

December 2016

# The SHAPE

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*From the Rector*

## Dear Friends

After a fall full of activity, learning, and fellowship, we find ourselves in Advent, once again. After a tumultuous election cycle and in a climate of uncertainty and division, we find ourselves in Advent, once more. Advent – the season of preparation – invites us to move over into the slow lane so we have time to watch, listen, and learn. Just when society and the Holiday Season demand that we increase our frenetic activity, Advent invites us to the slow lane.

In the slow lane, we don't have to be so much on guard, so we can be more aware of who is around us and what they are thinking, feeling, and doing. We can be more aware of what we are thinking, feeling, and doing. Because we are more aware, we can be kinder to ourselves and those around us. In the slow lane, we can consider how God might be speaking to us and inviting us to change our perspective. We can prepare for - and cooperate with - what God is unfolding for the world.

Advent means coming. We all know we prepare in these four weeks for our remembrance of the coming of God to the world two millennia ago in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. In a time of oppression and desperation, God came to be with humanity and give us new life. God is with us still and continually brings us new life.

But Advent is also a season of preparation for the second coming of Jesus...the time when God's kingdom will be completed. Our preparatory work for the second coming is helping to build the kingdom now, each day, with every person we meet. This is not just a matter of being kind – though kindness always moves us

toward the Light. In the preparatory work of kingdom-building, we follow Jesus' lead. We welcome the stranger, we care for those in need, we speak for the voiceless, and stand up for those who are marginalized. This is not a path of more frenetic activity. Jesus' path is securely rooted in deep, prayerful, and thoughtful relationship with God. Jesus' work – and our work – stems directly from this relationship.

In the slow lane, to which Advent invites us, we tend our relationship with God. I invite you to incorporate one practice into your Advent days that will deepen your relationship with God and help you listen for God's voice. You might decide to attend our Thursday Morning Prayer (9:30am) or Bible study (10am.) You might set aside 15 minutes each day for quiet prayer, meditation, Bible or other spiritual reading. You might start writing an ongoing, running letter to God all during this time of Advent. You could do an art project exploring what preparation and coming means to you. You could take a walk with God each day, listening as much as you talk.

Whatever you decide to do as an Advent practice, be assured that God will bless that time with you, move your heart, and show you your way forward in the cooperative kingdom-building for which we were created, and on which our world depends.

Blessings on your advent,

*Shelley+*

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## Pledge/Finance Update

The Vestry is so very grateful for the generosity and response of the congregation to our New Consecration Sunday ingathering. So many people took action to respond in gratitude to God by stepping up their pledges. We received 51 pledges on NCS Sunday. Of these, 32 (or 63%) increased their pledges over last year! Four are self-stated tithes, and four remarked that they were moving to proportional giving. We had 3 brand new pledges. What a fabulous, spirit-filled response! Thank you to each and every one who made this happen. And pledges are still coming in. It is not too late to send in your 2017 pledge if you have not yet done so. It does not need to be said how helpful it is to our vestry that people pledge so we can plan responsibly for the coming year. Thank you.

Sadly, in the last year, 5 families moved away, and a few are not up to date in their offerings. So as we near the end of 2016, we are in need of your support and help. At the current rate of giving, it appears we will end up with a shortfall of about 10% of the total pledge amounts we used to set the 2016 budget.

Please check your records, and if possible, bring your 2016 pledge up to date by the end of

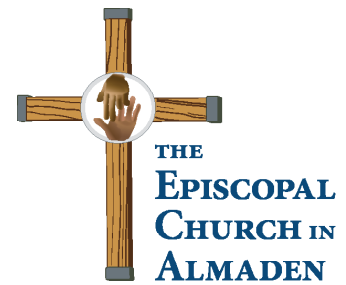
the year. If you need help with how much you've contributed or how much you pledged, our treasurer, Ruthanne Adams Martinez, will help (408-268-0245 Tu-Fri 10am-2pm or office@eca-sj.org)

Also, to lessen our shortfall this year and improve the start of next year, the Vestry would like to ask the congregation for a small shift in pledging. We simply ask that you start contributing in December at your 2017 rate. This small added contribution will help us start 2017 in a more balanced state, so that we may meet our commitments.

