

Dear Companions on the Way...

One of the guiding values of my ministry is to seek **collaboration**. I generally feel my efforts are enriched and more fruitful when others share in the activities that I value. I also feel a greater closeness to God by being engaged with others who seek after God. I have particularly been blessed by the opportunities that exist in Durango to make connections with others who are committed to following God and loving their neighbors from other perspectives. St. Mark's has a long history of being open to sharing ministry and experiences with other faithful seekers but it seems that we are experiencing that at new levels of late and I want to build on that foundation.

There are a number of examples that are important to me and many of you. About ten years ago during Lent, we had a series of worship services, soup dinners and discussions with members of Christ the King Lutheran Church so that on a local level we could engage in conversation and learn about the national and formal collaboration efforts that were happening. That has since evolved into an established series of services and dinners during both Advent and Lent that include Catholic, Methodist and Lutheran congregations, and even Har Shalom Hebrew (Jewish) congregation joined us last spring.

Har Shalom used our parish hall for several years until they purchased their own worship space. That experience continues to be a spring of good will between our two communities. They staff our nursery on Christmas Eve so our regular staff can be with family or attend church. We have collaborated on adopt-a-highway cleanup and other joint programs. I was their guest at the Israel Independence Day forum.

What have particularly brought this to mind are some more recent and far-reaching connections. Last month, I was invited (again) to speak at the Buddhist Sangha (congregational meeting). I spoke about some of the differences between Christian and Buddhist practice and emphasis, and then opened a discussion about ways we might enrich each other by our various emphases. I will also be sharing the leading of a **class on Lovingkindness** this October and November as part of Fort Lewis' continuing education catalogue. I will be participating in this class leadership with Buddhists and a Jewish leader of contemplative practice, all of us committed to collaboration, contemplative practice and connecting practice into the way we deal with the world.

I could go on with several other ecumenical and interfaith examples: having a Presbyterian preach, weddings and funerals with shared leadership,

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etc., but I am wondering if there might be more we can do within St. Mark's to have shared voices and collaboration. At St. Mark's, we are very distinctive in the way we offer the **prayers of the people** (at 10:15). I have found some resources that give us different prayers for each week, and then Cheryl and I spend a good bit of time adapting them to our specific circumstances and liturgical style. In our worship, we encourage a variety of folk to offer the biddings, we allow for additions in the lists, and more recently are hearing specific biddings coming for others. Although this may feel a bit "messy" or disorganized at times, the positive side is that we have much more involvement and participation than in the typical Episcopal church.

What would increased collaboration look like in our prayers? I encourage you to consider being one of the readers; finding a prayer in the prayer-book or other resource that lifts up a concern you carry in your heart; taking on the editing of the prayers that are included in the bulletin some week; or simply taking the bulletin home each week and praying daily for the names and concerns that have been listed. These are prayers *of the people* and they should reflect the needs and voice *of the people*.

I also want to issue an invitation to consider whether you might be called to preach a sermon. I would like to offer a five-week **class on preaching**: looking at topics like exegesis (identifying themes in scripture passages), practical application and context for preaching, organization of ideas and sermon delivery. Then there will be an opportunity to deliver a sermon this Fall. The class will include some outside reading, preaching practice and debriefing after your sermon.

God, I'm convinced, desires to collaborate with us in the revealing of God's commonwealth of justice, peace and freedom on earth. God gives us the gift of the Spirit and speaks through God's people. I am convinced that it is through many voices that God speaks to us most clearly and fully; and that as we put ourselves in situations where other voices are heard, God can speak a new word to us. This church is a place where a variety of voices are welcome. How can we build on this attribute and make God's voice even more welcome?

Shalom,



Andrew

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- August 3. St. Mark's day at
Manna Soup Kitchen
- August 8. Allen Mathews Guitar Recital
- August 19. Bake Sale after each service
- September 5 Alpha Course Celebration Dinner
- September 29 . . . Habitat for Humanity work day
- October 5-6 Diocesan Convention
- October 10 Fall Blood Drive

Acolyte Training: Tuesday, September 18

Kids age ten and older are invited to take acolyte training. Mark your calendar now...a pizza party will be part of the deal! Let Fr. Andrew or Cheryl know if you're interested in your child or teenager participating.

