

# The Stillpoint

**February 2009**

**St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, California 94588**

A lot will have happened between the time that this issue went to press and the time it arrived in your mailbox. Our annual meeting is now history, and we have a new vestry and new deanery delegates. Our new vestry went on retreat the last weekend of January with the vestries of the other churches in the Southern Alameda Deanery: Holy Cross, Castro Valley; St. Bartholomew's, Livermore; All Saints, San Leandro; St. Anne's, Fremont; and St. James, Fremont. The vestries met together as a group, and by church. They exchanged ideas and best practices. They laughed, played, worshiped, and worked together. They heard from our new assisting bishop, Steven Charleston, and from Holly McAlpen, Vice-President for Client Services, about our insurance and liability issues. They opened what is meant to be an on-going dialogue about new ways to accomplish our mission together. As you read Fr. Ron's letter in this issue, consider how your faithfulness and reliability can help our vestry help our congregation to help God's creation.



**Begins Feb. 25  
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For info on Shrove  
Tuesday and Ash  
Wednesday**

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# St. Clare's Vestry\*

The 2009 vestry was elected after this issue went to press. New listing in the March Stillpoint

## Other Ministries in the Church

<b>Church Secretary</b>	Diane Granlund	462-4802	stclare@att.net
<b>Preschool</b>	Meg Bell	462-0938	stclarepreschool@sbcglobal.net
<b>Organist-Choirmaster</b>	Jason Fredrick	922-9329	j_fredrick@comcast.net
<b>Assisting</b>	The Rev. Susan Geissler-O'Neil	846-2409	sgeissleroneil@comcast.net
<b>Rector</b>	The Rev. Ronald D. Culmer	462-4802	onebreadonecup@msn.com

### Deanery Representatives / Convention Delegates

The 2009 delegates were elected after this issue went to press. New listing in the March Stillpoint.

(more ministries on inside of back cover)



## Heart to Heart

.....With Rev. Ron+

It's the beginning of a new year! As we begin 2009, I'd like us to have a fresh start and fresh vision of our relationship with God and our habits in worship. I'm asking that we



be found dependable in the eyes of one another and of God. Think of it this way: Do you apply the same standards of faithfulness to your worship of God that you expect from other areas of your life?

Consider the following: If your car starts once every three tries, is it reliable?

If your news carrier skips delivery every Monday and Thursday, is that person trustworthy?

If you don't go to work once or twice a month, are you a loyal employee?

If your refrigerator stops working for a day or two every now and then, do you say, "Oh well, it works most of the time?"

If your water heater provides an icy-cold shower every now and then, is it dependable?

If you miss a couple of loan payments every year, does the bank say, "Ten out of twelve isn't bad"?

You see, we expect faithfulness and reliability from the things we own and we expect it from other people. Does not God expect the same from us? The problem is that in our religious activities we see ourselves as volunteers rather than duty bound (1 Corinthians 9). For a volunteer, almost anything seems acceptable. For a person who is duty bound, faithfulness is expected.

Reliable faith...let's make that the name of the game in 2009!

Yours for the reign of God,  
Fr. Ron

## **Children's Communion Class**

Beginning in Eastertide and finishing in Pentecost, Father Ron and Tracy Brown will lead a Communion class for children interested in learning about the sharing of the bread and wine during the Eucharist. The half-hour class will be held in Father Ron's office at 9:15 AM for five Sundays: March 8, March 15, March 22, March 29, and April 5. The class will culminate with a celebration and presentation on Easter Sunday, April 12.



