

# St. Mark's Voice

Quarterly Journal of Reflection and News

St. Mark's Voice

Aug. Sep. Oct. 2010



## Eucharist & Rite of Reception/ Reinstatement

On July 25, St. Mark's hosted a celebration of the official recognition of GLBT pastors in the Lutheran church. It was a historic opportunity for reconciliation with Bishops, congregations and all the faithful who came together for the service.

In 1990 two San Francisco Lutheran Churches, St. Francis and First United, defied the policy that prevented openly GLBT individuals from serving as pastors when they ordained a gay man and a lesbian couple.

As a result the two churches were expelled from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

More than 20 years later: 18 pastors have been ordained in defiance of the church, 3 pastors were removed by trial and countless others were denied the ability to serve openly as GLBT pastors in the Lutheran Church. Now, the ELCA has changed its policies and on July 25th, the first group of GLBT pastors who faithfully served the church, despite their undocumented status, were recognized by the ELCA. Seven GLBT pastors, from the Bay Area were either received or reinstated to the ELCA roster of pastors.

*Continued on page 3*

## St. Francis, by Albert Carpentier

Albert Carpentier, O.P., Internationally known printmaker, was born in Belgium in 1918, and ordained a Dominican priest in 1944. He has worked as a missionary and artist in Japan for 45 years and stands in a long tradition of Dominican artists. An Exhibition of his works entitled "Beauty Rising in the East: The Artistic Vision of Albert Carpentier, O.P." has toured the United States.

Albert Carpentier has a strikingly unique approach to printmaking. Similar to a woodcut process, he uses a one millimeter thick paper called "Ibou" in which to make his "paper prints." His technique involves engraving, cutting and peeling away layer by layer of the thick paper, to achieve the printed results he is seeking. The technique is deftly handled to create his richly varied liturgical and genre imagery. His background in stained glass making is reflected in his printed compositions, which utilize bold black coupled with areas of solid color in a rainbow of hues. His prints instruct while they celebrate religion and life.

- *Jim Zerlang*

### ST. MARK'S REGULAR SCHEDULE

#### SUNDAYS AT ST. MARK'S

- 9:00 am HOLY COMMUNION  
w/Children's Time
- 10:15 am Sunday School
- 10:15 am Adult Forum
- 11:00 am CHORAL EUCHARIST
- 12:15 pm Coffee and Fellowship Hour

#### WEDNESDAYS AT ST. MARK'S

*(The Wednesday schedule will resume on  
September 8.)*

- 6:00 pm Midweek Supper
- 6:45 pm Midweek Holy Communion
- 7:20 pm "Journeys in Faith" Gathering
- 7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal



### Sacred Saturdays

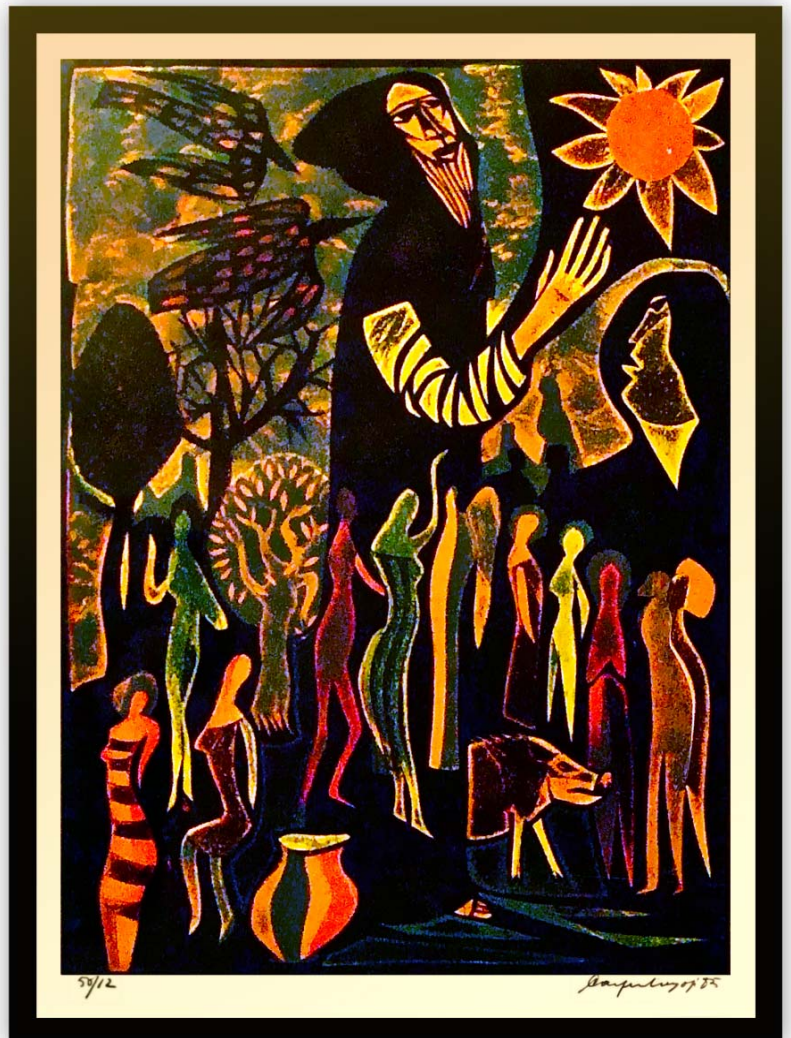
Come for a time of Evening Worship—contemplative, sacred, and communal.

