

February 20 13

The **S**hape

Newsletter of The Episcopal Church in Almaden

From the Rector

Living in our holiday-mad neighborhood, Frances has become very keen on decorations. There's one house in particular that decorates for every single holiday well in advance. Halloween decorations go up sometime in September, followed by harvest-themed items for Thanksgiving and shortly thereafter by Christmas kitsch. As soon as the Christmas gear is down, up goes Valentine's Day décor. Other houses fill in the gap with Diwali lights in November and Chinese New Year red in February.

When the idea of Martin Luther King, Jr. day was introduced, Frances was curious what you do for that day. Well, not much, I said – we remember MLK

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Service Schedule

SUNDAY SERVICES

7:30 AM

11:00 AM

THURSDAY SERVICE

7:30 AM

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

Acolyte Master

Bobbi Finley

Altar Guild

Kathy Mastre

Coffee Hosts

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

Folk Music Director

Alex L. Dykes

Shape Editor

Mary McPherson

Bible Study

Sharon Hall

Children & Families

Worship Schedule

- Feb 3** **4 Epiphany**
7:30 & 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist
- Feb 7** **Cornelius the Centurion**
7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist
- Feb 10** **Last Epiphany**
7:30 & 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Folk Sunday
- Feb 13** **Ash Wednesday**
7:30 AM Book of Common Prayer Service
7:00 PM Joint Venture Service
- Feb 17** **1 Lent**
7:30 & 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist
- Feb 21** **John Henry Newman**
7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist
- Feb 24** **2 Lent**
7:30 & 11:00 AM Holy Eucharist
- Feb 28** **Anna Cooper & Elizabeth Wright**
7:30 AM Thursday Morning Eucharist

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From the Rector

[Continued from cover]

and what he did...but no, there are no decorations for that day. We went to the library to look for a book about MLK. There were probably 100 books on Christmas, but I had to search hard to find a picture book about King. And yet, of course, that day honors what became a seismic shift in our culture, the beginnings of action toward race equality in our country. No holiday decorations, no parties, and yet a day of real importance nonetheless.

In the next few months we will have two such days on our calendar – days of seismic shift with little outward symbolism to show for it. Ash Wednesday begins our season of Lent on February 13. We will come to church and receive a small smudge of ashes on our foreheads; some of us may fast; but we will also hear the reading from Matthew’s gospel that tells us to look glad and happy even when we’re fasting and penitent. Even with the smudge of ashes, this day is about what happens inside of us – it’s not meant to be about outward show. And then Good Friday, on March 29, will end our Lenten season. We will come to church and sit through the noon hour, in quiet and prayer, remembering Jesus’ death on the cross. We might walk the Stations of the Cross. But again, there is little else to show for that day – even though it is a day that changes the whole equation of God and the world.

Perhaps that’s the way it is with things that deeply matter. Christmas is full of outward show and decoration, but the real truth of it, the Incarnation, does not lend itself to yard ornaments. So too with the reorientation of our hearts called for on Ash Wednesday. Ashes might remind us that we are mortal, and ‘to dust we shall return,’ but they do not mark the change of true repentance. That is something within us – turning our attention and our priorities to God and God’s desires for us, re-directing our steps toward God rather than all the

other things that call and beckon for us to follow.

But of course, this change isn’t just entirely within us. When we turn our attention to God first, when we reorganize our priorities so God’s things are at the top, it changes how we live. It wouldn’t impress anyone to say ah yes, I’ve changed, I’ve repented of my former ways and become more Christ-like, and then to go on about all the same old mean things we did before. When we reorient our hearts, our behavior and our choices and our actions all follow. We can see on the outside what’s happening on the inside.

And the strange thing about repentance is that sometimes it goes the other way entirely. Sometimes we can’t get our hearts to want to change; we’re set in our habits of thought and it’s hard to shift them. Sometimes we have to make the changes in our external lives first – start acting ‘as if’ in order to effect the change within. By changing our habits of action, we can begin to change our habits of thought – and by that, to change our hearts.

There are no holiday decorations to put up to show for this work. But we might see one symbol for it in our gardens. Seeds send up little fragile shoots at first, that gradually and determinedly grow into strong, healthy plants. But sometimes those plants need external stakes to hold them up – so we might see barely discernible signs of green, with strong cages and stakes standing ready to support them. Perhaps that’s the outward show of the season for what is happening within: new growth, new direction, little by little at first, needing the support of discipline and community to make it possible... and growing into a whole new way of being in the end.

Kate Flexer

Welcome New Leadership

At our Annual Meeting on January 13, we voted in a new slate for vestry, Joint Venture board, and diocesan delegates. Please join me in welcoming the following to their new ministries!