It is recommended that participants in the class be at least in the first grade. The curriculum for our class is called "This Bread & This Cup" by Mary L. Wile, a deacon in the diocese of Maine. Each participant will have their own work book the cost of which is \$10.00 per person. The five sessions are as follows:

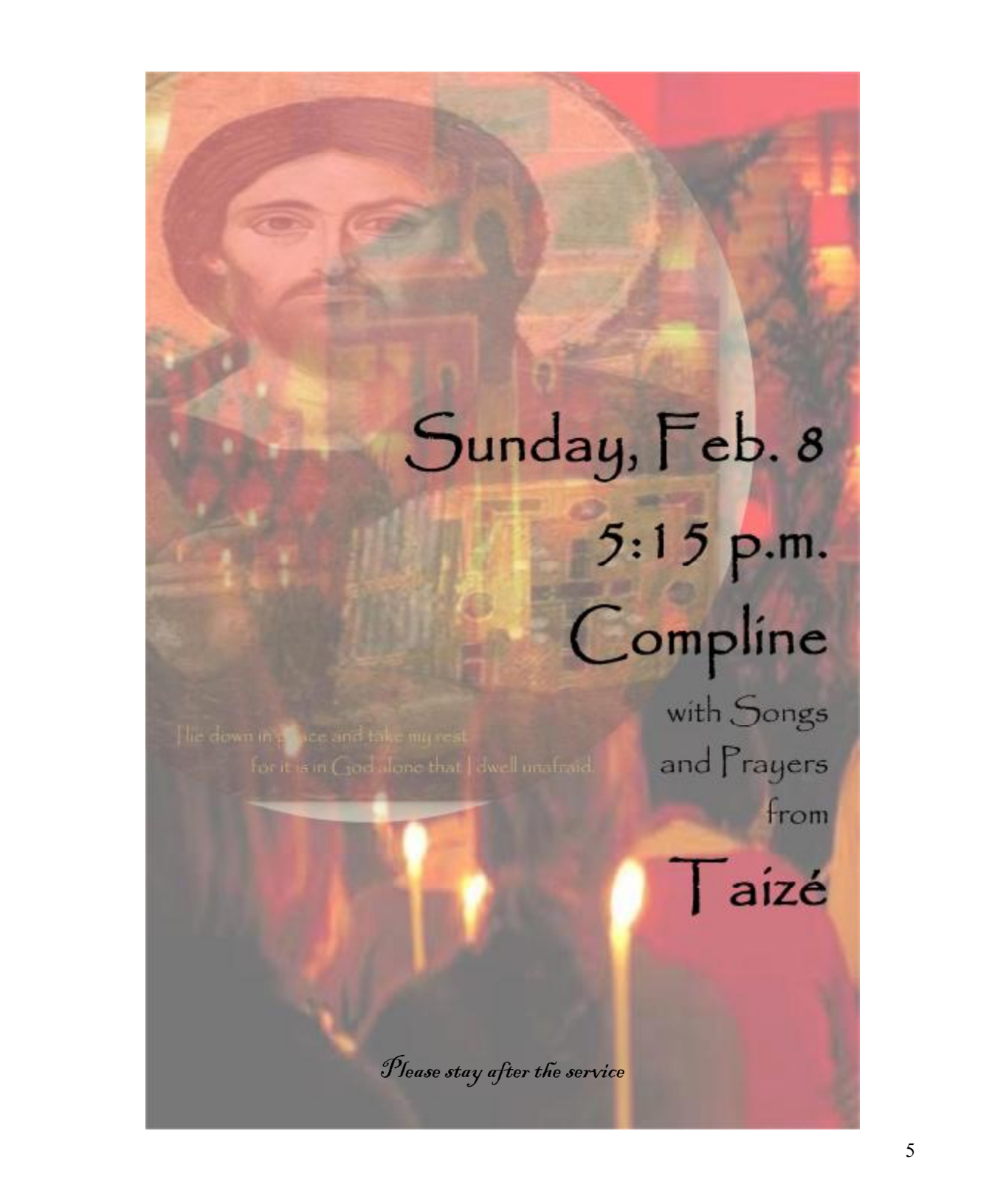
- Sharing a Family Meal
- Storytelling
- These Holy Things
- Praying Together
- Manners and Customs

We expect attendance at all five classes! Please sign up with the church office no later than February 22.

### **Open Heart Kitchen Tuesday, February 10 4-6:30 p.m.**

Help feed the hungry by being part of St. Clare's monthly ministry at Open Heart Kitchen! Adults and teens alike are invited to join us at Asbury Methodist Church, 4743 East Ave. in Livermore on the second Tuesday each month. To join or find out more about this ministry, contact Katherine Smith at 846-7480.





