

Gospel Grapevine



January 2010

What's Inside:

What They Sought	2
Mission to Seafarers	3
Touch of Inner Healing	5
Planned Giving	6
Herbert O'Driscoll	6
Readings	8

Annual Stewardship/Pledge Program

THANK YOU! Thank you for your trust in God to provide for all your needs. Thank you for your commitment to the St. Alban's community and its work both in and outside the parish. Thank you for taking the time to care about your parish's financial matters.

Our theme this year has been a passage that is familiar to most of us:

"... All things come of thee, O Lord; and of thine own have we given thee. ..."

■ I Chronicles 29:14

We hope you have found some time to think about and meditate on this scripture and have discovered some new meaning and significance of it in your life.

It's never too late to make your pledge!!!



St. Alban's Episcopal Church

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Worship Schedule

Sundays

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

10:00 a.m. Nursery Open

10:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist,
Rite II

It is never too late to make your pledge or change your pledge. Pledge cards can be found in the pews. The Finance Committee finalized its proposed 2010 budget and presented it at the Annual Meeting on Dec 6. It was then presented to Vestry on Dec 9 for review and was approved without changes. Your pledge made a difference in making this process possible and successful. However, budgets are our best guess at what will happen. Unexpected situations come up all the time, both in the life of the parish and in the lives of those who support that parish. So, if you feel the need or calling to change your pledge for 2010 let me (Carrie Cone) or our Treasurer (Susie Nichols) know.

Giving from one's all means giving first. Giving from one's all is about understanding that everything we have, everything we use to make our livelihood, our lives—our minds, our hearts, our spirit, our strength, even the time we spend—is a gift from God. Let us be forever grateful for all we have been given.

God bless you and all our church family,

Your Stewardship Pledge Team,

Carrie Cone, Maryellen Young, and Gaylord Sisk

St. Alban's Vestry

Eric Hanson, *Senior Warden*

Phil McClelland, *Junior Warden*

Carrie Cone

Karen Cresse

Kären Ford

Barbara Hatt

Sid Rathburn

Sarah Sweeney

Shirley Wilson

Susie Nichols, *Treasurer*

Staff

The Rev. John Leech, *Rector*

Lisa Coale, *Parish Administrator*

JoAn Andenes, *Music Director &
Organist*

Joyce Carver, *Director of
Children's Education*

Ben Johnson, *Youth Leader*

Phil McClelland, *Webmaster*

Mona Carter, *Newsletter Editor*

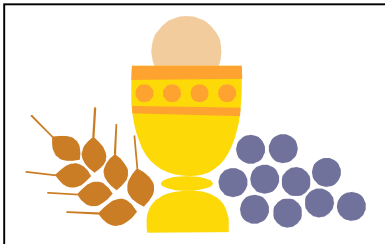
Office Hours

Monday through Thursday

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Rector's Hours – 9 a.m to 11 a.m

Thursdays and by appointment



What They Sought, What They Found, And What They Gave

By the Rev. John Leech

On a cold clear night illumined by the moon stars are few – a week or two later they are all over the place, our primordial guides to navigation.

During the daytime Old Israel wandering in the desert followed a pillar of cloud, by night a pillar of fire; in a later age the wise people of the East following a star sought what its portent promised: the birth of a new King in Israel.

They crossed the wild desert, following the clear stars shining; they journeyed on by plain and mountain...

They knew, though they were from far away - perhaps from the ancient universities of north India, the mountain observatories of Persia, or the plains of Mesopotamia, that there was something coming into being in the world - in the land of Palestine - that was altogether new - and yet of a promise very old.

These learned people, traveling far, followed - a star; a star - and much more: they followed the hope of the future.

And they found it in Judea, not in a king's palace, not even in the Temple, but in a manger, where a baby lay; they found it in that child, in the arms of his mother, watched over by the patient and faithful Joseph.

