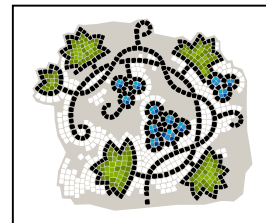


St. Alban's Grapevine



JUNE 2009

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The Emerging Spirit

by The Rev. John Leech

A question I have been asking in recent weeks is this: *Where do we sense the Spirit emerging in our congregation?*

One of the joys of the past few days has been hearing what people have to say about how they see the Spirit emerging at work in our midst. At breakfast downtown one morning someone pointed out that more people are now sticking around after services to have conversation with each other (she notices, because she and another breakfaster make the coffee 95% of the time). Across the table someone remarked how friendly the congregation was – when you visit somebody always says hello to you and asks your name. I'd add hospitable and devoted (Saint Alban's people look after each other) as well.

One afternoon someone called to report on her visit 'back home' – and how now she much prefers this small congregation, which she finds much less formal or stuffy than the big church she attended before. "You'd never see somebody bringing that sweet little dog into church back there. So now, this is home". Hooray!

One thing I am enjoying about this congregation is seeing people take responsibility both for themselves, for their place and time in the world, and for being God's people chosen for here and now to both proclaim the Word and carry it out in their lives.

I sense the spirit emerging in the congregation in new growth in lay leadership, in members taking initiative, in independent, positive responses to challenges by organizing new ventures, taking on ongoing ones, working for transformation, or letting go of what needs to be let go. I see it in the adult education class that studies our parish vision statement in light of the Scriptures and then discusses how to implement it, moving from vision to mission. I see it in older members deeply involved, passing on their skills; and I see it in new members, learning new ways of being church – God's people in this place at this time.

Beyond all these immediate things – what is happening – is the long-term emergence of the spirit in our midst. One sunny afternoon in the Berkeley Rose

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Worship Schedule

Sundays:

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

10:00 a.m. Nursery Open

10:30 a.m. Sunday School

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

Continued from page 1

St. Alban's Vestry

Karen Ford, *Rector's Warden*
Phil McClelland, *People's Warden*
Phyllis Becker, *People's Warden*
Carrie Cone
John Greenlaw
Mark Gregory
Barbara Hatt
Barbara McLain
Gaylord Sisk
Sarah Sweeney
Jeannie Wells
Shirley Wilson, *Clerk*
Chris Greenlaw, *Treasurer*

Staff

The Rev. John Leech, *Rector*
Susie Nichols, *Interim Parish Administrator*
JoAn Andenes, *Music Director & Organist*
Joyce Carver, *Director of Children & Youth Education*
Ben Johnson, *Youth Leader*
Phil McClelland, *Webmaster*

Office Hours

Monday thru Thursday
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon



Garden an elderly man from Pakistan asked me what I thought the great religious traditions of the world had in common. "We are all seeking the same thing – and the same thing is seeking all of us."

As Donald Nicholl said in *Holiness* (Seabury Press, 1981; 2nd ed., Paulist Press, 1987), "...the Holy One was longing for each of us to be holy before ever we began to do so, and that he continues to do so even when we ourselves get tired of our longing. The way in which we respond to that personal call is our total responsibility." (61) He remarks that we should not judge the progress of others, for "...sometimes beginners are near to their end. And another thing is for sure: anyone who regards himself as already holy still has a long way to go." (44) To sum it all up, he assures us that "...at the very centre of the universe is a loving Heart whose longings are the source of our own hearts' longing. Hence our own longings can never be in vain, because they correspond with reality, with that Heart upon which our universe is centered." (39)

As Augustine prayed, "Thou movest us to delight in praising Thee; for Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee." (Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, Ii)

The movement of the Spirit is entirely compatible with our lives, as they are really meant to develop, for the God who sustains & sanctifies is the God who redeems & justifies is the God who made us & called us into being. This inspires confidence in me that Christ will have the victory – over small and sordid sins as over big and spectacular ones – and that these small beginnings, like bud-break on twig or vine, are indeed signs of the Spirit emerging in the midst of us, God's people, here and now.

—Fr. John

The adult education class, led by Eric Hanson, meets in the conference room in the education annex on Sunday mornings between services, from 9:15 to 10:00 am.

The will of God never takes you to where the Grace of God will not protect you.

The Labyrinth—a Metaphor of Life

by Maryellen Young

Recently I was talking with a friend about how walking a labyrinth is like a metaphor of life: sometimes you are close to the center and the next thing you know, you're at the outside; some times there are sections where the path is long and smooth and then you are amidst a lot of twists and turns.

