

September 2012



The Shape

Newsletter of The Episcopal Church in Almaden

September is upon us, and with it, Labor Day weekend: the annual weekend of barbecues and mourning over the passing summer. But Labor Day, of course, has a history beyond being the traditional end of wearing of white and seersucker. It was made a federal holiday in 1894, hurriedly put into place to quell conflict with workers after the violence and bloodshed of the Pullman Strike. The labor movement (as the bumper sticker reads, ‘The folks who brought you the weekend’) insisted on a day to honor the economic and social contributions of workers to our country. When you stop to think about it, resting and gathering with family and friends is a great way to honor the work we all do other days in the year. It’s sort of a national Sabbath, you could say.

[Continued on page 3]

SUNDAY SERVICES

7:30 AM

11:00 AM

THURSDAY SERVICE

7:30 AM

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

Worship Schedule

Rector

The Reverend Katharine Flexer

(408) 364-6524

Staff

Susie Ferguson

Youth & Christian Education

Kristal Kim

Music Director & Organist

Bill LaVallee

Treasurer

Dennis Elliott

Administrative Assistant

Assisting in our Ministry

George Romer

Senior Warden

Steve Wing

Junior Warden

William Bond & Inge Bond

Acolytes

Bobbi Finley

Altar Guild

Kathy Mastre

Coffee Hour

Sharon Mills

Greeters

Jenny Hoyt

Lay Readers

Ann Avoux

Prayer Vine

Dave Byers

Ushers

Bonnie McPherson

Junior High Youth Group

Inge Bond

Senior High Youth Group

Andy Kerr

Stewardship

Alex L. Dykes

Editor

Jill Hertzner

Copy Editor

Sept 2 - Labor Day Weekend

7:30 AM Holy Eucharist

10:00 JV Worship with Communion

Sept 6 - Gregorio Aglipay, trans.

7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist

Sept 9 - Proper 18

7:30 & 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Folk Sunday

Sept 13- John Chrysostom

7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist

Sept 16 - Proper 19

7:30 & 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Healing Sunday

Sept 20 - John Patteson & Companions

7:30 AM Thursday Morning Prayer

Sept 23 - Proper 20

7:30 & 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist

Sept 27 - Vincent de Paul

7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist

Sept 30 - Proper 21

7:30 & 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist - New Music Sunday

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E-MAIL ADDRESS Theshape@eca-sj.org

From the Rector

[Continued from cover]

So we are gladly renewing the tradition of a shared service with CCAVUCC on Labor Day weekend. This year we are particularly using it as an opportunity to honor, thank, and celebrate the work of several people in our two congregations, work done for the good of the whole on our buildings and grounds. We'll have a barbecue too, in Labor Day tradition. It will provide us with a long-overdue opportunity to give thanks for improvements and efforts made around our property. But I have a further suggestion to make as we approach Labor Day.

Bishop Greg Rickel told the May stewardship conference participants about a church that invited its members to bring a symbol of their work to place on the altar on Labor Day. The church's intention was to make it clear to people that all of their work, outside and inside the church, is part of their vocation, holy and blessed by God. One year a postal carrier came forward and laid his mailbag on the altar. When he turned to go back to his seat, he had tears in his eyes. 'No one ever told me my work was holy,' he said. That simple gesture had shown him that what he did, too, was honored.

It is easy for all of us to forget this. We come to church on Sunday and think "churchy" thoughts, but when we go back out into the world on Monday, our minds are elsewhere entirely. We do our job because it makes us money, or gets us recognition and a promotion, or is fulfilling and meaningful to others. But we may not remember that we also do those jobs to the glory of God. Likewise we might fulfill our obligations to others because it's the right thing to do, or because they or we need it – but forget that God also delights in our tasks

when they serve others. God is and wants to be involved in all the daily things, not just the spiritual thoughts and the Sunday prayers.

