

DECEMBER 2013 | JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2014

St Mark's
LUTHERAN CHURCH
VOICE
QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF REFLECTION & NEWS

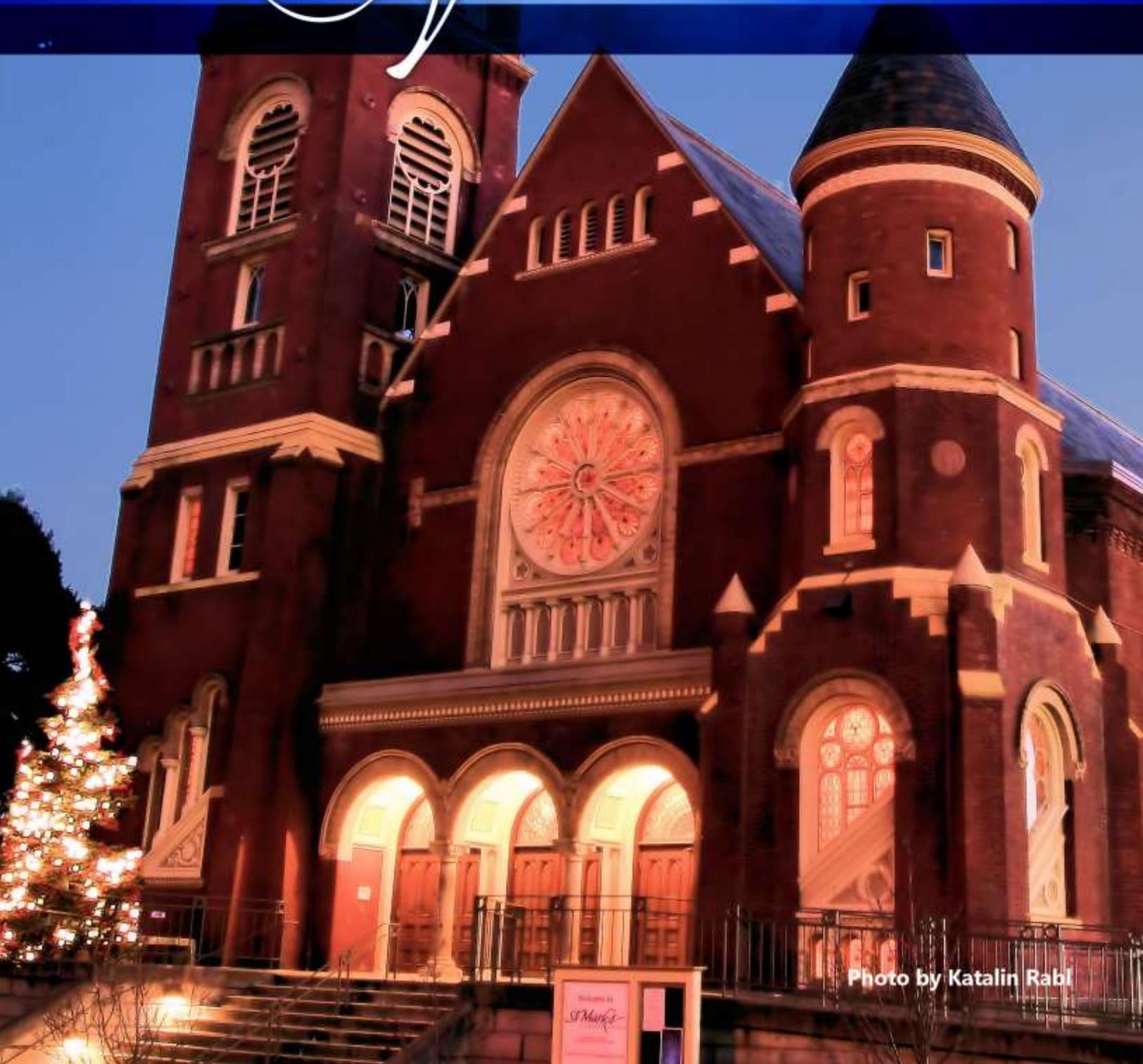


Photo by Katalin Rabi



ADVENT CONSPIRACY

Worship **fully**,
spend **less**,
give **more**,
love **all**.



The decorations have been in stores long before Thanksgiving. Our ten year old daughter Grace spotted Christmas decorations prior to Halloween and even she was mildly disgusted!

What if, however, we could reimagine Christmas without the commercialism and consumerism? What if we could resist the temptation to buy into the belief that the more money we spend, the more love we convey? What if we could experience fully the season of Advent with its message of hope and peace amidst the chaos of our lives?

There is a movement underfoot in churches to rediscover the wonder and mystery of the incarnation while freeing people of faith from the yoke of Christmas consumerism. Welcome to the "Advent Conspiracy"!

Founded by three clergy, the Advent Conspiracy (AC) was born when these pastors realized that they and their parishioners "were getting through the season with no sense of joy or celebration, with almost a sense of survival," said Greg Holder, one of the three founding clergy. There are four guidelines to follow which are quite basic: worship fully, spend less, give more, and love all. This is NOT a four point checklist to add to your already lengthy "to do" list. Rather, when lived out, these principles have subversive power to not only turn Christmas upside down but to transform lives.

Curious to know more? Come to the adult forum on Dec. 1 at 10:00 am in Heritage Hall with Pr. Elizabeth for discussion. And, check out the website: www.adventconspiracy.org

Blessings and courage
in your Advent
conspiracies,

Pastor Elizabeth
Pr. Elizabeth





You are invited to celebrate
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
Tuesday, December 24

5:00 pm

ENTER

Enter the Wonder of Childhood Again with the popular Christmas Pageant. Favorite Carols, Candle-lighting. Youthful Exuberance.

8:00 pm

RESTORE

Restore your Spirit with a Peaceful Service of Sacred Readings, Carols, Candle-lighting, Holy Communion.

