

The Light

A monthly newsletter for
St. Augustine's in-the-Woods
The Episcopal Church serving Whidbey Island.



SEPTEMBER 2011

Rev. Nigel Taber-Hamilton, *Rector*
Rev. William Burnett, *Rector Emeritus*
Rev. William Seth Adams, *Priest Associate*
Rev. M. Fletcher Davis, *Priest Associate*
Rev. Amy Donohue-Adams, *Priest Associate*
Rev. Julie Bird, *Deacon*

St. Augustine's Services

SUNDAY

8:00 am Eucharist
followed by coffee and Forums

10:30 am Eucharist
with music, church school & child care
followed by coffee hour

MONDAY

5:30 pm Solemn Evensong
(with incense)

WEDNESDAY

10:00 am Eucharist and Holy Unction

For additional activities please see "calendar"



From the Senior Warden

Harry Anderson

As I was watching the amazing display of pomposity and self-interest during the debt ceiling debt a month ago in Washington, D.C., I kept asking myself this question: Have these politicians forgotten what “community” means? Have we arrived at the point where all of us truly are “on our own?” Has the financial and psychological cost of “what’s best for all” really gotten that high?

Our political process is demonstrating so much dysfunction these days that we are right to worry about where all this arguing, name-calling, selfishness and fist-waving is leading us. I was a baby when my dad and the rest of “The Greatest Generation” came home from World War II. I was lucky to grow up as our national confidence, ingenuity and generosity was strong enough to rebuild Europe and Japan, expand the upwardly mobile American middle class, add a safety net for seniors, the poor and the disabled, build a ribbon of interstate highways and offer affordable higher education to everyone who worked for it. At that time, CEOs made about ten times what the production-line worker did, they got bonuses only when they created and spread new wealth, and the highest individual tax bracket was 90 percent. It was a good time to grow up, and I benefited mightily from all that national generosity. Can we say the same today?

I thought about all this the other day as we began preparing for the 2012 Stewardship Campaign at St. Augustine’s-in-the-Woods. Over the past couple years, our parish has undertaken a very ambitious, very generous and very expensive expansion of our facilities. The result is our beautiful new parish hall, fireside room and office. And to top it off we just finished repainting and recarpeting the undercroft for our Christian education programs, and we commissioned two wonderful new stained glass panels for the side doors of our church.

I imagine you have been feeling some of that happy spirit and renewed energy at St. Augustine’s that I have noticed since we dedicated our new facilities on Epiphany Sunday, June 12. There just seems to be an extra spring in our step, a wider smile on our faces, and a brighter sparkle in our eyes. I believe it’s because we all may be thinking the very same thing: “We did it!” Emphasis, please, on the “WE!”

And why did we do it? I’d say it was for the best of reasons. We decided as a community that to serve our parish and our wider community better we needed bigger and better facilities, and we committed to each other that we would pay and support them. My friends, what an amazing, inspirational thing we have accomplished! And we did it in the middle of the worst economy in 75 years and as our political leaders dither and think too small.

Now we need to continue that happy spirit and renewed energy as we consider our pledges of time, talent and treasure for 2012. There is no question that our budget to operate St. Augustine’s will need to be bigger next year. Utilities and almost all other expenses will be higher. The Vestry’s Budget Committee is currently working on a “Best Hopes” Budget for 2012, which we will share with you at the Stewardship Campaign Kick-Off on Sunday Sept. 25 at 4 p.m. in the parish hall. The “Best Hopes” Budget will include increases in a number of areas, including fellowship, hospitality and administrative support, to help us put our new facilities – and ourselves – to best use. But we will only be able to afford as much of the “Best Hopes” Budget as our pledge commitments for 2012 will permit.

Please mark your calendars and be sure to attend the Stewardship Kick-Off on Sept. 25. As you’ve heard, on that afternoon the St. Augustine’s Players will present an original “Italian operetta” entitled “Abbondanza!” to get us all in the right frame of mind to consider our pledges for 2012. You will laugh, you will cry, you will (hopefully) increase your pledge! Be there on Sept. 25 – it’s an Italian potluck, with wine (of course)!