Sunday, Feb. 8

5:15 p.m.

Compline

with Songs  
and Prayers  
from

Taizé

I lie down in peace and take my rest  
for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.

*Please stay after the service*

## ***Mardi Gras Supper on Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 7:30 p.m.***

Traditionally at St. Clare's we celebrated Shrove Tuesday — the word "Shrove" coming from the Old English word "to repent" and the three days before Lent being known as "Shrovetide" — with a good old fashioned pancake supper hosted by our youth.



Not after last year!

This year St. Clare's will again enjoy a Mardi Gras celebration before the season of Lent. For those that don't know, Shrove Tuesday is more popularly known as Mardi Gras, a French term meaning "Fat Tuesday." It's a contrast between the fasting of Lent and the rhythm of the rest of the year. It was also a time which at midnight, French people would "throw out the fat" to mark the beginning of their Lenten disciplines.

First, The God Squad will be overseeing the cooking and serving of our meal. Proceeds will not only help with their youth events, but also for their mission efforts. Next, two of Fr. Ron's good friends (and Foodies of high caliber) Terry Aleck, and Walter Young will be back to help our youth cook up classic Cajun Gumbo, along with cornbread, salad and dessert. And of course what Mardi Gras celebration would be complete without beads, music and more. We promise this will be a good, good time! And the cost? Ah, just \$5.00 per person including entertainment.

## ***Ash Wednesday Services, Feb. 25 at Noon and 7:30 p.m.***

The observance of Ash Wednesday became widespread throughout Christendom during the 7<sup>th</sup> century and in the 12<sup>th</sup> century people began using palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday for the ashes.



The church service provides an opportunity for the worshipping community to engage in penitence and confession...to prepare for the Season of Lent, and to look forward to the hope of Easter.

During the Ash Wednesday service, it is traditional for ashes to be placed on the foreheads of the faithful as the worship leader intones the words from Genesis: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

In medieval times, it is recorded that a popular sign in public places read, “Remember you are dying.” It was a reminder of the reality of death, but more than that a reminder to live fully that day.

In more modern times, Ash Wednesday is an opportunity to examine the kind of life that we are leading, the quality of our actions, our thoughts and our relationships. When we receive ashes on our foreheads, we remember who we are. We remember that we are mortal beings, that we are baptized and we are creatures of the Earth. Above all, we remember that we are a people on a journey, and members of the body of Christ. The ashen cross smudged on our foreheads will proclaim that identity to others too.

This year’s Ash Wednesday services at St. Clare’s are as follows: 12 Noon, and 7:30 p.m.

## *An Invitation to Healing from Holy Cross, Castro Valley*

WHO: All those interested in the healing ministry of Jesus  
WHAT: A Deanery wide Mini-Retreat with Lunch  
WHERE: Holy Cross Church, 19179 Center St, Castro Valley  
WHEN: Sunday, March 8, 2009 from 12-3 p.m.  
WHY: To learn from each other and support each other  
RSVP: Bonnie Pikul, Office Manager 510-889-7233

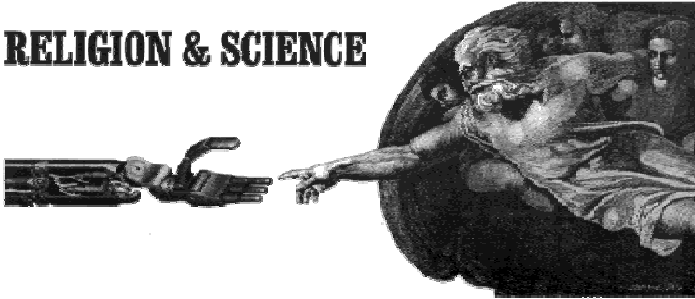
Holy Cross would love to provide an opportunity for the healing teams/healing ministers of the deanery to spend an afternoon together on Sunday, March 8 from 12 noon-3 p.m.

We envision a time that includes sharing, reflecting and praying for the growth and health of healing ministry in each one of our congregations. Since this day falls in Lent, we will no doubt weave Lenten themes into our planning.