10:00 pm

EXPERIENCE

Antonio Vivaldi's "Gloria" - with orchestra
beloved baroque masterpiece
a thrilling setting of the angels' chorus to the shepherds
Hugo Distler's Christmas motet "Sing With Joy"
and Morten Lauridsen's hauntingly beautiful
"O magnum mysterium"
with the St. Mark's Choir and Orchestra

10:30 pm

CONNECT

Connect With the Sacred in a Festive Midnight Mass. Joyous Music, Centering, Candle-lighting, Holy Communion.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Wednesday, December 25

10:00 am

CELEBRATE

Festive Holy Communion Service

Advent Worship

World AIDS Day Interfaith Service

Sunday, December 1 at 7:00 pm

Please join us for this powerful service

Embrace the Hope of Advent

Wednesdays at 6:45 pm

December 4, 11, and 18

The Great O Antiphons | A Service for Advent

Hear the ancient texts sung in new settings

Come for soup at 6 pm and worship at 6:45 pm

Advent Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 15, at 3:30 pm

St. Mary's Cathedral

The Choirs of St. Mark's and St. Mary's will

sing beautiful sacred music for your

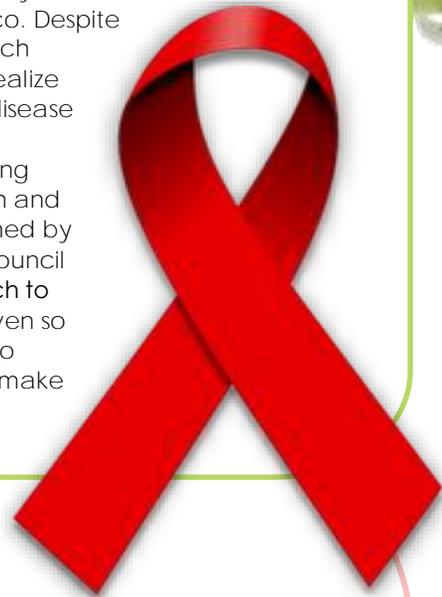
enjoyment—works by Victoria, Stanford,

Lauridsen and more!

World AIDS Day Interfaith Service:

Giving Voice to Our Living the Here and Now

The AIDS epidemic affects many around the world as well as in our own city of San Francisco. Despite significant advances in research worldwide, many still do not realize the significant impact of this disease at present. The Third Space Community, a network of young adults representing many faith and non-faith traditions, will be joined by the San Francisco Interfaith Council and St. Mark's Lutheran Church to recognize those who have given so much to this movement and to empower those who want to make a difference now.



The O Antiphons

Wednesdays during Advent

December 4, 11, and 18 at 6:45 pm

antiphon (Greek *ἀντίφωνον*, *ἀντί* "opposite" + *φωνή* "voice") in Christian music and ritual, is a responsory by a choir or congregation to a psalm or other text in a religious service or musical work.

The Greater Advent or O Antiphons are antiphons used at daily prayer in the evenings of the last days of Advent in various liturgical Christian traditions. Each antiphon is a name of Christ, one of his attributes mentioned in Scripture. In the Roman Catholic tradition, they are sung or recited at Vespers from December 17 to December 23. In the Church of England they have traditionally been used as antiphons to the Magnificat at Evening Prayer. More recently they have found a place in primary liturgical documents throughout the Anglican Communion, including the Church of England's Common Worship liturgy. Use of the O Antiphons was preserved in Lutheranism at the German Reformation and continues to be used in Lutheran churches. The titles of the seven antiphons are: O Sapientia (O Wisdom),

O Adonai (O Lord), O Radix Jesse (O Root of Jesse), O Clavis David (O Key of David), O Quiens (O Dayspring), O Rex Gentium (O King of the nations), O Emanuel (O With Us is God). The first letters of the titles taken backwards form a Latin acrostic "Ero Cras" which translates to "Tomorrow, I will be there", mirroring the theme of the antiphons.

Our Wednesday evening services during Advent will consist of the seven antiphons in new musical settings by Carl Schalk, each followed by a brief meditation, each then followed by the congregation singing the verse of O Come, O Come, Emmanuel based on the antiphon text. This should be a wonderful time meditation in preparation for the coming of our Lord.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!





Parents with Kidlettes Holiday Activities

December 1

Toy Swap and Wreath Making

On December 1 after the 9 AM service, bring gently loved books and toys to swap with other parents. There will also be wreath-making activities for all families.

December 14

Babysitting at St. Mark's

The St. Marks Nursery providers have agreed to come on Saturday to babysit so parents can go shopping. Proposed time is 11-3. Suggested fee for babysitting is \$20/child for four hours of babysitting.



Christmas Decorations

You are invited to contribute to St. Mark's Christmas Decoration Fund in honor of, or in memory of, a loved one. Look for a bulletin insert in the coming weeks which will have more details.

The insert may be completed and mailed to the church office or dropped it in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Your donations are put toward the cost of Christmas trees and poinsettias. Thank you for your holiday generosity!



Winter Concerts at St. Mark's

Come and enjoy beautiful music in our Sanctuary.

