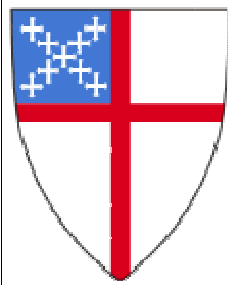


The Fabric of St. John's



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



August 2009

Pastor's Corner

We have a time of decision facing us; but this is not the time to be frightened or upset, or feel frustrated because our life together is not going smoothly. Quite the contrary, this is the time to be uplifted because we have been given the opportunity by God to begin something new. We can begin a new thing. I know the saying may be trite but when "one door closes another door opens."

Ecclesiastes, that wonderful book of wisdom says:

To everything, there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

This is a precious time in the life of our community at St. John's let us use this time prayerfully and see what wonderful things God may have in store for us.

God's blessings, Mary+

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

Vestry Highlights

Vestry met on Sunday, August 12th. The big news in the Rector's report was the receipt of a check for \$35,592.40 from the Helman estate. Our diocesan tithes is about \$3000 in arrears and we have borrowed \$3500 from designated funds to pay bill. Both of these items were approved for payment by the Vestry.

The finance committee has met and reported on bids for the roof. The lowest bid for the flat roof is \$12,000 and the highest is \$29,000. The high bid includes a 5-inch pitch. The committee recommends we do nothing until we find out more about the sale of the land. Doug Ballard suggests we hire an architect and the Vestry agrees.

Rev. Mary reports that Mick Bowerman has an interested buyer. Vickie Bethka, Jake Hamilton and Rev. Mary will be meeting with Mr. Bowerman. The Vestry discussed whether we should be putting money into a building that we cannot afford because of the size of the congregation. We are struggling to pay our bills and have lost sight of our Outreach. We need to look long and hard at relocating according to some members of the Vestry.

Sue Young has resigned as director of the church school. The Cruttendens have left the church because they feel the need to find something more for their children and family.

Rev. Mary will be 72 years old in October and will be re-appointed by the Bishop on a yearly basis. Rev. Mary will be Dean of Formation for the Seminary for the Priesthood and will be teaching.

The Bishop's visitation will be August 23rd. He will celebrate the Eucharist and meet with the Vestry.

We will have a Parish Meeting on July 19th at which we will learn about the sale of the land, repairs to the roof, and Doug Ballard will talk about monthly expenses. Vickie Bethka and Jake Hamilton will present the discussion with the developer and possible sale of the land.

Daughters Of the King Prayer

LORD, quiet my heart so that I can hear you. Remove any distractions that would keep me from being open and attentive to what your

Spirit might be impressing on my heart and mind. Please make me humble and receptive and willing to answer obediently when you call on me. Your servant is listening. AMEN.

Daughters Of the King News

Hope everyone is having a wonderful summer.

Up coming events that we will be hosting include: Blanket making workshop on Saturday, August 8th, 11am-2pm, please bring a sack lunch; and Taize' service on Sunday, September 20th at 6pm. All are welcome to both events. Please come and bring guests.

We will also be gathering school supplies for the Alma Middle School, to help needy children in our area. It's going to be a year of great need, and school supplies are relatively cheap, please help us make things a little easier for those with less than us.

Our business meeting will be held August 23rd after our service.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES NEEDED

DOK will once again be collecting school supplies for needy children at the Alma Middle School. We will collect all this month and most of Aug with school starting the day after Labor Day. The following is a list of suggested items.

Pencils #2
Pens- blue, black, and red
Spiral notebooks
Loose leaf filler paper
Pocket folders
Graph paper
Glue/ Glue sticks
Colored Pencils
Markers
Index cards
Ruler (metric & inches)
Pencil case
Backpack
Binders
Erasers
Small pencil sharpeners
Also Useful for Classroom use
Kleenex and Hand sanitizer

Parish Meeting

The Parish Meeting was held after the service on Sunday, July 19th.

Jake Hamilton passed out a possible use of the land to be sold. The developer is thinking of perhaps 20 single family houses on either side of a boulevard. This would be between the church and the trail on the old railroad. No prices were

discussed at this very early stage so the committee will be meeting again.

