



Church Mouse

News & Events from St. John's Episcopal Church • Oakland, California

February 2012

February 5 – Epiphany 5
7:45 – Early Eucharist
10:00 – Choral Eucharist
“Camp Sunday” after service

February 12- Epiphany 6
7:45 – Early Eucharist
8:55 – Family Eucharist
10:00 – Adult Faith Formation
10:00 – Church School
10:45 – Choral Eucharist

February 19 – Epiphany Last
7:45 – Early Eucharist
8:55 – Family Eucharist
10:00 – Adult Faith Formation
10:00 – Church School
10:45 – Choral Eucharist
5-7 p.m. - Pancake Supper

February 22
Ash Wednesday
6:30 a.m. – Distribution of ashes
7:30 p.m. – Distribution of ashes

February 26 – Lent 1
7:45 – Early Eucharist
8:55 – Family Eucharist
10:00 – Adult Faith Formation
10:00 – Church School
10:45 – Choral Eucharist

March 4 – Lent 2
7:45 – Early Eucharist
10:00 – Choral Eucharist

Guide us waking,
O Lord, and
guard us sleeping;
that awake we may
watch with Christ,
and asleep we may
rest in peace.

Rector Asks: Is Lent a Brick or a Friend?



Lent begins this month. Sorry. Someone had to remind you. Coming right on the heels of Epiphany makes it even more difficult given the exciting and intoxicating message of Epiphany which calls us to broaden our horizons and think outside the box while allowing our hearts to fill with a sense of wonder and adventure. Then, all of the sudden, Lent lands on us like a brick and the tradition asks us to pack away our alleluias and buckle ourselves in for a long haul to Jerusalem where we will, once again, remember the struggle that is required when we are true to our values and beliefs. It makes one want to bury the season of Lent, not the alleluias.

On the other hand, I have to admit that I stumbled into an Episcopal Church in Cambridge Massachusetts during Lent and it was the Lenten experience that inspired me to become Episcopalian. At the time I was finding it hard to wear a smile and the constant call to an upbeat attitude was wearing thin in the church I had been attending. I was finding the call to embrace all those qualities we aspire to, like hope, faith and

love, a bit ingenuous. I was struggling, I felt lost, and I felt isolated, convinced that I was marching to the beat of a drummer that no one else could hear. I had been hung up on the overture of my spiritual life and had no understanding of how to imagine another movement in the symphony that was my life.

It was then that a friend invited me to St. James Episcopal Church where I suddenly felt there was a place for my anguish. Episcopalians are pretty good about proclaiming that All Are Welcome! But what I experienced was much more profound. The liturgy and practice of the church proclaimed not only that I was welcome, but also, all of who I was. My doubts, fears, anxieties, and moments of despair and frustration were welcome right there in the middle of the liturgy. I felt absolved for not having a happy face. I had no alleluia to bury, and the message that no alleluias were allowed felt gracious to me. The fact that others were liturgically burying their alleluias made me feel that others were standing in solidarity with me. It was OK being who I was, and where I was.

—Continued on Page 2

Spirits, Demons and Mark... oh my



As Epiphany continues on into February get our first real taste of the Gospel of Mark. In these up incoming stories Jesus encounters evil spirits and demons.

Evil spirits and demons... really? What is an educated, progressive Christian of 2012 to do?

At first glance this gospel seems to be set in a world where there is a struggle going on between the evil and the good. Jesus as Luke Skywalker fighting the darkness one demon at a time.

The Pentecostals use warfare language to describe this struggle. They believe that a war is going on for souls. A 2006 documentary called Jesus Camp follows children that are being trained to fight. The documentary is filled with battle songs, crying over lost souls and public pleading for people to be saved.

This type of theology makes my quiet, tea loving Episcopal soul quake.

In 2008 I spent a summer in NC doing a Clinical Pastoral Education Unit (CPE) in a hospital. This is a required internship in a hospital for episcopal priests. I spent it in a medium sized hospital in Raleigh. While I was there I was surprised by the number of patients that spoke of their ailments as demons. This hospital was located in the middle of a highly educated community and I was listening to patients about demons.

I remember one man, a patient who was a hard working, good man seemed to get the short end of the stick when it came to health. He told me “I have been fighting these demons for the past few years, I just try to not let them get me down. I know that I must never give up. The devil is tricky and will be around every corner but I know these doctors and prayer will help me fight him”

This man knew that sometimes life is full of chaos (sickness, dysfunction, darkness etc.)

—Continued on Page 2

Rector Asks: Is Lent a Brick or a Friend?

—Continued from Page 1

Perhaps that is what Lent is all about, standing in solidarity ourselves and with the entire world. The very season of Lent is revolutionary in that sense. It proclaims a commitment to not being co-opted into an American dream that can leave people behind or parts of the human struggle behind.

