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## From the Clergy Associate

**A thousand ages in thy sight are like an evening gone....** My time away this summer allowed me to spend wonderfully rich time with family and dear “old” friends. Invariably in our conversations and reminiscences, questions would arise: “Gosh, how many years ago was it that we ...? Were the kids in grade school or middle school when we did that? ...” And there was always the sense of wonder: “Where has the time gone? It seems like only yesterday...”

My brother-in-law Ralph always reminds our family that whenever we are trying to recall how long ago something happened (“oh, that was only a couple of years ago... wasn’t it?”), we need to double that number to get the more accurate number. (In our family we call this the “Ralph Factor.”) And nine times out of ten, this has definitely proven true in *my* recollections and conversations with family and friends. (I haven’t been at St. Elizabeth’s for “a couple of years now,” but for five years!)

**... Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun** One of my favorite summer traditions is to drive down with friends to Ocean Grove for the day, kicking it off with the Sunday worship service in the Great Auditorium. For the service that we attended this year, one of the hymns was “O God, our help in ages past.” And it struck me, once again, how many people *really sang* this old, solid hymn. And as I was singing up in the balcony of that beautiful old auditorium on a sunny 90-degree day, all I could think of was singing these same words on much cooler days with the people of St. Elizabeth’s at the funeral services for dear parishioners Ron Hermance, Ted Krause, and Gene Cremins over this past year. And I gave great thanks for them and for the life and ministry of St. Elizabeth’s. And I thought how the past months, the past *year*, had flown by...

Whether we have been away for the summer or have stayed close to home, we gather now for the beginning of another school/program year hopefully with renewed energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to continuing to build up the vibrant life and ministries of this parish and the Body of Christ. What a blessing it is to be members of something larger than ourselves, to be members of this Body of Christ. Our days do pass much too quickly, “like an ever rolling stream...” May we, as individuals and as a community, give thanks and live each day as the gift from God that it is, seeking

to build up God's kingdom—one day at a time.

**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, be thou our guide while life shall last, and our eternal home.**

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