

Saints Alive!

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

[Uganda Pilgrimage](#)

[New Annual Meeting Format](#)

[Spirit of Song](#)

[Social Ministries](#)

[Alternative Christmas Catalogue](#)

[Mark Your Calendars](#)

Three Important Items

Fr. Rob Droste, Rector

If you don't normally read the articles in *Saints Alive!*, please read this one so you'll be up to date on important happenings around All Saints.

Diocesan Safe Spaces Program

Anyone who reads or watches the news is aware of the large number of cases of sexual abuse and misconduct in churches of various denominations. We all want All Saints to be a safe space for all—especially children and the frail elderly. The days when a parish could just assume “nobody would ever do that” are long gone. Simply remaining “neutral” on this issue and/or failing to educate ourselves invites misconduct, an unhealthy atmosphere, and lawsuits that can cripple a congregation.

To prevent problems and, more importantly, to take proactive steps toward creating a safe, welcoming space for all, the Diocese of California has asked all its parishes to participate in the program “Called to Right Relationship” (C2RR). Your vestry and I are of one mind in supporting this program.

Between now and the end of February, the vestry will help the parish perform a Congregational Safe Church Self-Audit, create a plan for implementation of all policies and standards, make reports to both Sunday services, and report to the Annual Meeting (details on that below). By February, we should be well on our way to implementing the standards needed to ensure that All Saints is a safe space for every member and for all who use our building.

In addition, each of our volunteers whose ministries include regular contact with children or youth needs to complete, by December 31, the Level One training found online at www.diocal.org/safechurch. (All paid employees and volunteers whose ministries include program supervision and/or off-site programmatic contact with youth must also complete the Level Two training.)

I'm aware that Episcopalians can bristle at the idea of a policy they feel is "imposed" on them. Still, comprehensive, coherent policy and standards are clearly needed in every congregation to ensure that we live out the values of a Christian community. Please let me know if you have questions; you can also contact Julia McCray Goldsmith at the diocese (juliam@diocal.org or 415-869-7826).

Why I Support the 2009 Uganda Pilgrimage (and Hope You Will Too)

Three of our teenagers—Alyssa Hopper, Laura Miller, and Rachel Phillips—are working hard to raise money to go work at the Sunrise House orphanage in Karamaga, Uganda, in August 2009. It's an audacious idea. Some of you will remember that it was Anne Harris that started the Uganda Project at All Saints. A few weeks ago, I told her what the young people were considering. Her response was, "Wonderful!"

I've noticed some discomfort with the project, which is also a natural response. The two most frequent questions I'm asked are "Is it safe?" and "Is this the best way to spend this money?"

First, safety is the number one concern on a trip like this. I will be going, as will Fr. Mark Spaulding, Anne Phillips, and an experienced traveler/mom from Holy Cross. No young people are going without their parents' consent. The young people know that at any time, this trip could be cancelled for safety reasons. (That's what trip insurance is for.)

In evaluating safety for all of us, we will use all channels of information, including the U.S. Department of State, Bishop Kamanyire, and the Anglican Diocese of Uganda, among others. If you have other reliable information concerning safety, please print it out and pass it along to me.

The concern about spending the money is a legitimate one, too. But this work trip is not competing with our ministry to Sunrise House. It is the next logical step in our relationship with the AIDS orphans and staff. Face-to-face interaction is a far deeper way of getting to know one another and listening to find out how we can help (rather than figuring that out for them). And this kind of pilgrimage is a life-changing experience for young people.

The project, even at this preliminary stage, has already planted a seed. There is serious talk about a much larger trip for adults and youth in 2010, for which we would raise enough money in the diocese to buy a piece of land for the orphanage and install all the equipment needed for a self-sustaining farm. Several adults from All Saints and Holy Cross have

expressed interest in going, and we've begun contacting East Bay churches to gauge their interest in substantial fundraising.

New Annual Meeting Format

Over the past few years, we have tried two different formats for our Annual Meeting. One was to have a joint 9:00 service, followed by the meeting. The other was to have a dinner and meeting on Saturday night. The first disrupts our regular service schedule—with a negative impact on newcomers and visitors. The second creates “another evening commitment” and is difficult for many families to attend.