Let Lent be an inspiring friend to you this year. Let it remind you that not only are you welcome here, but all your doubts, fears, anxieties and questions are also welcome. Lent is a truly invitational time because it invites us to open our hearts to who we truly are and to open our hearts to the entire world, reminding us that God is very present in the struggle as well as the resulting victory that will be Easter.

Scott+

Spirits, Demons and Mark... oh my

—Continued from Page 1

and that he should do everything he can to prevent chaos from running his life. Using this perspective, I think well educated, proper Episcopalians (like us) can think about demons in a new light. Chaos fills our lives in many different ways and in our ordered, modern society we sometimes don't have the language to describe how it feels when chaos has invaded our being.

Mark's gospel demon talk is about authority. The authority that Jesus has over the demons. This is expressed when Jesus commands them to leave by their name. God knows our demons by name. I believe that this deep knowing from our Creator will help us even in our darkest moments continue to see the light and to be the light. This Epiphany don't quake when you hear about demons instead give a moment to think about your personal demons and how a God who knows them by name can help you lead a life that is about life giving light.

Krista+

Senior Warden Letter Come to the Retreat

Retreat (among other definitions):

- *A period of seclusion or solitude, often with a religious connotation (noun)*
- *To fall back, retire, or withdraw (verb)*



In late December Carol convinced me we needed some time away after Christmas. Don't get me wrong Christmas was fun. Greg was home, we saw friends, and had lots of chances to

“chill”. I felt pretty relaxed (other than watching the Bear's underperform once again), but acceded to her suggestion. We found a modest place in Healdsburg, and headed north with nothing other than a couple of books, music, some crossword puzzles, and no plans.

I slept 15 of the first 24 hours we were there. Had I not been for my appetite, it may have been more. And remember, I felt relaxed when we left. How could I have so misread the situation?

Chekhov had a wonderful quote. He said “When we retreat to the country, we are hiding not from other people, but from our pride, which in the city and among people operates unfairly and immoderately”. (It is hard to be prideful when playing left field in flip flops and a tee shirt at the annual Ranch softball game when a 12 year old bashes one over your head.)

The point is we all need to retreat sometimes.

St. John's offers a diverse program of activities throughout the year. One of the highlights is our annual parish retreat. For a late spring weekend 75-100 of us “Occupy Healdsburg”, at the inviting, bucolic, spacious and spiritual acreage of the Bishop's Ranch. That's about 75 miles north of Oakland. Melissa Brauer has done a great job of offering a wide range of options during the Friday night to mid Sunday respite for the past several years. Thank you Melissa, you rock. Problem is all of our lives are too programmed, too many choices, sometimes too much inertia with the status quo. Thus, despite all the effort, planning, and great country style cuisine, attendance has softened. The church has lost money each of the last two years, albeit one year that loss was underwritten by a generous parishioner.

In December, the Vestry faced a hard choice. Commit to taking the entire ranch May 11-13, 2012 with the risk of losing some money if attendance is disappointing, or reduce our target and share the ranch with another group. They unanimously concluded the best strategy was to re-invigorate the retreat and enjoy the benefits of having the place to ourselves. We are now committed to getting 85 attendees, about 10% more than last year. (That is a floor, not a ceiling.) As always, our goal is to break even on this activity.

Planning has begun. Typically, Ken Fuller's hand was the first one up, so he will be helping. Soon we will be gathering input from each of you. What do you want for this year's retreat? What would entice those of you who haven't come to join the fun? We have some new ideas, and seek others. One area we want to explore: how can we make the logistics of getting to and from a “non issue”?

A group is also studying how we can price without unduly burdening families or others. Expect some new ideas. Certainly that will include discrete full or partial scholarships. If interested, please talk to Scott or Krista.

I really hope this retreat is exceptional. Unfortunately, Carol & I can't be there. As luck would have it that is the weekend Greg graduates from seminary, assuming he continues to work hard. Enjoy the ranch!

David Brown

The Year in Worship

Eucharistic Lectionary: B
Daily Office Lectionary: Year Two
Advent 2011 to Advent eve 2012

St. John's Episcopal Church

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*It ys a sotyll mouse that slepyth
in the catty's ear.*

—Hilles *Commonplace Book*, 1530

Targeting Your Bequest



If you are considering including the church in your will or estate plan, there is an important question to answer: "How would you like your gift to be used?"

There are basically two different questions to be considered:

1) Do you wish your gift to be used for the general purposes of the parish, or for some specific purpose such as outreach ministry or youth or education or music? An unrestricted gift lets the funds be applied where most needed, but you may be motivated to support a specific ministry.

