

Issue Highlights

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St. Paul's Episcopal Church Walnut Creek, CA *The Epistle*

September, 2011

FAMILY CAMP



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The water was warm (enough,) the children were plentiful (so many boys!) the food was fabulous, the company was charming and convivial! Ah, such a wonderful vacation. Ah, such a long wait 'til next year!

From the Desk of Rev. Sylvia



LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH

How can you forget where you were when you got the news of the attack on The World Trade Center? September 11, 2001 has come to signify, for our generation, a similar sense that December 7, 1941 has for the prior generation—it is “a day of infamy.” It is not something we will ever forget—and not in a good way.

I was there that day. I actually saw the second plane hit the tower. I could not process what I had seen. I kept telling myself I wasn’t seeing what I was seeing. The truth was just too terrible to behold.

I was living in Wilmington, Delaware at the time, but was on a train on my way to Trinity Church, Wall Street, to meet with the future Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. I was to be a part of a discussion panel with him about the state of the church or some such topic—it’s not clear to me anymore. I was caught in New York City in the midst of one of the most horrific days in our history.

I remember sitting on the steps of Madison Square Garden along with hundreds of thousands of others who’d been evacuated from Penn Station and the surrounding sky scrapers as city officials and the military tried to figure out what was happening and determine whether the attack was over.

As I sat on the steps, I heard stories from the people who had been in the World Trade Center but that managed to escape. I wept as the anger swelled among the people, especially the young men. “Let’s bomb them back to the stone age!” was the cry from many. I asked, “Who do we bomb? Do we know who did this?”



How would we justify that violence?” But, the anger, fear, frustration and shock were taking a toll on the crowd. Nobody wanted to hear about words of peace. Nobody wanted to hear “love your enemy.” Nobody wanted to “turn the other cheek.” Not that day.

Of course, we need time to get over the pain and agony—clearly an unprovoked attack is hard to take quietly. So it’s been ten years

now, ten years since that horrid day. Have we learned to love our enemy, have we decided we trust Jesus enough to believe it is to our benefit to, “turn the other cheek, do good to those who hate you?”

Is there room for forgiveness and reconciliation even in the day to day injuries we receive or inflict? Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me—the first line of an old hymn gives us a way to begin the process. It begins with me, you, us. We must model forgiveness and reconciliation to others, make the first move when there is disagreement, say things like, “You know, that didn’t come out as nicely as I had hoped. Why don’t we start over and give it another try?”

Nations, communities, families --- we are all human and we all make mistakes and we all hurt one another. If we don’t learn to live in peace, if we don’t make forgiveness and reconciliation a priority in our lives, we will never be able to find true joy and become our best selves. Let there be love, peace, and forgiveness, and let it begin with me.

Peace and Joy,

Rev. Sylvia

Meet John Stump, Our New Director of Music

John was born in Denver Colorado. His father was a Disciples of Christ minister. In 1961 the family moved to Sunnyvale where John graduated from high school. He began college at Cal State Hayward, and then moved to New York City to attend Julliard School of Music. There he received a Master of Music in organ performance. John is an Associate of the American Guild of Organists, and was the instructor of organ at California State University, East Bay. His teachers have included Kenneth Mansfield, and Anthony Newman, and he has had classes with Harold Vogel, Marie Claire Alain, and Marilyn Mason. John has played recitals for Conventions of the American Guild of Organists in the United States and in Mexico. He lived in Mexico from 2005 to 2009, where he helped with the student program of the San Miguel de Allende Chamber Music Festival. He has played many solo organ recitals in several cities and towns in Mexico. John lives in Rossmoor. There he enjoys the woodshop, where he built the practice organ he has in his



home. Occasionally he plays bridge and he tries to get to the gym. John also composes music! He judges he spends too much time with his computers and home organ.

Let's "Eat Out" and Help The People of Honduras!

We have made 4 mission trips to Honduras and have touched the lives of many fellow Episcopalians in the squatter's section of Villanueva, just outside of Tegucigalpa. We've built homes, funded the purchase of a huge sturdy delivery truck for their Cinder block co-op, painted many areas of the church and the church itself, mourned their losses and assisted with health care needs of a little boy and much more. But most significantly we offered hope and companionship to a people whose poverty is second only to Haiti.

Your dinner ticket helps us continue to walk with people who are doing what they can in their untiring efforts to rise above wretched poverty. We are the hands and heart of Jesus in Villanueva. In turn, we gain strength from their faithful struggle because in the midst of their valiant fight to go beyond mere survival—their faith in God is unshakable. In all things they put their trust in

God. In the deep sorrow they experienced with the untimely death of two major figures in their parish in the last few months—their faith has been unwavering.