We will receive the Living Word through the Scriptures and the Eucharist, chant sacred songs and remain in prayerful silence. Sacred Saturday Worship takes place on the second Saturday of each month at 5:00 pm in the sanctuary. Upcoming dates are:

**Saturday, August 14**

**Saturday, September 11**

**Saturday, October 9**



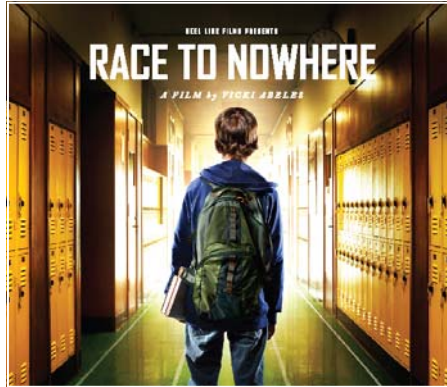


## Race to Nowhere Screening at St. Mark's in September

Do you feel like your kids are in the race to nowhere? If you do, trust your instincts to do what's best for your own child. In September there will be a screening of the documentary "Race to Nowhere" with a reception and Q&A with the film's director Vicki Abeles.

The film has empowered school districts to initiate change in areas like reducing or eliminating homework for elementary kids, setting later start times for tired high schoolers and limiting the number of AP courses a student can take in one semester.

Information on how to purchase tickets online will be available in the coming weeks. We hope to see you in September!



## Ministry Team Fair on Rally Day

**Sunday, September 12**

What are ministry teams, anyway? We used to call these "parish life committees," but "ministry teams" is a much better description of what these groups do. During the coffee hours on September 12, look for Teams from Social Ministry, Education, Hospitality, Property, Stewardship, Journeys in Faith, Discipling and Outreach, Endowment, Youth, Ministry of Welcome and more to talk about their work on behalf of all at St. Mark's. The Fair will coincide with Rally Day, a time when we kick off a new year of programs and ministries, as we return to Sunday School, Adult Forum, Wednesday evening services, and so much more. The Fair will also include Asante, the African Bazaar whose wonderful wares you have seen before. The Asante Network is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization committed to helping women in Tanzania and Uganda by connecting them with markets in the U.S., empowering them to develop their traditional arts into viable home-based businesses. Please join in celebrating this very important day in the life of St. Mark's!

*- Jan Charter*



## Reinstatement

*continued from page 1*

Received to the Roster were:

- the Rev. Paul Brenner, a member of St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco
- the Rev. Jeff Johnson of University Lutheran Chapel, Berkeley
- the Rev. Craig Minich of the East Bay Lutheran Youth Program (called by: St. Paul Lutheran and United Lutheran, Oakland)
- the Rev. Dawn Roginski formerly of St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco
- the Rev. Megan Rohrer Executive Director of Welcome (called by: St. Francis Lutheran, Iglesia de Santa Maria y Marta, herchurch and Christ Church, in San Francisco)
- the Rev. Sharon Stalkfleet, formerly of the Lutheran Ministry to Nursing Homes (called by St. Paul Lutheran, Resurrection Lutheran and Trinity Lutheran in Oakland and Trinity Lutheran Church, Alameda)



Reinstated to the Roster was:

the Rev. Ross Merkel of St. Paul Lutheran in Oakland



Pictured clockwise from top left: Pastors Paul Brenner, Megan Rohrer, Craig Minich, Jeff Johnson, Sharon Stalkfleet and Dawn Roginski.

## Thank You, Muchas Gracias & Dankeschön for a WONDERFUL Sabbatical!

What can I write when my heart overflows with joy for having had the opportunity to go on sabbatical? **Thank you to all of you**, good people of St. Mark's, for making it possible for me to experience Sabbath!



I had an amazing time—from traveling to Guatemala to spending a week in Holden Village; from having my family visiting from Germany, to celebrating my partner Chris' Ph.D. graduation from the Graduate Theological Union. My time away from St. Mark's was everything but boring. Yet, in the midst of the many things I "did", I became most aware of God's presence in between the times of "doing". Meister Eckhart's words ring true, "God is not found in the soul by adding anything but by subtracting."