2) Do you wish your gift to be available for direct expenditure, or do you wish it to be part of a permanent endowment? With an endowment, the principal will be preserved permanently and only the income may be spent. There are advantages and disadvantages to either choice. Direct expenditure permits the vestry and rector to

spend the gift immediately on whatever seems most important at that moment. The endowment alternative, on the other hand, preserves the gift and provides an annual stream of income in perpetuity. (This income is generally 4% or 5% of the value of the gift, as a greater payout would eventually diminish the inflation-adjusted value of the gift.)

Some donors prefer their gift to their parish to fund an endowment fund at the diocese for the sole benefit of the parish, which entrusts fund management with the diocese while letting the parish spend the annual income.

Whether your planned gift takes the form of a bequest from your will or trust, the remainder from a retirement plan, an insurance policy or an annuity, you have these same two questions, described above, to answer.

If a specific use is named, it is prudent to provide some alternative use. For the originally intended purpose may no longer exist. For example, one parish received a large bequest to be used

only for church bells—but the codes of that municipality now prohibit public bells. Thus, the gift languishes unused. Allow for some flexibility in the designated use of the gift! Your gift planning officer can suggest options.

Give generously and give wisely. Children yet unborn will be blessed by your faith and your generosity.

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper, CFP
(415) 869-7812

Gift Planning Officer
RichardS@DioCal.org

Episcopal Diocese of California
www.EpiscopalGift.org



Finance Corner: 2011 and 2012

Here is a snapshot of the final financial results for 2011 and budget for 2012. We managed to navigate through another challenging year successfully, achieving a modest positive surplus consistent with the Budget.

This reflects all the hard work by the staff and generosity of all of you in the congregation. We are truly blessed in many ways.

Peter Freeman, Ministry Catalyst for Finance
Lilah Greene, Treasurer



Saint John's Episcopal Church in Oakland Analysis of Revenues & Expenses - Detail Church Operating Budget

Headings and Account	2010 Full year results	adjusted budget 2011	Actual 2011 YTD results	Total 2012 Budget
Revenues				
Pledge				
Total Pledge (4.6% phantom)	455,383.50	452,889.00	448,810.73	480,000.00
Other Contributions				
Total Other Contributions	62,141.84	59,543.34	58,431.80	59,350.00
Total Revenues	517,525.34	512,432.34	507,242.53	539,350.00
Expenses				
Total Personnel	358,500.05	356,641.06	357,376.19	387,552.75
Total Assessments & Grants	102,602.00	105,094.00	106,594.00	94,798.00
Total Utilities	17,539.78	16,010.14	15,354.72	14,354.77
Total Insurance	17,780.76	17,790.00	17,810.00	18,269.00
Total Administration	29,765.26	25,574.04	25,126.56	24,670.00
Total Property	11,475.99	9,773.46	8,770.84	9,298.05
General Programs				
Total Youth Programs	7,766.00	7,810.00	6,728.19	10,950.00
Total Outreach Programs	13,750.00	250.00	250.00	100.00
Total Education Programs	2,086.42	2,250.00	1,527.33	2,500.00
Total Inreach Programs	9,343.78	8,000.00	6,017.77	15,080.00
Total Worship Programs	10,478.99	9,782.29	11,204.96	10,568.00
Total Communications Programs	150.47	800.00	18.64	400.00
Total General Programs	35,809.66	21,082.29	19,018.70	28,648.00
Total Expenses	581,239.50	559,774.99	556,779.20	588,540.57
Net Total - before rental operations	(63,714.16)	(47,342.65)	(49,536.67)	(49,190.57)
Total Rent Income	55,241.00	73,912.00	76,176.00	74,144.00
Total Expenses - rental properties	16,166.81	15,651.00	19,268.44	17,868.74
Total Other Expenses	16,166.81	15,651.00	19,268.44	17,868.74
Net Operating Total	(24,639.97)	10,918.35	7,370.89	7,084.69

Net Operating Total

Congregational Vitality Case Study: Ministry Catalysts

The following is a component of the Diocese of California's webinar on community.

Parish: St. John's Oakland

Description

Catalyst (cat-a-lyst): 1. a person whose talk, enthusiasm, or energy causes others to be more friendly, enthusiastic, or energetic. 2. something that causes activity between two or more persons or forces without itself being affected 3. a person or thing that precipitates an event or change.

