



The Bells of Saint Mary

October, 2009

With My Hand on the Plow: Harvest Home

Come ye thankful people come, raise the song of harvest home: all is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin; God, our Maker, doth provide for our wants to be supplied; come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.

Words: Henry Alford

Music: St. George's Windsor

This hymn, number 290 in our hymnal, is a traditional hymn sung at Thanksgiving. The words I have included to start this article are words I want to reflect on as you read this edition of the Bells of St. Mary's . . . dedicated, as it is, to the topic of Harvest.

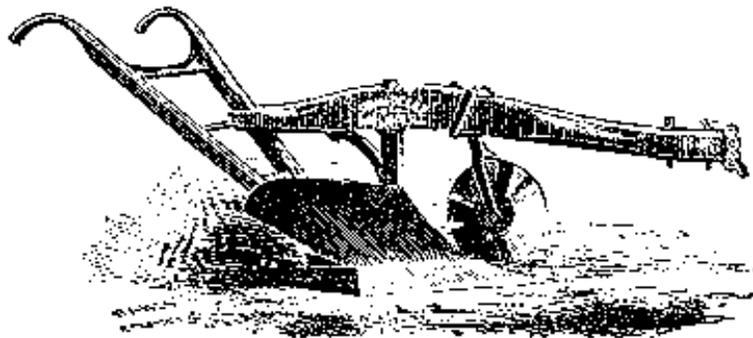
For we Christian people, the word harvest has many meanings. We think of our Lord's words that remind us that "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few", and we also pay heed to scripture that reminds us the Lord of the harvest will come and separate the wheat from the chaff. Images of harvest are everywhere in the Bible...and all around us where we live here in the Lompoc Valley.

The fields are beginning to show. One day I will drive by the fields to the east of the church, and they will be lush and green; a couple of days later, harvested and bare,

with the leavings of the harvester scattered where the food grew only two days before. The smell of now harvested cabbage fills the air with the matter still to be plowed under to revitalize the earth for the next planting. And the rhythm of life continues apace...growth, water, pruning, harvest, fallow and plant again. Always plant again. Such it is with the church, and our common life.

On Sunday, September 13th, we began a re-planting that has been two years in preparation. Our Sunday Learning Circles came after a necessary period of continuing and assessing Sunday morning programs that I inherited

when I came here in July 2007. During this period, we also tried Wednesday evening programs, and various other offerings intended to plant, grow, water, prune, harvest and let the fields go fallow before planting again. Now, finally, we have a new crop. And like any good farmer, I am excited about what we are growing, and full of hope that we will produce a good crop. We have a very dedicated group of workers for our fields, and I am confident that our collective efforts will produce a bumper crop. In order for that to happen, I am praying that you will respond and come to the offered classes. We learned that Wednesday evenings as a regular offering



just were not meeting the need of our community, since so many of you have a very hard time coming out at night, or carving out time in the evenings with so many other duties at home with family; thus the choice to focus our attention on Sunday mornings.

We also want to bring more offerings to you that are based in our liturgical life together, so that your need to be in worship-filled activity is offered in ways that are varied, Spirit-filled, and enriching. Towards that end, we will once again offer the Blessing of the Animals on Sunday, October 4th at the 1030 service; we will observe All Hallows Eve with a Day of the Dead celebration on October 31st, celebrate All Saints Day on Sunday, Nov.1st with a service of Holy Baptism, and commemorate All Souls Day the next day on the 2nd with our annual observance of All the Faithfully Departed, where we will bring pictures and remembrances of our loved ones who have gone before us, and celebrate their lives and witness.

Finally, I need to say to you that I have a very strong sense of the transformational nature of the path I am setting us on. When we focus on learning more about the Christian life that we live, and ways to better understand what our Lord is calling us to do, then we will be actively participating in the working of the fields that the Lord has given us, and in doing that, transformation happens. When we find ourselves concerned with understanding better how to put our faith into action, then we will in turn, become doers of the Word. And that is how we grow, both as followers of Jesus, and as a church. And growth must happen in order for there to be a harvest. And without a harvest, we have no way to be in the rhythm of life that is to continue apace...growth, water, pruning, harvest, fallow and plant again. Always plant

again. Such it is with the church, and our common life.

