

The Christ Episcopal Church Gazette



Christ Episcopal Church of Budd Lake
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The Pastor's Nook

My Journey to Christ Church

By Rev. Sonia Waters

Elena asked me to make my first attempt at the Pastor's Nook with some background on how I became a priest and found my way to you. That's a tall order for a little Nook, since God brings so many parts of our lives together to take us where God wants us to be. But since most of my life has been a literal journey (I've moved every 2-3 years) I will try to describe the itinerary that brought me here.

I had no intention of becoming a priest, because I had gone to an evangelical college - Wheaton College in Illinois - where many people believed women should not be ministers. I did not believe this myself, but being a bit of a rebellious youth, I had no desire to beg for acceptance from the institutional church. I had spent a semester of my college in Kenya, taking classes and volunteering one day a week at a kindergarten in the Mathari Valley slums. This left me with a desire to do overseas relief work or ministries of care, but not church leadership. Wheaton had taught me that a life should be lived for Jesus, in service of others,

and I was looking for that life outside of the church.

Unfortunately, you don't get ANY job with a degree in English Literature and a minor in Women's Studies. I ended up back in England, where my family is from, living with my aunt for a couple of months, trying to get a job and working at a daycare part time. My father offered me a job in his chemical engineering company in California. Now, I can barely add or subtract, let alone be an engineer. But he thought I had a good mind for administration. I worked first as a secretary and then led the spare parts department. I served Jesus by volunteering as a hotline counselor and speaker for a rape crisis center, and attended a small Episcopal church. I also returned to school for a teaching credential. After a couple of years my rebellious side took over and I left to live in Denver (one credit away from my teaching credential - kids don't try this at home, it severely limited my options!). I worked as an administrator at a group home and part-time at a used bookstore to make ends meet. Dad threw the carrot back at me, with an offer to send me to Japan. It was irresistible. So off I went for a year of working for the sales department in Japan.

I became very involved in my ex-patriot church in Tokyo, and began to feel the call to ministry. But after my volunteer work with women in crisis from rape and sexual assault, I still wasn't entirely sure if I should serve Jesus in church or in social work. I returned home to begin the ordination process in the diocese of Los Angeles, lived in Pasadena, and got a job in a domestic violence shelter. I worked a solo shift from 4pm -midnight. I did case management, hotline calls, group meetings, crisis counseling, housing advocacy, and worked with moms and their kids. I mediated many a near fist-fight between clients or children. It was a formative experience, to put it mildly, but I began to feel that Holy Spirit moved in me most when the women shared their faith journeys. I realized how much I wanted them to know the love of God and to hear the stories of their spiritual lives.

I moved to the California desert to take a church internship, and finally returned to teaching as a substitute teacher for Special needs kids. I was quickly made a long term substitute teacher with a main class of "severely profoundly handicapped" non ambulatory kids and assisted at the class next door, which was a "multi- handicapped" level kindergarten. There was something very healing about being with the kids after all the destruction of self and others that I had seen at a shelter. I sure fell in love with them.

About a year later, I went to General Theological Seminary in New York City, because ...well...when else could I live in New York City? There I met John. I got a bit of an education, but mostly I met John.

I interned at the Church of the Ascension in Manhattan. Three years later I was called as the Assistant at Grace Church in Brooklyn Heights, where I spent the last four years of service.

John and I celebrated our union a little over a year ago. John comes complete with a family of three amazing kids, who lovingly call me their "Monster" (short for step-monster) but I prefer to think of those cute fuzzy monsters on Sesame Street, like Grover. I moved to New Jersey and started working towards my PhD in Pastoral Theology at Princeton Seminary. My degree is a combination of psychoanalysis, counseling and applied theology. Three months ago God brought me to Christ Church. I feel Christ Church is the end of a long journey and the beginning of a new and blessed path. I now have a true church home. After many years of traveling alone, I am humbled and thankful to have such amazing traveling companions on The Way.