- Dec 7.....7:00 pmSan Francisco Lyric Chorus
From British Shores... Christmas Across The Pond
- Dec 8.....5:00 pmSan Francisco Lyric Chorus
From British Shores... Christmas Across The Pond
- Dec 13.....8:00 pmCalifornia Bach Society
Christmas with Peter Warlock and Henry VIII
- Dec 14.....3:00 pmSan Francisco Girl's Chorus
- Dec 14.....8:00 pmSan Francisco Choral Artists
- Dec 15.....7:30 pmYoung Women's Choral Projects
Gifts of the Season: Spirit, Peace and Joy
- Dec 16.....7:30 pmBeethoven's Birthday Celebration Concert
- Dec 20.....7:30 pmTuomas Pyrhonen Organ Concert
- Dec 21.....8:00 pmVoices of Music
Celebrate the holidays with our recreation of
a 17th Century Venetian Christmas Vespers
- Dec 22.....4:00 pmSan Francisco Early Music presents: Galax
Quartet with Contralto Karen Clark
- Jan 4.....4:00 pmNew Esterhazy Quartet
Paris Symphonies
- Jan 10.....8:00 pmMagnificat Baroque
Curiose Et Moderne Invenzioni
- Jan 18.....8:00 pmVoices of Music
- Jan 19.....4:00 pmNoe Valley Chamber Music
Voice and Plucked Strings
- Jan 26.....4:00 pmAmerican Bach Soloists
Bach's Magnificat
- Feb 2.....4:00 pmSan Francisco Early Music
Galax Quartet with Contalto Karen Clark
- Feb 9.....4:00 pmNoe Valley Chamber Music
Gala Celebration
- Feb 158:00 pmVoices of Music
The Great Artist Series: The Art of the Recorder
- Feb 164:00 pmMagnificat Baroque
Bach's Heritage
- Feb 228:00 pmSoloduo Guitar Concert
- Feb 234:00 pmAmerican Bach Soloists
Bach's Hercules
- Feb 258:00 pmRagazzi Boy's Chorus and Sine Nomine
- Feb 288:00 pmCalifornia Bach Society
German Cantatas circa 1700

With Those Pipes Came the Completion of a Dream

By Dr. Timothy Zerlang

"I am accustomed to think of a congregation with an organ as of a fleet of boats in the harbor, or on the waters. The organ is the flood, and the people are the boats; and they are buoyed up and carried along upon its current as boats are borne upon the depths of the sea. So, aside from mere musical reasons, there is this power that comes upon people, that encircles them, that fills them, this great, mighty ocean-tone; and that helps them to sing."

Harry Ward Beecher, *Yale Lectures on Preaching, Second Series* (New York: Fords, Howard & Hulbert, 1900), 121-122.

Early in October a large crate arrived at St. Mark's from the Taylor and Boody organ building company containing the final pipes needed to complete our organ - 375 pipes to be exact. With those pipes came the completion of a dream dreamed several years ago by a visionary group of very dedicated people: a hard working Organ Committee, an organ building company obsessed with the idea of creating quality instruments that will last hundreds of years, and a community - members of St. Mark's and friends of St Mark's committed to the best in Lutheran church music and worship. With those pipes (and some additional bits and pieces) our 'organic' ocean became deeper, more powerful, more capable of encircling and buoying up our congregational song. I love Beecher's image of the organ as a mighty ocean physically



supporting the musical expression of the congregation because, even though our organ is a wonderful concert instrument capable of rendering the works of Northern European Baroque masters spectacularly and authentically, it is its role in the worship of St. Mark's that is its most significant.

So what about those 375 pipes - wasn't our organ good enough without them? Why did we need them? When an organ builder begins to design a new organ it is a lot like an impresario creating a musical ensemble. The first question raised should be what repertoire is to be played, then, what instruments does that repertoire require? If the ensemble is to play a Mozart symphony; violins, violas, cellos and basses are assumed, flutes, oboes, bassoons and horns, are probable, trumpets and timpani are possible, and harp rather unlikely. Our organ is built in a north-German baroque style and intended to best play the music of Bach and the composers in his circle. Before the organ was completed this Fall, we had all the stops (in organ-speak, stops are the instruments in the orchestra) that were essential. We now have four new stops that some might place in the "it-sure-would-be-nice-to-have" category.

Our New Stops

Cornet – five ranks, 125 pipes (ranks are the rows of pipes that make up a stop — on our new cornet, for example when one note is played, there are actually five pipes sounding): This stop is played on the lower keyboard and extends for only two octaves (25 notes) in the treble and is most often used as a solo. It sounds a bit like a trumpet, yet very distinctive and assertive.

Viol da Gamba – one rank, 44 pipes: So-named because it imitates the sound of the instrument of that name. It is one of the softest stops on the organ and played on the lower keyboard.

Gemshorn – one rank, 56 pipes: This stop is played on the upper keyboard and sounds two octaves higher than the key that is actually played on the keyboard. It sounds a bit like a really high flute and adds a wonderful sparkly sound when used in combination with other stops.

Mixtur – five ranks, 150 pipes: This stop is played on the pedal, and is intended to give the pedal division the power to balance the full sound of the keyboards.

Pipe Organ Completed!

St. Mark's Organ Committee

The final stops and mechanisms have now been installed and the organ is completed as originally designed. This is the culmination of many years of work. St Marks has been struggling with what to do with its organ requirements since at least 1969 when a committee was formed for this purpose.

When we decided to remodel and retrofit the church building it was clear that there needed to be a complete replacement. About 15 years ago a revitalized organ committee was formed with Walter Capp and Jo Ann Wentker as co-chairpersons. Many others also worked on the committee. Our former organist and choir director Rodney Gehrke interviewed various organ builders and with his recommendation we selected Taylor & Boody Organ Builders of Staunton, VA. They inspected our Sanctuary, ran numerous sound tests, and recommended that the organ (and choir) be relocated to the rear upper balcony, and the congregation agreed. The final designs for the organ were settled with Rod's assistance and construction began. The scope of time was about 3-4 years.

Ordering the organ required prior payment of most of the cost and final payment on completion. Our retrofit plans became delayed with city and state regulations and we found ourselves owning an organ and no place to put it. We made the final payments and had a wonderful instrument but couldn't use it. We also could not leave it at Taylor & Boody nor would it be advisable to crate it up and store it. Fortunately Taylor & Boody found a church near their shop that could use the organ for several years while they were awaiting delivery of another organ to be installed in their church and so "our" organ was used for three years by them.