The ancient labyrinth has been a comfort for millions of pilgrims for thousands of years in many different traditions. It was reintroduced at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco in 1991. Steadily it has been embraced again by people of all faiths and persuasions because of the power it has in their sense of the mystery of the Spirit and of themselves as children of the cosmos, held in God's hands.

There is no dogma to follow and no doctrine to learn. This circular path may be walked at your own pace with your own thoughts. Enter at the beginning, follow the path to the center and stay there as long as you like. When you are ready, return on the same path. It is suggested that walking in is a path of cleansing; being in the center is a place of insight and gifts; walking out is to bring those gifts into more integration within you.

With warmer weather coming, now is the time to try walking the labyrinth. Recently, on one of those sunny days, I decided that walking the labyrinth was a great way to start my quiet time with God. We are very fortunate at St. Alban's to have a labyrinth available outdoors, but even I admit it's more fun to walk when the weather is warmer. Thanks to Lee Forsberg, our labyrinth is maintained. We now have a covered structure, built by Verne Giddings, at the entrance that contains our pamphlet with information about walking the labyrinth and our guest book for recording your comments.

Let your friends and neighbors know that we have a labyrinth available. I recently mentioned it to a friend who likes meditation and she was grateful to know it was available. If you are wrestling with an issue, walking the labyrinth can be a source of comfort or insight. If you have any questions, I'd be happy to talk with you about labyrinths.



Sample Biblical Phrases to Use While Praying the Labyrinth:

My hope is from God (Psalm 62:5b)

In the day of my trouble I call on you for you will answer me (Psalm 86:7)

You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy (Psalm 16:11)

Worship God with gladness; come into God's presence with singing (Psalm 100:2)

Sources: www.labyrinths.org
Christian Prayer and Labyrinths: Pathways to Faith, Hope and Love by Jill Kimberly Hartwell Geoffrion

The Sacred Path Companion by Lauren Artress

Hands On Ministry

by Maryellen Young

We had a lot of fun at our last Compass Center dinner on April 25th. Thanks to those of you who donated food for the dinner!—Evie Arneson, Janet Neice, Connie Forsberg, Susie Nichols and Susan Bailey. Barbara Lagozzino, Dan Mullene, Reilly Mannery and Susan Bailey and I were there to help cook and serve.

Barbara Lagozzino experienced some personal Hands On activity as she reached out to one of the residents and learned that she was about to transition into an apartment. Barb made some quick phone calls and recruited donations of an ironing board, mop, broom and other items to help get this woman started. Thanks Barb and thanks to those of you who responded to Barb's call.

Handing out Food at the Food Bank also was fun on May 16th. The Food Bank had received a large donation of cheese and dairy products, so we were able to offer clients extra items, instead of our normal limitations. Joyce Carver, Carol Gordon, Judy Kistner, Reilly Mannery and I were there helping.

Compass Center: August 2nd was chosen as the date for the next Compass Center dinner, subject to confirmation that Edmonds Lutheran kitchen is available. Watch for more information about the menu and opportunities to participate.

Food Bank. Saturday, September 19th will be the next day to volunteer at the North Helpline Food Bank in Lake City.

Mission to Seafarers: Start collecting items on sale for donations for Mission to Seafarers or sew a ditty bag to donate. List of needed supplies and ditty bag directions are available in the Mission to Seafarers container in the Parish Hall.

Packages to Troops: Emily Bee has expressed an interest in sending packages again to the troops that we pray for each week. Watch for more information on this potential project.

Cedar Valley Back to School Set Up and Supplies: This will be a month of August project for the donation of school items. Cedar Valley is a school that has lots of students whose families struggle financially. Our own Camille Hartley is a teacher there so we're looking to support her and this school with our back-to-school supply collection this year. We'll also be helping with preparing classrooms for the start of school on Tuesday, August 25th. Watch for more information



Ministries Fair – June 7th

From Book Groups to Buildings and Grounds, Altar Guild to the Finance Committee, and Church School to Youth Ministry, representatives from a multitude of St. Alban's ministries will be on hand to explain what they do. You can take home information on ministries you're interested in, or just stop by to thank a fellow-parishioner for what he or she is doing. Don't miss this opportunity to celebrate the rich life of service going on in our midst. You're sure to be inspired! For more information contact Sarah Leech at (425) 582-2282.