“Ministry Catalysts” are a team of parishioners who act to “catalyze” the parish’s numerous ministry areas and groups. Having been recruited based on their knowledge of St. John’s unique culture and their passion to help groups within the church thrive, they are vital links between the many groups within St. John’s, helping them to communicate and connect with other groups, so that the whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

Problem Definition


It was recognized that individuals were cycling on and off the Vestry every three years, contributing little in terms of continuity and consistency. Using a methodology outlined by the Alban Institute (www.alban.org), St. John’s formed a learning team to think “outside” of Vestry meetings to identify issues, brainstorm solutions, and generally consider how to move from a pastoral to a programmatic church. It was realized that while the Vestry model served well in a governance role, it was not especially effective in the management of the church.

Solution

Thus the idea of the “ministry catalyst” was born. A parishioner who had long shown an interest in a particular ministry area was identified and invited to serve as a catalyst for that area. This process was repeated several times until — effectively — another tier of leadership was formed in the parish: the Ministry Catalyst team. Each catalyst serves his or her constituent groups and the entire church by advocating for resources, ensuring adherence to budgets, coordinating events and solving problems as they arise.

Seven members comprised the original group, which has grown to number ten as particular areas have been identified for focus: Adult Faith Formation, Communications, Finance, In-Reach, Operations, Outreach, Stewardship, Welcoming, Worship, and Youth & Children’s Ministry. The catalysts gather monthly together along with a liaison from the Vestry and at least one clergy member. They also participate actively in Vestry retreats.

Adult Faith Formation - Saint Francis: Holy Hippie

 Last year’s Poetry in the Christian Tradition class introduced some of us to the Prayer of ST. FRANCIS and its remarkable subject. Parishioner Jesse Warr (and others) will frame discussions of issues raised by Francis’ eccentric life... he stripped bare in the public square, bargained with a dangerous wolf, preached to birds, created the first Nativity Scene, was the first to experience stigmata, wrote compelling poetry. Let’s explore whether St. Francis offers a model for being truly good, truly Christian. Join us beginning Tuesday, Feb 7 at 6:30 in the Vestry room. This is a new start date. Jesse is trying to organize a field trip and a special speaker. Our goal is to mentally and spiritually Occupy Assisi.

Session 1: Sainthood
Session 2: Biographical Highlights
Session 3: Choosing the Ascetic Life
Session 4: Preaching to Birds, Bargaining with Wolves
Session 5: Creche & Crucifixion
Session 6: Core Values

Come to any or all sessions as they fit your schedule. Please call Jesse Warr if you have any questions or plan on attending. 510-533-9255.

Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument
of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

The Big Test



I’m currently on the path to recovery after experiencing a marathon week of General Ordination Exams. For those of you that are unaware, the Episcopal Church requires all candidates for ordination to undergo a week of exams testing one’s proficiency in the seven Canonical areas. Some refer to the GOE as the Church’s version of the bar exam, or simply (church hazing) by my fellow students.

Years ago, when I began my seminary experience I overheard many rumors about the ‘dreaded’ ordination exams. For most students, those rumors resulted in a certain level of anxiety leading up to the exam. Our seminary advisors provided several resources to better handle the anxiety while preparing for the exams. For some strange reason, going on a delayed honeymoon was not on the list. Thinking outside the box, Julie and I decided the best way to de-stress the week before my exam was to take our delayed honeymoon to Hawaii.

Julie and I had a wonderful week in Kauai, where it seems as though life moves in slow motion. It doesn’t take long to get into the rhythm of life in Kauai. Throughout the week of hiking, snorkeling, and relaxing on the beach, I don’t think the ordination exams entered my mind once. Some say that all good things must end; therefore, after a week in paradise it was time to return to the real world. Our plane landed in San Francisco the evening before the exams were to begin. I woke up the next morning, put on my favorite Hawaiian shirt, and began the seven exams lasting four hours each. Looking back, I am glad the Episcopal Church requires each candidate to complete the General Ordination Exams. But at the same time, I’m glad it’s behind me.

Andrew Hybl

O Divine Master, grant that I may
not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born
to eternal life.
Amen

Inside/Outside Work Days

March 17

May 5

September – Labor Day

Welcome to 2012!



This year we have planned three work and clean-up days at church. Mark your calendars and sign up in the Narthex for March 17th, May 5th, plus Labor Day in September. We will divide our time between the inside and the outside. The first work day is on St. Patrick's Day but the paint won't be green. In preparation for Easter we will concentrate on the inside and the major project is to wash the walls and paint the chancel. As you can imagine, 25 years and candle soot has altered the original color to a MUCH darker shade of beige.

Elizabeth Clayton will do the interior design and Scott Tate will lead the painting crew. Because of the height of the chancel, we need teams of two as one person will need to hold the tall ladder for the person painting. We need people to clean the carpet throughout the Education building. Some of our carpeting was done last year, but much hasn't been cleaned in many years. And we always want window washers. We want the church to sparkle for Easter!

