

The Light

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



JULY 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

When Bishop Greg Rickel visited us on July 12 for the joyous dedication of our new building, he took time to have lunch with our Vestry over delicious home-made pizza at the home of Susan and Kevin Sandri. We had an interesting and wide-ranging conversation with the Bishop about a lot of subjects, from the continuing turmoil at St. Stephen's in Oak Harbor to how we expect to use (and finishing paying for) our new building.

We spent quite a bit of time talking about the Episcopal Church and all the challenges it has faced in recent years. You know the litany: Ordination of an openly gay bishop in 2003. Violation of long-standing Anglican protocol by African bishops who asserted authority over a handful of dissident Episcopal parishes in the United States. Lawsuits, property disputes and negative publicity that erupted after the majority of some parishes (like St. Stephen's) voted to leave the national church. And, of course, the declining (and aging) membership of the church overall.

We asked the Bishop if he thought our national Episcopal "brand" was permanently damaged. I thought his response was intriguing: It's damaged if we believe it is.

He thinks it's time for us to "re-recruit" ourselves, to keep in mind what still binds us together and keeps us coming back, Sunday after Sunday. The national church and our local parishes still do wonderful, generous things, but those things sometimes are forgotten when we're caught up in disputes and controversy. He asked us to remember about all the outreach that St. Augustine's has done and continues to do, such as support for Good Cheer, Helping Hand, highway clean-up, greening, animal ministry . . . the list goes on. And all the ministry we do for each other, every day. Perhaps, the Bishop suggested, it's time to take a serious new look at what it means to an Episcopalian in the second decade of the 21st Century. In other words, to "re-confirm" ourselves and re-commit ourselves to the mission of the church.

I thought about the Bishop's words last Sunday (June 26) as I listened to the wonderful sermon preached by our sabbatical priest, the Rev. Dr. William Seth Adams. Bill talked about hospitality and welcoming – essential elements of our common understanding of what it means to be a Christian. He mentioned that, as very recent arrivals at St. Augustine's, he and his beloved wife and co-priest, Amy Donohue-Adams, had been impressed by the depth and warmth of the hospitality they had witnessed and received. But then he talked about something else he and Amy had noticed as newcomers among us: the heartfelt longing for some long-time parishioners who, for whatever reason, no longer come to our church. He and Amy don't know why this has happened, Bill said, nor is it particularly relevant to them. What's important, he said, is how obviously they are missed – and how many people say so.

Bill then invited us to try a little of the hospitality and welcoming on ourselves that we so generously supply to others. Call one of the missing members and invite them back. Tell them they are missed.

Bill's words certainly struck a chord in me. As a relative newcomer to St. Augustine's, I had picked up on this undercurrent as well. It's not relevant to somebody who's just joined or is thinking of joining to hear the myriad reasons why somebody else just left. It's much more relevant for a newcomer to know that a congregation that claims "reconciliation" as one of its core values actually practices it on itself.

So, with the huge effort of building the new parish hall and all the apparent stresses and strains finally behind us, maybe it's time to "try a little tenderness." Let's re-confirm ourselves as members of St. Augustine's-in-the-Woods, and, as Bishop Rickel suggests, concentrate on what still binds us together as Episcopalians in the 21st Century. Give somebody in our parish a call today and talk about it!



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



Handbells

This summer we are playing handbells before the service. It is not difficult at all and I encourage all members of the parish to give it a try. You only need to be able to count to 4! We meet downstairs near the kitchen at 10:15 for a short rehearsal and then play at 10:25 in the Narthex. Please join us!

Children's Music Activities after the service

Each first Sunday of the month, all children of the parish and visitors as well, aged 3 and up, are invited to meet me in the choir loft for about 15 minutes of music activities which will include singing and game playing, as well as playing some percussion instruments. Parents of very young children will need to accompany them to the sessions. We meet Sundays, July 3 and August 7 this summer. Please encourage your youngster to join us.

Choristers

The Choristers are seeking new members. All children (3rd grade and up) are warmly invited to join us, regardless of singing ability. Please speak with me at coffee hour for more information.