I'm pleased to tell you that this year, the vestry authorized trying a third option: “splitting” the meeting over two separate weekends. This new format will do three positive things. It will allow more people to participate in the election process; it will allow the new vestry to do its yearly planning by the end of January and present goals to the parish; and it will give the treasurer and ministry leaders more time to complete their reports.

Here's how it will work. On Sunday, January 11, we will vote on new vestry members and name the wardens for 2009. The vestry will accept nominations through Sunday, January 4, and ballots with all qualified nominees will be prepared and distributed immediately following the 8:00 and 10:00 services. (Details on nominations follow.) Ballots will be tallied after the 10:00 service and the results publicized through regular parish communications channels.

On Sunday, February 8, we will have the “remainder” of the annual meeting after a shortened 10:00 a.m. service. At this point, we will celebrate our accomplishments during 2008, leaders will give their reports and I will give my annual address. The vestry will present the review of ministries for 2008 and the goals and budget outlining parish income and spending for 2009.

Vestry Nominations for 2009 Annual Meeting

- Nominations must be made in writing by two voting members of the parish in good standing and turned into the church office.
- The nominee must sign off, in writing, accepting his or her nomination.
- Nominations must be received by the end of the day Sunday, January 4.
- Each nominee will be asked to provide a short paragraph on his or her qualifications for vestry service and reasons for running.

Spirit of Song

Mary Nelson

Do you love music and liturgy? Do you attend Sunday services regularly? Think you might enjoy spending time with a small group of lovable eccentrics? Then the choir could be for you! Sit in on a rehearsal before you make up your mind—Wednesday at 7 p.m. Talk to Dylan Snodgrass.

Social Ministries

Tom Breckenridge

Food Pantry Shares the Bounty

The All Saints food pantry brings bounty into our neighborhood, feeding body and soul. During two November food give-aways, 33 volunteers dispersed food to 60 people, who picked up food for 160 household members.

On November 1st, the first pantry began with a spirited set up session—complete with celebratory ribbon-cutting by Gus Kriletich of the Brotherhood of St Andrews, overseers of the previous All Saints Food Pantry. Then we threw open the doors to find our sidewalk filled only by pouring rain. In the first 10 minutes, we wondered if anybody would come.

“We need to go get some people here—I’ll take some flyers around the neighborhood.”
“Me too.” “Me too.” A volunteer quickly fashioned a “Free Food” sign to take to East 14th Street. Off the four went into the deluge.

Then people came—28 in all, picking up food for 80 household members. The hall was filled with thank-you’s and God-bless-you’s . . . and discussions of kids and the fiber content of breads. As the *Daily Review* reporter witnessed during the second pantry, this charity event quickly becomes a social event—focused not on giving, but on sharing.

The glow from the first pantry was still bright as we organized for the special Thanksgiving Pantry on November 22nd. The Alameda County Community Food Bank provided us with 42 whole chickens and 520 pounds of canned food. The parish and its neighbors pitched in for food, as well. Two parishioners each donated a turkey, and another gave four chickens. Then a stranger called and asked if we could use 10 more chickens. One whole family pantry was emptied into ours, and other parishioners and friends brought in more bags of canned goods.

There was a bounty of volunteers as well. Two neighbors and a Soup Stop regular joined in. A new neighbor, an April Showers volunteer, a guest from the first pantry, and a friend who brought her two kids to be bag boys also volunteered—25 folks in total.

The second time we opened the doors, there were 28 people already in line, eager to fill their food bags. Forty-two members of our community came in and took home groceries for 119 family members, including 42 children.

To paraphrase Margaret Mead, the whole world may not have changed just yet, but there's no doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people is having an impact on the well-being of our community.

Leadership Change in Meal Preparation for Building Futures With Women and Children

Starting in January, Mary Kincaid will take over as chief organizer for the fourth-Sunday meal preparation ministry. She will set up some weekday cooking sessions. Also, Kathleen Waters will lead the youth in cooking for the program quarterly, starting in February. With just a few more cooks, the program will be staffed! Thank you, Mary, Kathleen, and you who are soon to call Mary and volunteer.

