



The Epistle

Newsletter of St. Paul's Church
A Parish in the Diocese of San Joaquin
The Anglican Church in North America

March, 2010

Taking Stock of Who We Are

Every year in January and February, parish priests and parish secretaries throughout the Anglican Church struggle to deal with the challenge of completing the annual parochial reports that each congregation is required to submit to the diocese. These reports provide statistical information on various aspects of church life.

This year, due to a change in canons associated with the formation of the Anglican Church in North America, the forms that are used for reporting the information are being revised – so the process is being delayed. As far as I am concerned, that is not a bad thing, since I don't like all the work that is required. But, I know that inevitably the forms will arrive, with a due date attached, and we will have to complete the task.

Even with my lack of enthusiasm for dealing with the annual parochial report, I know that the information will be helpful, not only to the diocese and the wider church, but also to us here at St. Paul's. The report will give us a statistical picture that will help us evaluate parish life.

For example, we will be able to see if the parish is growing or not by looking at the number of people in worship on an average Sunday. We can also look at the number of baptisms, weddings and funerals to see what trends those figures reveal. And, of course, a review of the church's financial situation often tells a story about the church.

In essence, compiling and reviewing the statistics gives us a good idea of who we are as a congregation.

But as we all know, statistics cannot tell the whole story, because we cannot measure some things that are very much a part of who we are.

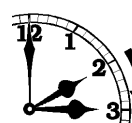
For example, we cannot count the prayers that are offered, or the daily acts of service rendered by parishioners, or the amount of trust we put in God.

But all of these things, and so many more, are a part of who we are. We are individuals who are gathered by God into a community of faith. Our faith is in Jesus Christ, and we gather for many things, including fellowship, worship, study and service.

As we begin another Lent, perhaps this is a good time for individuals within the parish to assess for themselves their role in the life of the community. During Lent we can ask ourselves how well we fulfill our roles as part of a community of faith, gathered for fellowship, worship, study and prayer.

Daylight Saving Time Begins Sunday, March 14

So as not to be late for church, be sure to set clocks forward one hour before going to bed on Saturday, March 13, since



Daylight Saving Time begins at 2:00 AM on Sunday, March 14.

St. Paul's Church

120 North Hall Street
Visalia, California 93291
Church Office: (559) 732-4821
Rivera Hall: (559) 732-4822
Internet: www.spvisalia.com

Office Hours

Monday-Friday 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Communion Services

Sundays at 8:00 and 10:30 AM
Wednesdays at 9:30 AM and 5:30 PM

Clergy and Staff

The Very Rev. Richard I. James, Rector
The Rev. Jim Rouse, Assisting
Elaine McKinney, Parish Secretary
Antoinette Horsting, Financial Secretary
Melvin Morris, Sexton

Members of the Vestry

2010

Amy Gunn, Mary Murray
Jack Ramirez, Kashy Rowland-Smith,
William Winn

2011

David Francis, Monica Norton
John Peters, Harry Tow, Larry Wilds

2012

Larry Akey, Mark Cave, Sue Nyberg,
Sue Piper, Ed Robinson

Delegates to Diocesan Convention

Kathy Bernardi, Betty Blackmon,
Kim Robinson, Chet Smeds

Alternates to Diocesan Convention

Cindy Hoover, Nancy Salmon



Coffee Hour Teams

Thanks are due to the following people who have volunteered to be on a coffee hour team in March:



8:00 AM

7 Mel Morris
John and Sandra Parker

10:30 AM

Greg and Amy Gunn
Dot Gunn, Peggy Johnson

14 Manny and Paula Lucero
Jack and Judy Ramirez

Frank and Kate Rogers
Naomi Haas

21 Anne MacDonald
Barbara Melton

Carol Whiteside
Noreen Siebenaler

28 Chet and Cheril Smeds
David and Maureen Martin

Ed and Kim Robinson
Sally Williams

About four more volunteers are needed for Coffee Hour teams in the coming months. Anyone who is interested in helping with this ministry, either on a regular or an occasional basis, is asked to call Cathy Guadagni or Kathie Shannon.

Parish Election Results

At St. Paul's Annual Congregational Meeting, held Sunday, January 31, the following people were elected to three-year terms on the Vestry: Larry Akey, Mark Cave, Sue Nyberg, Sue Piper and Ed Robinson. Elected for one-year terms as Delegates to Diocesan Convention were Kathy Bernardi, Betty Blackmon, Kim Robinson and Chet Smeds. Elected as Alternates were Cindy Hoover and Nancy Salmon.