*Thank you,  
Todd Lukanc and the  
ECA Vestry*

## Shape Change

Beginning in the new year, the Shape will be delivered each month by email. Those without email will still receive a mailed copy of the Shape. If you prefer reading a hard copy, it will still be available in the narthex. This will save a considerable amount that is now spent on postage and paper. Tell Shelley if you have email, but still need to receive a mailed copy, instead of picking up a printed copy at church.



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### Rector

The Reverend Shelley Denney  
email: shelley@eca-sj.org  
408-268-0245

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### Staff

**Susie Ferguson**  
*Children and Youth Ministries Director*

**Barry Ford**  
*Music Director*

**Lynda Ford**  
*Assistant Music Director*

**Ruthanne Adams Martinez**  
*Administrative Assistant  
Treasurer*

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### Assisting in our Ministry

**Leslie Rousseau**  
*Senior Warden*

**Bryan Bond**  
*Junior Warden*

**Joan Wagner**  
*Altar Guild*

**Kathy Mastre**  
*Coffee Hosts*

#### *Greeters*

**Ann Avoux**  
*Prayer Vine*

**Debbie Estill**  
*Ushers*

**Debbie Estill**  
*Youth Group*

**Andy Kerr**  
*Folk Music Director*

**Mike Schmidt**  
*Shape Editor  
Pastoral Care Coordinator*

**Kathleen Eagan**  
*Senior Ministry*

**Taylor Wing**  
*Webmaster*

## “Old” and “New” Ways

When I took this job in November 2011 and was given the direction of “growing our Sunday school and youth programs” I pictured creating programs that would rebuild what I remembered from ECA’s past – Sundays overflowing with noisy children and a youth group dynamic and flourishing. Since then I have had to learn that programs may have their own ebb and tide. Since then I have had to learn a reality of today’s families. Since then I have had to learn about the “millennials” and what they expect and might want. Believe me, it hasn’t been easy and often very discouraging. Why? Because I am “old” sometimes in thinking things should be as they were. Or “old” thinking things were better as they were. Or “old” thinking new ways are way too different and certainly outside my comfort zone. But, in reality...I have had to adapt, be creative, innovative and, most important, willing to keep trying to find new ways to awaken our neighbors and learn how we can best serve them.

Our Christmas Pageant is a great example of how things have had to change. Years ago, we worked on it during Sunday school time for a few weeks, had a Saturday morning re-

hearsal and then presented it as part of a Sunday service. To accommodate the “family style of today” we have moved to a “one day affair.” Now we take only 2 hours to prepare (3 PM to 5PM) and then its “show time” at 5 PM. We follow our presentation of the Christmas story with a dinner for all participants and all those who come to see our pageant. The pageant has become more a “neighborhood event.”

VBS programs at our church were one week for half day. And now? Now it is still half day but with extended care offered to 6 PM to accommodate working parents. We have grown that weeklong experience to 3 other camps from 9 AM to 3 PM to meet the needs of families in our neighborhood on school breaks. Believe me, this was never in my farthest imagination when I was hired in 2011. But the spirit moved within, and I dared to step out of my comfortable box and follow the spirit’s lead.

I don’t really know what 2017 has in store for us. I would love to have our church filled with families and children every Sunday. I would love to scramble for Sunday School teachers. I would love to have youth wanting to be a “chimes choir.” That may or may not be God’s plan for this parish. But I can promise in 2017 I will continue to pray, be open to the spirit’s lead and follow even “out of my comfort zone”

to where God is leading me. I will also pray that you will be willing to go with me wherever God leads. I will need your support and help. I have great faith that if we go together as the spirit leads we will all be blessed.