New Vestry Members:

Bryan Bond recently finished a term as JV President and is eager to continue his service to ECA. Bryan and his wife Inge have been at ECA for many years, raising their three kids Brad, Marcus, and Will here. Bryan works for Siemens and was instrumental in installing a new phone system at the church.

Kelli Casale has been at ECA for over 20 years. She serves on the Altar Guild and was previously on vestry and the search committee. Kelli works for the city of Mountain View as a Code Enforcement Officer, so she will keep us on the right path.

Alex Dykes has been at ECA for over 30 years. He was baptised and confirmed at ECA and married Rob McClaine here in 2008. Alex has served on vestry and JV several times, and is the editor of the Shape. Alex is on the Altar Guild and is a regular supplier of eggs to the ECA congregation.

Beth Proudfoot has been a member of ECA about five years. She is a child therapist and parenting coach, director of the Child & Family Counseling Group, a private mental health clinic for children. Beth has three grown sons. She has led several parenting classes here for the wider community and has sung in the choir for several years.

New Joint Venture Board Members:

Ellen Lukanc has served as diocesan delegate and on vestry and the search committee. Currently she

is on the diocesan Disaster Preparedness Committee. She and her husband Todd have been members for 25 years, and raised their two sons Greg and Doug here at ECA. Ellen works as a nurse at Stanford Hospital.

Ann Mayers has been a member of ECA for almost 20 years, and has worked with the youth group and Sunday School besides offering her musical gifts with the bassoon and, now, the pennywhistle. Ann is a writing coach, editor and an ardent opera fan.

Jon Mills is former senior warden and former leader of the youth group. He and his wife Sharon have been members of ECA about ten years, and have two daughters, Taylor and Brooke. Jon works at a biotech firm in Redwood City formulating pharmaceutical drugs, and when he gets a spare moment, enjoys mountain biking, skiing, and 'standing in trout streams all alone.'

New Diocesan Delegates and Alternates:

Delegates:

Mary McPherson has served two years as delegate and one as alternate, and was our parish coordinator for the diocesan Haiti fundraising campaign.

Todd Axtell has served a number of years as delegate and alternate, both as a member of ECA and as a member of Trinity Cathedral.

Kimberly Axtell has served a number of years as delegate and alternate, and worked on a diocesan committee formulating a resolution on poverty to send to General Convention.

Alain Guichard rejoined ECA in the last year with his wife Elizabeth. Alain is new to diocesan involvement this year.

New Leadership

Alternates:

Nancy Romer has served two years as delegate, having got a good taste of the diocese while chair of ECA's search committee.

Ann Mayers has served one year as alternate.



Senior Warden

Happy New Year!, again. At this point in our Christian annual journey we have celebrated Jesus' birthday and Epiphany. We should have put away most of the Christmas decorations by now and set out the tree for the recyclers. And so, also, we prepare ourselves to enter Lent on February 13. I encourage you to participate in the Lenten Meditation series in formation by Mary McPherson. Your Vestry welcomes some new members and will begin embracing tasks we brainstormed mid-2012 to carry us toward our shared Vision. We've made great progress as an organization while maintaining focus on our Mission via the Vision you helped create during the Search process Please encourage and support your Vestry in this New Year.

*George Romer
Senior Warden*

Vestry Plans

Your new vestry will meet on retreat February 1 & 2 to begin their work together for the new year. Vestry year now runs from February to February. This year's vestry includes: George Romer, Senior Warden; Bryan Bond, Junior Warden; Todd Lukanc, Wendy Martin, Mike Schmidt, Kathleen Eagan, Sharon Hall, Andy Kerr, Mary McPherson, Kelli Casale, Alex Dykes, Beth Proudfoot, and Sheri Winkenwerder, Clerk.

February 2 will begin with a Mutual Ministry Review of our last year together, with the help and facilitation of Brian Nordwick of the diocese. Former members will offer their input as well for this review. Look for a report back on our 2012 accomplishments in next month's Shape!

Lenten Offerings

The season of Lent begins Wednesday, February 13. ECA has several ways for you to observe the season, at church and in your own private devotion!

Sunday Classes: On March 3, 10, & 17 after the 11:00 service, Elizabeth Drescher will teach “Being Church in the Land Between Religions: Nones, Spirituality, and Mainline Christianity in the New Media Age”

Since late 2012, when the Pew Center on Religion in American Life released a study entitled “The Rise of the Nones,” mainstream media outlets have been buzzing about the growing population of the religiously unaffiliated. One in five Americans now identifies as a None. The majority come from Christian backgrounds, with the Episcopal and UCC churches contributing the largest percentage of their membership to the Nones demographic. Clearly, this is a trend that we should be following closely, and Nones are people we need to understand in much greater depth.

