

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



600 Ferry Street
Lafayette, IN 47901-1142
765-742-4079

Edward J. Tourangeau, Rector

www.stjohns-laf.org

[e-mail:stjohns@stjohns-laf.org](mailto:stjohns@stjohns-laf.org)

The **Parish Hot Dog Roast** is scheduled for Oct 12 at Battleground Park.

Games for the kids will begin at 4:30 while the fire is being laid and lighted. By 5:30 the roasting should be under way. After the S'mores, we'll visit and sing around the campfire until 7:00.

Everything for the meal will be provided. You need to bring are your appetites, your singing voices and lawn chairs or blankets to sit on.

Anyone wishing to help out in any way, please contact Nancy Bowker or Kathy Smith. Hope the weather cooperates. We'll see you all there.

A View from the Big Pew

Dear Friends,

Since Labor Day I've been enjoying some memories from last September and our trip to Israel and the West Bank.

As with our sabbatical several years earlier, we were enrolled in a study program at St. George's College in Jerusalem. This time, though, several graduates of the EFM program here at St. John's joined us. The places we visited and the sites we saw in this course were mostly familiar to Patty and me. The experience was new and fresh in several ways, one of which was the lecturer for our course, The Rev. Dr. Kamal Farah, and the opportunity to have informal conversation with him.

Kamal is a priest of the Diocese of Jerusalem, born in a small village near the Israeli/Lebanese border. His family was Maronite Catholic. The Maronite Church is one of the Syriac Eastern Catholic Churches and represents the majority of Christians in Lebanon today. At the time of the first Arab-Israeli War in 1947 Kamal's village was destroyed. He was sheltered in a residential school sponsored by the Anglican Church, leading eventually to his conversion to Anglicanism. He speaks seven languages and has studied extensively abroad, taking one of his doctorates from the Sorbonne. As a priest of the diocese of Jerusalem he served congregations in the Galilee and Jordan, as well as being assigned to the College faculty. To observe and talk with Kamal was to encounter a representative of Middle Eastern culture with all of its courtesy, modesty, conventions and thought patterns. He seemed to know everyone in the country and was constantly on his cell phone calling ahead to arrange for an unscheduled visit at a certain place because elsewhere we had found a scheduled site suddenly closed for the day, to report a change in our itinerary because we had been delayed at a previous stop or to tell someone we were ahead of or behind schedule.

It was Kamal, for example, who arranged through his friend Fr. Mina, the Coptic priest of Jericho, with military authorities in the regional command of the Israeli army – to get our group through the gates and behind the barbed wire and across the land mined no-man's land east of Jericho to the Jordan River and the *real* "traditional site" of the baptism of Jesus. No tour group had visited this site since the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. When we arrived at the banks of the Jordan River. We found ourselves within 40 feet of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the opposite bank. It was a wonderful experience to see these two priests – both of them well on the other side of 65 – stand together where no civilian had stood for 40 years and pray with, bless one another and the rest of us, including the armed guards who couldn't have been older than 25 and for whom the only significance of the site was its strategic function as a military buffer zone.

Kamal was a lesson in himself, not only for those studying the life of Jesus in the places where it was lived, but also as a contemporary Christian attempting to live faithfully in a vastly complex, tense and diverse religious -political landscape. The day we were to visit Bethlehem, which is in the West Bank and on the other side of the infamous "Separation/Security" wall. Kamal arranged for us also to visit both Deheisha refugee camp (established by the U.N. in 1948 for Palestinian refugees of the 1947 war) and the Israeli settlement at Efrat, one of those disputed and self-contained communities within the bounds of the territory occupied by Israel at the end of the 1967 war. In one day we visited both the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (the traditional site of the birthplace of Jesus) and had the opportunity to speak with and listen to human embodiments of both sides of the Arab/Israeli conflict...just another day in the land of Jesus' birth.

Of the people in our course, we Hoosiers were the more liberal. We held a range of opinion. The majority of our course mates were from one parish in Birmingham, Alabama, more conservative than we. It was these folks, however, who took the speaker from the Efrat settlement to task for the way Palestinians are treated by the Israeli government. Speaking from their own experience with integration in the South, the question and answer session got fairly heated in a spot or two. People in Israel are like folks everywhere and can be quite passionate about what they believe in, especially when they think their lives, the safety of their children and their livelihoods are on the line. Our speaker was no exception. Clearly he was used to talking with groups like us, and didn't give an inch.

When our session ended, we'd all taken our bathroom breaks and were getting back on the bus, our speaker followed and asked Kamal if he could say one more thing. Ever gracious, Kamal gave him the microphone and the man proceeded to commend us for our interest in trying to learn of and experience both sides of "the situation" in Israel. He even went so far as to say he didn't have many groups like us.

