



St. Paul's Episcopal Church Walnut Creek, CA

The Epistle

AUGUST 2010

Community Life

I wonder how we can make parish life more like life on the Eel River (Family Camp)? Here's why that idea appeals to me. My impression of Family Camp my first time was that there was a feeling of community there that is very much like what I imagine the early Christian community felt like. So it was very appealing to me—because I think the early Church had a very natural unforced sense of togetherness and that's what it feels like up at Camp.

Part of the joy and attraction of Camp is that while there is a definite structure there is also a pronounced relaxed quality about it. Everyone has to sign up for a chore every day (even the very young must do chores), breakfast and dinner are communal meals, all the children must obey the nearest adult, all the children are the responsibility of any adult, and there are other rules and traditions that are involved.

The setting lends itself to quiet intimate conversation, funny campfire storytelling, spontaneous new events, leadership development among the adolescents, creativity and showmanship on skit night, recognition of new bugs and small animal discoveries, awards and validation for going "above" the call of duty, singing



silly songs, and having some solitude and personal time as well.

Last year I had a delightful conversation with several of the kids at camp. I had invited three young men to discuss the possibility of getting baptized. Before I knew it, there were about 15 kids all around us asking questions and chiming in with their thoughts about baptism. It was a great exchange—and

on Sunday, "we gathered at the river" and baptized the three of them.

Another year a small group of us took a short road trip to see the Giant Redwoods and along the way told our stories to one another. I learned some wonderful things in that ride!

Living as close to nature as you do when camping also brings a sense of closeness to Creation God and raises spiritual awareness making it easier to connect our selves to God, creation and one another.

What would it take to bring those same qualities to our life here in the parish? Or is it unique to that time and place?

I wonder...

Rev. Sylvia



The 2010 CROP Hunger Walk October 3rd at 1:00 pm at Civic Park in Walnut Creek

Come and walk to help end hunger!

Hunger and poverty are rampant in our world, and escalating in the current economic climate. Something can and must be done about it. Our local CROP Hunger Walk is a great place to start. For a few hours and a few miles, our friends and neighbors will be coming together to, in the words of I John 3:18, "...love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action."

On October 3rd starting at 1PM, the Contra Costa CROP Hunger Walk will be held in Walnut Creek, to show our love and active concern for neighbors in need near and far. We will be raising awareness and funds to change the world in real and measurable ways -- digging wells that will bring clean water to villages; providing seeds and tools so that people can grow their own food; helping communities and families rebuild after disaster. Whether it's responding to flood and tornado damage in parts of the U.S., or helping to rebuild earthquake-damaged homes in Haiti, CROP Hunger Walks are making a difference.

CROP Hunger Walk funds will benefit the overall work and ministry of Church World Service -- working around the world to help those in need help themselves through refugee assistance, self-help development programs, advocacy, and disaster relief. And, it's important to note that 25 % of what we raise will help the Warm Winter Nights Shelter in their important work here in Contra Costa County.

On Sunday, September 12, the Rev. Vy T. Nguyen from Church World Service will be with us preaching at both worship services to inspire us to join in the walk. So please mark your calendars and join us, whether as a

walker or sponsor (or both).

As a wonderful segue, October 3 is also the celebration of the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, which includes the Blessing of the Animals. We encourage you to bring your pets to the hunger walk. CROP Walk participants will gather for lunch in the Parish Hall immediately after the 10am service, and then walk to Civic Park to join in the event. Together, we can change the world, one step at a time!



You can register online today and begin gathering sponsors at www.crophungerwalks.org/contracosta. For additional information or to volunteer, please contact Ann Crisp, Coordinator for the Contra Costa CROP Hunger Walk, 925-356-8822 or bacrisp@prodigy.net. Our local coordinator is Mark Sturgess and he will be signing up folks for the event beginning September 12.

Second Parish Forum "Focus on Growth"

— By Anne-Leith Matlock

The Vestry is pleased to announce that the second Parish Forum will "Focus on Growth".

