



# The Grapevine

April 2007

NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, LONGVIEW, WA  
1428 - 22nd Avenue, Longview, WA 360-423-5600 www.sslv.org

## A PRAYER FOR PILGRIMS AND JOURNEYERS

A journey once taken alone  
we now choose to take  
together.

Moving forward as one body  
into a future filled with  
possibility, we walk without  
maps, but we walk  
confidently,  
and we walk with hope,  
because we have chosen to  
be lights for each other, while  
on the way.

We travel forward along a  
way  
we have not gone before;  
we travel as one who is led,  
arms outstretched, as one  
who is called forth to life.

We travel in need, dependent  
on the Lord for strength, for  
assurance; dependent on  
each other, God's  
instruments, for love.

Leaving known paths behind  
us, we choose to journey  
forward in faith and service.

As the journey brought us  
here, so now we begin it  
anew,  
in company.

- Edwin Hays



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Each year during Lent the Altar Guild replaces altar flowers with sticks and limbs cut from trees and bushes. For a few weeks they appear dark, stark, and rather dead arranged in a basket in front of the altars in the chapel and church. Then an apparent miracle occurs. From those seemingly dead branches buds begin to sprout. Life arises from the supposed dead. It is the miracle of the season when all around us we see life and color emerge from the world that had been so many shades of gray for so long. We need not do anything. It is a gift, just as our lives are all filled with vast amount of grace-filled ordinary miracles. We just need to awaken from our sleep walking to experience it consciously.

To me, the stories of Jesus' Resurrection are retellings of the Creation stories in Genesis. They tell of God's incredible fecundity, of abundance, of generosity. It seems beyond our capability to understand fully, or to take in completely. We say rather blithely that we are in God, and God is in us. But what if we really lived like that were true? I wonder, what might be the consequences of a life lived in the full consciousness of that reality? How might we go about our rather ordinary lives in the full knowledge of that extraordinary circumstance?

Within our very being is the ultimate, loving, creative power of the universe. Each of us, and every created thing, is an expression of God's goodness. That goodness may well be masked under layers of pain or evil, but at the very core of Creation is God's love and goodness. It is from beneath those layers of pain and evil that Christ burst forth from the tomb in those beloved Easter narratives. The Resurrection shows us God's ongoing gift of life, even in the face of sin and death.

Christ is risen, and all are risen with him!

Sursum corda,

*Richard*



## St. Stephen's Mission Statement

*St. Stephen's is a Christian Community, empowered by the Holy Spirit to bring others to Christ and to celebrate God's love through worship, fellowship, education, and service*

### The Staff

The Rev. Richard Green	Rector
The Rev. Kathleen Patton	Associate Rector
The Rev. John Ackermann	Deacon
Angela Warning	Parish Administrator
Ann Long	Pianist, Treasurer
Howard Meharg	Music Minister, Webmaster
Katie Lewis	Organist
Annie New	Children's Ministry Assistant

### The Vestry

John Edmiston	Rector's Warden
Peggy Norman	People's Warden
Jill Johanson	Lloyd Solon
Stan Lewis	Dick Woods
Diane Glase	Sara Hamilton
Barbara Dunlap	

## Starving Hunger

After going without food for a whole day, our teens collected grocery carts full of food from the neighbors, studied the scriptures, and played some games. We made a banner with 1380 of our own purple hand prints to show how many children we would feed for a day with money we raised. Then we met in the chapel to extinguish 600 candles – one every two seconds for half-an-hour – the same number of children who die worldwide of hunger-related disease in that period of time. After a night on the hard floor at Baird House we ended our fast at 6:00 am, and headed home.

Thanks to all the famine participants, including Kirsten Bowers, Haley and Jamie Ellis, Jessie Ferriss, Jessica Johanson-Kubin, Derrick and Miranda Lecker, Britney Peeler, and Perry Piper.

Thanks also to famine helpers, Peggy Norman, Gretchen Niemi, Jill Johanson, Carol Lee Biesanz, Gail Ellis, Jody Kirkpatrick, and Stasha Hornbeck. And of course, to all who donated to feed hungry children, God bless you!

