

# The Shape

April 2010

## *The Episcopal Church in Almaden*

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



*Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. John 2:19*

# Opportunities at ECA

**Worship** (*Holy week services in red*)

**Maundy Thursday**

**Apr 1 - 7:30 AM Morning Eucharist**

**Apr 1 - 7:00 PM Joint Venture Service**

**Good Friday**

**Apr 2 - 12:00 PM Prayer Book Liturgy Service**

**Apr 2 - 1:00 PM Stations of the Cross**

**Holy Saturday**

**Apr 3 - 7:30 PM Easter Vigil at Trinity Cathedral**

**Easter**

**Apr 4 - 6:15 Sunrise Service at Quicksilver Park**

**Apr 4 - 7:30 & 11 AM Holy Eucharist**

Apr 8 - 7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist

Apr 11 - 7:30 & 11 AM Holy Eucharist - Folk Sunday

Apr 15 - 7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist

Apr 18 - 7:30 & 11 AM Holy Eucharist - Healing Service

Apr 22 - 7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist

Apr 25 - 7:30 & 11 AM Holy Eucharist

Apr 29 - 7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist

## Fellowship Events this Month

April 4 - Easter Egg Hunt at 10:10 AM

April 14 - Trip to Filoli (Page 5)

April 17 - Family day at Point Lobos, SP (Page 10)

April 23 - Chick Flicks (Page 12)

## Fellowship – Teens

*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

## Study – Children and Youth

Sunday School meets Sunday at 10:10 AM to 10:50 AM

Ages 4 years through high school.

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 |

## CONTACTING

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## Father Frankly Speaking

Every decade or two, an Anglican or Episcopal bishop somewhere in the world gets into trouble for appearing to deny the reality of the Resurrection. The hapless bishop's name is all over the Internet, and devout members of the Church everywhere are scandalized. There is even talk of excommunication. Usually the bishop's statement, when examined closely, turns out to be nothing as definitive as an outright denial of Jesus' Resurrection, but rather a vague – some might say muddled – expression of uncertainty about its meaning and place in the modern world.

Of course, if we review carefully our various scriptural texts dealing with the Resurrection, we find plenty of precedent for ecclesiastical muddle and confusion surrounding the meaning of the Resurrection. The Apostles – the first bishops, as we believe – upon hearing news of the empty tomb, for example, reject the report as “pure nonsense.” Peter actually inspects the empty tomb, but instead of breaking out in Handel's Alleluia chorus, quietly heads home, leaving the grieving Mary alone in the garden. Some bishops these guys were...

Mary herself does not at first recognize the Lord. And, according to Mark, the women at the tomb – having been given specific instructions to go tell the disciples – instead sit on the news and tell no one. For something which we now proclaim as being at the very heart of our faith, the story of the Resurrection certainly did not get off to a very auspicious start.

I suppose it is reassuring – or unsettling, depending on your point of view – to know that things have not changed that much in two thousand years. We still do not quite know what to make of the Resurrection. It is still a sign of contradiction – a mystery. Perhaps we should actually find

it encouraging that Jesus' Resurrection can still be a hot topic today.

What exactly happened at the Resurrection we will alas never know. There were no embedded reporters. No Fox News. No Senate hearings. No film at eleven. We are left finally with our faith. The Resurrection has been called the first moment of eternity, and there is a lot of truth in that. The Risen Christ straddles the disciples' – and our – earthly existence with his divinity and immortality. He is not just a resuscitated corpse, not just the same old Jesus. He is different. He is transformed. And yet... He is indeed the same Lord.

The world today is in as much need of redemption and resurrection as it has ever been. For many, it is still as if the rock had not been rolled aside. To this world, we proclaim that the Resurrection is not only real: it is probably the only truly real event ever. It is life itself. But life still sometimes hidden and found only in the chasm of an empty and abandoned tomb.