I learned to say no to checking my email or cell phone from morning till evening. I let go of feeling the need to be on all the time. I stopped my running from one event to another as if there is no tomorrow. Instead I learned to unplug (in Holden Village in the middle of the Cascades, you really have no choice) and to live slower more attentive.

I emphasized new things in life. I ran almost every day, started to lift some weights, studied Spanish (aprendí español), read several books from beginning to end, prayed, cooked, visited friends and family and worshiped. Oh, what a gift it is to simply "be" in worship!



When we take time to slow down and learn something we have never done before, we become so much more aware of the things around us. By saying no and letting go, I saw more, smelled more, tasted more and experienced more. I have been able to pay closer attention to the people next to me and the environment around me.

God has given us a time to rest, so that we can recharge and replenish for the demands of our lives. Experiencing the more in doing less has been a true gift from God. I hope to keep up the sabbatical spirit. And I pray that you can, too.

According to the rabbis, those who observe Sabbath observe all the other commandments. Jesus reminds us that the Sabbath is God's gift for us. I continue to marvel in my Sabbath experience of the past months. My gratitude continues as does my joy for a renewed vision to do God's ministry to which each of us is called right here, in the heart of the city.

- *Pastor Christian*

### SAVE THE DATE

*Sabbatical Open House on  
September 11*

Pr. Christian and his partner Christopher invite everyone for a dessert reception in the East Bay on Saturday, September 11 from 4-6 p.m. For directions and location check the weekly announcements.



## Women's Reflection Day, August 28



All Women are invited to gather on Saturday, August 28, 2010 for a day of reflection around the theme GRACE. This is an inter-generational event and childcare will be provided. You can RSVP by calling the church office at 415.928.7770. For more information on the retreat, contact Joanne Chadwick at 415.409.6294 or joanne-chadwick@sbcglobal.net.



## You? Choir? Why Not?

If you have ever considered joining the St. Mark's Choir, now is an excellent time to take the plunge! The choir sings every week at the 11 am service, as well as some festivals and special liturgies. Yes, some musical background is needed, but don't let that stop you from contacting our Director of Music, Timothy Zerlang ([zerlang@stmarks-sf.org](mailto:zerlang@stmarks-sf.org)). Let him help you decide if this valuable and enjoyable ministry is right for you. Our first rehearsal this Fall will be Wednesday, September 8, at 7:30 pm, but you can join us anytime (no time like the present).

- *Tim Zerlang*



## Sunday, September 19

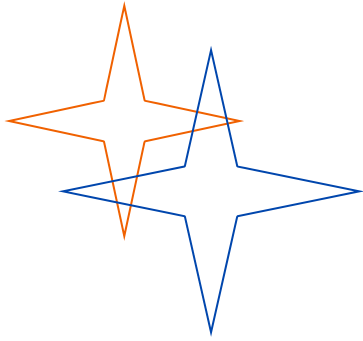
Lutherans and their friends will gather in Speedway Meadow in Golden Gate Park on September 19th for the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans **Sixth Annual Picnic and Barbecue**. Come out to the park and enjoy games and activities for all ages, a Bouncy House for the kids, and live entertainment by "Holy Spirit Band" AND "Jazzberry Patch."

The picnic runs from **11:30 am to 3:00 pm**. To help us plan please reserve your place by contacting Jo at 800.564.1293 or at [thriventsf@yahoo.com](mailto:thriventsf@yahoo.com).



The next Choir Retreat is on  
Saturday, September 18.





The Rev. Mark W. Holmerud and Pastor Nancy Feniuk Nelson at the Pride Parade in June.



## How to Thrive in Retirement™

**Saturday, October 30**

How to Thrive in Retirement is a free workshop that helps pre-retirees prepare for retirement beyond finances. Participants will learn how longer life expectancies can mean new opportunities to reach goals related to their family, congregation and community. The workshop will also discuss potential challenges and how to avoid them when preparing for retirement.

How to Thrive in Retirement will be presented by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans representative Christopher W. Benson CA insurance ID # E034109 on Saturday, October 30, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. to noon in St. Mark's Heritage Hall. Childcare will be provided for this event. For more information, contact Jo Zemke at 1.800.564.1293 or email: [jo.zemke@thrivent.com](mailto:jo.zemke@thrivent.com).

*The How to Thrive in Retirement™ workshop is intended only to educate you about financial decisions. It is broad in scope and does not consider your individual personal financial situation, which is unique. The information and advice may not be appropriate in all cases. No products will be offered for sale.*

For additional important disclosure information, please visit [Thrivent.com/disclosures](http://Thrivent.com/disclosures).