Help us help them to help themselves—their greatest desire is to put the various businesses they've already started on solid ground. Your help is not a hand out, but a hand up.

Have dinner with us, buy raffle tickets, bid on the few auction items we'll have or just give a donation to the mission projects. Your participation is part of our prayer for them. Make your reservations by signing up in the Parish Hall on Sundays, or email:



Dinner at Massimo's September 14 at 6pm (cocktails-cash bar) 6:30 (\$39 dinner all inclusive) (contact Nancy Robinson : no_robinson@yahoo.com)

Dinner at Zio Fraedo's October 4 at 6pm (cocktails-cash bar) 6:30 (\$39 dinner all inclusive) (contact Mike Yale: mikevale09@yahoo.com)

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS



Victoria and Sam Briskin

Sam and Victoria Briskin, as you can easily see, are a very photogenic couple. This photo of their marriage was at St Paul's a few months ago. Both are employed in the ever dynamic world of hospitality— Victoria can be found selling, coordinating, and helping produce events or meetings for the Hyatt Resorts and Hotels. One of her current ambitions is to add additional skills to her resume – like weddings and their receptions. It may be also difficult to physically find Sam on any particular day. He would be busy as a

Audio Visual Manager selling, coordinating and operating major events for groups of all sizes.

Or you might find Sam at the AT&T ball park, but only if the Giants are playing at home. That would be his favorite kind of a perfect day – especially if the Giants win! . A perfect day for Victoria, would be to be immersed in the magical world of Disneyland. Breakfast on Main street and Space Mountain would only be first of her many adventures.

Victoria and Sam are a most engaging couple. It would make your day to get to know them even better.



Molly Clopp

Molly, a native San Franciscan and a life long Episcopalian, is one of the easiest people to talk to that your reporter has ever met. She must be both enjoyed and honored as the lady most concerned about patient safety in the world of Kaiser Hospital. In addition to her professional career

world of theater – she has even taken to ushering at the Leshner so her joy can also be shared with the patrons. Her answer to the question: “If money were not object, what would you love to do?” was easily responded by “TRAVEL”. Knowing there are many in our parish who have similar interests, you can give Molly a call at either 705-7373 or 703-7356. Or e-mail her at <mollypclopp@gmail.com>.

Molly's spirit is also nourished by the



James and Patricia Pellicer

Both James and Pat, married 11 months ago, are very interesting people. Your reporter is very eager to introduce them to you. Example: prior to being recently interviewed, Dr. James handed your reporter a three page typed article entitled COMMENTARIES ON ST. PETER. It turns out this is was a typical production of Dr. Pellicer, who was a professor of literature at the City University of New York. But it also appears that he has a similar passion for not only church history, but for an in-depth understanding of major Christian personalities of the 3rd to 4th centuries. This is what he likes to do for fun. His initial home was Argentina and he would love to travel, maybe next year, to Egypt. The city of Alexandria being his major attraction. He would

love to teach us by designing complete semester long courses that we would teach. Part of their attraction to one another is Pat's strong desire to also teach – in her case us Spanish – to whom? – to us! . That is what she does every day for the children in the Spanish Village. During the interview she shared a brief movie she made on the cell phone of two two year olds dancing the rumba. You probably cannot even imagine how delightful that was. She has mastered both Italian and Spanish and would truly enjoy teaching us these languages. If so, we must remember to include Italian cooking along with the language classes. For that is her most favorite food. One more thing: if Pat she were offered a perfect treat for an afternoon of delight it would be Italian Opera. The Pellicers can be reached at 925-979-1302 and at osa28@yahoo.com.



Doug and Toni Hegemier

Doug and Toni Hegemier, who moved up Clayton last August, are a most interesting couple. Please read on. They met while both were in the world of law enforcement in Southern California – Doug with the Sheriff's Department and Toni with the LAPD. In LAPD's wisdom they realized a few years ago that women, due to their unique skills and talents, would most easily fit into the Departments resources. So that's what Toni did for 10 years. For 30 years she created and managed Day Care centers - both for profit and not. Why? Because, to a very large part, she so enjoys the little ones. She and Doug are now awaiting the birth of their daughter's (also a

Clayton resident) first child in August. A really big day!

As you remember, Doug was a member of the Sheriff's department in LA county. Leaving there he continued using his police honed skills as a credit card fraud investigator, initially for an oil company and then for a bank. That all ended a few years ago when retirement was the most attractive position.