The finishing of our retrofit in 2006 coincided with the need to move our organ from the church in Virginia so Taylor & Boody dismantled it and loaded it into a giant semi-truck and sent it to San Francisco. The last months of 2006 and early 2007 were required to install the organ, but with a problem. We had run out of money for the complete organ as designed. One missing stop, a large 16 foot Fagott (bassoon) pipe was donated (\$30,000) and installed immediately. That left four remaining stops costing about another \$125,000. The committee believed it would not be feasible to ask the full congregation for contributions when the economy and our budget were so strained. But we did not want to give up. Jo Ann and Fred Wentker and Gary Shilling agreed to try to find donors who could fund the remaining stops and we started on this mission and were successful.

The final additions include these stops. The Viol da Gamba and Cornet stops were paid for by a legacy from the Westberg family (former members) and smaller gifts from church members. The Gemshorn stop was paid for by a non-member friend, some estate gifts designated by the Council and a gift from a member. The final stop, Mixtur for the pedal section was funded by a gift from a member at the end of 2010. Our Director of Music, Dr. Timothy Zerlang, says the result

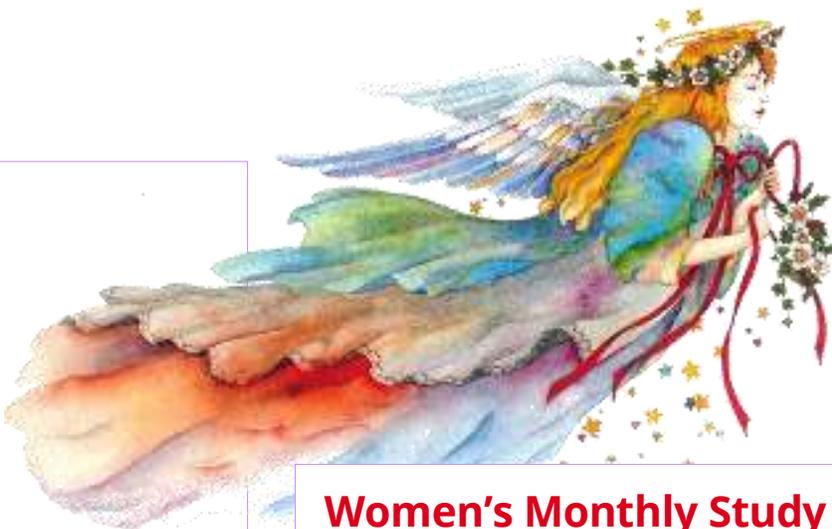


is an organ with a fuller, richer more melodious and much more vibrant sound. He promised to "knock your socks off" with the final instrument and is preparing to do so.

One final note for the newer members: the organ is designed in the German style principally to accompany congregational singing. It is also a wonderful concert organ with the completion of the final stops. It is a "Tracker" organ with no electrical power action. The keys actually connect to the pipes physically with rods and other mechanical connections. There is an electrically powered blower for air supply but that can be disregarded and there is a foot pump for an energetic assistant to power the organ in the old fashioned way. Thus the organ can be played just as it would have been played 500 years ago. The organ can be dismantled and moved. It will last hundreds of years if maintained- that is not an exaggeration. There are many old organs in Northern Europe still in use. Our organ is a treasure for many, many future generations.

Organ Celebrations

Watch for information regarding a series of events currently being planned to celebrate our newly completed organ throughout 2014!



Adult Forum

Sundays at 10:05 am

DECEMBER 1 | HERITAGE HALL

Advent Conspiracy

Pr. Elizabeth will share about how to celebrate the real meaning of Advent and Christmas through these four simple guidelines: Worship fully, Spend less, Give more, and Love all. Learn more about this movement called, the Advent Conspiracy. www.adventconspiracy.org.

DECEMBER 8 | HERITAGE HALL

Sabbatical Report

Pr. Elizabeth, Hans and Grace will share what they did, learned, read and discovered during their sabbatical over the summer months. Join in sharing with them what the congregation experienced during our sabbatical time. Pictures of Glacier National Park will be included!

DECEMBER 15 | HERITAGE HALL

Meet Teaching Parish student Brach Jennings

Join Brach as he shares his faith story and experiences as a young college student who was radically liberated by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

JANUARY 5 | FIRESIDE ROOM

Report from the El Salvador Trip

The St. Mark's El Salvador delegation reports back on their recent visit to our sister parish, Cordero de Dios.

JANUARY 19 | FIRESIDE ROOM

Annual Meeting Preview

A review of proposed St. Mark's 2014 budget, church council candidates and annual meeting items by Council members. Everyone invited.

JANUARY 26

No Adult Forum

FEBRUARY 2, 9, AND 16 | FIRESIDE ROOM

Jesus of Nazareth and Jesus Christ – Bridging the Gap Between the Historical Jesus and Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World

Join Pastors Bekah and Elizabeth for lively discussion regarding who is Jesus and what do Lutheran Christians believe about Jesus. We will utilize numerous resources including the bestselling and somewhat controversial book, Zealot – The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth by Reza Aslan.

Women's Monthly Study Gatherings

All women are welcome to the Gatherings this winter. There are two different groups from which to choose!

1st Tuesdays, 6:30 pm-8:30 pm
Fireside Room

All women are invited to gather on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in the Fireside Room. You are invited to come for dessert and fellowship for the first half hour and then discussion until 8:30 pm.

Our books for the winter are:

- Dec 3 Our Lady of the Lost & Found by Diane Schoemperlen
- Jan 7 Dance Hall of the Dead by Tony Hillerman
- Feb 4 Women, Spirituality & Transformative Leadership: Where Grace Meets Power by Kathe Schaaf, et al.

2nd Tuesdays, 11:00 am-1:00 pm
Fireside Room

All women are invited to come for study at 11:00 and at noon to bring their sandwich or salad and share fellowship. Drinks and dessert will be provided. This year our Bible study will center on the Women of the ELCA's Guide, In Good Company: Stories of Biblical Women by Kay Ward, a bishop of the Moravian Church.