A Little Night Music  
**Round  
ABOUT  
Midnight**

**San Francisco Night  
Ministry Annual Benefit  
Saturday, October 16**

**Save the date!**



Hymn of the Day: "The love burning deep"



## A Stone That the Builders Rejected: A Story of Ibrahim



Natalie Lehmann

Our “LEARN N’ SERVE” St. Mark’s Senior Youth arrive in Berlin jet-lagged and bleary-eyed. Yet early on Monday morning, we are eager to launch into our first service project, as assigned by the American Church in Berlin. Directly across the street is the “INA Kindergarten”, a place where the younger children of this neighborhood go for daily childcare. These children are mostly from needy families of Turkish, Lebanese and Middle Eastern origin, generations of “guest workers” on the margins of German society.

Ibrahim (not his actual name) is one of many six year old boys that we meet as we assist in the classrooms, help with outings, play blocks or make music with the children. He seems more energetic and spritely than the others; he shows a keen interest in these newcomers from America who suddenly appeared out of nowhere.



Coco Ocker pictured with children from the INA Kindergarten.

That evening, after the first full day of service work, our group of teens is unwinding at a local playground. Arriving at the same playground is Ibrahim, together with some of his siblings. Like a bolt of lightning, and to all our dismay, this little six year old attacks the St. Mark’s youth, kicking, pulling hair, trying to throw rocks. As the St. Mark’s youth run from the scene, baffled and trying to simply protect themselves, the nearby chaperones step in confronting Ibrahim, whose face shows a mixture of fear and frantic excitement. Later, as we try to sort out what happened, our thoughts are about what will happen tomorrow when we see Ibrahim back at the Kindergarten, about why he was so aggressive, “is he just a thug in the making?”; my mind even goes to the question: “What will he do to Americans when he’s bigger?” We certainly don’t think of him as any kind of cornerstone to a new relationship.

Over the days that followed, Ibrahim becomes one of the most beloved of our “Learn N’ Serve” youth. His spirit brims with intelligence, a burning yearning to learn, pure joy in participating in activities with our youth, and

*Continued on page 8*

### STAFF

The Rev. Elizabeth E. Ekdale  
Lead Pastor  
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The Rev. Christian Jennert  
Associate Pastor  
jennert@stmarks-sf.org

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Director of Music  
zerlang@stmarks-sf.org

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Buildings & Grounds Supervisor

Jenny Hart  
Sunday School Coordinator

Jan Charter  
Church Council President  
charter@stmarks-sf.org

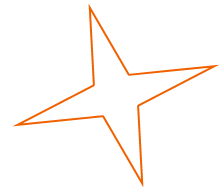
Carl Storey  
Security

The Rev. Chuck Lewis  
Visitation Pastor

Elvira Markov &  
Johanna Najera  
Nursery Attendants



**St. Mark's at San Francisco's Pride Parade in June.**



**Ibrahim**

*Continued from page 7*

a burgeoning musical talent that stuns his Kindergarten teachers. Pondering the disturbing events of that first evening, questions arise: Was he testing us?, Was this his way of saying "If you accept me (If I accept you) you first have to know all of me!", "Will you reject me if you know all of me?". On that first night, we certainly had been ready to reject him.

In that week of service through the America Church in Berlin's OCEP program, we continued at the Kindergarten, we helped with an afterschool tutoring program, we painted and cleaned a youth center and we participated in church's "Laib und Steele" food-distribution program. We learned about Berlin history through tours of the city, and we learned about the history of our Lutheran faith tradition at Martin Luther sites in Wittenberg and at the Wartburg, and also by visiting the Bach House Museum in Eisenach, all wonderful and transforming experiences. But the "cornerstone" of this trip, the experience that will first come to mind in remembering this trip years from now, will be exactly what we thought so quickly to reject, a boy named Ibrahim.

To hear our youth tell of their experiences on our "LEARN N' SERVE" trip, please come to the adult forum in the Fireside Room on Sunday, October 10. There will also be a short video/slide show about the service trip.

*- Tom Benson*



## The Lure of Gold

With the discovery of gold in California, many Germans and German-speaking Americans came west seeking a better life--but not without some resistance.

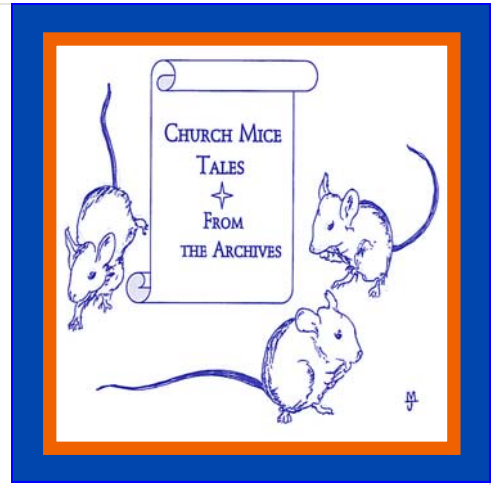
An early issue of Der Lutheraner (May 14, 1850) printed the following dialog between a Lutheran pastor (P) and a member of his parish (M) who was "smitten with the urge to go to California".