Perhaps it's easier to compartmentalize on this. After all, if God is involved in what we do with all of our lives, then that makes us much more accountable for how we treat coworkers and caregivers, cleaning women and garbage collectors, store clerks and tech help line folks. If our and everyone's work is sacred, then we should indeed be thanking our postal carrier – and praying for her too. The same goes for our own unpaid labor, working in our garden, vacuuming the floor, serving on the charity board, wiping the sticky hands. If we do it with God in mind, if we pray for the task, the job, the worker, the one we labor to help, it makes it far easier to do what needs to be done. We do the work more willingly when we're aware of whom it serves.

Unfortunately, our Labor Day service is too full of other things for us to include that wonderful idea of bringing our work forward to place on the altar. But I invite you to do it in your prayers and heart anyway. Consider everything you do this month – whether it be work you do for pay, volunteer work you do at the church or elsewhere, caring for your grandkids or your kids, shopping for groceries to cook the meals for your family, whatever it might be – consider it all as vocation, honored and blessed by God. Lift it up in your prayers; lift up the work of others as well. What you do matters; this Labor Day, stop to notice that, and use your work to serve others and glorify God.

Kate Flexer

Senior Warden

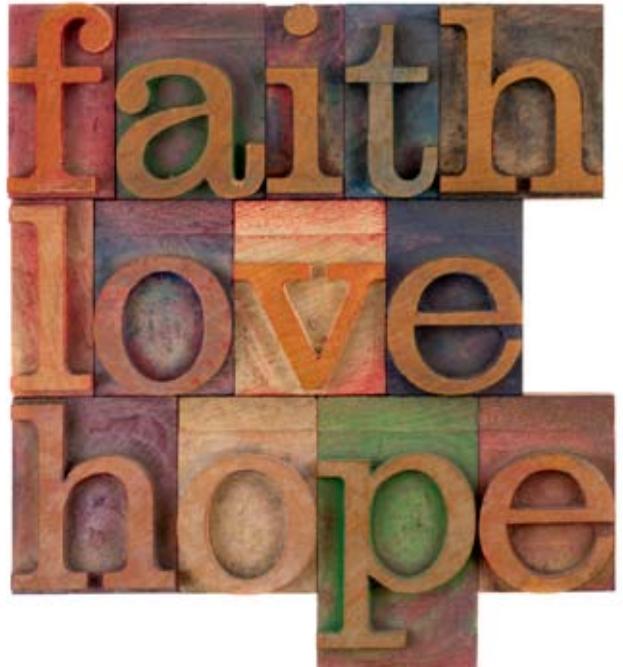
Your Vestry met in retreat on Saturday, August 11 and in a scheduled Vestry meeting on August 14. Regarding progress toward our 2015 Vision, our collective best assessment of our progress toward realizing our full Vision is over 2/3 of the way. However, the first part has been easy; we were able to pick “low hanging fruit”. Now, we have tall ladders to climb to reach fruit high in the trees. (For our vision statement, see the ECA website.) Your Vestry is committed to moving forward on the additional work Jesus calls us to do to reach our Vision.

Stewardship is a large part of our overall goal. As we appreciate the spiritual leadership Kate is providing for us, we should remember that Kate and her family are a gift to us and we need to care for them as we would family. Kate shared in her sermon on August 12 that she made a decision that she would forego an opportunity to serve on a commission from General Convention in favor of devoting more of her spare time to visits with her Seattle family. Those of us who have cared for our parents as they aged recognize the quality of that decision. Yes, we chose Kate (and Jim, Frances, & Benjamin) to help us grow physically and spiritually. We need to recognize that they also chose us.

In response, we are called to support and exercise good stewardship toward them as they enter “family space” many of us have been through. So, let’s be mindful of how we can help them through some tough times ahead and minister to them, too.