## Holy Week and Easter

### Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

April 2, 3, 4 (6:00 pm)

also Wednesday noon Eucharist in All Saints' Chapel

Thursday, April 5

### **Maundy Thursday Dinner** (6 pm)

An intimate soup supper and table Eucharist remembering Jesus' last night with his friends.

### **Stripping of the Altar** (after dinner)

We remove all decorations from the sanctuary, and wash the altar, in memorial of Jesus' betrayal and arrest.

### **Vigil at the Altar of Repose**

(about 8:00 pm, through noon, Friday)

Spend an hour watching and praying with Christ through the night.

Friday, April 6

### **Good Friday Service** (12:00 noon)

Remember Jesus' passion and death at this sober service from the prayer book.

### **Stations of the Cross** (6 pm)

Relive the passion of Christ through walking meditation and prayer.

### **Good Friday Service** (7pm)

Prayers and Eucharist from the reserved sacrament.

Saturday – April 7

### **The Great Vigil of Easter** (8 pm)

Begin in the garth with the lighting of the first fire, and the paschal (Easter) candle. Bring bells to ring!! Champagne reception follows.

Sunday – April 8

### **Easter Morning** (7:30 and 10 am)

Full choir at both services

Children's message at 10 am

Choir breakfast between service

Easter Egg hunt after 10 am service



## Musical offerings for a musical spring!

April 26 – Pacific Lutheran Women’s Chorus. This outstanding ensemble continues in the tradition of excellence for choral music for which PLU is noted. This is a Thursday evening, 7 p.m. event.

April 29 – Compline at 8:00 p.m.

May 19 and 20 – Hear the Columbian Choral Ensemble and Quintessence Brass in concert at St. Stephen’s. The concert, “Courage Lives,” will feature songs of remembrance as we anticipate the Memorial Day celebration of the following week. Quintessence is a brass quintet made up of five of the top brass players in the state, John Swecker, Danny Murphy, Gary Nyberg, Deena Martinsen, and Bob Pollock.

June 9 – Don’t miss the Whitney Methodist Church Choir Women from Boise, Idaho. This group, conducted by one of the best choral directors in the nation, Connie Branton, will be superb. They’ll also sing in our morning service on Sunday, June 10. Again, we’ll need help with housing. Please open your homes for Saturday evening, the 9<sup>th</sup> of June.

Please mark your calendar for these wonderful musical events.

Howard Meharg

## Thank you . . .

so much for generously sharing space with the Willapa Hills Audubon Society so that we might have our March 17<sup>th</sup> program. It was perfect for the Alaska slide presentation and program and allowed for a warm and jovial fellowship as well.

Best regards,  
Margaret Green

## KEEPING GOD’S HOUSE IN ORDER

**February’s work party gave us a jump start** to property maintenance for the year. Thanks to Rick Lecker, Duane Higby, Greg Lopic, Dick Benson, Judy Swanson, Barbara Dunlap, Red Rogers, and Karen Rogers we accomplished many projects, large and small.

- Among other things, we kept St. Neptune from continuing to encroach on John Ackermann’s space.
- Things are fairly well re-organized now in the kitchen. Karen Rogers has agreed to be Kitchen Manager to keep our kitchen well-stocked. Please check with her before purchasing supplies for events.
- The “Martha Room” (that was formerly used for the Fish program) is now used for excess kitchen storage, banners, and St. Claire’s sewing supplies.
- Extra tables and chairs, as well as janitor supplies, are located at the far end of the parish hall.

I am looking for a cabinet-making saint! (We need a lockable cabinet in the Martha Room for sound equipment.) If you can help, please let me know!

### Coming Soon!

A garden wall will be under construction on the outer edge of our beautiful new courtyard in March or April. This will be one of the last of our “parish hall remodel” activities. We also hope to install a drip system and some dramatic outdoor lighting in the courtyard. Then, once the chapel ramp and railing is finished, we will conclude our very successful remodel project.

### Want to help with house and garden tasks?

If you are not on the email distribution list for “properties (work and fellowship) parties” but would like to be, just let me know or call the office and Angie will forward the information. There are multiple opportunities: everything from dusting, demolition, and dirty work to painting, planting, and pleasing God by keeping His house in order. We especially need help from those of you who have building repair and green thumb gifts.

