

August 2021

# The SHAPE

*From the Rector*

## Dear Friends

Just a couple of weeks ago, we had our first in-person Episcopal Visitation with Bishop Lucinda Ashby. Our visitation last year was via Zoom because of the pandemic lockdown. This was also the first time in sixteen months that the ECA Choir was able to sing together, as we were outside and there was no need for social distancing or masking. Sixty-three ECA members attended the joyful service of Holy Eucharist, at which Bishop Lucinda preached and presided.

She shared with us the importance Jesus placed on Sabbath rest, as shown in our gospel for the morning. Jesus saw Sabbath not just as a time to take a break from work, but also as a time to reconnect with God. He himself was able to teach, heal, and truly see others for who they were because of his own close connection to God. Jesus maintained and strengthened this relationship through frequent times of quiet prayer. We too can refresh ourselves and grow our relationship with God through quiet times of prayer.

I am convinced that a regular silent practice of some sort is a key to spiritual growth. The tradition of our corporate prayer engages all the senses: hearing, sight, touch, taste, and even smell. With our voices and our bodies, we participate fully in our Sunday liturgy. It is rich and beautiful and gives us opportunity to experience God with our sisters and brothers in Christ, and our oneness in the One who created, redeemed, and sustains us. And we also need to experience and connect individually with the same One, from our heart more than our mind, and with an emphasis on listening rather than speaking.

Silent practices are neither mysterious nor strange. I am sure we all remember times with people we love when we sit in companionable silence, simply enjoying one another's presence. It is the same way with the One who loves us beyond our comprehension. In fact, one of the great blessings of doing so is that we gradually come to accept how much we are loved!

If you do not have a silent practice, try sitting quietly and comfortably for just three minutes each day – perhaps in a place you associate with relaxing. When you start, state your intention internally to sit in God's presence for that few minutes. Without letting your mind wander and engage in miscellaneous thoughts, simply let them float away when they come. Be gently aware of your body and your breathing – that will help you stay in the moment. The present moment is the only place we are able to encounter God...or anyone else. We do not encounter in the past – we remember. We do not encounter in the future – we imagine. Try to just BE in the present moment, aware that God is always closer than your breath. Do not be concerned that it seems like nothing is happening. The fruit of silent practice shows up at other times in our life. When three minutes seems attainable, try increasing a minute or so. Eventually you may choose to work up to twenty minutes. You may even want to join the ECA Wednesday Meditation Group (link in Wednesday Message each week.)

The last two weeks of July have been my own vacation – my Sabbath rest from work and time to gently refresh in the presence of Christ. We have visited lots of family, reconnecting in deep ways. I hope for each of you the chance to re-create with Sabbath rest in August.

Blessings,

*Shelley+*

## Senior Warden

# A New Normal

Sunday, July 19th....I was present for the visitation of Bishop Lucinda Ashby at ECA. Fifty five of you were too!! Much preparation was necessary by Shelley before the visit for it to run smoothly. Many others helped with this too ... to quote Pat McGarvin, "We are a church of angels" who are willing to step up and be present. My husband, George and I arrived almost 2 hours prior to the start of the service to be part of the general "get things done" committee. As people began to arrive for the service, I had an overwhelming sense of gratitude and joy watching each one. Many, I hadn't seen in over a year. But this moment also caused me to think deeper about the past year and more.

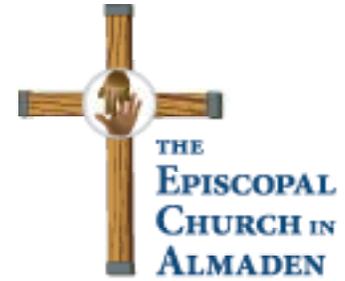
For over a year, we have been operating from places that are difficult, filled with many kinds of grieving. The losses that many have experienced are deep and emotional. We think we are moving forward since many have been vaccinated and are wearing masks in appropriate situations, but then we get a yank backwards from the news of the virus variants. We all want to "return to normal," but it just can't be. We are entering a "new normal", even in the church. Our lives will need to build forward, not backwards. The Bishop used the word "languishing" which implies the lack of energy round moving forward, yet there is no energy to be patient. It is important to continue to recognize that this is a time that most

of us haven't ever experienced. We've been in a dark place of turmoil and are about to come out of it, but we can't really see the clear light for the end. We have promises...from our government, our church and our community...but it's not quite clear yet.