Life Planning Seminar Set For August 2, 2011

St. Augustine's Stewardship Committee will sponsor a Life Planning Seminar in our beautiful new Parish Hall on Tuesday Aug 2 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., including lunch (with a \$5 suggested donation for food). Everyone is welcome to attend this informative presentation. St. Augustine's members should add their names to the sign-up sheet in the narthex. Friends and community members should RSVP by calling the church office at (360) 331-4887.

The seminar is designed for people of all ages to help us prepare for how we would like our affairs handled if we become incapacitated or pass away. The seminar will include these elements:

- A presentation by Carla Jolley, a registered nurse at Whidbey General Hospital, about advance medical directives and medical powers of attorney, which are used to give someone you designate the authority to make medical decisions if you are incapacitated.
- A presentation by Wendy Close, our parish nurse, about hospice, home health and other kinds of care available on Whidbey Island for those with chronic or end-of-life conditions.
- A workshop led by our parish member and attorney Jay Ryan on how to gather and prepare your personal and financial information for your family to use if you are incapacitated or pass away.

The Life Planning Seminar is another of St. Augustine's outreach efforts to be of service to our own parish members as well as our friends and neighbors.



Politics and the Greening Agenda

As members of the Body of Christ, we acknowledge and embrace the divine call for us to be stewards of God's creation. It is our sacred responsibility to respect, preserve and protect all living things on this fragile Earth, our island home.

(St. Augustine's Greening Committee Mission Statement)



St. Augustine's -in-the -Woods has been designated as a Greening Congregation by Earth Ministry. As such we attempt by education and example to reduce our parish carbon footprint and apply best practices toward our environment. One aspect of our mission is to educate our congregation on environmental issues and encourage public policy that protects ecology. The Greening Committee is concerned with the recent direction of U.S. public policy. A summary of a March 4, 2011 article in the *Guardian* (UK) provides a basis for our concerns.

The election of 2008 and first actions of the new administration brought new hope for policies that could address global warming and human threats to the environment. An energy bill passed the House of Representatives with a carbon cap and trade provisions. The bill appeared on line for a narrow bipartisan approval in the Senate. However, this possibility caused a reactionary backlash by petroleum and coal corporations against the emerging green agenda. This reaction began in Houston with a lunch hour rally composed of oil company workers who were bussed to the rally site. Eighteen months later a coalition of climate change deniers and energy state Representatives and Senators had begun a full scale assault on environmental bills.

Following the 2010 Congressional elections bills were introduced in both houses of Congress designed to strip the executive branch of its powers to act on climate change. A bill introduced in the House and Senate would bar the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from using existing air pollution laws to reduce carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere.

The green agenda was also attacked by the House budget proposal that would cut EPA's budget by thirty percent. The intent of the EPA defunding was to deny the EPA the means to regulate carbon dioxide.

The House also passed a bill removing wolves from the endangered species list. With support from Montana's Democratic Senators this provision survived the budget compromise and was enacted into law. For the first time in the history of the Endangered Species Act politics overrode science - a disturbing precedent.

Pressure from Congress has also impacted the White House. The President has downgraded the post of climate advisor. As yet there has not been a strong push back from the administration to the attacks on the environment.



In the midst of this reaction against policies designed to reduce our carbon usage and continue the non partisan effort begun in 1970 to improve the quality of our environment the Greening Committee is reminded of the words of Eucharistic Prayer C, “At your command all things came to be; the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home. ... From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed

your trust ...” We pray that humans may set aside shortsighted material interests, return to a concern for earth their island home and again use their reason and skills to help save our planet. To refocus Congress and President on the dangers facing our environment will also require actions from the many greening congregations.



It takes a village . . .

by Carole Tyson

Yes, it takes a village . . . to raise a child, . . . to care for those in need, . . . and to build beautiful gardens. One of these villages exists right here within St. Augustine's. For many years the villagers have been involved in the first two activities, and with the new building and gardens, they have come forth with their hearts and souls to participate in the latter.