The Risen Christ continues to appear to us. Like his disciples long ago, we too are often unaware of his presence. But he is there in our fellow parishioners and in the beggar at the freeway exit. We may at first mistake him for someone else.

But if, like Mary, we listen closely, we will hear him call to us each by name. And, we will know once again that he lives.

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

*Father Frank*

*The Rev. Dr. Frank Hegedus*

*Interim Minister*



# Way to go ECA!

The Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real  
P.O. Box 1903 • Monterey, CA 93942  
Phone (831) 394-4465 • Fax (831) 394-7133  
Website: [www.edecr.org](http://www.edecr.org)

February 23, 2010

The Rev. Frank M. Hegedus  
The Episcopal Church in Almaden  
6581 Camden Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95120

Dear Frank,

At the February Board of Trustees meeting, the Diocesan Finance Committee reported that the Episcopal Church in Almaden increased its Fair Share in 2010. We all know 2009 was a difficult year and 2010 is shaping up much the same. We are most grateful that you have placed your Fair Share as a priority in your own budget process. A congregation that makes the extra effort to succeed and then increases its commitment to our Diocese is indeed a blessing to us all. We are truly thankful. I commend your achievement and on behalf of all the organizations and people (including myself!) whose mission relies on the support of our Diocese, I thank you.

Please extend my congratulations to your congregation and my personal best wishes and prayers for your continued success.

With God's blessing for your life and ministry,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Gray-Reeves".

Mary Gray-Reeves  
Bishop, El Camino Real

MGR:sa

## Senior Warden

February and March has been a wonderful time of discernment for ECA. On February 21 and March 7, our Search Committee put together our two Summits. During these two Sundays, we were asked to list our strengths and to look into our future. And judging from the many creative and colorful posters, ECA has many strengths and we are looking enthusiastically forward to our future. Thanks to the Search Committee, their chair Nancy Romer, and our diocesan consultant Joanna Shreve, for the many hours of hard work to prepare us for this time of reflection and celebration. Thanks also to Father Frank for lending his considerable help and wisdom to our discernment process.

And the Vestry has been hard at work as well. Committees have been working on upgrading the website and looking at ECA's financial future. Throughout the whole community of ECA, we are working together to prepare for our next rector. We have such a wonderful community here, willing to put in long hours on our communications, website, finance and rectory. Thank you, all.

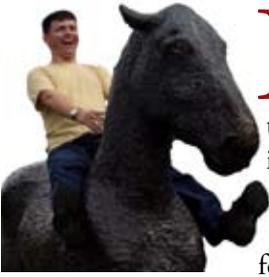
In the meantime, the ministry of ECA continues. The beginning of April also marks the beginning of the Easter season. Bishop Mary will be joining us in celebration Easter Sunday – what a great honor!

May the Holy Spirit continue to sustain us all with joy as we walk together in ministry.

*Kimberly Axtell*  
*Senior Warden*



## From the Editor



It has been an “interesting time” these last 12 months or so. I have been told that living in interesting times is not always a bad thing, but it sure does try the soul. I have recently found myself involved in far too many activities, committees, groups, events, et cetera, both in my personal and professional life. I sit down now and then and wonder when (if ever) I’ll be able to have something approaching a “life of leisure.” I would like to say that the lofty goal would be to spend time praying, but sometimes I’d just love a nap.

This modern world of ours can separate us from the beauty of creation. I know that a few of our parishioners get out and marvel at the majesty of the world around us (thanks to the modern miracle of Facebook), but what about the rest of us? When was the last time you went somewhere that few people have been? Someone where that your mobile phone doesn’t work? Somewhere you were able to just stop and wonder? Somewhere to think and breathe without worrying about your schedule?