The one word that keeps bubbling up is "adaptability". We will be successful if we continue to adapt and be nimble. I believe that ECA is both of these words/actions. Each of us has proven that we can adapt to so many things. One big example is our online services. With the technological expertise of Bryan Bond and Marcus Krsynowski we have been to church "on line" for months and will have the opportunity to continue should we desire. Other examples include: meeting outside for delightfully spiritual services; driving through the parking lot to receive our wafers for communion; calling each other, writing to each other, walking to their homes for a waving visit and driving by to wish people "happy trails" and "happy birthday" and engagement congratulations.

We are now possibly facing the biggest request of adaptability for us all. As we move forward for the Church of the Future, we may all be asked to adapt how we "do church". I am confident that the Lord is leading us to the solution He wants us to implement. I am confident that we will listen and act on His direction. We all know

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### Rector

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

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### Staff

**Lynda Ford**  
*Music Director*

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

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### Assisting in our Ministry

**Nancy Romer**  
*Senior Warden*

**Joan Wagner**  
*Altar Guild*

**Alain Guichard**  
*Head Usher*

**Ann Avoux**  
*Prayer Vine*

**Mike Schmidt**  
*Shape Editor*

**Kathleen Eagan**  
*Senior Ministry*

**Taylor Wing**  
*Webmaster*

**Betty Consorte**  
*Pastoral Care Coordinator*

that faith is a mystery. I will endeavor to keep the joy in my heart and the mystery of faith alive as we move forward together. Peace be with us all.

*Nancy Romer  
Senior Warden*

## Classes for Everyone

**T**hursday Morning Bible Study meets every Thursday morning via Zoom from 10-11:30am. Each week we study the gospel for the upcoming Sunday. This not only enhances the participants' Sunday experience, but also gives us a very good grounding in each gospel book, as we study the same book for most of a year. Bible study runs continuously. The Zoom link is in the Wednesday Message each week. Open to everyone, we hope you'll join us!

Wednesday Night Class/Discussion Group is taking a break throughout August. We will begin to meet again (7-8:30pm) on September 2nd. If you have an idea for a topic you would like to learn about, please let Shelley know. Some suggestions so far: Women of the Bible, What Do Episcopalians Believe, Talking to God: How to Pray and Why. Anything sound interesting?

## Book Group

**T**he JV Book Group is now meeting online, via Zoom, on the third Monday of each month, at 4:30 P.M. All are invited to participate. If interested, contact Amy Griffith by email ([amy-g@pacbell.net](mailto:amy-g@pacbell.net)) or by phone (408-268-0920), and Amy will arrange for you to be included in the Zoom meeting.

The August meeting will be at 4:30 P.M. on Monday, August 16. The book will be *The Lost and Found Bookshop*, by Susan Wiggs.

If you'd like to get started on the book for September, it's *The Color of Air*, by Gail Tsukiyama.

*Amy Griffith*

If you have any needs - spiritual, emotional, or physical - please let me know. You can always get me on my cell: 805-550-0582 or my email: [shelleydenney@gmail.com](mailto:shelleydenney@gmail.com) The office is, of course, closed - but Ruthanne is working from home. If you have an "office" question, call on her cell phone: 408-482-4014. Please be mindful that though at home her hours are still Tues-Fri 10am to 2pm. You may contact me at any time.