The time and energy, not to mention plant donations, contributed by so many of our congregation are huge in the success of this endeavor, but far more important to me personally is the time I've been able to spend with all these volunteers, getting to know them - either 'better' or for the first time. It's been a gift that I will treasure always.

From this:



To this:



From this:



To this:



From this:



To this:



Over the next few years, as the gardens evolve and mature, I know we will all take delight in the knowledge that our own little village accomplished such a wonderful feat!

My gratitude knows no boundaries – fellow villagers, you make my heart happy.

Notes from the Vestry Meeting June 16, 2011

Diana Klein, Vestry Clerk

*Building use guidelines for our new building were discussed. * Financial information on the Building Fund was updated. * The new Financial Oversight Committee will be evaluating our financial system and making recommendations.

* Annie Deacon has resigned as Director of Christian Formation. Shantina Steele will be the interim Director and is working on programs at all levels.

*Nigel's sabbatical plans and those of the parish were discussed. * Plans will be made for an "End of sabbatical celebration," along with honoring Nigel's 10 years at St. Augustine's.

* Jack Halstead has resigned from vestry due to ill health and we will discuss a replacement at the next meeting.

* The Parish Picnic will be at the church, date to be determined. * The moratorium on additional statuary in the Columbarium was upheld.

* Kelly Diefert, our janitor, has resigned and Trisha Mathenia has been hired as her replacement.

* Elena Rice has resigned as the nursery caregiver. We will be looking for a replacement.

* Susan Sandri will be meeting with the original stained glass artist to see about stained glass for the two doors near the front of the church.



You Can Count On Me!

by Ray Haman

How often do we say: “You can count on me”, when expressing our support for a family member, friend, colleague or favorite cause? The phrase has a double meaning when it involves our commitment of time, talent and treasure in support of parish operations here at St. Augustine’s – especially our advance commitment of financial support. You know – it’s the pledge.

At St. Augustine’s the Vestry and its Finance Committee don’t develop a budget for next year’s operations, and then ask the Stewardship Committee to generate the pledges to match the budget. Instead the Stewardship Committee **counts on you and me** to respond to God’s many gifts with a generous commitment of our time, talent and treasure to continue and enhance God’s work at our parish. Then the Finance Committee and the Vestry actually **count the combined amount of our financial commitments** as they develop the budget for next year’s operations. Our commitments are the cornerstone of the budget making process.

Of course, plate offerings also are important; but budgeting for our response is pure guess work. It’s those advance financial commitments, which are almost always fulfilled, that parish leaders can **count on**. So, financial planning, and God’s work, at St. Augustine’s will be vastly improved, if more of us convert our plate offerings into advance financial commitments.

Then there are those of us who have made pledges for many years at St. Augustine’s and at other parishes; but we have pledged the same amount each year since Jimmy Carter was president. We will soon occupy a new “green” building; but we can’t more than double the space available to support our many ministries without increasing the cost of heat, light and janitorial services. God can perform miracles, but that’s not one of them. However, God can inspire us to increase our financial commitments to support His work at St. Augustine’s.

Please remember these important needs of the parish next Fall, when the Stewardship Committee offers you the opportunity to respond in thanksgiving for God’s many gifts by making a prayerfully considered commitment to support God’s work at St. Augustine’s next year. I pray that God will inspire you to respond: “**You can count on me**”?



Contact Information for Bill & Amy

Dear Ones,

Beginning in June, we will be looking after the priestly responsibilities in the parish while Nigel is on sabbatical. We look forward to this very much. Consequently, it seems wise to make sure you have contact information for us, and that you have our names right.

Amy is the Rev. Amy Donohue-Adams, typically called Amy. Her email is amylfp@gmail.com. Her mobile phone is 360.914.2332. Bill is the Rev. William Seth Adams, typically called Bill. His email is williamseth1@gmail.com. His mobile phone is 360.914.2662. We do not have a landline.