Based on more than a year of interviews with Nones across the U.S., Elizabeth Drescher will guide us into reflection and conversation on what the growth of the Nones means to ECA and how we can continue to be in relationship as people explore new ways of making meaning and pursuing self-realization in the world today.

Session 1: Who are the Nones?

Session 2: Nones Beyond the Numbers: Listening to the Stories of the Unaffiliated

Session 3: Making Connections, Sharing Meaning: How Mainline Congregations Can Stay in the Conversation

Wednesday Classes: On Wednesday evenings beginning February 20, we will hold a series called ‘Who Is My Neighbor?’ Beginning with a simple soup supper at 6:00, each week we will explore one of the cultural groups in our Almaden Valley. We are sharing this series with CCAVUCC, and have a number of speakers from outside and inside our church communities ready to present to us and answer questions. If we are going to adequately minister to our neighborhood, we need to know more about those who live here! Look for more details in midweek and Sunday bulletins, as well as an opportunity to sign up to provide soup.

Lenten Meditations: Our ECA Lenten Meditation book, with meditations written by parishioners and friends, will be available for you to pick up at the beginning of Lent. Consider making it part of your daily ritual during this season to read the scriptures for each day and the meditations of your community.

Your Memorial

We have been holding various workshops and discussions at ECA around end-of-life issues. One meaningful exercise is to take the time to plan what you would like to have at your funeral or memorial service. How would you like to be remembered? What would you wish family and friends would do after you are gone? What hymns do you NOT want played at your service? Lent might be a good time for such a reflection, as we look more closely at our own mortality and limitations, and reorient towards what is important for us.

The rector has forms to use in planning a memorial service, distributed at a recent advanced planning workshop. Ideally each parishioner would have such a form on file at the church, so that we know your wishes should the expected happen unexpectedly. If you would like a form, please pick one up in the church office and return a copy to be filed there later.

Book Group

February's book is "*Across Many Mountains*" by Yangzom Brauen. We will be meeting at the home of Suzanne Mayo on February 20th. Everyone is welcome, so join us at 7:30PM. Our evening will be generously hosted by Joan Okumura (again, at the home of the Mayo's).

Amy Griffith

Birthdays

Alyce Gallego	2
Bailey Bishop	5
Pete Mayo	6
Ellen Lukanc	7
John McPherson	7
Ryan McPherson	7
Andy Kerr	15
Jeff Nollette	26
Monique Rousseau	16
Mary McPherson	18
Zachary Nollette	21
Taylor Mills	23
Mel Stonehocker	24
Valerie Tysanner	24
Elizabeth Garcia	26
Kimberly Axtell	27
Brooke Mills	27

Anniversaries

Jon & Sharon Mills	11
Tim & Donna Miller	19



Youth Group

The youth groups offer their wholehearted (if belated) thanks for the congregation's support in donating proceeds from the Steak and Stein dinner to the new youth center. Our group is growing in numbers and enthusiasm and we are all excited about creating our new space! We sincerely appreciate your generosity.

Bonnie, Inge, and the JV Youth Group

Dinner Groups

It is that time of the year again! Taxes? No, ECA Dinner Groups! Toss your name in the hat and enjoy getting to know your fellow ECA members.

As before there will be three different types of diner groups. There will be an adult-only group that will meet in people's homes, a dinner-out group and a family group.

If you'd like to join, just contact Joan Wagner at: wagner5404@sbcglobal.net or 1-408-268-2920.

All participants will be notified by February 28, 2013.

JV News

Work on the mold/asbestos/lead paint problem in old fellowship hall, the big Sunday school room and the small Sunday school room/Nursery continues. The remediation work (removal of affected materials) has been completed satisfactorily. Unfortunately, the wild, wet weather a few weeks back uncovered some new leaks in the roof. That delayed the work a few weeks. We believe that the problems have been addressed. The rest of the renovations of the Sunday school rooms and nursery as well as the construction in the new Learning and Conference Center (aka Old Fellowship Hall) is now underway, and should be completed soon.

Please say a big "Thank You" to outgoing JV President Bryan Bond. Under his sage guidance, the JV Board accomplished a whole lot this past year!

Steve Wing



Sunday School News

Sunday School is beginning to burst at the seams! We anxiously wait to be in some sort of classroom with a little elbow room. Maybe you noticed we tried meeting in the hallway outside the Christian Education office. That was fine when only 4 or 5 children showed up. But January brought us 9 students each week. And with 16 students officially registered for our program we have to prepare accordingly. It takes a little ingenuity and creativity every Sunday, but we manage to squeeze everyone into the CE Office for class and when we need to stretch a bit we sneak into the choir room when it's empty.