Then Kamal led the entire bus in prayer, with our Jewish speaker still on board. Kamal prayed for the safety of the man's family, home and community. He prayed for the safety of all who lived in that land and for the future of all the people of Israel and the West Bank. He prayed for the Jewish community as it prepared to celebrate its upcoming high holy days, Rosh Hoshanna and Yom Kippur. He prayed in Jesus' name.

It was a small thing in many ways, coming at the end of a long and tense and tiring day. It was also a witness to the way Kamal sees his homeland and his faith. It has had its influence on me. You may remember me saying, after my sabbatical time in Israel, my understanding of God grew larger as a result of my time there. I can only report that Kamal, his manner of life, prayer and self-presentation, has served to further enlarge that understanding.

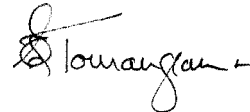
One immediate consequence of that expansion can be found in our Sunday Prayers of the People over these past few weeks. I hope you have noticed and been able to share in our prayers for the Muslim community as it celebrates the holy month of Ramadan. Kamal taught me on the bus that day as we were leaving Efrat, we will pray also for our Jewish brothers and sisters as they observe their high holy days of Rosh Hoshanna and Yom Kippur later this month. I pray it leads us to find ways to learn more of these different faiths and those who practice them.

You may think such small acts are of no consequence. If so, then you might be interested to know that a parishioner shared with a Muslim acquaintance that her church was praying for Muslims as they observe Ramadan. This acquaintance replied, "Praise to Allah that there some Christians who do not hate us!"

When I was growing up I remember hearing a lot about the Judeo-Christian tradition. It was the basis of so much in our land and way of life and faith. As I continue to grow up and grow deeper into that consciousness to which I believe God calls me, I confess to an increasing discomfort with the term "Judeo-Christian." In its place I am trying to use the term "Abrahamic."

Whereas "Judeo-Christian" now feels as if it's leaving someone out, "Abrahamic" is certainly biblical. Beginning in the book *Genesis* it tells the story of Abraham and both his children. Ishmael is the ancestor of the Arab peoples and Isaac the ancestor of the Jewish peoples. Both were children of him who was called by the one true God. The God we worship in Christ is the God of both Arab and Jew. We do God no honor if we fail to remember that. We do our Muslim and Jewish sisters and brothers a disservice if we fail – in the ways available to us – to embody that. We do the people who today struggle to live peacefully with all in the land of Jesus' birth dishonor if we do not join in witness with them as we are able.

I hope you join me in praying for all of God's children. Try to remember that we are heirs of the Abrahamic tradition, nothing less.



Jubilee Christmas

Our favorite time of year is fast approaching. JUBILEE CHRISTMAS will be held on Saturday, December 13, 2008. Everyone's help will be needed with this important event. We will be serving at least 35 families. Look for information in the Sunday bulletins and the *Eagle* for opportunities to get involved with this wonderful ministry. Presently we are having work days usually on a Saturday for making blankets, sewing and decorating stockings and knitting hats and gloves. Please look for these dates in the Sunday bulletins.

If there are any of you that have been ambitious and have already purchased items, please label them with the child's age and sex. We are not collecting items yet but will have more information in the November *Eagle*.

Please come and join us for the work days. You can visit and catch up with friends while you are helping with this most worthy endeavor.

Patti Mellor

The Altar Guild is in need of new members. Each team meets for about an hour on one Saturday per month to set up for Sunday services. The members also spend a short time after each service tidying up. No special skills other than helping hands are needed. Please contact Jackie Paar [538-2337] with any questions or additional details.

Think About It!!

The purpose of Lent is to prepare the believer – through prayer, penitence, almsgiving and self-denial – for the annual commemoration during Holy Week of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

During Ramadan Muslims ask forgiveness for past sins, pray for guidance, ask for help in refraining from everyday evils and try to purify themselves through self-restraint and good deed.

Rosh Hashanah is the first of the High Holidays, "Days of Awe" or The Ten Days of Repentance, the most solemn days of the Jewish year. They conclude with Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year. It is the Day of Atonement – "For on this day He will forgive you, to purify you, that you may be cleansed from all your sins before G-d" (Leviticus 16:30)

There is a period of feasting and celebration prior to each of these Holy times.

Does any of this "ring a bell" with anyone??

JHH

The word “campaign” is defined as “an undertaking organized to achieve a specific objective.” This is a rather cold definition, not really accounting for the involvement of real people necessary to do this achieving. Thankfully, we, as a church family are real people and involved in achieving a specific objective this fall. I speak, of course of our stewardship campaign, which has already begun. I bring this to your attention since it’s imperative that you all be actively involved for it to be a success. We need our people! We need every one of you to express your caring for this place and what we do in a very real manner.

