



ST. JOHN'S GOOD NEWS

St. John's Episcopal Church
512/836-3974 (fax- 512/836-3936)

11201 Parkfield Drive
Austin, TX 78758

FROM THE RECTOR:

Every year the Rector and the Vestry take a Saturday early in the year to hold their annual planning retreat and to discuss the spiritual and business end of running the congregation, to evaluate the previous year, and to set some goals for the current year. This year's planning retreat was significant in that a series of assessments were made concerning the congregational membership, the pattern of giving towards the pledge drive, and the degree of participation in the life of the congregation by the parish members.

First, the pattern of giving in terms of the number and dollar amount of the pledges:

- The total number of pledges totaled 84, which includes pledges to the operating budget, the mortgage fund, and the utilities fund. The dollar amount of the pledges was \$200,443. Of the 121 pledge packages mailed, 75 responded, which is 62 percent return.
- There are three broad categories that make up the total pledges, as follows:

Level 1 – This level has 46 pledges that account for 55 percent of the number of pledges made, but only 13 percent of the pledge dollars. This level has pledges ranging from \$52 a year to \$1,200 a year. The average pledge for Level 1 is \$590 a year.

Level 2 – Is composed of 26 pledges, ranging from \$1,350 to \$3600 a year. This middle level reflects 31 percent of the total number of pledges and 31 percent of the dollars contributions. The average pledge in this level is \$2,356.

Level 3 – Only 12 pledges comprise this high-end level, but account for 56 percent of the pledge

dollars. This level has pledges ranging from \$4,160 to \$24,150. The average pledge in Level 3 is \$9,405

The membership rolls:

112 persons have been dropped from the active membership rolls in the last couple of years. The reasons are as follows:

- Death – 5
- Left the Episcopal Church – 6
- Families seeking Baptism only -- 44

Transferred to another Austin area Episcopal Church – 13,
ten of which moved to avail themselves of larger children's and youth Christian Ed classes.

Transferred to out-of-Austin Episcopal Churches – 15

Became inactive – 25 – reasons unknown
4 – personal reasons

Level of Participation in the life of the parish (216 persons in the rolls):

There are five levels of participation, ranging from: Very active and very much involved – 90 persons, or 42%. These persons pledge, attend regularly, and are involved in one or more ministries, committees, or parish program.

Active and involved – 42 persons, or 19% – pledge and regular attendance, no ministries

Attend regularly only – 50 persons, or 23%

Irregular attendance only – 34 persons, or 16%

Very much in the periphery or inactive – 80 persons, archived records in the database

Note that the first two levels represent 61% of the 216 persons on the parish rolls.

84 persons do not participate in the pledge campaign

Father Al †

SENIOR WARDEN'S MESSAGE

Today is the first Vestry Meeting of the New Year. We will officially seat our new vestry members and Terry, Paul, and Laura will be sitting at home feeling left out and wondering what to do, like at the end of football season. Now what do I do with myself? Thank you for all the hard work you have done on the vestry for the past 3 years. Being on the vestry is a jumping off place to dive into bigger and better things after your term has ended. This is a program that builds strong individuals to continue on as leaders within the church.

Yesterday Bishop Dena Harrison visited with the vestry prior to meeting with the Confirmands. She was intuitive to our problems and offered suggestions for goal planning and campaigns to generate revenue for St. John's. She was laying the foundation for future activity by St. John's Vestry and its' members. She was highly complimentary of Fay Jones and the effect she has had on the membership and number of confirmands she has confirmed since Fay started at St John's.

The Annual Meeting for St John's is this Sunday, January 22. I'm in high hopes that people don't stampede out the back door immediately after church has ended. This meeting is important for St. John's members to know what is going on and what our general state of affairs is. It's like the State of the Union address. But if you didn't stay, you lost your opportunity to ask questions, get information, and voice your opinion. If you now want to ask questions and get information, please call me at 990-7500 after 6 pm.

The end of January presses us on to Lent, Ash Wednesday, and Pancake Suppers on Shrove Tuesday, February 21, hosted by the Vestry. Ash Wednesday begins Lent on Wednesday, February 22.

The Vestry will hold its' Annual Retreat at Seminary of the Southwest on Saturday, January 28, from 9-3.

