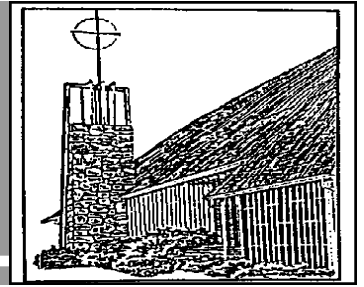


The Pulse



A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR MARY ROBINSON-MOHR

Volume 38, Issue 8
September 2006

Greetings friends!

How wonderful it is to be home again in the temperate Pacific Northwest after baking in the desert of the Aqaba Rift Valley during my recent sabbatical! It was wonderful to go, and it is also wonderful to be back. I look forward to sharing with you some of the “gleanings” of that remarkable time. Most of the reading that I did during the sabbatical was about recent archaeological findings in Israel and Palestine, and how those may impact Biblical studies. Two of the books on my list went an entirely different direction, however. They gave me some background on the Eastern Orthodox tradition, specifically, about monasteries in deserts and about icons.

So one of the highlights of our travels for me was our two-night visit to St. Catherine’s Monastery in Egypt, located at the foot of the traditional Mt. Sinai in the Sinai Desert. We met a tour guide, van and van driver, and a security guard (yes, in both Jordan and Egypt we were required to be escorted by an armed guard) at the Israel and Egypt border near Eilat at 3 a.m. in the morning one day. In the dark. Barely awake. You get the idea.



We had not expected a security guard to travel in the van with us. If you have seen the animated movie, “Lilo and Stitch,” you will remember a very scary looking FBI agent in the movie. Our security guard looked just like him. He was the only one in our small entourage that wore a suit and tie, and he topped it off with mirrored sunglasses. He was very muscular, with a neck as wide as his head and biceps stretching the stitches in the sleeves of his suit. He didn’t smile much, and we realized we didn’t get many pictures of him. We were scared to take his picture!

Our itinerary for that day was to drive furiously across Sinai, and spend a quick day in Cairo, then backtrack a bit and forge south into the rugged and mountainous interior of Sinai. We were to stay at the St. Catherine’s guesthouse that night, and the next night. I hope to give you more details soon of this “flight into Egypt” in the blog, but for now, I’ll try to stay with the St. Catherine’s highlights.

First of all, our three Egyptian companions thought we were crazy to plan to spend two nights at an isolated monastery. They tried several times to persuade us to change our minds, and spend two nights in Cairo.

continued on page 2...

St James Presbyterian Church
910 14th Street ~ Bellingham, Washington 98225
phone: (360)733-1325 fax: (360)733-1664 e-mail: stjpres@msn.com

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR MARY ROBINSON-MOHR *CONT. FROM PAGE 1*

“There is so much to do and to see in Cairo!” they would say, “but there is only a hike and a half hour tour of the monastery at St. Catherine’s.” We would agree, yes, that Cairo is full of things we would love to see, but we still wanted to stay at St. Catherine’s. The scary security guard said nothing, and I think he just stared straight ahead in response. It was always hard to tell, with his mirrored sunglasses, where his gaze had landed.

So, duds that we are, we were excited about two nights in a desert monastery. That’s because St. Catherine’s is one of the first places that Christian monasticism began, out in the deserts of Egypt, early in the fourth century. The most visible structure of St. Catherine’s is the surrounding wall and chapel, built by Emperor Justinian in the sixth century. No doubt he built it to last, because it is still standing, strong and functional, after about 1500 years. Some of the oldest religious art in the world is in this unique place, including some of the oldest icons, which survived the iconoclast controversies and icon burnings of more inhabited places in Europe and all. The monastery library is well-known to even modest students of the Bible, in that its dusty forgotten shelves have in recent years produced some of the oldest surviving manuscripts of the Bible in the world. These have been invaluable to translators, and have spawned many of the Bible translations of the last century or so. There are also archives of letters from emperors and notables through the ages, a letter of affirmation from Mohammed the Prophet, and a letter from Napoleon. So, duds that we are, we couldn’t wait to spend two nights in the guesthouse of this ancient, legendary monastery.