Additionally, please note that we do not have the same last name. One of us is Donohue-Adams, the other one Adams. Though quite happily married, we are not “Mr. and Mrs.” because we do not share the same last name. Also, we are not “Amy and Bill Adams,” or “Bill and Amy Donohue” because we do not share the same last name. Many friends, when writing to us through the mail, address things to “Amy and Bill,” thereby resolving the last name complexity. We even have several friends who simply write “A & B.” Our names are important to us and we want you to be clear about them.

Blessings, Amy and Bill



From the Parish Nurse
by Wendy Close



Upon reviewing the first aid kit in the narthex, I quickly realized that almost all of the medications were outdated. After a shopping spree to Rite-Aid, all now is up to date. Included in this kit are all kinds of bandaids and bandages, Tylenol and Advil, Pepto-Bismol and such, a thermometer, gloves, hydrocortisone cream, antibacterial cream, and much more.

Also the blood pressure cuffs (regular and large) and a stethoscope are in a plastic box in the bottom shelf of the cabinet in the narthex should the need arise for someone other than myself to use. The defibrillator is in there as well, soon to be in a more visible spot in the new building.

Tip for the month: Don't forget to eat before church! Blood pressures and blood sugar levels can bottom out with all that standing us Episcopalians do causing us to feel faint and nauseous. It is not a pleasant feeling, and depending on underlying medical issues it could be more urgent than just getting a glass of juice and a roll at coffee hour.

Stay well!!



Mission Sunday Offering 2012
by Ron St. George, Chair MSO

Each month twelve charities (one each month) receive Mission Sunday Offerings (MSO) from St. Augustine's parishioners. Four of the charities are pre-determined by the Vestry. However, the remaining eight charities come from recommendations of our parishioners. The MSO committee will meet soon and make a final recommendation to the Vestry for approval.

We invite any suggestions for new recipients of MSO 2012. The 2011 charities that will be reviewed are: Helping Hand, Time Together, South Whidbey Youth Center, Enso House, Habitat for Humanity, All Souls Church (New Orleans), Hearts & Hammers, Citizens Against Domestic Abuse (CADA). Although the members of the MSO Committee may give preference to prior MSO recipients, almost every year one or two changes are made. Preference is given to charities in which St. Augustine parishioners have been directly giving their time, talent and/or treasure. All MSO recipients must be exempt charitable organizations under Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or activities/organizations sponsored by St. Augustine's, the Diocese or the National Church.

Anyone wishing to recommend a charity for one of the eight monthly MSO contributions in 2012 may submit a written letter to: The MSO Committee, c/o St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, PO Box 11, Freeland, WA 98249. Submissions can also be made by hand delivering the letter to the church office during regular business hours.

All written recommendations must be submitted by September 2, 2012. When submitting a proposal, please include information concerning the charity's programs and fundraising needs.

The MSO Committee is also actively seeking new members. Volunteers are most welcome. The Chair and members of the MSO Committee are approved by the Vestry at the end of each calendar year.



Adult Forum Schedule for July

by Ted Brookes



July will usher in a potpourri of adult forums that will hopefully appeal to each of you. First, we will complete our sub-series on the Gospel of Mark with 3 lectures. Sandwiched in between these 3 gospel lectures will be a special presentation on Episcopal Relief and Development, and the third in our regular series of Town Hall meetings.

Specific forum subject matter, dates, and presenters/hosts are noted below:

3 July - Gospel of Mark-God News in Mystery. Mark's Jesus is both powerful and paradoxical. His proclamation of the rule of God is demonstrated by mastery over unclean spirits and the ability to heal. Yet his teachings in parables resists easy comprehension. Only demons recognize Jesus as the Holy One. For humans, Jesus is the mystery that both attracts and repels. Despite being God's chosen son, his self designation as the "Son of Man" points to a destiny of suffering for the sake of others. The only human character who proclaims Jesus as "God's son" is his executioner. Ted Brookes presents.

10 July - Episcopal Relief and Development. The Mission Sunday Offering for this July is Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD). Chuck Hamilton, the Coordinator for ERD in the Diocese of Olympia, will give us a power point presentation that explains what the organization is and on what projects it is currently working throughout the world. Ted Brookes hosts.