But, one never knows, there just might be some future roles in our parish for someone with 30years of joy in child care management and/or the skills of a professional investigator.

Oh, one more thing. If you need to locate a couple with whom you can easily have a chat with or an evening with, you can find them at 925-693-0174 or dhegemie@yahoo.com.



Roger Reed

If your passion is the history of California and the American West, Roger is your guy. If your passion is the product a piper produces on a bag pipe Roger is your guy.

Roger is also a docent at the Museum of California History in Martinez and an active member of the SF St. An-

draws society. If Roger's interests are yours and you want to learn more at an restaurant, it best not be Scottish but Mexican or Italian. Roger retired from teaching American history in 2004 and is now ready to go back to work. He would enjoy having a part time position as a legal assistant or aide. Roger can be reached at 925 381-3836 and at [<rweedvg@aol.com>](mailto:rweedvg@aol.com)

St. Paul's September Highlights

- Sept 9-11 Men's Retreat
- Sept 11 Sunday Schools Start
- Sept 11 Blessing of Backpacks
- Sept 11-21 Prayers for Peace
- Sept 14 Honduras Dinner
- Sept 17 Parish Campus Clean up
- Sept 18 Ministry Faire
- Sept 20-22 Clergy Conference
- Sept 26 "Living the Question" Starts
- Sept 27 Vestry Meeting



Choir rehearsals resume Thursday, September 8, at 7:30. New members welcome!

St. Paul's Sunday School Does KIVA!

What is KIVA? The word "KIVA" means "unity" in Swahili. KIVA is a non-profit organization founded in 2005. KIVA's mission is to alleviate poverty by lending people money that they will then use to make more money than they borrowed. KIVA lets donors lend as little as \$25 to help create opportunities around the world. KIVA works with micro-finance institutions to provide



Kelly Kus

loans to people who do not have access to traditional banking systems. Here is how it works. An organization, like St Paul's Sunday School, wants to donate. It selects an individual or a group from the KIVA website. It makes a loan, via the Internet, to the selected group. The borrower invests the money in their business. Using the profits they derive, they repay the

loan to the donating group. The repayment rate is currently at 98.7% ! Thus, virtually every group repays their donor. Then, the lender is able to continue with another loan to any group they select.

Several years ago, the Sunday School made a quilt which was auctioned off. The money was used to fund a number of initial KIVA loans. Now, ALL of the loans have been paid back, replenishing our KIVA account. . On July 10, six Sunday School kids, ranging in age from four to 11 years old, reviewed several groups across the world seeking funding. Together, the kids chose two groups to

lend the money from our KIVA account. Our money will go into a fund that supports a group of families in Uganda. These monies will enable them to purchase shoes for resale and build a market stall. Some of our money will go into a fund in Kyrgyzstan to assist a family to buy livestock.



Zoe Tcheng

We are excited and honored to participate in the KIVA program. We are proud of our kids for enthusiastically working together to benefit people on the other side of the world!

Marianne Johnson and Sue Phalen

ATTENTION: Vestry and Staff

Change in September's Vestry Meeting Date

Due to scheduling conflicts, September's monthly vestry meeting has been changed from its regular third Tuesday, September 20, to the fourth Tuesday, September 27. In October the Vestry meeting will return to the third Tuesday, October 18.

MEN'S RETREAT

We held a men's retreat last year, and a number of St. Paul's men enjoyed a weekend at the Walker Creek Ranch in Marin County, a 1300-acre wilderness. It is owned by the Marin County Office of Education. Check it out on their web site!. The Ranch was a good place to meet, so we're going there again this year. And we already have more than "a small number" signed up!

The dates are Friday September 9 to Sunday September 11. We'll arrive after dinner on Friday and depart for home Sunday after breakfast. In between, we'll have fellowship, instruction, discussion, fun & games, music and just hang out.

The weekend includes two nights' lodging (double rooms with bathrooms down the hall) and four fine meals (B-L-D Saturday and B on Sunday.)

Chuck Glass will be leading our instruction sessions, focussing on healing prayer. Chuck is a member of the healing ministry team and is well-informed in this area.

Cost is \$ 215. If you'd like to participate, or have questions I have not answered, please call Pete Banwell at 939-5257.

EXPOSE': ST. PAUL'S FEEDS FOLKS AT THE CONTRA COSTA SINGLES' HOMELESS SHELTER by Sue Phalen

When we go to public/private news sources we are often regaled with way too much negative information. Well, I decided we should have a *positive* expose' for a change and here it is.