The background reading on Orthodoxy was very helpful to me at St. Catherine’s. I could better appreciate the meaning of the icons seen. They are not meant to be portraits of people of faith, as much as a tool for prayer and meditation. Features of the saints are deliberately distorted to tell the story of the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. For example, the mouths of portrayed saints are often small, indicating that they have learned to listen to God, and not to speak first. For the same reason, their ears will often be seen, sometimes prominently. Their necks will be thickened, and their noses elongated to show that they are breathing in the breath of the Spirit, and taking the presence and inspiration of the Holy Spirit within them. The foreheads will be widened to show the growth of wisdom in their spiritual life. Their eyes will sometimes look heavenward, to show that they can see things that are beyond material sight. When the eyes are focused toward the viewer, they are often slightly skewed, to give the impression that they are looking past the viewer, and seeing things beyond the visible rather than focusing on things of this world.

An Orthodox church is rich with sensory symbolism. Artwork is everywhere, and incense combines with the gentle scent of burning olive oil lamps to make one feel as if one is drawing close to heaven. The iconostasis, or icon screen at the front of the sanctuary, is meant to give a visible sense of the close interface in the life of a believer between earth and heaven. A “doorway to heaven,” in the center of every iconostasis, is opened at one point during the Orthodox mass.

I tried to summarize some of this for Susannah, my nine year old daughter, before we entered the monastery’s chapel. I told her that this is a church quite different from our church, and that the people of this church try to make their sanctuary feel as if they are touching and entering heaven.

I was fascinated with her answer. I expected her to say something like, “Are there lots of lights?” or “Is there a lot of gold or jewels?” I would have said “yes” to either of these questions, since these are used to give a sense of majesty and otherworldliness to Orthodox sanctuaries. Instead, she said, “So, does it feel like a safe place?”



continued on page 9...

CROP WALK

On Sunday, October 1 (World Communion Day), local churches and organizations will be participating in this year's Whatcom County CROP Walk. (Please see the insert for more information.)

We will gather at Fairhaven Village Green at 1:30, with the walk to begin at 2 pm. Walkers can choose a 2.5 mile walk around the Taylor St. Dock and circling Boulevard Park, or a 1 mile stroll down Harris Ave. and circling the Ferry Terminal. A celebration at the finish, at Village Green, will include music, refreshments, and fellowship.

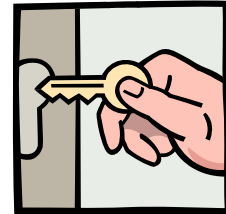
Walkers and sponsors are needed for this event. 75% of the funds raised will support Church World Service in their effort to stop hunger. The other 25% will be shared equally by our local service: Maple Alley Inn, the Bellingham Food Bank, and the Ferndale Food Bank.

Contact Gretchen Pfueller, 734-3953, for registration forms or for further information.

St. James will be responsible for setting up the course, the start and the finish. If you are interesting in helping, please contact Gretchen!

CHURCH BUILDING ACCESS

If you need access to the church building during times outside of office hours, please contact the church office at 733-1325. The key lock box code will be changed on a regular basis.



PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Please join in an ecumenical prayer vigil for the Christian communities in Jerusalem, for all those who are suffering in the Holy Land, for Palestinians and Israelis, and for peace in the Middle East. All are welcome.



Monday, September 18
5:30 pm
 First Presbyterian Church
 1031 N. Garden St., 734-5510



SUNDAY MORNING PARKING

Four reserved (handicapped) parking spaces are designated in our front, 14th Street parking area. In addition to these designated spaces, we would like to save all of the 14th Street parking on Sunday mornings during the Worship Service for those who need level access and our first-time visitors. If you have no difficulty climbing stairs, please use the lower parking area or the Lowell playground lot. The Lowell lot is accessed off of Taylor between 14th and 15th. There is a stairway down to 14th at the south end of the area.



WORSHIP TAPES AVAILABLE FOR LOAN

Our morning worship service is audio-taped each Sunday. If you know of anyone who would like a copy of any recent service, please check one out in the church library.

ST. JAMES PRAYER CHAIN

If you have a prayer request for the St. James Prayer Chain/ E-mail Team call

Linda Monroe at

360-671-6594 or e-mail her at Lidale@aol.com.

MONTHLY CHURCH WORK PARTY



Good-bye summer, hello autumn...