*In your faithful service,  
Susie Ferguson  
Children and Youth  
Ministries Director*

### **JV members:**

*John McPherson, Kathy Mastre and  
Jim McPherson*

### **Vestry Liaisons:**

**Senior Warden**  
*Leslie Rousseau*

**Adult Education:**  
*Dan Hudkins*

**Communication:**  
*Joyce Wing and Mike Schmidt*

**Family/Youth/Christian Education:**  
*Jerry Ferguson*

**Fellowship:**  
*Will Bond*

**Finance:**  
*Todd Lukanc*

**Hospitality:**

**Joint Venture:**  
*Bryan Bond*

**Outreach:**  
*Leslie Rousseau*

**Pastoral Care:**  
*Mike Schmidt*

**Stewardship:**  
*Elizabeth Guichard*

**Worship:**  
*Dan Hudkins*

## Thursday Morning Bible Study

When we meet for Thursday morning Lectionary Bible Study Shelley starts us off with prayer. And then one of us reads the Gospel story for the coming Sunday. And Shelley asks, “What pops out at you in the Gospel?”

Sometimes what we read is Jesus’ action based on a previous Gospel story. Sometimes we have to look for or inevitably discover a connection to a previous Gospel story. As Jesus moves from place to place, arriving by boat or walking from town to town, he uses whatever takes place as he arrives - the people who seek him out, the action of those hoping for the relief of physical affliction and mental longing, the comments of onlookers (some sympathetic to Jesus’ response, some not.) Jesus’ stories build a record of why we can love God with all our heart, soul, and mind; and how we can, even with our limitations, love our neighbor as our self. We can do this because Jesus came to show us and tell us how much God loves us. The truth comes out; we are encouraged to invest the love God has given us. We are encouraged to participate in life and dream our dreams.

In the time we spend in this intimate Lectionary Bible Study

group, participants make us laugh; moreover, we make each other think. We can see and hear Jesus’ call to broaden our outreach and inclusion. Come. This study is open to everyone and we’d love to have people join us. This is a good offering of ourselves to be present to one another in community.

*Sandie Mueller*

### Outreach

## Turkey Drive Triumphs Again...

Well, we managed to do it again – this year’s Thanksgiving Turkey Drive was once again a resounding success! We ended up with almost 400 pounds of prepared turkey meat in our freezers that we’ll be able to use to prepare meals in our kitchen twice a month to provide meals for the homeless at three different locations. We also collected over



*Andy Kerr and Steve Wing helping process turkeys (photo from 2015).*

\$1000 in donations that will be vital in the assembly of complete meals. The dedicated Montgomery Meals volunteers do a tremendous job in this fine example of ECA outreach.

Many thanks to all the T-Day volunteers (around 60 total) who made this rather complex operation happen. A special thank-you to the folks at our local Legends Pizza for once again allowing us to use their big oven on Thanksgiving Day to cook the 50 turkeys. Be sure to patronize Legends for your family pizza nights this coming year.

