



The St. Francis Bulletin

FROM THE RECTOR:

As I write this I am struck by the ongoing series of natural disasters in our country and around the world. Just in August alone the bridge collapse in Minneapolis, miners trapped and possibly killed in Utah, an earthquake in Peru killing hundreds, floods in the upper Midwest (after our flooding in Texas earlier this summer), and finally Hurricane Dean, presently pounding the Mexican coastline. I'm sure there are others with less impact but these are enough to get our attention. It is not that these kinds of things don't happen all the time. It just seems that they are coming more frequently and one on top of the other. What's going on? I don't know. The immediate response from some would be global warming. However, a Canadian scientist has just reworked the NASA data on global warming, found an error in the data, and has come to the conclusion that four of the warmest years on record were actually in the 1930's. Maybe it's something else. Maybe the Lord is trying to get our attention. Maybe God wants us to realize in a more complete way who is in charge and to whom our attention needs to be directed. Let's face it, when these kinds of calamities strike our attention is directed heavenward, even if only briefly, unless of course we are on the receiving end. Remember how many folks found their way to a church in the aftermath of September 11? That knee jerk response quickly ebbed when it became apparent that we were not going to be attacked repeatedly. But our God is a jealous God who wants our attention on a more enduring basis, not just when we find ourselves in desperate need. What has been your response to all of the most recent tragedies? Like the news media most of us tend to focus on the disaster of the moment until the next one comes along. Have we turned to God in prayer during any of these situations? Are we reminded in any way how fragile we are as human beings and how much we depend upon God moment by moment for everything?

Are we moved to respond in any way to the needs of our brothers and sisters wherever they may be? To put it most simply, if God has been trying to get our attention during all of this, has it worked? Think about it and try to determine what your response should be to all of these things. Scripture says that if we are able to interpret the portents in the heavens, shouldn't we be able to understand the signs of the times? What are the signs of the times saying to us? And is it time to turn our attention more intently toward our God?

Kevin McCommon

Our parish just lost another good guy. On August 15 Kevin McCommon went home to the Lord after a brief but intense illness. There were obviously many people who attended Kevin's memorial service at St. Francis who knew Kevin better than I. But from all the things I heard my impression of him was the same as theirs. He was bright, witty, passionate about many things, and a committed Christian. I could really like someone like that and in fact I did. Please keep his family and especially his son, Sam, in your prayers. May God have mercy on Kevin's soul and may Kevin rest in peace!

Adult Education

Sometime in September I would like to begin another adult education series. However, I am undecided about what to do. I'd like those who are willing and intending to participate help me decide. I have two thoughts. The first is to do a Scripture study on the Letter to the Romans. I have done this before but quite a few years ago. Romans is always worth reading and studying. It is the most theological of Paul's letters and is an immense source of reflection. My other thought is to do a book discussion on Dallas Willard's The Divine Conspiracy. This book is an

extraordinarily in depth reflection on the Sermon on the Mount and it's implications for us as Christians. I'll take comments for a little while and then decide. Please let me know your thoughts.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

It's that time again! Christian Education classes for children and youth begin September 9 at 9:30 am in the Parish House. Plans are in the works to begin the school year with three classes: Kindergarten and younger, 1st through 5th grade, and 6th grade on up.

The older youth will begin the year under the direction of Steve McCown. Each class will be a discussion of the lessons set for that Sunday with the hope that each will try to apply the message in his/her lift during the upcoming week. The conversation can get quite lively at time. They will meet in the meeting room.

The elementary aged children and the Kindergarten and younger classes will meet separately, but will have the same lesson. The roster of teachers in not quite set, but Susan Rambin, Elaine Williams and I are committed to working with these children.

These two classes will be incorporating Godly Play into the lessons. It is also a wonderful way for to tell the stories of faith -- Bible stories, baptism, church seasons, and others -- in ways that allow both the adults and the children to enter the stories "as little children" and discover the riches that are waiting there for all of us. Here is a good explanation of Godly Play:

"Godly play" is a term coined by Jerome Berryman to describe an approach to children's spiritual formation that is based on creating a sacred space in which to present the stories of our faith, wonder about them together, and then allow the children open-ended opportunities, usually with art supplies, to engage the story on their own terms.

The stories are told very simply, with simple props, and without interpretation or moral instruction. After a story is presented, the children and the storyteller wonder together about aspects of the story that draw their interest. For instance, with the parable of the Good Shepherd, they might wonder together how the sheep felt as they followed the shepherd. Or whether the sheep have names.

Or how it might feel to be inside the sheepfold.

After a time of exploring the story with wondering, the story is put away, the children choose the art supplies they would like to work with, and they spend some time creating whatever they choose, in response to what they feel is most important in the story, or most interesting.