Please join us for the monthly all-church clean-up landscaping ~ fix-it ~ workday:

Saturday
September 9, 9 am—12 pm

Bring your favorite tools, and join us in maintaining our lovely church!

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

- **Fern Wibbens** wants to share the happy news that her grandsons graduated this last spring:

Brennen Chamberlain

from Burlington Edison High School

Jesse Rae Wibbens

from Fairhaven Middle School

If you have news you would like to share with the St. James family, please send it to the church office!

“THE FORGOTTEN FAITHFUL”

“A Window into the Life and Witness of Christians in the Holy Land.”

Sabeel 6th International Conference,
November 2-9, 2006,
in Palestine & Israel.

Conferences and visits to Christian communities in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Jericho, Nazareth, and Galilee. Registration ends October 15. Registration forms available via e-mail at

conf2006@sabeel.org

Sabeel is the Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem.

**BIRTHDAYS
& ANNIVERSARIES**

September Birthdays

- 1 Nancy Richter
- 3 Bea Aubert
- 3 Colin Jackson
- 5 Ryan Haines
- 5 Kate Snyder
- 6 Margaret McVie
- 6 Earl VanderWerff
- 13 Brian Hoffman
- 13 Bill Summers
- 14 Don Thorson
- 16 Linda Landis
- 17 Dave Nelson
- 18 Ann Lary
- 19 Greg Schayes
- 21 Margaret Landis
- 21 Nick Keefe
- 23 Faye Hill
- 23 Twyla Bader
- 23 Jillian Bader
- 24 Kathryn McGregor
- 25 Matthew Haggan
- 26 Margie Burkett
- 26 Tom Kilpatrick
- 27 Tass Galley
- 27 Ken Reimers
- 28 Margaret Van Zanten
- 30 Phyllis Jones
- 30 Hannah Donnelly

September Anniversaries

- 7 Peter & Susan Burkland
- 11 Bill & Katy Read
- 11 Ralph & Eleanor Rinne
- 16 Charles & Susan Snyder
- 29 Milt & Sharon Schayes

**NEW MEMBERS
ORIENTATION**

Would you like to explore membership in St. James Presbyterian Church? A New Members Orientation will be held on Sunday, September 10 at 4:30 p.m. There will be an opportunity following the orientation to meet with the Session to request membership and share a light supper. It couldn't be any easier! Childcare is available upon request.

Questions? Need more information? Call the church office at 733-1325, or talk with Pastor Mary.

WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

September 26

10:30 am Bible Study

Margaret Van Zanten will introduce the 2006-07 Horizon Bible Study: “In the Beginning, Perspectives on Genesis.” In this first lesson, we look anew at the Creation accounts. Each subsequent Study focuses on different persons in the Genesis saga.

12 pm Luncheon

Bring a friend and a salad to share!

All women are invited for food, fun and fellowship!

Questions? Please call Phyllis Jones, 734-4504

• Coming soon...

**The Women's Association
Annual
Craft Bazaar**

Saturday, November 4

• If you or someone you know would like to be a vendor, please contact
• Ann Lary (734-7534)
• or Phyllis Jones (734-4504)

FROM THE INTERFAITH COALITION

Dear Megan and Youth of St. James Presbyterian Church:

You are amazing! Even with the downpour of rain we had last Wednesday, you finished sanding, priming, and painting the detached garage at Garden Street House, and finished the fence as well. Both look so nice – clean and fresh. You did a fabulous job. Thank you.

When I saw you Wednesday, you gave me an envelope containing your monetary donation to Interfaith Coalition – proceeds from fundraising you'd done earlier in the year. I was absolutely stunned when I opened the envelope back at our office and found a check for \$1,000. Wow! Thank you.



Your donation of time on July 11, 12, and 13 helped Interfaith Coalition with our ongoing effort to maintain the homes we have dedicated to housing homeless families. We work hard to provide not only shelter and safety to families, but also a sense of comfort and, for the short time they stay in Interfaith Family Housing, a sense of being at home. Only if the houses are well maintained can families have this sense. With the work you completed last week, the home looks welcoming from the moment a family drives up and parks the car. Once again, thank you.

Your generous donation of \$1,000 will help support not only our homeless housing program, but also our efforts to ensure access to health care for all people in need. As you know, the mission of Interfaith Coalition is to improve the lives of local people in need, and we focus our efforts on housing for homeless families and health care for all.

