call that one person you have chosen to walk with us into a future committed to love, faith and growth. Amen”

Melinda Jennings, Search Committee member

Your Search Committee has been meeting regularly to do the work you have commissioned us to do. With the guidance and support of our Diocesan consultant, Joanna Shreve, we have put together two dynamic sessions for the Shape of Things to Come. By the time you read this message, you will have hopefully participated in the first one on February 21st. The second one is March 7th same time, same place. From the information which you share, the Search Committee and the Vestry will synthesize your thoughts to be used in the ECA profile. It is essential that you verbalize your thoughts so that we can do our work.

We are very blessed to have Joanna Shreve working with us. She has been trained by the Diocese of El Camino Real to serve as a consultant to churches in the search process. Her endless knowledge, insight, commitment and enthusiasm are priceless gifts she freely gives to us. Please introduce yourselves to her if you get the opportunity.

In addition to the preparation and follow up for these sessions, each Search Committee member will be devoting themselves to writing specific parts of the 2010 Profile. You will notice the deadline we have set for ourselves for its completion. Our intention is to stick to the time line as best as we

are able. We are working as if we are in charge, but knowing as we pray, that the Lord is in charge.

Please take the time to look at the following Search time line. It is and will remain a work in progress.

We continue to ask for your prayers as we grow in love and understanding of each other.

Nancy Romer

Search Committee Chairperson

Search Time Line

Mar 7	The Shape of Things to Come Summit
Mar 10	Profile (first round) completed
Mar 11	Committee meets to review Profile
Mar 28	Finalize Core Values & Goals
Apr 7	Review Profile
Apr 19	Send Profile to Vestry
Apr 27	Search Committee & Vestry meeting
May 11	Finalize CDO Profile
May 12	Call for a new rector circulated
June 15	Read and evaluate applications
June 23	6 Week Closing for position
July 7	8 Week Closing for position
July 15 to Aug 4	Complete phone interviews
Aug 10	Review of phone interviews
Aug 23 to Sept 1	Site visits
Sept 15 to Oct 5	Candidate visits
Oct 6	Final candidates slate readied
Oct 12	Present candidates to Vestry

Please remember that this time line is (and must be) flexible for various reasons. This is not meant to be a strict schedule.

Reconciliation & Healing Rite

Lent is always a good time to look back and make peace with what has been, perhaps especially this transitional year after our recent Forum sessions on ECA history and our programs on the “Shape of Things to Come.”

Join your fellow parishioners during “forum time” on Sunday, March 14, for informal prayer and healing reflection. This will be a low-key program. No one present or absent, living or dead, will be put on the “hot-seat.” We’ll be in the music room from 8:35–9:10am, and again from 12:30–1:00pm.

Christian Education

By the time you read this, we will have launched our new, exciting Sunday School program for the preschool to middle school children and youth. We have moved to a rotational, experiential, hands-on model of education and faith formation. My goal is to have the children be more actively engaged in their learning in a fun, supportive environment. Each four to six week session will have a theme, and the classes will rotate through stations that express the theme in different ways. We will be cooking, crafting, acting, and exploring. Our first theme is “Dig into the Bible...”

Please feel free to come experience Sunday School with us. I would be glad to give you a tour if I am not teaching, or you are welcome to walk through and look and listen on your own. Most of the classes will be in the Youth Center.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns, feel free to contact me.

Melanie Click
(408) 268-0243 (Church - leave a message)
(408) 323-8283 (home)
mjclick@comcast.net



Lenten Eucharists

We will begin most of our Lenten Eucharists with the Penitential Order. For the most part, this simply means we begin with the Confession and Absolution. You will find this rite in the Book of Common Prayer, page 351. But it will of course be clearly indicated in the Bulletin Order of Service. This rite helps us during Lent to focus on the theme of penitence.

On Sunday, March 21, our Eucharistic services will begin with the ancient “Great Litany,” a beautiful prayer very appropriate to the penitential season of Lent. It can be found in the BCP on page 148.

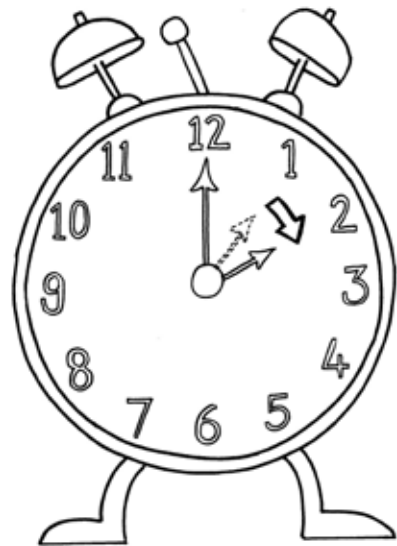
Thanks George!