Our sessions will include:

- Dec 10 Annual Christmas Luncheon - call or email Pam Ruh for more information (415/292-4496, pambobruh@hotmail.com)
- Jan 14 Miriam, a Loving Protector
- Feb 11 Abigail, a Calm Strategist

If you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Smith at 415.285.7438 or suzathome@comcast.net.

Sunday School at St. Mark's

Jenny Hart, Sunday School Coordinator

Here are some quantitative facts about Sunday School at St. Mark's. Each Sunday we have between 5 and 10 adult volunteers for Chapel and Sunday School. In addition, we also have regular young adults, like Ana Hurley, who help out. Our average Sunday School attendance is 16 students per week.

We are so fortunate to have such a large number of committed volunteers, each and every Sunday. I've been a member at St. Mark's for over 15 years...Gail Culp has been teaching our older youth for longer than that. But we also keep recruiting new volunteer teachers, like Shauna Kemp-Malone and Adrienne Brown. We truly have an amazing group of St. Mark's members who are committed to serve Chapel and Sunday School every Sunday.

Parents with children: thank you for bringing your children to Sunday School. Regular Sunday School attendance builds a strong Christian community. Students that attend Sunday School regularly are really connected with the other students and their teachers through Christian enquiry and education.

Empty nesters and those of you without children we want you to know that Sunday School at St. Mark's is a wonderful program. On a regular basis we have 2 students to every adult volunteer. We welcome more children!

Spread the word!! We have a great resource and we have lots of room for more children.

We warmly welcome visitors of all ages who are interested in our program.



Confirmation Classes

Youth in grades 6, 7, and 8 are invited to join this cycle of confirmation classes at St. Mark's led by Pastor Bekah. Together we will delve into our Lutheran roots, explore our Christian faith, and engage in service projects. Upcoming events include a walk with the Night Ministry with Pr. Lyle Beckman and a visit to Glide Memorial Church. Our current confirmation students are Katherine Lam and Mila Sall. Interested in confirmation? Please contact Pr. Bekah for more details.



ST. MARK'S MINISTRIES

Castro Street Fair

ReconcilingWorks and St. Mark's sponsor a booth at the fair, where members hand out tattoos and brochures.



St. Mark's Member Receives BOLD Award

Bertie Brouhard receives Good Neighbor Award from Board Member Alex Randolph.





Oktoberfest

By Marisa Louie

Nearly 200 members of the St. Mark's and Martin Luther Tower communities gathered for our annual Oktoberfest celebration on Saturday, October 26. There were activities for all ages, from "mummy candles" and face painting to traditional German music and samples of homebrewed beer made by Council member Nate McDonald. We enjoyed a supper of bratwursts, potatoes, cabbage, and sauerkraut accompanied by beer and cider.

Many thanks to members of the Church Council and Martin Luther Tower Board, and to these enthusiastic, hard-working volunteers: Cal Culp, Gail Culp, Rob Forrest, Maria Fortunata, Aaron Greig, Selina Heath, Hans Hoch, the Hurley Family, Linda Krauskopf, Elizabeth Lee, Gilbert Lee, Rachel Letchumanan, Dale Loepp, Diana Louie, Hiroko Nagata, Marge Okuley, Roger Ostrem, Brian Richards, Cora Rose, Cory Schoolland, Viknesh Sivalingam, and Sheryl Squires.

We also thank the MLT Board and John Stewart Company for their financial support, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for sponsoring the bouncy house, Deutscher Musikverein for wonderful music, and 21st Amendment Brewery for donating beer.



Bright Stars of Bethlehem Shine Over San Francisco Bay

By Linda Krauskopf

Stars indeed shone brightly on September 25th as St. Mark's joined with more than a dozen Bay Area churches in presenting a gala celebration and benefit dinner of Palestinian cuisine and music entitled "Bright Stars Over the Bay" at the General's Residence, Fort Mason. The festive event raised scholarship and program money for students of Dar Al-Kalima College, a Lutheran college conceived by the Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, pastor of Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, Palestine. Bright Stars of Beth-

lehem is the American non-profit organization founded to support the college and its extensive community outreach ministry, the Diyar Consortium. Featured speaker at the Benefit Dinner, Rev. Raheb explained that Dar Al-Kalima students develop important leadership skills along with their academics, and pride in their Palestinian culture through study of traditional arts such as ceramics, woodworking, sports and dance. As well as the arts, the college offers practical training in film, photography, culinary arts and computer studies. Above all, Dar Al-Kalima instills hope in its students in the face of the severe restrictions imposed on Bethlehem residents ever since Israeli military surrounded the city with the Separation Wall in 2003. Says Pastor Raheb of the work of Bright Stars of Beth-

lehem, "Hope is what we do!"

Following the Gala, Bright Stars of Bethlehem presented "Room for Hope," a three-day Palestinian Arts Festival at San Francisco State University, beginning with an exciting dance performance by the Diyar Dance Troupe; speakers on technology and women entrepreneurs; a mural presentation and films, including the U.S. premier of Yasmine Perna's film "The Stones Cry Out" (watch for a showing of this film at St. Mark's in the New Year) ; poetry readings; an Arabic music seminar; and an outstanding concert of Arabic music by the Georges Lammam Ensemble concluded the Festival.

Throughout the week students in the Diyar Dance Troupe were hosted by St.

Mark's and Zion Lutheran Church members. The spirited young people went shopping and sight-seeing in our beautiful city, had a picnic and boating at Stow Lake; enjoyed our Create-Your-Own-Pizza party and salsa dancing lessons, then gave us in return an introduction to their Palestinian traditional dabke dance. After Sunday morning's service, the Diyar dancers continued their Bay Area tour in Walnut Creek, Stanford University, Morgan Hill and finally, Los Angeles before returning home to Bethlehem. We were blessed to have had these bright young dancers in our St. Mark's community, ambassadors of their culture from the Little Town of Bethlehem, as witnesses to the faith that makes us brothers and sisters through Christ.