Have a wonderful summer and know that your donation of time and money will have a lasting effect on many of our neighbors in need.

Peace,
Lori Polevoi
Program Coordinator
Interfaith Coalition

TREASURER'S NOTE

SALLY ALBERS

September seems to me a time for reflection and planning, as it may be for many others. So I will be mailing out a year-to-date contribution report to all those who have contributed to St. James and its missions this year. Please look on this report for any errors or omissions in how your contributions have been credited. But also, and more importantly, consider whether you will make adjustments in your planned giving for the balance of the year.

The Session is obliged to balance its budget each year. While we have been keeping our expenses close to our income so far, our income through August is \$7,000 lower than our original projections. I am preparing a revised estimate of income for the last four months of 2006, so that we can keep our operating expenses within the lower total. You may leave a message for me at the church, 733-1325, or by envelope to the Treasurer, or email stjtreas@msn.com. All contribution information is kept as confidential as possible, within the limits of auditing requirements. I respect your wisdom in this matter.



EARTH MINISTRY'S CELEBRATION OF ST. FRANCIS

Please join us in celebrating St. Francis, the patron saint of ecology and the environmental movement, and in honoring our newest Greening Congregations Partners!

Earth Ministry's Celebration of St. Francis

October 7, 2006

University Congregational United Church of Christ, Seattle, Washington (one of our new Partners)

Keynote Speaker: University of Washington Professor David Domke

Progressive people of faith and spirituality are in a unique position in American politics today. We hold clear moral values that resonate with the majority of Americans, and we have a positive vision of the future for our families and the earth. Yet religious fundamentalists have used strategic public rhetoric and mass media to make theirs the only religious voice that many elected leaders hear on issues that are important to us all. Rather than letting a vocal minority speak for all Christians, we must reclaim our faith, our flag, and our future by bringing progressive spiritual values to the forefront of the political debate.

Please join Earth Ministry in welcoming University of Washington Communications Professor David Domke as the keynote speaker at our 12th annual Celebration of St. Francis on October 7, 2006, at University Congregational United Church of Christ, Seattle, Washington. Professor Domke will be speaking on the importance of spiritually progressive language, messages, and media to augment faith-based environmental and social justice efforts. The program will also include remarks by Reverend Lisa Domke and music to uplift and energize our souls.

More on Professor Domke:

David Domke is an Associate Professor and Head of Journalism in the Department of Communications at the University of Washington. He is the author of *God Willing? Political Fundamentalism in the White House, the "War on Terror," and the Echoing Press*, published in 2004 by Pluto Press in London and the University of Michigan Press. The book examines the strategic religious rhetoric of the Bush administration and the mainstream press's response. Professor Domke has been interviewed by CNN, BBC, Fox News, MSNBC, NPR, The London Times, USA Today, and The Philadelphia Inquirer. As a journalist, he worked for the Orange County Register and Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Professor Domke lives in Seattle with his wife, the Reverend Lisa Domke, and their son.

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP TOPICS

September 3

Communion

James 1: 17-27

Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

"When the Tail Wags the Dog"

September 10

FALL SCHEDULE RESUMES

10:30 am Worship

Proverbs 22: 1-2, 8-9, 22-23

Mark 7: 24-37

"People at the End of Their Rope"

September 17

Proverbs 1: 20-33

Mark 8: 27-38

"Actions Have Consequences"

September 24

Psalm 1

Mark 9: 30-37

"The Well-Watered Tree"

CHANCEL AND BELL CHOIR REHEARSALS

Rehearsals for St. James' Music

groups will begin in September: The Chancel Choir will begin on Thursday, September 7, 7:30 pm in the Choir Loft. The Bell Choir will begin rehearsals on Thursday, September 21 at 6:30 pm in the Horizon Room. For information about either group please contact Music Director Carolyn Mullen at 595-0934.

HURRICANE KATRINA: ONE YEAR LATER

Survivors of Hurricane Katrina continue to rebuild their lives and redefine their understanding of “home” and “community” one year later. Creating space and opportunity for people of faith to work alongside survivors and local congregations, Volunteer Villages have also cultivated a wider circle of community.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance produced a series of short videos to assess the impact of volunteer villages on various levels, and to lift up the needs and challenges remaining for the long-term recovery of the Gulf Coast.