Most exciting are the delightful new children and families we are meeting. Mark and Eric Kontur, twin 4th grade boys, joined our classes in October and have become very regular participants. They ask wonderful questions and keep all the teachers on their toes. Loic (first grade) and Nina (4 years old) Gramkowski joined us for our pageant and Epiphany Sunday then began Sunday School with us in January. Elizabeth (first grade) and Adan (4 years old) Jimenez visited us last spring briefly and have found their way back here again. Haley and Wyatt Develbiss (first graders & another set of twins), who were pages leading the camel at our Epiphany Service, have been part of our church for a number of years and are now trying to get the Sunday School hour into their regular Sunday family activities. Our teachers are all looking forward to getting to know these children well and share our program with them. It won't be long and we will need to hold 2 small classes to better accommodate our numbers and ages of the children.

We continue to be blessed with ten wonderful teachers and shepherds that share the Good News with our children and are ready to expand our program as the need presents itself. Watch your weekly bulletins for who is teaching and what we are studying.

And don't forget, you, too, can invite families to our churches and introduce them to our Sunday School program. I have lots of exciting things planned for our future.

Susie Ferguson



Senior Ministry

The Senior Ministry at ECA continues to develop and grow, thanks to the interest of our congregation. Take a look at the Resource table in the narthex, and you may find some people, places, and things that could improve the quality of life of someone you know! Our last meeting on "Advance Planning" was built around the idea that planning is a good and necessary thing, especially when it comes to the many questions and issues confronting us in our "golden years." We discussed legal, social, residential, and medical aspects of advance planning, and Kate distributed a form for us to indicate our wishes for a memorial service when the time comes. Filling out those forms and returning them to Kate can save our families the confusion of figuring out arrangements and ensure that our service goes the way we would prefer. You don't have to be a "control freak" like me to want to clarify your preferences about medical treatment, care options, and a host of other likely decisions that await all of us at some point, and it can be a blessing to your loved ones to know exactly what you want.

Many questions arose in our last meeting about wills and other legal matters, so our next meeting will be graced by attorney Ms. Ella Duncanson, J.D. She is an estate planning attorney, very experienced in these matters, and kind enough to talk with us, on a Sunday after the 11:00 service. Watch the bulletins for the date and time.

Thanks to everyone who already stays in touch with senior members of ECA and offers a hand when needed. And please let me know if there are Senior Ministry needs that are not being addressed, so I can look for options.

Kathleen Eagan



Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is February 13, the beginning of the forty days of Lent. It is a time to stop and reflect on our mortality and on God's grace in our lives, and I encourage you to do that in the context of worship here at church. At 7:30 am we will have the Book of Common Prayer service including communion; at 7:00 pm we will do a joint service with CCAVUCC. Both services will include the imposition of ashes. Please come to worship with your community as we begin these great days together.

Turkey Drive

Well, we managed to pull it off again! This year, we were lucky enough to secure the big pizza oven at the local Legends Pizza Co. in which to cook the 60 big turkeys procured this year. A big THANKS goes out to Legend's owner Nick Minarik for allowing us to use his oven on Thanksgiving Day. As most everybody knows, this turkey drive is our annual ECA event to help the Montgomery Meals team cook and freeze turkey to use in the preparation of homemade meals we prepare in our kitchen to feed the homeless every other week throughout the year. And also a big THANKS to all the volunteers who transported, kitchen cleaned, washed, de-greased, disseminated, sliced, diced, packaged, and weighed turkey to the tune of 515 pounds of prepared turkey meat that now sits on our freezers. That's a new record for total poundage! The response never ceases to amaze – thanks to everybody who came through again!

And remember to patronize Legends Pizza this coming year on your family pizza night or whenever an occasion for pizza presents itself.

Steve Wing (aka the Big Turkey)



Communications

It has been a fun ride for me to meet with the web team (Jason Kazarian, Alex Alvarado, and Mary McPherson) the past few months. They are eagerly and enthusiastically attempting to make the website even more useful to our congregation. I encourage you to bookmark the website on your computer/mobile device—I can almost guarantee you'll find it handy at times. I know I'm getting more used to consulting the website to answer ECA-related questions.

Perhaps you've noticed that the website has acquired a new look in the past month. We are using a new template, or theme, and I think it looks great. The change was made to make the website easier to navigate, particularly if you're using a phone or tablet. Since making the change, we've had to make a few tweaks and adjustments, but I think those are nearly done now, and you should be able to find everything you might expect to find now. If you find anything amiss, please let us know.