Prayer Outreach to Christian Charity Work around the World

By Renata Kiefer

We have been praying for the Kindergarten Cynthia Espinoza located in the Barrio "Tablada", one of the poorest sections of Asunción, Paraguay. On October 13th, 2013, Renata Kiefer presented the extraordinary work of this Lutheran-run charity, which she discovered through her own international work as a physician.

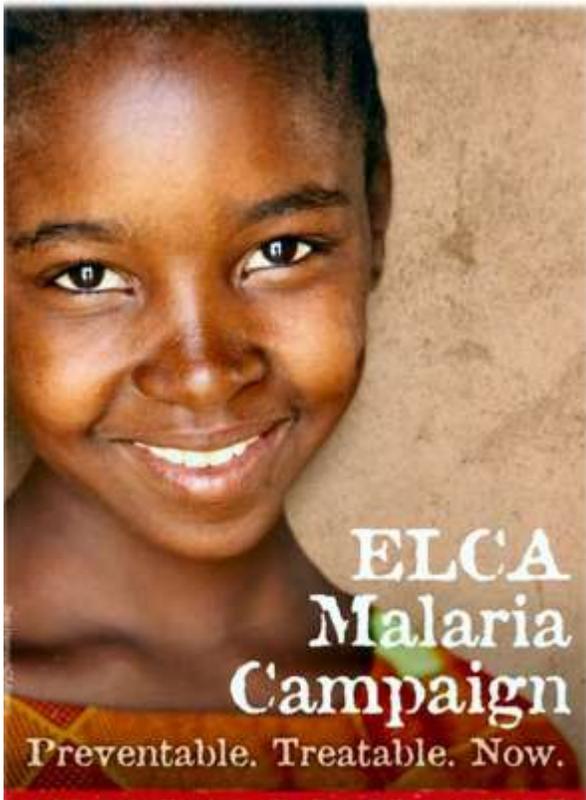
Named after its founder, Cynthia Espinoza, the Kindergarten provides a safe haven for up to 100 three to six-year old children of working mothers. Since 1992 it has been maintained and guided by a dedicated group (Managing Board) of German and Paraguayan women of the German Lutheran Church of Asunción, under the leadership of Anke Derpsch. They volunteer their time, skills and resources to supervise a staff of four teachers, one cook, two cleaning women, and one international practitioner. They manage operations and watch over the welfare of the children who receive three nutritious meals a day, free medical and dental care, play therapy, and pre-school instruction.

The children's families live in abject poverty, lacking the most basic resources, and in an environment contaminated by offal and chemical waste from nearby industry. Only 2 % of the children have both parents. Mothers receive counseling in hygiene, nutrition, and legal matters, and help with chores in the Kindergarten. During seasonal river flooding, families must abandon their shacks, fleeing to higher ground, requiring the Kindergarten to provide an additional 100 to 200 meals to hungry children.

Pre-school teaching and direct nurturing are essential for these vulnerable young children, when cognition and personality

development enter important stages. Here they are not aware of their poverty, since they experience acceptance, mutual respect and love, and learn essential skills for their school- and later years. This work of resilience building received international recognition in 2010, when Mrs. Derpsch was honored with the "Cross of Merit".

The Kindergarten's operation is financed by donations, coming mainly from churches, and from charity events. If you wish to give financial support to this Lutheran charity in 2013, you may write a check to St. Mark's with the designation 'Cynthia Espinoza'.



Malaria Campaign Update

\$25,000 Malaria Campaign Challenge Grant Goal Has Been Met!

In January 2013, a member of St. Mark's offered a \$25,000 challenge grant, which provided a dollar-for-dollar match for our congregation's gifts to the ELCA Malaria Campaign. St. Mark's members gave \$11,935 toward the match before the April 13 deadline for our congregation's campaign.

The matching funds remaining in the \$25,000 challenge grant were then offered to congregations of the Sierra Pacific Synod. The grant inspired 13 congregations to raise an additional \$13,160 for the ELCA Malaria Campaign, bringing the total raised from the challenge grant to \$25,095.

The ELCA Malaria Campaign has raised \$9.3 million so far, and plans to raise a total of \$15 million by 2015 to support programming implemented by Lutheran churches and organizations in sub-Saharan Africa. Our congregation's gifts to this vital campaign have made an impact! The ELCA Malaria Campaign recently expanded its work to Namibia and Burundi and is now working with companion churches in 13 African countries to prevent and control malaria. Thanks be to God, and thanks be to all who have given so generously and prayed so fervently.



San Francisco Interfaith Council

Celebrating our diverse faiths & spiritual traditions • Bringing people together to build understanding • Serving our community

Interfaith Homeless Shelter

January 12-February 2, 2014

Beginning Sunday, January 12, St Mark's will host the SF Interfaith Council Homeless Shelter for three weeks. Overnight housing, breakfasts and dinners will be provided for approximately 60 men each evening and morning in the Urban Life Center Auditorium. Please contact John Elford at jbruceelford@gmail.com if you can help. Be a part of St. Mark's Social Ministry...we look forward to serving with you!

San Francisco Interfaith Council Monthly Breakfast

The San Francisco Interfaith Council has for 20 years brought people of different faith traditions together, bringing spiritual comfort at times of crisis, building understanding among various religious traditions, celebrating our diversity, and coordinating services to the citizens of San Francisco. The Council's breakfasts are held on the second Thursday of each month from 8:00 am to 9:30 am in Heritage Hall. All are invited and encouraged to attend this monthly breakfast.

The next breakfast is Thursday, December 12.



Seniors IN ministry



St. Mark's & MLT Senior Center Christmas Dinner

Friday, December 13 at 5 PM
in Heritage Hall

Join us for holiday cheer!