~ Margaret Lopic



## Walkabout Recruitment ... Faith Takes Practice

“Come One, Come All!” is the call of Christ, but that’s not always easy to model when it comes to Parish-sponsored events, is it? “Who’ll cook? Who’ll handle the chairs? Who’ll CLEAN UP?” Those are just some of the questions that come to mind when we stretch ourselves to accommodate the endless love of God. Well, we’ve done it AGAIN by agreeing to host the Regional Diocesan Bishop Candidates’ Walkabout on Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup> here at St. Stephen’s. The candidates along with accompanying family members and Diocesan assistants will be here that evening for Q&A sessions from 6:30 to 9:30 pm. Area congregations from Chehalis, Castle Rock, Cathlamet, Battle Ground, Vancouver and Washougal are all invited to meet the Candidates that evening. (See Candidate bios in Parish Hall)

The last year has been filled with planning and hard work in defining ourselves as a Diocese as well as voicing our prayers for our next Bishop. See [www.bishopsearcholympia.org](http://www.bishopsearcholympia.org) for the background leading up to the big week of Walkabouts which will begin here in Longview. Being FIRST has all sorts of challenges for our Parish, but underlying all those challenges is the wonderful power to truly launch the week-long Western Washington experience for the Candidates. We have a chance to begin their grueling week with a “Welcome!” that our congregation is more than able to provide.

The most redeeming element of sponsoring events like this is that it’s good for us as a Parish to do. We come together with a broader vision than “local”. We experience the feel of a church that’s bigger than our Sunday morning worship, but isn’t so disconnected that we can’t have coffee together as we hear and see five VERY different people who have answered our invitation to consider serving as “Bishop Diocesan”.

For the evening we’ll need a VARIETY of volunteers to make the event pleasurable for the Candidates and regional visitors as well. We’re asking you to just sign up at the office door if you’re willing to be plugged into a hole that will eventually need filling. The planning’s in the early process as this Grapevine is going to press, so we don’t have specific tasks organized yet. Having a broad list of willing folks to work with will help the eventual planners breathe easier as the date approaches. So practice Faith in God’s presence in your life (no matter where you are!) and sign UP! This is “Church” at its best and be assured that the grace of God will surround us not only on that night but in the weeks and days preceding it. Amen.

### Rite 13

#### News and Schedule

\*April 1 – No Rite 13, but Mo. K+ is also happy to host an “Easter Egg” party that morning (for anyone still in town) to stuff candy eggs and dye real ones for the hunt the following Sunday. Pre-Teens and teens are also invited to help read the Passion reading for Palm Sunday. Contact Mo. K+

<sup>3</sup>\*April 8 – EASTER! Rite 13 meets at the regular time (8:45); kids help the Easter Bunny.

\*Junior High Youth Conference (JYC) May 4,5,6 – Grades 7-9 from all over the diocese have a great time, worship, play, and build wonderful friendships, getting a larger vision of the church. Jan Higby will drive (a van if necessary).

\* Early Adolescent Parenting Class – Friday evening May 18 and Saturday May 19 – learn about how your child grows, get support in your parenting, and connect with other teen parents. Jan Higby will offer this program here at St. Stephen’s.

\* Rite 13 Ceremony – This June we will celebrate the journey to adulthood by blessing and commissioning those who have already turned 13. This is an important event for the whole class! We want to select a date and plan a dinner for the previous night. Do you prefer...

Saturday June 2 for dinner, and  
Sunday June 3 for celebration

OR

Saturday June 9 for dinner, and  
Sunday June 10 for celebration?

\* Parish youth program planning night with diocesan consultant – tentative schedule – June 1 followed by Saturday training for J2A leaders, June 2. Questions? Contact Rite 13 leaders Jan Higby, Carol Lee Biesanz, and Mo. Kathleen Patton.

## Newcomers Class begins April 15<sup>th</sup>!

Are you curious about what's what and who's who at St. Stephen's?

Have you been keeping yourself at a respectful (safe!) distance from other people when you come to church?

Would you enjoy finding a comfortable setting to voice your own questions while hearing and encouraging the questions of other folks like you? Well the Newcomers Class may be just what you're looking for!