This is play. It is Godly. It is meeting God along with children rather than teaching them what we adults think they ought to know. Our faith stories are very powerful and offer plenty to think about even without our elaboration on what they "mean." Godly play is often deeply satisfying for the adults who engage the stories along with the children.

New children are always welcome to attend Sunday school classes at St. Francis. Please include the teachers, the children, and their parents in your prayers.

Amy Crandell, Children's Christian Education Director

Fifth Sunday Activities

September has 5 Sundays, so on September 30 these extra activities are scheduled:

Potluck Luncheon: bring something good to eat and stay to share the food with other St. Francis members and friends after the 11:00 service.

Retirement and Nursing Home visit: a small group of adults continues to provide a service of hymns, prayers, and Bible readings from 3:30 to 4:30 on the 5th Sunday. Please feel free to join us. The location is 6909 Burnet Lane in the dining hall.

Games Night

Games night is held the first Friday of every month with the September event scheduled for September 7. This is a fun time for children of all ages and adults. Many people are able to attend the Evening Prayer service, which begins at 5:30. When this concludes, we all gather in the Parish House for fellowship and a light potluck supper. After a while, we break out the games - - sometimes several and sometimes we all play the same game. The evening usually concludes around 8:30. Come for part or all of the events. It is a truly enjoyable evening.

ALTAR GUILD NEWS

In the spring of this year the Altar Guild requested donations from the members of St. Francis to purchase a new Frontal Cloth for our Altar. The amount requested was \$2,000.00. The generosity of the members of St. Francis was overwhelming. The requested amount has been reached and as Director of the Altar Guild I say thank you to those who gave so generously to make our place of worship a more beautiful tribute to our Lord. The Frontal is in the process of being ordered and will arrive approximately six weeks after the order has been placed. Again, I say thank you for your generosity.

Shirley Ellis
Altar Guild Director



WOMEN OF ST. FRANCIS/ ALTAR GUILD

Combined meetings on September 8th in the Parish Hall

The Altar Guild of St. Francis Church will have a brief meeting on Sat., Sept. 8th, at 10:00 am to update members about Altar duties for the remainder of the year. At approximately 10:30 am, the Women of St. Francis will gather for the scheduled fall meeting. A short devotional will be followed by committee reports and refreshments. All parish women are invited to attend and join in the life of St. Francis Church.

Rector: The Reverend Len Giacalone
Senior Warden: Mark Rambin
Junior Warden: Keith Harrell



Birthdays

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| 2 | Diane Lazelle |
| 7 | Eileen Cole |
| 22 | Brian Hoard Bill Reading |
| 25 | Sheri Brummett |
| 28 | Marion McIlhaney Nathan Jensen |

Anniversaries

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| 5 | Mark and Susan Rambin |
| 6 | Steve & Angie McCown |
| 9 | Clif and Merry Nell Drummond |



Associate Rector: The Reverend John Stults
Organist: Sylvia Kelley
Server: Ray Merrill

Newsletter Submissions

Any parishioner that has news of any kind they would like to share with everyone is welcome to send it in writing to Tricia Denslow at 640 B Lakeside Dr., Wimberley, TX 78676 or to her e-mail address (triciadenslow@yahoo.com). If received **by the 20th**, it will appear in next month's newsletter.

St. Francis Episcopal Church

1408 West 9th Street

Austin, Texas 78703

SEPTEMBER

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| 2 | <u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., <u>Morning Prayer and Holy Communion</u> , 11:00 a.m., Ecclesiasticus 10:7-18, Psalm 112, (Hebrews 13:1-8), Luke 14:1, 7-14 | 16 | <u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m., Exodus 32:1, 7-14, Psalm 51:1-11 1 Timothy 1:12-17, Luke 15:1-10 <i>Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.</i> |
| 3 | Labor Day | 18 | Adult Education begins. 7:00 pm. |
| 7 | Evening Prayer, 5:30 p.m. Games Night | 21 | Evening Prayer, 5:30 p.m. |
| 8 | Altar Guild meeting 10:00am Women of St. Francis meeting 10:30 am | 23 | <u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m., Amos 8:4-12, Psalm 138, 1 Timothy 2:1-8, Luke 16:1-13 <i>Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.</i> |
| 9 | <u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m., Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 1, Philemon 1-20, Luke 14:25-33 <i>Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.</i> | 28 | Evening Prayer, 5:30 p.m. |
| 10 | Grandmother's and Mother's Prayer group, 11:00 a.m. Vestry Meeting, 5:30 p.m. | 30 | <u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., Amos 6:1-7, Psalm 146, 1 Timothy 6:11-19, Luke 16:19-31 <i>Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.</i> <i>Pot Luck Lunch 12:30 pm</i> |
| 14 | Evening Prayer | | |