- P. Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. You believe this, don't you?**
- M. Of course, I do. What Christian would deny this?**
- P. Do you really mean what you say?**
- M. Why do you doubt me?**
- P. Because you want to go to California!**
- M. But can't I be a believer and go to California?**
- P. Well...I know that you have been having hard times around here, but do you think that going to California is going to help you?**
- M. I don't see why not.**
- P. Because the clear command of God says otherwise. You have a wife and two promising children. Does that mean you are bereft of hope?**
- M. Three years ago, you might have been right; then I had plenty of hope.**
- P. Just as you now have hope for California?**
- M. Indeed, between California and our poor county here there is a big difference.**
- P. Agreed, but God says that in the sweat of your brow you should earn your bread. If this seems too much for you, remember, that's the way God has arranged it. What could you possibly accomplish by an adventurous trek to California?**
- M. How can you ask? You know very well what they are finding there. Isn't it worth it to make a big find and be free from all earthly needs?**
- P. But you must know that many go in vain and find nothing.**
- M. Well, you see, it's right here where I trust in God!**
- P. So you would trust in God in going to California; why don't you trust in God here with us?**
- M. Of course, I don't doubt that God can help me here too, but I think it is a much surer thing to try one's luck out in California than instead of starving to death here....**
- P. No my good man, your plan proves that you do not trust in God, because you feel compelled to seek another and much surer God by going to California and thus to lose body and soul. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God.**

This poor Lutheran who was eagerly California-bound 160 years ago was probably not persuaded by this daunting dialog to stay put. The conversation occurred during the era of an onrush of Lutherans seeking their fortunes in California and the 1849 birth of St. Mark's in San Francisco.

- Marge Jencks

Reference: Lee B. Rosen (1969) Thesis: The History of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, San Francisco, California, 1849-1969.



# Journeys Through Revelation

## Apocalyptic Hope for Today

Taught by Pastors Elizabeth Ekdale and Christian Jennert

Wednesday evenings: 8 sessions beginning Sept 15, 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Many people's impressions are that the book of Revelation is violent and fearsome: four horsemen unleash destruction and calamity upon the earth; mysterious numbers like "666" spell destruction; mutant locusts and multi-headed beasts terrify and even more.

An enormous prophecy industry (the Left Behind novels, video games, and movies) has marketed Revelation as a timetable toward the end of the world. Some even claim that the earth itself has to be destroyed before Jesus can return. But this is not how we should read this amazing portion of scripture.

Revelation is one of the most difficult books of the bible, full of mysterious symbolism. Its twenty-two chapters can be intimidating. The message of Revelation is, most of all, one of hope. Come and explore this amazing, hopeful, and mysterious book of the Bible with the Pastors and one another. You will truly be surprised and inspired by studying this scripture in community.

Cost: \$10.00 to purchase the study which will be available on Sept. 12 at the Ministry Fair and at the first class.

- Pastor Elizabeth



## Oktoberfest Comes to St. Mark's

### A Strategic Planning Initiative

What do Oktoberfest and St. Mark's strategic planning goals have in common? Oktoberfest is a traditional component of German culture that celebrates the end of the harvest and St. Mark's strategic planning process celebrates the beginning a new era of commitment and service at our beloved St. Mark's Lutheran Church. One celebration looks back with thanksgiving and the other looks forward with thanksgiving. The two celebrations come together on Saturday, October 2 at 6 pm in Heritage Hall, where the congregation will be invited to enjoy a German feast of food and drink prepared by Dean Atkinson. Afterwards we will discuss how to begin implementing the strategic goals that the congregation recently adopted. You don't want to miss this very fulfilling (and filling) evening of fun, food and planning. Come celebrate the harvest! Come celebrate the future of St. Mark's! Mark your calendars now,

*Wir hoffen, euch dort zu sehen!* (We hope to see you there!)

- Jan Charter





## St. Francis Celebrated October 3

On Sunday, October 3 we will celebrate the life and work of St. Francis of Assisi with a blessing of the animals liturgy at 9 am worship, a brief discussion of his life and most famous piece of writing, the "Canticle of the Sun" at the 10 am Adult forum, lead by Timothy Zerlang, and an opportunity to hear a musical setting of the Canticle by composer Jean Berger offered by the choir during the 11 am liturgy.