17 July - "Town Hall Meeting. This gathering will be an open forum for the congregation. In addition, the Vestry will provide an update on the financing of our new building. Harry Anderson will host."

24 July - Gospel of Mark-Teacher and Disciples. Because Mark teaches his readers by showing rather than telling, the drama of discipleship in his narrative serves to instruct the readers concerning their own allegiance to Jesus. Jesus appears as a teacher who calls his disciples to be with him. However, his verbal teaching is difficult and his example is frightening. His chosen disciples, moreover, are portrayed in negative terms. They are slow to understand and, worse, are disloyal. Mark constructs the narrative of Jesus journey to Jerusalem as an instruction on the nature of discipleship. Mark's readers are to imitate Jesus, not his first followers. Ted Brookes presents.

31 July - Gospel of Mark-Passion and Death. Mark prepares his readers for suffering and death by a series of prophetic statements, but the importance of Jesus death, and the way he died, is shown by the amount of attention Mark gives to Jesus last days. After Jesus' symbolic entry into Jerusalem, he engages in a series of controversies with leaders. Then he has a last supper and prayer. This is followed by Jesus being arrested, tried, beaten, and crucified. Mark's account denies nothing of the scandal of Jesus death, but renders it meaningful by clothing it with garments of scripture, especially in its climatic moments. Ted Brookes presents.



Buying Local & Buying In-Season

by Ted Brookes

Buying locally sourced products, food and drink is a great way to make a huge difference in reducing your carbon footprint. Buying local cuts down on many contributors emitting carbon that occur during a product's supply chain. A good example of this can be found in the life of a kiwi fruit. It is grown in New Zealand, picked unripe, sprayed with preservatives, packaged using materials like plastic that are made with oil and emit CO₂ during their production. Then it has to be flown to the U.S. by air transportation because it cannot be exported on cargo ship because it will spoil. Once in the U.S. it has to be transported to supermarkets in trucks emitting more CO₂. Then we buy it and take it home, usually driving our CO₂-emitting car. This is a huge journey emitting massive amounts of carbon dioxide in the process. The kiwi fruit sure tastes great, but it and other goods imported from great distances are not so great for the environment.

Buying locally produced and in-season groceries can therefore cut out a lot of carbon emissions from transportation and reduce your carbon footprint. As well as environmental benefits, this kind of produce is likely to be better for you, and better tasting. If things like fruit and vegetables are bought locally they will be picked when ripe and will not need preservatives to keep them from spoiling. They taste better and are more healthy for you. Goods that are in season always taste better as well.

A lot of supermarkets now display notices on their packaging letting consumers know that a product has been flown in. This is important and should be considered if you are seriously committed to reducing your carbon footprint. Planes emit a huge amount of carbon, around 198 pounds per mile for a Boeing 747. so where possible, it is best to avoid groceries that have been flown into the country, or at least try and cut down how often you buy them.



The Sabbatical

Nigel will be away for three months beginning the day after Trinity Sunday (Monday, June 20). In that time Nigel will be writing his dissertation and also, in the middle, visiting the British Celtic lands (Ireland, Wales, and Scotland). In his absence we have co-interims: The Rev. Dr. William Seth Adams, and the Rev. Amy Donohue-Adams.

Since their arrival last fall (“with the snow”, as Bill likes to say) Amy and Bill have quickly found a place in our community and our hearts – we are very blessed to have them with us.

Bill was, until he retired, Professor of Liturgy at the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, TX, where one of his students was a person named Gregory H. Rickel (now our bishop).

Amy started her religious life as a Religious – a Roman Catholic nun. After ordination as an Episcopal priest Amy was, until she retired, a board-certified hospital chaplain, also in Austin.

In addition to their Sunday responsibilities they will both – in their various ways and according to their skills – participate in other important aspects of our common life.

Some of you have asked about Rev. M. Fletcher Davis. Fletcher’s summer schedule was sufficiently uncertain when we were doing the planning that he asked to be excused from involvement this time around. He will, of course, be present as able, and when not out of town.



