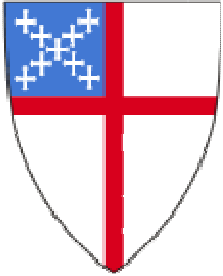


The Fabric of St. John's



Parish News of
St. John's Episcopal Church
Alma, Michigan



January 2009

1 Pastor's Corner

A very happy, blessed, and healthy New Year for all of us! 2009 will bring us a new beginning starting with the inauguration of a new president as well as, we hope a beginning turn around in the economy.

We are in the midst of difficult times but now we can show a real trust that the Holy Spirit is with us; that in spite of the difficulty we will come out with a stronger faith. Please keep all of us in your prayers. So many of our congregation are facing very stressful events in their lives; praying for one another is an act of support, compassion, and mercy.

I came across an Irish blessing for the New Year by John O'Donohue and thought that it was particularly apropos. God's blessings on you and your families.

On the day when
The weight deadens
On your shoulders
And you stumble,
May the clay dance
To balance you.

.....
May the nourishment of the earth be yours,
May the clarity of light be yours,
May the fluency of the ocean be yours,
May the protection of the ancestors be yours.

And so may a slow
Wind work these words
Of love around you,
An invisible cloak
To mind your life.

What's going on at St. John's?

Episcopal Church Women

ECW met briefly on Sunday, December 7th to talk about paying tuition for Sally T. to attend Makerere University in Uganda. Sally has been supported by the Kabells and then ECW since she was a student at Nyakabungo school in the Kinkiizi Diocese. ECW has been asked to help with her tuition now that she has completed high school. It would be about \$400 a semester for four years. A vote was taken and it was agreed to pay for one semester at \$400 plus the cost of transferring the money to her father's bank account. We will also write her saying that we cannot guarantee paying for future expenses and suggesting she look in to the Kinkiizi Diocese Educational Fund under Bishop John's supervision.

News from the Kabell's

On Sunday, the 21st, an e-mail came from Jerry Kabell with an article for the newsletter. He apologized for not sending an article the past two months. He says that now he has a slightly better sense of what he is doing here, he will try to do better. He would like us to have a better understanding of the events in South Asia that we get from the daily news media. So, read his article and if you are so inclined try reading some of the books on his list. He sends us all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Say Happy Birthday in January

- 1 Anne Smith
- 3 Jerry Crispin
- 3 Traci Kress
- 6 Christopher Walter Holtz
- 13 Meghan Elyse Ballard
- 13 Daniel Welch
- 14 Bea Palmer
- 15 Patricia Andrews
- 18 Adam Davison
- 23 Lyn Zilch
- 24 Murray Borrello

Youth Group

This months discussion topic "How can I serve and obey God and still be cool?" The group will be looking at the seven sacraments of the church and what they mean for them.

For the thanks giving corner.

Thanks for the birth of a healthy grandson.

Daughters of the King Prayer

LORD, you are not interested in outward show or performance, elaborate sacrifices or religious acts. You want to develop in me the heart responses of humility, mercy, love, and justice. Work these attitudes in me. Thank you for showing me what is good through the example of your son, who perfectly met all your requirements so that through his spirit I may abide in you.

Daughters of the King News

Merry Christmas

Have a blessed holiday season and may God's grace be with you in the New Year. We wish to thank everyone who so generously donated coats and warm weather gear. There is great need this year, and you all will be blessed.

Please attend our blanket making workshop Saturday January 10th at the church. We will work from 11am - 2pm, so please bring a sack lunch and any rotary cutters, mats, fleece, etc... with you. The blankets will be donated to the hospital to be given to dialysis patients.

Our next business meeting is January 25th right after service. All women are invited to attend.

United Thank Offering

Don't forget about your Blue Box! Even in this wintry weather and difficult economic times, we can still be thankful. We do have a roof over our heads and gas prices have gone down and we are grateful to our Lord and Savior who is caring for us all the time.

Mark your calendars for these January events!!

Celebration of the Epiphany

Sunday January 4, 2009

Epiphany Cake during Coffee Hour

Find a charm in your piece of cake and learn the meaning of the charm.

Daughters of the King Meeting

*Put together tied fleece blankets for the patients in the
Hemodialysis Unit at Gratiot Medical Center*

Saturday, January 10, 2009

*Come at 11:00 a.m., bring a sack lunch. And work until 2:00
p.m.*

All are welcome, not just DOK members.