Join MLT residents and St. Mark's Seniors, the MLT board, staff, pastors and friends and family for a wonderful evening of holiday cheer. We will be treated to Christmas music by a group of young musicians from Sacred Heart Cathedral Prep. Enjoy a wonderful meal in the spirit of the season. Signups, as always, will be taken at the MLT Office.

Senior Center Luncheons

Senior Center Luncheons take place in Heritage Hall every third Thursday of the month from 12 noon to approximately 1:00 pm. Cost: \$4. To RSVP for lunches please call the MLT Office at 415.885.1084.

Upcoming Lunch dates:
January 16 & February 20

Senior Center Trips

Senior Trips depart from the Brockie Lounge at Martin Luther Tower. The number of participants varies depending on drivers' availability.

Cost: \$3 (transportation fee).

To RSVP please call the MLT office at 415.885.1084.

Christmas Crèche Exhibit in Palo Alto, Monday, December 9

Celebrate the season with displays of nativities from around the world in artistic settings. Admission is free and some of the highlights include:

- European Traditionals
- International Carvings
- Fabrics and Fibers with Local Artists at work
- Nativities Around the World

Join us for this festive trip in December!
Departure: 10:00 AM
\$3 Fuel Surcharge • Sign up at MLT office.

Questions? Contact Pr. Elizabeth.





Endowment

Providing a legacy of support through the Endowment Fund, St. Mark's can respond to God's compassionate love and reach out in service to the community and the world. We are grateful for the saints – those among us and those who've gone before us—that have included the St. Mark's Endowment Fund in their estate planning.

After a recent significant bequest gift, the Endowment Fund held at The Lutheran Community Foundation has grown to over \$114,000 in less than 3 years. As a result, St. Mark's is authorized by the Endowment Fund by-laws to begin the process of disbursing funds to support needs which will extend the reach of St. Mark's mission and ministries. The Church Council and the Endowment Committee are working together to meet the goal of commending disbursements in 2014 and we look forward to sharing the results of this with the Congregation next year.



Greg Jahnke, member of the Endowment Committee, and Pastor Bekah Davis celebrate St. Mark's Endowment Fund soaring over the \$100,000 mark after the Fund received its most recent bequest gift.

S M ST. MARK'S E F ENDOWMENT FUND

For additional information on planning a gift to the St. Mark's Endowment Fund, please contact the church office by phone at (415)928-7770 or by email at endowment@stmarks-sf.org. Pastor Ekdale and members of the Endowment Committee stand ready to respond to questions your financial and legal advisors have about making estate gifts to the Endowment Fund. Inquiries will be held in confidence and without obligation. Members of the Endowment Committee are:

Margaret McLean • Stacy Cullison • Brad Hubert
Greg Jahnke • Robert Rathmell • Shelly Taylor
Debra Varian

Plant Seeds, Grow Faith.

Your Gifts at Work

Annual Giving 2013

General Fund

Pledges as of 11/24/13	2013	2014
Number of pledges	114	85
Number of pledging units	229	183
Amount Pledged	\$ 363,422	\$ 311,588
Amount Received	\$ 336,701	n/a

Income vs Expenses

Jan-Oct '13	Actual	Budget
Income	\$ 395,317	\$ 408,708
Expense	\$ 391,884	\$ 411,385
NET	\$ 3,433	(\$ 2,677)



Fall Stewardship Campaign

By Roger Ostrem, Stewardship Team Chair

Celebrating Community. This phrase has been the central theme of our stewardship campaign at St. Mark's this fall. Hopefully our stewardship efforts during this year's fall pledge drive have drawn your attention to the concept of community and what it means to you.

The community of St. Mark's is blessed by actually being a wonderful tapestry of many different communities, all of which are woven together to form a community of faith. As we celebrate community, let's also offer up our gratitude for this enriching tapestry that impacts our lives so directly. Yes, we have much to be grateful for and as members of the community of St. Mark's we need to express our gratitude by supporting this wonderful community of faith through our personal stewardship efforts, including our time, our dedication and our pledge of financial support.

This year's fall stewardship campaign began on October 20th culminating on Celebration Sunday, November 24th. Each Sunday during the fall pledge drive we brought attention to one of the many communities that make up our community of faith. We began our season of stewardship by introducing our campaign slogan, Forward in Faith...Celebrating Community. During the following weeks we highlighted the San Francisco Interfaith Council, the San Francisco Night Ministry, Lutheran Social Services, our sister church Cordero de Dios and our own parish community of St. Mark's.

Although the fall pledge drive has ended, our stewardship efforts continue. God has called us to become good stewards of all that He has given us. We encourage you to make stewardship a part of your everyday Christian life. If you have not turned in your pledge card, please do so as soon as possible.

The Stewardship Committee would like to express our gratitude to all of the members who have made a financial pledge of support to the ministry and missions of this community of faith. Thank you to all of the good stewards at St. Mark's. We continue to encourage you to celebrate community.



Sacred Events at St. Mark's

Join us in commemorating the recent sacred events in our parish:

Baptism

Gavin William Chernock
October 20

Memorial Service

Leon Sit, former MLT Resident
November 8

New Members Received in October

By Affirmation of Faith

Rachel Boles
Tapio Boles
Amy Brendel
Rebecca Burad
Caroline Francis
Nathan Francis
Shannon Valenti



Annual Meeting

January 26, 2014
at 12:15 pm

Please plan to attend our annual congregational meeting on Sunday, January 26, following the 11:00 am service.

Important actions at this meeting include

- Approval of the 2014 budget,
- Election of new Council members
- Reports by the Pastors and the President

Church Council Nominations

Several openings on next year's Church Council will become available as existing members of the current Council complete their term of service. Candidates for appointment to Council will be presented and voted on at the upcoming Congregational Annual Meeting on 01/26/2014. If you are interested in becoming a candidate for a position on St. Mark's Church Council please contact Lisa Gray at 415.674.8452 or at lisabgray@yahoo.com.

