

March 2019

The SHAPE

From the Rector

Dear Friends

Wednesday, March 6th is Ash Wednesday and ushers us into the beautiful season of Lent. Pastor Marty from CCAV-UCC and I will be distributing “Ashes to Go” again this year in front of Starbucks (next to Safeway). (Yes, it IS a “thing!” Many Episcopal churches participate in taking this symbol of our mortality and dependence on God out into the world.) We will begin at 8:30am, and anyone who wants to join us is welcome. ECA will also have Holy Eucharist and the Imposition of Ashes that day (noon and 7pm.) These activities and services will get us off to a good start to Lent!

Which raises the questions: what is a good Lent – what is Lent for? “Lent is one of the oldest observations on the Christian calendar. Like all Christian holy days and holidays, it has changed over the years, but its purpose has always been the same: self-examination and penitence, demonstrated by self-denial, in preparation for Easter. Early church father, Irenaus of Lyons (c.130-c.200), wrote of such a season in the earliest days of the church, but back then it lasted only two or three days, not the 40 observed today.”

Very often we will hear, “What did you give up for Lent?” Giving up something: sweets, alcohol, soda, etc., is a fine thing to do if we remember - each time we want what we gave up - that this is a discipline we have undertaken for God. The purpose would be to curb our will and offer that sacrifice to God. The practice would also recall our commitment to God to our mind multiple times per day.

A very constructive discipline for Lent might be to

take something on instead of giving something up. One might decide to participate in ECA’s offerings of Wednesday centering prayer, the Wednesday night class, Thursday morning Bible study and Morning Prayer, etc. One might make a commitment to God to attend Sunday worship every week during Lent. One might commit to reading the Bible every day or spending a few minutes in prayer each morning and evening. The purpose of taking on these commitments is the same: to open ourselves to God’s presence and action in our lives...to deepen our relationship with our Beloved.

Lent is a time for fruitful growth. Even as it occurs during the season of the year when the days are lengthening (where it got its name) and seeds in the earth are beginning to germinate, Lent is a time for God to stir our hearts and minds through the vehicle of the extra commitments we make in love. If we put in the commitment, God will take care of the growth.

May this Lent be a time when you discover and delight in God in new and wonderful ways.

Blessings,

Shelley+

Senior Warden

Three Stories of Peace

First, we received the following note with a \$100 donation to ECA. "To whom it may concern, My name is ___ and I work a program of recovery. That means that I have not had a drink or done drugs in 3 years and I am an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). About 6 years ago I graffitied your church. Something we do in AA is set right the wrongs from the past and that is what I am doing here, the best I know how. I want the \$100 enclosed to go towards whatever the church needs. Today I am not only setting things right from the past but am also living along different paths, so I do not repeat the same mistakes. I wish you peace. God Bless."

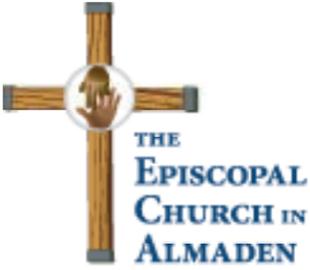
Second, while at the day center we saw a tall man drive up with a nice big white truck who brought all his bagged trash and then dumped it into our garbage bins. He came and went too fast before we realized what he had done. We weren't too happy about that. The next day, we saw a small man pull up with his nice large white truck full of tree branches. But he got out and was walking around, he noticed us in the Day Center, stopped for a moment than sauntered on. I went out to investigate and asked if I could help him, of course I went out fast and didn't put on a coat, it was cold. He was a small, older man, no upper teeth, he turned to me when he heard me and was at first so em-

barrassed that I had to come out into the cold to talk with him. I just said shivering, no it is alright how can I help you. He said it is this place, he feels such peace radiating from the building and the land, and that he comes when he can after work to walk around so he can feel the peace. He hoped I didn't mind, I said if that is what we can offer you please be at Peace. He smiled a big toothless grin and thanked me.