At our Vestry meeting, Mike Schmidt led a meditation on 1 Peter 5:2-3. The verse exalts us to be shepherds by willingly serving eagerly by setting examples of leadership and service to our parishioners and our community. Please respond in kind to our Vestry when called upon during the next few months to provide feedback and renew your service pledges. And, if you are moved, join a ministry or create one to fill a need.

George Romer



From the Editor



As we head into the fall, our preparations for the coming winter are in full swing. We decided it was probably a good idea to get some siding shingles on the house before we spent another wet winter with unprotected walls. We're also hoping to get gutters up before our typical 50 inches of rain turns the side of the house into a pond again.

While this task doesn't sound daunting at first, we soon realised that "rough" building tasks like foundations and framing are different. They are physically demanding but create little room for argument. However, detail oriented tasks like trim and siding are designed to strain even the strongest of marriages. Of course, it didn't help matters that when we designed the house nearly three years ago we didn't discuss what the outside would look like. Procrastination will get you in the end.

I had envisioned something "Cape Codish" with weatherbeaten shingles and simple lines. Rob had his heart set on entirely different look with board and batten gables and plenty of snazzy woodwork. Aside from design complications, the reality of two people trying to complete a task together with varying levels of attention to detail posed another challenge. Rob takes pride in hair-width seams, perfect angles, artistic flourishes and symmetry. I just want to know the task came in under budget. In the end you can't tell the difference between the shingles I put up and the ones Rob put up. Because he fixed mine. Marriage has definite benefits.

Out in the forest, our chickens have started their own preparations. The older girls are moulting and fattening up for the impending "brutal" California

winter. As the old feathers float away in the breeze, the young chickens are growing at an incredible rate not knowing the changes that lay ahead. I can only imagine what it's like to lay your first egg without someone telling you what's going on.

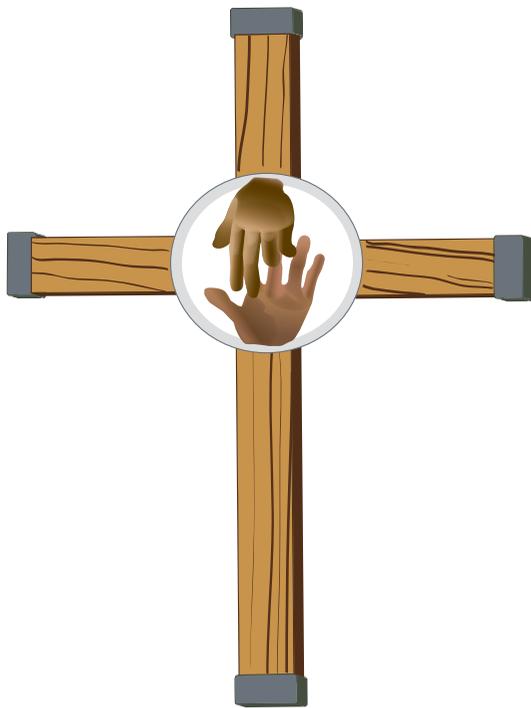
As we all get ready to enter the busy season for the year with work, school and an endless stream of holidays, what are you doing to winterise yourself? Are you ducking your head in the sand hoping spring will arrive soon? Are you fluffing your feathers? Are you too busy with all the tasks at hand? Are you deciding to take a new challenge on perhaps?

As I sat at home looking into the forest and our half-shingled wall I asked myself what we are doing to winterise our souls. Coincidentally as I went through the articles for the month I had a few answers. First up we have the next Rooaah meeting at the UnWined wine bar on Wednesday, September 12th at 7:30 PM. Rooaah is an informal gathering and discussion of faith and faith related topics organised by our parishioner, and my new friend, Elizabeth Drescher.

If you prefer something more formal, if you can call anything at ECA "formal," Mary McPherson has decided to expand her Bible study programme to include Wednesday evenings at 7:30PM in addition to the existing Thursday morning schedule.