The Diocesan Council will be held in College Station on February 10 and 11.

Saturday, March 3, is the Wardens and Vestry Conference. The Diocesan staff from Houston presents this day of training and workshops. Bishop Andy Doyle will be one of the main speakers. He is a very enjoyable speaker with a great sense of humor! This year St. David's at 7th and San Jacinto will host the conference.

On March 11, 2012, Daylight Savings Time starts. Didn't we just do that?

Have a great February. See you at church.

The Lord be with you!

Linda Pemberton
Senior Warden

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

Hard as it is to believe, January is over. We had a very busy month here at St. John's ~ although it seems they are all busy!

Thanks to Margaret Beare for making happen another wonderful luncheon for the confirmands and Bishop Harrison; thanks to the 5th Sunday Committee for a delightful serendipity meal; thanks to the youth of our parish for participating in the worship services; thanks to our new vestry members Don Robertson, Bill Bennett, and Autumn Jordan as well as continuing member Bill Beare and special thanks to our outgoing vestry members Paul Villarreal, Terry Cox, and Laura Faulkner. I know they will not fade away but will remain active in the life of St. John's. And of course, our Treasurer and Parish Administrator do yeoman's work in keeping the records of the parish and putting on the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Vestry Retreat was held on the last Saturday of January ~ based on the information Fr Al and I presented to the vestry regarding the “State of the Parish”, and especially new member ministry, we have a very exciting and ambitious year ahead of us. The Vestry, Congregational Growth and Revitalization Committee, and the Newcomer Ministry will be continuing to study ideas and implement new strategies to make St. John’s a beacon of light in our community. We Episcopalians love our “3s” ~ the Holy Trinity, the “Three Legged Stool” ~ for our ambitious plan for 2012 we have created a new 3-legged stool:



As Fr Al said in his sermon today, our new mission statement and vision is to invite people to “come and see; come and learn; come and be transformed.”

Thank you to everyone who makes life at St. John’s happen; if you need information about how to participate in any area of ministry at St. John’s, please feel free to contact me at the church office (512-836-3974) or email me at

fjones@austinstjohns.org .

Blessings, Fay



YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR:

Healing and Guidance: Audrey, Rosa, Ruby, Fernando, Hector, Bill, Bethany, Art, Laurretta, Cindy, Carolyn, Jim, Dee, Shirley, Jeff, Renee, Ron, Theresa, Jane, Andie, Gil, Richard, Reed; Novella, Madeline, Ruth, Jennifer, Kathy, Greg, Louise, Betsy, Judy, Mary Lou, Helen, Trish, Margaret, Bette, Frank

Deceased: Jerry, Stan, Mary Francis

Home Bound: Jack, Barbara

STEWARDSHIP

Working Definition of Christian Stewardship

Christian stewardship is grateful and responsible use of God’s gifts in the light of God’s purpose as revealed in Jesus Christ. Christian stewards, empowered by the Holy Spirit, commit themselves to conscious, purposeful decisions.

Stewardship is lived out in:

Living and telling the Good News; sharing God in seeking justice, peace, and the integrity of creation in an interdependent universe; wisely employing God-given human resources, abilities, and relationships; sharing the material resources we hold and giving them in service, justice, and compassion; providing for future generations, sharing in the life, worship, and responsible stewardship of the Church and of its mission. Both for the individual and for the community, stewardship is a joyful act for the sake of God’s world.

This definition comes from the Standing Rules of the Ecumenical Stewardship Center. The Episcopal Church is a founding member of this group and remains active in its continuing work. You can find out more about ESC at their website, <http://www.stewardshipresources.org/>.

Stewardship has also been defined as:

What I do, with all that I have, after I say, “I believe.”

and

Using the gifts God has given us, to do the work God is calling us to.



PANCAKE SUPPER



You are invited to join us for the annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, **Tuesday, February 21** from **6 to 7:30 p.m.** A special treat this year: Roger Hall has agreed to make the batter for sour dough pancakes! [YUM] The Vestry will continue the tradition of cooking pancakes and sausage. Bring your family and friends to share in the fun. We will have sugar free syrup available and also a limited amount of gluten free pancakes. Please call the church office (836-3974) to let us know if you need these. Free will offering – any receipts after expenses are covered will go to the Operating fund.