Remember, pledges are what pay the bills and get the work done at St. Augustine’s. And pledges are a tangible display of our unselfish, “what’s best for all” approach to our community. Let’s show our poor, lost leaders in Washington, D.C., how sharing, community and “Abbondanza!” really should work!



Music at St. Augustine's
Marion Anderson, Music Director



Call for singers for our wonderful Adult Choir

Anyone who loves to sing is warmly invited to join us as we enter a new season this fall. It is not necessary to be able to read music. You just need to be able to “carry a tune” and have a love of music and our wonderful liturgy. We also invite singers who can commit to a season, such as Advent and Christmas, but who cannot sing the entire year. Please speak with Marion after the service.

Choristers

Children and youth, from 3rd grade and up, may sing in our wonderful Chorister’s program. We are becoming affiliated with the Choral Training Program of the Royal School of Church Music in America this year and we have really exciting plans for a stimulating and exciting year of singing. All children and youth and welcome – regardless of singing ability. (Ability to match pitch is not required. It is part of what we learn in the program.) Please speak with Marion after the service.



Green Living 101 by Elizabeth Davis

Common rubrics for green living include: reduce, re-use, recycle; eat lower on the food chain, less meat, more chicken and fish, more vegetables and fruit and whole grains.

Add to those this one: get toxics out of our cleaning substances. Have you checked recently to see what cleaning products are under your kitchen and bathroom sinks? If you are reading this article, you probably already do that.

Commercial household cleaners can be toxic, corrosive, flammable or reactive. Look for these words on the box or bottle: CAUTION (lowest level of toxicity), WARNING, or DANGER (highest level of toxicity). Examples from labels on some well-known products include: “caution-eye irritant” label on a window cleaner; “warning” on a liquid general cleaner; “danger-Corrosive” on bleach. If you have any such products, the first question to answer is: are they locked up or out of reach of children and pets? Once the answer to that question is ‘yes’, the second question is: are there less toxic products available to do the same job as the toxic product? The answer to that is ‘yes.’

“Green Cleaning Recipes” (attached) provides some inexpensive and easy to prepare cleaning products for drains, ovens, and mirrors and windows, as well as all-purpose cleaners and scouring powder. For other resources check out the website for the Washington Toxics Coalition at www.watoxics.org; click on ‘healthy living’, then ‘healthy homes & gardens.’

Removing toxic cleaning products from the home not only reduces chances of accidental harm to people and pets from ingestion, spillage or fumes. It also reduces harm to the environment, particularly possible drainage into surface or ground waters of the island.



St. Augustine's Animal Ministry by Margaret Schultz



October is the month that we celebrate the life of St Francis of Assisi and honor his memory by working to benefit animal welfare, especially the dogs and cats living on our beloved Whidbey Island.

Aside from love and companionship, one of the most important things we do is feed our pets. This is a fairly simple process. Buying good kind of food for our pets requires some effort on our parts. The leading source of information about pet food is television commercials. The typical format is showing you a nearly gourmet dinner and implying that it has the same contents as the pet food being advertised.

And what I say to you is "Caveat Emptor" or "Buyer Beware" A rule of thumb is if the food is heavily advertised and sold in the grocery store you should not feed it to your pet.

Let's start with dog food. Purina's "Beneful" is probably the most advertised dog food on TV. It implies with its cascading picture of vegetables and grains that it will provide all the nutrients necessary for dogs and guarantee them good health. It will not!

Why?: because the principle ingredient in Beneful is corn! Corn is an allergen for dogs and will create much itching and scratching and quite possibly a shot of cortisone at the vet's. In addition to it being an allergen, it has no nutritional value and passes through a dog's digestive tract and ends up in your yard for you to pick up.

Two other primary allergens are wheat and soy, which like corn seem to find their way into most dog food and also can cause your dog to scratch and dig at himself. This too can easily land you in the vet's office with a big bill.

In addition to these harmful foods is corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup and salt, the common elements in most junk foods. We don't need these nor do our pets.

Now about the cats. Cats and fish are like a hand and glove in our popular imagination. I am sure at one time feral cats would surround fish mongers in search of a little extra protein. Oh yes and then there is the Victorian image of Puss and Cream or milk. This is so distant from the truth!