As we near the Christmas season, I encourage you to make sure your shingles are up and your winter feathers are in and perfectly preened. Once your home is water tight, think about how you can prepare yourself for the coming season.

Alex Dykes



Pastoral Care

If you or anyone you know is in need of assistance, please give one of our willing volunteers below a call!

Meals

Anne Tysanner
artysanner@yahoo.com
(408) 927-7140

Rides

Gayle Byers
dng_byers@sbcglobal.net
(408) 268-0448

Small Repairs

Allan Jones
adjones9966@yahoo.com
(408) 268-3322

Prayer Vine

Ann Avoux
annavoux@gmail.com
(408)270-2406

Card Ministry

Margaret Halliwell
(408) 267-5229

Receptions

Marianne Schmidt
mschmidt8120@sbcglobal.net
(408) 323-8025

We're on the Web!

<http://www.eca-sj.org>



- **Worship Matrix**
- **Bulletins**
- **Past Shape Issues**
- **Church Calendar**
- **Recorded Sermons**
- **Upcoming Events**

JV Updates

- The Roof - The minor repairs and resurfacing work on the roof was completed satisfactorily by BCI on July 25. Bob Green and I did the final walk-thru with the contractor's foreman. They did a really nice job with a few extras thrown in. We also have a new re-certification and 10-year warranty in hand.

- The JV board has reviewed and accepted a bid to repair and replace the gutters all around the whole church. Work on this project started on August 14 and was completed ahead of schedule. We will be painting the gutters on the narthex but the others are designed to never need to be painted.

- The Youth are working diligently on moving the youth center to the far corner Sunday school room.

- Susie Ferguson presented a very well thought out plan for the overhauling of the entire downstairs 'old fellowship hall' area. The JV board agreed to seriously look into the renovation along the lines of Susie's proposal. More on this as it happens.

Steve Wing

Oktoberfest

An early reminder to keep the date of Saturday, October 13, 6-9:00pm open on your calendar for this year's Oktoberfest dinner. We haven't begun developing this year's menu yet, but how about beginning with fresh-baked soft pretzels for an appetizer, and we'll go from there. Good food, good fellowship, and great fun! There will be a sign-up sheet and more details on the ECA bulletin board by later this month.



Event Schedule

Last month I wrote about the Event Schedule, which is located on the home page of ECA's website. I hope this calendar proves useful to some of you. This month I want to write about two other calendars.