At the first meeting of the new Vestry, held Tuesday, February 9, Fr. James appointed Kashy Rowland-Smith as Senior Warden; and the Vestry elected John Peters as Junior Warden, Mary Murray as Secretary, and Monica Norton as Treasurer. Each of these positions are for a term of one year.

Women's Ministries

ACW Luncheon

The March ACW luncheon will be at 11:45 on Monday, March 1, and will be hosted by St. Anne's Guild. Susan Gambini will be giving a presentation on the "Courage to Change" program located in Exeter. This program helps young men to escape gang life.

Everyone is invited to this event, which will be held in Rivera Hall. Tickets are on sale for \$10 from Wendy Johns, Maggie King, or Betty Blackmon.

ACW Board Meeting

The ACW Board will meet at 1:00 on Monday, March 8, in the Guild Room. The meeting is open to all, and all board members are encouraged to attend.

Guild Meetings

Women of the parish are invited to participate in one of the parish guilds, which meet monthly. The next meetings are as follows:

- *St. Mary Agnes' Guild* will meet Monday, March 15, at 10:00 AM, in the Guild Room. Questions about the guild may be addressed to guild leader Wendy Johns.
- *St. Anne's Guild* will meet Monday, March 15, at 11:45, in the Guild Room. Questions about the guild may be addressed to guild leader Maggie King.

Daughters of the Holy Cross

The Daughters of the Holy Cross will have their next meeting in the Guild Room at 10:00, Thursday, March 11.

Women interested in learning more about this group whose members are dedicated to prayer, study, service and evangelism are invited to attend the meeting, or they may contact Betty Blackmon.

Community Service

CROP Walk

Once again, members of St. Paul's will be participating in the community's annual CROP Walk sponsored by Church World Services. This year, the walk will be on Saturday, March 13.

Designed to engage local communities in helping to alleviate hunger in their own communities and beyond, CROP walk invites parishioners from the community's churches to gather pledges of financial support for their walk.

As in the past few years, the Visalia-area walk will begin and end in Rivera Hall. Anyone wanting to help in setting up for this event is asked to call Cathy Guadagni.

Those wishing to participate in the walk itself can register at the CROP Walk table, which will be set up in Rivera Hall during Sunday coffee hours.



Samaritan Center Golf Outing

Twenty-three years ago parishioners from St. Paul's Church started a "golf outing" at the Visalia Country Club as a way of raising money to help those in need in the community. Over the years the outing grew so that now it is a major community fund-raiser led and supported by people from St. Paul's and beyond.

This year's outing, as in the past few years, will raise money for the Samaritan Center's medical services to the poor within Visalia and the surrounding area. The outing will be held on Friday, March 5, at the Visalia County Club.

Registration forms for the golf outing are available in the church office. Cost for golfing, including green fees, cart, range balls and two dinner tickets is \$200. Dinner tickets by themselves are \$35.

Special Lenten Programs

Communion Classes for Children

The age at which children begin to receive Communion is left to the discretion of their parents. Some parents wish for their children to be Confirmed before receiving Communion, while others allow them to begin at a younger age.

To help the younger children know something about the nature and meaning of Holy Communion, a series of classes is being offered on the Wednesdays of Lent. These classes are very simple, with first through third grade students in mind.

The classes, which are taught by Fr. James, will be from 4:30 to 5:00, in the Children's Chapel. Parents are welcome to attend.

Lenten Prayer Pals

St. Paul's is continuing its tradition of having parishioners "adopt" a student in the parish as a "Lenten prayer pal." The adults pray for their student throughout Lent. In addition, a note or card may be sent each week, although the identity of the adult prayer pal is kept secret from the student until Easter Day. *Anyone who has a child that he or she wants to participate, should contact the church office.*

Mite Boxes

Lenten Mite Boxes are available in Rivera Hall and in the church office. They will be gathered at both services on Easter Sunday.

Adult Sunday School Classes

During Lent, two classes are being offered each Sunday morning from 9:30 to 10:15. The classes are as follows:

St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians

Taught by the Rev. Don Seeks, retired Archdeacon of the Diocese, this class meets in Rivera Hall. Parishioners are encouraged to be prompt as there is a great deal to cover each week.

An Introduction to the Anglican Church

Designed both for those new to the Church and those who are wishing to be Confirmed, the class covers such topics as Scripture, Church history, the Sacraments, worship, and structure. The classes are taught by Fr. James in the Guild Room.

