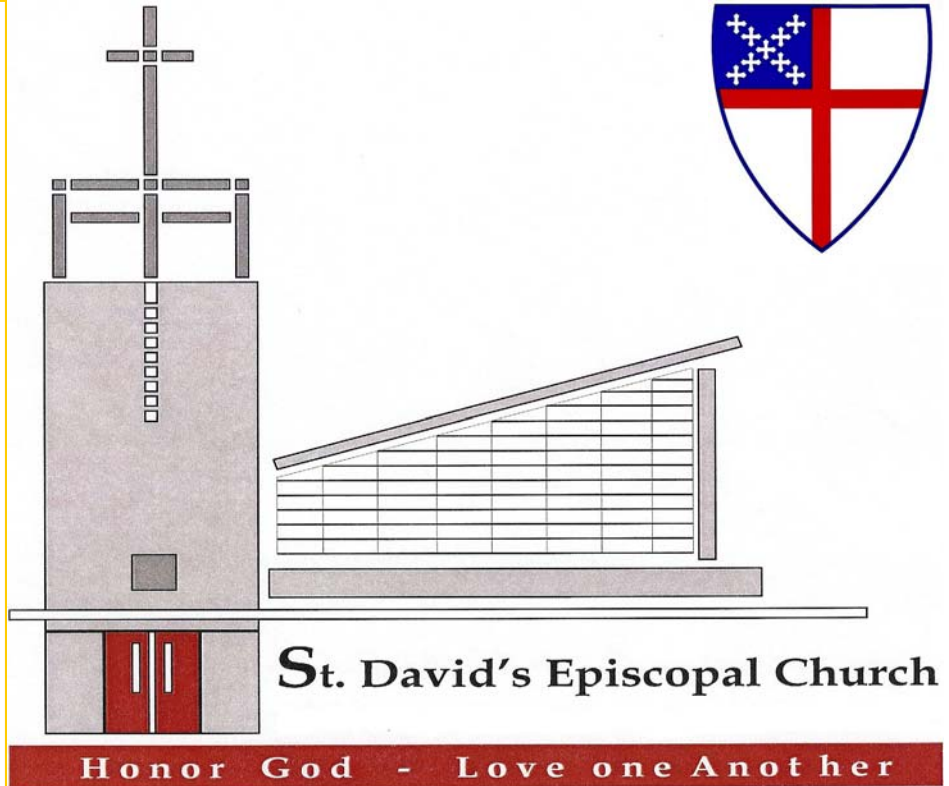


THE MESSENGER

June 2011

www.stdavidschurch.com



Home Grown Missionary

Alice Johnston may not appear on the outside to be your typical missionary. She did not start doing missionary work until after she had been retired for a few years, and then it came upon her as a surprise. Yet, Alice is returning to Kenya in a few days for the fourth year, and her passion for the work she does is growing with every trip and every day.

A few years ago Alice visited with her priest and asked if there wasn't something more she could do? She was first inspired by the work of the Kansas-2-Kenya ministry of the Diocese of Kansas and later by the work of Comfort the Children International.

This year she returns to the village of Maai Mahiu, about an hour's drive from the national capital of Nairobi, and her work will center on the Malaiki Mums which is a group of mothers with disabled children.



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The children of the Malaiki Mums are in many cases unable to walk or have a disease that makes it difficult or impossible for them to attend regular school.

The Malaki Mums receive training in a variety of subjects including sewing, making clothing for young boys and girls.

Other missionary endeavors include "Grandmother's Garden" or cucushamba a program began years ago teaching community members how to garden effectively so that they can produce their own vegetables. Better nutrition being the goal of the project, the Grandmothers are some of the best teachers.

The environmental mission includes a garden near the Nyega School. The school, built to accommodate 400 students now has an enrollment of over 1700 due to the political unrest and violence in Nairobi.

"Ubuntu" a word familiar with Episcopalians as the theme of the 2009 General Convention means "I am because we are." Simply put, we do not live in isolation but are affected by the presence and acts of others. The displaced persons from Nairobi live in a camp



nearby.

A Clinic providing education and medical care has been established near the community as well. The clinic provides testing for HIV and began with a grant of \$70,000.00. Those who are test positive are transported to medical facilities for medication and treatment if necessary.



Over the past four years, Alice has assisted, with help from St. David's, in the procurement of four sewing machines. Her goal this year is to raise \$6000.00 for the Malaika School. The funds will help to provide medical supplies, as well as books and classroom supplies.