*Donations of 1½ yards of fleece, any pattern or color, are
needed to make the blankets.*

Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 18, 2009

*Starts following the 10:00 a.m. service and finishes with the potluck
dinner in the Parish Hall.*

Bring a dish to pass and your own table service.

*We will be electing new vestry members, delegates to Diocesan
Convention and alternates.*

*Reports will be available from all groups in the Church and there will be
time for questions.*

January Schedule

Thursday, January 1, New Year's Day

Friday, January 2

Saturday, January 3

Sunday, January 4

9:00 a.m. Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon

11:30 Young Families with Children

Monday, January 5

Tuesday, January 6

9:00 a.m. Plaid Door Check Writing

7:00 p.m. Choir Practice

Wednesday, January 7

9:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Group

Thursday, January 8

7:45 a.m. Spiritual Growth Group

7:00 p.m. Saginaw Valley Clericus at

St. Alban's, Bay City

Friday, January 9

Saturday, January 10

11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. DOK meeting
to make tied fleece blankets in Parish Hall

Sunday, January 11

9:00 a.m. Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon

11:30 a.m. Vestry Meeting

Monday, January 12

Tuesday, January 13

7:00 p.m. Choir Practice

Wednesday, January 14

9:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Group

Thursday, January 15

7:45 A.M. Spiritual Growth Group

12:00 p.m. Alma Clericus at His Place

Friday, January 16

Saturday, January 17

10:00 a.m. ECW Meeting

Sunday, January 18

9:00 a.m. Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon
Annual Meeting and Potluck

Monday, January 19

7:00 p.m. Saginaw Valley Convocation
at St. Alban's in Bay City

Tuesday, January 20

12:00 p.m. Commission on Ministry at
the Diocesan Office

7:00 p.m. Choir Practice

Wednesday, January 21

9:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Group

Thursday, January 22

7:45 a.m. Spiritual Growth Group

Friday, January 23

Saturday, January 24

Sunday, January 25

9:00 a.m. Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon

11:30 a.m. Daughters of the King
Business Meeting

Monday, January 26

Tuesday, January 27

7:00 p.m. Choir Practice

Wednesday, January 28

9:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Group

Thursday, January 29

7:45 a.m. Spiritual Growth Group

Friday, January 30

Saturday, January 31

What's Going On In South Asia? (Apart From A Lot Of Ministry)

If you check the news, either print, broadcast or on-line, on any given morning, you are likely to find a prominent story from, or concerning, Pakistan (or Pakistan may just be mentioned in a story primarily about Afghanistan or India). It is easy to get the impression that this part of the world is slowly (or not so slowly) sinking into a maelstrom of terror, incompetence, double-dealing, corruption, political chicanery and just plain out and out self-serving greed mixed with a dash of idiocy and a large dose of wishful thinking. It seems as if Satan has been given a free hand and is happily running riot. We give thanks that we are here in Pakistan and able to see beyond the headlines (not that the headlines are any better here than they are in the Western press; Pakistanis have an amazing ability to see the worst in almost anything). I'd like to share with you a few examples of other things which don't make headlines, but will probably have a greater long term value. Two months ago, Cindy received the following e-mail:

Subject: Pray for Dr. Jane
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2008, 1:52 AM

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Greetings from Pak Mission Society (PMS)

It is great joy to share with you that Lord answered our prayers. Dr. Jane has joined the Mother and Child Health Centre Ghanool from 6th October 2008. she is 82 and half year old and she made herself committed to serve in Ghanool. You are requested to pray for health and safety as it is not easy to stay here with inadequate living situation in strong winter.

Blessings

Adeel Rehmat

Ghanool is a small village near Balakot in the Mansehra District of the NWFP. It was badly hit in the 2005 earthquake, and is in a region with continuing militant presence. We met Dr. Jane during our first semester in Pakistan. She is an Ob/Gyn who has served in a number of different medical missions in Pakistan over the last forty or more years, but remarkable as she is (we first met her as she was doing her 6 am morning constitutional around Sandes Hill in Murree), she is not an isolated example. Her son and daughter-in-law have a ministry in Peshawar, where Rob is a teacher and is finishing a PhD in Islamics for which he is doing a comparative study of the rhetoric of Muslim clerics in the NWFP. Diane is also a medical doctor and runs a women's health clinic for the poorest and most disenfranchised of the poor. Their youngest daughter is a student at MCS, and their son, an MCS grad, now works with one of the NGO's engaged in reconstruction work in the earthquake zone. The medical missions are not solely the province of expatriates, however. Dr. Haroon Lal Din operates Kunhar Christian Hospital in Ghari Habibullah (also in NWFP, and it was the epicenter of the 2005 earthquake; the hospital was the only building in the town left standing) while his elder brother heads the Christian Hospital in Multan, in the central Punjab.