Led by lifetime church skeptic Mary Lyons (current member of the Diocesan Standing Committee), the class will happen after Coffee Hour for four consecutive Sundays beginning April 15<sup>th</sup>. Every week after a light lunch you'll have a chance to alternately speak with the Revs. Green, Patton and Ackermann; learn about the faces and places behind the various ministries and activities going on in the Parish and, if interested, get a chance to investigate more intentionally the interests and questions (our specialty!) that brought you to the doors of this particular church at this time of your life. Mary's ongoing goal is to be done by 1:30 every Sunday and she has a good reputation for honoring that time limit unless the group votes otherwise because of an especially-engaging presentation that day.

So "Fear Not" and sign up in the Parish Hall, call Mary at 423-8382 or e-mail her at [MaryLyonsNow@msn.com](mailto:MaryLyonsNow@msn.com) and add your name to the list.

We're glad you're here and so is God. Amen!

## About the Bible

Our fourth graders were perturbed. As they begin to read the Bible for themselves, they're wondering why God is acting like a such a cruel warlord...why God likes the Hebrew people and hates the Egyptians... why God seems so violent when they've always been told God is love?

What would you say?

If you don't know what to say, and perhaps have a few questions of your own, I commend Marcus Borg's *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time*, or better yet, join one of our small groups studying Borg's *Heart of Christianity*.

For me the scriptures are precious and foundational, but like a beloved relative, they sometimes strike a raw nerve. How do we learn to not discard the baby with the bathwater? We all love the idea of simple, absolute answers, until we are forced to live with them. Then we struggle with how to make sense of this "Word of God."

Here is a start... Think of the Bible as a collection of reflections on our journey with God over centuries, inspired because the authors were touched by the Spirit, not controlled by the supernatural. The Biblical authors and editors couldn't read God's mind, though they did experience God's presence. Their stories are powerful foundations for our own reflections, catalysts for our own encounters with the sacred.

Because of their witness, we too have encountered the Living Christ in our baptisms, in Eucharist, in our daily prayers and daily living. The Bible helps us to recognize, celebrate, and enter into that presence more deeply. And it can do all that without being inerrant, infallible, or historically factual in an absolute sense.

But how to say all that to a fourth grader? Our conversation was a lot of fun, actually. Hats off to these smart, thoughtful, faithful kids, and to their courageous teacher (Judy Swanson) who encouraged their curiosity. They're working it out in their own way, and beyond right answers, I'm grateful for a community of faith that will accompany them as they grow in their journey.

*M. K. Katelyn*



## ***We can partially repay God's generous loans to us by giving Him a final gift.***

Lent is a time of reflection and attention to our Lord's ongoing work.

As part of your Lenten discipline, please remember to consider your "final affairs."

Have you written a will?

If so, how long has it been since you reviewed it?

If it is your intention to share God's gifts to you when you depart this mortal life, have you left a gift to your church and its ministry?

You may also want to consider adding a Christian preamble that describes your Christ-centered life and values

The Planned Giving Ministry Team is available to assist you with written materials and other resources. Contact the office if you would like some confidential nudging or to let us know that you have remembered your God and your church in your will.

Our annual Legacy Sunday will occur on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Members of the Stephanos Society will be recognized and celebrated. Your anonymity will be honored if that is your wish. Please contact Margaret Lopic at 425-4922.

Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

## Community of Hope

Eleven volunteers have just completed 14 weeks of training to become "Community of Hope Lay Pastoral Caregivers."

Community of Hope was started in 1994 at St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital in the Dioceses of Texas by The Rev. Jim Alcorn and The Rev. Dr. Helen Appelberg. Volunteers are trained to give pastoral care in a hospital setting, in nursing homes and in one to one encounters for people who need a listening ear.

Our Community of Hope people are now trained and ready to do some visiting. If you know of someone who could use a pastoral care visit, please, contact one of the clergy here at St. Stephen's and let us know, so we can assign one of our newly trained volunteers.

Deacon John Ackermann

## Lay Reading - Lector Training Set

I have had several inquiries about being lectors at the services. If you are interested then please attend an introduction class on Sunday, April 15th at 11:30 am, after Church.

We will discuss introducing the lessons, reading the lessons, Bible preference, liturgy preferences, and anything else we can think of!

Please come and see if it is something you want to do. The schedule is set through May so we will get you involved starting in June. The schedules are made out quarterly.