Many thanks to George Romer for putting up and taking down the nativity scene located on the front driveway this past Christmas. *And many, many thanks and apologies to Betty Consorte who has been trying to get this thank you in The Shape for 3 months!*

Betty Consorte

Spring Forward

Daylight Saving Time arrives this year on Sunday morning, March 14. Here is the deal: Get up at 1:00am, Sunday morning, and then go around the house and move all your clocks, watches, and sundials FORWARD one hour. Of course, some folks cheat and do all this before they go to bed on Saturday night. Either way, get to Church on time on Sunday, March 14!



kixx.net/munson.com

Chick Flicks

Yes, it was great fun when 35 women gathered for their 2010 Kickoff of “Chick Flicks” last month. Adorned with turquoise, purple, and lime green our Fellowship Hall sparkled with votive candles and the overhead tinkly lights. Susanne Moore has such a wonderful knack for putting things together and making everything look so inviting. Our wonderful chefs for the evening (those who attended) brought a wonderful array of specialties from their own kitchens or their favorite deli or takeout. No one went away hungry! Bonnie McPherson knows the secrets for fantastic popcorn which she made for us to enjoy during the movie.

Our featured film for the evening was *Steel Magnolias*. We give special kudos to Sharon Mills for her creativity in the dessert category. For those of you who are familiar with the film, you know just how unique an “armadillo red velvet cake” can be. Yes... and ours was superb!

Over dessert, discussions were led by a team of facilitators who had volunteered for the evening. Pat Fox, Kathy Mastre, & Nancy Romer joined the organizers for this event (Susie & Joy) to be facilitators and help our attendees explore a few questions in regard to Christianity and our particular film. Discussion time is never long enough on a Friday night when we set our curfew for 10 PM.

Special thanks are always in order for our technical advisor, Doug Dunham. Doug graciously spends an evening in the background and out of the limelight. He sets up our theater, gets our film running, and “strikes” our sound stage at the end. Another special thank you goes to Jerry Ferguson. He willingly came by early to set up the table and chairs for us and returned to assist with our clean up. All of you who attended were great help in our cleanup, with special mention going to Kelli Casale, Susan Gay-

don, and Charlotte Boileau, who helped with lots of tasks in the kitchen while the movie was running since they had to leave before the movie ended.

An outreach component was added to this particular night. Our movie revolved in many ways around a Beauty Parlor so we invited those who were able to bring new beauty or health items. We filled 5 huge bags and a big box, which was all donated to InnVision for their Women’s Shelter on Commercial Street in San Jose. Thank you and God bless everyone for your generosity.

I also must thank Joy Austin-Lane who was a major encouragement and inspiration to me to get things on the calendar and underway with our first Chick Flick of 2010. She does know how to “light a fire.”

We would like to have one Chick Flick evening per quarter. We are considering dates for April or May at this time. If you would like to join us and help put a Chick Flick evening together, please contact either of us and volunteer. We look forward to working with you.

Susie Ferguson (408) 499-6381

Joy Austin-Lane (301) 385-2900

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know

Most Episcopalians know that Lent is the holy season of the church year leading up to the commemoration of our Lord's death on Good Friday and the celebration of his resurrection at Easter. It is traditionally a time of penitence, prayer, almsgiving, and fasting – much as was called for by John the Baptist at the Jordan.

ORIGINS

The origins of Lent are obscure, although from the earliest days of the Church believers would prepare for the solemn celebration of Easter through prayer and fasting, the premise being that self-denial and reflection would serve to intensify the ultimate joy of celebration. Liturgically, the word alleluia is not used during this season and joyous anthems, such as the Gloria, are replaced by penitential ones.

Some speculate that fasting became an integral part of the observance of Lent simply because food stores were depleted anyway by the end of winter and early spring. Indeed, our word Lent is derived from an old Germanic word for spring and the lengthening (yup, same root meaning) of days. In most European languages, however, Lent is called by a name which references the forty days – cuaresma in Spanish, for instance.