Allen Mathews Classical Guitar Recital: Wednesday, August 8

Allen Mathews, classical guitarist and former Durango resident, will present a recital Wednesday, August 8 at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are available at the door for \$10. The recital will feature works by Antonio Lauro, Leo Brouwer, and Paulo Bellinati, as well as original compositions and Brazilian masterpieces. Learn more about Allen at www.allenmathews.com.

Last Sunday for Summer Choir: Sunday, August 12

The choir sings once a month during the summer months at the 10:15 service, and August 12 is the last date. Rehearsals are in the sanctuary at 9:15, an hour before the service begins. All are welcome, whether you sing with the choir regularly or not.

Bake, Bring and Buy! Sunday, August 19

The group of St. Mark's members who have been studying the Epistle of James this summer have had their calm intellectual discussions of the scripture seriously disturbed by James' exhortation to "*Be doers of the word and not only hearers.*" As a result we will hold a bake sale, and proceeds will help the Episcopal churches in Louisiana and Mississippi affected by Katrina. We need your help to bake goods for sale and then to buy them. Spend August 18 baking (men too!!), and then buy generously on August 19.

In the two dioceses where church attendance has dropped by 30% because of dislocation of members, 46 churches and one school have been destroyed or damaged. The churches must be repaired or rebuilt and clergy salaries and diocesan programs must be supported by outside resources while the region continues a slow trek to recovery. While many have given generously to ERD (Episcopal Relief and Development) for Katrina programs, you may not know that by its charter, ERD may not give to Episcopal church needs, so the very churches that must be centers for healing and rebirth themselves are in need of support. The program available to provide this support is called Darkness Into Day and you may read about it at this website: www.episcopalchurch.org/darknessintoday.htm. Help us help them!

Choir Retreat: August 24–26

Have you been thinking about joining St. Mark's Choir? Now is a great time! We're starting the choir season with a retreat to Santa Fe August 24–26. We'll have fun with the choir at St. John's United Methodist Church, rehearse jointly some anthems that both choirs will sing this fall, and sing with them in their service on Sunday. We'll get a head start on our fall and Christmas music, and music for our fall Pasta & Pops fundraiser. If you're interested in attending the retreat, please let Scott know immediately. Call him at 247-1129 ext. 14 or e-mail ScottH@StMarksDurango.com.

Alpha Course Celebration Dinner: Wednesday, September 5

We would like you, along with your friends, families, or co-workers, to come and see what Alpha is all about. On Wednesday, September 5 at 6:00 p.m. in St. Mark's Parish Hall, there will be a delicious dinner served and a presentation of the video "Christianity – Boring, Untrue, Irrelevant?" to follow. If you are able to attend, good food and fellowship are guaranteed, as well as an opportunity to decide if you want to participate in the Alpha course which will begin Wednesday, September 12.

Alpha provides a safe place to talk about spiritual issues from a Christian perspective. Because we are uniquely and wonderfully made, our individual experiences of God will probably be a little different than those of our neighbors. Alpha's small group setting gives us the opportunity to share our thoughts and questions about who Jesus really is and what impact His life, death, and resurrection have on our lives today.

The weekly video presentation covers various topics, such as:

- Why did Jesus die?
- How and why should I pray?
- Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Alpha course is not just for members of St. Mark's. We welcome and encourage you to invite friends and family who may not be members of St. Mark's to attend the celebration dinner and participate in the course. This upcoming Alpha course will also offer us an opportunity to share this wonderful experience with the members of the Methodist congregation as this class will be a joint effort of our two churches, with half of the classes at each church.

The Alpha course is ten weeks long (September 12–November 14) on Wednesday nights from 6:00

to 8:30 p.m., and includes an overnight retreat near the end of the series (Friday, October 26–Saturday, October 27). Each session begins with a meal, prepared by members of the Alpha Committee. There is no cost to take Alpha; however, a donation of up to \$5 would be gratefully accepted to help defray the cost of the dinner at each session.

Please call the church office at 247-1129 to register for the kick-off dinner. Because food and materials are involved, it helps to know how many to expect. Everyone is welcome, so bring your neighbors, your friends and your family.