As I look back on my childhood, and compare it to some of the kids in the youth group, I have to ask myself if the constant pressure on our daily lives has improved anything. I realise that I lived in a bubble growing up, but it was a pleasant bubble to be in. Somehow in the 80s we never encountered drugs or gangs (amazing I know), never spent every waking moment in some sort of school sport or activity or project class. I remember that after school my brother and I would spend hours and hours trying to build the perfect wagon to race down the hill in (we discovered brakes were important after

passing a moving car going in the same direction, being unable to make a corner, hitting a kerb and crash landing into a freshly plowed field). When the wagon ceased to interest us, there were all manner of things to disassemble and “improve,” much to the chagrin of our parents I must add. There were lizards to catch, worms to dig up, bikes to ride, cows to tip. In modernity, kids spend every waking moment in some sort of young-adult-sided busy-box, and I am forced to wonder if God fits in there with all the other things that are crammed inside?

A problem that has “plagued” the Episcopal church for decades is the tendency for us to be quite rigid in some ways. I do not mean rigid in theology, nor in social beliefs, but in a specific social skill that involves talking about God, and heaven forbid we insert the word evangelism there. In my house, God really wasn’t spoken of in the way or frequency that our brothers and sisters in the Baptist/Pentecostal denominations might be used to, but we did take trips camping, hikes in the forest, and plenty of vacations to “nature-resort” type places where you are out in the middle of nowhere with no TV and no telephone, but plenty of bikes, hiking trails and fishing poles.

Right about now you are probably wondering where this ramble is headed, and I shall oblige with the answer: I encourage us all to do our utmost to slow down our lives. Sometimes we get so busy that we cannot see the world around us anymore. Now that spring is here, take a trip down the less travelled path and you just might find more than a transient feeling of serenity.

*Alex Dykes*

# Holy Week and Easter Schedule

## **April 1: Maundy Thursday**

*7:30 am Holy Eucharist*

*7:00 pm Joint Venture Service*

The morning service is our regularly scheduled Thursday Eucharist. The evening program is a Joint Venture service with our friends at the Congregational Church, CCAVUCC. It offers prayer, scripture, Eucharist or Communion, as well as the Stripping of the Altar and Tenebrae, powerful visual reminders and symbols of the desolation of Christ's death.

## **April 2: Good Friday**

*Noon - Prayer Book Liturgy*

This is a very solemn liturgy, consisting of prayer, Scripture, homily, and reflection on the meaning and value of the cross. There is no Eucharist at this service.

*1:00 pm - Stations of the Cross*

Children's Minister Melanie Click will lead participants along the Way of the Cross, a form of prayer attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi. Join in reflection as we make our way along the "stations" posted in the forested area next to the church. Meet at the Church Entrance.

## **April 3: Holy Saturday**

*7:30 pm - Trinity Cathedral, 81 N 2nd St, San Jose*

The beautiful Vigil service is appropriate to a Cathedral setting. It consists of prayer, scripture, baptisms, sermon, festive music, and Eucharist. Due to its length, children and perhaps others might find it a challenge.

## **April 4: Easter Day**

*6:15 am Sunrise Service at Quicksilver Park*

This informal service puts us in mind of the disciples approaching the empty tomb in the Gospel accounts. The light of dawn assure us of the light of Christ illuminating our hearts and minds.

Bring a flashlight to see and flowers for the cross. Directions to Quicksilver Park will be posted on our website, [www.eca-sj.org](http://www.eca-sj.org). Participants are encouraged to return to Fellowship Hall for refreshments and the 7:30am Eucharist.

*7:30 am Easter Eucharist*

*10:10 am Easter Egg Hunt*

*11:00 am Easter Eucharist*

We welcome Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves as our celebrant and preacher at both of our Easter services. Be sure to come and give the Bishop a warm ECA welcome!

## **April 6: Easter Monday**

Church Office will be closed.