The Growth Parish forum will take place on Sunday, August 22 beginning with a Potluck in our Parish Hall at 5:30 p.m. shared with our Youth Group. All parishioners are welcome and encouraged to attend, young, old and in between. Further, all staff and vestry are asked to attend. We plan on concluding the evening by 8:30 to correspond with the end of youth group.

As we finish our fellowship over potluck, at 6:15 prior to the youth separating to the Youth Center we are hosting a lively debate on "to grow or not to grow" between two

well known characters to our St. Paul's Family.

Beginning at 6:30 we will have an opportunity to view an outstanding short video "Everyday Creativity" by Dewitt Jones and have an update on progress by the Growth Committee, Staff and Vestry of St. Paul's on initial Growth planning. We will then break into small groups to put meat on the bones for next steps in Growth. Then pull back together, to affirm our progress on Growth as a community.

There will be time reserved at the end of the evening to have open dialog, regarding growth at St. Paul's. We request that questions be submitted in advance to either Tom Tcheng, Peoples Warden at juniorwarden@stpaulswc.org, or to Anne-Leith Matlock at anne-leith@sbcglobal.net. As at the first forum, we will read and respond to the questions that have been submitted to us by email or mail first, as this will likely answer many of your questions. Those who wish to ask questions or make comments may elect to have their questions read by the moderator or to ask the questions themselves. Questions and comments will be limited to 1 minute each.

We are excited about this "Focus on Growth" Forum and believe it will be constructive, positive and helpful to open communication and will give all members, vestry and staff the opportunity to present their growth ideas, and questions. Hope to see as many of you as possible at this Growth Focused Second Parish Forum!

St. Paul's Bookstore Thanks You

We are proud to report that sales in St. Paul's Bookstore this year (July 09 - June 10) have exceeded \$20,000 - for only the 2nd time in Bookstore history. Your faithful support of our books, gifts, and cards has brought about these good results. We know you share in our pride of our Bookstore, one of very few Christian stores in the area.

Some nice opportunities contributed to our success. Certainly the most obvious is the visit in December by John Dominic Crossan and the wonderful turnout of folks who came to hear his message. In April, we were invited to St. Timothy's in Danville to handle book sales for an appearance by Alexander Shaia, author of *The Hidden Power of the Gospels*. Our consignment Book Cart at St. Timothy's has been well received and we are grateful to their parishioners who oversee it.

Special group orders of books by both St. Paul's and other parishes added to our sales. Did you know that we also welcome individual orders of books of any particular interest you have? We have ordered books on railroad history, regional birds, and special books of beautiful pho-

tography. All you have to do is ask.

The Bookstore hosts two Book Groups each month. Their selections contribute to sales but keep us up to date on new and even older books that are thought to be worthy of discussion. Everyone is welcome at St. Paul's Book Groups - feel free to join either one at any time. Information of meeting times and selections are posted in the Bookstore.

It is your Sunday morning Coffee Hour shopping, however, that sustains the Bookstore and we thank you for your loyalty. We welcome your suggestions of books on our Christian faith. We are also happy to order any book that helps us understand our life on this earth, our relations with others, and how we find the teachings of Jesus Christ vital to this present day. Come and see us - again.

Why to Sell Now

Many financial planners are encouraging their clients to sell appreciated assets before the end of the year because capital gains taxes will increase in 2011. But did you know that you can sell appreciated real estate or securities without paying taxes on the increase in their value?

You may accomplish this with a "Wealth Preservation Trust"—also known as a Charitable Remainder Trust—which can also provide you with lifetime income. The Diocese serves as trustee for more than 50 such trusts that individuals set up to benefit both their family and their church. Using a charitable remainder trust as a way to make a gift and secure a lifetime income has never been more timely.

For more information, please call your gift planning officer or visit www.EpiscopalGift.org.

To receive a weekly email message of thanks and opportunities, subscribe to the GiftLegacy at www.Episcopal-Gift.org.