Under New Management

(To be sung to the tune of
"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen")

By Lana Liu

I'm under new management,
The old has passed away;
I'm under new management,
The new is here to stay;
When Jesus died, was crucified,
He sent it on its way--
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy,
Freedom and peace,
Oh, tidings of love and release!

I'm under new management,
Satan has lost his claim;
I'm under new management,
I go by Jesus' name;
Now life, not death, now peace, not
fear,
Now rest, not crippling shame--
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy,
Freedom and peace,
Oh, tidings of love and release!

So to those still in bondage,
I say, discern the one
Who tries to give you orders,
Who tries to hold you down;
Authority's not his to have,
You're free of his control;
Your new management loves you so,
You must know--
Your new management loves you so!

WHERE IS LINDA?

By Linda Coleman

As some of you may know, it has been a long hard journey I've traveled through these past few years. As my husband Bill become more sickly in 2008, I searched out any resources I could find in the library that might help me in my situation.

At the end of 2008 Jesus was to guide me in my selection of reading. I came across a book that asked me "**If I had only 30 days to live, what would I regret I didn't do?**" The answer that come to mind immediately was to do Ballroom Dancing, so in late January of 2009, I signed up for private lessons at a dance studio in Hackettstown.

I've shared with a few people at that time that when I began dancing, I felt as if something inside of my soul was being born anew. Dancing gave me pure joy in my heart that filled my soul in a profound and new way.

The contrast between being a caretaker for Bill and dancing gave me many challenges of ups while dancing and downs while dealing with Bill's decline. In May of 2009, I was encouraged by my dance instructor to do 5 different dances in the free style section of the Show Case event the studio had for all their students. At this dinner dance there were many different performances. It was like living in a fairy tale of joy to dance in the free style: to do the Waltz, Rumba, Foxtrot, Swing, and the Cha Cha during the dance event at the Show Case.

Now, it is 11 months later since I've begun this journey and the Lord continues to bless me in so many ways

as I improve in these five dances. Thank you Lord for giving me the gift of new birth to dance with joy in my heart and so I ask you dear friends, "**If you had only 30 days to live, what would be the one thing you would regret you didn't do?**"

I'm so thankful to God for...

By Joan Mazalatis

God our Father, Jesus our Saviour, and The Holy Spirit and that if we choose we can have a relationship with them here and now - I'm so very thankful that I did!

For life changing decisions

For my husband and his unconditional love, unfailing support while I was sick, and for what a blessing he is as a father and grandpa.

For being blessed with my great children

For great memories of past years

For seven "more than wonderful" grandchildren and how much love we share

For my dad's long life and his remarkable recovery

For our church and the friends there who "are family"

For the peace that comes from God alone

For tears - of both healing and joy

That God answers our prayers

That God The Father created us in His image

For the possibility through Jesus to 'become again' the people that God our Father first created us to be.

For people who accept you for who you are - without judgment

For the awesome privilege to serve God in His church and in the world

For angels

For people who really listen to you

For the ability to listen

For the freedom we have here

For the abundance we have here

For the ability to reason and to feel

For people with compassion

For patience and kindness

For "the sun" that soothes and warms us

For "The Son" who gives us His grace to live by

For rainbows

That God keeps His promises

When the sun sparkles like crystals across the lake

For a full moon

When the moon makes a path of light
across the lake

For endless stars on a clear night

The fresh smell after rain

For hummingbirds

For starfish - and the experience of
finding hundreds of them on the beach

For the refreshment and fun of the
beach

For the sound of roaring waves

For the beauty of cascading waterfalls

A sunset that takes your breath away

When the sky at dusk is streaked with
pink and grey

Thanks be to God for eternal life

For clouds encircled with a silver
lining

For the vivid colors of autumn trees

For the sound of birds singing

For fresh fallen snow

For making snowmen and snowball
fights

For the way ice glistens on bare trees
with the sun on them

For butterflies

For human gentleness

For the profound questions that
children ask

For laughter

For people who always make you
laugh

For babies - everything about them

For the innocence and playfulness of
children

For snow angels

For the blessings that God gives us
every day

For the ability to be thankful

For Thanksgiving dinner with family

For chocolate, ice cream, pot roast and
mashed potatoes (not necessarily in
that order)