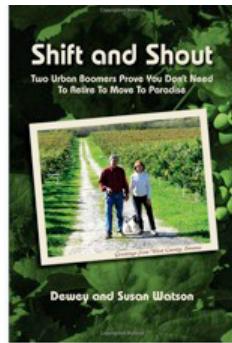
For those of us who would rather be doing work on the outside there will be something for you to do also, but this is dependent on weather conditions.

When the work day ends we'll have a St. Patrick's Day themed supper. Corned beef, cabbage, and great community fun are all on the schedule.

Stay tuned for the May 5th work day which will concentrate on the exterior and the grounds. It will be followed by a Cinco de Mayo barbecue; perhaps a time to try out some quesadillas and guacamole?

Contact Ken Fuller, Ministry Catalyst for Operations, at thunder572002@yahoo.com if you have questions, suggestions, or want to help with the organization.

Shift and Shout – New Book from Dewey and Susan Watson



Quoting from their page on Amazon.com, where you can check out their new book!

Two Urban Boomers discover you don't need to retire to move to the beauty of the Russian River Valley. This memoir explains how radical Shift can hap-

pen when least expected and then leads the reader in an exploration of all that West County Sonoma has to offer both residents and visitors. With humor and warmth the authors serve up a paean to their new home and lifestyle.

Dewey & Susan Watson have lived in the Bay Area of San Francisco since 1968, mostly in the cities of Oakland, Berkeley and Piedmont. Dewey has written and blogged extensively on various subjects and is presently writing an historical novel about the Russian/Alaskan Native experience in Hawaii. Because they so enjoy West County Sonoma, they felt their story was worth telling.

Ed. Note: The Mouse has begun a series of articles to promote a healthy lifestyle. You can consider it to be instructive, nagging, motivational, or some other rationale that could encourage you to put down the chips and make healthier choices.

Five Reasons To Eat More Apples

Sweet, juicy and flavorful, apples are nature's perfect healthy grab-and-go snack. Apples have surprising nutritional benefits that make them the #1 fruit you should be eating.

1. Nutrition: Apples are packed with polyphenols, quite a bit of fiber (one apple has 4 grams!) and vitamin C—all that for about 95 calories. They also are a good source of immune-boosting vitamin C (providing 14% of the Daily Value).

2. Weight Loss: Apples satisfy hunger for few calories so it's not surprising that they can be part of a healthy diet that promotes

St. John's Women's Retreat

The Bishop's Ranch

March 2-4, 2012

“Thoughts on the Other Hand:
The Purposes of Paradox”

Retreat leader: Marilyn McEntyre

Our retreat together is just around the corner...join the St. John's women for a wonderful weekend together celebrating fellowship, faith and the beauty of the ranch in early spring.

We are fortunate to welcome St. John's parishioner and author Marilyn McEntyre as our retreat leader. Marilyn will guide us in reflections on the ways faith calls us to live in and with mystery and paradox as a pathway to truth. We will consider some of the many paradoxes in the Gospels. Poetry, art and photos will enhance our thinking and learning.

Registration forms are online (<http://stjohnscommons.org/group/womens-retreat>) and in the narthex. Please return them by Feb. 12. Questions to Sandra Ahn, Nancy Hall or Anne Meyer, your retreat coordinators.

weight loss. And in a recent study, dried apples also helped participants lose some weight. Women who ate a cup of dried apples daily for a year lost some weight and lowered their cholesterol and heart disease markers.

3. Heart Health: Experts attribute the heart-healthy benefits to antioxidant compounds found in apples, which help prevent LDL cholesterol from oxidizing and inhibit inflammation. Plus, the soluble fiber in apples has also been shown to lower cholesterol levels.

4. Protect Against Metabolic Syndrome: People who eat apples may be less likely to suffer from metabolic syndrome, a cluster of symptoms linked to an increased risk of heart disease and diabetes.

5. Exercise Extender: Eating an apple before you work out may boost your exercise endurance. Apples deliver an antioxidant called quercetin, which aids endurance by making oxygen more available to the lungs.

Submitted by Judith Fleming

Coffee Time

Four reasons why you should buy your coffee at St. John's:

1. The coffee grown in Uganda and roasted by Thanksgiving Coffee Company is delicious and organically grown! We offer dark roast beans and drip grind, decaffeinated beans and drip grind and (on special order only) light roast beans and drip grind. The flavor is full bodied and lively.

2. Your purchase promotes world peace! Thanksgiving Coffee purchases the entire crop of the Ugandan coffee farm cooperative that is operated by a grass roots community of Christians, Muslims and Jews working together in Eastern Uganda.