By the fifth century, a forty day Lenten observance was common in the West while in the East fifty or more days were, and continue to be, observed. Specific acts of penitence were prescribed in detail as were the types and amounts of food which could be eaten on fast days. Interestingly, the Sundays in Lent, being in themselves mini-observances of the resurrection, have always been exempt from Lenten acts of penitence.

SHROVE TUESDAY

Is the day before the beginning of Lent and is often marked by revelry and partying. Shrove, meaning literally “written down” in older English dialects, refers to the custom of keeping tabs in writing of those who had visited the priest for Confession and Absolution before the beginning of Lent. Shrove Tuesday is known as Carnival or Mardi Gras in other cultures.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Marks the beginning of Lent, a day on which a smudge of ash is rubbed on the foreheads of believers as a sign of penitence. Often, dried palm fronds from the previous year's Palm Sunday observance are burned for their ash as a means of symbolically bringing together our yearly observances. Ash Wednesday is in many traditions a day of fasting. For many Anglicans, this simply means eating less than one might normally and avoiding meat, if possible.

LAETARE SUNDAY

Is the old Latin name for the Fourth Sunday in Lent, laetare meaning “rejoice” and reminding the faithful that they are more or less at the half-way point in their Lenten observance. Curiously and for reasons not entirely clear, this Sunday is maintained in Britain and other countries as Mothering Sunday, the equivalent in the US of Mothers' Day. In very traditional Anglo-Catholic Churches, rose-colored – pink – vestments are worn on this day.

PASSION SUNDAY

Has traditionally been considered the Fifth Sunday in Lent and the beginning of the most solemn part of the season known as Passiontide, referring of course to our Lord's passion, or suffering, at his death. In many churches, crosses and other deco-

About Lent But Didn't Even Know to Ask!

rative elements in the church building are either removed or covered over. Confusingly, many contemporary liturgists now call Palm Sunday by the name Passion Sunday.

HOLY WEEK

Beginning with Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter Day, Holy Week commemorates the last days of our Lord on earth and his death on the cross. It is the most solemn time in the entire church year.

PALM SUNDAY

Is the Sunday before Easter and thematically goes from the joy of Christ's entry into the holy city Jerusalem to the sadness of his death. Palm, or other, branches are distributed at the services on this day and may be taken home and displayed alongside a cross or other religious symbol. Processions are also common on Palm Sunday.

CHRISM MASS

Bishops traditionally have blessed the oil – chrism – used in anointing the newly baptized and newly ordained on the Thursday morning of Holy Week. Today, this is most often done on Tuesday in Holy Week, as all the clergy of a Diocese gather with their bishop not only for the blessing of oil but also to renew their own ordination vows and promises.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Is the Thursday of Holy Week and has two principle themes. First, as Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, so today in many churches priest and congregation ritually wash each other's feet at the worship service on this day. In this way, they remind one another that all are called as Christians to serve one another. Additionally, Maundy Thursday commemorates the institution of the Holy

Eucharist, or Communion, at the Last Supper. No one is entirely certain of the origin of the name, by the way. But most scholars speculate that Maundy derives from the Latin word *mandatum*, or commandment, harking back to the Gospel reading for this day in which our Lord gives us a new commandment – to love one another.

GOOD FRIDAY

Commemorates the death of our Lord on Calvary. The service on this day, typically held at midday, includes prayer, scripture, and sermon, but no Eucharist. The worship service sometimes offers the opportunity to “venerate” a wooden cross, as a ritual sign of respect and gratitude for our redemption through Christ's death. In earlier times in Britain it was common to eat hot-cross buns on this day, although the origin of this custom is obscure.

EASTER VIGIL

Is in a sense the last act of Lent and the first act of Easter. In ancient times, it was customary to spend nearly the entire night in prayer before a major religious feast. The Easter Vigil service is kept in many Anglican churches, primarily cathedrals. It begins with a series of scriptures and prayers and reflections – a vigil --followed by the first Eucharist of Easter itself. The entire service is beautiful but often quite lengthy.

Father Frank

Archbishop Rowan Williams:

By Matthew Davies, February 09, 2010
[This article has been edited for length.]

Complex issues in church and society should be approached with a “three-dimensional vision,” Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams urged members of the Church of England’s General Synod during his Feb. 9 presidential address.

“Seeing something in three dimensions is seeing that I can’t see everything at once: what’s in front of me is not just the surface I see in this particular moment,” he told synod members gathered for their Feb. 8-12 meeting in London. “So seeing in three dimensions requires us to take time with what we see. It may help us look more critically at solutions that seek to do too much all at once; and perhaps to search for structures that will keep open the ability to learn from each other.”