Third, as we've mentioned before with prior Day Centers, our new ladies also thanked many of the volunteers for providing them with warmth, safety, dignity and a wonderful sense of peace. It is so heartwarming when you have a single moment when another human grabs your arm with such gratefulness to tell you that this place has offered them their dignity back and that they have gained such a profound sense of safety, real love and peace of mind. They could not thank us enough.

In just a few weeks, hearing, seeing and feeling these words that total strangers have spoken, has provided me with inspiration to help continue our following of God's purpose as we explore and discuss what we can do together now and as we take our journey into the future. I hope these little stories help you with your thoughts, passion and actions. It is always the little things that can make the biggest differences. I wish you peace.

Your Senior Warden,
Joyce Wing



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Ruthanne Adams Martinez
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Joan Wagner
Altar Guild

Ann Avoux
Prayer Vine

Debbie Estill
Ushers

Mike Schmidt
Shape Editor
Pastoral Care Coordinator

Kathleen Eagan
Senior Ministry

Taylor Wing
Webmaster

Vestry Update

The Vestry meeting was held on February 12, where Don Hall was re-elected as Junior Warden for 2019.

Continuing business items included: a letter will be sent to all members of the congregation who were not able to attend the Annual Meeting; a meeting will be scheduled to discuss how to handle our Village House involvement in future; the Connection team held a training for house meeting table leaders on February 9, which 18 people attended. This is in preparation for the next meeting to be held April 7 from 3-5 pm at church to discuss issues and pressures people face, including the area's housing crisis.

New business items included: Don and Sharon Hall have offered their home for a wine and cheese party to discuss future fellowship events. This is tentatively planned for March 2. More to come on this in an upcoming bulletin. The Vestry plans to hold monthly parish meetings to foster conversation with the entire congregation about ECA's future direction. These will be held the first Sunday of each month after the 10:45 service and will last about 45 minutes. The first meeting will be March 3.

The next Vestry meeting will be held Tuesday, March 12 at 7:15 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

Elizabeth Guichard

Let's ROC

Jesus says, "I love you"

In February, "Let's ROC" centered around the theme of love. Twelve children gathered to hear the story of Jesus seeing and calling Zacchaeus out of the tree, and how that love changed Zacchaeus. Then we remembered that Jesus sees and loves us. That love was made tangible for all in delicious meal and adorable desserts. Parishioners loved hearing the children play the chimes, talk about the bible story and just seeing them grow.

Join us March 16th 4:30-6:30, for a St. Patrick's Day themed "Let's ROC" - "Shamrocks and Rainbows." There will be dinner of corned beef and cabbage. The chime choir will help lead us in worship. We'll have a special opportunity to view the art made by the young participants in our art class, taught by Dana Renfand, assisted by Leslie Rousseau and Judi Dimicelli. RSVP to Holly at holly@eca.org, or look for the sign-up sheet in the parish hall.

Holly McCullough

Book Group

The JV Book Group's March meeting will be on Wednesday, March 20th (generally on the 3rd Wednesday of the month). Meetings are held at 5:30 PM at the Marie Callender's Restaurant on Blossom Hill Road. If you have not attended the group before, please know that all are welcome. RSVP to Amy Griffith (408 268-0920) or email amy-g@pacbell.net.