To learn more, visit <http://www.pcusa.org/katrina/>

ROCK GROUP GIVES \$75,000 TO PC(USA) FOR KATRINA RELIEF

From Presbyterian News Service: August 9, 2006

Money will be used to buy materials for rebuilding by Evan Silverstein

LOUISVILLE — The Hurricane Katrina relief effort of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) received a big boost Tuesday (Aug. 8) thanks to a \$75,000 contribution rock ‘n’ roll style. The announcement came during an afternoon news conference where representatives of the rock band *3 Doors Down* presented Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) with the money, which will go for purchasing construction materials to rebuild homes along the Gulf Coast. The news conference was held at a volunteer village in Gautier, MS, one of six such sites in Mississippi and Louisiana operated by the relief and recovery program of the PC(USA). Each village houses work teams from churches across the country helping with the response.

Band spokesman Mark Smith said *3 Doors Down* was impressed with the effectiveness and efficiency of PDA’s Gautier village, which is located in southeast Mississippi near the Alabama border, about 20 miles east of Biloxi, MS. He said the contribution was made through The Better Life Foundation, the band’s charitable agency named after its first CD. “Initially we did immediate relief stuff and right now the most important thing on the Gulf Coast is rebuilding,” Smith told the *Presbyterian News Service*. “So we want this distribution to help with rebuilding efforts and to help people step-by-step get closer to where they were before the storm hit.” The band, whose members are from nearby Escatawpa, MS, were an early supporter of disaster-relief efforts following last fall’s Gulf Coast hurricanes and continues to raise money for the cause through sales of its music and special concert appearances. “For me the gift from *3 Doors Down* affirms the visible presence that Presbyterians have along the Gulf and for local people they are becoming the responder of choice,” said Susan Ryan, PDA’s coordinator. “If local people are saying that this is a place they want to put their money, then it validates the kind of wonderful work and ministry that is happening in the Gulf.” Ryan said the money would purchase a range of building-related materials such as drywall, shingles, doors, and windows. The funds are earmarked for use only by volunteers working out of the Gautier volunteer village, Smith said.

The widespread destruction left by Katrina and other hurricanes last year led to the PC(USA)’s biggest-ever domestic relief effort. The band’s \$75,000 adds to a record-setting \$23 million in contributions raised by PDA in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. “They were out on tour when Hurricane Katrina hit,” Smith said of the band. “When they came back home and saw it, it was just complete shock. In some places it looked like Iraq.” *3 Doors Down* has sold more than 12 million records in the United States alone since debuting in 2000 with their CD “The Better Life.” The band’s follow up release in 2002, “Away From The Sun,” remained on the Billboard Top 200 Chart for almost two years.

3 Doors Down has written six number one hit singles including (according to Nielsen) the most played song in the country in 2003 “When I’m Gone” and the 2004 critically acclaimed ballad “Here Without You.” One of the band’s guitar players, Chris Henderson, who was present at the news conference, lives near PDA’s volunteer village in Gautier, which is pronounced “go-shay.” His home took on six feet of water from Katrina and every member of the group had at least one family member directly impacted by the storm, Smith said. Joining Henderson in *3 Doors Down* is Brad Arnold, lead vocals; Matt Roberts, guitar; and Todd Harrell, bass. “It’s great because they’re local boys and they want to make a contribution to the redevelopment of their community,” said Camille Lopez, PDA’s volunteer village coordinator. “They really wanted to make sure that they put it into somebody’s hands that would take good care of the money and made sure it was spent properly on people who needed it.”

PACIFIC SCIENCE CENTER TO EXHIBIT DEAD SEA SCROLLS

SEATTLE—*Discovering the Dead Sea Scrolls*, a new exhibition opening at Pacific Science Center on Sept. 23, 2006, will feature four scrolls never before seen by the public and another making its first appearance outside Israel.

Manuscripts of Genesis, Exodus, Ezekiel, and the War Rule, all found in Qumran Cave 4 off the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea between Jerusalem and Jericho in the 1950's, will make their public debut in the exhibition. Pacific Science Center is sponsoring the conservation of these manuscripts for their world premiere public viewing.

