

The Epistle

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA 94901

Our Mission Statement

We are called to be a diverse and inclusive community of Christians in the Anglican tradition.

We offer a compassionate haven for reconciliation, spiritual growth, and commitment to social justice.

Healing. What is it, and how do I do it?

by Father Harold Weicker

It seems that we are surrounded by so much hurt these days. People we care about are in pain. So many in our nation are suffering because of the economy and the misplaced priorities of those "in charge." Crime and the increasing secularization of the American soul are taking their toll. Families are suffering for many reasons with little help on the horizon. Each day, the news media graphically presents the tragedies of nations. The world is hurting in more ways than I can cite in this short article. None of this is news to you. I suspect that, as sensitive people, your observations on the global, national and human condition are a real part of what disturbs your peace at this time.

For those of us who believe that peace starts with inner peace and know that we need to participate in our "cure," the question always is, "What can I do about my distress?" Two things come to mind. The first is "The Serenity Prayer" which has helped millions of addicted people on their road to recovery.

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference."

This prayer is not intended to let anybody off the hook. For one, it establishes serenity as the goal. This is not easy. It takes far less work to stew and worry. Secondly, the prayer calls for honest personal assessment. What can I do, and what is beyond my reach? Only radical honesty in this matter can enable the discernment of wisdom... not cop out. Lastly, the Serenity Prayer acknowledges that it takes committed courage to effect inner change.

The easy way is just to sit on the "Pity Pot" (as my British relatives were "wont" to say) and wallow in the pain. Inner healing requires courageous commitment to changing one's core self... as people getting well in 12 Step programs know.

Of course, I should have started with the word that prefaces the prayer... "God." We are called to have an active faith in God by believing we need God's strength and personal truth in our life if we are to succeed in making the necessary changes. We trust and act on the insights the Holy Spirit gives us concerning our core self and our life as a whole. But we do not ask, or expect, God to do the work we are capable of doing. We ask for wisdom not a way. We entrust God with the things we cannot do, and in everything else we ask for God's way and the strength to be effective.

Going back to the question, "What can I do about my distress," I mentioned that two thoughts came to mind. The second one comes from an author/speaker friend of Carol's and mine, Hugh Prather. At a time of great stress and distress in my life, Hugh told me, "Harold, you seldom are upset for the reason you think." So much of what bothers us has a history in our life. The presenting issue can just be a tip of a large iceberg. This is why personal honesty and the help of others are important. How often do we avoid the real truths by focusing on one issue we claim to be the cause of our problem? I do not believe in the lasting effects of partial healing. Ultimately the whole person has to be involved or the infection will spread. Isaiah reported God as saying, "Behold, I make all things new," and so many saints after Jesus time on this earth reveled in the fact that they were a new person in Christ. I believe this with my whole heart... because I know how often God has renewed me... and the day is not yet over! Let us not trip ourselves up by misdirected partialities. Those of us who would be healed need

(Continued on page 2)

to know that we must open our hearts and lives, as best we can in the moment, to as much of God as we know at the time. Half-stepping won't get us very far.

Lent is a good time to commit ourselves to the healing/strengthening process of God in our life. The parish group gathering around the principals of the Center for Attitudinal Healing will be a great resource for personal transformation. In this issue of *The Epistle*, you will find an excellent article by Neville Armstrong on this opportunity. I hope to see many of us there.

God's blessings are with us and, for this we are grateful. Maybe I'll write an article in the near future about the power of an attitude of gratitude. Till then, I'll see you on the road.

Love, Hal+

Thoughts from the Rev.

by Rev. Lynn Oldham Robinett

Here we are once again in the middle of Lent. I hope that you are looking at and working on the spiritual aspect of your life. If you made any new commitments in your life such as giving something up or taking something on, I hope that you have been able to learn a little bit while keeping those commitments. I have always found Lent to be embodied with a sense of renewal when I take it seriously. It is a challenge to do what one sets out to do at times, especially when the temptation to do differently always presents itself.

As Lent leads into Easter, when we reach the end of our fasting, our commitments, we can rejoice and celebrate at the dawning of a new day, and what that brings. The resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday does not just signify that we can now eat chocolate or drink coffee or whatever it was we gave up or committed to doing, (even though that's often how it feels), we also need to look at how our actions during Lent have affected our faith. Without the reflection at the end of Lent, there is really no reason to make any sort of commitment during Lent unless you just want to show you can do something that you really don't want to do! So take a moment this Easter to reflect on Lent and if you're interested in sharing, I'd be happy to hear about it.