## Search Committee Update

*In all lowliness and meekness we submit ourselves in peace to the calling of Christ. From diverse paths, we humbly present ourselves to walk together for the purpose of this search (for a new rector). With patience and love, we blend our gifts of the spirit. We build on the foundation of Christ's love and grace given to each of us. We join in a higher purpose to the glory of God, our Creator and Redeemer. We trust that in our unity and diversity we will work properly. From the depths of our knowledge to the heights of God's grace, we seek truth and growth in love and one goal in all.*

-Joy Austin-Lane

Congratulations to you all!! Your participation in the two "Shape of Things to Come" sessions yielded fantastic results and provided insight and critical information towards the goal of finding our new rector for ECA. During the two Sundays, more than 100 different people attended the round table discussions and provided pivotal information for the profile. Thank you all for your time, thoughts and prayerful participation for the future of ECA. Please continue to use the wishing well to make your thoughts and/or desires known to the committee. It is located in the Narthex and will remain there for another month.

A giant thank you goes to Susanne Moore who ensured that wonderful lunches were served to everyone. Her cooks and helpers included Suzanne Mayo, Bonnie McPherson, Gayle Byers, Maryke Williams, Sharon Mills, Amy Griffith, Caitlin McPherson, Ed Mueller, Pete Mayo, David Byers, Ron Howie, Arnold Moore and George Romer. We also appreciate everyone whose donations helped with the expenses. Thank you.

Your Search Committee is spending time and thought to create a profile that best represents

ECA today and in the future. It is clear that we are a "church family" who cares deeply about our faith and worship, our youth, our spirituality, our community and world, while deepening our understanding of the Lord. We laugh together; cry together; and sing and play together. We are not afraid to lead the way, because we know that others are willing to join us. Did I say we want to and are willing to grow in many ways? We intend to have the profile completed in April for the Vestry to review it. The Bishop's Office must also approve of it prior to being posted on the website and used for rector recruitment purposes.

As part of developing the profile, Hans Spanjaart is developing the ECA website which will contain the profile. He is including photos of church functions and would like anyone who has photos which should be considered for inclusion to send them to him. He is doing a remarkable job and the website will be an incredible marketing tool for our church now and in the future. You will be able to view the profile on the ECA website as soon as it is completed. It will not be published in a hard copy.

The Search Committee can feel the love and support of all of you and we sincerely appreciate your prayers. We are about to complete one step of the process and are feeling strong and able to complete the tasks ahead for us. We continue to grow and to learn and to be open to listening.

*Nancy Romer  
Search Committee Chairperson*

## From Joanna

Dear friends,

I want to commend the ECA community for their commitment to their faith community. The energy and gifts that you all brought to the two “The Shape of Things to Come” workshops were very, very impressive. Your next rector is going to very blessed to become part of your family of faith.

I want to thank all of you who participated in either or both of the workshops on February 21st and March 7th. Your hard work has provided some really good information to communicate to all of the applicants who respond to your call for a new rector. And personally, I feel incredibly blessed by your wonderful commitment to the hard work that the workshops required.

Thank you for the beautiful cross made by Dennis Moran, which you presented to me on March 7th. I shall cherish it forever, as it reminds me of your loving community of faith so committed to each other.

You are in my prayers as you move forward in the process to call your next rector. It will be a joy-filled process, I know.

Faithfully,

Joanna Shreve

## ECA Financial Snapshot

|                   |           |           |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Account Balances: | 2/31/09   | 2/28/10   |
| Checking          | \$8372    | \$4681    |
| Money Market      | \$26,707  | \$21,708  |
| Endowment         | \$259,190 | \$258,658 |
| 2010 Jan. - Feb.: | Actual    | Budget    |
| Contributions     | \$36,180  | \$35,833  |
| Other Income      | \$998     | \$1192    |
| Expenses          | \$44,568  | \$39,612  |



# Outing to Point Lobos

Saturday, April 17, 2010

Meet at Piney Woods Picnic and Parking Area

Park Opens at 8 AM

Entrance Fees \$10/ car (\$9 for Seniors)

NO Pets Allowed

**T**his park is very popular, located just south of Carmel on Hwy 1. When the park is full, visitors wait in a line to enter on a one out/one in basis. If the park is full, you can park along Hwy 1 and walk in for no charge.