World Class Concerts at St. Augustine's

Oops you already missed one! I know Sunday, June 26, was a sunny day and the warm temperature was just too great a temptation to stay indoors, so you didn't go to hear the Ensemble Elektra, a fabulous Baroque trio featuring our old friend, violinist Tekla Cunningham and her two colleagues, acclaimed harpsichordist Jillon Stoppels Dupree and recorder player, Vicki Boeckman. The good news is that they will be back to St Augustine's and the Greenbank Farm this summer for the annual Whidbey Island Music Festival.

Tekla Cunningham the program director brings groups of internationally recognized musicians to the Island to play early classical and baroque chamber music. This year there will be concerts on the weekends from July 29 until August 7.

The schedule is as follows:

Week 1

July 29-July 31, 2011

Program 1

Bach Brandenburg Concertos 4&6

Friday , July 29 7:30 pm at St Augustine's

Sunday, July 31, 3:00 pm at Greenbank Farm

Program 2

Handel in Italy with Ensemble Elektra

Saturday, July 30 7:20 pm at Augustine's

Week 2

August 5-August 7, 2011

Program 3

I Would Walk 500 Miles-J.S. Bach's Journey to Lubeck

Friday August 5, 7:30 pm St. Augustine's

Sunday August 7, 3:00 pm Greenbank Farm

Program 4

Abendmusik (Evening Music)

August 6, 7:30 pm at St. Augustine's



Ticket prices are: \$20 general, \$18 senior, \$15 student when purchased in advance through the ticket hotline 1-800-838-3006 or online at www.brownpapertickets.com. Also parents note that children are admitted FREE with paying adult. Tickets will be sold at the door but general admission will be \$25 instead of \$20!

These are great concerts given by internationally recognized musicians and soloists. But the really great thing is hearing these concerts in church since our sanctuary has nearly perfect acoustics and is about the same as salons in which they were originally performed. This means that you will be able to hear the music the way the composers heard it. Another thing that makes these concerts so much fun and interesting is the informality of the performances which include lively introductions and explanations of the music by the performers which creates a "up close and personal" intimacy, which is oftentimes lost in the formality of a concert hall.

Do come and bring your kids, grandkids, nephews and nieces. They are free and this will be a great educational opportunity which may instill in them a love of classical music.

Margaret Schultz



St. Augustine's New Building Dedication

Dear Friends,

It's difficult to put into words the joy I felt as I watched so many of us gather to dedicate our new building. Ringing our 110-year-old bell to commence the dedication was a thrill I will long remember. I kept hearing people saying over and over that the addition is "more than I ever dreamed it would be." And didn't we have a party worthy of our new space? The look of happy amazement on so many faces truly said it all. We all deserve a pat on the back and a hearty "thank you" for taking this leap of faith, creating a beautiful new space and dedicating it in such a joyous fashion to the glory and service of God for decades to come.

Harry Anderson,
Senior Warden



Dear friends:

We would like to start this spring newsletter of Children's Hospice with the famous words of American philosopher Susanne K. Langer: "Life is a succession of moments. To live each one is to succeed".

We'll tell you about those moments that make up the lives of our young patients. They do not know what will happen to them tomorrow. Nevertheless every day they find an opportunity to rejoice in something and to be surprised, to learn something new about themselves and the surrounding world, without waiting for that invisible moment when everything in their lives will improve. And we learn this remarkable ability from them. As far as we can, we make them happy and surprise them...

First of all, **our medical news:**

The health condition of our patients resting in the hospice inpatient facility after chemotherapy is stable. One of our patients, Polina P., even started to move through the hospice in a wheelchair, a short time ago this seemed impossible for her.

Xenia P., one and a half year old girl with a cervical spine injury, was delivered to us again from the intensive care unit of St. Petersburg State Pediatric Academy. Her health still remains in critical condition. She is bound to an oxygen concentrator, since she feels worse without the oxygen support.

Within cooperation between Children's Hospice and specialists of St. Petersburg State Pediatric Academy we proposed a concept of services for treating chronic pain in children. As a realization of this concept, we began treatment of Tanya K., a girl with complex regional pain syndrome. We will report treatment results in the next newsletter.