JV members:

Steve Wing, Joe Machado
and Don Hall

Vestry members:

Senior Warden
Joyce Wing

Inge Bond

Judi Dimicelli

Don Hall

Todd Lukanc

Bonnie McPherson

Wendy Martin

Kathy Mastre

Nancy Romer

Marianne Schmidt

ECA Activities

March 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 4:30pm Party to plan Fellowship activities
3 7:30am Holy Eucharist 10:45am Holy Eucharist Casual Choir 12:45pm Working Together As One	4 9:30am Yoga	5	6 <u>ASH WEDNESDAY</u> 12pm Ash Wednesday Service 3:30pm Centering Prayer 4:30pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7pm Ash Wednesday Service	7 8am Men's Breakfast 9:30am Morning Prayer 10am Lectionary Bible Study 6pm Stewardship Committee 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	8	9
10 (Daylight Savings Time begins) 7:30am Holy Eucharist 10:45am Holy Eucharist 12:30pm Connection Team Meeting	11 9:30am Yoga	12 7:15 Vestry Meeting	13 3:30pm Centering Prayer 4:30pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7pm Lenten Class	14 8am Men's Breakfast 9:30am Morning Prayer 10am Lectionary Bible Study 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	15 2pm Montgomery Meals	16 4:30pm Let's ROC
17 7:30am Holy Eucharist 10:45am Holy Eucharist Handbell Choir	18 9:30am Yoga	19 7:30pm JV Board Meeting	20 3:30pm Centering Prayer 4:30pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 5pm Book Group 7pm Lenten Class	21 8am Men's Breakfast 9:30am Morning Prayer 10am Lectionary Bible Study 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	22	23
24 7:30am Holy Eucharist 10:45am Holy Eucharist Folk Choir	25 9:30am Yoga	26	27 3:30pm Centering Prayer 4:30pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7pm Lenten Class	28 8am Men's Breakfast 9:30am Morning Prayer 10am Lectionary Bible Study 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	29 6:30pm Cooking Class	30
31 7:30am Holy Eucharist 10:45am Holy Eucharist						

Stewardship

Why Do We Give?

The Stewardship Committee recently met to debrief over the recent pledge drive and to figure out what worked and what didn't work in our continued quest to be good year-around stewards of the blessings that God has provided us at ECA.

We talked about the personal stories that have been shared over the last two years and how they impacted each of us. We all have our stories of why we are at ECA and why we share our financial blessings with the church vs. giving to other truly worthwhile causes, and it made me think about why Jim and I choose to support the church. Many of you know I was a church dater for much of my life, looking for a community that I fit into, as I had a driving need to feel a part of something bigger than myself, somewhere where they walked the walk and not just talked the talk. I knew that this church community existed, because I saw it when I visited my grandparents. Their church community knew each other, cared for one another, served side by side with one another, and cried and celebrated with each other at those milestone events that every family has. They were, in short, a family. But unfortunately, this church was in Riverside and I was not.

I had almost given up on finding a similar church community, as I had been disappointed so many times once I moved to San Jose. But then I came to ECA. ECA felt different almost from the start. But the service was a bit too similar to my Catholic

upbringing and almost sent me looking again....except for the people, they were so accepting of my family, and there were so many ways to serve, and activities to be a part of, and suddenly we were coming to church more often than not, and then my father died. We weren't members of the church, we hadn't pledged, we occasionally put money in the basket, but we hadn't truly committed to the church...but they were committed to us. Suddenly we were enveloped in the loving embrace of the church as they took over all the details of the funeral and making sure we were cared for. So many came to the funeral of a man they had never met, just to support us, and this church has continued to love and care for my family ever since. ECA does this over and over, even extending this loving family community to the ladies of the Day Center and to the neighborhood camps and Let's Roc, it's just in their DNA. They've been doing it for families for over 50 years, and I for one want to make sure they are here to support our people and the people of our community who need to be loved for another 50+ years. That is why Jim and I give. This Jesus centered, loving community needs to survive and thrive for all those who desperately need it! Just my two cents.

*Bonnie McPherson
Stewardship Committee Member*

Vestry

Working Together As One (WTO)

Let's come together on every 1st Sunday of the month for a "hearty" Coffee Hour for only 45 minutes from 12:15 to 1:00pm! The Vestry set up these monthly meetings to provide on-going communication between the Vestry and our congregation to Work Together as One as we explore and plan our future endeavors. In the future, there will be other smaller focus groups as well, but these monthly meetings will provide status, question and answers and planning discussions.