Another change is coming soon, perhaps by the time you read this article. The vestry has requested that the web team provide a means of making on-line donations to ECA, by credit card. Research has been done, groundwork has been laid, and there will soon be a place on the website home page where you may designate money to ECA, either for your pledge or for some other specific purpose. You certainly don't have to use this feature, but it will soon be available if you wish to make use of it.

Mike Schmidt

Lost in Translation

Translations are funny things; words so eloquently and thoughtfully assembled in one language rarely have the same effect in another. Were I to resurrect a manner of writing from the 16th century, a modern translator would have several obstacles to overcome when translating the text. The first would be merely understanding an archaic form of English where spelling was inconsistent, grammar was equally variable and the very meaning of words was different from modern English.

Then the translator would have to decide whether to translate this into, say, modern Turkish, or should the translator attempt to translate it into a form of Turkish used in the 16th century to keep in tune with the original era of the source? The problem becomes even more pronounced even within our own language when we attempt to read Old English. For those who wonder, Old English is primarily English from before the year 1100. (Many people think of Old English as anything other than modern English, but this is not the case).

It may come as a shock to some, but the original written form of English used a runic alphabet much like the Norse languages and not the Roman alphabet. This is because the root of modern English formed after the end of the Roman occupation of Britain and because the Romans never adapted their alphabet to the local Celtic languages there was essentially no influence upon the locals. If you were one of the few that could write Anglo-Saxon/Old English between 700 and around 1200 AD, it would have looked like this:



(A side note of trivia is that the last county to use a runic alphabet by some portion of the population was Sweden until the mid-1800s.) After the influence of the mainland Europeans shifted English to the Latin alphabet (sort of), English consisted of approximately 45 different letters in its alphabet, many of them you will see in modern Germanic languages like å, ä, ö, æ, oe and others which you can't type with a standard English keyboard.

As English has progressed, we pruned the alphabet down to the current alphabet. Many of us were forced to read Beowulf when we were in school, but did you ever glance at the original text? Or did you know that there are more than 20 different translations! English-English translations if you believe. Here's the original and two translations:

*Hwæt! We Gardena in geardagum, feodcyninga,
þrym gefrunon, hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon.*

*Lo! We the Spear-Danes, in days of yore, have heard
of the glory of the people's kings how the noble ones did
deeds of valor.*

*Yo! We have heard tell of the majesty of the Spear-
danes, of the Folk-kings, how the princes did valorous
deeds.*

Now, the more curious reader may be wondering where I am going with this train of thought. No, I

Lost in Translation

didn't accidentally publish the article in the wrong periodical, this was written for *The Shape*. This is obviously leading back to commentary on biblical translations. I am constantly amazed that there exists in this country a relatively large number of "biblical literalists" as I call them. I'm speaking of the folks that think the English Bible translations are perfect in every way.

A good example of this is in the 1998 issue of *"The Flaming Torch"* where a pastor by the name of Wallace Miller says "*[the] Authorized 1611 Version is the preserved, inerrant, inspired, and perfect word of God in the English language, there are no mistakes in it [KJV] and not one word, comma, period, chapter heading, or verse number needs to be changed.*"

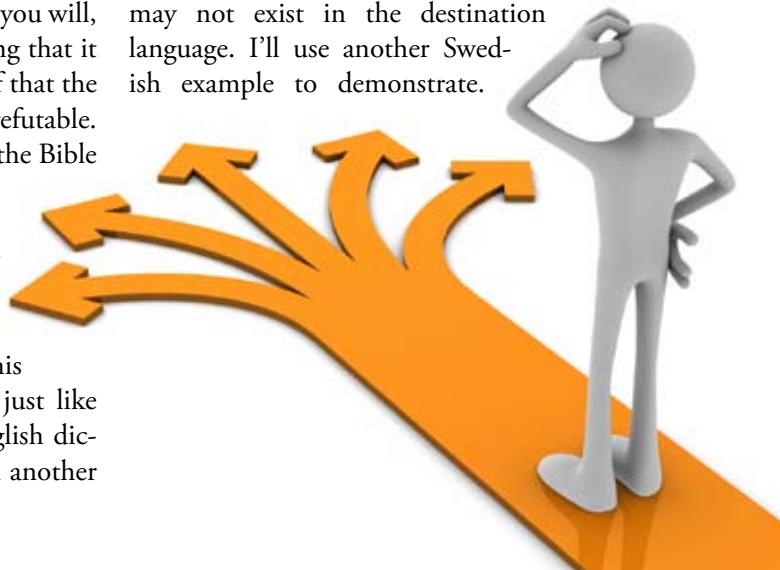
There is a problem with this statement of course, we know that there are errors in the King James Version of the Bible, there are errors in almost any translation. If the original manuscripts of the Bible are the word of God verbatim, and we take the Bible to mean the "word of God" absolutely, then we have no Bible. There was a time when we did, but today we have a "reader's digest" version if you will, but not the original. I think it is interesting that it is primarily Americans that have the belief that the Bible in English is 100% correct and irrefutable. Yet how can this be when each version of the Bible is slightly different?