### JV members:

*Steve Wing  
Ellen Lukanc  
Judi Dimicelli*

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### Vestry members:

**Worship, Music**  
*The Reverend Shelley Denney*

**Senior Warden**  
*Nancy Romer*

**Communications**  
*Joyce Wing  
Judi Dimicelli*

**Outreach**  
*Don Hall*

**Junior Warden**  
*Alain Guichard*

**Finance**  
*Todd Lukanc*

**Fellowship, Hospitality,  
and Welcoming**  
*Kelli Cassale  
Susanne Moore*

**Pastoral Care**  
*Marianne Schmidt*

**Stewardship**  
*Kelli Casale*

# ECA Activities

## August 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:45am Holy Eucharist (inside in person and live-stream) Outside Coffee Hour	2 Shelley's Day Off	3	4 10am Meditation Group (Zoom)	5 10am Lectionary Bible Study (via Zoom)	6	7
8 10:45am Holy Eucharist (inside in person and live-stream) Outside Coffee Hour	9 Shelley's Day Off	10	11 10am Meditation Group (Zoom) 1pm Re-Entry Team Meeting	12 10am Lectionary Bible Study (via Zoom) 6pm Vestry Meeting	13	14
15 10:45am Holy Eucharist (Inside in person and live-stream) Outside Coffee Hour	16 Shelley's Day Off 4:30pm Book Group	17 6pm JV Board Meeting	18 10am Meditation Group (Zoom)	19 10am Lectionary Bible Study (via Zoom)	20	21
22 10:45am Holy Eucharist (inside in person and live-stream) Outside Coffee Hour	23 Shelley's Day Off	24	25 10am Meditation Group (Zoom)	26 10am Lectionary Bible Study (via Zoom)	27	28
29 10:45am Holy Eucharist (Inside in person and live-stream) Outside Coffee Hour	30 Shelley's Day Off	31				

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## July Vestry Notes

The Vestry met via Zoom on July 8. Shelley gave an opening prayer, which was followed by a Lectio Divina based on Matthew 17:1-9. In the business meeting, Todd began the financial report by thanking Joyce & Steven Wing for their ongoing counting. Pledge income increased slightly in June to 103% of the year-to-date budget, while expenses remained normal. Shelley reported that both ECAs and the JV PPP loans have been forgiven.

In the “church of the future” update, Joyce Wing explained that Jerry Ferguson prepared a report on our stated goals compared to our current zoning ordinances and conditional use permit. Based on that report, the core team felt that the housing component should be removed from the list of services we want to provide as it could be a lengthy and difficult process to change the zoning. A draft strategic plan has been written and provided to Maria Nicolacoudis, the CEO of Hearts & Minds. She agreed to work with us and, in fact, has already discussed our project with her Board. She plans to create an ad hoc group to work with us and suggested that we include the Almaden Valley Counseling Center in our efforts. The JV Core Team has also begun discussing what our financial needs would be with such partnerships. They requested input from the Finance Committee, which hopes to meet in August.

The Vestry began discussions about what the “new normal” should look like, which will continue next month. Under consideration is what efforts & services we should absolutely keep, what we should enrich and what we should scale back or discard.

Joyce Wing is working to re-team the counters so we can return to counting our pledge and plate income on a regular basis.

The Re-Entry team is researching options for providing coffee and tea at coffee hour and have agreed that it is no longer necessary to sanitize surfaces (except for the bathrooms) between services.

Shelley will be on vacation from July 19-August 2. During that time, Nancy Romer, Sr. Warden, will be in charge.

The next Vestry meeting will be held on August 12 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. All are welcome.

*Elizabeth Guichard*

## June JV Board Notes

The JV Board met on Tuesday, June 15th. Pastor Shelly Wilson, the new interim pastor at CCAV, UCC, was welcomed to the board. Next, the JV Board approved CCAV, UCC’s plan for in-person worship starting July 4 with the understanding that ECA will clear out that which is currently being stored in the Fellowship Hall and that CCAV, UCC will follow the Covid protocols in place. In addition, the board approved John Leslie’s request to present his play outside at the end of July with the condition that he follow Covid protocols, sign the building use agreement, and obtain insurance coverage. Then the board discussed requests from the Assistance League and AA to resume using the building for their meetings. It was decided to indicate that anyone using the building must adhere to rules set forth by the diocese. The board agreed that the bi-weekly cleaning crew should re-start. The board was made aware of the occurrence of “donuts” made in the gravel of the rose garden. A motion was made and passed for the purchase of two new EZ-Ups. Finally, as of June 15, no date had been scheduled for the proposed electrical work and nothing had been done to move forward on the issue of the Smart Thermostats.