Shepherds beat them to it. Rude rustics, 'mechanics' as they would be in Shakespeare's play, got there first. Shepherds who had been abiding in the fields, keeping watch by night over their flocks, like that last unlikely son of Jesse, the boy David who would become king - and distant ancestor of this other little boy, this son of Mary - greeted the future, wrapped in swaddling clothes.

The wise perhaps knew better what this would mean; but all, wise and rustic alike, knelt before this tiny fellow, and opened the greatest gift they had to give, each one of them: their hearts.

Open your hearts, O faithful people, Open your hearts, and join in song.

Christ our Savior is born - and the glory of the Lord shone round about them.

Christ our Savior is born - and the praise of the Lord was on their lips.

Christ our Redeemer has come to us - and the message of his kingdom is abroad.

Christ our Lord is come - and we join in proclaiming his glory.

Christ the Alpha and Omega is come into the world - and given us a future with hope.

Open your hearts, O faithful people, and join in the song of celebration.

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

When I was growing up we hung stockings by the mantelpiece on Christmas Eve and lit the old candles (melted red crayons poured into waxed milk cartons). We waited until Christmas morning (each year a little earlier, a little more wise to the wrappings and assemblies of the night past) for bathrobes and pajamas and Christmas tree - all lit up - and presents discovered beneath its boughs. "Merry Christmas!" we greeted each other.

Our cousins, by contrast, followed the Latin American custom - if we were visiting them there was a second celebration for us - the custom of exchanging gifts on Three Kings Day, the feast of the Wise who followed the star from the east - Epiphany, Little Christmas.

As it was for the baby Jesus and the holy family, so for my cousins it was the day that the Christ was revealed as king, his glory first made manifest, that became the day of gifts.

The gifts given on Christmas (Eve or Day) or Epiphany (at the end of the Christmas season) are just the least of it really - they are outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual gift, the gift of our lives, our devotions, our hearts. We are not kings but what we have to give is what means most - and what, God bless us, everyone can give...

What shall I give him?
Give him my heart.

—Fr. John



Sunday School Update *By Joyce Carver*

The Sunday school children are truly into the spirit of giving this season. They brought "gently-used toys" for those less fortunate and are now gifting earned monies to buy a goat for an African family. They invite the parishioners to join the effort.

Stir-up Sunday was a fun and interactive event that energized the children and adults to begin preparations for The Birth. Merry Christmas!



STIR-UP



SUNDAY



Newsletter Articles for Next Issue-Due Jan. 15

Send articles and photos via email to Mona Carter at mikenmona2@comcast.net. Be sure they have a .doc extension on the file for text files. Or, place items in the plastic holder marked "Grapevine" on the wall next to the front door in the Narthex. All articles and announcements are subject to editing. Include name and contact information.

Meet Nonie Swaim

By Sarah Leech

St. Alban's is blessed to welcome Elizabeth "Nonie" Swaim as a member of our parish. Nonie moved to Edmonds from Pittsburgh, PA where she was a member of Southminster Presbyterian Church and a long-time elder of that congregation. A nurse by profession, Nonie is passionate about volunteering with abused children. She loves to travel in foreign countries and long distances by car, and she enjoys seeing plays and listening to public radio. Nonie lives in the Point Edwards area of Edmonds with her pet, Mollie, a Cavalier Spaniel. She has two grown children, Laura and Charles. Her youngest – Charles - is "special."

Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.



Mission to Seafarers Ditty Bag Stuffing

By Ben Johnson

On November 21st, the St. Albans Youth Group, other members of the St. Albans congregation, and many other volunteers from throughout the Diocese converged upon St. Johns the Baptist in West Seattle to stuff ditty bags for the Mission to Seafarers.

The ditty bags will be delivered during the Christmas season to seafarers on merchant vessels calling at the Port of Seattle. The ditty bags are filled with practical items that convey the love, concern, and compassion of our local churches to the seafarers working to bring us the items we use and wear on a daily basis.