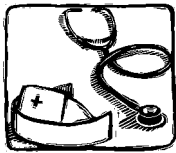
These foods except for the cream of course, might be OK if it were not for the high content of magnesium. Magnesium kills cats and in a horrific painful way by causing their bladders to explode! Not all cats, mind you but mostly male cats--about 50% of them. I have lost four cats to Feline Urinary Syndrome because the relationship between magnesium and feline fatalities was not understood back then. What is FUS?? It happens when a cat consumes too much magnesium. The magnesium forms a kind of calc, small granules that plug up the urethra. It effects male cats more than females because the end of a males urethra is much narrower. Approximately 50% of male cats are susceptible to FUS. I assure you don't want to be on the wrong end of the 50%. I was and spent \$1,000 in intensive care for my cat Loco, back in the days when you could afford veterinary care!

I have listed the principal ingredients that cause illnesses for dogs and cats but the question remains how do you find a good food for your pet. Read the labels and buy from a pet food store like Cenex, Critters and Company in Clinton or the Healthy Pet in Freeland.

Yes, you can have a pet that may have no reaction to corn, wheat, soy, or magnesium but you it is much too expensive to find out, especially when their are reasonably priced alternatives,

The most reasonable of the alternatives is Costco's Kirkland brand pet foods. None of their products contain any allergens and cost half the price of excellent name brands. This is why St. Augustine's Pet Ministry prefers monetary donations to food donations in the basket--it will go much farther because it has a higher food value. I have been using the Kirkland dog food, for 10 years with excellent results and since I started using the Kirkland Super Premium Cat Food, I have not ever experienced a single case of Feline Urinary Syndrome. (Jean Fasini from Oasis tells me that the regular cat food in the orange bags is so bad that even the hungry feral cats won't eat it.) Oh well no one is perfect!. There is lots of good pet foods available but at the pet stores and not in your grocery store.

Not all dogs or cats have allergies, but you still don't want your pets any more than kids to eat junk food so be sure to check those labels.



From the Parish Nurse
by Wendy Close

Now that we have moved in to the new building let me tell you where things are related to health. The fireside room has a counter and cupboards that are designated for the health ministry.

Under the counter are the blood pressure cuff and stethoscope as well as the first aid kit.

On the counter are more Vials of Life and assorted brochures for the taking.

Above the counter in the center is the defibrillator.

There is a recliner chair in the corner for anyone feeling the need to rest, put your feet up or recover from a bit of a fainting spell (see last month's newsletter)

Soon to come is a bookcase with health related books from the library.

Now that we finally have summer here, don't forget your sunscreen. There is a very moving video on you-tube called "Dear 16-year-old Me" about malignant melanoma. Makes you want to slather on the SPF 50 every day.

Stay well.



Stewardship by Jay Ryan Stewardship Committee, Planned Giving

FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

“The Minister of the Congregation is directed to instruct the people, from time to time, about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for the religious and charitable uses.” (page 445 of the Book of Common Prayer)

Stewardship of our resources concerns both person and assets. We have a Christian responsibility to ourself and to our family to take care of ourself—that is make appropriate provisions for our own well being. Do you know what will happen if you are temporarily or permanently incapacitated, if you are seriously ill or in a terminal condition?

You need to consider having a Health Care Power of Attorney (health care directive) to allow someone in your family to make medical decisions for you and obtain access to your medical records if you become incapacitated. Also a Living Will to tell medical personnel about your end of life desires. It would also be helpful if you would make notes regarding funeral and burial services and send these to St. Augustine’s for filing. All of these issues were discussed at our St. Augustine’s meeting on August 2. If you missed this meeting you should pick up copies of the meeting information and documents. Also relating to incapacity consider a durable asset Power of Attorney. These usually run to a spouse or a trusted child or children to make asset decisions for you while you are unable to do so.

Next in planning your estate distribution you should be mindful of a few changes that have occurred this year. The most significant change is that the Federal Estate tax credit amount is increased to \$5 Million and tax over that amount is reduced to 35%. The same exemption and tax applies for lifetime gifts. Lifetime gifts continue to have a \$13,000 per person annual exclusion as well as a medical expense, educational and charitable exemption. The marital deduction is still available for all assets passing to a spouse during life or at death. A caution however is that the Federal Law will expire after 2012 and remember the Washington State exemption is only \$2 million. There is an extension to the end of 2011 for a charitable contribution direct from an IRA for those over 70 and ½ years. The contribution is tax neutral, that is the IRA distribution is not recognized as income and is not deductible as a charitable gift.