So I am inviting you again, as I did on my very first Sunday with you on July 1, 2007, to put your hand on the plow and don't look back. And we will together produce good fields for the Church, for our life, and for our Lord.

With my hand on the plow,
Fr. Michael

Senior Saints Luncheon

On Wednesday the 28th of October, the Outreach Committee will host the seniors in our community to lunch in Fitch Hall. This is the 13th year that St. Mary's has invited all residents of local senior care and assisted living facilities, as well as local shut-ins, to join us for lunch. The Outreach Committee plans the event, but it can not be a success without the help of the entire congregation. We need volunteers to join us for lunch, and make a difference in the lives of people who do not often have the chance for one on one conversation. We ask you to help serve some guests who can't serve themselves (or find it very difficult to do so) and then fix yourself a plate and enjoy.

If you would like to help us please sign up in Fitch Hall. We would like to have our volunteers there between 10:30 AM and 11:00 AM, as our guests will start arriving then. Some of them must be transported by van from local care facilities, and this necessitates several trips. Luncheon will be served at 12:00 noon and usually we are through between 1:00 PM and 1:30 PM.

Thank you for considering this wonderful outreach to our community.

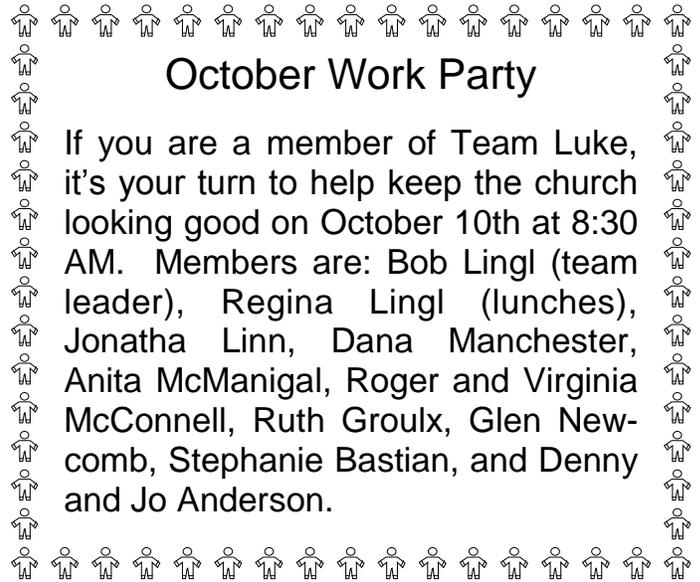
Norma Anderson



October Birthdays

Daniele Gusland	3
Curtis Baker	4
Darrell Adams	11
Michael (Mike) Brown	11
Ronald Davis	13
Joe Gonzales	14
Peggy Fields	15
Catherine Gibson	15
Sonia Culmer	16
Leah Olsson	18
Stephen Straight	18
Stuart Twells	18
Jean Horton	21
Robin Smith	22
Frank Longley	29
Mark Esola	31

I guess the stork takes it easy in October! (Or does he have to wait for Congress to pass a budget?)



October Work Party

If you are a member of Team Luke, it's your turn to help keep the church looking good on October 10th at 8:30 AM. Members are: Bob Lingl (team leader), Regina Lingl (lunches), Jonatha Linn, Dana Manchester, Anita McManigal, Roger and Virginia McConnell, Ruth Groulx, Glen Newcomb, Stephanie Bastian, and Denny and Jo Anderson.



Above: I know I promised Pete Drus that some picture of him would run in the Bells, but I forget which one it was. This one is from the 2008 Blessing of the Animals — 2009's will be on October 4th.

Left: David and Julia Anderson, Thelma King, and Mary Newcomb. (John Beeler photos)



Making Room for Children in Church

Worship and Learning

Worship is one of the basic ways people learn what it means to be Christian. Children learn worship by worshipping with the congregation Sunday after Sunday.

- **They learn they belong to Christ** and are welcome in His Church.
- **They learn to know the Lord's Prayer** and other parts of the liturgy from memory.
- **They build a fund of memorable**, shared experiences of Christian community against which they may draw when they are older.
- **They are enriched by the beauty of music and art as** expressions of praise and as human responses to God.
- **They hear stories from the Bible read and** interpreted, and begin to see Christian worship as one place where God may speak to them.
- **They witness the drama of Baptism and Eucharist** as signs of God's kindness and favor.
- **They discover that they are valued as persons by** God and by the people of God at Church.