This one is about a program that has been in place at St. Paul's for better than 20 years, and the people who, without any fanfare, make it happen. They *are* feeding the hungry and helping the homeless as Jesus told us we should.

On the second Monday of every month we provide a meal, the makings of which are purchased, prepared and served by congregation members. Serving help comes from eighth graders in the California Junior Scholastic Federation of Sequoia Middle School. The meals go to the hundred residents at the Singles' Homeless Shelter located in Concord.

Donations to the St. Paul's Steering Committee of the Contra Costa Interfaith Coalition purchase the food. It costs about \$325 per month. Our food shopper is DONNA HERDMAN. On alternate months, each of our two cooking teams prepare the meal from their designated menu. The team headed by NANCY BURCHETT consists of JACK and MARCIA HICKS, LLOYD and SISSY THORNHILL,

GAIL SHERWOOD and SANDRA BRACKETT. The team headed by LIZ TAYLOR consists of LINDA BANWELL, CAROL LOMBARD, JOHANNA ROWE, MARILYN LLOYD and MIKE YALE.

In addition to the above cooks, eight members of the baking team provide cakes each month. JO GEARY is the organizer. The baking team is: (hold on to your hats) NANCY ADOLPHSON, PAT BAXTER, PHYLLIS BOLTON, BARBARA BOTTOMLY, SUSAN BURPEE, SUE BUSENIUS, PEGGY CARLISLE, SUSAN COUCH, CATHERINE CROWELL, LESLIE DAWSON, JUDITH DILLINGHAM, KAY ELLIS, JACQUELIN EWING, MAUREEN HORTON, SHERRY MATTERN, JULIE LAYNE, HELEN GREENWOOD, NANCY FALKENSTINE, JANICE FOSTER, CAROL GLASS, JEN GOSSETT, PENELLA GOULDING, PEGGY GREENE, HELEN OLIVER, CARLA PANCHECO, NANCY ROBINSON, FRAN SCHRODER, PEGGY SHOCKLEY, ARLINE SPIELER, FRANCES STURGESS, AMY TCHENG, ANN THELWELL, SISSY THORNHILL, LORNA MARTYN, BARBARA SCHUPP, PRISCILLA

TUDOR, NANCY TURNER, JAN WILLIAMS, and LAURA WILLIAMS. (I have put their names in CAPITAL letters because they meet a dictionary definition of the word capita – "first rate".)

When the meal is ready for transport, the Sequoia Middle School serving team, under the direction of retired teacher Bea Moore, gathers up the food and needed utensils and takes them to the shelter where they then serve the residents. After they are finished, the dirty utensils etc. are brought to the home of NORM and MARYANNE KAY (Maryann was the original organizer of the servers) where Norm washes up and transports the clean stuff back to St. Paul's kitchen.

SOOOO, the next time you are bummed by the news, think of these fine people who are putting their "Faith into Action" helping our Contra Costa neighbors. Oh, by the way, if you want to support this ministry, you can donate money toward the cost of food OR sign up to be a backup for the cooks. Contact me at 925-935-2586 or at suephalen2@yahoo.com and I will tell you how.

MINISTRY FAIRE

When? After the 10:00 A.M. service, September 18.

What? Our church does a lot of good in the world! There are over eighty (!) committees at St. Paul's that do volunteer work. Come and see. Many ask for only a few hours a month. You can give as much, or as little, as you want. Maybe, it is time to volunteer for something different or add something interesting to what you are now doing. We give our time and energy because it feels good. Please join us and learn more about your church.



Liturgy and Music table, Ministry Faire 2010.

What I Did on My Summer Vacation

By Jim Bell
Property Chair

Do you recall when you were in grade school and you had just returned from summer vacation and your teacher would give you a writing assignment called, "What I Did on My Summer Vacation"? Here is what various members of the Property Committee have been doing this summer. Some of the projects you can see and some you can't.

Fred Bolton and Earle Schremp, together and separately dug up the roses by the entrance to the church and replaced them with new roses that had been donated. They refurbished the drip-irrigation system. They sanded and repainted the metal fence in back of the roses. They added new boards at the bottom of the fence to prevent soil from washing away during fall and winter rains. Then, just for fun, they removed almost all the bricks underneath the evergreen tree by the front entrance because the tree roots had caused the bricks to heave upward causing a tripping hazard. Over the course of the next week they carefully replaced the bricks.