Throughout March, Stepan R., a boy suffering from a severe cancer disease, was treated in Children's Hospice. His health condition deteriorated despite the best efforts of doctors. With the help of consultants from the Pediatric Academy, we were able to reduce the pain syndrome, but the disease proved to be stronger. In early April the boy passed away. This loss reflected in the heart of every one of us.

Nobility and beauty

Nobility and beauty – by both these words we could symbolically describe many of the events that occurred in Children's Hospice in the early spring.



In March, the Zapashny Brothers Circus presented its performances in St. Petersburg. Our young patients, their parents and friends have been honorary guests of the circus for the third consecutive year; they received invitations to all performances. The circus management provided Children's Hospice with the best tickets for every performance of the bright and colorful show "Camelot -2. Vicar of the Gods." The characters of the performance showed an example of courage, patience and kindness, which can defeat any evil. It's an example of hope for anyone who finds himself in a difficult life condition.

After one of the performances, Edgar and Askold Zapashny responded to our request and personally met with a very sick little girl from Chelyabinsk region in the Urals. Viktoria had long dreamed about this meeting. The brothers saw before them a fragile girl, who passed through eight years of treatment, but had not lost her faith in miracles and her ability to enjoy life sincerely. On that day, Viktoria felt doubly happy - she made friends at once with two true knights!

This spring began in the Children's Hospice with the celebration of Maslenitsa, also known as Pancake week. The whole week the children ate pancakes and baked them by themselves. They met with interesting guests and learned ancient folk traditions. Both children



and adults put the warmth of their souls and the infinite desire for life into everything that happened - despite all the troubles and contrary to the cold winter outside...



Then there was another holiday that united all of us. It was the Women's Day on March 8, which was dedicated, above all, to the beloved mothers of our little patients. It was very important for us that the mothers, who used to care unceasingly for their children and to support them, would feel on that day someone's care and support in return. They were showered with admiration, respect and love and received handmade gifts from their kids.

All of our plans were realized through the efforts of many wonderful people. After the masters of a beauty salon performed a magical transformation of our mothers, they attended a true author's music concert in the library of Children's Hospice inpatient facility. Meanwhile, the employees of our psychosocial service helped the children to create true little masterpieces - sunny greeting cards. The cards reflected the most gentle and genuine children's feelings, the value of which cannot be described in words...



We are happy that there are people on our side whom we do not have to ask for help - they will offer it by themselves before we have time to ask. They cannot remain indifferent, knowing that someone is in trouble. One of these people is Vitaly Kuznetsov, hospice volunteer. Vitaly studied political science and is a university lecturer. But above all he is a rescuer. Not only due to the additional education, which he is receiving at a rescue officer's course, but also following the dictates of his heart.



Vitaly tries to help our children in every matter he can. He also supports our staff in their work with children. This is a man who never lets you down. Being the most active Children's Hospice volunteer-driver, he also motivated his friends to give transportation services for Children's Hospice with their own cars. In March he held a seminar on first aid in various emergency situations to Children's Hospice staff. In particular, he told in detail the rules for how to behave during a fire. Such knowledge is essential to everyone, but it is especially important for those people whose work involves responsibility for others.

We wish you cordially a happy and bright spring and success in all your endeavors. Thank you for your assistance and support to Children's Hospice. We hope that what you have read touches both your heart and your soul. Please share this joy with your friends and pass this newsletter on to some of them. If any questions arise, don't hesitate to contact us. We are always happy to hear from you. See you in the next issue of our bulletin.

Yours faithfully,

Fr. Alexander Tkachenko, Children's Hospice, March-April 2011

Detski Hospis/Children's Hospice

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Web: <http://www.kidshospice.org>

United States:

If you would like to take a tax deduction on the donation, make your check payable to **St. Augustine's in-the-Woods Episcopal Church**, and clearly mark on the memo line "Children's Hospice". Be sure that your correct name and return address are included.