Wednesday Night Bible Study

During Lent, Fr. James is leading a class in the Guild Room from 7:00 to 7:45 each Wednesday night. The general topic is "Knowing God." The specific topics for March are as follows:

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| March 3 | "Sons of God" |
| March 10 | "Thou Our Guide" |
| March 17 | "These Inward Trials" |
| March 24 | "The Adequacy of God" |

Parishioners are invited to come to any or all of these classes. No previous participation is required.

Soup Suppers

During Lent, a soup supper will be served each Wednesday at 6:15. As in years past, different groups within the church are asked to help provide soup. Others are invited to bring a soup on the Wednesday of their choice. Other items will be provided by the Heaven's Kitchen team.

March's schedule is as follows:

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| March 3 | Acolytes, Lectors and LEM's |
| March 10 | Bible Study Classes and Groups |
| March 17 | Outreach and Mission Groups |
| March 24 | Women's Groups |

Stations of the Cross

The devotional service known as the Stations of the Cross will be held in the church every Friday in Lent at 6:00 PM.

This service, which lasts about twenty minutes, consists of a series of brief readings and prayers at fourteen different “stations” – places in the church where specific events of Jesus’ passion are recalled.

Many parishioners find this service to be a very meaningful addition to their personal devotions, especially during Lent. All are welcome.

Wednesday Nights at St. Paul’s

Wednesday nights provide parishioners a great opportunity for both fellowship and spiritual growth. Child care is provided all evening.

During Lent, the schedule will be as follows:

- 4:30 – Communion Class for Children
- 5:30 – Holy Communion in Rivera Hall
- 6:15 – Soup Supper in Rivera Hall
- 7:00 – Classes and Programs for all ages
- 7:00 – Bell Choir Rehearsal
- 7:45 – Choir Rehearsal

Maundy Thursday Prayer Vigil

Just as Jesus invited the disciples to pray with him the night before the crucifixion, the church invites her members to pray throughout the night before Good Friday. With Jesus’ invitation in mind, parishioners are being invited to be a part of a prayer vigil from 9:00 PM on Maundy Thursday to 9:00 AM on Good Friday.

Some may choose to pray at home, while others may wish to pray in the church. For the latter, the church will be open, with prayer and devotional guides available. Security will be provided.

A sign-up poster is available in Rivera Hall, and parishioners are invited to indicate when they will be in prayer for the needs of their family and friends, and for the wider communities of the church, the nation and the world.

Through this vigil, which has been held for twenty years, God has blessed both the participants and those for whom prayers have been offered, so everyone is invited to be a part of this special ministry and devotion.

Fellowship and Pastoral Care

Foyer Groups

St. Paul’s foyer groups have been meeting for a couple of months now, and the members of each group are having a great time getting to know each other through shared brunches and dinners.

In April, there will be an opportunity for parishioners to sign up for the second round of foyer groups, with new groups starting in May.

Questions about these groups can be addressed to Judy Ramirez, Cheril Smeds or Noreen Siebenaler.

Wine Tasting Trip

A spring wine tasting trip to wineries in the Paso Robles area has been scheduled for Saturday, April 10. All adult parishioners are invited to participate. Cost is \$75 per person and includes the bus, tasting fees, lunch, and snacks. Dinner is “on your own.”

The bus will leave St. Paul’s at 8:30 AM, and will return around 8:00 PM. Reservations can be made through the church office. A non-refundable deposit of \$25 per person is due at sign up, with the remaining money due no later than April 3. Questions should be addressed to Judy Ramirez.

St. Paul's Church
120 North Hall Street
Visalia, California 93291

Return Service Requested

The Rector, Wardens and Vestrymen of St. Paul's Parish in Visalia, California
A California Non-profit Corporation, The Rev. Richard I. James, Rector and President

Fellowship and Pastoral Care

Flowers From the Altar

After Lent, the church will again be placing flowers on the altar each week. And after each Sunday's services the flowers will be made into small bouquets and taken to parishioners who are shut in. But, help is always needed in getting the flowers to these people.

This ministry can be done on a Sunday by Sunday basis with no on-going commitment required, or someone can volunteer for a particular Sunday of each month. Anyone wanting to help is asked to speak with Fr. James.

Also, small vases are needed for this ministry. Those who have vases to donate are asked to leave them in the church office.

Thank You's

Hearty thanks are due to all who helped with the "work day" held on a recent Saturday. Windows were washed, floors were cleaned, furniture was dusted, the kitchen was scrubbed, weeds were pulled and flowers planted, and other tasks accomplished, too. Thank you, volunteers!

From the Parish Records

Deaths

Robert Bowman – Diane Friend's father

Changes to the Directory

Nancy Houk
350 Locust Drive Apartment M-113
Vallejo, CA 94591
707-644-2331