The Holy Cross Healing Team has offered to create a program and provide lunch for this event to discern how we can best support and encourage each other. There is no cost. Just bring yourself, your insights and questions, and your stories of healing.

*The Holy Cross Healing Team*

## RELIGION & SCIENCE



### Led by Dr. Rudy Johnson

For a long time — for some people in science and some people involved and interested in religion — there has been conflict and tension between a "scientific" viewpoint on life and the universe, and a "religious" viewpoint on the same. Currently, many people find that such a conflict does not really exist unless one is an extremist, as a materialist, in science; or an extremist, as a fundamentalist, in religion. The scientific viewpoint and the religious viewpoint are complementary ways of seeing, understanding, discussing life and the universe. Many recent developments in science, for example in recent twentieth century developments in physics, point to how the two viewpoints complement each other.

Dr. Rudy Johnson is now leading a series of group discussions on this topic during the education hour at St. Clare's from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.. We are using a book written by Keith Ward, an Anglican priest and a professor at Oxford University in England. In the book, *The Big Questions in Science and Religion*, Ward asks a series of questions, chapter by chapter. For example: Has science made belief in God obsolete? Is science the only sure path to truth? Does science allow for revelation and divine action? Please join us!

### Book by Book Bible Study Continues with Exodus

Our weekly Book-by-Book bible study continues, with a DVD-guided exploration of Exodus hosted by pastor Richard Bewes and theologian Paul Blackham of All Souls Church, London. We begin each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. by watching the DVD, in which internationally renowned guest teachers provide insights to their favorite Bible book. A discussion follows, facilitated by Jim Shiffer. We end at 10:15, and ask everyone to help stack the chairs and set them outside the classroom door. So grab a cup of coffee or tea and join us! (Note: there will be no class on December 28, the Sunday following Christmas.)

# Habitat for Humanity

## Help build homes for those in need beginning Feb. 28!

Interested in continuing to support our mission work with Habitat for Humanity East Bay? We have volunteered for several work days at this wonderful program for the builds at Habitat's Edes Avenue Development in Oakland. We have scheduled work days for 8 – 10 St. Clare's volunteers on the following Saturdays during 2009:

- February 28th
- April 25th
- June 20th
- August 22nd
- October 17th

If you are interested in joining us for a work day or finding out more about Habitat for Humanity, please contact Dave Willmore at church or at [willmore@sbcglobal.net](mailto:willmore@sbcglobal.net). Alternatively, please call me at (925)548-0912. Sign up sheets will also be available on the Kiosk notice board.

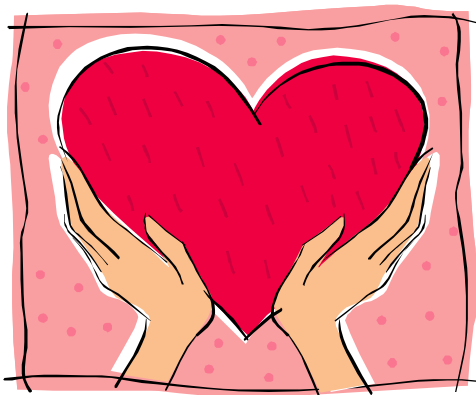
Volunteers must be at least 16 years old and minors (under 18) must have a parent sign a youth waiver form. There are some restrictions for youth volunteers - they can't operate power tools or work at heights above six feet. No construction experience is necessary and Habitat provides the tools, training, and safety equipment.

Habitat for Humanity East Bay is also currently in need of volunteers at their office in Oakland to help stamp envelopes, file papers, and do web research.

## Photo Directory Anyone?

The office and vestry have gotten numerous requests for a new photo directory, and we'd love to do one if we can find volunteers to make it happen. If you can serve on a committee to help organize this, please contact the office or Patricia Haller at [phaller@comcast.net](mailto:phaller@comcast.net) or 925-485-6011.

## Helping others with our Heart, Hands — and Cars!



Part of our response to Jesus' command to 'love one another as God has loved us' is our commitment to help our extended parish family in times of need with meals, emergency babysitting, transportation, and more. During these difficult times, we find that more and more of our fellow parishioners need extra support — and we currently do not have a coordinator for the Helping Hands program! In you have a gift for scheduling willing volunteers, please contact the office!