On **April 13th**, we begin Holy Week with **Palm Sunday**. As we did last year, we will have a combined service at 10:30 a.m. (We will still have a 7:45 ser-

vice as usual). We will have the usual parade into the church with banners and children, so be ready to do things a little differently. Last year it was a very unique service with a nice transition into the holiest week of the year. There will be many different Holy Week services and a description can be found somewhere in the Epistle. A few I will mention here. On **Thursday, April 17th**, we will have a traditional **Maundy Thursday** service with washing of the feet at 6:30p.m. If you have never been to this service and are interested, the power of washing feet as Jesus did, and watching all the ornamentation be stripped from the church leaves quite an impression. Even for children. On **Good Friday**, we have a 4 p.m. **Stations of the Cross** that are interactive and particularly geared for children. And of course Lent officially ends with the resurrection, which we commemorate on **Sunday, April 20th**. There will be a **Family Service** at 9 a.m., with an **Easter Egg Hunt** to follow. So please come and make Holy Week and Easter a family event at these services that lead us through the darkest and brightest moments of our faith in the span of a week.

Peace to you this Easter,

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THE WAY I SEE IT...

by Neville Armstrong

Attitudinal Healing is a path to Health through Inner Peace. It represents an opportunity to experience our lives in the presence of Love, which is the essence of our being.

For me, Attitudinal Healing has been a profound and growing spiritual experience--healing by changing the way I view myself and those around me. I would like to believe that it is also a way to significantly effect my most important and influential relationships, those that give me meaning and position in my life.

But what am I trying to heal? What am I awakening from? I have come to believe that we are all, in some way, wounded. We may be aware of feeling a sense of "disease" all our lives--or maybe one day, quite out of the blue, something "bad" happens to us and our whole world turns upside down. In any event, whatever it is, each one of us, sooner or later, is likely to encounter "our selves." This can be devastating to us, or more accurately our "egos." But the truth is that this may be our salvation, our path and our journey to a more meaningful, and hopefully, more spiritual life. We are face-to-face with God, or as some of us might say, a Higher Being, or for others, even just Love. It is our task then to embrace this power, and discover perhaps that this is really our true authentic self. To me, this realization personifies Attitudinal Healing. Again, the opportunity to share this experience with important others means our journey is not solitary, but part of a bonding which enhances our passage.

For me, Attitudinal Healing also is a way of accepting the idea that basically we are all the same, that the more we listen, really listen, to each other, the more deeply we instinctively appreciate that fact. By listening, and by giving back at certain times an accounting of our own similar life experiences, ones that are really true for each of us, we can begin heal-

ing, we can grow spiritually and better serve our God.

A few words about where I see Healing and Health in our church family setting. We already have wonderful "healing teams" active within our parish. We also have more than a few "health care professionals" in our congregation. So we know that the process of healing is alive and well among us. The concept of Attitudinal Healing is therefore in no way to compete with or belittle either of these modalities; to the contrary, Attitudinal Healing is here to augment and supplement these. I would wish to suggest that in the case of medical care, for some of us a "cure" is not what we seek; rather, we wish to be in charge of our own healing, from within. For me, that is the difference between "medical care" and "health care." I have found that to a large degree our disabilities may result from a lack of "health" care, and that we cannot always easily find the answer from professionals. It is then that we are likely to consider the idea of changing our attitudes in certain ways, and to begin appreciating that the real answer lies with each of us. We begin to view others more like ourselves, either extending Love or asking for it, and eager to be both students and teachers to one another. We are on a journey together.

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER, INTERIOR SILENCE

Please join us for centering prayer each Wednesday evening at 6:00pm before the 6:30pm Eucharist. Both beginners and experienced participants are welcome.

Instruction in centering prayer is available at 5:45 pm. **by prior arrangement** for those with questions or who are new to contemplative prayer and meditation. Please call Chris Olson at (415) 479-0409.

LIFE AT THE SCHOOL FOR DEACONS

(Or IF YOU WANT TO HEAR GOD LAUGH, TELL HER WHAT YOUR PLANS ARE!)

by Jean (Hicks) Shelburne

Last fall, the people of St. Paul's blessed me and sent me off to Berkeley to learn about being a deacon in the Episcopal Church. Since I have now completed nearly two semesters, I thought you might be interested in knowing a bit about what goes on there, what I have been busy learning, and how God is working in my life.