J.J. Keki, a Ugandan coffee farmer, happened to be in New York on September 11, 2001. The event caused him to realize the intensity of religious hatred and motivated him to find a way for different religious groups to work together on a common goal. He went home and gathered coffee farmers from different religious traditions to come together and form the Peace Kawomera Cooperative on the rich volcanic slopes of Mt. Elgon. The cooperative is profitable enough to give support to a local school.

3. Your purchase gives a livelihood to farmers in Uganda, unlike other coffee outlets. Thanksgiving Coffee pays fair trade prices to the farmers so they can actually make a living from their labors and even and send their children to school. Mirembe Kawomera coffee is the first fair trade certified coffee to reach the US market. Uganda is the most coffee dependent country in the world in terms of export earnings. 90% of Uganda's exports are from coffee sales.

4. Your purchase helps our St. John's Ugandan outreach: to KIDA and YES. We buy the coffee by the case at the wholesale price. Our markup is less than the online retail price and still contributes a small amount on each bag to African Partners, which in turn sends the money to KIDA and YES. We sell dark and light roast at \$12, and decaf at \$13.

Check out the story of Mirembe Kawomera at <http://www.mirembekawomera.com/> and don't buy your coffee anywhere else! Look for the colorful bags for sale at St. John's for \$1 less per bag than you would get on the website. Contact Karen Gleason (gilgleason@comcast.net) or Martha Helms (martha750@comcast.net) with questions.

Six Ways – You Can Support Episcopal Charities in 2012

1. One Time or Recurring Donations online or you can mail a check, payable to "Episcopal Charities" to:

Episcopal Charities
1055 Taylor Street,
San Francisco, CA 94108

2. Vehicle Donations

Your vehicle donation will generate funds to support the work of Episcopal Charities. Cars are accepted in any condition, and we offer free towing of donated cars. Click here to make a vehicle donation now.

3. Planned Giving

We offer our donors the ability to consider Episcopal Charities in their estate plan. Please contact Richard Schaper at richards@diocal.org or 415-869-7812 for more details on the benefits of supporting Episcopal Charities through a planned gift.

4. Search or Shop Online

Did you know that every time you search, shop online at places like Amazon.com, or sell online you can support Episcopal Charities? Every time you search the web or shop through GoodSearch.com, Episcopal Charities can earn money. You can even download the GoodSearch toolbar for easy browsing and shopping.

5. Sell on eBay.com

Episcopal Charities has join with eBay Giving Works. Every time you sell on eBay, you can designate a portion of your proceeds to go to Episcopal Charities. You will even be credited towards seller fees for the amount you donate. Click here for more details.

6. Donor Advised Fund (DAF)

Episcopal Charities has partnered with the East Bay Community Foundation to make available a Donor Advised Fund that can increase the impact of all your charitable giving, while providing you important tax benefits. For more information contact your Gift Planning Officer, the Rev. Richard Schaper, at richards@diocal.org or 415-869-7812.

Grateful, Glad and Giving

We've spent the first half of our gratitude year exercising our "notice and appreciate" muscles on reasonably easy topics like family, rest, community, abundance and Jesus. In February, we take on a graduate program of focusing on gratitude for failure. Failure is not something we'd usually like to be grateful for - wouldn't we rather avoid it? After all, it's embarrassing and difficult so why look for it? The problem is this: the recipe for avoiding failure is to live small and take no risks. Not only is that a failure to take the gift of life, it doesn't work very well anyway. One of my favorite thinkers of our time is James Hollis who led me this year to forego a list of resolutions and instead adopt a mission statement for 2012: My goal this year is to be defeated by ever larger things!

We will be led in this grand adventure of considering the blessings wrapped in a package called failure by Theo Cavanaugh, one of the Angels from our parish. Theo is a marriage and family therapist, a graduate of the Transpersonal Counseling Program at JFK and cofounder of The 3rd Act, a coaching business developed to assist people in their retirement transitions. Fasten your seat belts, everyone. The path to gratitude for failure is definitely an "E" ride!

Susan Pierpoint, Gratitude Angel

The entire law is summed
up in a single command:
Love your neighbor
as yourself.