All are invited to bring their pets for a special blessing during the 9 am liturgy on October 3. The tradition of blessing animals reflects St. Francis' conviction that all of creation shares the same Creator, and are therefore all creatures and plants are brothers and sisters. Stories abound of St. Francis preaching to not only the people he met, but birds, other animals and plants as well. Francis's simple, childlike nature fastened on the thought, that if all are from one Creator then all are real kin. Hence his custom of claiming brotherhood with all manner of animate and inanimate objects. The personification, therefore, of the elements in the "Canticle of the Sun" is something more than a mere literary figure. Francis's love of creatures was not simply the offspring of a soft or sentimental disposition; it arose rather from that deep and abiding sense of the presence of God, which underlay all he said and did. Francis is patron saint not only of our city and Italy, but of ecologists as well.

During the **Adult Forum** we will discuss St. Francis' Canticle of the Sun, possible the earliest known literary work in Italian. We will also examine, with the guidance of Timothy Zerlang how Jean Berger enhances our experience of this text with his music setting, which we will hear sung by the choir during the form and the 11 am service. German-born pianist, composer, and music educator Jean Berger (1909-2002) arrived in the United States in 1941, after working in Paris and Rio de Janeiro, and touring throughout South America. In the US he held teaching positions at Middlebury College, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and University of Colorado at Boulder. Berger composed extensively for choral ensemble and solo voice. Berger composed his "Canticle of the Sun" in 1991.

*- Tim Zerlang*

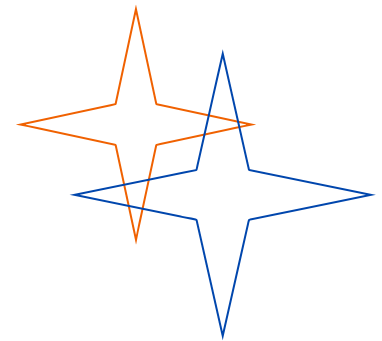
## Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 3 at 9:00 am in the Sanctuary



Our Blessing of the Animals service honors St. Francis of Assisi and our wonderful animal companions that bring so much joy to our daily lives. All pets and their humans are welcome! Please ensure that pets are safely in carriers or on a leash. Photos of animals unable to attend are also welcome.

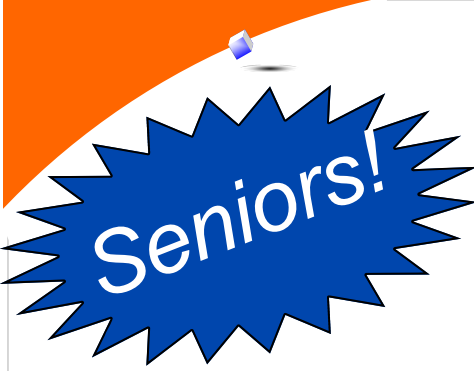
*Please ensure that pets are safely in carriers or on a leash. Photos of animals unable to attend are also welcome. For more info, read on!*



## Founders' Day at PLTS September 29, 2010

Ecology, Theology, and the Church: A Liturgical Manifesto with The Rev. Dr. H. Paul Santmire. To register, go to [www.plts.edu](http://www.plts.edu).





## August 13: Asian Art Museum of San Francisco featuring the new Shanghai exhibit

## September 24: Grace Hudson Museum, Ukiah

The Museum's collections consist of more than 30,000 objects, with significant holdings of Pomo Indian artifacts (particularly basketry) unpublished manuscripts, historic photographs and the world's largest collection of Grace Hudson paintings.

## October: 22: Capitola with Lunch at Paradise Beach Grille



Capitola is an intimate beach village tucked in a river valley in Santa Cruz County on the Monterey Bay. The City's wharf and riverside areas remind one of a village in France or perhaps a Mediterranean coast in Italy. Capitola Village is located along a wide beach with a breathtaking view of Monterey Bay and is home to numerous craft galleries, boutiques and restaurants.

Please sign up for  
**Senior Trips**  
and  
**Senior Luncheons**  
in the MLT Office,  
at 415.885.1084.

**Senior Luncheons**  
Look for  
Senior Luncheons  
on the following days:  
  
Thursday, August 12  
Thursday, September 16  
Thursday, October 14  
  
Watch for posted menus in  
the MLT Lobby!

## Help the Walter Bock Memorial Fund Assist MLT Residents in Need

Back in the 1960s, our congregation built Martin Luther Tower, a 120 unit apartment building dedicated to serving low-income seniors. This ministry provides more than just a place to live, it also provides community and social support to its residents. The building enriches the City by ensuring our urban environment includes an oasis for senior citizens.

Unfortunately, the recession hit many MLT residents hard. Medical costs have risen sharply. Some residents have lost part-time work that helped to make ends meet. Others have suffered unexpected illness or the loss of a loved one who provided support. These residents struggle to pay their rent. Many MLT residents came of age during the Depression and don't want to ask for help even when they need it. They hide their struggle and quietly endure. But there is an easy way you can help!