First of all, the School for Deacons is an intensive program designed to provide the academic training for permanent deacons in the Episcopal Church in this area. Currently there are students attending from the Diocese of California, Diocese of Central California, and Diocese of Northern California. The program is designed for people who are working full-time, so we meet one weekend approximately every three weeks per semester, August to mid-December, and January to mid-May. Graduates of the full-time program receive a Bachelor of Theological Studies degree. In order to be ordained deacons in the Episcopal Church, the students also must successfully complete the canonical process for Holy Orders, which is a very rigorous process in itself, consisting of several years of tests and interviews and approvals (hopefully). However, students who complete the educational study do not necessarily become deacons. Some find their calling in the lay leadership of the church, and are able to make ample use of their training that way.

First-year students like myself study early church history; Old and New Testaments; the history, development, and intricacies of the Book of Common Prayer; the how's and whys about Anglican liturgy; an overview of social justice areas; homiletics (sermon development and delivery); theological reflection; and spiritual formation. We also take part in 3 worship services each weekend. All of these classes involve reading a number of books, practical hands-on work, and writing reflection and study papers for each class session, all to be done outside of the class weekends. So now you know why you may not have seen me around St. Paul's for a while!

An important part of what is done at School For Deacons is discernment, guiding and supporting the students as they identify and clarify their call to ministry, and learn to articulate it to others. This, too, has been a challenging and interesting process. So far it appears that I am called to a ministry of service and worship development (liturgical planning, etc.), particularly in the area of music, which you all know I enjoy very much.

I am working on refining and testing this call to ministry as I work with my husband in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Novato where he is the Director of Music. The work I do in this church is very similar to what David Ross did when he was with us at St. Paul's as a deacon-in-training, and I believe I am enjoying my training as much as he did.

For those who were part of the Vision Team, I would like to share that this past fall I was privileged to visit the mega-church which we learned about which was grown using small group ministries (Southeast Christian Church, Louisville KY, led by Pastor Bob Russell). It was a truly awesome experience, and I would welcome the chance to share details of the visit with any of you who might be interested.

As for hearing God laugh - never tell God "no, never". As a traditional, high-church Episcopalian, if anyone had told me a year ago that today I would be re-married to my first husband after a 30 year separation (we were married on February 14, 2003), leading a contemporary worship service as a music leader with a headset mike and tambourine, studying for the diaconate, and chanting a Lutheran liturgy, I would have said "NO WAY! YOU ARE CRAZY!" Well, God had other plans. My husband Jim's church happens to be the branch of the Lutheran church which is now "in communion" with the Episcopal Church, so it is a logical, if unexpected and unforeseen step - but God DOES have a sense of humor, after all.

Anyone who would like more information about the School For Deacons is welcome to give me a call (883-4521) or email me at elhicks@earthlink.net. Thank you for your prayer support on this spiritual journey. And may God bless everyone at St. Paul's!

Jean

VESTRY NOTES

By Veronica Dodds Jr. Warden

One of the Vestry's goals this year is to improve and maintain the appearance of our church facilities. Budget cuts have eliminated our hope of hiring a Sexton, leaving us with only a cleaning service. It is obvious to all that this is a less than perfect solution. Duncan Hall, recently refurbished, is beginning to deteriorate a bit, looking a bit rough around the edges. Cindy Essen does some maintenance for the church, but budget constraints limit what we are able to pay. She has been very generous with her time and energy, as have others. It is up to us, the stewards of St. Paul's, to lend a hand. Some work consistently to keep the facilities maintained, but, as Martha Stewart says, if we all pitch in it would be a "good thing!"

Coffee Hour is a time for all of us to socialize, yet as people begin to drift away there is a mess and only one or two people, who *voluntarily* wait to see that everything is cleaned up, put away and Duncan Hall ready for the next function. They see a job to be done and they just do it. Imagine if everyone just walked away from Coffee Hour with table and chairs left scattered, soiled tablecloths, trash, leftover food, spilled coffee, juices, dropped cookies and assorted messes, acting like their mothers still lived here.

Coffee Hour clean up, done properly, with several people pitching in consists of putting away the tables and chairs, emptying and cleaning the coffee urns, wiping and washing up, soiled linens in the proper receptacles, using the carpet sweeper (stored in the chair closet), unload and/or load the efficient dishwasher in the kitchen, picking up the trash that others have left, and someone taking the towels and tablecloths home to launder. If everyone cleaned up after themselves and pitched in, those very few people who currently clean up every week, might be able to *enjoy* coffee hour with the rest of the congregation. There is a Coffee Hour sign up chart in the Parish Hall for each service. The set up/bring "goodies" commitments filled up quickly, hardly anyone has signed up for clean up.

The Rev. has established a display board at the far end of Duncan Hall. The board is a bit empty right now so if you want to post something relating to St. Paul's check with her about putting them up. Be sure to put your name and the date first displayed on everything you post.