You have already received one letter (and perhaps a second letter) before receiving this *EAGLE*. So you know that we are asking for your help in maintaining our church building (in all its complexities) and its programs and staff for the coming year. You will be receiving two more letters (four in all) explaining in great detail our approach this year. Simply put, our theme revolves around the following equation:

$$S=W^2DW^3G(\infty)$$

This translates to “**stewardship is what we do with what we’ve got, all the time.**” That’s a broad statement, but it succinctly covers pretty much our entire lives. We are born into a family, we become part of a church family, we live our lives with integrity towards our friends and the world, and we share what we have with others while we’re here and after we’re gone – very simply, because we’re not in this alone. We recognize that we are part of a larger world than just ourselves and that a commitment, or “covenant,” determines the quality of how we live within that larger world. God does not place one here in isolation. We live within each other as part of our recognition of God as center of our lives. We promise in our baptismal vows to support others as they live their lives in Christ. We are incredibly blessed in the amount of abundance every one of us enjoys on a daily basis.

So, what do you do with what you have, all the time? How will you live the theology of God in the center of every one of us? How will you share your abundance as you support others in their lives in Christ? This fall, your Stewardship Committee is asking you to consider your covenant with God and His people as you determine how you measure yourself against these questions.

Our formal campaign will conclude on Sunday, November 2nd. Pledge cards will be included in the final letter you receive and extras will be available at the church. That gives you quite a few weeks to think about how you will be able to help us to achieve our specific objective – that of a community which cares for all and fulfills each person’s vow to support others in the sharing of their abundance all of the time. If we all contribute to the best of our ability, there will be no problem achieving this goal. Please pray about this, talk about this, and decide how you fit St. John’s into this definition.

Thank you. And, if you want a sticker or two to wear on Sundays, just call the church office or speak to one of us.

Tom Brush, George Moore and E. Linda Jeffries
St. John’s Stewardship Committee



The Food Pantry has fed over 16,200 people through the end of August which is 9.1% more than the same period in 2007. Your continuing support has been very helpful in this effort. Right now, we have two primary needs; volunteers to shop or distribute food, and cereal. Please contact Jackie Paar [538-2337] with any questions or additional details..



UTO

Our St. John's United Thank Offering Fall Ingathering will be held Nov. 9, 2008 at both services.

The fall "Daily Thanks Newsletter" is online. It is full of great stories and also offers a 2008 Grants Booklet preview. www.episcopalchurch.org/uto.htm 2009 UTO Grant Applications are available from Bishop Cate's office or online in October. If you wish to submit a grant application, it must be completed and returned to the diocesan office no later than Dec. 21, 2008.

Remember that **ALL** United Thank Offering monies are awarded in grants. These grants meet compelling human needs and expand both the mission and ministry of the church. Look for UTO information in the Commons.

Yours in Christ,

Mary Louise Davis

DO SOMETHING BOLD

DO SOMETHING BOLD. That is the 2008 motto for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer 3 Day. We, Ashley Bigelow and Nolie Parnell, are doing something bold. We are walking 60 miles in 3 days in Washington, D. C. to raise funds and awareness for breast cancer.

Battling breast cancer is hard work. Hard work to overcome it, for the people affected. Hard work to treat it, for doctors and other healthcare professionals. Especially hard work to find the causes and cures, for breast cancer researchers. That's why we walk so far on the Breast Cancer 3-Day. To honor the fact that, while a world without breast cancer is possible, getting there requires hard work.

At 60 miles, the Breast Cancer 3-Day is the longest walk of its kind. While Nolie has walked in the years past, this will be Ashley's first year. For many first-time walkers, it's the biggest physical undertaking they've ever attempted. Those who walk for the first time are often amazed at their physical stamina. Many have never undertaken such a challenge.

Why have we decided to do something bold? Both of our mothers have battled breast cancer. Nolie's mother battled it twice in her lifetime and Ashley's mother is currently fighting. Ashley's mother will win. We are sure of it. So for our mothers and those who have been personally touched by breast cancer, and for our daughters, nieces, and friends, we will walk 60 miles and raise over \$2,200 each.

We wanted to share this with the congregation at St. John's. We have learned through this journey that there are many of you who have also been diagnosed with breast cancer, and even more who have had their families touched by it. Your stories have touched and inspired us. We will carry them with us while we are on the road for those many hours of training and then again for 3 days in Washington, D.C.

We cannot do this alone. We ask you for your prayers, support and encouragement. If you are interested, you can find further information on the website www.the3day.org. And if you see us limping just a little after the weekend of October 3rd, you will now know why. WALK ON!