As a first and vital step, it is important to know where we are starting from so that we don't leave behind what we love. On March 3rd, we want to hear from Parishioners to understand who we are, what we believe and what God is calling us to do. These findings will be the foundation to build our future upon. We will be asking the following questions, please think about them in preparation for this meeting:

- Tell us a story of your best experience as a member of ECA.
- What was it that made it so important to you?
- What did it make you want to do?

Please set aside this time on the first Sunday of each month, through 2019. We look forward to seeing you there!

Your Vestry

Adult Education

Lenten Class

Wednesday evenings (7-8:30pm)
March 13 to April 10

The class for Lent this year will be "Walking the Way of Love: A Journey through the Baptismal Covenant." The Way of Love, introduced by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, is not a program but a way of life. It is a return to the ancient pathways and Rules of Life that followers of Jesus have observed for centuries. They knew the power of commitment to a core set of practices – Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest – and the power of gathering in a small group where you find love and support for living into these commitments. Our Wednesday class is a program based on this Way of Love. Additionally, as Episcopalians, we have committed to the five promises of the Baptismal Covenant.

But what does that look like applied in real life? This study reviews the promises of the Baptismal Covenant, the steps of the Way of Love, and offers tools from human rights work to answer this question. Together, participants will discuss, share, and learn from one another. By applying these principles as volunteers, professionals, and faith communities, we can live out our call as disciples of Christ.

All are welcome in this class, if you cannot make every session, please come to those you are able to attend.

Note: there will not be a Wednesday evening class on Ash Wednesday due to the 7pm service.

Fellowship

Let's Party Like There's No Tomorrow

Many have commented that we are just not doing enough fellowship, or the right kind of fellowship, and they miss it! Well I have a deal for you!!!! The fellowship committee is having a party to plan the parties for the coming year, and you are invited to brainstorm with us as we drink wine and nosh. What a deal!

This "don't miss event" is on Saturday, March 2, 4:30-7 P.M. (or until we run out of wine), at the lovely home of Don and Sharon Hall. Bring an appetizer to share, a favorite beverage, and your imagination!

See you there,
Bonnie

Outreach

The Ladies Have Left the Building

The day (warming) center has come and gone, but the feel-good feeling still lingers as we put the space back to its normal configuration. The group was smaller, but their challenges were in some ways even greater than in some previous groups. The challenges to our center were some

times overwhelming as well, as we battled illness and fewer volunteers throughout the month, putting a strain on those who were able to serve. But even as we take a collective sigh of relief, as we get our lives back, I want to remind everyone of the many wins that we accomplished in January. We had our doors open 12 hours a day/7 days a week for a month. We provided warmth, wonderful food, companionship and loving acceptance to a group of God's people who desperately needed it. We opened our doors to so many volunteers who don't worship with us, and shared with them the way of Jesus, the way of love that binds our faiths and spiritual beings together. We were the hands and hearts of Jesus as we spoke the tongues of love and healed the broken spirits and bodies of these children of God. I thank all that were a part of this labor of love and all who supported those who served. Alleluia, Alleluia!

Bonnie McPherson

Worship

Ash Wednesday Services

There will be Ashes to Go in front of Starbucks (next to Safeway on Camden & Almaden Expressway), from 8:30 to 10:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes services will be held in the sanctuary at noon and 7 P.M. (music at the later service).



Worship Schedule

March 3 – Last Sunday after the Epiphany

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

March 6 – Ash Wednesday

12:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes
7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes

March 10 – First Sunday in Lent (Daylight Savings Time begins)

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

March 16

4:30 p.m. Let's ROC

March 17 – Second Sunday in Lent

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

March 24 – Third Sunday in Lent

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

March 31 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

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

Gifts of Gratitude

Thank you ..