Peace,  
Deacon John

### **Someone has much too much spare time or is deadly at Scrabble:**

Dormitory: When you rearrange the letters: Dirty Room

The Eyes: When you rearrange the letters: They see

Astronomer: When you rearrange the letters: Moon Starer

Desperation: When you rearrange the letters: A Rope Ends It

The Morse Code: When you rearrange the letters: Here Come Dots

Animosity: When you rearrange the letters: Is No Amity

Election Results: When you rearrange the letters: Lies - Let's Recount

Snooze Alarms: When you rearrange the letters: Alas! No More Z's

Eleven Plus Two: When you rearrange the letters: Twelve Plus One

## ATTENTION GRADUATES

If you or someone we should know about is graduating this year, please let Angie in the office know or call Greg Lopic (425-4922). We want to include this information in the June Grapevine. Thanks

## Notice regarding our new tables

When folding and putting away tables  
Please stack them against the wall  
**Top to top or legs to legs**  
so they don't get scratched at all!

May God give you the grace  
to never sell yourself short;

grace to risk something big  
for something good;

grace to remember that the  
world is too dangerous now  
for anything but truth, and too  
small for anything but love.

And the blessing of God  
Almighty - the God who  
creates us, the Son who sets  
us free, and the Spirit who  
promises to be with us - even  
to the end of the ages, be  
with us all evermore.

*The blessing of new Bishop, the  
Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith, Diocese of  
Newark, at the conclusion of his  
Consecration Service.*

## Summer Parish Faith Adventure



What I love about traditional  
Vacation Bible School is the  
fantastic fellowship, creativity,  
playfulness, and opportunity to  
dig in deeper with faith.

**I want more than the traditional  
VBS, however.** I want ALL ages,  
just little kids. I want heart  
is more than head  
is the word "school"  
I want serious time  
that explodes with  
delight and unplanned fun.

Do you want that too?

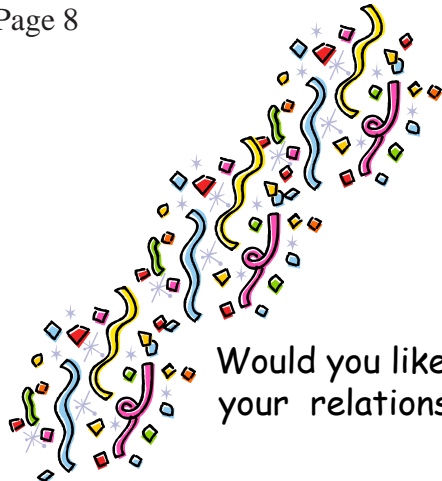
I have an idea. Actually, Leader Resources has an idea. Go to <http://www.leaderresources.org/pilgrimage>, and see for yourself. They have a great new program called "Pilgrimage" that we could do as a parish as a day, evening, or weekend program (I'm suggesting the last week or weekend in June). We'd create a medieval environment, and take pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Canterbury and Rome, meet saints, study scripture, and experience the journey of faith as a community. Think Redwall and Runescape meet St. Patrick. I'm thinking the imaginative attraction here could be strong. And it ties with the Rite 13/J2A emphasis on pilgrimage and journey. No way to lose!

Come join a conversation about this, Monday night, March 26th from 5:30-7:30 at the Patton-Green's (1645 24<sup>th</sup> Ave.) Bring something EASY to enjoy with an indoor picnic - anything from lettuce for the sandwiches to chips and beer. We'll play around with some ideas, and see if this if for us this spring.

Alternately, e-mail me to let me know you are interested!

Here's to the adventure...

*Mo. Kathleen+*



Would you like to get to know some interesting people - expand your relationships with your fellow parishioners, share a story and a laugh or two over a meal?



Please sign up for our Spring edition of Fun Fellowship 8s. You will be matched with 7 or 8 other folks for a get together sometime between April 10th and the end of June.

We will select a host for each group who will coordinate your event.



Please sign up by EASTER. If you would like to host - say so! Call the church office to sign up 423-5600. Consider inviting a neighbor or a friend to this one - just fun and fellowship and getting to know some neat people...some of whom happen to go the St Stephens!



~ ~ Your Fun and Fellowship Committee