Living Our History



“When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.” Luke 2:15-16, NRSV.

We're sometimes reminded that history not only happens long ago, but continues to happen even now. And whenever there's a project to accomplish at St. Mark's, a devoted group of volunteers is likely to be on hand. So it was, when Council selected the columbarium area as a permanent home for the stained glass Nativity Window created by Walter Schmidt. German-born Walter, who is now 100 yrs. old, had found his way to San Francisco and was a part of St. Mark's family during the 1960s and '70s. He's still an active and talented artist, and now resides in Burnaby, British Columbia.

At the time of St. Mark's seismic retrofit and renovation in 2005-06, the Nativity Window graced the chapel (now the nursery) and needed to be moved. The window's temporary home became the Urban Life Center (ULC) auditorium for nearly 7 years, where it collected grime and endured minor damage. But could we carefully relocate the heavy glass window from ULC to the church for sprucing up, and to a staging area for installation? The answer came when an eager team of volunteers stepped forward. Photos show volunteers removing the window from ULC, rolling it across the plaza to the nursery, and setting up for cleaning each piece of glass, repainting the frames, and making minor repairs to broken or missing panels.

When the Nativity Window was ready to be put in place, a contract was let for installation inside the existing clear glass window in the columbarium area. This was accomplished last year, and a dedication and special blessings were held at the 11:00 am service on May 12, 2013, with Walter's daughter Maria Balentine and granddaughter Elizabeth from Ferndale, Washington present.

The center panels of the Nativity Window depict Walter's artistic concept of the Bible verse above, with Mary and Joseph, and the baby Jesus lying in a manger. Step into the columbarium during this Christmas season (through the double doors at right of the chancel) with the Bible verse above in mind. Gaze at the window's artistry and feel the magnitude of the birth of Jesus and the wonder and joy of Christmas.

This is the 22nd in a series of Tales from the Archives by Marge Jencks.



Window on temporary display in ULC auditorium being removed for its trip to the church.



Tom and Gary steering the window out of ULC.



Window being delicately rolled across the plaza.



Some of the helpful volunteers. L. to R.: Gordon Stevenson (with assistant Elmo), Ralph Loen, Kilian Benson, Alexa Benson, Tom Benson, and Gary Schilling.



Nativity Window installed in Columbarium area. Center panels depict Mary and Joseph, and baby Jesus lying in a manger.



1111 O'FARRELL STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94109-6601
415.928.7770 | STMARKS-SF.ORG

STAFF

The Rev. Elizabeth E. Ekdale
Lead Pastor
ekdale@stmarks-sf.org

The Rev. Bekah Davis
Associate Pastor
davis@stmarks-sf.org

Dr. Timothy Zerlang
Director of Music
zerlang@stmarks-sf.org

Jun Ranches
Director, Church Admin & Ops
ranches@stmarks-sf.org

Ann Dayton
Parish Administrator
dayton@stmarks-sf.org

Cheryl Garcia
Bookkeeper & Events
Administrator
garcia@stmarks-sf.org

The Rev. Chuck Lewis
Visitation Pastor

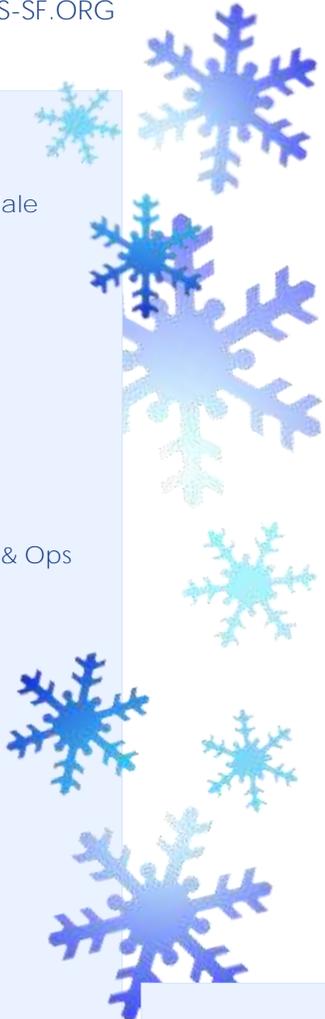
Carl Storey
Security

Shirley Liu
Elvira Markov
Johanna Najera
Nursery Attendants

Jenny Hart
Sunday School Coordinator

Brach Jennings
Teaching Parish Student

Suzanne Smith
Church Council President



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays
9:00 am HOLY COMMUNION w/
Children's Time
10:00 am Refreshments
11:00 am CHORAL EUCHARIST
12:15 pm Refreshment & Fellowship Hour

Wednesdays
6:00 pm Midweek Supper
6:45 pm MIDWEEK HOLY COMMUNION

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday, 9 am to 5 pm

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSURES

Christmas: Tue, Dec 24, noon,
thru Wed, Dec 25
New Year Tue, Dec 31 and
Wed, Jan 1
MLKJ Day Mon, Jan 20
President's Day Mon, Feb 17

ST. MARK'S IS A "RECONCILING IN CHRIST" CONGREGATION

St. Mark's is one of over 315 congregations, 22 synods and 12 organizations across the ELCA and the ELCIC (Canada) which have declared that people of all sexual orientations and gender identities are equally welcome to join fully in the worship and life of this Christ-centered community. For more information, please contact Steve Krefting at krefting@stmarks-sf.org or 415.826.3124 or speak to one of the pastors.

ST. MARK'S IS A CONGREGATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop
The Rev. Mark W. Holmerud, Bishop, Sierra Pacific Synod
The Rev. Susan Strouse, Dean, San Francisco Conference
Sister Parish: Cordero de Dios Lutheran Church in Soyapango, El Salvador



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.