If you would like to help Alice in her work as our own "Home Grown Missionary" you can contact her at 785-273-1954 or johnston3754@sbcglobal.net.

*For More information about Comfort the Children go to
www.ctcinternational.org*

Congratulations

Virginia



Virginia Feeley celebrated her 100th birthday at an open house near her apartment. Virginia is the senior member of St. David's and is pictured here with her great-grandson.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS CHANGES IN SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

A Task Force composed of members of the Worship Ministry Group, Vestry, Christian Formation Ministry Groups and regular attendees of the 9:00 service was appointed by Fr. Don in February and made its recommendations to the Vestry at their regular meeting in March. The Vestry approved the recommendations and the Rector has worked to implement them over the summer months.

The Recommendations include the following:

- The 9:00 service will end no later than 9:40 am.
- Sunday school will be lengthened and run from 9:50-10:35 am.
- The 9:00 service will include 5 total songs instead of six, and the clergy will be asked to preach for only 3 minutes.
- One song during the service will be a "folk" song or not as contemporary as the other music selected.
- Our Director of Music (Donna Osborne) will be working on ways in which the musicians can get closer to those attending so that there is more participation between the two groups.
- The presiding clergy will sit near the musicians.

The 9:00 am service was instituted during the transition to the new building when we had an overflow problem during the then 10:30 service. The service includes contemporary music and liturgies, approved by the Bishop, from the "Enriching our Liturgy" recommendations of the national church.

If you have not yet attended a 9:00 service please come and experience an exciting and unique way to worship.

Musicians are always welcome too. If you are interested contact donna@stdavidschurch.com.



Kirsten Goodman
Director of Youth Ministries
271-5144 or 580-7934
kirsten@stdavidschurch.com

Reading at Rescue Mission

On June 2st, St. David's youth visited the Topeka Rescue Mission Hope Center and read with some of the children staying there. When it was time to go, each child got to choose a book to keep. While there were a couple of kids who really weren't interested in sitting still, it was clear that they all had a good time. Readers from St. David's were: Brett Fair, Cara Wedeking, Jensen Fair, Peter Hesse, Sam Hesse, Sydney Webb and Will Loehr.

Relay for Life

St. David's youth are helping to set up for this year's Relay for Life at Hayden High School. Relay for Life raises money for cancer research. The youth are helping to put together the luminaries, lamps that will be set around the track to be lit after dark. St. David's has a team participating in the race as well.

Let's Help Lunches

On Wednesday, June 22nd, St. David's youth will be at Let's Help during the lunch hour to help serve lunch. We'll also help out on St. Davids regular day in July, on the 27th.

The Seekers

This summer, on Sunday evenings, we will be offering a program called The Seekers. This program is part Bible study, part self-examination and part fun. The Seekers is designed for people aged 16-20 and has been used with high school youth groups and Canterbury's on college campuses across the country. It asks the important question, "Who will you be as an adult person of faith in the world?" It examines the self, values, faith, and work. We'll meet in the youth center at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday evenings.

CANNED AND POWDERED MILK

During June the featured food collection for Doorstep is milk. However, any nonperishable food staples such as **canned fruits and veggies, macaroni and cheese, peanut butter, jelly, cereal, tuna, pasta, dried beans, pork and beans, etc. are always welcome.** During the summer it is easy to forget that the needs for many people must be met and the demand for all types of services continue to increase.

Anything you can donate will be put to good use. If you are looking for a good place to volunteer, call Christina at Doorstep 357-5341.

*Senior Warden's
Bits of Wisdom*
Ronda Hoss, Senior Warden



Hi everyone!

This month, I am going to recap some of the items from my report to the Vestry at our last meeting. If you have any questions, please stop me in hallway or write me at seniorwarden@stdavidschurch.com.

* The Vestry is going to be discussing having heart healthy alternatives at all parish functions including breakfast. We all need to respect those who have or want to maintain a specific diet.

* VBS is not that far away (August 8-12th) at Grace Cathedral. It will be held in the evenings this year.

* Thanks Kyle Smith for the wonderful lettering above the AV windows in the narthex.

* We are getting close to the time when each Ministry Group and many other areas will be asked for their budget 2012 needs. The Rector will submit his 2012 draft budget to the Finance Committee on August 1st.

* The Vestry discussed an upcoming Youth Group trip. We are very pleased with our youth program for both High School and Middle School.

* The monthly "Grace Report" in May was presented by Marcia Ransom and the Welcoming Ministry Group. Good Job!