Discovering the Dead Sea Scrolls will feature a total of 10 original scrolls and three facsimiles, along with other artifacts from the ancient settlement of Qumran near the Dead Sea. They will be accompanied by a collection of interactive exhibits on the science behind the scrolls' excavation, conservation, and interpretation. Curated by the Israel Antiquities Authority, this exhibit was developed in cooperation with Discovery Place and presented in association with the The Dead Sea Scrolls Foundation. This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

Regarded by many as one of the greatest archeological discoveries of the 20th century, the Dead Sea scrolls predate Christianity. Until the scrolls' discovery, the oldest Hebrew biblical manuscript known to scholars was written in 895 C.E.* The biblical Dead Sea scrolls are more than 1,000 years older, having been transcribed or copied between 250 B.C.E. and 68 C.E., written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

Most scholars believe an ancient Jewish sect known as the Essenes wrote the scrolls and hid them in the Qumran caves. The manuscripts, most written on parchment, include biblical, sectarian and apocryphal texts.

Tickets to Discovering the Dead Sea Scrolls, which runs September 23, 2006-January 7, 2007, are available now at Pacific Science Center's Web site, www.pacsci.org or by calling 877-DSS-1947. Group sales information is available by phone at (206) 443-3611. The exhibition will be open to the general public Mondays - Sundays at 10:00 a.m. Open Thursdays till 9:00 p.m.

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR MARY ROBINSON-MOHR

Apparently it is important to my daughter that Heaven is a safe place, where there is no fear or terror or threat of war. One does not need a scary security guard in Heaven. In her mind, a church should feel like a safe place, if it is going to reflect any kind of heavenly presence on earth. I have a sense that this is very important to other children. I think it is important to a lot of adults. Does a church feel like a safe place, where the faithful can gather together, and offer support, love, and a preview of Heaven? That's a wonderful goal for any congregation.

Susannah knelt by my side along a prayer rail in that sanctuary. We prayed with some other touring pilgrims, who came and then left. My prayers in that place were prayed mostly while I had my eyes wide open, inspired by the stories of Scripture and of various saints, so beautifully portrayed around me. The power of the symbols in the sanctuary, the artwork offered by centuries of Christians before me, moved me to tears at one point. Susannah and I prayed there for quite a while. I mean, how often do I get to pray in the sanctuary of St. Catherine's?

When I felt that I was ready to leave, I turned to Susannah and said, "Shall we go?" "No," she said. "I'm not ready to leave yet. I want to stay in Heaven for a while." So, we did. My hope and prayer for each of you is that you will find a time and place and opportunity to linger in the presence of Heaven on earth in your worship and prayers and study.

By the way, even though the St. Catherine's library is closed to the public, we got to go into it, and visit with the monk that is in charge of the library. But that is another story for another day!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Mary

CONT. FROM PAGE 2



Sunday schedule

9:00 Adult Class
10:30 Worship
(starting Sept. 10th)
 7 pm AA

September 2006

Church office

Open Tuesday ~ Friday,
 9-12, 1-4

733-1325
 E-mail: stjpres@msn.com

S U N

M O N

T U E

W E D

T H U

F R I

S A T

1

2
 10 am OA

3

(Last day of 10 am
 Worship)
Communion

4

Labor Day

5

8 am Prayer
 Group
 5:30 pm Al Anon
 7:30 Washington
 Gender Alliance

6

5 pm Mission
 & Social
 Action
 6 pm AA Men

7

5 pm Christian
 Ed. comm.
 6:30 Congrega-
 tional Life
 7:30 AA
 7:30 Chancel
 Choir

8

6 pm Prime
 Timers

9

9-12 Church Work
 Party
 10 am OA

10

**First Day of
 10:30 am
 Worship**

11

Rally Day

4 pm New
 Members Class
 6 pm Session potluck
 7 pm Session

12

8 am Prayer
 Group
 5:30 pm Al Anon
 7:30 Washington
 Gender Alliance

13

6 pm AA Men

14

7:30 pm AA
 7:30 Chancel
 Choir

15

6:30 pm
 Women's Agapé
 Night

16

10 am OA

17

12 pm Deacons

18

19

8 am Prayer
 Group
 5:30 pm Al Anon
 7:30 Washington
 Gender Alliance

20

Pulse items
 due!
 6 pm AA Men

21

7:30 pm AA
 7:30 Chancel
 Choir

22

9 am Adult CE Class
 10 am OA

23

24

25

26

8 am Prayer
 Group
 10:30 Women's
 Bible Study
 12 pm Women's
 luncheon
 5:30 pm Al Anon
 7:30 Washington
 Gender Alliance