*Steve Wing*



# ECA Activities

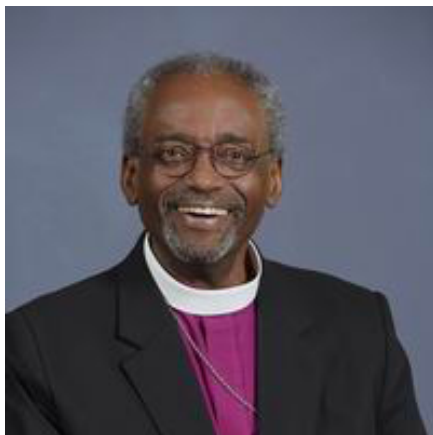
# December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7:30am Healing Service and Holy Eucharist 8am Men's Breakfast 9:30am Morning Prayer 10am Lectionary Bible Study 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	2 3pm Montgomery Meals	3 6pm Christmas Party
4 7:30am Holy Eucharist Coffee Hour Sunday 10:45am Holy Eucharist Coffee Hour Sunday	5	6	7 4:30pm Handbell Rehearsal	8 8am Men's Breakfast 9:30am Morning Prayer	9	10 8am Knitwits "Chase the Chill" @ St. James Park
11 7:30am Holy Eucharist 10:45am Holy Eucharist	12	13 7:15pm Vestry Meeting	14 4:30pm Handbell Rehearsal	15 8am Men's Breakfast 9:30am Morning Prayer 10am Lectionary Bible Study	16 3pm Montgomery Meals	17 3pm Christmas Pageant Preparation 5pm Christmas Pageant and Dinner
18 7:30am Holy Eucharist 10:45am Holy Eucharist 12pm Connection Team	19	20 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	21 4:30pm Handbell Rehearsal	22 8am Men's Breakfast 9:30am Morning Prayer 10am Lectionary Bible Study 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	23	24 <u>CHRISTMAS EVE</u> 5pm Holy Eucharist 8:15pm Choir Rehearsal 9:30pm Holy Eucharist and Carols
25 <u>CHRISTMAS DAY</u> 9:30am Simple Breakfast 10am Holy Eucharist - Joint JV Service	26	27	28 4:30pm Handbell Rehearsal	29 8am Men's Breakfast 9:30am Morning Prayer 10am Lectionary Bible Study	30	31

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## “The Episcopal Church Welcomes You”

*The following statement, by Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael B. Curry, appeared in “Real Episcopal”, the diocese news email.*



Last week I shared what I pray was a reconciling post-election message to our church, reminding us that ‘we will all live together as fellow Americans, as citizens.’ Today I want to remind us that during moments of transition, during moments of tension, it is important to affirm our core identity and values as followers of Jesus in the Episcopal Anglican way.

Jesus once declared, in the language of the Hebrew prophets, that God’s “house shall be a house of prayer for all nations” (Mk 11:17). He invited and welcomed all who would follow saying, “come to me all who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens” (Mt. 11:28).

We therefore assert and we

believe that “the Episcopal Church welcomes you” – all of you, not as merely a church slogan, but as a reflection of what we believe Jesus teaches us and at the core of the movement he began in the first century. The Episcopal Church welcomes all. All of us!

As the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement today, we Episcopalians are committed, as our Prayer Book teaches to honor the covenant and promises we made in Holy Baptism: To proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ; To seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves; to strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being.

As Christians, we believe that all humans are created in God’s image and equal before God – those who may be rejoicing as well as those who may be in sorrow.

As a Church, seeking to follow the way of Jesus, who taught us, “you shall love your neighbor as yourself,” (Mt. 22:39) and to “do to others as you would have them do to you” (Mt. 7:12), we maintain our longstanding commitment to support and welcome refugees and immigrants, and to stand with those who live in our midst without documentation. We reaffirm that like all people LGBT persons are entitled

to full civil rights and protection under the law. We reaffirm and renew the principles of inclusion and the protection of the civil rights of all persons with disabilities. We commit to the honor and dignity of women and speak out against sexual or gender-based violence. We express solidarity with and honor the Indigenous Peoples of the world. We affirm the right to freedom of religious expression and vibrant presence of different religious communities, especially our Muslim sisters and brothers. We acknowledge our responsibility in stewardship of creation and all that God has given into our hands. We do so because God is the Creator. We are all God’s children, created equally in God’s image. And if we are God’s children we are all brothers and sisters.

“The Episcopal Church Welcomes You,” is not just a slogan, it’s who we seek to be and the witness we seek to make, following the way of Jesus.

