

THE EPISTLE

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA - A SACRED SPACE FOR YOUR BUSY LIFE

FROM THE RECTOR ✝

Dear Friends,

For the last six months I have been trying to get to the St. Vincent De Paul Soup Kitchen in San Rafael once a week to do an hour of food prep. It's my volunteer work outside the doors of St. Paul's. Along with Paula Beard and Judy Rowcliffe, I took the training in early March and then signed up to help on Thursday mornings.

I'm not as consistent as I would like. Vacation or travel comes up, my schedule gets busy, a child gets sick, and then this one hour a week is what seems to get dropped. Over the summer I missed three weeks in a row. One of the weeks I had been out of town the entire time, but in the other two I just allowed a busy schedule to squeeze out my time chopping vegetables, making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and doing dishes at St. Vinnies.

When I finally returned a very unusual thing happened. I put on my apron and sat down at a side table to destem a large cardboard box full of grapes. As soon as I grabbed my first bunch and began plucking the grapes I heard a clear, distinct voice in my head say 'Where have you been? I missed you.'

I can count on one hand the number of times in my life I've had a thought that emerged in my mind with this kind of tone and strength. In the past, I always took it to be a kind of communication from God and I've always found what whatever short, clear words were spoken to be absolute truth for me. This was another one of those times. The voice was clear, compassionate and firm without the least trace of passive/aggression. I took it to be a clear signal that Jesus was pleased when I went to chop vegetables, and was genuinely present in that soup kitchen among the volunteers, the largely Hispanic professional staff, and the eclectic mix of clients out in the dining hall. If I want to know and be with Jesus- and I do- I need to be at the soup kitchen!

I'm still not showing up to St. Vinnies as regularly as I would like. For a while, Judy was also signed up for Thursday, but her hand started to hurt her so she's in search of another way to help in our community. What I would like is a partner or a small team of people who go with me to help those in need and look for Jesus there at the Soup Kitchen of St. Vincent de Paul. I need support to do what I know to be the right thing.

I have always dreamt of being part of a Christian community where hands-on service for those in need was the norm. I wonder what would happen if everyone at St. Paul's committed to giving one hour a week in service. How would our lives be different? Would we like the change? What would we lose? What would we gain?

Right now, we have a solid foundation of hands-on service with our Teen Success Breakfast, the worship services at the 5th Avenue Health Care Center and many other small or individual efforts. What will it take for us to broaden our efforts so that every one of us (including the Rector!) shows up every week in service?

Faithfully,

Christopher

FROM THE ASSOCIATE RECTOR



I've joked with some of you, I have the unique talent of losing things. I don't mean to brag, but it really is one of my greatest gifts. I give thanks that we live in a small house as the lack of square footage means there are only a limited number of places I can search for the lost object d'jour. I am the woman searching for the lost coin on a regular basis.

Losing a treasure is one thing, becoming lost is another thing altogether. When I was about 5, my father's company threw a huge party for all of its employees at a local park. There was row after row of tables and chairs and people. Big, bright umbrellas decorated the tables. There was food, music and people and people and people. My family found a spot on one of the rows, and we ate and partied like everyone around us. Suddenly, I realized the legs and shoes of the people surrounding me were not those of my people. I had no idea where Mom and Dad were, and got very, very scared as I wandered through the tables in search of them. A clown, a very scary clown came my way. I wanted to run, but couldn't. I had no options as he pulled me up to the band-

stand in the front. Bringing me up to the mic he announced: "We have a lost little girl here named Julie. Is anyone missing their daughter?"

Mom and Dad looked around to realize I was gone, and came up to claim me. Back at our umbrella, I memorized its color reasoning that if I kept it in my sight, I wouldn't get lost.

To make a long story short, it didn't work, and the clown took me up to the front, did his thing and Mom and Dad came to claim me a second time.

They say the third time's a charm. But standing next to a clearly irritated clown, we waited. And waited. The clown tapped his foot and glanced at his watch. Mom and Dad didn't come. I began to panic. Did they leave without me? Have I been abandoned to spend the rest of my life with scary-clown-man? Were they sick of coming up to claim their wayward daughter? The world became a scary, lonely place. Clown-man started to grunt and sigh. Certainly, he had better clown things to do than stand around with this soon to be family-less little girl.