I think part of the problem is the most Americans grow up never learning another language as most others in the world do. We Americans tend to have this odd notion that all other languages are just like English, and if you just whip out an English dictionary and translate word for word from another

language, it will all make sense. While this might work for the odd phrase, it doesn't work on the whole.

Words from one language don't always have a direct translation, and worse yet you need to translate concept to concept. Example: the word "welcome" can be used in different ways; it can be a response to "thank you" as in "you're welcome." Welcome can also be used as a greeting, "welcome to ECA" or "you are welcome to some" as an invitation to take something.

When we translate meaning for meaning we get the following English/Swedish pairs (as an example) [Welcome to Sweden / Välkommen en Sverige] [You're welcome / Varsågod] [You're welcome to [have] some / Ha något]. So as you can see, the word "welcome" translates several different ways, so if you tried assembling sentences by direct translation, you'd get some very strange looks in Sweden. In addition English has one of the largest vocabularies of any modern language making translations more complex because the "ideal" word may not exist in the destination language. I'll use another Swedish example to demonstrate.



Lost in Translation

Swedish lacks a direct translation for either bunny or fuzzy. This poses a problem when translating in either direction because meaning can either get lost or get added if you didn't know the original intent. Without this knowledge translating the "cutesy" phrase "what a cute fuzzy bunny" becomes "vilken söt luden kanin" and translated back to English it becomes "what a dainty hairy rabbit." Without knowing the original intent, you wouldn't be able to "correct" the translation back to English or to any other language.

To make matters worse, the Bible was not written in one language, it was written in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Latin. Even worse still is the fact that the originals do not exist, at best we have (relatively) young copies. A good example of translation errors in the Bible can be found in the King James Version, Isaiah 13:15 the KJV reads "every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword"). There is no support for this reading in any Hebrew manuscript. Instead, the correct reading is "anyone who is captured will fall by the sword" which is an entirely different meaning. I don't seek to suggest that there are massive differences and that in the King James Version Jesus is the Son of God and that in the original version they really meant that he was the unholy offspring of a ficus plant.

What I am getting at is that the meaning is what should be important, not the detail. When you focus in on detail, you have to ask yourself if the detail is correct. This approach also means that we have to ask what the message was at the time. Much of the Bible is in story form, but what meaning do these stories have for us today? What was the meaning then? We must understand the history behind the stories before we can understand the story itself.

The translators of the 1611 King James Version of the Bible understood these problems all too well, and in the preface they said this: "*[the translations are accurate] In the same way, when the King's speech delivered in Parliament is translated into French, German, Italian, and Latin, it is still the King's speech, even if it is not interpreted by every translator with the same skill, or perhaps with as appropriate phrasing or always with as great clarity. For as everyone knows, things are classified by their major characteristics.*"

They knew there would be errors, they knew they could not choose all the right words, and they knew it was not the same, but the goal was for the meaning to remain constant.

I will leave you with my favorite example of a translation error. There is a British television comedy called "Red Dwarf," in it, a character grew up a "Seventh Day Advent Hoppist." His family hopped all day long on Sunday. They hopped while eating breakfast, hopped to church, hopped in the service and hopped back home. Why? Their version of the Bible had a misprint in 1 Corinthians 13, it read: "Faith, **Hop**, and Charity, and the greatest of these is **Hop**."

Alex Dykes

Youth Updates

The youth have been very busy over the last two months doing service activities. They helped Santa Maria Urban Ministry with their toy drive, spending the money that they raised in Thanksgiving pie-making on toys for SMUM, and then spending the morning one Saturday wrapping and sorting the presents for distribution. They also made blankets for InnVision at one meeting and served at Montgomery meals on a Friday in December. Coming up they are serving Pancakes for Shrove Tuesday -- so get ready to indulge! More info to follow about Shrove Tuesday in the coming weeks. If you know any youth who might want to join us, please send them our way. The more the merrier!

Bonnie McPherson and Inge Bond

Lenten Discipline

I am so excited to introduce to you ECA's very own booklet of Lenten Meditations for 2013. Using the Daily Lectionary, volunteers wrote personal reflections for each of the 40 days of Lent. If you haven't received yours, they are/will be located in the Narthex along the west wall. Our prayer is that each member of ECA would accept as a Lenten discipline before God, reading a daily meditation, written by your brothers and sisters in Christ, our extended family. A lot of thought and prayer went into them. I pray you will cherish them. And may we all be blessed by experiencing them together throughout the days of Lent.