For miracles

That God makes it possible for people
to have a new heart - both physically
and emotionally

For music - when it touches you deeply

For the joy of singing

For the fun of dancing

For candlelight dinners

For spontaneous nights out

For traveling to new places

For vacations with grandchildren

For the peace that comes from meditating

For the ability and means to travel

For times of rest and relaxation

For the sound of “silence”

For a good book

For God’s sense of humor

For good health

For Jesus healing power - and that I was healed

For precious times together with friends and family

For people that you are so comfortable with that you can say almost anything to

For getting dressed up and feeling beautiful

For the joy and fun of weddings

For our home on the lake - what a blessing

For the way it looks at night with houses lit up across the lake - we really live here!

For our All God’s Children service and the joy and healing it brings to everyone

For grandchildren who call to say “I love you”

For beautiful smiles

For the intricate beauty of flowers and the joy they bring

For hugs

For swimming - the joy it brings

For root beer floats

For snorkeling and all the beauty you see underwater

For whales

For how graceful swans are

For geese flying in a V formation

For (I can’t believe I’m saying this) dogs!

For people who understand

That God our Father created this world for us to enjoy

For forgiveness

That I have learned to go easy on myself

For the freedom to say what I think

But for also learning to be careful when speaking

For so many reasons to be thankful

For the joy I had creating this list of 101 things I’m thankful for.

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Mom's Minute Shalom – Peace Greeting

By Leonette Chapman

When I thought about the theme of today's service – Welcome, I thought about the greetings used in the scriptures – Shalom. What does shalom mean? In the Old Testament, it means completeness, soundness, and well-being of the total person. In the New Testament, it means hope, trust, and quiet in the mind and soul brought about by reconciliation with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

We as parents need this kind of peace given the chaotic lives we live. Can anyone relate to chaos? We need this peace daily.

So, when I say “shalom”, I am asking how's your peace? When you respond “shalom”, you are stating you are complete, sound, and full of hope, trust, and peace in God.

The New Testament peace we received is beyond man's understanding.

John 14:27 – (Jesus speaking) “Peace, I leave with you. My peace I give you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension/understanding shall

guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

An example of this occurred for Brandon and I on vacation. While in the Jacuzzi at the timeshare where we were staying, Brandon was very excited. I went inside to get out towels and turned on the TV. Bishop TD Jakes broadcast was just starting. Brandon heard his voice and said, “TD Jakes”, then calmed down. He listened to the message and lounged in the pool. We came in and Brandon did not want me to change the channel when another ministry came on that he liked. Our children received the same peace from the Word of God.

So, remember shalom and the peace of God and let it guard your heart and mind in times of stress. God and His Word will give you peace that surpasses your understanding – remember this.



“I Am in Here!”

By Ray Bonker

This Fall we had two major media networks involved in our All God's Children service. ABC News in Washington, DC sent a New York based film and sound crew to record our AGC service November 1 st. We were graciously given a DVD of the entire service by ABC News and the video will help us in our future outreach efforts. The producer has told us that part of the video will be used for a story they are compiling about autism and its impact on everyday life for families affected by this disability, Once an airing date is set we will let everyone know the schedule.

Earlier in the year a film crew for PBS visited our home to record a day in the life of my daughter Elizabeth. They returned for a second day of filming at her school. The final product from this effort aired on October 17 th and 18 th on PBS stations across the country. The 9 minute video highlighted the progress and struggles Elizabeth has experienced over many years in her fight against autism. Several of her religious poems were also highlighted in the piece, many of which have been published in previous editions of the Gazette! The video was also posted to the PBS website for Religion and Ethics Newsweekly, which is the program that hosted the story. In addition, we have created a website www.elizabethmary.net where detailed information about the educational, medical, and spiritual interventions we have used with Elizabeth are spelled out, plus you can

sign up for Elizabeth's poem of the month to be delivered to your email address! Links to multiple internet resources are also included.