Bringing children to worship may not always be easy, but it is an essential part of their growth in Christ. The Body of Christ assembled is incomplete in their absence. *We need children.*

Submitted by Trudy Ardizzone with thanks to King of Peach Church, Kingsland GA



ABCs for Parents and Friends of Children

Arrive in time to find a good place to sit. Sitting near the front will provide younger children with a better view of the sanctuary.

Bring quiet toys, books, or coloring books for preschool and early elementary school age children.

Clue in children as to what will happen next in worship. Children who can read will want to follow the service in the Prayer Book and find hymns in The Hymnal. Children like to be ready.

Discuss worship at home to prepare children for any departures from the routine of worship such as Baptism or other special features. Also give time to answer questions about worship experiences.

Express your gladness at having children in worship. During the Peace be sure to welcome the children near you. Include them in your conversations before and after worship to let them know they belong.

Free yourself from worry about children's behavior and be open to receiving their ministry to you.

Submitted by Trudy Ardizzone with thanks to King of Peach Church, Kingsland GA



 Trick or Treat?
 Every holiday is a day for open doors! Hospitality this is called. Friends and strangers (new friends?) are welcome. We never know who will enter.
 It might be Christ!

 **But on Halloween, some of those strangers announce themselves: "Trick or Treat!" And yet we open the doors! Not only that, we hand out good things. We act like our doors are open to the whole world and we have**
 **nothing at all to fear! We act like all that we have we'll share with the whole world!**

 **And all those costumes and masks! What's going on? This dull, everyday**
 world puts aside all its seriousness for a few hours. We put on a mask and become someone else. We play with the world. We truly make fun of the world. We turn it upside down as Jesus did with the beatitudes. The reign of God is like this.

Liturgy Training Publications



Parish Voices: Matthew 25

Saturday August 29, 2009 marked the fourth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina hitting the Gulf Coast of the United States. It also was to be a record breaking day in Santa Maria, as the temperature rose to 104°. It was much cooler inside the house, and the prospect of working in the garden, or going to a crowded festival in the park, was not at all appealing. As Trudy and I tried to decide what to do on this particularly toasty day, we sat down and began to watch the funeral service of Senator Edward M. Kennedy.

As I watched, my mind began to wander to Nov. 22, 1963, and the memory of being dismissed early from my high school gym class, and being sent home, because Ted's brother Jack had been assassinated. My mind then wandered to June 5, 1968, when I watched with shock as Ted's brother Bobby was shot. Bobby died on June 6, an important date in U.S. and world history. At the time of Bobby's death, I was attending CCNY in the Harlem section of Manhattan. Our campus was at a particularly volatile point at this time. With our proximity to Columbia University, which was a focal point for anti-war protests, and the recent assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., tempers finally boiled over following this horrible event. Our campus, which was already in disarray, was now shut down.

As my mind continued to wander, a voice emanated from the screen, "The Gospel of Our Lord according to Matthew." This caught my attention. What reading had been chosen for Teddy's farewell? Then I heard the words, "When the son of man comes in his glory and all the angels with him..." "How perfect!" I blurted out, tears welling in my eyes. My outburst took Trudy by surprise. I'm not sure if it was because it startled her or because I might actually know the passage. While I work hard to be a good Christian, a Bible scholar I am not. However, the Gospel of Matthew (think *Godspell*), and in particular Chapter 25 verses 31-40, is very important and dear to me. These verses serve as the bedrock for my outreach work. Clearly, it also was the bedrock of Ted Kennedy's work not only as a U.S. Senator, but as a Christian. This tale of *The Sheep and the Goats* speaks to our duty to show forth God's love to those in need in our own community, addressing basic human needs for the lost, the least, and the forgotten. Just as importantly to me and no doubt to Ted Kennedy, it speaks to redemption.

Whatever his shortcomings, there seems little doubt that Ted Kennedy, the human being, citizen of the world, and repentant Christian, heeded these important words throughout his life and now is at peace with his God. For this reason, while I will probably never remember the day of his passing, the day of his funeral will be etched in my psyche. It will be a constant reminder of God's Grace and the promise of redemption.