A heartfelt thanks to all our contributing writers, and to Kimberly and Todd for printing them for us.



Knit Wits

The Knit Wits want to thank everyone for your wonderful support. Through our afghans raffle and Alternative Christmas sale we raised \$775.00! Linda Sarmecanic, Donna Miller and Beth Proudfoot were the winners of this year's drawing.

I can't believe that the Knit Wits group has been together for almost five years and each year your support grows! Over those years we have shared many hours of fellowship while our hands were busy knitting or crocheting. We have made close to 100 afghans and too many baby hats to count! We have donated to The Ronald McDonald House, Child Advocates and The Baby Love Ministry.

In 2012 the Knit Wits decided to donate their handmade afghans to the InnVision Shelter Networks. With this in mind, Maryke, Joan, Margaret and I visited their facilities on Commercial Street in San Jose. We were given a tour of their George Travis MultiService Drop-in Center and the Commercial Street Inn Shelter. The George Travis center is the primary gateway to emergency assistance for homeless women and children in Silicon Valley and the The Commercial Street Inn is a 55 bed shelter for women and children. The goal of both facilities is to help homeless women and children return to self-sufficiency and permanent housing. We gave them 14 afghans and asked that they specifically be given to women with children who are trying to escape domestic violence. Just a few weeks after our visit I received an e-mail with this story:

Yolanda and her son Ramon came into the Georgia Travis Center office with one thing on her mind: Escape. Yolanda spent a decade of her life being abused mentally and emotionally by her husband. She lived in fear daily desperately looking for any way she could

get away. When she gathered enough courage to finally leave, she left with only the clothes on her back and a backpack of clothing for her 2 year old son. At intake she was given a handmade knitted blanket for her son. This small gesture of kindness made her day and helped her ease into life at Commercial Street Inn.

This year we will continue make our afghans, we already have six ready to be sewn together, but we are going to expand our projects to include hats and scarves. We also used our remaining money from last year to buy materials to make twenty fleece blankets which we hope to make with the help of the youth group. These all will be donated to the clothing closet at the George Travis center.

Please join us on the 2nd and 4th Saturday from 10-12 at the church. You don't have to know how to knit or crochet, we will teach you or you can simply join in the fellowship.

Sharon Mills



Symphony of Life

*A gaze out the window...
I saw the trees
or perhaps the trees saw me,
for they waved their branches at me.
Drawing me to a space of peace...*

*A stroll among the trees...
I heard the trees
or perhaps the trees spoke to me,
for the whispers seemed to say,
"You are me, I am you."*

*"I too wonder about eternity,
I too strive to grow upward, offer beauty, exude
fragrance of glorious life!
And pray, with all the good intention that is in me,
that I may surpass myself from this moment to the
next...
wondering, if I keep climbing this invisible thread
that which seems to connect me to the Heavens,
I may live eternally."*

*A brush on my ankle...
I bowed down low.
A humble little flower
shyly offered her smile.
"I am the tree, the tree is me."*

*I found myself murmur,
"She may grow to be a tree... the tree will eventually
fall, decay, and die...
that other flowers may be nourished... to grow
again."*

*At the thought of death and futility of life,
a thin veil of sadness was about to wrap my head,
when suddenly,!!*

*A shock to my heart
made me freeze in one spot.
A bright sense of calm,
slowly penetrated through my being.
"To live eternally means to die for others.
I am them, they are me!"*

*Then a glorious symphony of sounds!
The trees singing, "I am you, you are me."
The flower humming, "I am the tree, the tree is me."
And I, harmonizing,
"I am them, they are me.
I am you, you are me.
We are us!"*

Perhaps, this is life of eternity... here on earth and very much so elsewhere.

Kristal Kim

Christmas Eve At The Santa Clara Jail

Last Spring at our NCNC (Northern CA Nevada Conference of the UCC) Annual Gathering, I attended a workshop presented by Chaplain Evelyn Vigil on “Hope and Help: A Faith-based Response to the Release of Prisoners in Your Community”. Evelyn, an MDiv graduate from PSR (our UCC seminary in Berkeley) and a partner in ministry at Foothills Congregational UCC in Los Altos, has served as the facility chaplain for the Main Jail, a maximum-security jail that houses up to 1400 men (and I would add, a handful of women) who adhere to a variety of faiths. During the workshop Evelyn shared with the group that on the day before Christmas and Easter, every inmate is offered Communion; to make that happen, volunteers are needed to help. I knew that I wanted to be part of that team, even though Christmas Eve would not be the most convenient day for anyone to do that. Days, weeks, and months went by, and thankfully on the last day for anyone to be able to get security clearance to participate, I got in touch with Evelyn who e-mailed me to be at the jail at 7:00 a.m. on the 24th. I had several questions in my mind, some of which were: Where to park? Exactly how to get there...What to wear...What was permitted for a visitor to bring into the facility...How long would the experience be?