Doug Ballard talked about the finances and told us what the monthly bills are. Consumers Energy is charging the church over \$1300 every month for gas and electricity. Other bills are salaries and insurance payments, the diocesan pledge, repairs, the copier, paper and toner etc. The insurance on the church is for \$1,000,000.

The bottom line is that not enough money is coming in each month to meet the bills and we must decide what to do. The choices are not pretty! Sell the church, build a smaller greener church somewhere, keep the church and find a way to cut the expenses. The Vestry needs your input. Please care enough to talk about it with people on the Vestry and tell them what you think should be done. We need more people to pledge. We have lost some families for various reasons.

One of the things the Vestry has been concerned about is that we do not do Outreach. That is not true!! Here is a list of the Outreach that has gone on this year:

- The Plaid Door
- United Thank Offering
- Rev. Mary's Discretionary Fund
- Letting AA use the Parish Hall
- Collecting money for Episcopal Relief and Development
- The food box for the Salvation Army
- Collecting goods for the Women's Shelter in March
- Collecting school supplies for in August for the Alma Middle School
- Collecting winter coats for children and seniors
- Adopt-a-family at Christmas
- Making tied blankets for the dialysis unit at the hospital
- Knitting and crocheting prayer shawls
- ECW gifts to Commission on Aging and to Sally in Uganda

Can you think of more? Do you have an Outreach idea that we could do? Tell us about it and we'll try it!

We need to pray individually and as a church that the Vestry makes the right decisions. God will be with us and help us if we just go to Him and ask for help. Start praying right now!

August Birthdays

- 1 Trudi Clark
- 2 Luke Stefanovsky
- 3 Jim Davison
- 4 Zachery Davison
- 7 Jerry Kabell
- 8 Kaylinn Fishburn
- 13 Cameron Tessman
- 13 Lorraine Welch
- 14 Heather Clark
- 15 Alicia Fishburn
- 18 Kenalee Atchinson
- 21 Derek Stefanovsky
- 25 Tina McCreery
- 25 Vernon Andrews
- 28 Angela Holtz
- 29 Janice Anspach

Your Prayers are asked for the following. Please keep in mind the needs of our church and ask God for his help.

- Bill Davidson (Friend of Mike Bethka)
- Francis Hamilton (Relative of Jake Hamilton)
- Kay Crispin (Member)
- Royce Clark (Member)
- William Harris (Member at Masonic Home)
- Karl Wakeman (Member)

United Thank Offering

Do you keep your Blue Box handy when you think of a prayer so you can drop in a coin of thanksgiving? Remember this is one of the ways that we do Outreach. Your coins will be added to those of other givers in our Church and sent to the United Thank Offering headquarters where they will join the gifts from churches all over the United States. This will amount to over 2 million dollars! Grants for help will have been submitted from all over the world and the money will be distributed according to need. Your few coins may help some church in India or some other faraway place. This is your chance to do wonderful things! Don't forget to drop coins in your Blue Box and bring it to the Ingathering next May.

Rev. Mary will be away one weekend each month for her duties as Dean of Formation at the Coppage/Gordon School of Ministry. She is giving us her schedule for August so that we might know when she is available at the church.

Rector's Schedule for August

2 9:00am Adult discussion of Sunday Gospel
10:00am Holy Eucharist

3-4 Office

5 Office
Home Communion

6 Office - Clericus

9 9:00am Adult discussion of Sunday Gospel
10:00am Holy Eucharist

10-14 office
12 Home Communion

16 9:00am Adult discussion of Sunday Gospel
10:00am Holy Eucharist

17 Office

18-20 Rector vacation

23 9:00am Adult discussion of Sunday Gospel
10:00am Bishop's Todd's Visitation
12:00pm Vestry meeting with Bishop

24-27 office
26 Home Communion

28-30 Coppage/Gordon School of Ministry Retreat

30 9:00am Adult discussion of Sunday Gospel
10:00am Morning Prayer

Aug31-Sept.4 Rector's vacation

Alex Radzibon submitted the following notice which is of interest to our personal wellbeing.