The Book of Common Prayer also directs you, if you are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable purposes. An allocation of any part of your estate to Saint Augustine’s, the Diocese or any other Episcopal charity makes you eligible to join more than 40 other Saint Augustine’s parishioners in the Saint Augustine’s Legacy Team (SALT). The correct designation to Saint Augustine’s is:
SAINT AUGUSTINE’S IN-THE-WOODS EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Located in Freeland, Washington.

If you have made such an allocation please be sure to check this off on the Annual Commitment card that you receive from the Stewardship committee and turn it in at our Parish dinner on October 20. SALT members are also eligible to join the Diocese Bishops Society. The Bishop society has events from time to time to that often include an opportunity to visit with the Bishop. Every member receives a purple bookmark and lapel pin



Mission Sunday Offering for September by Ron St. George

For September, 2011 the parishioners of St. Augustine's Parish have chosen Habitat for Humanity as the recipient of the Mission Sunday Offering. Habitat for Humanity International has been building homes for people across the globe since it was founded in 1976 with an assist from former President Jimmy Carter. Since then it has repaired or built 400,000 homes worldwide.

Habitat for Humanity International has built homes in all 50 states and dozens of countries. The Island County Habitat for Humanity is a local affiliate acting independently within the framework of the Habitat Affiliate Covenant. All Habitat Affiliates are asked to tithe a percentage of their contributions to fund house-building work in other nations. These funds provide much-needed help for international building program while also allowing the local affiliate to share in the opportunity to demonstrate the spirit of Christian partnership.

In 2005 Habitat for Humanity International initiated a Disaster Corps program sending volunteers with specialized skills into areas hit hard by natural disasters. The 1500 nationwide affiliates puts Habitat for Humanity in the communities hardest hit by the disaster. At the local level Habitat can provide efficient and effective responses to disasters impacting housing and shelter. Disaster Corps members provide key skills needed to organize proficient home rebuilding and disaster relief.

The Island County Habitat for Humanity affiliate started in 1998. It is just one of approximately 1500 Habitat affiliates throughout the USA. Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit Christian ministry based upon the belief that every person should have a decent, safe and affordable place to live. Habitat for Humanity partners with low-income families to build homes on Whidbey Island and throughout the world. Locally, families receive financial training, home-ownership classes, and opportunities to complete required sweat equity hours as part of the "Hand Up" program to achieve homeownership.

To qualify for the Habitat Program applicants must:

Demonstrate the need for adequate shelter based upon current housing. For example, family size compared to available living space, temporary housing and the cost of available housing in the area.

Show an ability to pay based upon minimum income requirements.

Qualify for low income housing based upon maximum income requirements.

Establish a partnership with Habitat for Humanity by participating in the building of their own home, repaying an affordable mortgage, acquiring enough savings for the down payment, closing costs and attending all homeownership workshops.

The Island County Habitat for Humanity has continued it's mission to build homes through donations of time, labor, skills, and the proceeds from it's furniture store in Oak Harbor. Our regional Habitat for Humanity also benefits from donations of land and corporate grants from Lowe's. It has benefited from the assistance of building professionals and The Island County Habitat for Humanity is an independently run non-profit organization coordinating all aspects of Habitat home building in our local area. The Island County Habitat for Humanity has a goal of building six homes in 2011. Several homes have already been completed at the Crosby Commons development in Oak Harbor.

On Whidbey Island the average Habitat for Humanity home costs about \$100,000 and is approximately 1000 square feet with two or three bedrooms and one bath. The costs of homeownership are kept low as the families do not buy the land. The land is held in trust and homeowners make small monthly land lease payments. The leases are for 99 years and are renewable and transferable.

Your donation will give low-income families an opportunity to have the sense of pride and accomplishment of homeownership. As always, our combined donations will be matched up to \$500 from the Parish Endowment Fund.