Joe Ardizzone



All members of Saint Mary's are invited to submit letters or articles on relevant topics, including their spiritual life. Please send articles to the Bells editor at: john.beeler@verizon.net. Thanks!

The Bat in the Belfry

Mr. John Beeler, esteemed Editor of The Bells, has sent word that the theme for this month's issue is "Harvest". I'm happy about that because my Mouse friend who lives at St. Peter's, Santa Maria, sent me a wonderful poem. It was given to her by her Mom, and we don't know who wrote it, but would love to know in order to give them the credit they deserve. It is very old and obviously came from England. I love it and I think you will, too.



DIARY OF A CHURCH MOUSE

Here among discarded cassocks, stools and half-split open hassocks;
Here where the Priest never looks, I nibble through old Service Books.
Lean and alone I spend my days behind this Church of England baize.
I share my dark forgotten room with two oil lamps and half a broom.

The cleaner never bothers me, so here I eat my frugal tea.
Christmas and Easter may be feasts for Congregations and for Priests.

For me, the only feast at all is Autumn's Harvest Festival,
When I can satisfy my want with ears of corn around the font.
I scramble up the pulpit stair and gnaw the marrows hanging there.

It is enjoyable to taste these items ere they go to waste,
But how annoying when one finds that other Mice with pagan minds
Come into church my food to share who have no proper business there.

Two Field Mice, who have no desire to be baptized, invade the choir.
A large and most unfriendly Rat comes in to see what we are at.
He says he thinks there is no God, and yet he comes. It's rather odd.
And prosperous Mice from fields away come in to hear the organ play,
And under cover of its notes eat through the Altar's sheaf of oats.

A Low Church Mouse, who thinks that I am too papistical, and High,
Yet somehow doesn't think it wrong to munch through Harvest Evensong.
While I, who starve the whole year through, must share my food with Rodents who,
Except at this time of the year, not once inside the church appear.

Within the Human world I know such goings on could not be so,
For Human Beings only do what their religion tells them to.
They read the Bible every day and always, night and morning, pray.
And just like me, the good Church Mouse, worship each week in God's own house.

But all the same it's strange to me how very full the church can be
With people I don't see at all except at Harvest Festival.

Happy Harvest and Blessings from Bede Bat and His Mouse Friends!

Walking the Dogs

(Note: Fr. Michael asked me to write about walking my ex-wife's dogs, and specifically recommended the first sentence, when it was the first thing that escaped my mouth after he made the request. I also got some advice from my sister-in-law, who is a freelance writer for Calvary Chapel Magazine.)

Angel is a brat. (Is that another word for 'alpha dog'?) Yes, Angel Cherubelle Howard is an AKC registered Pembroke Welsh Corgi, complete with kennel club papers, and yes, we paid the breeder five hundred dollars for what was then just a yappy little ball of fluff. But all that just makes her an expensive brat whose great-grandparents' names are recorded in some computer. By the way, how can a little yappy ball of fluff possibly be worth \$500? And PLEASE don't ask me to explain the circumstances under which we were convinced to purchase her!



Angel Cherubelle Howard. This is the picture I brought to the Blessing of the Beasts last year.

Putting the leashes on her and her 'older brother' Sparky is the hardest part of taking them for a walk. They never seem to figure out that regardless of all their fighting (with each other, fortunately not with me), the same thing always happens: they both wind up on a leash, and out the door we go for a walk (after another round of fighting at the door). (A bit like our relationship with God?)

My ex-wife, who owns these 'little barking monsters' (my phrase), describes Sparky as 'mellow'. In some ways, this is true. But he is very stubborn about one thing: sniffing every 'marker' left by another dog, and leaving his own 'Sparky was here' in the location. Some of this dallying may be from tiring more easily than his 'kid sister' (it's a two and a half mile walk, and he is nine years old), but he is less militant about these pauses after it rains. Also, the sniffing begins less than a block after we leave the house.

Unlike his shaggy-looking sister, he looks like a typical Pembroke Welsh Corgi, which is amusing considering we got him for free, from a lady who bought two horses from someone who was giving away a free Corgi with each horse. And, you guessed it, he does not have AKC papers!