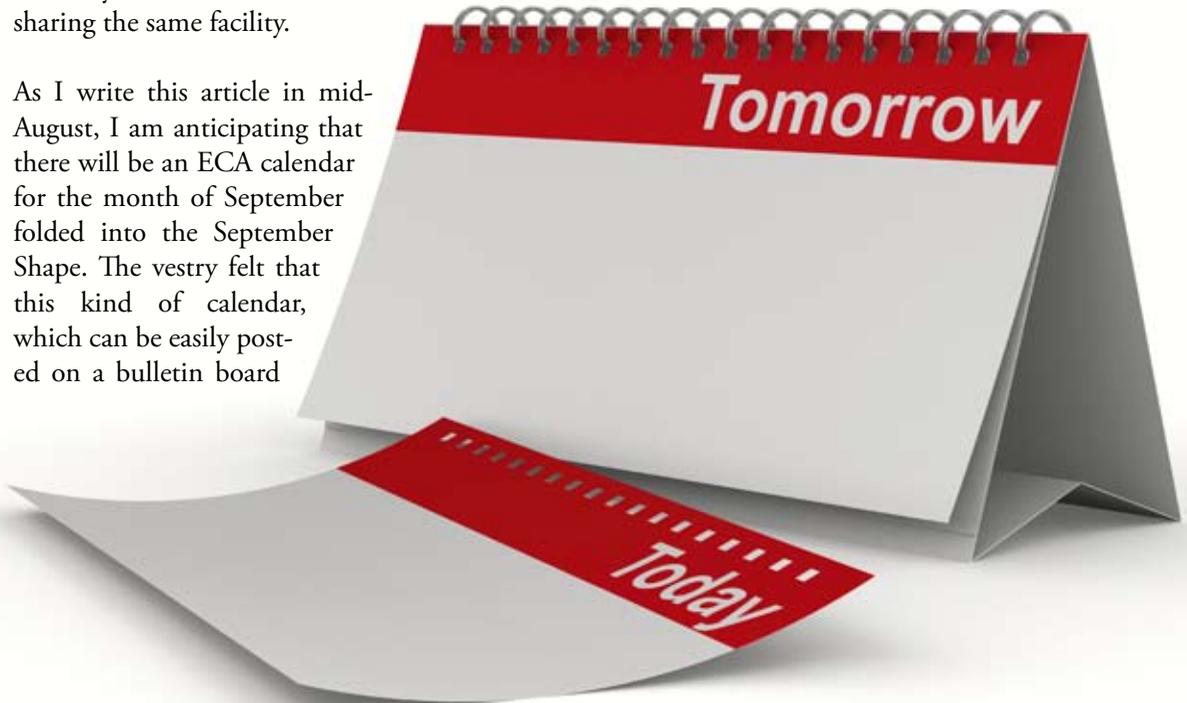
Also located on the home page of the website, under the heading "Latest News," is the Facilities Calendar. This is a useful calendar as it shows everything scheduled at our facility, whether it is for ECA, for CCAVUCC, or a joint event for both churches. The Facilities Calendar is maintained by our office manager, Dennis Elliott. Any events held at the Joint Venture facility should go through Dennis and be placed on this calendar. Failure to do so could result in an inconvenience between two conflicting events, the tie going to the group who scheduled their event through the office. This is a way of life with two churches sharing the same facility.

As I write this article in mid-August, I am anticipating that there will be an ECA calendar for the month of September folded into the September Shape. The vestry felt that this kind of calendar, which can be easily posted on a bulletin board

or refrigerator, would be most useful to members of the congregation. Hopefully, it will show you, at a glance, everything that is going on for a given month.

All of these calendars may seem redundant, but it is the vestry's hope that a little redundancy results in everyone having an opportunity to be informed. We regard communication as being vitally important in the life of our church. Let me know if you have thoughts or suggestions along these lines.

Mike Schmidt



Anniversaries

Todd & Ellen Lukanc	1
Matt & Kelli Gundersen	3
John & Mary McPherson	3
Allan & Virginia Jones	4
Graham & Lynne Kelly	20
Jerry & Susie Ferguson	21

Birthdays

Brenda McHenry	2
Louis Stephan	3
Margot Estrade	4
Ted Fahlen	5
Kelli Casale	8
Dorothy Willard	9
Debbie Estill	14
Marc Bond	16
Maryke Williams	17
Charlotte Norris	18
Pat McGarvin	19
Jerry Long	20
Gary Cassetta	24
Kathy Mastre	24
Ben Austin-Lane	25
Joe Machado	28
Nancy Romer	29
Jean Cassetta	30



Thank You

John and Mary McPherson: hauling and dumping piles of brush and debris from our lot.

Mike Schmidt: a thoughtful meditation for our vestry meeting.

Kate Flexer: recent sermons are so inspiring!

Debbie Estill: student supplies for the mission.

Jon and Sharon Mills: hosting Bike and Build's overnight stay on August 11.

All counters: "rolling" with the new process.

David Byers: his extra effort, blood, sweat and tears with the Sunday BBQs and his work around the property.

John McPherson: JV property maintenance.



Sunday School

Our Sunday School program starts this month on September 9th with our unit “We Remember Moses.” The children will begin with the story of baby Moses floating on the Nile. From there we will be witnesses of God calling Moses to a special task, meet Pharaoh, and go with the Israelites through the Red Sea. To help me share these stories this month we have Wendy Martin, Ashley and Nick Martin, Phyllis Chai and Sandie Mueller as our teachers.