Sheafe Ewing cares for the fountain in front of the Chapel, making sure that there is plenty of clean clear water in it. Sheafe also looks after the various pieces of patio furniture scattered around the courtyard. Please pay special attention to the two benches flanking the entrance to the Parish Hall. Someone had broken the bench seat

supports on one bench, so Sheafe arranged to have new seat supports made, installed them, and refinished both benches. Thanks Sheafe, they look terrific.

Here's one you can't see. I kept getting reports of water near the refrigerator in the Parish Hall. but I could never find any. Then, one day I was in the kitchen and saw the puddle. I called out a commercial refrigerator repair person who diagnosed the problem as having two parts. Part one: The seal around the refrigerator doors was in tatters, letting hot air

Remember **The Big Campus Clean Up Day**

September 17
9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.
Lunch will be provided.

Coordinators
Fred Bolton and Sheafe Ewing.



Pete Banwell, Jim Bell, and Lyle Morton at work.

enter the refrigerator. Part two: The evaporative coil under the refrigerator had died and needed to be replaced. Parts were ordered and all repairs were implemented two days later.

Here is another one you can't see. One day, during a particularly hot period, My Spanish Village reported their electricity was out in spots. Earle Schremp, Pete Banwell, and I discovered one of the main electrical boxes had malfunctioned. We contacted an electrician, who stopped by, confirmed our suspicions, ordered a part, returned the next day and installed the next day and installed it.

Our renters at 1944 Trinity Avenue reported that they did not have any hot water, and then a little later reported that the clothes dryer was not working. Pete Banwell, Jerry Williams and I installed a new hot water heater. An appliance repairman repaired the dryer and it is working as expected.

Lastly, we were notified by Fresh Start that the floor in the middle bathroom in Fellowship House felt "spongy." Pete Banwell and I investigated and found the floor to be rotted out. The next Saturday Bill King, Pete, and I tore the floor out of the bathroom. Over the next week we replaced the floor, painted the bathroom, put own new linoleum, and installed a new vanity.

The above are just some of the fun things we have done this summer!

A Sermon From a Youth

Luke Webster, age 18, preached this sermon to the congregation upon the return of our youth group from a mission trip to a Native American community in South Dakota. The Gospel for the day was The parable of the sower as found in Matthew 13: 1-9.

Sowing the Seed

The sower. Who is he? Is he a representation of us, tossing our hopes or dreams or ideas into hopefully productive soil? Or is he God, spreading the life's populace to different corners of the globe and in different biomes and all that good stuff? This gospel reading confused me because there is little to no room for true metaphoric exploration since the metaphor was explicitly explained in the second half of the verses. Who am I to give my thoughts on something that Jesus obviously was fully aware of. But maybe the explanations themselves are what should really be explored.

On the reservation, metaphoric or figurative ideas ooze out of everything as if every epic novel in existence had been ground into a mush and then used as fertilizer for the grass that stretched from horizon to horizon. From the buzzards looking for their prey, to the horses galloping across the endless fields, or to a baby bird waiting for its mother, to a firefly flying where no other light will go. As I was preparing to write this sermon I was in the car driving to my granny's house. While in the car I spotted a man walking through one of the many cultivated fields in the central valley with a hoe over his shoulder and a satisfying grin on his face that told me that he had just completed a hard days work. Well, aside from this man being a literal "sower", I thought to myself how completely normal and average this man is. I labeled this guy without any other exploration of context of the man's background as the default "seed". He

was once spread from God's hand to land here. This farmer, who I've decided to name Jeffrey, goes about working his crops, very content and satisfied in his work and his life.

When we arrived in Wakpala, South Dakota, we were greeted by



Luke finds a Lakota friend.

Father Rob Schwartz. He was very glad to see us, and recognized some of us from our mission trip last year. I was taken over by that familiarity, back in Wakpala, seeing Father Rob, standing at the edge of immense green fields and rolling hills, and recalling that experience of last year. Walking up to the church and the rectory, it was a very good feeling to see these buildings in their shiny white paint, as we had spiffed them up with a new roof and paint job last year. Father Rob told us that our presence was so appreciated, both in that the folks of St. Elizabeth loved the work we did on the buildings, but also they liked having youth come visit, since they had difficulty getting local youths involved in church. We asked what we could do this year for them. ...and they wanted new out-houses. I guess it's a real sign of love if you are willing to take down the old ones, and build new poo-houses for people! So that's what we were there for, to show them our love. So, everyone, grab a shovel and let's get on with it. Some of us also ran a vacation bible school for the little ones of the village.