Galatians 5:14

St. John's Family

SYLVIA AHERN and PAT TWOMEY have returned from three wonderful weeks in Italy over Christmas (Florence) and New Years (Venice); they left for Milan in early December, just after Pat took his every-ten-years surgery Board exams (he passed). Ciao e Buon Anno, StJ... SARA and JOE EVINGER celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary in January, each picking an activity and a restaurant: a Tennessee Williams play – “Period of Adjustment” – and dinner at Albona (Joe), and an all-Debussy program at the SF Symphony and dinner at Caffè delle Stelle (Sara)...The Mission Trip Youth have sold over 2,000 bottles of olive oil and vinegar so far to help fund their trip to New Orleans in Summer 2012. More available!... QUINN FREIDENBURG made his solo debut at St. John's on Christmas Eve, followed by another performance on New Year's Day. Quinn currently attends Pacific Boy Choir Academy where BREN-

NA MACILVAINE is his fourth grade teacher...JESSIE DUTTON-KENNY was awarded a \$5,000 grant to study (she's a Museum Studies major) in Dublin, Ireland for six months...BONNIE and JERRY MORAN spent 12 days in Peru along with their daughter MELINDA in September. They visited Cuzco, The Sacred Valley, Machu Picchu, an eco-lodge in the Amazonas Refuge, and Lake Titicaca where they spent a night on Amantili Island with a native family. Lots of photos, lots of fun. Great food, marginal wine... MARG CAUCHOIS has been in Argentina – the whole family met her there for Christmas...GORDON and NANCY EVERETT had a fabulous trip to China and Tibet. They visited Shanghai, traveled down the Yangste River visiting the Three Gorges Dam, then on to Tibet, Xian and Beijing. They also visited a friend of Gordon's in Shanghai – and loved it all...

Supporting Our Troops

I am pleased to report that we have received a thank-you letter from Colonel Luke Pittman, Chaplain with the US Army and Chief of the Clinical Pastoral Division at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC). He writes:

On behalf of the Chaplain's Clothes Closet at LRMC, I want to thank you for your generous donation. We appreciate your expression of patriotism by giving back to our service members. Your donation will be used for direct support of our wounded and injured warriors...The Chaplain's Closet serves more than 700 service members each month. Since the Chaplains Closet is a non-funded humanitarian entity within the Department of Defense, we rely on the generous donations of fellow Americans and others. One hundred percent of all donations directly support our wounded and ill military members. Please continue to pray for our wounded warriors and their families, and again thank you for your generous donation.

Nancy Everett's nephew, Brandon Warren, from the Big Island, recently completed advanced helicopter training in Fort Hood, TX and has been deployed to Kuwait with Charlie Company, the 1-108 Aviation Battalion. He is in a 50-man unit. We would like to collect Valentines (signed and with a message of thanks from you), tasty and nutritious individually wrapped snack foods (such as granola bars so they can be easily shared), and hand-knit wool scarves (contact Sara E for specifics), to be mailed in early February. Please do not bring magazines at this time. I will collect your donations and mail them in special USPS boxes for military mail in early February. For more information, contact me at sevinger@comcast.net.

Sara E.



Photo by Trish Dolan

Christmas Eve Youth Choir

The Christmas Eve Youth Choir – 18 voices strong – made a big comeback singing several favorite seasonal anthems and demonstrating they are ready and willing to regroup as soon as we have a new Youth Choir Director. Singers included: AUDREY BYRNE, QUINN FREIDENBURG, MOLLY FRIEDERICH, MADELEINE JONES, LUCY KHO, MADDY KHO, KIRBY MARION, WALTER MARION, SYDNEY MEDFORD, PEARCE MEDFORD, BRIDGET NIX, MEREDITH NIX, CHARLOTTE PORTER, ANNIE PIERPOINT (borrowed her from Virginia Seminary), KATE WALKER, MAYA WALKER, SALINA WITTMER and VANESSA WITTMER. Salina soloed on “What Child Is This?” and Kate and Maddy Kho on “Light a Candle”...

Vestry Changes

The annual meeting on January 22 voted in the new vestry members for 2012. Anne Meyer, David Brown, Jim Hasler, and Shirley Saunders began their three year terms with smiles and lots of talent.

Rector Scott thanked the outgoing vestry members who have contributed so much and continue to volunteer their services. Ken Fuller and Scott Tate were present, but Tess Freidenburg and Katherine Schaffer were absent due to illness.



Camp Sunday on Feb. 5



Stay after the 10 a.m. service on February 5 to learn about the St. John's retreats and the youth and family camps that are offered by Episcopal dioceses. Eat s'mores, look for information, and eat cookies fresh from Bishop's Ranch.

A Gallup poll found that 85% of people who have made a faith commitment did so before age 18, and the Lilly Endowment found that the single greatest commonality among clergy and lay church leaders was a positive religious camp experience. Episcopal camps touch the lives of more than 300,000 children and youth each year. In the Diocese of California, that number is over 700.

If you want even MORE information visit this website. http://www.diocal.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=668&Itemid=215

Or contact Jennifer Snow, jennifers@diocal.org or Samantha Greensides, samantha@greensides.com

Fun, Fun, Fun

And it benefits St. John's. Attendees at the Jan. 22 annual meeting had the opportunity to sign up for Oscar, wine tasting, and margarita parties that benefit the operating budget. If you couldn't attend, check out the sign up boards in the Narthex. Space is limited at all three events, so don't wait. Sign up and give your check to Krista or Tom Fregoso.