The Rev. Richard L. Schaper, CFP
Gift Planning Officer
Episcopal Diocese of California

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EpiscopalGift.org

Equipping the Beloved Community

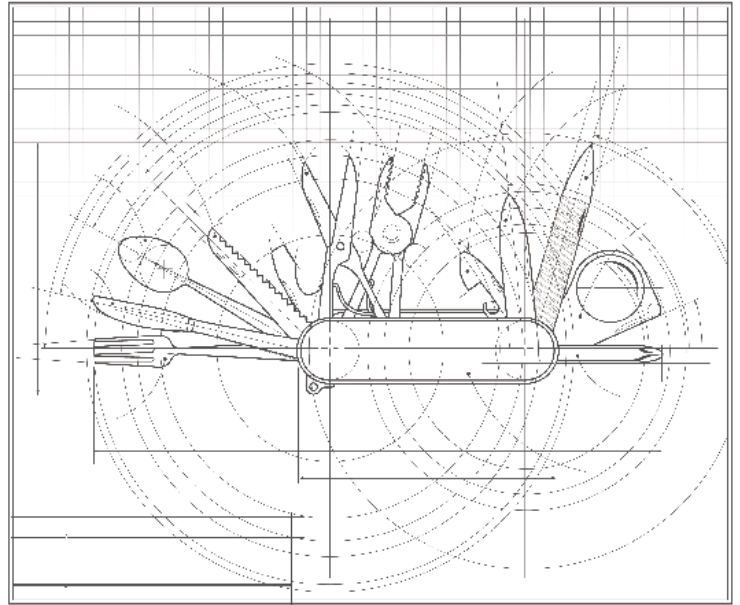
Regional Training Event
August 28, 2010, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Holy Trinity
330 Ravenswood Avenue
Menlo Park, CA 94025

This regional diocesan training workshop provides a number of courses to enhance your ministry.

Register for this event online at diocal.org/equipping (credit card or check accepted).

9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Plenary Worship

The Rev. Dr. Ruth A. Meyers is Hodges-Haynes Professor of Liturgics at Church Divinity School of the Pacific. Currently the chair of the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, she is an associate member of the Council of Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission and a past president of North American Academy of Liturgy, and she has served on the Steering Committee of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation. Her current research focuses on the relationship of liturgy and mission.



10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Session I

Eucharistic Minister Training (Randy Street)

What is Stewardship? The Foundations and Tools All Leaders Need (Jennifer Kitt, Richard Schaper and Melanie Donahoe; part 1/2 of a double workshop session)

Introduction to Godly Play (Di Pagel; part 1/2 of a double workshop session)

Worship, the Book of Common Prayer, and Change (Ruth Meyers)

Taller en Español (part 1/2 of a double workshop session)

12 p.m. to 1 p.m. Lunch

1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Session II

Eucharistic Visitor Training (Randy Street; part 1/2 of a double workshop session)

What is Stewardship? The Foundations and Tools All Leaders Need (Part 2/2 of a double workshop session)

Introduction to Godly Play (Part 2/2 of a double workshop session)

People of the Book: Journaling for Deeper Prayer (Beth Foote and Julia McCray-Goldsmith)

Taller en Español (Part 2/2 of a double workshop session)

3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Session III

Eucharistic Visitor Training (Part 2/2 of a double workshop session)

Can I Get a Witness? Telling the Stories of Your Ministry Through Public Narrative (Vanessa Glass and Julia McCray-Goldsmith)

Godly Play and Spiritual Formation

The Labyrinth as Embodied Worship (Trinity Labyrinth Team)

Equipping the Beloved Community

Regional Training Event
August 28, 2010, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Holy Trinity
330 Ravenswood Avenue
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Register for this event online at diocal.org/equipping (credit card or check accepted),
or complete and return this from along with your \$25 check made out to the Diocese of California to Equipping the Beloved Community Registration, 1055 Taylor Street, San Francisco, CA 94108, Attn: Robyn Arnold.