One might wonder why the early arrival hour...I later learned that breakfast is served at 4:30 a.m. and lunch at 9:00 a.m.; medications are dispensed at regular times to not a few inmates, as well as other “programming” which happens. Communion would need to be “sandwiched” in between whatever else was usually going on.

I arrived at the jail with time to spare, and parked where I believed was possible (Yes, I’d checked ahead of time), only later finding a citation on my

windshield. Being one who likes to have a good idea of what might be “the drill”, I was relieved to find the front desk officer welcoming. He found my authorized name on “the list”, I gave him my driver’s license to keep till I left, and he gave me a required badge. I was not there too long before a couple from Foothills came, and they would also be serving. I learned that there are lockers for visitors to use. I met other volunteers from St. Andrew’s Church, St. Jude’s, Cathedral of Faith, as well as the Simpsons from “Foothills”. And Evelyn with her warm heart, joyful nature, and welcome sense of humor, joined us.

There seemed to be doors and more doors through which to pass...And there are no buttons inside the elevators; one uses hand signals to an above camera to indicate which floor is desired. We all walked down to Evelyn’s office, on the lower level. There we helped ready the elements...grape juice and wafers, to be offered by intinction using a paper cup, because experience had revealed that it was safer than a more sturdy one. We had a brief Communion service ourselves, and after also meeting the woman who directs the education program, we set out in groups. I was with the man from St. Andrew’s, a person who volunteers often on a one-to-one basis with inmates. Evelyn was also with us when she didn’t need to be called away. We went first to the maximum security area where inmates came one at a time, and were separated from us by a glass door. There was a small opening lower on the door through which we offered the dipped wafer along with words of hope and comfort; each inmate was called by name which either they volunteered or the unit officer did. We introduced ourselves by our first names. The inmates thanked us and returned to their cells. We went next to the psychiatric unit where there were also several wom-

Christmas Eve

en. The officer in charge was very good-natured and welcoming to us; he wrote in his log book that we were there to “lift spirits”.

He also accompanied us to individual cells where we found several folks without clothing; in those cases the inmates were told to put something on, and some wrapped themselves in a blanket. We visited one clearly psychotic woman whose words about religion seemed to convey some anger and more. I was really moved by Evelyn’s ability to “cut through” what was being said, and asking if the woman would like prayer; “Yes”, was the answer, and Evelyn shared with her heartfelt words that God was ever present in her need.

We went also to a room where a Spanish-speaking service was being held for members of the Norteno and Sureno gangs, inmates who reportedly usually fight when together. The young men courteously offered chairs to us which they had brought downstairs to the meeting area. We weren’t there too long before the men were called back to their cells for awhile because a fight had broken out, and all the guards in the area were needed to quell that. When the men returned to the room the service resumed.

Some other areas we were unable to visit because of “programming”. I was at the jail for about three hours, fully realizing that others, including Evelyn, would be there much longer. For me, the experience was a very meaningful start to Christmas Eve, having the feeling that in some small way spirits had been lifted.

Phyllis Chai

Gifts of Gratitude

Thanks to Sandie Mueller, Ann Mayers, Kelly Yamanishi, Wendy Martin & Alex Alvarado for helping with our Sunday School program in December.

Thanks to Sheri Winkenwerder for making our wonderful set of Jesse Tree ornaments for our Christmas Pageant.

Thanks to Lori Yang, Carla Gerber, Woody Woodworth, and Wendy Martin for special help and assistance with our Christmas Pageant preparations, props, costuming, and rehearsal help.

Thanks to Tim Miller for setting up our media center for our Sunday School program.

Thanks to Kathy Mastre, Leslie Rousseau, & Lori Yang for making our “coffee hour party” on pageant day a very special one.



Pilot or Co-Pilot

My sister is Senior Warden of St. John's Episcopal Church in Chico, CA. They received a large donation 5 years ago – starter money - to build what they call a Parish Life Center. A year ago, they worked with an architect and came up with a plan, only to find out when they asked for bids, that the plan was not within their reach. Overcome with disappointment, they continued on the journey God had set before them. Ultimately, they found some building experts who were able to help them achieve their dream, albeit different from the start.

As she shared her story, it reminded of something I read recently. God is not our co-pilot. Jesus doesn't help us out while we do the main navigating. We are his co-pilots. He is the one driving the ship. He is wise, wonderful, and in control. Our challenge is to be open to the journey he has in mind for us.

Mary McPherson

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