- Attend the fabulous Seals' Oscar party on February 26. Costumes are a must. Tasty buffet, libations, and mini talent shows during commercials. Limited to 60 people. Price is \$30 per attendee, includes a video of the evening. This is incredible, join the fun.

- Like wine? Then sign up for John and Nancy Walker's incredible wine tasting on March 10 (start time 7 PM). Co-hosted by Scott & Lisa Lawson. Share some great wines, learn about wine, and enjoy food and dessert. These guys know wine! There are 25 slots available at \$50 per head.

- Sign up to join co-hosts Karen Notsund and Carolyn George for a women-only evening of conversation and camaraderie while enjoying drinks, sweet and savory treats and music from South America! Date: Saturday, April 21. Limited to 25 women. Price \$40, as was the last one

Mission Trip Fundraiser

Mardi Gras Silent Auction
Youth Auction Starts SUNDAY, FEB. 19

Sorry parents, we are not auctioning off your kids. But we are going to auction off their skills and time to help fund the June mission trip to New Orleans.

We are offering this silent auction only from Sunday, February 19 through Sunday, February 27. All items will be listed on the Narthex walls.

Each youth will have listed at least two offerings such as dog care, 3 dozen cookies, child care, gardening, and party help. Check it out and pay the youth of St. John's to help you.

THANKS!

New Acolytes



Being an Acolyte is a great way to serve your parish and engage in the service itself. Children and youth enjoy the front row seat and interaction in the service.

We are beginning to introduce acolyting to the younger generation. Children in grades 3 to 6 are training to be acolytes at the 10:45 service. An adult or high school teen is the crucifer who carries the cross. The younger children will be the torch bearers who carry the candles. Or a child and his/her parent can volunteer together to be torch bearers.

Are you or your child interested? You can pick the Sundays you are available. And two siblings or friends can sign up together.

There will be a training in early March, so please contact Kellor or Tom Fregoso to sign up for the training or ask questions.

So please step up now to get involved. Once we build a large enough acolyte team, we hope to have acolytes at the 8:55 service next year.

Mardi Gras Pancake Supper

Sunday, February 19 from 5:00—7:00 p.m.
\$6 adults & \$4 children under 12



Games and fun for all!
Including a Pancake Toss and Roll

Silent Auction
of Youth Skills and Services
to benefit the Youth Mission Trip to New Orleans

Parishioners, youth, families and friends needed to set up, cook, serve and clean up from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. or 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

St. John's Bulletin Board



WHO All children in grades 3 – 6
WHERE St. John's Episcopal Church
1707 Gouldin Road, Oakland
WHY To play games, talk, eat pizza
and have fun with friends
COST \$5 per meeting
WHEN 1st Tuesday of each month from
6:00 – 7:00 p.m. unless noted.

Please RSVP to Kellor by the day before the meeting so enough pizza can be ordered –
youth@stjohnsoakland.org

FRIENDS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!
*All children with great behavior are invited.
Poor behavior may result in being asked to miss
a meeting.*

A parent volunteer is needed for each meeting.

Feb. 1 **Valentines! Sardines!**
(Lent starts February 22.)
**We'll make cards for our
Helicopter Unit in Kuwait!**

Mar. 1 **It's Lent. We'll talk about
preparing for Easter.**

April *No meeting this month*

Java Corps Schedule

Date/ Group/ Theme
Feb. 5–Ministry Catalysts–Camp Sunday
Feb. 12–Church School–Youth education
Feb. 19–Ushers & Subdeacons–Leading
the way
Feb. 26–Chancel Choir–Lovely music
March 4–Outreach–St. John's in the
world

Monthly Meetings Open to All

Women's Group meets on the fourth
Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
in the Reception Room. Bring a dish to
share and get to know a lovely bunch of
women. The next meeting is Feb. 23.

Men's Group meets on the third Tues-
day of each month. They begin at 6 p.m.
in the church kitchen and move into the
Reception Room. They are lovely, too.
The next meeting is Feb. 21.

Help With The Pancake Dinner

All youth and their parents are
asked to help host this fun event on
Sunday, February 19.

Kellor is in need of:

- A person to pick up and return the grill rental
- Two head grill masters that will set up, clean up and teach the kids to flip pancakes (and grill sausage and hash browns)
- Decoration and set up committee
- Clean up kitchen crew and table clean/put away

Contact Kellor at youth@stjohnsoakland.org to participate in the fun.



St. John's vision is to manifest God's love through invitation, inclusion, faith and action



St. John's Episcopal Church

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