RECALL NOTICE:

>
> The Maker of all human beings (GOD) is recalling all units manufactured, regardless of make or year, due to a serious Defect in the primary and central component of the heart.
>
> This is due to a malfunction in the original prototype units code named Adam and Eve, resulting in the reproduction of the same defect in all subsequent units. This defect has been technically termed "Sub-sequential Internal Non-Morality," or more commonly known as S.I.N., as it is primarily expressed.
>
> Some of the symptoms include:
> 1. Loss of direction
> 2. Foul vocal emissions
> 3. Amnesia of origin
> 4. Lack of peace and joy
> 5. Selfish or violent behavior
> 6. Depression or confusion in the mental component
> 7. Fearfulness
> 8. Idolatry
> 9. Rebellion
>
> The Manufacturer, who is neither liable nor at fault for this defect, is providing factory-authorized repair and service free of charge to correct this defect.
>
> The Repair Technician, JESUS, has most generously offered to bear the entire burden of the staggering cost of these Repairs. There is no additional fee required. The number to call for repair in all areas is: P-R-A-Y-E-R.
>
> Once connected, please upload your burden of SIN through the REPENTANCE procedure. Next, download ATONEMENT from the Repair Technician, Jesus, into the heart component.
> No matter how big or small the SIN defect is, Jesus will replace it with:

- > 1. Love
- > 2. Joy
- > 3. Peace
- > 4. Patience
- > 5. Kindness
- > 6. Goodness
- > 7. Faithfulness
- > 8. Gentleness
- > 9. Self control
- >
- > Please see the operating manual, the B.I.B.L.E. (Believers' Instructions Before Leaving Earth) for further details on the use of these fixes.
- >
- > WARNING: Continuing to operate the human being unit without correction voids any manufacturer warranties, exposing the unit to dangers and problems too numerous to list and will result in the human unit being permanently impounded. For free emergency service, call on Jesus.
- >
- > DANGER: The human being units not responding to this recall action will have to be scrapped in the furnace. The SIN Defect will not be permitted to enter Heaven so as to prevent contamination of that facility. Thank you for your attention!
- > - GOD
- > P.S. Please assist where possible by notifying others of this important recall notice, and you may contact the Father any time by 'Knee mail'.
- >
- > Because He Lives
- >

Report on General Convention

The General Convention in Anaheim has ended and thousands of resolutions were examined and either passed or rejected. The resolution receiving the most attention was the decision to allow all persons, including gays and lesbians, to be ordained to the clergy as deacons, priests or bishops. A prayer for the blessing of committed relationships is to be developed for approval of the next General Convention.

The theme of the convention was *ubuntu* which means living as a community, and those attending felt that the mood of the convention

was one of listening to each other whether agreeing or not.

That Box in the back of the pews!

When you walk into the church you pass by a box behind the pews. It is for our gifts to God to help feed the hungry. We are collecting non-perishable foods which are donated to the Salvation Army when the box is full. This is one of our Outreach items and is very important. Many people are counting on food banks to help them feed their families and those of us who are able should be helping out by contributing. Bring something for the Box in the back of the church next Sunday!

Tied Blanket Making

The Daughters of the King have a project of tied blanket making. The blankets are given to the dialysis unit at Gratiot Community Hospital. Patients undergoing dialysis find that they feel chilly, so a fleece blanket is welcome. The blankets are given to the individual patients for their own so we need to keep supplying them. We use 1½ yards of fleece for the top and 1½ yards of fleece for the bottom. Then strips are cut all the way around and tied. If you would like to donate fleece, please feel free to do so as we always need more to make the blankets. Also, please come and help us. Anyone is welcome who can tie knots or cut with scissors. The next blanket session is **Saturday, August 8th, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Bring a sack lunch and we'll furnish the coffee or tea.**

Episcopal Relief and Development

On June 28th we had a collection for ERD and almost \$300 was collected. This is another of our Outreach projects. From **ERD Now** for June of this year comes the following:

Drive six hours from Angola's capital, Luanda, and at the end of the road you'll reach Mucaba Municipality in Uige Province. Here,

you'll find little to no infrastructure. A major bridge damaged during Angola's 27 year civil war was never rebuilt. Far worse, there are few trained health workers or clinical facilities. Though they are suffering from appalling rates of child mortality.