Piney Woods is a centrally located picnic area with tables and restrooms. It is also a very easy walk to an area along the coast, which is accessible for climbing and tide pooling. Great for kids! There are quite a number of hikes that offer variety of terrain and scenery. Whether you like to hike along the coast or in the trees and forested areas, you'll find something you like at Point Lobos.

Bring your own food and beverages for the day. There are beaches at which you may swim. The ocean will be very cold. It could be windy or chilly so bring sweaters and/or jackets for comfort. Most importantly bring your spirit to explore God's creation.

Jerry and Susie Ferguson will plan to be at the park by 8 AM to claim at least two tables in the picnic area for us all to share or more if our group warrants. We are not able to reserve the area and tables. Come when you can, the earlier the better, and help us get the tables we need for the day. Check the ECA Fellowship Board for more details on the park and activities for the day's adventure.

# Filoli

**O**n Wednesday, April 14, we be taking a trip to Filoli up on the peninsula. We will tour the house in the morning, have lunch and take walking tour of the grounds after lunch. You can come for one part or stay for the whole day. The cost is \$15 or \$12 for seniors. Lunch is available in the cafe and runs \$7-\$10. We'll be meeting at church at 9:45 AM and arrive for the docent of self-guided tour at approximately 10:30 for the 2 hour tour. Some of the group may take an afternoon hike from 1:15 to 3:00 PM. As always please bring a friend! Find the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

*Filoli is a country house set in 16 acres of formal gardens surrounded by a 654 acre estate, located in Woodside at the southern end of Crystal Springs Lake.*

*Filoli was built between 1915 and 1917 for William Bowers Bourn II and his wife, Agnes Moody Bourn. The principal designer, San Francisco architect Willis Polk, used a free Georgian style that incorporated the tiled roofs characteristic of California at that time. Bruce Porter was commissioned to collaborate with the Bourns in planning the gardens, which were laid out 1917-1922.*

*The name of the estate is an acronym formed by combining the first two letters from the key words of William Bourn's credo: "Fight for a just cause; Love your fellow man; Live a good life."*

*Following the deaths of William and Agnes Bourn in 1936, the estate was sold to Mr. and Mrs. William P. Roth, owners of the Matson Navigation Company, in 1937. The Roth family built Filoli's botanic gardens. In 1975, Mrs. Roth donated the estate in its entirety to the National Trust for Historic Preservation.*

## Chick Flicks

**C**hick Flicks is back on Friday, April 23rd. We will begin at 5:30 PM with appetizers. Dinner will be served at 6 PM with the movie selection starting at 7 PM sharp. As of this date (the Shape deadline) the movie has not been confirmed. Please check the Fellowship Bulletin Board for details and our sign up for the evening. "Chick Flicks" is an opportunity for the women of our parish and their guests and friends to "look at some spiritual concepts within the framework of secular movies." Please consider joining us and bringing your friends. This is a great time to introduce other women to our church family.

For more information and details please contact: Susie Ferguson, 408-499-6381 cell, or Joy Austin-Lane, 301-385-2900 cell, for more information or to volunteer to help them with this event.

*Susie Ferguson & Joy Austin-Lane*  
*"Chick Flicks" organizers for April*



## Birthdays

|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Dennis Moran      | 3  |
| Ryan Hall         | 4  |
| Stephen Taylor    | 4  |
| Hank Ciappa       | 7  |
| Amanda Degnan     | 9  |
| Steven McPherson  | 9  |
| Sandie Mueller    | 9  |
| Juliette Rousseau | 9  |
| Jim McPherson     | 10 |
| Elizabeth Ward    | 10 |
| Doug Dunham       | 11 |
| Grace Yomtov      | 11 |
| Gayle Byers       | 13 |
| Sean McCormick    | 16 |
| Matthew Degnan    | 20 |
| Mariolien Ciappa  | 22 |
| Laura Moore       | 22 |
| Sandy Taylor      | 22 |
| Tyler McPherson   | 25 |
| Georgina Dunn     | 26 |
| Caitlin McPherson | 26 |

## Anniversaries

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Steve & Joyce Wing         | 19 |
| Todd & Kimberly Axtell     | 29 |
| Bryan & Inge Bond          | 29 |
| Karl and Jan English Lueck | 30 |

# How God Got That Way

**H**umankind has long been fascinated by the question of supernatural beings, which we call gods; beings which are not part of this physical world of ours but somehow beyond or above it.