*Respectfully submitted from afar,*

*Judi Dimicelli*



## Working Together as One Status Update

Some good news! The JV Core Team has been drafting a JV Strategic Plan. The initial draft was sent to Maria Nicolacoudis, Director of Hearts and Minds, prior to our meeting with her to provide her some context for our upcoming discussion with her. The JV Core Team met with Maria over a zoom call, an update was provided, introductions were made, Pastor Shelly and her role was mentioned since she was unable to attend, and then Maria was asked if she could provide two things. First if she could give us comments on our draft JV Strategic Plan and offer any recommendations, and secondly, that our main purpose of the meeting was to ask if Hearts and Minds would like to begin conversations on partnering with JV on our Church of the Future efforts. She responded immediately by saying “Yes, Hearts and Minds would like to begin a partnership discussion” and that she had already approached her Board of Directors with this potential endeavor, they were very supportive. YAY!

She said they would form an ad hoc group of Board members to begin these discussions with us. She also liked the idea that we

had talked with Almaden Valley Counseling Services, and encouraged us to have the same discussion with them. She sees the synergy between their two services and how complimentary they could be at one site. We have sent the draft JV Strategic Plan to the AVCS new director and plan to meet in a few weeks. She stated that our JV Strategic Plan was very good, and mentioned the areas that are still needed, such as timelines and objectives, which we had only begun. In general, she felt it was a good and comprehensive document.

We are finishing up the JV Strategic Plan and will be incorporating what we learn from the DCG Strategies Land Use document. We have just received their document and will be discussing the report over the next two weeks internally and then with DCG to finalize if we have any questions or changes that are needed.

The entire team was pretty excited and will begin developing more detailed plans and seeking expertise to assist us. Once we finalize the JV Strategic Plan we will send it out to the congregations and schedule a date to make a presentation in-person and over zoom. There is still a lot of work to be done, along with further investigations on land use and the processes with the City of San Jose. However, we are making plans to talk with key-decision makers to make them aware of our Dream and to seek guidance and support as we move forward. One of these individuals is our Councilman, Matt Mahan.

JV Core Team members: Joyce Wing, Rev. Shelley Denney, Marianne Schmidt, Ellen Lukanc, Nancy Romer, George Romer, Judi Dimicelli, Pastor Shelly Wilson, Debbie Bemis, Jan Blake, Tom Gerber and Kelly Yamanishi. Plus, assistance from Jerry Ferguson.

Questions: contact Joyce Wing, Debbie Bemis or Shelley Denney



*This photo, and the one on the following page, are from the outdoor service on the occasion of the Bishop's visitation, on July 18.*

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## July Report on Worship, Music, and Christian Education

As of the first of June, we moved to indoor, in person worship every Sunday, which is also live-streamed, thus making it a hybrid service. This accommodates: those who are not yet comfortable coming in person, those who want to see the service but not attend every Sunday, and those who have not ever come in person to ECA, but like our service. We plan to continue hybrid services, since a lot of people are viewing them. As of June 20, per diocesan rules, we were able to begin Holy Eucharist indoor, in person. We are now back to Holy Eucharist every Sunday, as before the pandemic lockdown. At this time, and probably through the summer, those in person must be masked and socially distanced while they are inside the building. To be able to do this, pre-consecrated hosts are being distributed with bulletins when people come upstairs into the sanctuary. We all then receive them together at the appropriate time in the service.

Congregants may now sing behind their masks during the service, and choir members may sing without masks if they are 12 feet from each other and the congregation. So, we are able to have 4-5 choir members in the loft to lead the hymns. At least through the summer, anthems will continue to be videos, shown on the large

screen installed in the livestream booth, during the service. Please remember the choir is usually on hiatus during the summer. Lynda and I continue to choose the music for each Sunday, as we have done for the past 16 months, now joined by the other members of the Liturgy and Music Committee when they are available. We try to pick hymns that are upbeat and very familiar.