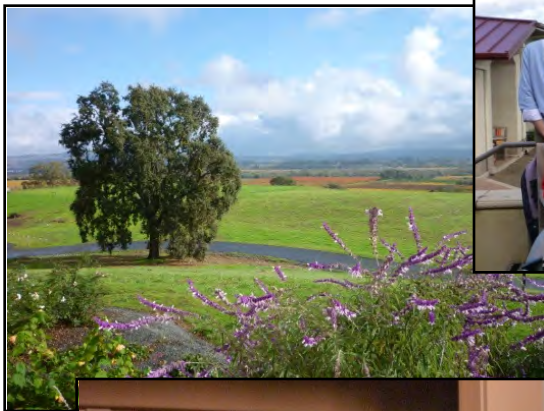
While demolishing an out-house, I was thinking to myself, "what is this

really accomplishing?" Then all of a sudden, I stepped on an old rusty nail. After the pain of removing the nail, a ride to the clinic for antibiotics, and a few hours off the job, I got a renewed sense of purpose jolted back into me. It was not about the job itself, it wasn't about having a new out-house that was important. It was about making the out-house, the fact that we were there for them, to do whatever they needed. It was all just about, and for them. The next day, I found a brand new nail in my backpack. I didn't know how it got there, it just appeared in my backpack. I took that as a sign that this nail was for my next task. I don't know what that is yet, but with this nail, I am ready.

What is love? Even more profound, how can we love something that we can't see, touch, or hear? This was a question that we were asked while on the mission trip. The context of this question inevitably led to the said intangible recipient of our love being God so we were a little prepared for that. God is the one easy answer for that intangible entity of which we can all turn to when asked this question. To see God is to recognize love in people's faces. I will admit, my favorite vision of God is Morgan Freeman all dressed in white. But, back to Wakpala, to see Father Rob smile, to see the children attend vacation bible school, and to see the people of St. Elizabeth grateful for our help is to experience love and to feel the presence of God. God has sewn his seed through us, we have carried it to Wakpala, and we receive their seed back as well. I hope to cultivate the seeds sown in my heart from this experience. I can hope for a farmer such as Jeffrey to help me cultivate God's seed, God's message, and God's love

Luke Webster.

Save the Date!
November 11-13, 2011
St. Paul's Women's Retreat
Come to the 2011 Women's Retreat at the Bishop's Ranch.



Photos from Women's Retreat at Bishop's Ranch, 2010.

2011 Women's Retreat

Ladies, come for a relaxing, rejuvenating and inspiring weekend retreat November 11-13 that helps you slow down, opens yourself to new ideas and spiritual concepts, and strengthens your friendships with women of St. Paul's. Enjoy the beautiful setting that the Bishop's Ranch offers, with vistas of the valley, a lovely chapel, trails for walking and fabulous meals. This year we are also offering a range of prices, \$188-\$244, based upon accommodations. A sign-up table will be in the parish hall most Sundays in September. We arrange carpools so your time away can begin right in Walnut Creek as you join others for the pleasant drive to the retreat center.

The theme this year is "Draw the Circle Wide." Here is what our retreat presenter, Barbara Alexander, M.A. and M. Div, wrote about this retreat opportunity:

With over 90 references to compassion in the scriptures, it is said that the whole Bible is a book on compassion. We are told to respond to others' needs, bear each other's burdens and do unto others, as we would have them to do unto us. This is a very tall order indeed. The call to draw the circle wide has always been challenging but never more than in our 21st century global village. Cultivating open hearts and minds that reflect the flow of God's love is the journey of a lifetime. It begins with cultivating compassion toward oneself, a practice many women have not been encouraged to develop. Our time together this weekend will combine concepts and practices to experience God's deep love for each of us in order to more fully embody that love in the world.

Barbara was a part of our retreat last year. Her spiritual insight, enthusiasm and connection to us was incredible. Please consider the opportunity to enjoy a weekend away, and then come home with ideas and concepts that will help you in all aspects of your life.

The retreat schedule includes time for presentations, quiet time for relaxing, walking, socializing and prayer. It is a wonderful time of rest and rejuvenation for women of all ages and interests.

You may register online at stpaulswc.org or at the Women's Retreat table during fellowship hour after the 10 A.M. service in September and October. Spaces are limited. So make your plans now and begin the pleasant practice of anticipation!

NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

What? Get a free family portrait in time for Christmas and a new Church Photo Directory. It is a "win-win."

Where? Photo sittings will take place in late October and early November. Details to follow.