Some speculate that this concept of god-ness is rooted in our own perceived weakness and vulnerability. In this sense, our rational human nature itself leads to thoughts of god – of some force beyond ourselves which is “in charge” and which can protect us – whether from marauding armies, storms, earthquakes, or illness.

In some societies, this has resulted in a pantheon of gods. Such was typically the case in the ancient world, which honored gods of various natural forces such as sun, wind, fertility, and the like, as well as of cities and nations. Such beings, while not visible, were felt to influence this world and the course of human life.

Perhaps the great gift or insight of the ancient Jews was the gradual development of belief in one god only. The origin of monotheism is obscure, and it is not clear from a purely historical point of view, how or why the ancient Jews came to this understanding.

Monotheism remains today the predominant understanding of god-ness. Jews, Christians, Muslims, and several other faith communities are all monotheists.

## *The Philosophy of God*

Some thinkers see the idea of god as simply a kind of projection outside ourselves of our own human attributes. They might suggest that god is created in our image rather than the other way around. Put another way: could god exist without us? Or: is the

fate of god and humankind inextricably linked? This is not a trivial question. Humankind seems almost hard-wired for belief. Could it be that in some sense God “needs” us in order to fulfill what it means to be God?

The nature or substance of God is another issue or difficulty faced by philosophers and theologians. Many speak of God as a spirit, but that in itself begs the question: what is a spirit? Words such as being or entity also seem to tell us very little. Nearly implicit in most concepts of god is personhood and some level of awareness and consciousness.

The Christian Scriptures tend to define God as love. This is an appealing conceptualization, since even the material world is governed by laws of attraction, such as gravity and electro-magnetism. It would make sense to personify – since only persons can truly love -- love as the ultimate source of all being, that is, God.

For some thinkers, this means that God changes, just as we do. After all, if the object of our affection changes, do we not also change? This approach is sometimes called Process Theology.

Philosophers over the centuries have never stopped trying to understand the meaning of god or god-ness. From a purely rational viewpoint, it is impossible to “prove” gods or God exists – otherwise everyone today would accept the existence of God. But that does not stop scholars from trying.

## *Arguments for God*

Many philosophers have tried to demonstrate the reasonableness of belief in God. Perhaps the most common such demonstration stems from the need of a “first cause.” That is, we readily see that one thing causes another in this world. In this view,

# How God Got That Way

God is the ultimate cause of everything – the entity beyond which we cannot ask why. Others of course might puckishly ask, why not...?

Another ancient demonstration of God's existence is called the Ontological Argument. First developed by philosopher Anselm of Canterbury in the eleventh century, the argument posits that God is that greater than which cannot be conceived or thought. Since, in Anselm's view, it is greater to actually exist than not to exist, God must exist. Think about that and let it sink in. This "proof" of God's existence is still hotly debated in philosophical circles today.

As is the nature of existence itself. Indeed, if existence is an attribute of creation, perhaps it is better to say that god does not, strictly speaking, exist since existence itself is a created form. Perhaps we should simply say God is or God subsists.

Other thinkers sometimes speak of signposts of God in daily life: such as our concepts of beauty and the arts, humor, play, and morality, all of which are suggestive of something beyond ourselves. Just as we will never be able to put a Mozart sonata or Shakespeare drama under a microscope, so can we never analyze God in a laboratory or test tube.

## *Science and God*

Developments in modern science, especially cosmology and physics, converge with philosophy and religious thought in raising suggestive questions about the origin of the universe and thus of all things scientifically knowable.