Then, blessings upon blessings! I saw them come. My mom and dad emerged from the masses to take me back once again. I had a family again! I waved good-bye to my unlikely, scary savior and felt unimaginable joy.

There's really nothing like being found when one is lost.

Thanks be that God seeks us until we are found!

Amen.

December Calendar of Events and Holiday Schedule

December 11th
St. Anne's Annual Holiday Lunch
Duncan Hall ★ 12 noon

December 14th
Fifth Avenue Caroling Tradition
Meet in Duncan Hall ★ 3:30 pm

Followed by
St. Paul's Holiday Party and Pot Luck
Elk's Lodge on Mission Street ★ 5:00 pm

December 21st
Greening of the Church & Potluck
Church and Duncan Hall ★ 5:00 pm



December 24th
Christmas Eve Family Service
5:00 pm

December 24th
Christmas Eve Late Service
Music at 10:30 pm 11:00 pm Service

December 25th
Christmas Day Service
10:00 am

Followed by
Christmas Day Potluck
Duncan Hall

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS!

- 1 Aiden Gray
- 2 Greg Mallozzi
- 3 Ann Hanson
- 3 Liam Stone-Grijalva
- 3 Allison Bagby
- 5 Andre Parkinson
- 6 Luca Hines
- 6 Katie Taggart
- 7 Sue Mason
- 10 Andrew Allanson
- 11 John Eitel III
- 12 Lisa Allanson
- 16 Cathy Christie
- 16 Barbara Rokoszak
- 16 Eleanor Errante
- 17 Chris Olson
- 19 Tim Walker
- 25 Bobbie Hanley
- 26 Alex Elliot
- 27 Holly Ptirchard
- 28 Maricella Machado

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES!

- 6 Alexis & Jorge Melara
- 25 Della & Bobby Holloway
- 31 Nikki & John McDermott

And special mention to Bobbie Hanley - that she and her husband Edward would have celebrated 65 years of marriage as of December 11th. Edward is greatly missed.

ST. PAUL'S CAROLING AND HOLIDAY PARTY

Come join us on Sunday, December 14th for Christmas Caroling and a Holiday Party. We start at 3:30 at church for a brief warm up and then walk over to the Fifth Avenue Health Care Center for our second straight year of Caroling. After that, we will walk over to the Elk's Club where there will be fun, games and music, as well as a pot luck dinner, from about 5pm to 7pm. Contact the office for more information.

ST. PAUL'S BOOK CLUB

We will be meeting on Friday, Dec. 12th at 6 PM.
We will meet in the church parking lot and go for a dinner meeting at Bombay Garden on Fourth St.
The book we will discuss is
Saving Fish From Drowning by Amy Tan.

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Our Angel Tree tags this year will be for the Community School Teen Mother's Group and their children. Parishioners always like to buy presents for young children and a few of these mothers have never experienced Christmas. In addition, the students at Community School will receive gift certificates to the new Subway Restaurant near the School. This money will come from Social Ministries funds provided by the St. Paul's Christmas offering last year.

Social Ministries is contributing funds to Ritter Center at this time of economic stress, and also to ICEP (Inmate Correctional Education Project), the prison education program receiving our annual support.

St. Anne's Christmas Luncheon

Please come join us at Noon on Thursday, December 11th,
for a festive luncheon in Duncan Hall.

All are welcome and we look forward to seeing you there.

PARISH PROFILE - JAY LUTHER

By MARION CEDARBLADE



WELCOME HOME JAY LUTHER! It's good to have you back. For those of you who have joined St. Paul's in the past four years, Jay was a very busy member of the parish before that time. And then his wife - The Rev. Carol Luther - a chaplain at an Episcopal school in Oakland - was called as Vicar of Church of the Redeemer in San Rafael. And there went Jay and Carol and daughter Jennie. What a blow! When school opened last September, Carol returned as its Chaplain, Jennie went to work and Jay came back to us. All's well that ends well!