We also have been blessed with some outstanding representations of the stories and personalities by Mary and Dennis Moran, and Alex Alvarado. Their artwork is sure to bring a very special visual excitement and life to our lessons. I hope you will take time to come by our Learning and Conference Center and see for yourself these treasures by our resident artists.

To begin this school year, we have 11 adults (besides those listed above: Gwen Hacker, Janice Krahenbuhl, Debbie Estill, Leslie Rousseau, Ann Mayers, Alex Alvarado, Kelly Yamanishi, & Mike Hertzler) willing to teach or shepherd with us. Isn't that fantastic! This begins a wonderful framework that will serve us well as our program grows from its “one room Sunday School” to multiple classes. I hope this year we will all work to expand our program so we can offer at least 2 classes beginning in 2013. If you would like to work on this “expansion idea” please give me a call and let's brainstorm some new ideas and activities we might try to grow our Sunday School and churches.

Susie Ferguson

Youth Renovations

Are you as excited as I am about the impending renovations for our church? I know many of you, like me; have exciting visions for our joint programs and our individual churches.

Let's continue to be positive and rally for the major renovations that are vital to restore a new energy and appeal for visiting and church shopping families. Let's put the health and safety of our children and youth and those yet to join us in the foreground and make our areas for them more welcoming and inviting with new life –bright, shining, clean, and age appropriate. Let's be proud of our facility so we are comfortable inviting new families, especially those with young children to join us. Are you on board? I hope so. Let's continue moving forward. Let's build a better and brighter future for our churches.

We have many things that have served their life expectancies with us and now need to move on to make room for new exciting additions that will enhance our current programs. We are finding them new homes where they can continue “productive lives,” so to speak. One such example was some cabinetry and counters that have now been relocated to the Santa Maria Urban Ministries building in downtown San Jose. Special thanks go to Betty Consorte for her help in this relocation. We will continue to work towards recycling our old as best we can.

Susie Ferguson

Bike & Build

When people arrived for the 7:30 service on August 12, the church was buzzing with activity. We hosted a group of thirty young people from Bike & Build as they pedaled across the country to help provide affordable housing. This group of 19- 25 year olds started from Charleston, South Carolina on May 27th. Over 81 days, they pedaled 4200 miles through 13 states. Along the way, they stopped and spent 16 days building affordable housing in ten communities including Chico, CA. All along their route, their jerseys and trailer proclaimed their mission.

Jon and I met them as they ended their second to last day in San Jose. Refueled with some lemonade, grapes, and trail mix, they were able to use our restrooms and hose to clean off the road grime and get ready for an evening out together before ending their trip the next day. After pizza and fun, they returned to the church to spend the night in the youth center while their bikes and gear were safely locked in fellowship hall. Jon was their host for the night, just in case they needed anything. EARLY Sunday morning, Alex, Rob, and I returned to help Jon fix them a hot breakfast. With their stomachs full and their gear packed and re-stowed in their trailer (they even swept and mopped fellowship hall), Kate said a blessing, and we waved good-bye as they headed towards their final destination- Santa Cruz.

It was a great experience to talk to these young people. Without exception, they were bright, articulate, enthusiastic, and VERY appreciative. Each one is required to raise \$4500 in order to participate in the ride. One girl told me she raised \$300 selling grilled cheese sandwiches during finals week! As a group, they raised a total of \$158,230. The donations go towards funding the affordable

housing building projects Bike & Build supports throughout the country.

This ride was one of eight rides organized each year. Each one starts on the East coast and ends on the West coast. Together they promote the importance of affordable housing in 47 states, 1 province, and hundreds of communities nationwide. If you would like more information about this organization or to make a donation to this important cause, visit www.bikeandbuild.org.