The mystery of time itself is one such issue. What is time? Does it have a beginning? And, if so, what was there before time, and what will there be after time? What is the origin of time? Its purpose?

Some scientists point out that the known universe is apparently finely calibrated for life and, specifically, human life. If the laws of nature – gravity, for example – were different by even a very small degree the world as it is could simply not exist. This anthropic principle is intriguing but controversial.

The ultimate question of course is, "Why is there something instead of nothing?" And, since there is obviously something, where did it all come from originally? Physics, philosophy, the arts, and religion approach these questions in different ways. But science itself cannot answer the ultimate question, "Why?"

The basic problem today with concepts such as creationism and intelligent design is that they mix disciplines of knowledge – science and theology. A beautiful poem about trees or the forest, no matter how much truth it might contain, does not belong to the science of forestry management or botany. They simply approach the subject from different perspectives. The problem with current books promoting atheism, such as those of Richard Dawkins and Sam Harris, is similar. No Christian believer thinks that God is part of the world of science. That is a given.

## *Conclusion*

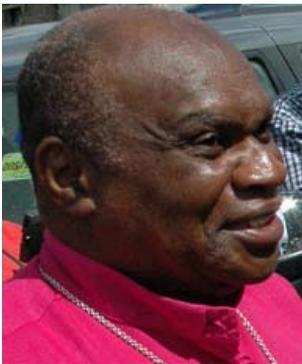
As believers, it can sometimes be salubrious for us to go back to the beginning and ask basic questions. The answers we come up with will determine the quality of our faith as well as our understanding of the world around us – and the God who made it all.

*Father Frank*

# A Reflection from the Bishop of Haiti

By Jean Zaché Duracin, February 17, 2010  
Episcopal News Service

**D**ioocese of Haiti Bishop Jean Zaché Duracin offers the following reflection, commenting on the situation in Haiti and the need for faith, prayer and renewal in the midst of devastation. The Diocese of Haiti is one of the largest and fastest growing dioceses in the Episcopal Church.



January 12 was a terrible day for the Haitian people. The earthquake left not a soul untouched. There is not a single family that did not lose a close friend or member: Mothers, fathers, siblings, in some cases entire families disappeared.

As for resources, we have next to nothing. The wreckage is beyond imagination. However, this situation delivers us into faith. I look at this as a baptism. We who are still alive have had the blessing of survival, but in many ways we have died to the ways of the past. We have the opportunity to rise up and start anew.

It is important for us in Haiti to turn inward and rediscover all that is just within us. It is imperative that we be reborn in this moment. We will live without the physical trappings of the church because we still have the same spiritual guidance, the confessions, the conversations, the reflections.

We need faith. We must go forward with confidence and hope. We will not give up. We must see within this situation the possibilities that exist. We

turn to Jesus Christ, who did not fall into temptation; though he was in hard situations, he overcame death in victory.

We await the resurrection of Christ as we explore what is found in this wreckage. Dear ones were lost, houses, clothes, possessions, memories – lives are reduced to nothing. Yet, we Haitians are speaking to each other in new ways. We can look at each other with new eyes. We can create a society of respect and love so that we may truly live as children of God. This is how we can rebuild our country.

We have seen how other people – other nations – love us. The people of the Episcopal Church have sent countless messages of sympathy. Knowing we are not alone gives us confidence in new life.

My wife was injured in the earthquake and left to seek medical care. I cannot visit her. I miss her and wish she were here with me. It is difficult to be separated. But this separation has given me solitude and has enabled me to reflect in a new way about how to proceed in a life founded in God as a Christian.

The earthquake did not diminish our worship, though it altered the places where it takes place. The church has not faltered and must now rise to a new role. Belief in Christ and love for our Lord carries us into a new phase of construction. We will raise new places to worship God.

We are looking forward to a celebration of Easter; familiarity of religious practices sustains us. We give glory to God. We sing within the church of the world. We celebrate life with the same spirit we were given it. In the middle of all the deaths, there is a God of love and of life, and we must shout Alleluia with the living.