27

5:30 pm
 UMHE
 6 Personnel
 6 pm AA Men

28

10 am *Pulse* Crew
 7:30 pm AA
 6:30 Bell Choir
 7:30 Chancel
 Choir

29

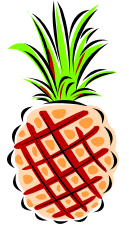
6 pm Friday
 Night Social

30

10 am OA

WE HAVE A NEW YOUTH DIRECTOR!

The Personnel Committee interviewed a couple of wonderful candidates and has chosen **Katrina Larsen**. The Committee members were *very* impressed with Katrina's **joyful enthusiasm, ideas, and charisma**. Katrina is a student at Western Washington University, pursuing a degree in English with a minor in theater. She has been involved in youth ministries for the past nine years, during which time she has grown closer to God, learned how to relate to her peers, and is very comfortable leading others in their relationship with Christ. Katrina is an incredibly friendly person who will do awesome things with and for our youth! Please introduce yourself to her when **she starts her new position in September** and help her feel welcome at St. James.



PEACEMAKING OFFERING ~ OCTOBER 1

About the 2006 Peacemaking Offering

October 1 is World Communion Sunday, the day the Peacemaking Offering is usually received by Presbyterian churches. The theme, "Swords into Plowshares: Living the Ways of Peace," is taken from the great vision of peace found in Isaiah 2:2-4, when the peoples of the world stream to the mountain of the Lord and learn from God how to live in peace. What they learn from God leads them to action: they change swords and spears, instruments of war that are no longer needed, into plowshares and pruning hooks, implements used in the peaceful work of producing food for people.

Please look for further information in upcoming newsletters and bulletins!



COMMENTS ON THE 217TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

EXCERPTED FROM A LETTER BY ELIZABETH SANDERS,
MISSIONARY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

"At this year's Assembly, again there were overtures related to Israel and Palestine, many addressing the church's process of corporate engagement with companies active in that region. This process, technically called 'phased selective divestment,' was approved in 2004, with the hope that we might change problematic practices of companies in whom we're invested. That is, if their behavior contributes to injustice and violence among Israelis and Palestinians, we want to help them change; if they refuse to work with us toward these goals, then our church can consider divesting of their stock.

Since 2004, an unprecedented lobbying campaign developed around this process, and it looked as though there would be a heated battle at this Assembly. We feared that this issue had become, like sexuality and abortion, a wedge in our denomination. We feared that our church might be pressured away from the principled and prophetic stand it took—of putting our money where our mouth is, as it were. General Assembly attendees driving into Birmingham were met with the billboard message 'Divestment is an obstacle to peace.' High profile activists, such as former CIA head James Woolsey, came to Birmingham to add their clout to the campaign around the engagement process.

We should not have been shaken; we should have rested firm in the message of angels throughout scripture: 'Fear not!' On June 21, by an overwhelming margin of 483-28, the General Assembly's commissioners approved an action which maintains our commitments to peace and justice in Israel and Palestine, to integrity in our financial investments, and to nurturing interfaith relationships. The full text is available at

<http://les-pcusa.org/Item.aspx?IID=90&>

Indeed the Spirit was at work in Birmingham!"

*Thanks to
the Pulse
Mailing
Crew*

Maverette Butler
Marion Dobbie
Dottie Hager
Pat Nelson
Mel Reasoner
Margaret Rice
Inge Thurston

The Pulse is published once per month, with the exception of the combined July/August issue. Articles and announcements for the next issue must be **received** in the church office no later than **Wednesday, September 20, 2006.** That issue will be mailed Thursday, **September 28.** If you have something that you would like considered for publication, call the church office at 360-733-1325, e-mail stjpres@msn.com, put it in *The Pulse* box near the church office or mail it to:
St. James Presbyterian Church, 910 14th Street Bellingham, WA 98225

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COLLEGE CLASS AND LUNCH

Watch for the first College Class of the school year! It will begin on Sunday, October 15, at noon. Lunch and a great discussion will be provided.



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