It is a great ministry that allows our congregation and others the opportunity to participate in an international and ecumenical outreach ministry. This the fourth year that the St. Albans Youth Group as participated and we look forward to many more. The number of volunteers and items to stuff seem to grow exponentially every year. This year's goal was to stuff 500 bags. This year's group of volunteers stuffed 500 and a little more in about an hour. The group of volunteers from St. Albans included: John Bee, Liz Bee, Emily Bee, John John Bee, Meridith Bee, John Greenlaw, Chris Greenlaw, Patrick Greenlaw, Marshall Greenlaw, Chuck Becker, Phyllis Becker, Ben Johnson, and Cameron Johnson.

Thank you and job well done by all. You packaged up a lot of joy, love, and goodwill for the seafarers that will receive these gifts.



Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

By Connie Forsberg

December was highlighted by several events. A tree trimming party was held with lots of laughter, fun, and fellowship. The men helped with this event with the promise of coffee, donuts and lunch! The hall was decorated in splendor in anticipation of our annual Christmas party held on the 15th.

Lights sparkled, music played and the smell of delicious food greeted over 30 ladies. JoAn Andenes, organist, prepared songbooks with Christmas songs for all to sing along. A gift exchange was held, and food donations collected for the Edmonds food bank.

In January, a no-host luncheon will be held; if weather permits. Look for the sign-up sheet in the parish hall.

The Sunday coffee-hour team needs help. Marjorie Garrard and Evie Arneson have been graciously doing coffee-hour for many years. A sign-up sheet has been posted in the kitchen. It's a great way to meet fellow parishioners and learn the ins and outs of the kitchen.

As always, remember to bring food for the baskets each week as the need gets greater every month. Blessings!

ECW Birthdays!



- 1/1 Susan Hanson
- 1/6 Evie Arneson
- 1/18 Christine Sine
- 1/19 Barbara Campbell
- 1/24 Karan Stephens
Sarah Leech
- 1/28 Sheillah Reidburn
- 1/29 Lorrie Pruitt

Deck the Hall



Touch of Inner Healing— The Unforeseen

By Shirley Wilson

As Christians we say that we live by faith. Yet when the unforeseen happens how do we react? After the initial shock, our next reaction may be anger, sorrow, depression or a feeling of helplessness. Our friend, Clem, said he raged at God recently, with fists in the air, when his wife, Rita, became seriously ill while vacationing in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. They, along with several other couples, including Dave and me, from various locations in the United States have spent winter vacations together at the same resort for over 30 years without any mishap or illness. What happened this year was totally unexpected and unforeseen.

When Rita first became ill with a headache and fever, we all assumed it was probably the flu, but when the symptoms became more severe with internal bleeding and convulsions, she was taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital and kept in ICU for several days. Blood tests showed that she had been bitten by a mosquito carrying the dengue virus. Further research told us that this disease is caused by a family of viruses transmitted by the bite of an *aedes aegypti* mosquito that has previously bitten an infected person. Luckily Rita's critical status finally lifted and we could all breathe a sigh of relief. She was out of danger. About that time, her husband, Clem, started feeling sick with similar symptoms and was admitted to the ICU after collapsing. His case was not as severe so his recovery was quicker. They eventually both felt well enough to return to their home in New York in time for the Christmas holidays.

I believe Clem's reaction of anger was an honest one, and a healthy one. God wants us to be open and honest in our relationship with Him, telling Him how we feel so that He can help us work through it. David, in the Bible, certainly poured out his frustrations to His Heavenly Father in the Psalms and God honored and blessed him as a result. Clem, as well, trusted God enough to tell Him his true feelings.

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

He was then comforted by the fact that St. Alban's was praying for his wife; "someone they didn't even know." I believe the Lord delighted to answer our prayers.

We don't know what the New Year will bring. But we know the One who is in charge of our future. With that knowledge, we should not be afraid of the unforeseen. Our Heavenly Father is in control and He is completely trustworthy and totally loving. He has made us to be resilient and He promises to go through all the difficult places with us. As Robert Schuller once said, "tough times never last, but tough people do." I would add, with God's help.