## Lectern

The proclamation of our Holy Scriptures each Sunday is an important element of our service. It has been said that, over the course of three years, Episcopalians who attend church regularly will have heard read to them nearly the entire Bible. So, contrary to the old saw about Episcopalians not knowing or reading the Scriptures – just the opposite is true.

Because the Scripture lessons each Sunday are so important to our worship, it seems appropriate that we should have some “place” from which to read and proclaim them. We will soon have a lectern for this purpose in our sanctuary. It will look like the picture to the right.

The lectern will be placed in much the same location where the lectors stand now when they read. Theologically and symbolically, it will emphasize the centrality of the Word in our service. But practically, it also makes sense. It will afford the lector a place to hold the binder with our readings without trying to fumble with the microphone at the same time. After the “Liturgy of the Word” the lectern can be easily moved aside for Communion.

While Father Frank will continue to preach from the space in front of the altar, visiting preachers and other speakers might appreciate having a place for their notes or text. Funds for the purchase of the lectern will come from memorial monies already donated for such purpose – not from the operating budget. The expenditure will be just over \$100.



## Christian Education

Come one, come all to our annual Easter egg hunt! We will meet on the patio at 10:15 on Easter morning. Bring your baskets and be ready for a fun time!

The new Sunday School program is off to a good start. We have been learning about the Bible by cooking, making art, and playing games. After Easter we will continue with a brand new rotation of stations -- storytelling, science, and art. We begin each Sunday by praying and singing together in the large room of the Youth Center, and then we go to our stations for activities.

If you have questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions, please contact Melanie Click.

## Words Not Heard

“Say, Honey, let’s go join ECA so we can help bail them out of their financial problems.”

Words you will never hear around the dining room table. Yet many Episcopalians approach the subject of attracting new members – evangelism – as if this is all it is about. It does not work that way of course. And, at some level we all know it.

Why not join with your fellow parishioner, Susie Ferguson, as she and others strategize what we can offer the broader community. Educational programs? Opportunities for outreach? Personal enrichment programs? Spirituality? What will draw people to us? What can we offer others...? This is in itself an exciting new ministry at ECA. Why not make yourself a part of it? Contact Susie Ferguson at (408) 499-6381 and make a difference in our Parish Community for years, maybe decades, to come!

# Congregational Church of Almaden Valley, UCC

**A**t a recent congregational meeting the former AVUCC voted to begin using a new name, Congregational Church of Almaden Valley, UCC. There were several considerations in mind when making this decision, not the least of which was: the church had previously approved a name change by vote, but did not follow through on the decision at that time. CCAVUCC council is currently looking into the steps that we must take to legalize this change as well as ways that we can publicize the church with our new name.

Many of us have long felt that the name United Church of Christ never has gained good recognition in our society and that we are not readily perceived by our friends or by people driving down Camden as a mainstream Protestant denomination. Several people at the meeting told stories of trying to explain to friends that we are really a Congregational Church (not the Church of Christ, for example), and others told of driving past the church for a long time before realizing that this might be a Protestant church of just the sort that they were looking for.

The confusion in the UCC name arises from the fact that while we have our roots in the Congregational Church that dates back to the 16th century in England, in 1957 the denomination merged with two other churches, Evangelical and Reformed and the Christian Church, and renamed itself the United Church of Christ. At that time many Congregational churches retained their original name but added UCC to indicate their new identity as well. By renaming ourselves Congregational Church of Almaden Valley, UCC we are following the pattern of many other churches in our denomination, for example, First Congregational Church of San Jose, UCC.

In addition to increasing our name recognition, we are pleased find in our new name a way of tapping back into our Congregational heritage. As a group we identify with this heritage, particularly in its traditionally democratic polity, as well as its open minded and encompassing approach to both theological and social issues.

*Sue Scaff*  
*CCAVUCC Moderator*