Seeking Delegates to Diocesan Convention: October 5–6

Our Diocesan Convention is coming up in October. We are looking for some delegates from St. Mark's to attend and represent us. The Convention will open on Friday evening, October 5 with a Eucharist and the Bishop's address. On Saturday morning we will gather again at the Cathedral for our business session. There will be a number of workshops to attend. St. Mark's delegates need to be adult or youth members in good standing who are willing to attend and then share with the congregation their experiences and resources picked up. St. Mark's will cover the expenses of attendance. Check out the diocesan website for more info: www.coloradodiocese.org go to News and Events, and then Diocesan Convention. If you are interested, let Fr. Andrew or Cheryl know.

St. Mark's Messenger Deadline

Deadline for the next issue is August 24.

Submit information for the newsletter to Tonya Wales at 259-4166 or detwales@msn.com or contact Cheryl at 247-1129 or CherylW@StMarksDurango.com.

Cathy Donahoe Mission Update

Cathy Donahoe is a missionary with the South American Missionary Society. She is serving in the Dominican Republic as a physical therapist in San Pedro de Macoris at the Clínica Esperanza y Caridad. E-mail: cathydonahoe@sams-usa.org or cathyd@turbonet.com.

Dear Partners in Mission,

Thank you for your prayers and support as I am getting settled into my life here in San Pedro. I do feel this is where I should be and God is presenting opportunities as things go forward. Work in the clinic is going well. I have 15 patients on my caseload and have been enjoying working with them. Two of them have had complications needing referral outside of our clinic. One has returned to therapy, grateful that she was encouraged to seek medical treatment. The other one I pray is receiving the treatment needed, as I haven't heard from her.

As getting settled in my apartment has taken place, I have been able to start doing a bit beyond this clinic. There is a Rehabilitation Association that supports or assists several clinics around the country, with the primary one being in Santo Domingo, the capital. I have been invited to offer a two-hour in-service at the end of August for the PT staff there in a collaborative effort with a PT there. I am excited to see where this effort leads, with hopes that I could visit other clinics in this area as well.

Please pray that the patient I mentioned is receiving the treatment she needs and that the in-service preparation and delivery offers the first step toward sharing a different perspective on patient care to a receptive audience.

In Christ,
Cathy Donahoe, SAMS Missionary

**SING & MAKE
MUSIC
WITH ALL
YOUR SOUL!**
—Psalm 108

Use Your Musical Talents to the Glory of God

*St. Mark's offers music ministry
opportunities for everyone!*

St. Mark's Children's Choir

Tuesdays from 4:00–5:00 p.m. beginning September 25

St. Mark's Choir

Choir season begins with a retreat to Santa Fe August 24–26

Rehearsals: Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m. beginning August 29

Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. beginning September 8

Come to one or both rehearsals. Youth and adults welcome!

Play an Instrument?

Interested in purchasing a set of handbells for St. Mark's?

Please let Scott know!

MUSIC
at **ST. MARK'S**
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

C. Scott Hagler, Minister of Music/Organist
247-1129, ext. 14 • ScottH@StMarksDurango.com

Book Drive

Christ the King Lutheran Church is holding a book drive during the month of August and we have been invited to participate. The book drive will benefit the small farming community of Greensburg, Kansas, which was destroyed by an F-5 tornado in May of this year. The Greensburg school district will receive the books to help start the school library. Books should be in good condition and can be fiction, non-fiction or general reference books suitable for preschool through high-school-age children. Several other churches and businesses in Durango are participating in the book drive, with a goal of sending at least 40 boxes of books to Greensburg. If you would

like to participate, please bring your donations to St. Mark's and leave them in the Parish Hall in the container marked "Book Drive." For more information or to find out ways you can help, contact David and Diann Wylie at 259-2816.

Save Your Wine Corks!

Linda Dunaway has a special project for the St. Mark's Christmas Bazaar and needs used wine corks. Each project takes about 500 corks, so lots are needed. Please save yours and deposit them in the jug in the kitchen at church. Thank you!

Deadline for the next issue is August 24, 2007.