*Presiding Bishop and Primate  
Michael B. Curry*

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*To subscribe, go to [www.realepiscopal.org](http://www.realepiscopal.org) and click on the News tab at the top.)*

## Quiet Day, Saturday March 18, 2017

**I** Kings 19 relates how Elijah was told to stand on the mountain as the Lord was about to pass by. There was a mighty wind, an earthquake and a fire that tore through the mountain while Elijah waited. After the fire, came God's still, small voice seeking Elijah. I see this as a picture of our spiritual selves seeking to know God. We can identify the mighty winds, earthquakes and fires in our lives that keep us hyped and focused on getting through the next crisis.

Elijah stood still through the wind, earthquake and fire and got to hear God's still, small voice. A Quiet Day is our opportunity to step out of the wind, earthquakes and fires and to make ourselves open to hear God's still, quiet voice.

- *A Quiet Day is a day to "be" and not to "do."*
- *It is a day away from our "should" list.*
- *It is a day to meditate, create a piece of art, listen to music, or read a spiritual book.*
- *It is a day to allow ourselves to listen to God in the language of silence.*

Please consider making plans to attend our next Quiet Day, on Saturday, March 18, 2017.

*Marianne Schmidt*

## A Successful Holiday Tea



*Ruthanne Adams Martinez played the harp for the entertainment at the Holiday Tea.*



*About 90 women and men (there were a few) attended the Holiday Tea.*



*Prizes were raffled off, and there was a silent auction, but the Holiday Tea raised considerable funds for the Almaden Counseling Center and the Handbell Choir.*

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## November Vestry Meeting

Your vestry convened once again to seek and provide guidance about which of the paths that God offers are the ones we are called to follow. After a Bible study leading into Christ the King Sunday (last before Advent), we settled in to work.

Taking events in agenda order, The Pumpkin Patch was an enormous success (beyond imagining for some of us). Total sales were \$9,003 putting us above the level for a 30% payment to us – so our take (before incidental expenses) is \$3,000 to be used for outreach activities. An enormous shout out to Susie Ferguson and a cast of dozens. General sense was that not only was it a good fund raiser, it was an excellent community builder and should be repeated.

In further good news, our Mission Opportunity Grant that asked the diocese for \$14,000 was funded to \$15,000! An enormous shout-out to Shelley for her grants-person-ship. This will be used to fund a part time outreach position. More details as job descriptions, etc. are created.

Village House, a rotating homeless shelter for medically fragile women has asked us to participate as a daytime warming shelter (7:00 AM – 7:00

PM from January 4 through February 1). Supporting this endeavor requires one shift supervisor (who has received training) and two supporting volunteers. Supervisor shifts are 4 hours each and volunteer shifts are two. This looked like a very long reach, however the rector and Village House have prevailed upon St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church (15333 Woodard Road) and St. Anthony Catholic Church (McKean Road) who have agreed to fill many of the supervisor and volunteer slots. This was a condition of our participation. As many of you heard from Bonnie, this is a wonderful ministry opportunity for all of us. Training schedules and sign-up opportunities will be available soon.

Our relationship with the Abrahamic Alliance is likely to continue as an annual event following its initial success. This activity has been referred to the auspices of the Connection team.

At convention, Shelley was elected to the Standing Committee of the Diocese, whose most frequent role is reviewing and recommending candidates for holy orders. Fortunately, this is not usually a particularly demanding role and is right in the sweet spot of things she loves.

We will be experimenting with having the Shape mailed only on request with email and per-

sonal pickup as the other options. Stay tuned for updates.

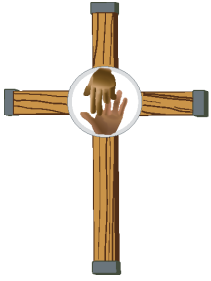
And now what consumed the balance of the meeting. You can see pledge status for 2017 elsewhere in the Shape. As substantial headway has been made on the finance system transition, things that were suspected have now been confirmed. Usually, there is a bulge in pledge payments in September as people catch up from summer. That bulge did not occur. We've also had several pledging families move away, leaving gaps in cash flow, so it appears that for this calendar year we are likely to have a shortfall even though we saved significantly on music. We ask you all to prayerfully consider adjusting your December payment up to the level you anticipated to begin in January (if you're part of the majority who increased their pledge for 2017). Of course, if you have catching up to do, that would also be great. The vestry will be exploring options for how to fund any remaining shortfall at the next meeting.