Ancient and mused things are unattractive and need to be removed. Things that stay up too long will be removed and recycled. There are some easels left from the art show which may be utilized following the same

basic guidelines.

There is good news too. The porch is a lovely place to socialize but it also needs some attention. A volunteer has agreed to power wash the stained stucco. The piles of boxes, children's' things and plain junk piled in the corner of the porch has been removed by the school and church members. The porch has been swept and the window ledges wiped down although its hard to notice, between the wind and our sloppiness it needs to be swept more than the volunteer "sweeper" can keep up with. Even the shelves in the Sunday School rooms have been disinfected, each book wiped and organized. We can *all* pitch in some way, even those who can't reach high or bend low. An anonymous benefactor is generously seeing to it that the landscaping is improved. The design is in the works right now.

If you smoke, use the ashtray, if you eat, drink, wash your hands, throw your trash away. If you see that someone (or the wind) has left trash, take just a moment to clean it up. If its a job you aren't able to do, ask for help or leave a message.

St. Paul's will look inviting again when we all take responsibility to be benefactors and do our part. This is, after all, the House of the Lord. We want our parish to grow, not in dust, trash and mold, but in spirit, reverence and people.

Prayerfully yours,
Nag-in-Chief

DONE IN A DAY

by Della Holloway

We have a new volunteer program in place called "Done in a Day." That simply means that you pick the project that you want to help with and the day and time you want to do it—just making sure you have a key if one is necessary for the project you are working on. There are simple things that need doing—such as keeping cupboards and closets in good order, office chores that Judy might need help with. Ask both Lynn and Judy what help they could use. Maybe you will see something around the Church or Parish Hall that needs attention—other than that being done by our temporary Sexton. For more information contact Della Holloway or Ripley Hunter. Thanks in advance for your assistance in these matters.

Please remember the following people in your prayers: Dodge Ackerman; Maggie Baxter & Family; Jeremy; Cecile; Chuck & Sue; Sarah; the K's; Laretta; Jeff; Bill & Brigitte; Richard & Louise; Charles; Victor; Jim Pfeifer; Rod; Bud; Suzanne; and Steve.

And for those who have died:
Fred McCarthy; George Millard; Shen.

PARISH PROFILE

by Marion Cedarblade

Katie Taggart, dubbed "The Party Girl" by Fr. Bruce Bramlett, is dropping the title, temporarily, while she pursues her art and other activities. After serving on the "Wine and Sprit" fund raising committee for two years she was the chair last fall. She also served on the International Dinners fund-raisers and managed parish fairs. Katie, legally Katherine, signs her art work K.T.

She grew up in Oak Park, Illinois and graduated from the University of Michigan as an art history major. She worked at United Airlines after college and had a splendid time

with week-ends in Paris and Tahiti or wherever United offered those wonderful free passes. The Party Girl was loving it.

And then came a fateful business trip to San Francisco when she met Jay-Jay Taggart, that is. Within a year she had cancelled the planned year in South Africa, quit her job, moved to San Francisco and married Jay.

She worked at the Hyatt Regency at Fisherman's Wharf for 14 years, then moved to the St. Francis Hotel where she continues to manage the group housing (convention) desk.

Katie's artistic talents are revealed by paintings on glass, and more recently on fabric. Her other hobbies are hiking, reading and going to the opera. She has recently injured her heel, putting on hold the 8-mile hikes she Loves.

Katie is a cradle (born in the faith) Episcopalian and has served in this parish as a Vestry member, Junior Warden, Altar Guild member and on stewardship committees. She worships with the 7:45 am congregation. She and Jay live "on the hill" above St. Paul's with their Manchester terrier Maxwell, who was named for her father.

TODAY'S DATE: _____

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Full Name of the person to be prayed for: _____

Please leave on prayer list 30 days _____ 60 days _____ 90 days _____ 6 mos.

Person submitting request (required) _____

Phone Number: (___) ___ - ___ - ___ E-mail: _____

All names will be dropped from the Prayer List when requested time is up unless the request is renewed. (Those who request 6 mos. are also responsible for renewing their request, but every attempt will be made to contact you after 5 mos. to remind you that the name will be dropped soon.)

Healing happens

by Nancy Skinner

Tilda Norberg and Robert Webber in their book, Stretch Out Your Hand tell us that many of us who pray for healing focus on physical healing. Even those of us who have adopted a holistic view seem to be drawn to emphasize physical healing. Often the physical healing is the last to take place, and sometimes does not occur at all. Healing does take place and it is the deep healing that comes from God. Often times the physical healing follows later. We do not know why this is and the problem has been discussed and worried over and written about for ages.