Elizabeth's video was played before and after the AGC service on October 18 th. We hope that everyone will be able to learn from her story and remember her declaration “I am in here!”

Cooks Nook

Name That Tuna Salad

(From the book: Crazy Plates by Janet and Greta Podleski)

By Gerianne Murphy

Gerianne has added a twist to this recipe by adding pasta.

Ingredients

1 can of cannellini beans
(white kidney beans) drained and rinsed
1 can (6 Oz.) water packed tuna, drained
2 cups diced tomatoes
½ cup of minced red onions
2 tbsp chopped, fresh basil or mint Leaves

Dressing: I double these ingredients.

1 tbsp olive oil (2 tbsp of olive oil)
2 tsp each of red wine vinegar and lemon juice (4 tsp of vinegar and lemon juice)
1 tsp of sugar (2 tsp of sugar)
1 clove of garlic, minced (2 cloves)
½ tsp Dijon mustard (1 tsp mustard)
¼ tsp each salt and black pepper (1/2 tsp of salt and pepper)
½ box of pasta bowties (boil and drain the pasta)

Directions:

In a large bowl, combine beans, tuna, tomatoes, red onions, and basil. Stir gently to avoid smashing the beans. Add the cooked pasta and again stir gently.

Dressing:

In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice, sugar, garlic, mustard, salt, and pepper. Pour dressing over the salad and mix well. May be served immediately or chilled before serving.

Serves 4-6

Maple Nut Sticky Buns

(From the book: Easy to Bake, Easy to Make)

Ingredients:

1 cup coarsely chopped pecans or walnuts
 ½ cup of maple syrup
 3 cups all-purpose flour
 ¼ cup granulated sugar
 1 package quick-rising active dry yeast
 1 tsp salt
 1 cup warm water (120°F-130°F)
 6 tbsp of softened butter, divided
 1 egg at room temperature
 ½ cup packed light brown sugar, divided
 1 tsp of cinnamon

Directions:

1. Grease a 13 X 9 inch baking pan and spread pecans and maple syrup evenly over the bottom.
2. Combine 2 cups flour, granulated sugar, yeast and salt in a large bowl. Stir in water, 2 tablespoons butter and egg. Beat until smooth; gradually stir in remaining flour

until soft dough forms. Cover with plastic wrap; let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes.

3. On lightly floured surface, roll dough to 15 X 12 inch rectangle. Spread with remaining butter. Mix Brown sugar with cinnamon; Sprinkle over surface. Starting with The 12 inch side, roll up tightly.
4. Cut into 12 slices; place cut side down in prepared pan. Cover with plastic wrap; place on a wire rack over a large pan of hot water. Let rise until buns double, 30-45 mins. Preheat the oven to 375° F. Uncover buns. Bake until golden brown, 25-30 minutes. Cool for 1 minute. Loosen edges, invert onto a serving plate. Serve warm.

**By Popular Demand –
Grandma's Bread Pudding**

By Gerianne Murphy

Ingredients:

4 cups of 1 or 2 day old diced bread
 2 tbsp melted butter
 ½ cup of sugar
 ½ cup of raisins OR pineapple well drained
 3 cups of warm milk
 3 eggs (should be room temperature)
 ½ to 1 tsp. vanilla
 Pinch of cinnamon
 Pinch of nutmeg

Directions:

Cut bread in one inch cubes leaving crust on. Place in bowl. In a separate bowl add egg to milk and blend. Add sugar, fruit, butter, vanilla, cinnamon, and nutmeg to the egg and milk mixture. Blend. Pour over diced bread and let soak about 5 minutes. Place in a 1 ½ quart greased baking dish. Set

baking dish in a larger pan or bowl of hot water and bake for about an hour at 350° or until custard is set.



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Editor-in-Chief –

Rev. Sonia Waters

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Due date for sending me articles, poetry, recipes, and pictures for the winter Gazette is March 7, 2010. Please send to: Chalkdust423@yahoo.com.

Thank you!

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