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

St. Alban's church women hosted the "Annual Barbeque." Hot dogs and hamburgers were cooked by the men.

Patti Drummond was the guest speaker from Children's Home Society of WA. She shared the purpose of the organization and the special services they provide to at-risk children and families who have run into hard times. ECW presented Patti with a variety of donated supplies needed by the kids and families.

Susan Bailey shared her experience of the recent trip she took to New Orleans. It is not widely known that there are families still living in temporary housing and awaiting repairs on their homes, four years after Hurricane Katrina.

ECW also thanked Nancy Boor for her role as editor of the newsletter. Susan Bailey was also thanked for her service with the Health Ministry over the years.



Join St. Alban's Legacy Society

by Maryellen Young

Recently the St. Alban's Legacy Society was launched. If you tell us that you have recognized St. Alban's as part of your estate planning between now and next May, you will be a charter member of our Legacy Society. You can do this in such ways as a gift from your estate or as a beneficiary of life insurance or tax-deferred account. There is a brochure in the parish hall that provides more information. We have had a lot of help in this process from the Diocese. The Diocese as a new gift related website that has lots of information. Go to www.ecwwgift.org. One of the features of this websites are testimonials from others within the Diocese as to why they have joined their church's Legacy Society or the Bishop's Society. Below are excerpt of these testimonials:

Over the years, I've revised my will to reflect changes in my circumstances and values. One of the things I've done is to leave a legacy for the church. I want to leave something behind for future generations. After all, this is my community and I care about it. I have benefited so much from being part of this community. It's a plan I can live with. [Sheila Preston Comerford, Trinity, Seattle]

As stewards of our own affairs who plan for the future, we need to do at least three things. First, we need to organize and provide for the disposition of our possessions... Second, as good stewards, we should have a will... Third, good, faithful stewardship calls for each of us, in our wills, to provide something for the church: for our own church community, for our Diocese, our national church, or some other church or church organization. We want future generations to have a church community that can welcome and support them and carry on the work of the church in the world. [Dale Rammerman, Christ Church, Anacortes]

I have lived a very rich and abundant life. As a member of the Bishop's Society, I want to give thanks for all my blessings and to share God's wealth with others. [The Rev. Jerry Shigaki Canon for Multi-cultural Ministries]

The members of the Planned Giving Committee who you may contact for more information are:

Maryellen Young, Chair, 425-776-2461

Daisy Beach, Treasurer, 425-776-3791

Dan Mullene, Secretary, 425-776-8258

Barbara Lagozzino, 425-774-9265

Reilly Mannery, 206-542-1371

From the Vestry

by Karen Ford, Senior Warden

Vestry Notes this month are very sparse as there was not a quorum to conduct business. We did have a lively discussion about where we see the church in the next few years with the six members of vestry who were able to attend the meeting.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, June 11th at 7 PM in the Parish Hall. If anyone has questions, concerns, or issues that need to be addressed by the Vestry, please contact any of the members of Vestry or Fr John for inclusion on the Vestry agenda.

Announcement

Congratulations to Sarah Leech, who has accepted a job as Director of Women of Purpose at World Concern. Women of Purpose provide a structured way for volunteers, working together, to help prevent the exploitation and trafficking of women and children in the developing world. World Concern's Women of Purpose links North American women with groups of marginalized women in some of the poorest countries in the world. Through awareness building, prayer, advocacy and fundraising, volunteers help to lift vulnerable women and children out of poverty and bring them healing, restoration, opportunity and freedom.

Book Club Selections

by Sarah Leech

The Morning Page Turners and Evening Book Group are currently reading *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis. A classic since its publication in 1942, this humorous and penetrating book presents the correspondence between Screwtape, a senior devil, and his nephew Wormwood, a novice demon. Wormwood's task is to befuddle, tempt, manipulate and deceive an ordinary mortal into damnation. Screwtape's letters to Wormwood, full of diabolical advice and displeased chiding, afford an enlightening look into the frailty of human nature as well as the goodness of God.

After finishing *The Screwtape Letters* in June, our next book will be *A Severed Wasp* by Madeleine L'Engle. In this novel, Katherine Forrester Vigneras, a retired pianist in her 70s meets an old friend from her youth who is now the Bishop of New York. Responding to his invitation to give a benefit concert at a cathedral, she soon finds herself unsettled and stretched in unforeseen ways due to challenging relationships as well as mysterious occurrences around the cathedral close. How Katherine deals with these demands on her spiritual, emotional, psychological and artistic depths offers lessons in maturity and wisdom.