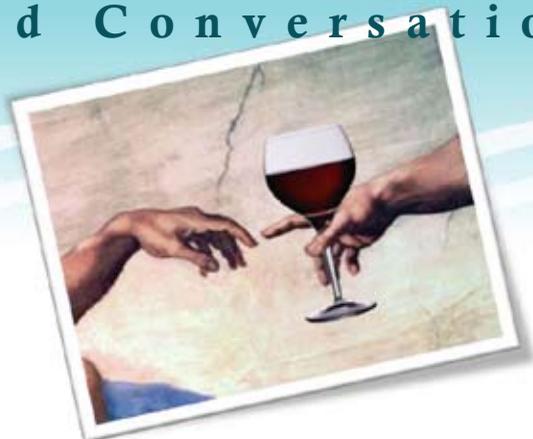
Sharon Mills



F A L L 2 0 1 2

Rooaah!

S p i r i t - F i l l e d C o n v e r s a t i o n



What is Rooaah?

Rooaah is a phonetic spelling of the Hebrew word for breath, wind, or spirit, *ruach*. And, Rooaah is a relaxed conversation about the Big Questions that challenge believers and seekers alike—*What's the difference between spirituality and religion? What role does/should faith play in politics? Why is there suffering? Is God really listening? Is Heaven really for real? Is Hell? How can we reconcile science and religion?*

A Rooaah gathering is meant to give breath to your questions in a community of fellow travelers, companions on the road to wherever our faith takes us next!

Are you a mystic?

September 12

Location: UnWined

6946 Almaden Expressway

See where the Spirit moves us next, as we gather this summer for soulful conversation. Friends, neighbors, and other companions are more than welcome to join in our relaxed, intergenerational conversation.

In September, we'll continue our discussion of how we experience the presence of God in our lives today. How might we prepare for such experiences? How do they call us to act in world beyond our personal spiritual enrichment? Bring your stories!

For more information, contact Elizabeth Drescher at elizabeth.drescher@att.net.



The Episcopal Church in Almaden

God Stops Here for Love and Laughter

6581 Camden Avenue, San Jose, CA 95120 (408) 268-0245

Adult Bible Study

This fall we have two opportunities to study the Bible together. We will continue our traditional Thursday morning Bible study (10:30-12) and will add a Wednesday evening Bible study (7:30-9). Both groups will study the same material and the format will be the same. This will make it easier for people who have a conflict (like work!) during the day to attend.

Our study this year will focus on the Old Testament book of Exodus and the life of Moses. If studying the OT seems uninteresting to you, consider St. Augustine's words:

*"The New is in the Old contained;
The Old is by the New explained."*

In 2 Tim. 3:16 we read, "All scripture is inspired by God ..." If that is so, we need to ask, "Why did God bring certain events to pass? Why did he allow them to happen? Why did he give us the record of these events? What is he teaching us through these records?"

The importance of the story of the nation of Israel's escape from Egypt, and the role it played in the whole foundation of Christian belief cannot be overstated. There is astonishing insight into Christ given in the Laws of Moses. The exodus of the Israelites from Egypt was a huge turning point in the history of Judaism, and introduces the whole concept of salvation and redemption. Many of the New Testament books refer to this momentous event.

If we acknowledge there is Divine intention in scripture, even though we may not understand all the teaching, and if we believe there is a lesson in every incident recorded, then studying Exodus will be a veritable feast.

Like gemstones, precious things are not all on the surface. We must dig in order to find them. I am truly excited to start this journey of discovery and hope many of you will join me.

**Wednesday evening Bible study
September 12, 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM**

**Thursday morning Bible study
September 13, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

Both groups will meet at the church, downstairs in the old fellowship hall. Every effort will be made to end on time. Check ECA's website for an agenda and homework assignments and mark your calendars!

Mary McPherson

Myth, Mystery & Me

How do we, as women of faith, navigate the gap between images from pop culture & ideals from scripture? The Reverend Peggy Bryan from St. Phillip's, San Jose is leading a 2-day retreat sponsored by the Episcopal Church Women of El Camino Real to help us all find out. The event will take place at the St Francis Retreat Center in San Juan Bautista on September 17th & 18th.