Pr. Walter Bock served as chaplain at MLT from 1979 to 1998. In his memory, the MLT Board contributed seed money to the Fund to honor Pr. Bock's service to the community and address the need for temporary rent assistance for MLT residents. We can all join in supporting the dream of St. Mark's 1960s congregation and Pr. Bock by helping our neighbors maintain a vibrant community. Please consider making a contribution to the Walter Bock Memorial Fund for Rent Assistance. Please contact any Rent Assistance Committee Member for more information or to make a contribution.

Scott Taylor, Committee Chair  
(650) 855-6800  
staylor@bpmcpa.com

Barbara Bock  
(415) 252-8589  
bbock@chanticleer.org

Robert Rathmell  
(415) 632-8784  
rjrathmell@gmail.com

*Adrienne Nelson (author)*



## Adult Forums

Members and friends of St. Mark's meet Sunday mornings at 10:10 in the Fireside Room of the Urban Life Center (or occasionally in Heritage Hall). We welcome all to join in learning and exploring together. Our upcoming forums are:



### ELCA Social Statement on Genetics

September 19 & 26

Dr. Margaret McLean

### Canticle of Brother Sun, Sister Moon

October 3

St. Mark's Sanctuary

Pastor Ekdale and Dr. Zerlang

*See article on page 11*

### Report from the Learn N' Serve Trip

October 10

Hear St. Mark's youth tell of their experiences on our "LEARN N' SERVE" trip to Germany in June. There will also be a short video/slide show about the service trip.

### Bonhoeffer and Ecology

October 17

Dr. Lisa Dahil

Dr. Dahil, a Bonoeffer scholar, will lead us in exploring what Bonhoeffer has to say about creation and earth's ecology. She is coming from being a presenter at the Professional Leadership Conference at Lake Tahoe and will share her thoughts with us.

### Pastor Christian's Sabbatical

October 24

Hear more about Pr. Christian's sabbatical time. How does a sabbatical foster growth, discernment and new vision for pastor and congregation. Come to this Adult Forum and find out!

### Katy Luther

October 31

Reformation Sunday

Debra Papageorge, Parish Teaching Student

## News from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Stay in touch with happenings in the ELCA! Visit

<http://www.elca.org/news>

and click on the News Releases button on the left side. Some recent news items include:

### July 28, 2010

#### ELCA Presiding Bishop Calls for Immigration Reform in Letter to Obama

If Congress does not pass comprehensive immigration reform soon, state legislators and local governments will continue to take immigration policy into their own hands, wrote the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), in a July 27 letter to U.S. President Barack Obama.

*St. Mark's  
in the news!*

### July 20, 2010

#### ELCA Sierra Pacific Synod to Receive Seven Pastors by 'Rite of Reception'

The Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is celebrating a "Rite of Reception" service for seven pastors on July 25 at St. Marks Lutheran Church, San Francisco.

### July 22, 2010

#### Hollywood Movie 'Get Low' Features ELCA Pastor's Extended Family

The Rev. Elizabeth C. Birkholz's grandfather loved to tell the story about Felix "Bush" Breazeale, a reclusive man from Cave Creek, Tenn., who threw himself a funeral party -- while still alive -- in 1938, so he could hear what people would say about him. Birkholz's grandfather, Frank "Buddy" Robinson, drove the hearse. More than 10,000 people attended the funeral.



## Baptism Sundays at St. Mark's

The church has established a series of Sundays throughout the year to be celebrated as "Baptism Sundays." Here are the dates of St. Mark's

### Baptism Sundays

for the year:

**September 5, 2010**  
Labor Day weekend

**November 7, 2010**  
All Saints' Sunday

**January 9, 2011**  
Baptism of our Lord

**May 1, 2011**  
Second Sunday of Easter

**May 29, 2011**  
Memorial Day weekend

Please contact one of the pastors to schedule a baptism for one of your children or yourself.

### Sacred Acts at St. Mark's

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

**Baptism**  
**Audrey Kathleen Dickinson**

Thank you to everyone who submitted articles and/or photos for this issue of the Voice!



## Annual Giving 2010

### Forward in Faith

Three year pledge (2009-2011)

No. of pledges 106 out of 225  
(possible)

Pledged \$529,763

Received thru 6/30/10 \$256,920

### General Fund

One year pledge (2010)

No. of pledges 124 out of 225  
(possible)

Pledged \$351,048

Received thru 6/30/10 \$144,500

### Income versus Expenses

	Jan-June '10	Actual	Budget
Income	\$222,520	\$227,428	
Expense	\$241,284	\$249,065	
NET	(18,764)	(21,637)	

## Your Gifts at Work

Through your financial gifts, we were able to affirm confirmation students in their journey of faith, welcome people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, support the ministry of the Sierra Pacific Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, provide for nursery care on Sunday mornings, drink Lutheran coffee, enjoy gourmet meals prepared by our Le Cordon Bleu-Paris-trained chef Dean Atkinson and much, much more.