DANVILLE 4TH OF JULY PARADE



With doves flying, drums and a tambourine playing, Danville's St. Timothy's Church joined with St. Paul's to represent the Episcopal Church in Danville's annual 4th of July Parade. This year's parade theme was "Recognizing Our Future Leaders." St. Paul's proudly showcased our future leaders (our youth) in the back of Rev. Sylvia's truck. It was patriotically decorated with red, white, and blue bunting, and displayed the American and Episcopal flags.

FREE BRIDGE LESSONS For teenagers.

Are you age 12 to 18?

Would you like to learn to play bridge?

The Diablo Valley Bridge Center is offering free lessons.

e-mail bridgeliason@gmail.com

or call 820-7203

WHAT IS “*LIVING THE QUESTIONS?*”

Living the Questions is the Adult Formation series being offered this fall. It combines supper (Yeah! No cooking tonight!) with a DVD presentation by the elite of today's theologians – Borg, Spang, Crossan, and many others. It is a professionally produced program that smoothly moves from speaker to speaker.

Living the Questions explores core Christian traditions and theologies. It is aimed at those Christians who, at times, shrink from the term “Christian,” as it has become synonymous with rigid Fundamentalism. It is also for those who sense they are alone in being a “thinking” Christian. Others may even believe that salvaging Christianity is becoming a hopeless task. *Living the Questions* will help both seekers and church regulars to explore the significance of Christianity in the twenty-first century.

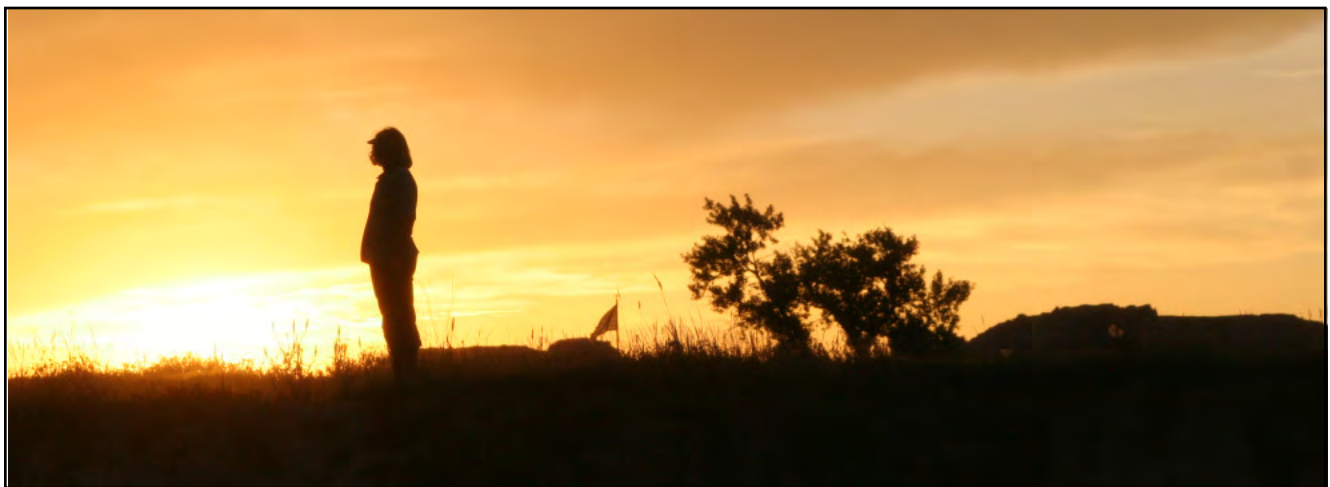
It is not unusual for an Episcopal congregation to host a wide range of opinions on some core beliefs. Amazingly, these beliefs are rarely touched upon in our conversations and gatherings with each other! *Living the Questions* provides a safe, but structured, environment. There people have “permission” to ask questions and share on perhaps touchy topics,

topics they have wanted to talk about, and/or were wary of broaching. Example: what happens to the bread and wine when blessed by a priest? Does it depend upon what the receiver believes, or upon who does the blessing? And so on.....

The goal of this series is not to formulate the “right” answer to each topic, but to enable each topic to be discussed in a safe atmosphere. Thus, each participant will, hopefully, leave each evening with a deeper understanding of the topic, and also, a respectful appreciation of the breath and depth of the diversity of beliefs of others..

The program is divided into three sessions, the first of which runs from September 26 – November 7. Register on line or in the parish hall after the 10:00 A.M. service. Each evening will begin at 6:30 P.M. with a simple meal, followed by a video. Participants will then break into small groups for discussion. A different topic will be explored each evening. \$5.00 will cover the costs for the entire evening which will end about 8:15 P.M. Further details are available on the St. Paul's web site.