Mail your donation to: **St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, P. O. Box 11, Freeland, WA 98249.**

Beyond Tithing: What is a “church dollar” worth?

by David Close

My brother and I found ourselves talking about the increasing costs involved in raising a family. At the time we each had three children, and it seemed they were fast eating us out of house and home. After a recent family trip together to a local ski area I commented that it seemed incredibly expensive. My brother responded in a matter of fact manner, “Oh it only cost a couple of “ski dollars!” I asked him what a “ski dollar” was. He responded that a “ski dollar” is one hundred regular dollars. Every ski trip since then has seemed so much more manageable and within the affordable bench mark of a just a couple of “ski dollars!”

Well we didn’t stop there. We soon invented the “house dollar” after my brother finished building a house. He explained to me that any changes he made to the original design of the house cost him no less than one “house dollar!” A house dollar, he explained, was one thousand dollars.

Soon I invented my own dollar. I called it a “church dollar.” I explained to my brother that when I began my ministry in 1973 parishioners were more often than not putting one dollar bills in the offering plate at church. After thirty years it seemed to me people were still predominantly putting one dollar bills in the offering plate. I suggested that a “church dollar” is still just one dollar.

I didn’t think much more about the “church dollar” until I retired and found myself sitting in the pew every Sunday. I began thinking about my own practice of placing cash in the offering plate as it passed me every Sunday. I discovered that I had fallen into the same pattern as most people. The first thing I reached for was a “church dollar!” I began to think about what I was doing in making my cash offering every Sunday at church. Wendy and I were already tithing 10% of our income to the church. Those payments had always been written monthly and placed in the offering plate. I knew I could easily be more intentional about my decision of what to place in the offering plate each Sunday as it passed by. Because my offering is a response of thanksgiving for what I have been blessed to receive from God I knew I could do better. I decided that I would always take out the largest bill in my wallet and place that in the offering plate as it passed by. I have discovered that I rarely now make an offering of one dollar on Sunday. My “church dollar” is much more likely now to be a twenty dollar bill and occasionally I am surprised by a stray fifty that I forgot about.

This simple practice has enhanced my participation in worship by providing a real opportunity to consider what constitutes my offering at every Eucharist. It makes me realize that there is a direct connection between my every day life (represented by what happens to be in my wallet) and my worship on Sunday. I am also certain that it has increased the funds which the church can use for its various ministries. Perhaps you could find it helpful as well. What’s the value of your “church dollar?”

Blessings in Christ,
David Close



Mission Sunday Offering for July Episcopal Relief & Development

Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday is a special opportunity to live out the promises made in our Baptismal Covenant, by demonstrating our commitment to care for people who are hungry, sick or living in extreme poverty. Our church will celebrate Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday on July 10. We will collect the Mission Sunday Offering to support the Episcopal Church's mission to heal a hurting world. Please give generously. Your offering will go to the agency's Global Needs fund, which fights poverty and disease worldwide by helping people sustain healthier, safer and more productive lives. Remember that your gifts will be matched by interest from St. Augustine's endowment fund.

Mission Sunday Offering envelopes are located in the pew racks. Please make checks payable to St. Augustine's and write "Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday" on the memo line.

A wealth of information is available about the programs Episcopal Relief & Development carries out and how our gifts are used in response to poverty and disaster by accessing the website: <http://www.er-d.org/>. Here you will find real life stories of how lives have been transformed.

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July CALENDAR

- 1 = Ethel Water's Birthday
- 4 = Pat Hoelting's Birthday
- 11 = Susan Sandri's Birthday
- 12 = Bob & Shirley Erb's Anniversary
Pete Vandegrift's Birthday
- 15 = Zach Idso's Birthday
- 16 = Melinda Kurtz's Birthday
- 20 = Wren MacLean's Birthday
- 21 = Ted & Pat Brooke's Anniversary
Woodsie MacLeod's Birthday
- 23 = Gerry Rosenau's Birthday
Ron McKinnell's Birthday
- 24 = Konrad Borden's Birthday
- 26 = Marv Idso's Birthday
- 29 = Whidbey Island Music Festival
- 30 = Whidbey Island Music Festival
Jay Ryan's Birthday