* The Vestry will meet in June and July but may not meet in August unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Even Vestries take vacations.

Have a safe summer everyone!

Ronda



Rector's Ramblings

There are times when I recognize that pride is not a good thing. Pride that turns one person away from another, or pride that divides is dangerous and can be sinful.

There are other times when a certain amount of pride is a positive thing. Let me tell you about four instances of that kind of pride.

I am extremely proud of our St. David's Crusaders who set out to raise \$10,000.00 for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. They did it, in fact they surpassed their goal. They are a "Jade" team and will receive special recognition at the walk. They have been a gold and platinum team before but this may be the high water mark for their very impressive efforts.

I am extremely proud of St. David's for coming through for the people of Joplin Missouri by contributing nearly \$3500.00 to Episcopal Relief and Development through the Diocese of Kansas. We all know the fragility of life and we know that storms are a dangerous part of life almost anywhere these days. My thanks to everyone who donated.

I am extremely proud of all of our kids who are going to "Mega Camp." I do not have the exact number, but I believe we are sending over 10 this year which is fantastic. Thanks also to those who made a contribution to our scholarship fund so that any young person who wanted to go to camp was given that opportunity.

Finally, I am extremely proud of our youth group and their plan to do something outstanding in the months to come. When our youth lead, they are unstoppable and such is the case this time. Although I will not steel their thunder by telling you all their plans, I will say that they will honor us and they honor God by the work they are and will do.

Of course the pride does not end with those four examples. I am proud of our Vestry and ministry groups for taking on difficult projects and moving forward with them. I am proud that we do not shy away from hard decisions. I am proud of Alice Johnston and her remarkable devotion to the people of Kenya and her continuing ministry in that African nation. She is a model that retirement does not mean doing less, I am proud of our Sunday school and they finish up an amazing year with over 60 children enrolled. I am proud of our choir, The nine o'clockers (the musicians at that service), and the Handchime choir for their dedication all year long. I am proud that St. David's has contributed well, over 12,000.00 to the Crossroads campaign of our Diocese. I hope even more of our folks will consider this idea in the future.

I am most definitely proud of our newcomers who have accepted our welcome and become a part of our corner of Christ's realm.

I suppose I could go on and there are no doubt things that I have not said, but it continues to be an honor and privilege to serve this parish. I am proud to be your priest.

Yours faithfully,



NEWS FROM THE DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

For former Iraq War chaplain, Memorial Day invokes 'crucial' memories

Our own Kevin McFarland brought us all up to date on current events at our May meeting. His talk was most interesting and well received. We didn't know so many things were happening!

The last meeting of our DOK class will be May 24th. Linda Martin will be brought into the Order at the Service of Admission on June 5th. Welcome, Linda!

Our June program will feature Ruth Maus from the Marian Clinic who will describe the services provided and tell us about the way the clinic works. We have been looking forward to her presentation.

The Mary and Martha Chapter of the Daughters of the King meets at 1:00 on the second Saturday of each month. For more information, please call Diane Bernheimer at 232-1066 or Louise Marvin at 233-453

[Episcopal News Service] The Rev. Bob Blessing describes war's defining moments with only a slight trace of humor: "Relationships count, and if nobody's blowing you up or shooting at you — it's a good day."

The San Diego chaplain's most recent tour of duty in Iraq included a considerable amount of both explosions and shootings, prompting a serious "reflective mode" as he observed Memorial Day holiday. "I'm really dealing with life and resurrection. Remembering all the lives and how they served, to me, is crucial," he said during a May 25 telephone interview.

Like his former battalion commander who died when his vehicle hit a land mine. "He was a good brother in Christ. I should have been there with him, but I was taking care of another situation. You just deal with those things as they come through but it doesn't make it any easier."

And the Iraqi translator. "Her name was Sarah, like my daughter. She was killed when a bomb went through her face, literally, and blew her apart. She kept our guys alive and gave the ultimate sacrifice, trying to keep peace for her people."

Blessing, rector of [St. Andrew's Church](#) in La Mesa, California, in the [Episcopal Diocese of San Diego](#), said that he'll pause this Memorial Day to remember not only the dead but also the living, and their huge sacrifices.

Like the Muslim imam "who helped us so much he had to flee Iraq. Thankfully, we got him out. He now lives in the Pacific Northwest. He is one of the wonderful brothers I love and cherish."