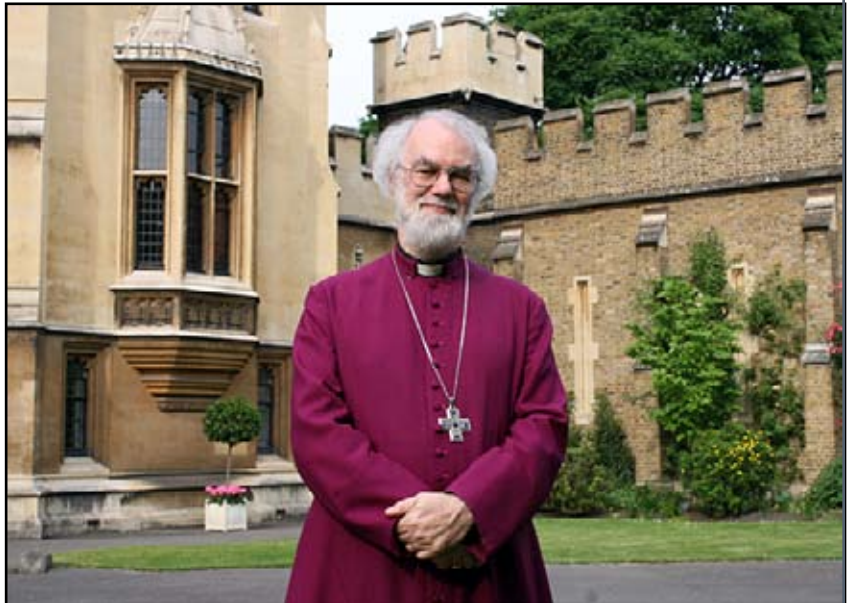
General Synod is the main governing body of the Church of England. It meets at least twice a year. Williams...described recent experiences of “three-dimensionality” he said he had encountered in Episcopal Church parishes... “There is the simpler sense of three-dimensionality which just reminds us that the other we meet is the person he or she is, not the person we have created in our fantasies,” he said.

Williams described his recent visit to the Episcopal Diocese of New York’s parish of St. Ann’s in South Bronx, one of the most violent and impoverished communities in the city.

“I watched them feeding several hundred people, I was taken to the after-school club where local children learn the literacy and other skills they don’t get in their public schools,” he said. “I spoke with an astonishing Hispanic woman who has single-handedly created a campaign against gun crime in the Bronx that seeks to bring a million women on to the streets in protest, and I saw how prayer unobtrusively shaped every aspect of this work and how people were introduced to Jesus Christ.”

Williams said that the experience at St. Ann’s reminded him of another parish he’d visited in New Orleans in 2007 -- “a local church planted as a result of the relief work of the diocese, when local people begged for a church to be opened because they had seen the love of Christ in the work done with and for them.”

These encounters, he said, represent “three-dimensionality in the Episcopal Church which some are tempted to dismiss as no more than a liberal talking shop.”



A Thee Dimensional Vision

Williams then recalled a telephone conversation in December with Archbishop Henri Orombi of Uganda, “discussing what was being done by Ugandan Anglicans in the devastated north of the country -- in the rehabilitation of child soldiers and the continuing, intensely demanding work with all victims of trauma in that appalling situation, work that no one else is doing or is trusted to do; and the ongoing work of care for those with HIV, where the Uganda church was in the forefront of African responses to that crisis.” He described this as “three-dimensionality in a church that has been caricatured as passionately homophobic and obsessed with narrow Biblicism.”

Williams opened his address with some comments concerning the debate on the Equality Bill, a proposed act of the U.K. Parliament designed to protect discrimination in employment on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. The bill has been criticized by some Church of England members, including bishops in the U.K.’s House of Lords, who are concerned it would restrict the rights of religious organizations to decide whether gay people and women are suitable for certain jobs.

Williams said that the debate over the status and vocational possibilities of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the church “is not helped by ignoring the existing facts, which include many regular worshippers of gay or lesbian orientation and many sacrificial and exemplary priests who share this orientation. There are ways of speaking about the question that seem to ignore these human realities or to undervalue them; I have been criticized for doing just this, and I am profoundly sorry for the carelessness that could give such an impression.”

Other topics addressed by Williams were the proposed Anglican covenant, a final draft of which has been sent to the provinces for their consideration and possible endorsement, and the debate on women bishops, which synod will take up at its July meeting once a committee has completed its work of revising draft legislation.