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name and location of your congregation: _____

Please check the workshops you plan to attend:

10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Session I

- Eucharistic Minister Training
- What is Stewardship? The Foundations and Tools All Leaders Need 1/2
- Introduction to Godly Play 1/2
- Worship, the Book of Common Prayer, and Change
- Taller en Español 1/2

1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Session II

- Eucharistic Visitor Training 1/2
- What is Stewardship? The Foundations and Tools All Leaders Need 2/2
- Introduction to Godly Play 2/2
- People of the Book: Journaling for Deeper Prayer
- Taller en Español 2/2

1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Session II

- Eucharistic Visitor Training 2/2
- Can I Get a Witness? Telling the Stories of Your Ministry Through Public Narrative
- Godly Play and Spiritual Formation
- The Labyrinth as Embodied Worship

For more information about Diocese of California Beloved Community programs:
Julia McCray-Goldsmith, Ministry Development Officer
tel 415.869.7826, fax 415.673.9268, juliam@diocal.org



Moving from the Fire Station to a more Peaceful Space

— By Jory Sandusky

Our church is amazingly blessed! Our people are hugely dedicated and invested in our success, volunteering thousands of hours a year. We participate in the community around us. Our campus is large, with great buildings that fit our needs. We recently paid off all our debt; we have a downtown property worth millions all in an affluent area. Our average household giving is higher than the national average and when there is a need, our people have been responsive and always rise to the challenge! Our operating budget is one of the most conservative sets of numbers I have ever seen for an organization as large as we are, our costs are exactly on goal, and the church itself is a landmark of Walnut Creek!

When there's a problem we fix it. When there's a "fire" we put it out. When there's someone in need, we come running. We're excellent "fire fighters". All fantastic things!

So why fix something that isn't broken you might ask?

My mom, a financial advisor herself, always taught me to build a budget backwards. Envision what you want your retirement to look like, the lifestyle you want leading up to it, and then define what that will cost. Based on that cost estimate, figure out a way of making and saving the money required to make those end goals a reality. Admit where you need help, and seek the right relationships to help achieve that help.

As a church and as individuals I think there's much we can learn from that advice. As our Stewardship Committee looks into the not so distant future, our goal is to start a dialog about being better planners and meeting the needs ahead of time. Life hands us all curve balls, we need to react to those curve balls effectively and calmly. With better use of the resources we have currently we can handle curve balls without having to call 911!

I look forward to the roll out of Pledge Season ahead and even more for 2011 when we launch our "90%" campaign. Let's build on our knowledge of personal financial matters but let's also learn how to be better stewards of Time, Talents and Treasures that God has trusted us with! Here's to being fantastic stewards in every area of our lives!

Toddler Eucharist Coming in October

Starting in September there will be a Holy Communion for the very youngest of our parishoners. In the chapel on the second Sunday of each month, this service welcomes infants and parents to celebrate life and Jesus' grace. See St. Paul's web page and next month's Epistle for details. For immediate questions or suggestions please contact Kate Nauer, knauer@stpaulswc.org or call (925) 934-2324.



Mormonism in America

— By Jory Sandusky

How did the Church of Latter Day Saints go from being the ultimate outcast of society to the embodiment of American Culture in just three generations? Join me in August and September for a six-week course as we articulate the differences between the Episcopal and Mormon world-views as well as explore the mysteries, the drama, and the allure of this truly American faith tradition!

Please note the NEW dates for this course.

When? Wednesday Evenings 7pm-8:30 8/11, 8/18, 9/1, 9/8, 9/15, 9/22

Where? Six evening courses at St. Paul's Walnut Creek Livingston Conference Room
One visit to the Mormon Temple in Oakland on a Saturday (TBD).

How? Instruction will utilize multi-media, discussion, and some reading.

Who? Anyone 14 years and older

With 800 converts a day, 50,000 full time missionaries around the globe, donations in excess of \$2 million a day, and with more Mormons in California than any state outside of Utah, shouldn't you know a bit more about their faith?

Please RSVP or if you have questions:
jorysandusky@yahoo.com



Vestry

To join a team, contact the Vestry Liaison listed.

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CFO
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Jerry Williams
Jory Sandusky

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Children, Youth, Young Families
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Evangelism/Church Growth
Faith in Action (Outreach)
Liturgy & Music
Membership
Parish Life
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Property
Stewardship

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Phil Webster (11)
Anne-Leith Matlock (13)
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Michael Kus (11)
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The Rev. Margaretmary Staller..... *mbstaller@stpaulswc.org*

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