*Your gifts make a difference!*



# Church Council Highlights

## May 2010 Council Meeting

- ▶ Announced that MLT/Episcopal Senior Communities team will provide once-a-week Food Bank in ULC for MLT residents and neighborhood.
- ▶ Reported that Synod has contracted to open an office in ULC soon.
- ▶ Reported on the plans underway for new signage around St. Mark's Square.
- ▶ Reported that a security fence is planned for east walkway of ULC.
- ▶ Discussed proposed plans for renovation of Fireside Room.
- ▶ Selected Council liaisons for implementation of 6 strategic goals for 2010-13.
- ▶ Reported that 11 St. Mark's members (including 4 voting members) attended Synod Assembly in May.



## June 2010 Council Meeting

- ▶ Announced that a Rite of Reception will be held at St. Mark's on July 25<sup>th</sup> for ELM clergy rejoining ELCA.
- ▶ Reported that Safe Families and Domestic Violence Training is scheduled for Sep. 13-15 and Oct. 7-9. LCF will help pay costs for a St. Mark's team.
- ▶ Approved installation of video feed from sanctuary to Heritage Hall monitor.
- ▶ Reported on success of Parish Retreat held June 4-6 at Bishop's Ranch.
- ▶ Approved repairs to floor of chancel, and discussed weight-load issues in general.
- ▶ Reported that ~\$750,000 is expected soon to help pay down \$1.2 M Thrivent debt.
- ▶ Considered new van policies that would allow for expanded use of van.
- ▶ Discussed ways to move forward with implementation of 6 strategic goals, including an Oktoberfest dinner on October 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- ▶ Reported need for volunteers to help with Food Bank at Bernal Gateway.
- ▶ Announced that a bench for new columbarium is on site.

“Reported that screening of “Race to Nowhere” will be Sep. 9 at St. Mark's. “

## July 2010 Council Meeting

- ▶ Announced that confirmands are attending Mt. Cross camp this summer.
- ▶ Discussed July 25<sup>th</sup> service at St. Mark's for ELM clergy rejoining ELCA and the need for volunteers to assist.
- ▶ Reported that screening of “Race to Nowhere” will be Sep. 9 at St. Mark's. The film was locally produced and featured on Oprah. A sell-out of 325 tickets is expected.
- ▶ Reported that in accord with new policies, reservations for van use will begin soon.
- ▶ Gary Schilling, Chair of Property Committee, presented report on long-term future of facilities. After the renovation of 2005-06 when so much was accomplished, issues remain for future consideration, e.g., elevator installation, stained glass window restoration, boiler room ventilation, sanctuary flooring, and outside wall restoration.



- ▶ Robert Rathmell described needs of MLT Bock Memorial Fund, which provides short-term financial relief for needful MLT residents. A \$2000 fund-raising proposal was approved, which incorporates raising awareness of MLT as a ministry of St. Mark's.
- ▶ Discussed the start of a new class of Journeys in Faith on Sundays at 12:30pm.
- ▶ Announced that St. Mark's will install a Sauter piano, on temporary loan, in the chancel area.

- Submitted by Marge Jeneks



## St. Mark's

### Voice

Aug. Sep. Oct. 2010

#### St. Mark's Lutheran Church

1111 O'Farrell Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Phone: 415.928.7770

Fax: 415.928.8534

[www.stmarks-sf.org](http://www.stmarks-sf.org)

*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 lesbian and gay people 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](mailto:krefting@stmarks-sf.org) or 415.826.3124 or speak to one of the pastors.*



#### Regular Church Office

**Hours** (after Labor Day)  
Monday through Friday,  
9:00 am to 5:00 pm

**Church Office Closures**  
**Labor Day**  
**September 6, Office closed**



Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America  
[www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

Several of St. Mark's youth members attended Confirmation Camp at Mt. Cross in July. Pictured above from left to right are: David Wiese, Intern Whitney Wolfe, Astra Varian, Teaching Parish Student Meredith Gardner, Pastor Elizabeth and Coco Ocker.



### St. Mark's Lutheran Team Raises \$4,542 for AIDS Walk SF

Three walkers for St. Mark's (Lyle Beckman, Lin Cerles and Dana Utz) raised \$4,452 in donations for the 2010 AIDS Walk San Francisco. On a cool and cloudy July 18 in Golden Gate Park, our team

along with 25,000 caring individuals raised over \$3 million for the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and other Bay Area AIDS service organizations.

Thanks to all of you who supported our team through your generous donations. A video clip of the event put together by Dana is posted on youtube.com: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDuGStvcZ8Q>.

You can find out more about the AIDS Walk at <http://aidswalk.net/sanfran/index.html>.

#### St. Mark's is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, 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