

# Saints Alive!

A publication of All Saints Episcopal Parish in San Leandro, California  
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October 2008

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## How You Should Vote This Year

*Fr. Rob Droste, Rector*

Did that headline get your attention? Most Episcopalians I know get pretty revved up by the idea of their priest taking a position on anything political.

You can relax. I'm not actually going to tell you how you should vote, as in which candidate you should support. Rather, I'm going to tell you a way to put a few of the best Christian principles into your decision no matter whether you're red, blue, or somewhere in between. The material is adapted from pages 304 and 305 of the *Book of Common Prayer*—the agreement we make with God at baptism of our children and then reaffirm regularly as our guiding rules for living.

First is the most basic. Before we make a decision, it's always good to affirm that we believe in a loving, powerful, kind, and compassionate God who created and sustains all things. It's so important not to skip this step. It's easy to say, "Well, I believe that," and really not think about it very much. Sitting quietly with this idea for a few moments usually produces a kind of calm in us. That improves all our decision-making. Then as we decide, we ask ourselves: "Does this vote affirm to the best of my ability my belief in a powerful and compassionate God?"

Second is "like unto it." Having remembered that God is powerful and present, we then remind ourselves that in the life, person, and work of Jesus Christ, we see that God loves every human being passionately. There are no exceptions. In fact, God seems to have a special interest in the poor, marginalized, and outcast. As people of God, we will always want to exercise all of our powers to cooperate with God's activity on their behalf. We ask

ourselves: “Does this vote affirm to the best of my ability my belief that God cares deeply about the poor and I should too?”

Third, we are to take a close look at our own “shadow” side and do what we can to shed light on it. Each of us carries anxiety, fear, envy, greed and gluttony, resentment, lust (especially for power over others), and more. Political strategists of all types understand this very well. If we are aware of the universal tendency to participate in the “isms” like racism, sexism, etc., and are willing to admit we have them and do what we can to heal them, we will be much less susceptible to manipulation. We ask ourselves: “Does this vote, to the best of my ability, recognize and neutralize the fact that I was trained to believe in many ‘isms’ and I’m trying to repent of them?”

This might seem like a lot of work. It is—but voting is important and deserves our efforts. Yes, the questions above are asked at the same time we are reading up on candidates and ballot measures, googling for more information, watching the news and discussing issues of our day with friends and family. But for the Christian, voting is much more than getting the “facts” as best we can. We are to affirm with all of our activities the broad principles available to us. These principles help us to make the best decisions we can as we step into the voting booth.

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## Social Ministries

*Tom Breckenridge*

### **Food Pantry Relaunch: Saturday, November 1**

*Great facility and clean. Will be a great site.*

With these words, the Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB) accepted our application for membership. Saturday, November 1, will be the launch date for the rebirth of the food pantry ministry that had been under the care of the Brotherhood of St Andrew. Congratulations and appreciation go out to all who have done so much to make this possible.

In its new manifestation, the food pantry will be held on the first Saturday of each month. Volunteers will set up a mini-grocery store in the parish hall, starting at 10:00 a.m. The groceries will have been picked up by a few designated shoppers. After the setup is complete, the volunteers will be joined by the Liturgy of the Steward workers for lunch. We'll then open the doors for the hungry at 1:00. Pantry guests will enter through the front door and sign in in the narthex. Volunteers will distribute food to the guests as they circle through the parish hall, then exit through the parking lot door.

Parishioners who have visited food pantry operations at St. Gregory's and Halcyon Baptist have come away filled with the positive spirit that pulses through these ministries. We look forward to generating more of that spirit here at All Saints.

If you'd like to get involved, contact Tom Breckenridge, 632-6479, [tom.breckenridge@gmail.com](mailto:tom.breckenridge@gmail.com)

### **Food Pantry Orientation: Saturday Morning, October 18 (10 to 11:30)**

Your help is needed! We anticipate a good-sized crowd for the pantry, and having a large, knowledgeable volunteer base is essential for a smooth operation. We promise an interactive—and yes, entertaining—morning. Meet some neighbors and Holy Cross members as you see what the excitement is all about. See you there!