Services will begin at 6:40, followed by a Lenten program. Please plan to join us.

Preparing for Lent

Our popular notions as to what Lent is all about normally is focused either on what one gives up in terms of a favorite food or activity, or the thought that it is a dismal season of fasting and self-denial. Actually, Lent should be a lively forty days of following the “Three R’s,” that focuses on Renewal, Repentance, and Resurrection.

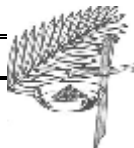
Renewal means recharging our spiritual batteries

Through meditation, prayer, and a reading from an inspirational book or other source, we can enter into an intentional phase of renewing our relationship with God, through Jesus Christ who has shown us the Way. Performing acts of charity and engaging in some form of social outreach that touches someone in need also accomplish our renewal.

MAY YOU HAVE A HOLY LENT

ASH WEDNESDAY

The liturgy for Ash Wednesday with the Imposition of Ashes will be offered at **12 noon** and at **7 PM** in English and **5:30 PM** in Spanish on **Wednesday, February 22, 2012**



Repentance is a Love-Offering of our Wills to God

Rather than seeing Repentance as a constant penitential beating of our hearts, or going into a dark, self-flagellation mode, Repentance might be viewed more as an intentional exercise of exploring where God’s Will might be leading us in the current phase of our lives.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ has a unique message for each one of us

Each one of us enters into the Easter Empty Tomb, one by one. Each one of us has to determine what Jesus’ sacrificial offering of himself means for us personally. We especially have to address his Resurrection in light of what it means for us as Christians, and in light of our personal expectations of Eternal Life.

Father Al †



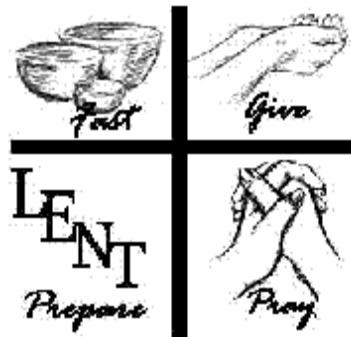
Stations of the Cross on Fridays during Lent: Our lay servers will offer the devotional Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings at 7 p.m. in the church.

Lenten Program on Five Wednesdays of Lent

Join us for a Soup Supper and Lenten program beginning at 6 p.m. on each Wednesday following Ash Wednesday and ending on the last Wednesday before Palm Sunday.

Hosts for the soup suppers:

- February 29 – Daughters of the King
- March 7 – Altar Guild
- March 14 – Ushers/Greeters
- March 21 – Choir
- March 28 – Groundskeepers



GROUNDSKEEPER'S REPORT

If your humble servant had only a little grist for the mill in January 2012 report he has even less for February. From the youth of your humble servant are memories of countless episodes that involve John Wayne or Stewart Granger or Alan Ladd or Errol Flynn, or a half-dozen other Hollywood stars who, trooping either through the jungle (always in Africa) or trekking across the American West or wading in swamps announce to the band of intrepid (white) heroes that "It's quiet." To which observation another of the band of hardy warriors (all white) was obliged to respond between clenched teeth "Yeah, too quiet." Whereupon the "natives" whether Africans, Japs or painted Indians would swoop down upon our outnumbered but valiant (white) platoon or squad or exploration party and attempt to wreak some slaughter, always unsuccessfully.

As I, your humble servant, write, I am constrained to observe that the weather is quiet, too quiet. This presages another torrid and desiccated summer season. The big weather machine in the Pacific Ocean is stuck in first gear. That is to say, the surface temperature in the eastern Pacific is lower than average (La Nina) sending less moisture our way and on top of that, the Arctic circumpolar air currents have, so far, kept their frigid air masses bottled up over Canada. Even Moscow has been wintering in comparative balmy days, staying above zero most of the winter. My Russian agents report that snowfall has been absent from the great city of the Czars this season. In fact as I write this another cloudless, mild day dawns. Your humble servant will use his bicycle today in comfort as he pursues the curious quest of demonstrating to the public that bicycle transit is indeed a practical alternative to the two-ton SUV.

Thus while we enjoy a mild dry winter season, we are, in 6 short weeks, about to be assailed by the natives – insects and weeds. We have been favored with just enough rain to coax both "hostiles" to dare an assault and we will see a return in early April of the constant need to mow our grounds.