Living the Questions is a journey, not a destination!



Linda Banwell takes a moment for a sunrise meditation during the Youth Mission Retreat, Wakpala, South Dakota, June 2011.

JULY VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

Attending Vestry Members: Jory Sandusky, Jim Bell, Mike Siebert, Patty West, Jana Baker, Marianne Johnson, Julie Layne, Anne-Leith Matlock, Mike Yale, and Rector Rev. Sylvia. CFO Jerry Williams, and Rev. Don also attended. Julie chaired the meeting. Jory took the minutes. Rev. Don wrote these Highlights.

Children, Youth, and Young Families Chair Marianne Johnson, reported on the progress of meeting the vestry's goal to have a Congregational Spiritual Journey via a strong adult formation program. This program will be highlighted in the forthcoming annual Membership Fair, scheduled for September 11. She also shared her joy as being part of the KIVA program with the Sunday School. **Look for an article in this issue.** Marianne was especially pleased that the Youth mission to a native American community in South Dakota went very well. Three youth presented a portion of the recent Sunday sermon. **One is presented in this issue, the other two will be in subsequent issues.**

Membership Chair Patty West reviewed the upcoming welcoming of new members events. They will start with a welcoming brunch on Sunday July 31, the liturgical welcoming on Sunday August 7, and the Vestry/Staff New Member party on Saturday August 1, at the home of Dick and Sally Ingraham. There will be orientation conversations on subsequent Sundays.

Liturgy Chair Mike Siebert briefly reviewed events that might be used in the September 11 time frame to emphasize world peace. Further details will be addressed at the

Liturgy Design meeting on August 23.

Mike, who is also the chair of the Columbarium Board, advised the vestry that Fred Bolton and Bob Schroder will serve new three year terms on the board.

Rev. Sylvia's sabbatical, planned for four months in 2013, received further clarification. Depending upon her plans, there could be two funding needs: supply clergy and personal sabbatical expenses. As a sabbatical was included in the original contractual agreement with Rev. Sylvia, the vestry recognized their need to include the supply clergy expense in the 2012 – 2013 budget. Rev. Sylvia is in the process of applying for a grant to finance her potential sabbatical expenses. As a resident cleric is often needed during the week, she proposed the vestry consider contracting for both Sundays and two days mid-week. The cost would be less if the cleric is retired. There was general optimism that these additional expenses could be covered, provided Financial Manager Todd Lopez is able to keep the church's unused space rented, at its current level.

Evangelism Chair Jana Baker reported on several topics. The Episcopal presence in the Danville July 4 parade was great fun. **Look for an article and pictures elsewhere in this issue.** Regarding our upcoming 125th anniversary, Jana is hoping for a lot of local press coverage. A committee is being formed. She then mentioned the use of a “QRS” symbol on evangelism brochures. This new symbol enables people with Smart Phones to mysteriously learn much more about St Paul's! Lastly, she wondered about possible Church signage visible to BART passengers.

On the Lighter Side: THE COAT HANGER

A woman was at work when she received a phone call that her young daughter was very sick. She left her work and went to a pharmacy to get some medication. When she got back to her car she found that she had locked her keys in the car. She did not know what to do. She called home to tell the sitter what had happened. The sitter told her that her daughter's fever was worse. She also suggested that “You might find a coat hanger and use that to open the door.”

The woman looked around and found a rusty old coat hanger on the ground, She looked at the hanger and told herself “I don't know how to use this.”

She bowed her head and asked God to send her help. Within five minutes a beat up old Motorcycle pulled up. Getting off of it was a dirty, greasy, bearded, man. The

woman wondered, “This is what You sent to help me?” But, she was desperate, so she was also very thankful. The man asked if he could help. She said, “Yes, my daughter is very sick. I stopped to get some medication and I locked my keys in my car. Please, can you use this hanger to unlock my car?” “Sure” he said. Within a minute the car was opened. The lady was so delighted, she hugged and told him. “Thank you so much! You are such a nice man.” The man replied:

“Lady, I am not a nice man. I just got out of prison today. I was sent there for car theft. I have only been out for about an hour.”

The woman hugged him again, and with sobbing tears cried out”

“Oh, Thank You God. You even sent me a Professional!”

Here are a few snapshots from

Youth Mission Trip 2011





Vestry

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The Epistle Newsletter is mailed to all church members. Each issue is also posted on the church website at www.stpaulswc.org, in full color. If you prefer to read the Epistle online, and not to receive it via U.S. Post, please contact the church office at 934-2324.

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