Financials through **April 30, 2011**

Income:

Pledged:	\$156,643.00
Non-Pledged:	\$4,736.00
All Others:	\$35,624.94
Total Income:	\$197,003.94

Expenses:

Operations:	\$77,660.18
Salaries & Benefits:	\$70,245.46
Programs & Ministries:	\$6,861.83
Total Expenses:	\$154,767.47

The 52-year-old Blessing is no stranger to war. He returned from his third deployment to St. Andrew's for Easter week services after nearly a year at the Contingency Operation Base (COB) Adder, "essentially a quarter-mile away from where Abraham's house was located in Ur of Chaldea," he said.



"It was a rough deployment. We lost two guys in our immediate brigade. This time I was responsible as senior chaplain for about 14,000 troops and contractors at the COB in Southern Iraq."

He supervised 18 chaplains and about 20 chaplain assistants as part of the Long Beach, California-based 224th Sustainment Brigade. He solidified a team approach to empower others "to touch far more lives for the Kingdom of God, without question," he said.

Each deployment has included its own challenges and graces. Blessing, a noncombatant who does not carry a weapon, has held the hand of dying soldiers, assuring them of God's presence and love. The Washington native has ducked mortar fire, double-checked the contents of body bags and faced tough questions of faith — his own as well as those from others.

"The suffering, the hardship, the discipline challenge you in your capacity as you are called to be a pastor," he said. "The thing I grieve is the loss, the death that comes with

being in a war."

Like many of those with whom he served, he has also experienced post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD.

"Every mobilization has been death and dying; it's hard when you lose brothers and sisters. If you have PTSD you are affected by the war mentally," Blessing said.

"As much as I had prayed and sought God, as much as I had walked with God, as much as I had communicated with God, the violence still tweaks anybody who is susceptible to it.

"At least 30 to 40 percent of the troops going to Iraq have it (PTSD)," added Blessing, who sought treatment for the anxiety disorder. "The ones who care have a tendency to be traumatized even more. It messes with you."

He grew up in the Seattle area and was active in youth ministry. After high school he spent a year in France, "involved in church planting, and as time went on, I realized that's what I wanted to do."

He graduated in 1980 from the University of Washington. He earned a master of divinity degree from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, California, in 1984.

Contact with troops while serving in the Anglican Church of Korea inspired him to join the U.S. Army Reserves. "I was in the mission field in Asia and connected once in a while with military in Korea, and visited troops. That's what got me interested in the military," he said.

A few years later, "I went active duty," he recalled. He estimates that he has spent about five years of his 23-year marriage actively deployed and serving in what he views as another kind of mission field.

"For the chaplain, the priest, it's just caring for people that are truly interested in their faith and want to figure out where God is in the midst of the violence around them, where God is in the midst of their lives.

"The majority of them are 18 to 20-year-olds; it's a great ministry to people with a lot of inquiries into the faith life journey. It's intense; it's a great opportunity. That's why chaplains love it.

"There's such a great need with the young men and women of our nation. It's such a privilege to support them, care for them and be with them in their time of crisis. When you send your sons and daughters out and terrible things happen, you need to know people are there, standing by them."

He feels blessed with both a family and a congregation that support and stand by him; an interim served in his absence at St. Andrew's, where Blessing was called as rector in 2006.

"Sometimes this five years away from my family has made my kids angry," he said. But he added that communicating with them via Skype helped during his last tour.

In fact, on one occasion, "I remember the rockets coming in," he said. "Everybody else was cutting and running for the bunkers but I jumped on the floor with my Kevlar on and continued my conversation with my wife.

"Now, that was real communication," he said jokingly.

Living with the realities of war also forced real communication, he added, sobering again.

"The death and dying and the suffering, the hardship and discipline challenge you in your capacity as you are called to be a pastor," he said. "We saw what was important defined so clearly that normal church drama, normal drama in life is only important as it relates to building relationships.

"Relationships are what count, not the size of your bank book, or your car, or the size of your church, or whatever it is one values. It's people. It's family.

"I knew that I was ready to meet Jesus, there's no question, but what became important was coming back for my family, my wife and kids, for my church, standing by them -- that was the crucial thing. That was a gift of *the violence.*"

-- *The Rev. Pat McCaughan is a correspondent for the Episcopal News Service. She is based in Los Angeles.*

Vestry Developing New Building Use Policy

In the coming months, the Vestry will decide on a new Building Use Policy. We want people to use it and respect it. We also want our guests to feel safe when they are in our structure.

The new policy will include a payment schedule for an Event Coordinator who will be able to assist groups with unlocking and locking doors, storm safety and other needs.

The new policy might be adopted as early as the June Vestry meeting.