### Drivers Wanted

We have a number of parishioners who would love to make regular church attendance, however, they cannot drive. Therefore, we are looking for parishioners who would willing to help these individuals get to church. Interested? For more information, please contact the church office.

## Memorial Gifts

As everyone knows, the stained glass windows in the church are complete. The Altar Guild is looking for help with a few more items that would make great memorial gifts and beautify our worship. The following is a partial list:

- Ambry/Tabernacle
- Pew Candles
- Chasuble & Stole
- Dalmatic & Stole
- Cope
- Funeral Pall
- Pulpit Lectern Hangings
- Jacobean Frontal (4 sided)
- Burse & Veil
- Communion Set

For more information about making a memorial gift, speak with Father Ron or a member of the Altar Guild.



# Birthdays & Anniversaries

## **Happy February birthday to:**

- 1 Leslie Bloss, Katie Kruger, Emilia Ehrlich
- 2 Pamela Minniear, Kimberly Squier, Hannah Menk
- 3 Jerry Hayes, Joan Harris
- 4 Dan Nakken, Michael Sundstrom, Tatiana Jansen
- 5 Bob Wood
- 6 Steven Squier
- 7 Peter Borris, Megan Weir
- 8 Ed Maddox
- 9 Cornelius Jansen, Lara Jansen
- 10 Jane Ingram
- 11 Sydney Watkins
- 12 Nathan Borris
- 13 Dave Boyd
- 15 Brian Pullen, Jennifer Smith
- 18 Jess Vanegas
- 20 John Squier, Amy Montgomery
- 22 Karen Creusere, Taylor Metz
- 24 Laura Miller

## **Happy February anniversary to:**

- 7 Jason & Alexandra Perez
- 14 Drew & Cecilia Melby

# *The God Squad*

Do you know the motto for God Squad? It goes like this: “Get R.A.D. and Go M.A.D. What does it mean? Simply this: Get Radically, Actively, Devoted, and Go Make A Difference! We have a few God Squad tee-shirts left that have our motto for those who want one!

Our next fundraising event is: Tuesday, February 24 at 6:30 PM when we’ll make Gumbo for Shrove Tuesday Mardi Gras! We need more individuals to help us with our fundraising!

We are looking for parent help with this month’s Winter Retreat! Please see either Tanya or Mike McKee and/or Fr. Ron for more info!

God Squad is meeting in February at the home of Grant Miller (3193 West Las Positas, Pleasanton). New to God Squad? We’d love to see you there! And, for the sake of keeping time, if you are not coming, please give us a heads-up so that we do not wait for your arrival!

## **God Squad Youth Ministry Snow Retreat February 20-22**



**Note: we need firm commitments to the snow trip. If we do not have enough people we will need to cancel the trip.**

**Call The St. Clare’s Office (925) 462-4802**

**Where to Meet:** St. Clare’s parking lot

**When to Meet:** 3:00 p.m. on Friday (or as soon as you get out of school)

**What is the cost:** \$45 (food, transportation and housing, see below for skiing)

**Where are we:** We are back to the Dome house! Address: 270 Boards Crossing, Dor-

rington, CA (up Highway 4). Phone: 209-795-4260 (you can make calling card or collect calls)

**What to bring:**

- Sack lunch for Friday afternoon
- Sleeping bag & pillow
- Towel and shower stuff
- Ski's, boots and poles if you have them
- Ski (warm) clothes
- Completed 2007/8 Participant Registration Form (get one from Fr. Ron)
- Money for rentals and lift tickets (see below) and munchies at the local store

**Never Skied?** No problem! It's Ok to just hang out at the house or play in the snow!

**Rental Information:** Snow Board or Ski, boots and poles, Rental (per day)

- \$31 (12 and under)
- \$42 (13 and over)
- Lift tickets are \$49 for 13-19
- \$59 for 20 and older

(For more info and multi-day rentals, visit [www.bearvalley.com](http://www.bearvalley.com))