A little background on Jay. He was born in San Francisco. Was graduated from U.C. Berkeley and went to Law School at Columbia University in New York City, where he had a teaching fellowship. He then went to Chicago (a city he also loves) and joined a non-profit associated with Northwestern University. And finally returned to San Francisco, working at one

of The City's prestigious law firms where he practiced law for 22 years. Now it was time for him to become a solo practitioner in San Anselmo -where he is about to celebrate his 15th year.

The way Jay practices law says a great deal about Jay. He specializes in employment, litigation, and SMALL BUSINESSES. He believes it is the small business, unable to pay fees asked by large firms, who are often left without competent legal advice. He wants to serve them. Jay always looks to help the "left out" in society.

As for St. Paul's, the Marin Deanery and The Diocese of California, Jay has been part of all. At St. Paul's he is a long-time member of the Social Ministries Committee, has three times been on the Vestry, was the originator of our web site, is one of our representatives at the Deanery and at Diocesan Convention and served on the Diocesan Search Committee when we elected a new Bishop. And he is the Legal Counsel for St. Paul's. An impressive list. It's also downright fun to have him around.



Photos by Katrena Rey



Contributions to the church—a qualified 501(c)3 charity—are tax deductible. Donations made before December 31 will qualify for a tax deduction on income tax for this year. For many of us, our combined marginal income tax rate is in the neighborhood of 33%. So it is as if the government gives a 33% rebate on every dollar we give to the church. This rebate is paid just once a year—on April 15, for contributions made before the end of the previous year.

Having, in effect, one-third of your contribution returned to you at tax-time in April is more valuable than bank-interest paid on the delayed contribution spread out over the remainder of the next year. This is why it may be of greater financial benefit to you to pay as much as possible of your 2009 pledge before the end of 2008. It is also more advantageous to your church, which then has the money to work with from the outset of the year.

There is a way to further increase this advantage: give appreciated securities (stocks, bonds or mutual fund shares). This may save you 20% capital gains tax as well as rebate you 33% on your income tax. For more information, please contact your Gift Planning Officer. On the other hand, if your securities are now worth less than you paid for them, sell them to capture the capital loss for tax purposes and then donate the cash.

The bottom line is this: it will likely benefit you as well as your church for you to pre-pay the pledge you made for next year. Even if you did not make a pledge, the advantage of making your 2009 gift before December 31, 2008 still applies.

Give generously, as God gives. Give smarter to be able to give more.

Richard L. Schaper, CFP
 Gift Planning Officer, Diocese of California
 Richards@diocal.org (415) 869-7812

PRAYER LIST

+In the Short Term Prayer List:

Ken Asay	Rick & Judy Felton	Diane Luboff	Dee Rosier & Family
Suniti Batra Asay	Chuck & Shay Hagerman	Lisa & Greg Martin	Gordon Swinney
Jackie Chew	Muriel Hammond	Vicky & Peter Martin	Ginnette W.
Helen Colvette	Carol K.	Joni Peterson	Maureen Zeuss
Marion D.	Irwin L.		
Dylan Diliberto			

+In the Long Term Prayer List:

Baby Lillian Grace	Maria C.	Corinna K.
Ben	Mary Cialikians	Blaine Marshall
Bo	Joseph Cook	Emily Monforte & Family
Chuck and Sharon	Letty Dell'Era	Claudine Schieflbien
D. Family	Alex Elliot	Howard Sherman
Natalie	Fr. Kimo	Eugin W. & Family

+For those who have died: Harbajan Khur Batra

+For those serving in the military: Jason Brooks, Gourley, Alex Rey and Troop 225, Aaron Sova, and our friend Brandon.

+ We pray for the other Episcopal Churches in San Rafael: Church of the Nativity and Church of the Redeemer. We pray for the unity of the Anglican Church worldwide and the Episcopal Church in the United States.

WORSHIP AT ST. PAUL'S

SUNDAYS:

8:00 am Holy Eucharist
9:00 am Family Service
10:00 am Holy Eucharist

WEDNESDAYS:

9:00 am Morning Prayer
6:00 pm Centering Prayer
6:30 pm Holy Eucharist

THURSDAYS:

7:15 am Centering Prayer

HEALING PRAYER

Healing Prayer is available at the back of the church on the first and third Sundays of each month, during communion at the 10:00am service. It consists of the laying on of hands with prayers for you or for someone you love.