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## **Free Tables for Nonprofits and Neighborhood at November 15 Auction**

*Maxine Sitts*

All Saints is providing free information and sales tables to advertise your favorite cause, charity, or worthy project at the November 15 Auction at All Saints.

You can use your table to provide opportunities for donations, display information to educate people, or make other imaginative offerings. The tables are for nonprofit use only. We expect that some of the tables will raise funds for All Saints causes, while others may be devoted to other nonprofits. If you know of others in our neighborhood who would like a table, please let them know about this opportunity.

The tables will be set up in the Fireside Room for the auction on Saturday, November 15, and will stay through Sunday services the next day.

So far, the following organizations have reserved tables:

- Building Futures with Women and Children
- The School for Deacons
- All Saints Social Ministry Team: Food Pantry
- Episcopal Church Women—with homemade goodies to support youth Uganda trip
- Episcopal Diocese Emergency Response Team (New Orleans) and Sarah Streicher Educational Memorial Fund

If you would like more information, please contact Maxine Sitts at [sittsbreck@att.net](mailto:sittsbreck@att.net).

## **An Easy and Cost-Free Way to Help All Saints In Its Mission: eScrip**

*Maxine Sitts*

With no effort or expense on your part, you can help All Saints build its Neighborhood Center, help feed our community, and fulfill its mission of doing God's work in the world!

If you already have signed up for eScrip, then be sure to renew your participation when eScrip contacts you by email or in the mail. If you haven't signed up, then please do so. It's all done on the web, and we can help you if needed. To enroll, go to [www.escrip.com/](http://www.escrip.com/).

Many All Saints folks have been enrolled for years, benefitting All Saints with close to \$1,000 just last year. If we enroll more folks, we can do so much more! Please contact any one of these people for help in enrolling: John Trubina, Tom Breckenridge, or Maxine Sitts.

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## **Passing the Chef's Baton**

*Tom Breckenridge*

All Saints cooks have a reputation to uphold. Join this select group of chefs known throughout the San Leandro area by agreeing to prepare one meal this year, inviting your friends and colleagues to join you. The meal is prepared the fourth Sunday of the month—usually at All Saints Neighborhood Center, 911 Dowling Boulevard—and delivered to the nearby Building Futures for Women and Children shelter.

### **Bonuses**

1. The biggest bonus is providing a meal for 36 women and children who are truly appreciative! You'll feel sooo good!
2. A secondary bonus is having a terrific party with your friends and colleagues as you prepare the meal in about an hour in a kitchen equipped to handle you and your entourage.
3. A third bonus is receiving guidance and recipes (if needed) from Famous Chefs of All Saints.

Sign up now! Times are limited through the remainder of 2008: October 26, November 23, December 28. To sign up, contact Tom Breckenridge at [tom.breckenridge@gmail.com](mailto:tom.breckenridge@gmail.com).

## Thank You, Liturgical Training Participants

Thank you to all who participated in the Liturgical Training sessions. We had a great turnout. Many blessings to you all. If you would like to have a training manual, we have a few left over from the training sessions. Contact John Trubina, [jtrubina@comcast.net](mailto:jtrubina@comcast.net).

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## Community Update

*Diana Souza, All Saints Member and San Leandro City Council Member*

### Senior Center Contract Awarded

In June the City Council sold \$13 million in redevelopment bonds to fund construction of the new Senior Community Center. In July we approved the award of a contract to Alton Construction—one of 12 bidders—to build the center! I am surprised at how few seniors have heard about this extraordinary progress. Please let all your friends 55+ in town know to expect a new Senior Community Center soon.

### Ask your Council Member!

The City Council recently agreed to place three City measures on the November ballot. These measures are intended to help with the budget deficits the City is facing due to the recent downturn in the economy. I support all three measures and urge you to vote for them too.

**911 Fee.** Many of you have seen in the papers recently that the state Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal of the Union City 911 fee case. What this means to San Leandro residents is that the Council has to eliminate this fee, creating a major loss of public safety funding and adding to the City's already large deficit. With the passage of the 911 Emergency Communications Access special tax, we can ensure the tax is used to fund public safety telephone dispatch services and that any future changes to the tax rate structure require a vote of San Leandro citizens. The 911 tax would replace the 911 fee residents have been paying since 2004.