St. Augustine's Episcopal Peace Fellowship Participates in the "Bean Poll"



For the Second straight year Whidbey Island Fellowship of Reconciliation (WI-FOR) sponsored a booth at the Island County Fair. WIFOR serves as an umbrella organization for Island peace groups. St. Augustine's Episcopal Peace Fellowship is affiliated with WI-FOR and is one of the founding groups. The WI-FOR booth featured a "bean poll" that allowed fair goers to deposit 10 beans in a eight tubes that represented seven possible categories of the federal discretionary budget plus a tube for supporting social security. The rough tally (we often miss marking people) was a total of 593 people we believed stopped by our booth.

The highest percentage of beans went into the education category with most everyone depositing at least one bean there (and the category was admittedly skewed by the large number of teens simply putting all their beans in this category). The other most popular categories were Medicare and health care, science and environment, poverty programs and social security. In contrast to the actual federal budget the people's "bean poll" would rank the military as seventh out of the eight categories. In the actual budget military spending accounts for around 50% of our federal discretionary spending. In response to the question "What part of the federal budget would you most want to support, we got the following responses in percentages:

Poverty Programs: 722 beans or 12.5%

Social Security: 686 beans or 11.98%

Military/Pentagon: 525 beans or 9.1%

Job Stimulus: 576 beans or 9.7%

Education: 1342 beans or 23.2%

Diplomacy and International Relations: 248 beans or 4.3%

Science and Environment: 831 beans or 14.4%

Medicare and Health Care: 853 beans or 14.8%

The interactive process began with an invitation from booth operators for passer-bys to participate in the bean poll. If a person was willing we gave them ten beans and explained the Bill Adams assists with a "bean poll" participant procedure. When participants had completed making decisions with their ten beans we showed them a bar graph of the actual distribution and asked them if they were surprised to learn that the around 50% of our national discretionary budget goes to the military at the expense of other pressing domestic needs. Most were not surprised that we spent a lot on the military, but they

often expressed surprise at the percentage. We then showed them another bar graph that showed that we spend about twice as much on our military as the entire rest of the world combined. The most important and rewarding part of the bean poll was interaction with people which led to a civil exchange of views and possibly consciousness raising. It was especially rewarding to see families including young children being involved with parents educating them as to programs. Very encouraging was the number of younger people in their teens and early twenties participating. While many adults were skeptical or chose not to participate nearly every young person accepted the opportunity to participate in the bean poll. St. Augustine's Episcopal Peace Fellowship members (Bill Adams, Bev Babson, Dick Hall, David Nakagawa, Olof Sander, Mike Seymour, Gretchen and Jack Wood) serving two hour shifts operated the booth on Friday from 9:00 AM to 8:00PM.



Adult Forum Schedule for September by Ted Brookes



September will see a continuance of our sabbatical series on Celtic spirituality and heritage. Central to this theme is the Trinity Television presentation of "The Celtic Way," featuring Anglican priest Herbert O'Driscoll and Celtic authority Ester de Waal, two of the world's foremost thinkers and writers on Celtic literature and spirituality. These two well known and respected lecturers offer deeply personal and often moving views of how they came to the Celtic vision. Sandwiched in between these presentations will be our wonderful Ministries Fair in which parish committees and organizations will share their service and mission to St. Augustine's and the community with the congregation.

Forum dates, subject matter, and presenters/hosts are listed below:

4 September - Celtic Prayers and the Oral Tradition. Ted Brookes presents.

11 September - Ministries Fair. Shantina Steele hosts.

18 September - The Islands at the Edge of the World. Ted Brookes presents.

25 September - Dark & Light in Celtic Spirituality, Part 1. Ted Brookes presents.



The St. Augustine's Players bravely
invite you to their very original Italian operetta
as we kick off the 2012 Stewardship Campaign. . .

ABBONDANZA!

*A fable about what can happen when
a church forgets what sharing is all about.*

► Starring people you know pretending they can sing opera! ◀

**Sunday September 25, 4 p.m.
The New Parish Hall**

It's an Italian potluck! Bring something Italian!
Wine will be served (of course!)
Sign up now in the narthex! Don't miss it!

Waiting For A Miracle by Lynda Anderson, Stewardship Chair

Last January at an Adult Forum we talked about the results of the Stewardship Campaign. I should begin by saying it was a good year, all things considered. Thank you so much.