If you would like to learn more about the Inner Healing Ministry please call Shirley Wilson at 206-542-2944.

Why I have included St. Alban's in my Planned Giving

By Dan Mullene

A few years ago, when I began working with the Planned Giving Committee to develop our endowment fund and legacy society, I can honestly say that I hadn't considered making a planned gift to St. Alban's.

Certainly our church has been an important part of my life for over 20 years, and I have been active in many ways, including vestry participation, the lay reading ministry, outreach, and other opportunities for service. And it has always been an honor and a pleasure to help support our

church and the local community in these and so many other ways.

But as I became more and more involved in the endowment fund development, I realized that it's also very important for me to make my own specific plan for a personal contribution to the church beyond today. To me, that meant that I needed to take action to offer support to St. Alban's at the end of my time on this earth as part of my estate planning.

Therefore I have made plans to name St. Alban's in my will and to make a specific contribution to the church. In doing so, I can continue to give back something to the church which has been there for me in my time of need, through the love of God, and of all of the clergy and members of St. Alban's, past, present and future, who have been so important in my life.

Our church teaches us that everything we have is a gift from God. The legacy we leave for our church becomes a witness to our faith, and helps to ensure that the ministries of our church continue after we are gone. I have been blessed with so much in my time here, and my faith calls me to give back now and in the future.

I am sure that my fellow members of the Planned Giving Committee would support me as I encourage everyone else in our congregation to prayerfully consider a planned gift to our church and to take time now to review how you can make a planned gift to St. Alban's.

As you complete your new year's resolutions for 2010, perhaps there's room for one more item on your list. Please consider your own gift planning through the endowment fund and other opportunities in your own life planning so that the Lord's love – and our own love for one another and our community – continues to flourish in the years to come.

Please note that if you give the Committee an indication of your intent to give a gift to St. Alban's in your planning by May 31, 2010, you will qualify as a "founding member" of the Legacy Society. If you would like more information on the St. Alban's Endowment Fund and Legacy Society, please contact me or any other members of the committee: Maryellen Young, Barb Lagozzino, Daisy Beach or Riley Mannery

"The Highway of Christian Time" A Day of Reflection with Herbert O'Driscoll

By Judy Fleenor, et al



It is an honor and a rare privilege to welcome the Rev. Herbert O'Driscoll, widely acclaimed author and preacher, to St. Alban's for this event. Herbert O'Driscoll is one of the leading contemporary preachers and teachers in the Anglican Communion. He has served as the Dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver B.C. and as Warden of the College of

Preachers in Washington D.C. The dozens of books he has authored make both scripture and the Anglican tradition come alive. He is especially interested in how classical Christian traditions such as Celtic spirituality

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

are being rediscovered and are impacting our contemporary spiritual journey. In his charming and inimitable style he will discuss past chapters of Christian spirituality, how they fascinate us and how some of the well-won wisdom of the past speaks to our present experience.

He states, "In exploring the past, we can open for ourselves some gates to the future. To stand at any point on the great highway of Christian experience is to see it emerge from the mists of the past and disappear into the mists of the future. The point at which we ourselves stand on this highway is the place of our vocation."

We are living in a period of immense change and transition, which can leave us struggling to make sense of our world and how we should live in it. Christians in other ages have faced such times. Please join us for this unique opportunity to hear Herbert O'Driscoll share how classical Christian traditions forged in such times can enrich our contemporary spiritual journey, opening new opportunities for understanding, hope and growth.

A Special Invitation for St. Alban's Parish Family - Prior to Saturday's presentation, Herbert and Paula O'Driscoll will spend Friday evening, Jan. 29 at 7 p.m. in the parish hall, with members of the St. Alban's Family. This is our opportunity to get to know them before we open our doors to the wider world. If you can, please bring an appetizer and/or wine. Cookies and coffee will be provided. There is no charge for this event.