**Utility User Tax (UUT).** The Utility Users Tax Modernization measure would update certain elements of the UUT ordinance to add new types of telecommunications not captured in the old tax structure and at the same time lower the current tax rate for telecommunications and video services from 6% to 5.7%. Internet services such as email, browsers, and digital downloads will not be taxed, nor will DSL or high-speed cable modem services. Residents have been paying the UUT since 1972, and this new measure would replace the current measure. Should the measure not pass, residents will continue to pay the 6% UUT.

**Police Service Parcel Tax.** The Police Service Parcel Tax would provide funding for San Leandro Police Department (SLPD) programs and services. The current deficit is likely to require program cuts in the coming year. The Police Services Parcel Tax has been proposed to help ensure that the SLPD can maintain its current resources and new crime prevention programs. The new tax would equal about \$48 per single-family home and between \$3 and \$12 per 1,000 sq ft for business, generating an additional \$2.3 million directly to the SLPD. The measure also includes a four-year sunset clause, meaning that any extension of the tax requires a new vote.

Should anyone wish to discuss these issues further with me personally, please call me at 510-856-8577. You can find more information on the ballot measures in the November 2008 Election Sample Ballot. Additionally, you can find information on the District 2 City Council race and the four San Leandro School Board races in your sample ballot.

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## Taking Action—Preserving Our Parks and Green Space

*Hillary Van Austen, President, Broadmoor Neighborhood Association*

Proposition Measure WW would extend a bond measure (Measure AA) that was passed in 1988, without raising the present property tax rates above the present rate of \$10 per year per \$100,000 of your assessed property's value. The measure will also bring over \$3.7 million dollars to the City of San Leandro for urban park improvements and acquisitions. That means that projects such as the East Bay Greenway, Bay Trail connections along the San Leandro shoreline, and an off-leash dog park could be earmarked for funding.

You can learn more about Measure WW in a couple of ways: (1) Visit the East Bay regional website at [www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org). (2) Attend an informational meeting. A local grass-roots group of concerned citizens is holding community information meetings in our area. Contact Tracy Vernon at 635-7460 or [jrshimko@earthlink.net](mailto:jrshimko@earthlink.net) about meeting times and locations. They are also in need of volunteers to get the word out about the Park Bond Measure. To volunteer, contact Mauricio Garzon at 848-0800 x310 or email him at [mauricio@sfbaysc.org](mailto:mauricio@sfbaysc.org). As one of the members says, "Just do *anything*. Just tell two neighbors about the upcoming election or zip off an e-mail to a work colleague."

If you are interested in endorsing the Park Bond measure, write to "Friends of the East Bay Regional Park District" to have yourself put on an endorsement list. Include your name, organization, address, and phone. Either email [FriendsofEBRPD@aol.com](mailto:FriendsofEBRPD@aol.com) or write to Jerry Kent, Endorsements Coordinator, 1904 Franklin St. #609, Oakland, CA 94612.

## National Night Out: What Next— Perhaps Project 365?

*Maxine Sitts*

After our successful National Night Out (NNO) barbecue, what can All Saints do to improve safety and security in our community?

One idea is to partner with Broadmoor Neighborhood Association to focus on a few goals—and achieve them in the next year. Some ideas so far:

- Calming traffic at Roosevelt and other schools.
- Working with SLPD to establish neighborhood walk-arounds.
- Improving lighting around our homes.
- Holding meetings about safety, security, and emergency preparedness. Our new Neighborhood Center can serve as a meeting place.

If we achieve the goals we set, we can apply for a national award from the NNO organization by participating in [Project 365](#). This involves designating a problem area in our neighborhood and working to resolve it. We qualify for Category 5—areas with populations of less than 15,000. Awards are based on the overall campaign, neighborhood participation, law enforcement involvement, promotion, special events, and a postproject report.

If you are interested in this project, please contact me, Maxine Sitts, at [sittsbreck@att.net](mailto:sittsbreck@att.net).

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## Meet the Moores!

Karen and Lucy Moore found All Saint's Episcopal Church in March 2007.