If you've been thinking about reading a book or two this summer, consider joining one of these two groups. Meeting dates are listed in the Sunday bulletins. If you have any questions, call Sarah Leech (425) 582-2282.

Prayer Beads

by Maryellen Young

Prayer Beads will continue to meet through the summer on the first Wednesday of the month. We meet in the Annex at 7:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. The use of the prayer beads helps to bring us into contemplative or meditative prayer—really thinking about and being mindful of praying, of being in the presence of God—by use of mind, body, and spirit. The touching of the fingers on each successive bead is an aid in keeping our mind from wandering, and the rhythm of the prayers leads us more readily into stillness. Prayer beads are available for your use if you would like to join us and try this different method of praying.

Sunday School and Youth Group

by Joyce Carver

The Sunday School and Youth Group were treated to a special event this last Sunday. Lorrie Pruitt and Helke organized a wonderful presentation about how service dogs are trained to serve their owners. Five dogs and their trainers plus Mary Ann, who is wheelchair-bound, and her dog were featured. The dogs ranged in age from a puppy to the grandfather of the group, now retired. They demonstrated skills of turning off/on lights, picking up items from the floor (even as small as a credit card) and giving them to the person in need. Many hugs and kisses and pettings were exchanged between the children and the canine friends. It was a wonderful exchange of love among God's creatures. Thanks to Lorrie and Helke for organizing this time together. June 14th will be the last day of this year's Sunday School program. Shannon will meet with the summer attendees in the Sunday school wing. Thank you for a great year-- parents, teachers, and children! Vacation Bible School comes forth in July.

A Touch of Inner Healing ---Why Father Has His Day *by Shirley Wilson*

Did you know that Father's Day originated right here in the Pacific Northwest? A woman named Sonora Smart Dodd of Creston, WA, first suggested the idea of the holiday in 1909. Her father, William Smart, a Civil War veteran, was a widower who raised six children on his own. He must have done a wonderful job, because when Sonora became an adult, she was inspired to create the holiday in memory of her father.

At our last YEAH (Young Episcopalians At Heart) meeting, Sarah Sweeney shared a beautiful story about her father. When she was 16, her dad became ill with cancer and was given only six weeks to live. Sarah had been raised to have a close relationship with the Lord, but when this happened she became very angry at Him. How could a loving God do this to her father whom she loved so dearly?

They were living in Europe at the time of the diagnosis, where her father worked for the Drug Enforcement Administration. The family immediately returned to the States where he would begin treatment, but a CAT scan showed the cancer was all over his body, giving them little hope of recovery. The treatments proved to be so horrible that her father made the choice to stop them, against doctor's orders, so that he could die in peace. However, God had a better plan. At the end of the six weeks, Sarah's dad was not only still alive, a follow-up CAT scan showed that there was no evidence of cancer left in his body! He was in complete remission.

But Sarah remained angry at God. There was always the fear that the remission might not last, so she still distanced herself from Him. It wasn't until several years later, at the age of 21, that she finally made her peace with her Heavenly Father. It happened at a Cursillo. The Lord let her know that it was okay to be angry at Him. She was encouraged to pour out her true feelings of guilt, anger, and even hatred toward God. He, in His mercy, understood, giving her an immediate sense of calm, and their relationship was restored.

Sarah's dad lived for 20 more years. So they had ample opportunity to get to know and appreciate each other in a meaningful way. When she was little, she felt special in her role as daddy's "baby girl" but as a police officer her dad worked weird shifts and was gone a lot. Later, she got to know him as an adult and they grew very close. After her dad was diagnosed the second time, he died within six months, but during that time, they talked every day, becoming even closer. He had become the caring father that Sarah had always wanted and needed, and a wonderful memory for her son, Ronan.

Father's are so important. It's only fair for them to have their special day. I'm sure that Sonora Smart Dodd and Sarah Sweeney would both agree.

Armed Services Update

As we need to know who the contacts are for our service friends: Doug Baer, David Benson, Robert Burnett, Zachary Conklin, Larry Dawson, John Graves, Thomas Lee, Sok Li, Peter Lombardi, Christopher Mazzeroll, Monica McCreery, John McGlocklin, Kyle Millard, Derek Napier, Brian Perkins, Jonathan Springstead, and Joshu Berger, and if possible their addresses, please let us know immediately. Contact Sheilah Reidburn (425) 745-1390.