Visit www.edecr.org/event_detail.php?i=666 for more information and to sign up.

Stewardship

As we approach the fall, our stewardship activities are ramping up. Be sure to keep an eye on The Shape and the midweek bulletin for a schedule of events and updates.

- The structure of our ECA programs and the Vestry's oversight of the ministries of the congregation continue to focus on the time and talent portion of our parish stewardship. The goal is to be effective ministers to our parish and our neighbors. This involves meeting the needs of our ECA family, and offering a variety of ways that we as Christians can serve each other and the community we live in.

- A series of Ministry Fair activities are being planned to acquaint people with our ministries, answer questions, and encourage participation and involvement.

- During the spring, Kate delivered an outstanding series of sermons on the subject of stewardship and ways that our participation in stewardship can impact our lives and the world around us.

- The Vestry held a retreat on August 12 to review the vision for 2012 that was developed by the parish at large in the search process two years ago. This review showed that the vision remains relevant today and that we are on track in moving as a congregation to meet it. It also revealed areas where more effort will be required to reach our goals, and people from the Vestry and the congregation at large have been identified to help address these areas as we move into our Fall programs.

- We are organizing a team of people to visit each family in the parish to get feedback on how needs are being met, to encourage people to contact ministry leaders within the congregation with sugges-

tions, and to provide more opportunities for participation in parish programs.

- In the Fall, we will focus on our annual Pledge Drive to support the process of formulating our budget for 2013. This budget will reflect the feedback we received from the parish on adjusting programs to meet emerging needs and opportunities.

- We also plan to offer an opportunity this fall to learn how family financial and estate planning can help us take care of our families more effectively and provide opportunities for Planned Giving to ECA and other charitable institutions that best reflect our personal desires.

All in all, we have a busy few months ahead of us, and I hope that you will volunteer to help in these activities when invited. The structure of our stewardship leadership model is:

INVITE everyone to participate in all aspects of our parish life.

ENCOURAGE people who may be interested: offer to make sure that they are comfortable and welcome in their role in ministry; and recognize and thank them for their efforts.

CELEBRATE the contributions that our stewardship makes to our parish and community.

Andy Kerr

Garden Party

Susie and Jerry Ferguson, in partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Phi Mu Alumnae Chapter, are having a Garden Party on September 22nd to raise money for the Children's Hospital in Oakland. The goal of this chapter of the Children's Miracle Network is to raise \$1200 at this event. A limited number of tickets will be sold for this "Garden Party" which will feature an array of savory and sweet delights along with a variety of beverages to delight everyone's palate from 2:00-4:30PM.

Tickets will be \$30 each and only 40 tickets to the event will be sold. Tickets will need to be purchased in advance. Only checks will be accepted made payable to CMN Children's Miracle Network. Cancelled checks will be evidence of your donation.

If you would like to attend this Garden Party and support the Children's Hospital in Oakland, contact Susie Ferguson to reserve your place.



Tabard Theatre

Tabard Theatre is performing *Elvis Has Left the Building* on September 29th at 3 PM. Join us for this South Bay Premier comedy packed with The King's unforgettable music and join us for dinner afterwards. Just arrange for your own tickets by phone 1-800-838-3006 or online via website www.tabardtheatre.org and click Box Office. Let Susie Ferguson know that you have tickets and let her know what you might want to do as a "dinner event" following the show. We'll coordinate something fun.

Lenten Meditations

Participate in ECA's very own book of Lenten Meditations! I will be collecting 40 contributions over the next several months and then assembling them in ECA's very own book of daily devotionals that the whole congregation can read each day in Lent. Be thinking now about sharing a meaningful scripture verse that touches you personally.
More to come!

Mary McPherson



Address Service Requested

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The Shape

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