*Some people say there are no "accidents" in life, and we believe that we were guided to this wonderful community of people who have helped us get back on our spiritual paths.*

### Lucy's Story

I was raised in the Episcopal Church; however, attendance and being a part of a church community were spotty at best through my childhood. As a young adult, starting a family, I wanted to reach out to a church community. The opportunity came when my mother and stepfather joined St. Peter's Episcopal Church in San Pedro, California. Due to the connection my parents felt with the church community, they soon became active members.

Their spiritual path led them to enter the ministry—my mother as a trained spiritual advisor/counselor, and my stepfather as an Episcopal priest.

My children, Ryan, Kevin, and Karen, attended St. Peter's Episcopal Day School and we continued as active members of the church for many years. As my children became more involved in middle and high school activities, we drifted away from this wonderful church community. My life was focused on raising my family and building a career in the business world. By now I was a single parent, and all of my energy and attention were spent on surviving economically, emotionally, and psychologically. Leaving my spiritual community was an act based on "time management"; however, now I realize how much more difficult my life became without the support of a caring group of individuals with whom I could share my life.

After many years in business, I left that world and started teaching. I was seeking something more in my life. I felt a strong desire to "make a difference." Making money for a financial institution no longer filled that need for me. I have been an educator for ten years, and I have never regretted that life-changing decision.

This is one example of many in my life where I have felt God was directing me to grow and spiritually connect in a different way. For the past ten or more years, I have been searching to find a place to build my faith and spiritual connection with a community of friends. In March, at the suggestion of my daughter, Karen, I came to All Saints Church. I immediately felt welcomed, loved, and connected to this new community of friends. Once again, I feel, I have been directed by a loving God to begin again the search and study of my spiritual path. I am not sure where this will lead me, but I know, with the support of this church fellowship, I will once again find my way.

*Karen's story to come . . . .*

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## **Neighborhood Center Progress Report: Building Fund Held Its Own This Summer**

*Maxine Sitts*

In July we added three names to our list of funders. And nearly all the monthly pledges came in on time. This is good news as we complete the first major repair and painting!

In October and November, we are taking time to listen to one another's ideas about the next phases. This listening time is also a chance for us to build up the building fund, so that we can "pay as we go." Our next phases include the children's areas and kitchen, along with other needs. As you know, the Building Plan has four more major components—all of which we want to complete by our centennial in 2010:



Welcome!

- Wheelchair ramps and other ADA upgrades
- Kitchen upgrades
- Enhancements to family/children's areas
- Renovations of front courtyard

Financially, the record of received funds from all sources in 2007 and 2008 was \$96,198.50 at the end of the summer. Thanks to all who are keeping their Building Fund pledges current, and if you haven't made a pledge, please do!

We know that the Building Fund is over and above our pledge to the operating fund of All Saints. It requires extra commitment from parishioners. But, the good news is that the Building Fund Drive will end when our ultimate goal is met. Now is the time for us to make a difference in our parish life, in our neighborhood, and in the world—fulfilling our mission of service.

## Mark Your Calendars\* \*Social ministry events are green.

### **Sunday, October 12**

Fall Fundraiser for An Episcopal Ministry to Convalescent Hospitals, 5:30 p.m.

### **Saturday, October 18**

Food Pantry Orientation, 10:00 to 11:30, All Saints kitchen

### **Sunday, October 19**

**Sean McConnell**, Diocesan Communications Director, will be our preacher at both Sunday services. He will speak on his recent trip to Iran.

April Showers, 11:00 to 2:00, San Leandro Boys and Girls Club

### **Sunday, October 26**

Cooking for BFWC, 11:00 to 1:00, All Saints kitchen

### **Saturday, November 1**

Food Pantry Re-Launch, 10:00 to 3:00, All Saints parish hall

### **Sunday, November 2**

April Showers, 11:00 to 2:00, San Leandro Boys and Girls Club

*Saints Alive! is published monthly via email by All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling Boulevard, San Leandro, California 94577.*

*Submit news for the November 2008 issue to [marypat56@comcast.net](mailto:marypat56@comcast.net) or mail to Mary Nelson in care of the church. Deadline is October 27.*

*For changes to the parish database, please email John Trubina at [jtrubina@comcast.net](mailto:jtrubina@comcast.net) or leave a message for him at the church.*

*For more information on All Saints' people and programs, please stop by the church or visit us on the Internet at [www.saintsalive.net](http://www.saintsalive.net). God bless you!*