Education is also a fertile mission field. The Lahore Diocesan Board of Education (Church of Pakistan) operates 16 high schools across the diocese, which provide some of the best education available in the country. The Presbyterian Education Board, supported by PCUSA, runs a number of schools across the Punjab, including Kinnaird Academy, a pre-school through Grade 10 English medium school for girls who in many cases would have no other opportunity for a

decent education. A month ago, Cindy and I had the privilege of being the Chief Guests at the First Annual Sports Day at Alpha Primary School, Kotli village, Sangla Hill. This is a small (80 - 100 student) pre-school through Grade 5 school in a very rural setting about two hours from Lahore, supported by Alpha Christian Ministries, a local pentecostal group, and serving both the Christian and Muslim children in the village. The principal, Ms. Saima Yousaf, is the sister of one of the Christian faculty members in my department at FC College. The children were incredibly well behaved and a delight to be with. They clearly love their teachers and the whole village values and supports the school (the local mullah and other Muslim elders were present and enthusiastic). Some of you may have read of another very ambitious educational ministry in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. The book, *Three Cups of Tea*, by Greg Mortenson, details his mission, following a failed attempt to climb K2, to build a school for the small village of Korphe in Baltistan, and its growth into the Central Asia Institute which has to date established 78 schools in Northern Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as undertaking a community health project in Mongolia and a teacher training project in Kyrgyzstan. One of the first girls to graduate from the Korphe school, the daughter of Ghulam Parvi, is now enrolled here at FC College. The University is also discussing the possibility of providing some teacher training for the CAI teachers.

Other ministries abound. Operation Mobilization works on community development in the poor communities where a majority of the Christians are to be found. Nirali Kitaben publishes basic literacy materials, as well as much of the language training material used by the Mission Language School. The Pakistan Bible Society has just finished a new Urdu translation of the Bible, and publishes the Bible in over 50 of the many languages spoken in Pakistan, and the New Testament in a number of additional languages. The Language Recordings Institute provides recorded versions of the Bible on CD in over 100 different languages, dialects and accents heard in Pakistan, and has available CD players which have rechargeable batteries and hand crank generators so they are usable independent of any electrical supply.

Yes, Pakistan has its troubles, but God and His people continue to be an active presence. Please pray with us that the people of Pakistan will follow His leading into the full light of His Kingdom.

Cindy and Jerry Kabell
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Pakistan and South Asia

Allen, Charles, *Soldier Sahibs: The Daring Adventurers Who Tamed India's Northwest Frontier*, 2000
Armstrong, Karen, *Islam: A Short History*, 2002
Bennet-Jones, Owen, *Pakistan: The Eye Of The Storm*, 2002
Collins, Larry and Dominique LaPierre, *Freedom at Midnight*, 1975
Mortenson, Greg, and David Oliver Relin, *Three Cups of Tea*, 2006
Rashid, Ahmed, *Descent Into Chaos*, 2008
Rashid, Ahmed, *Jihad*, 2002
Rashid, Ahmed, *Taliban*, 2000
Ruthven, Malise, *Fundamentalism*, 2004
Suskind, Ron, *The Way Of The World*, 2008

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Sunday Eucharist: 10:00 a.m.
Christian Education (all ages): 9:00 a.m.

January 2009

St. John's is a Church of the Episcopal
Diocese of Eastern Michigan

The Rt. Rev. S. Todd Ousley, Bishop

The Rev. Dr. Mary Delaney, Rector
Nora Kowitz, Secretary
Bob Crist, Organist
Basil Anderson, Sexton

VESTRY

Margaret Trimmer (Sr. Warden), Ryan Ballard (Jr.
Warden), Angie Ballard (Clerk of Vestry), Doug Ballard
(Treasurer), Sue Young, Wendy Brown, Vickie Bethka, and
Tim Cruttenden