St. Paul himself prayed many times to God to remove an affliction from him. Biblical scholars think that this affliction may have been a skin condition or dermatitis. And God repeatedly said, "My grace is sufficient unto you."

Healing on the High Seas.... During his recent cruise, Healing team member John Surinchak led morning prayers on the sea days. After one of the sessions had concluded a person asked for healing prayer for their problems. This became another first for the St. Paul's Healing team.... Healing on the high seas!

St Paul's has laying-on-of-hands healing every Wednesday after the 6:30 Holy Eucharist at service (approximately 7:00 pm). Laying-on-of-hands for healing is also offered on the second and fourth Sunday of each month during communion at the 10:30 am service.

Rick Luoni, Nancy Skinner, John Surinchak, and Marilyn Thompson are the healing team. We are committed to praying for the people you have asked us to, as listed in the Sunday bulletins and the Epistle. We also pray daily for the church and its leadership, for other people, organizations, and more.

Please join us in us in this beautiful and rewarding ministry. No experience is required, training and study is available and ongoing. Talk to any of us for more information.

There is also a CRISIS INTERCESSORY PRAYER group in its infancy. These are people in the congregation who hold two beliefs: first praying for others (that is what "intercessory" means) works, and second, it is their job to participate in such pray specifically when someone is facing, coping with, stunned by a CRISIS. You or your child/spouse/parent/etc., is seriously ill, dying, has been arrested, has been a victim of crime, is facing a crisis. What do you do? Call the church office, try to find staff or clergy and fill them in. IF you cannot reach anyone call Marilyn directly. Once Marilyn is called by the church or someone else, this incredible, God-driven thing happens. An email is written which will contain as much information as possible, and with a click, people receive the email and as it is opened, another voice is added to the prayers.

There is just one catch, MARILYN NEEDS YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IN ORDER TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE NOTIFIED. Please, send a blank email to:

time4prayers@earthlink.net.

Don't have email? No problem: Call me, talk to Cindy or me, leave a message, leave a note in the Epistle basket outside the offices, or as a last resort, call Judy at the church, leave your full name, phone number or numbers (in the order you want them called) and as soon as the email is sent, the phone calls start and I will notify (or someone will) everyone on the phone list. (It is helpful if, in addition to leaving your numbers, you also let us know if you're listed in the new yellow directory.) The importance of this ministry is beyond imagination.

Since I co-edit the "Epistle," am a member of the healing team and coordinate the crisis intercessory prayer it is only logical that I also coordinate the Prayer List you find in your Sunday bulletin and the "Epistle." It is a simple job especially because our hero, Judy Felton, fields the prayer list requests that come in by phone. If at all possible, please make your requests in writing (the form in the newsletter or at the rear of the church by the basket containing Day by Day books and leave in the Epistle basket. Call me if you need to place someone on the regular list if at all possible. Let's try to give Judy a bit of a break. MARILYN THOMPSON 415-457-6709.

ADDRESS ALERT

BEGINNING IMMEDIATELY THE ADDRESS FOR THE "EPISTLE" IS:

stpaulsepistle@earthlink.net

THE ADDRESS FOR THE "CRISIS INTERCESSORY PRAYER LIST" ALSO CHANGED TO:

time4prayers@earthlink.net

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGES.

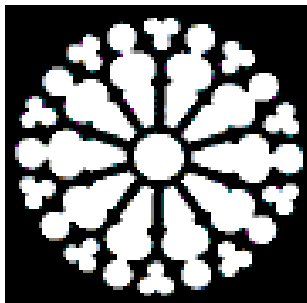
Please send a blank email to "time4prayers@earthlink.net to be part of an important ministry which sets in motion a prayer chain for any and all of us when crisis strikes. Questions? Call Marilyn @ 415-457-6709

REMEMBER

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE MAY ISSUE OF THE *EPISTLE*

IS APRIL 10, 2003

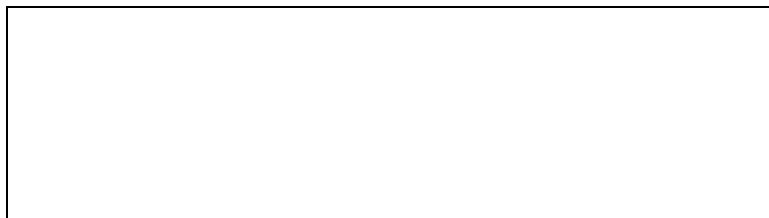
LAST BASKET CHECK AT 4:00pm



St Paul's Episcopal Church
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NON-PROFIT ORGANIZA-

Website: www.oldstpauls.org



***TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL* PLEASE DELIVER ON OR BEFORE 4/01/03**