CENTERING PRAYER

Rediscover silent meditation in the Christian Tradition. Sessions are on the Second and Fourth Sunday evening from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Upper Room. For more information, leave a message for Chris Olson at the Parish Office 415.456.4842.

Also note the regular service of Centering Prayer every Thursday morning at 7:15 am and Wednesday evening at 6:00 pm.

THE DEADLINE FOR THE JANUARY EPISTLE IS DECEMBER 9TH.

Email your article to Ana Stark at
astark@stpaulssanrafael.org.

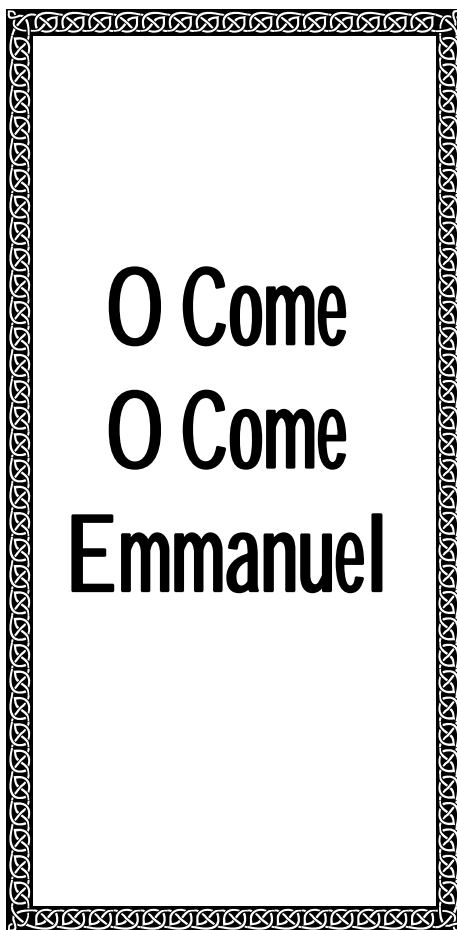
Articles need to be
received before the deadline.
Please reserve your space today!

COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

After Sunday Services, please join us in Duncan Hall for coffee and treats. Those whose last names begin with the following letters, please bring food on the respective Sunday:

First Sunday	A - G
Second Sunday	H - L
Third Sunday	M - R
Fourth Sunday	S - Z

A sign-up notebook will be on the coffee table each Sunday. Please help.



Visit our website to enjoy
the photos in color!

www.stpaulssanrafael.org

STAFF DIRECTORY

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Email: info@stpaulssanrafael.org
www.StPaulsSanRafael.org

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday through Friday
9:00 am - 1:00 pm
The Office is closed on Mondays.

RECTOR

The Reverend Christopher Martin
415.456.4842 ext. 3
415.454.1133 (H)
cmartin@stpaulssanrafael.org

ASSOCIATE RECTOR

The Reverend Julie Anderson Love
jlove@stpaulssanrafael.org
If you need to reach her by phone,
please leave a message in Ana's
voicemail.

ASSOCIATE PRIEST

The Reverend Jeremy Blodgett
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signsandwonders@juno.com

TREASURERS

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Michael Struck
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m_struck@comcast.net

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

Ana Stark
415.456.4842 ext. 1
astark@stpaulssanrafael.org

CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Each Christmas, the chancel area around the altar is decorated with holiday flowers given by parishioners in memory of, or in thanksgiving for loved ones.

Directions: Please fill out the form below and include your donation of any amount. Place in the Alms Basin, return by mail, or bring to the Parish Office no later than:
Friday, December 12th.



PLEASE PRINT



I am enclosing \$ _____ (donation amount)
for flowers to decorate the chancel area.

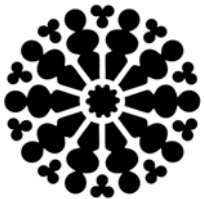
Flowers given by: _____
(print your name here)

Given in Memory of: _____

OR

Given in Thanksgiving for: _____

Please make checks payable to:
ST. PAUL'S, 1123 COURT STREET, SAN RAFAEL, CA 94901
Please write *Christmas Memorials Flowers* on the bottom of your check.



ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1123 Court Street
San Rafael, CA 94901-2909
415.456.4842

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