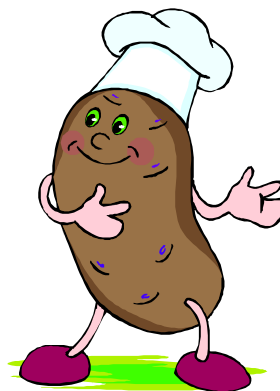
**Lift Ticket prices:**

- Child (12 and below) \$16 (2 day \$30)
- Young Adult (13-19) \$38 (2 day \$74)



**Thanks for your support!**

**For everyone who donated supplies, gave of their time, or just helped eat at the January 11 Baked Potato fundraiser — THANK YOU!  
The youth group raised \$150!**



## Preschool News

It is now summer and fall enrollment time for preschools. I am conducting tours daily and expect that we will have a full roster again this fall. Sue Orbell and I are attending the Preschool Fair, sponsored by Child Care Links, on Saturday, February 7. We give priority to our church families so if any of you are interested in having your children attend, please contact the office at 462-0938. Remember us when your friends and neighbors ask about a preschool and child care facility. We also have some current openings for age 2-years through Pre-K.

Last month we partnered with the Assistance League of Amador Valley to conduct vision screening of our students. This is a free service that is offered to our preschoolers. February is the month of Valentine's Day, a great time to show love for others. We are planning many activities around this theme. It's also CPR and first aid update time for the staff.

We decided to buy a playground sculpture with the fundraiser money that we earned. It's on order right now. Keep an eye out for it on the grassy area of the playground. As always, we appreciate your support and prayers.

Yours in faith,  
Meg Bell, Director

**The Stillpoint is available on-line at  
[www.StClaresPleasanton.org](http://www.StClaresPleasanton.org)!**

**The deadline for the March Stillpoint is Sunday, February 15. Please send any news about your ministries or other contributions to Patricia Haller at [phaller@comcast.net](mailto:phaller@comcast.net).**

**And don't forget that almost everything you want — the newsletter, the weekly bulletin, worship schedules, forms and registration information — are now all available on-line at [www.StClaresPleasanton.org](http://www.StClaresPleasanton.org). Check it out!**



## More Ministries

Acolytes/Crucifers				
recruitment	Julie Curtis	417-0296		julie.curtis@sbcglobal.net
training	Kim Baumann	828-0678		kimmerlyb@hotmail.com
Altar Guild	Paula Heuttig	426-1819		dnphuettig@comcast
Altar Flower requests	Bev Struthers	462-5331		bevstruthers@mac.com
Altar Flower arrangers	Bev Struthers	462-5331		bevstruthers@mac.com
Coffee Hour	<b>Volunteer Coordinator Needed</b>			
Cursillo	Dale/Laura Bowman	462-1184		dbowman@ladfss.com
Environmental Stewardship	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>			
Fellowship Circles	Jeannie Pullen	462-2356		pullen5@sbcglobal.net
Helping Hands	<b>Volunteer Needed!</b>			
Lay Eucharistic Ministers	Chuck Bridley	828-2239		chuckbrid@comcast.net
Mailing team	Bob and Barbara Wood	373-6064		splintbob@msn.com
Memorial/Funeral Receptions	<b>Volunteer Needed!</b>			
Nursing Home Worship	<b>Volunteer Needed!</b>			
Offering Counters	Trish Bridley	828-2239		trishkb@aol.com
Preschool Board Chair	Teri McGill			mttm@sbcglobal.net
Preschool Chaplain	Tracy Brown	373-0519		glyfley@hotmail.com
Stillpoint Editor	Patricia Haller	485-6011		phaller@comcast.com
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Sunday School Director	Tracy Brown	373-0519		glyfley@hotmail.com
Ushers	Ed Maddox	462-8866		edmddxjr@pacbell.net
Visitor Ministry	Denise Moscone	828-6675		denise72251@comcast.net
Women's Prayer Group	Marion Pallesen			
Youth Group Coordinator	Fr. Ron	462-4802		onebreadonecup@msn.com



# ASH Wednesday

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving kindness;  
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

Wash me through and through from my wickedness and cleanse  
me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.  
Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your  
sight.

*Psalm 51: 1-4*

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**St. Clare's Episcopal Church**

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