•to those who helped with the new narthex furniture: the basic team, including Ruthanne Martinez, Susanne Moore, Judi Dimicelli, and Dennis Widman; the consulting members, The Rev. Shelley Denney, The Rev. Marty Williams, and Debbie Bemis; and finally, the wonderful furniture constructionists, Jim and Bonnie McPherson.

•to volunteers from ECA who provide a loving environment and wonderful lunches in our Village House Day Center: Bonnie McPherson, Pat McGarvin, Joyce and Steve Wing, Kathy Mastre, Jenny Hoyt, Judi Dimicelli, Melinda Jennings, Ellen Lukanc, Susie Ferguson, Nancy and George Romer, Susanne and Arnold Moore, Michelle Yeider, Kathleen Eagan, Maryke Williams, Marion Grunge, Doreen Senior, Marianne and Mike Schmidt, Amy Schmidt, Phylis Chai, Monique Rousseau, Leslie Rousseau, Anne Tysanner, Kathryn Hussain, Kelli Casale, Laura Hall, Margaret Allvey, Sharon Hall, Wendy Martin. Forgive me if I have forgotten someone.

•to Susie Ferguson and Judi Dimicelli for helping set up for Let's ROC

•to Tom Ruffo for leading the Let's ROC kitchen crew, and to Jerry Ferguson, Marianne Schmidt, and Nancy and George Romer

•to everyone who made guests feel welcome at Let's ROC and made quick work of cleaning up

•to Susie Ferguson for leading the children's chime choir with Maryke Williams' help

•to Wendy Martin for taking beautiful photos of Let's ROC

JV Spring Tea

The theme for the JV Spring Tea, held May 1, is Congregational Creations: A Taste of Our Creativity. Our vision is to put the amazing talent in our congregations on display. **We invite you to submit one creation that you personally have created,** such as: paintings, woodworking, photos, knitting, sewing, crafting, metal work, etc. Please see Mid-week Bulletin for the form to fill out and submit to Ruthanne by March 31.

Looking Forward

April 7 • Working Together As One session

April 14 • Palm Sunday

April 20 • The Great Vigil of Easter

April 21 • Easter Sunday

May 1 • Annual JV Tea

God Was a Refugee

Finding the Beating Heart of Ministry in the Incarnation

The following is an excerpt from an article by Robin Denney in *Heart of Ministry*, February 2019. Posted in 21stCenturyMinistry, 21stCentury Religion, Featured Article.

Reina had walked for more than 20 days, in the rain and cold and mud. Grief-stricken after the loss of her son, she walked with one destination in mind: a country she hoped would be her safe-harbor, a new beginning, free from the fear and the violence she had known.

She walked with thousands of others to find safety in numbers. She wasn't trying to make a statement by walking. The last thing she wanted to be doing was walking. Walking was her only and final resort.

I didn't know what to say to Reina when she finished telling me her story. Her voice was so weak with tears, at times it was difficult for me to understand all that she said. I didn't know if her son had been taken from her, or if he had died. So I asked the first thing that came into my head, "Is there hope that you will see your son again?"

Her whole aspect changed. She stood up straighter, her voice was firm, her hand clasped around the cross that hung from her neck. "My hope is in Christ," she said.

We talked a little more, I asked the name of her son, so I could keep them both in my prayers. I asked if I could give her a hug. I said, "God bless you." And then the short encounter was over.

But it is still with me.

TO READ THE REST OF THIS ARTICLE GO TO:

<https://www.thebtscenter.org/bearings/2019-february/god-was-a-refugee>

March Birthdays

Tim Miller	March	01
Anna Spanjaart		01
Jack Jackman		03
Wendy Martin		03
Linda Sarmecanic		03
Judy Graun		04
Julia Machado		06
Jackie Whitlock		06
Bryan Bond		10
Marianne Schmidt		10
Gloria Ashdown		24
Eddie Keck		26

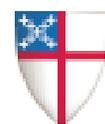
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