This season (April through October) we will, your humble servant dares to predict, see the City of Austin extend the present water use restrictions citywide. That sensible limitation will necessitate that our members attend carefully to our shrubs and flowers not only in the memorial garden but everywhere on the property.

As for actual work on our grounds since the last report, well that too has been quiet, too quiet. By the time this report is presented to the awaiting eyes of the congregation, mulch will have been added to the new plantings on the south side of the parish building and also on the memorial garden. The long drawn out project of creating a safe playscape for the Dia de los Niños will have been brought to a close. It is hoped that the YALL building will have been repainted. It is also hoped that hands can be found to chop up the pile of brush next to the green storage bin. Much is hoped for.

Mike Davis

NewsLetter
DEADLINE

The deadline to submit articles for the March

Good News is Monday, February 20, 2012.

Please e-mail your article to:

AnnetteVan@aol.com

VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

January 16, 2012

Vestry Elections: Our Junior Warden for 2012 is Hal Hughes; Don Robertson will be this year's Vestry Clerk. Marvin Rasmussen was elected to another term as Treasurer. Annette Van Dover will be Assistant Treasurer and John Williams will serve another term as Chancellor.

Junior Warden - Action Items for Vestry

1. Continue to have problems with people leaving garbage by the green storage building. Recommends that some signage be made that indicates the metal structure is not a dumpster.
2. Building and Grounds recommends removing half of deck in front of parish hall and replacing with grass. Fuller presentation will be made to the Vestry in February.

PARISH STATISTICS FOR 2011

• **Baptisms at St. John's:** **15**

- 5/22 Angelique Santiago
Samuel Jose Martinez
Nancy Nelli Martinez
- 5/28 Kenny Jessua Lopez
Steven Johanne Lopez
Karen Carbajal
- 5/29 Jesus Eduardo Perez
- 6/12 Jocelyn Blanco
- 6/26 Fernando Esparza Torres
- 7/17 Mia Zulay Rodriguez Maldonado
Edward Guerrero Maldonado
- 7/24 Jose Elmer Martinez
- 11/13 Arilene M. Valadez
- 11/20 Aidan Jairo Alvarez
Fatima Rodriguez Cortez

• **Confirmations/Receptions:** **16**

- 1/30 Christopher Jordan
Autumn Jordan
Tom Jordan
Jose Blanco
Mariam Elizabeth Blanco
Luis Blanco
Laurencio Fernando Montoya Satelo
Jordyn Favela

- 8/27 Maria Favela
Matthew Paul Villarreal
Tammy Munoz
Steve Munoz
Daphne Elise Christian
Minda Marie Turnbull
Kathy Sylvie
George Sylvie

Letters of Transfer – In **10**

- Guy Allen Cunningham
Jerri Cunningham
Jane Turnbull Hudson
Linda Giles Farmer Bennett
William Russell Bennett, III
Charles Patterson
Glenda Patterson
John A. Swinnea
Joyce Swinnea
Melissa Nicole Hadley

• **Letters of Transfer – Out** **1**
Jo Marie Larsen

• **Deceased:** **2**
Robert Stewart
Gary Stein

St. John's Episcopal Church

11201 Parkfield Drive, at Braker Lane
Austin, Texas 78758, Phone 836-3974,
Fax - 836-3936 Web: www.austinstjohns.org

SUNDAY SERVICES: 9:00 / 10:30 / 1:00

WEDNESDAY: 6:30 HC w/anointing

SATURDAY: 5:30 PM Holy Communion

The Rev'd **Albert R. Rodriguez**, *Rector*
The Rev'd **Rohani Weger**, *Assisting Clergy*
The Rev'd **Laurie McKim**, *Seminarian*

Mr. **Philip Riley**, *Organist and Choirmaster*
Mrs. **Fay Jones**, *Membership Coordinator*

VESTRY:

Linda Pemberton, *Senior Warden*; Hal
Hughes, *Junior Warden*; Don Robertson, *Clerk*;
Bill Beare, Bill Bennett, Autumn Jordan
Steve Mudge, David Petersen, Kay Soper

OFFICERS:

Marvin Rasmussen – *Treasurer*
Annette VanDover – *Assistant Treasurer*