But in this remote area you will find the Anglican Diocese of Angola. The largest denomination in Mucaba, the Church has 20 parishes and the only real infrastructure in the municipality. It also has an active Mothers' Union, through which women are mobilizing to save the lives of their children and grandchildren. That is why the Church is optimally suited to effectively implement an integrated program for child survival spearheaded by Episcopal Relief and Development.

The problem is that one in every four Angolan children die before the age of five. Most of the child deaths are due to malaria, pneumonia or diarrheal diseases. The church and Mothers' Unions are enthusiastic participants in the distribution of more than 73,000 nets and training 605 health activists in Mucaba. These workers are eager to use the tools they have learned in their training and to deploy them to address all causes of child mortality.

First, they are trying to ensure the safe delivery of babies by training birth attendants to provide hygienic conditions and medications. Breastfeeding is being promoted, infections are treated with antibiotics and a two-cent vitamin A capsule given two or three times a year can prevent blindness and death. Immunizations are being implemented.

With the support of Episcopal Relief and Development, the leadership of the Diocese of Angola and the enthusiasm of the Mothers' Union, young lives will be saved.

Episcopal Relief and Development's programs focus on sustainable development, which is often defined as work that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own

needs." But for us, as Episcopalians, I think it goes a bit deeper. Like the Xhosa word ubuntu (loosely translated to mean "I am because you are"), sustainable development encourages interdependence as a way of life. Solutions to social, economic and environmental problems become the work of a diverse culture of people coming together in community, building sustainable relationships through unity of purpose and common effort. That is unique...and precious.

Episcopal Relief and Development is unique because it is Episcopal and that directly informs the way it works. Episcopal Relief and Development helps us, as Episcopalians, make our baptismal promise to "respect the dignity of every human being" come to life. It is our relief and development agency.

Winter Coats

Now that the back-to-school sales have started, you start thinking about fall and cleaning out the closets. Save those winter coats that you are thinking of getting rid of, because Daughters of the King will have a big box in the narthex to collect coats for children and seniors in September. Each year a lot of people are grateful to receive a winter coat. Be sure they are washed or dry-cleaned! This is another Outreach of our church.

August Schedule

Saturday, August 1

Sunday, August 2

9:00 a.m. Adult Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon

Monday, August 3

Tuesday, August 4

9:00 a.m. Plaid Door Check Writing

Wednesday, August 5

Thursday, August 6

8:30 a.m. Spiritual Growth Group

7:00 p.m. Saginaw Valley Clericus at St. Alban's, Bay City

Friday, August 7

Saturday, August 8

11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Tied Blanket Making

Sunday, August 9

9:00 a.m. Adult Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon

11:30 a.m. Vestry Meeting

Monday, August 10

Tuesday, August 11

Wednesday, August 12

Thursday, August 13

8:30 a.m. Spiritual Growth Group

Friday, August 14

Saturday, August 15

Sunday, August 16

9:00 a.m. Adult Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon

Monday, August 17

7:00 p.m. Saginaw Valley

Convocation Meeting at St. Alban's in Bay City

Tuesday, August 18

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

Wednesday, August 19

Thursday, August 20

8:30 a.m. Spiritual Growth Group

Friday, August 21

Saturday, August 22

Sunday, August 23

9:00 a.m. Adult Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Bishop Ousley's Visitation Holy Eucharist and Sermon

12:00 Vestry Meeting with Bishop

Monday, August 24

Tuesday, August 25

Wednesday, August 26

Thursday, August 27

8:30 a.m. Spiritual Growth Group

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

Friday, August 28

Coppage/Gordon School of Ministry Retreat at Columbiere

Saturday, August 29

Coppage/Gordon School of Ministry Retreat at Columbiere

Sunday, August 30

Coppage/Gordon School of Ministry Retreat at Columbiere

9:00 a.m. Adult Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

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

Monday, August 31