Our ability to keep a more accurate view of our cash flow should be significantly improved next year because of our software change. Many thanks to Todd Lukanc and Ruth Anne Adams Martinez for their hard work on making the transition, and then making it comprehensible to the rest of us.

*Dan Hudkins*

*(The next scheduled Vestry meeting is Tuesday, December 13. As always, all are welcome.)*





## Worship Schedule

### December 1

7:30 a.m. Healing Service and Holy Eucharist

### December 4 - *Second Sunday of Advent*

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
10:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

### December 11 - *Third Sunday of Advent*

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
10:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

### December 18 - *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
10:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

### December 24 - *Christmas Eve*

5:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist  
9:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist

### December 25 - *Christmas*

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist - Joint JV Service

## Gifts of Gratitude

Thank you ...

- to all who helped with the Pumpkin Patch, a final thank you, especially to Susie Ferguson, Mary McPherson, Leslie Rousseau, Wendy Martin, and Marianne Schmidt. The total number of people who helped is staggering!

- to the many folks (over 60-too many to list) who helped with this year's Turkey Drive, providing the meat to be used for the coming year's Montgomery Meals.

- to The Big Turkey (AKA Steve Wing), for his leadership in organizing the Turkey Drive.

- to Sharon Hall for her leadership in organizing Montgomery Meals this past year. It's a big job and this ministry couldn't function without the time and effort Sharon puts in.

- to everyone who helps with Montgomery Meals (again, too many to list; some would be overlooked), including shopping, cooking, delivery and serving.

- to Mike Schmidt for his work editing the Shape each month.

- to Todd and Kimberly Axtell for printing the Shape each month, a true labor of time and materials. They also edit and do the layout when Mike is gone.

- to Joyce Wing for making sure the Shape gets delivered each month.

- to Susanne Moore for making the table decorations for the New Consecration Sunday Brunch.

- to the Stewardship Committee (Mary McPherson, Beth Proudfoot, Elizabeth Guichard, Debbie Estill, and Shelley Denney) for faithfully meeting, praying, and planning throughout the year, and for their wonderful work organizing and bringing about New Consecration Sunday.

- to the Rev. Julie Nelson for meeting with the Stewardship Committee several times and for being our guest preacher on New Consecration Sunday.

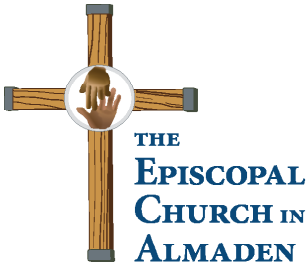
## Budget Update

### As of November 30:

Budgeted Income	\$ 225,959
Actual Income	<u>198,346</u>
Difference	\$ (27,613)
Budgeted Expense	\$ 223,881
Actual Expense	<u>217,297</u>
Difference	\$ (6,584)

## Worship at ECA

	Sunday
7:30 am	Eucharist
10:45 am	Choral Eucharist
	Thursday
9:30 am	Morning Prayer



6581 Camden Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95120

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Jonathon Beacher	12/1
Marion Grunge	12/2
Martha Lou Reynolds	12/2
Betty Consorte	12/5
Lola Fahlen	12/5
Susie Ferguson	12/13
Colleen DeVoss	12/16
Isabella Foreman	12/16
Susanne Moore	12/16
Kathleen Eagen	12/19
Gary Keck	12/19
Francie Kerr	12/19
Jason Skowronski	12/19
Dana Renfand	12/23
Mike Schmidt	12/26

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