Adult education classes continue, as for the past 16 months, on Zoom. We have a 7-8:30pm discussion group that focused on spirituality for a good part of last year, then a book discussion of "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo last fall, ending before Christmas. We took January off. In Lent, we had a 5-week course on Care of Creation, then during Eastertide and continuing now, we have focused on racism with a series of videos, some produced by our diocese, and some from other sources. This ended with my vacation, mid-July, and we are taking August off. We

have anywhere from 4-9 participants on any given Wednesday night, including two former ECA members who have moved to the eastern time zone! There are 13 members who have attended. We also have a Thursday morning 10-11:30am bible study class that reads the gospel for the coming Sunday. This not only enhances the participants' Sunday experience, but also gives us a very good grounding in each gospel book, as we study the same book for most of a year. Bible study runs continuously. Even in my absence it is often led by Judi Dimicelli. We miss very few Thursdays in a year. We have anywhere from 4-6 people on a Thursday, but have 8 members who have attended. I intend to continue these classes on Zoom until people want to return to having them at church, but only when we can do a hybrid class well, so those who can't/won't come in person are not excluded. There is a total of 4 people in both classes combined who used to come in person but choose not to or cannot attend on Zoom.

*Faithfully,  
Shelley*



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## Tales From the Kitchen, with Alain Guichard: Stuffed Tomatoes

With summer here, I start to think of how to use produce from the garden. And that makes me think of one of my favorite dishes from my youth... stuffed tomatoes.

In fact, this was a favorite for the whole family and when my mom wanted to give everyone a treat she would make this dish, served with macaroni.

it is very rich, made with butter, ground pork, garlic and parsley. But once in awhile, it is good to splurge.



### Ingredients (to serve 4):

- In the summer, at the farmers market, I choose large, ripe tomatoes, one per person
- 1 lb ground pork
- 1 egg
- 1/2 c chopped curly parsley
- 4 cloves chopped garlic
- 4 pats of butter
- salt & pepper to taste

### Instructions:

*Mix the ground pork with the egg, parsley, garlic, salt and black pepper. When mixed, divide into 4 large meatballs, one for each tomato.*

*Slice off the tops of the tomatoes, then empty the insides with a soup spoon (save the pulp).*

*Stuff the tomatoes with one large meatball each, then cover with the tomato tops.*

*Put the tomatoes in a baking pan with a pat of butter on each tomato, and add the saved pulp, salt and pepper.*

*Bake for 30 minutes at 250 degrees.*

*Cook the pasta as per usual (I like to use elbow macaroni).*

*Serve the tomato on top of the cooked macaroni, with the buttery sauce from the pan.*

*Bon appetit, and don't forget to for a walk after that.*

*Bon Appetit,  
Alain Guichard*





## Worship Schedule

**August 1** – *Tenth Sunday after Pentecost*

10:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**August 8** – *Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost*

10:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**August 15** – *Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost*

10:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**August 22** – *Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

10:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**August 29** – *Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

10:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

## Gifts of Gratitude

Thank you ..

- to Elizabeth and Alain Guichard, Susanne Moore, Ellen and Todd Lukanc, Joyce and Steve Wing, Nancy and George Romer, Marianne and Mike Schmidt, Bill LaVallee, Don Hall and Bryan Bond for helping to ensure chairs and tents were set up and taken down and were available to help wherever needed during the Bishop's visitation.
- to Joyce Wing for all of her work and organization as project manager for the Church of the Future. Her organization, diligence, and good listening skills are outstanding and a real blessing.
- to Pat McGarvin and Ellen Lukanc who went to the aid of a parishioner who needed medical help during the recent outdoor service
- to Lynda Ford and our choir, who make such lovely music
- to all of those who donated gently used clothes. 50 plus bags have been donated to date to SMUM!
- to Joyce and Steve Wing for delivering the used clothes to Santa Maria Urban Ministry
- to all those who make it possible for the church to be open for worship services, including all who work behind the

scenes to make it happen

- to Kimberly Axtell for leading the Sunday Service on July 25 at the last minute when the supply priest was unable to come. Her calm and spiritual presence were so appreciated.



*Over sixty folks attended an outdoor service at ECA on Sunday, July 18, for an in-person Episcopal Visitation with Bishop Lucinda Ashby, who presided and preached.*

## August Birthdays

Ashley Martin	August	13
Jessica Skowronski		14
Roger Hoyt		16
David Byers		17
David Hoyt		19

## <sup>The</sup>SHAPE

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