Turning Points

For this, much thanks:

To Lee Forsberg, Boy Scout Troop 300, and all others who worked on grounds clean-up.

To those who donated food items for the Edmonds Food Bank; and to Gaylord Sisk for delivering the food.

The Rev. Stephen E. Moore for his lucid and light presentation on "Episcopal 101" at the annual parish meeting December 6th.

Thank you for Christmas: *Thanks to all who supported our Christmas celebrations in so many and various ways:*

- All who helped with Stir-up Sunday in the Sunday School.
- All who gave money for Christmas flowers and other decorations.
- The Altar Guild for decorating the church.
- Those who decorated the Christmas tree; Connie Forsberg, Mary Fowler, et al for decorating the parish hall for the ECW Christmas potluck.
- Marjorie Garrard and Jim Nichols for organizing Adopt-A-Family for Chase Lake School plus all who donated gifts to the families.
- The children and their families who took part in the pageant.

We ask God's protection:

For those living or serving in areas torn by war, civil strife, or natural disaster, those serving in the military including, David Benson, Johshua Berger, Arthur Braten, Robert Burnett, Zachary Conklin, Larry Dawson, Andrew Embury, Thomas Lee, Sok Li, Adam Matuska, Christopher Mazzeroll, Monica McCreery, John McGlocklin, Troy Miller, Derek Napier, Brian Perkins, Alex Roddy, Jonathan Springstead, Rachel Teall, and Drew Wilson.

May they know God's healing power: Lana Berger, Thelma DeLong, Abe & Barbara Garcia, Alex Hatt, John Kistner, Sally LeBoeuf and daughter Nancy, Phil & Robin McClelland, Bill & Lila McDonald, DeDe Moore, Jeff Munsey, Keith & Lee Oles, Chris Perry, Carl Potter, Legh Priest, Millie Salmon, Jean Start, Hazel Shaw, Dee Tugby, and Mike Young.

May they rest in peace: Timothy Brenton, Mark Renninger, Ronald Owens, Tina Griswold, Greg Richards, Lee McGonagle.

Announcements

Prayer Beads – Will meet Tuesday, Jan. 5th in the Annex at 7:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. Prayer Beads are available for you to try. For information contact Maryellen Young, 425-776-2461.

Compass Dinner is scheduled for Jan. 31st. Watch the bulletin for details.

Prayer Shawls – Pocket prayer shawls are needed to send to Fort Lewis. Full-size prayer shawls are needed as well for church use.

Pocket Prayer Shawl – Knitting Directions

Materials: Baby-weight or Sport-weight yarn; Needle size 7-8 (baby wt.) or 2-3 (sport wt.)

Pattern: Cast on 15 stitches

First row: knit (K)3, purl (P)3, to end of row. Turn. Following rows: K3, P3: beginning and ending each row with K. Finish size is about 3" X 5" (approximately 42 rows).

As you make the shawl, pray for the person who will receive the shawl. If you do not know who the recipient will be, pray for God's embracing love to encompass them and that your shawl will be a shield to protect them during their tour of duty.

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

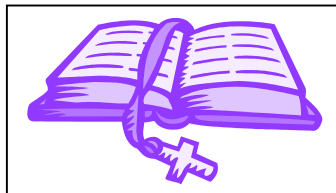
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The Lessons Appointed for Use on Sunday:



**Jan. 3
Feast of the Epiphany
(observed)**

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

**Jan. 10
The Baptism of our Lord**

Isaiah 43:1-7
Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

**Jan. 17
2nd Sun. after the Epiphany**

Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10
1 Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2:1-11

**Jan 24
3rd Sun. after the Epiphany**

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21

**Jan. 31
4th Sun. after the Epiphany**

Jeremiah 1:4-10
Psalm 71:1-6
1 Corinthians 13:1-13
Luke 4:21-30