I did not socialize much with my neighbors when I was married; since I still walk the dogs, and go to Bryce's baseball games, some of them probably do not realize that Lauren and I got divorced four years ago. Walking the dogs is an informal part of our divorce settlement, along with taking my stepson Bryce to baseball practice. Lauren, who brought me to Saint Mary's about twelve years ago, has a hard time handling two strong-willed dogs who can pull very hard on the leash (an advantage of having short legs), and she usually leaves the job to me, except when I am on vacation. Well, I need the exercise, and sometimes the dogs' nuttiness is a welcome break from the nonsense I run into at work. I tend to talk--or maybe I should say 'spew'--too much about what goes on at work, so I won't here.

About a block down the street we usually meet the first of Sparky and Angel's admirers, a middle aged husband who is often working in his garage or front yard. One of the more enjoyable things about walking the dogs is the reaction from some of the passers-by, especially young women. They find these cute little Corgis adorable. I have tried to motivate Bryce (my 16 year old stepson) to walk the dogs with this, telling him that "the chicks dig the dogs", but he is still more interested in online games than girls. If only the dogs had the same effect on 30-45 year old women...

Walking the dogs is usually the first thing I do after church, but sometimes I get into a bit of a bad mood after the service, or feel tired, and I put off the walk until the afternoon, or even Monday. I also try to walk them at least once during the week, although 'Babe Ruth' baseball interfered with that during the spring. They would love to be walked every day, but I don't have the time -- or is it patience and will? -- to do that.

The other really hard part about walking Angel and Sparky is running into other dogs. Angel is especially insistent about taking on other dogs, no matter how large; I can't bring her to the Blessing of the Beasts because of this. She would also try to catch--and eat--everything else that wasn't human. Sparky is a little better about other dogs than his sister, and he doesn't try to hunt cats and other animals, but even he has to be blessed by proxy.

(I just noticed that my uncle is looking over my shoulder as I write this. We're holding my father's wake at Mom and Dad's home near Charlottesville, and I'm working on this article to take a break from socializing. Other ways of taking a break include seeing what my cousin's kids are doing down by the lake, and refilling the bird feeder, as Dad would certainly want hospitality extended to our feathered guests.)



Can you say "omega wolf"? This is Sparky, of course.

On weekday walks, when we get to 'V' Street and Central Avenue, we usually head west, taking a route that doesn't cross any busy streets. But on Sundays, we head east towards 'O' Street, and then we usually take the bike path that runs along the drainage channel back to 'V' Street. That means running the gauntlet of 'watchdogs' that live next to the path just west of 'O' Street. I have to draw in most of Angel's leash as she charges at the backyard fences, and sometimes Sparky tries to 'discipline' Angel for recklessly confronting them--or at least that's what Lauren thinks he's doing.

By the time we get back to 'V' Street, I'm starting to feel relieved that we are in the home-stretch. The dogs are usually a bit mellow by now, and when we get back to their home, I can let them off the leash with the satisfaction of a job well done, and Lauren will also be happy.

John Beeler

Financial Statement

8/31/09

Undesignated checking/savings	95,791
Designated checking	31,735
Designated fund obligations	31,735
Parish mortgage	373,325

	Actual Aug 09	Actual Jan - Aug 09	Budget Jan - Aug 09
Income	27,822	213,785	228,480
Expenses	29,208	233,639	239,911
Net income/(loss)	(1,386)	(19,854)	(11,431)

Statement by the Parish concerning the financial data:

"While our actual year-to-date results still show expenses exceeding our income, the trend is positive. August, a traditionally low income summer month, shows a relatively small loss. As attendance and collections increase the trend reflects a near break-even future where income and expenses equal. Undesignated checking amounts are available for unrestricted expenditures. Designated checking amounts are restricted to specific expenditures which match the funds purpose and are approved by the Vestry."



**Don't forget the
blessing of the
animals...**

Sunday,
October 4th
at the 10:30 AM
service!

*Photo from last year's service,
taken by John Beeler.*

The Bells of Saint Mary's

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Thanksgiving

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Sunday Eucharist
8:00 AM and 10:30AM
Christian Formation
Each Sunday at 9:15 AM

Church Office Hours
Mon - Fri 10 AM - 4 PM

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