Alternative Christmas Catalogue

Rather than buying socks and ties, how about a few chickens? Why not fight poverty and AIDS, create peace, and educate youth? The Millennium Development Goals are excellent signposts for meaningful Christmas gifts. Your Social Ministries Team offers the following catalogue along with wishes for a Christmas season firmly grounded in God's grace!

Millennium Development Goals, With Suggestions

- 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger** (www.undp.org/mdg/goal1.shtml)
Heifer International, www.heifer.org
Interfaith Homelessness Network, www.ihnAprilshowers.org
Davis Street Family Resource Center, www.davisstreet.org
All Saints Social Ministries Fund
The Africa Project, saintsalive.net
- 2. Achieve universal primary education** (www.undp.org/mdg/goal2.shtml)
Help the Afghan Children, www.helptheafghanchildren.org
Three Cups of Tea/Central Asia Institute, www.ikat.org
- 3. Promote gender equality and empower women** (www.undp.org/mdg/goal3.shtml)
Building Futures with Women and Children, www.bfwc.org
- 4. Reduce child mortality** (www.undp.org/mdg/goal4.shtml)
Episcopal Relief and Development, www.er-d.org
- 5. Improve maternal health** (www.undp.org/mdg/goal5.shtml)
Building Futures with Women and Children, www.bfwc.org

6. **Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases** (www.undp.org/mdg/goal6.shtml)
San Francisco AIDS Foundation, www.sfaf.org
7. **Ensure environmental sustainability** (www.undp.org/mdg/goal7.shtml)
The Alliance for Climate Protection, www.climateprotect.org
8. **Create a global partnership for development** (www.undp.org/mdg/goal8.shtml)
UNICEF, www.unicef.org
Episcopal Charities, www.episcopalcharities.org
Sojourners, www.sojo.net/resources
Fellowship of Reconciliation, www.forusa.org

Mark Your Calendars

Saturday, December 6

Feast of St. Nicholas of Myra

Liturgy of the Steward, 8:30 a.m. (come when you can)

Food Pantry—setup & lunch 11:00 to 1:00, food distribution 1:00 to 3:00, All Saints parish hall

Sunday, December 7

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

Saturday, December 13

Sacred Circle Dancing, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., All Saints parish hall

Saturday, December 20

Food Pantry—setup 12:00 to 1:00, food distribution 1:00 to 3:00, All Saints parish hall

Sunday, December 21

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

December 21 (sundown)–29

Chanukah

December 22

Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle

Wednesday, December 24

Christmas Pageant and Family Worship, 5:00 p.m.

Holy Communion and Midnight Mass, 11:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 27

Feast of St. John the Evangelist

Sunday, December 28

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

Thursday, December 25

10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Service

Saturday, January 3, 2009

Liturgy of the Steward, 8:30 a.m. (come when you can)

Food Pantry—setup & lunch 11:00 to 1:00, food distribution 1:00 to 3:00, All Saints parish hall

Sunday, January 4

Deadline for vestry nominations

Tuesday, January 6

Epiphany celebration, 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 7

Women's Spiritual Direction Group, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., All Saints rear nave (bring pen and paper for journaling)

Sunday, January 11

Annual Meeting Part I: Vestry elections (voting takes place immediately after each service)

January 16–18

Youth Snow Retreat—Junior High

January 23–25

Vestry planning retreat, Bishop's Ranch

Saturday, February 7

Liturgy of the Steward, 8:30 a.m. (come when you can)

Food Pantry—setup & lunch 11:00 to 1:00, food distribution 1:00 to 3:00, All Saints parish hall

February 8

2009 Annual Meeting Part II: Celebration of 2008 accomplishments, 2009 goals and budget, after short 10:00 service

February 13–15

Youth Snow Retreat—Senior High

February 21

Crab Feed

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

Submit news for the January 2009 issue to marypat56@comcast.net or mail to Mary Nelson in care of the church. Deadline is December 27.

For changes to the parish database, please email John Trubina at 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. God bless you!