I have to admit I'm worried about this coming year though. As I mentioned at that Forum earlier this year we are dangerously dependent on 3 individuals for 40% of our commitment budget. This has happened for a variety of reasons:

- We have lost some of our former donors

- Some donors have substantially reduced their commitments

- The really big donors keep increasing their commitment

- A large percentage of donors have made the same commitment for several years

This serves to create a large imbalance.

I thought a long time about how to write this article and wanted to write something inspirational. I'm afraid it came down to writing something a bit more pragmatic instead. I have met with the Vestry and asked them to do their best to create a budget for 2012 to be presented to you with our annual Fall Stewardship Campaign. We don't usually do things this way. We generally run our campaign and then create a budget that matches your promises. With our new building we will undoubtedly have an increase in expenses. I know I could go to those top three donors and ask for more, but that is not only unfair it is not good business for the long term.

No, I'm going to ask the rest of you. If you don't make an annual commitment, I hope you will pray about it and talk to me, Nigel, Fletcher, Bill or Amy. I would love to share with you the tradition going back centuries of committing the first fruits of our labors back to God. It is his after all. If you do make a commitment, I hope you will consider increasing that commitment. If you give 3% of your income, perhaps you might consider giving 4% or more. If you are currently pledging \$1000 per year this increase could be as little as \$100 per year or \$9.00 per month. I hope you will take the time to talk to one of us about this.

Amy's sermon today was entitled "Waiting for a Miracle". Her theme was miracles result from our living sacrifice; the Apostles were exhorted to feed the thousands and not wait for Jesus to do it Himself. In this context, we are the apostles. The miracles will only happen here if we all become the living sacrifice and share our abundance (five loaves, two fishes). So many of the things we have accomplished here seem like a miracle. I am praying we don't need one, but 'waiting for a miracle' will be my mantra anyway.



CSAs In Your Backyard by Ted Brookes

What's a CSA you ask? CSA stands for Consumer Supported Agriculture. By participating in a CSA farm program you are directly connecting with your source of food and lowering your carbon footprint by buying locally.

When you join a CSA, you usually pay a flat fee at the beginning of the year. Then, on a certain day each week, for a set period of time, usually June through October, you pick up a bag or box of fresh picked organic vegetables, fruits, flowers, and herbs, all grown at a local family farm. Some offer eggs and other farm products. The idea is that you are "buying" a share in the farm. You receive your "share" of the farm products throughout the growing season. In this way, the consumer shares the risks and joys of farming with the farmer. You are also contributing to a cleaner environment by replacing the hydrocarbons produced by long haul trucking and air transportation.

Each CSA farm offers a different sized share with different prices and extra options. Just looking at their prices doesn't offer an accurate comparison. Location is, of course, a very important consideration. As a participating member of a CSA you might consider sharing pick up duties with neighbors or friends. You might even share your weekly order with friends or neighbors. Call or email the CSA farmers in your area and ask for more information.

On South Whidbey there are several CSA farms. Some are listed below:

A. Forget Me Not Farms

Lois Wenzek
5700 Double Bluff Rd., Freeland
(360) 321-2523
forgetmenot_farms@yahoo.com

B. Maha Farm

Anza Muenchow
4328 Glendale Rd., Clinton
(360) 579-2890
mahafarm@whidbey.net

C. Molly's Island garden

Molly Petersons
3340 Craw Rd., Langley
(360) 321-5547
petersns@whidbey.com

D. Pam's Place Produce

Pam Mitchell
Langley
(360) 321-2157
pamsplaceproduce@whidbey.com



Flower Arranging Workshop

We had six attendees at the workshop on Saturday, July 23rd - Diana Klein, Jody Heiken, Katie Reid, Maureen Masterson, Shantina Steele, and Shirley Bauder (plus Albert Rose, who not only took all these photos, but also did a nice arrangement himself). After presenting some basic ideas on floral design to the group, I suggested they just go for it - choose a container (thrift store purchases), flowers from the 11 buckets (purchased from a local grower in Clinton - friend of Shantina's), and go for it. It was exciting to watch their creations come into being - each one so individual and beautiful. The parish hall was delightful for Sunday's coffee hour and if they chose to, each designer could take their arrangement home afterward.