In his concluding remarks, Williams said: “It is only a three-dimensional vision that can save us from real betrayal of what God has given us. It will oblige us to ask not how we can win this or that conflict but what we have to give to our neighbor for sanctification in Christ’s name and power. It will oblige us to think hard about freedom and mutuality and the genuine difficulty of balancing costs or restraints in order to keep life moving around the Body. It will deepen our desire to be fed and instructed by each other, so that we are all the more alarmed at the prospect of being separated in the zero-sum, self-congratulating mode that some seem to be content with.”

Williams urged synod members that they “may be able to show to the world a face rather different from that anxious, self-protective image that is so much in danger of entrenching itself in the popular mind as the typical Christian position. I deeply believe that this church and this synod are still capable of showing that face and pray that God will reveal such a vision in us and for us.”

The full text of Williams’ address is available at http://www.episcopal-life.org/81808_119320_ENG_HTML.htm

Matthew Davies is editor and international correspondent of the Episcopal News Service.

Pledge Status

The January Shape update on 2009 pledge receipts showed a shortfall of \$17,097 compared with the pledged total of \$187,546. As the 2009 books closed, total receipts 67 pledges of \$177,429, together with \$5729 in plate offerings/gifts brought the 2009 receipts from these sources to \$183,158.

Looking ahead to the current year, only 63 pledges have been returned as of February 11. Considering the added costs we will incur this year in our search for a new rector, we are hoping that there are still some pledges to be submitted. If you have misplaced your previously provided blue pledge card, extras are available in the pamphlet rack in the narthex. You can mail it to our treasurer Bill LaVallee or place it in his mail slot at the office.

Hank DeVoss



Perplex the Professor

Got questions about Scripture...?

We got answers!

Join with our very own Matt Whitlock of the Santa Clara University Religious Studies faculty on Sunday, March 21. Matt will take your questions about biblical literature: its meaning and its importance today. So, bring your questions or comments and talking points. Sessions are scheduled 8:35-9:10am and again 12:30-1:05pm.

JV Handbells

Please join us for the Joint Venture Handbell concert on Sunday, March 14, at 3:00 PM. Enjoy the beautiful sound of English handbells! This is a rare opportunity to hear and see the bells "up close and personal". Ringers are from both AVUCC and ECA in a musical example of how well both churches work together.

The Bishop is Coming!



Bishop Gray-Reeves was born in Coral Gables, Florida, in the early 1960s and grew up in the Miami neighborhood of Coconut Grove, where she attended Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church.

After high school, she attended California State University, Fullerton, from which she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in history in 1987. After her decision to seek holy orders, she and her husband, Michael Reeves, travelled to New Zealand where she attended theological school at Saint John's College, Auckland, while her husband managed his business interests. In 1994 she graduated from Saint John's and received the equivalent of an American Master of Divinity degree.

After she and her husband returned to California, she was ordained deacon and then priest in the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, where she was also assistant rector of two churches. She and her husband returned to the Miami area. She was rector of Saint Margaret's Episcopal Church in Miami Lakes before being appointed archdeacon for deployment (a position similar to human resources director) for the Diocese of Southeast Florida. On June 16, 2007, the Diocese of El Camino Real at convention in Monterey elected her its bishop.

Bishop Gray-Reeves and her husband, Michael Reeves, have two teen-aged children, Katherine and Dorian.

Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves will be joining us here at the Episcopal Church in Almaden for Easter services on April 4. The Bishop will be with us as celebrant and preacher at both the 7:30am and 11:00am services. Vestry is also planning a reception at which members of the congregation will have an opportunity to meet the Bishop and chat. Further information will be available in upcoming Sunday and mid-week bulletins as well as in the April SHAPE. But for now, be sure to get Easter at ECA on your schedule!

The Rt. Rev. Mary Gray-Reeves became bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real on November 10, 2007, when she was ordained and consecrated the third bishop of the Diocese at services in Saratoga

Calling All Knitters

Please join us at the church on the second and fourth Saturdays of every month at morning at 10:00 AM and bring your knitting, crochet or needlework. This is a time for fun, fellowship, knitting, a big pot of strong tea and maybe some scones. We are always working on our own projects, squares for the Ronald McDonald house afghans or baby hats for the Baby Love ministry. Come join us and bring a friend! We look forward to seeing you Saturday morning!

Knitwits

