

The Evangel

In the heart of the city for ministry to the world

May - June 2008

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Reflection on the Holy Spirit

On the evening of that first day of the week Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to his friends, "Peace be with you,"....when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." (from John 20)

"Shalom" or "Peace be with you," on first sight an ordinary greeting in near eastern culture then and now. Yet, coming out of Jesus' mouth after his resurrection "Shalom" is more than that. Jesus gives his friends a gift that is attached to the Shalom, the peace. This gift is the Holy Spirit. "The Holy Spirit," according to Martin Luther's Small Catechism, "is the one who has called each of us according to the Gospel, enlightened us with gifts, sanctified and kept us in the faith..."

At the day of our baptism the Holy Spirit has been promised to us. I like that. It is through the continuing presence of the Spirit that Christ is still close to us. Moreover, the Holy Spirit promises us, and the world, peace and new life. It seems almost like an oxymoron that in the midst of a

world hurt by ongoing wars and crises, famines and illness Jesus promises his Shalom through the Holy Spirit. As Christians, it is our calling to be ambassadors for the fruits of the Spirit, one of them being peace. How do you experience Christ's peace in your life? Do you extend peace to others?

The Spirit does not only blow on Pentecost Sunday (May 11 this year) but every day. Perhaps the season of Pentecost can be such a time when we invite the Spirit

more closely into our lives so that we can experience the Spirit's fruits and then pass them on to others. Take time to discover the "spirit-ual" in your life. Be refreshed by the life-giving, generous and reconciling Spirit of God. As you read this newsletter you will discover there are lots of "spiritual opportunities" on Sunday mornings at St. Mark's and beyond!

Blessings,
Pr. Christian



St. Mark's children at Easter Sunday Easter Egg Hunt with Pastor Elizabeth

Blessed to Be a Blessing

When the Conference of Bishops worshiped at St. Mark's in March, they met to discuss issues of importance. One of their decisions was to encourage all Lutherans to tithe their economic stimulus rebate checks to ministries among people living in poverty. By sharing our rebate, we redistribute this money to people and ministries in severe financial need.

Blessed to Be a Blessing is an opportunity for families and members of St. Mark's to discuss the joy of generosity: "Where might we send a portion of this rebate so as to help our neighbor?" Here are some suggestions:

1. ELCA World Hunger Appeal
<http://www.elca.org/hunger/>
2. Lutheran Disaster Response
<http://www.ldr.org/>
3. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services
<http://www.lirs.org/>
4. Lutheran Social Services
<http://www.lsss.org/>

However we choose to enter into this, as God's people, we remember that everything we are and have comes from God. Remembering this helps our spirits to be joyful in our giving and generous in our serving.

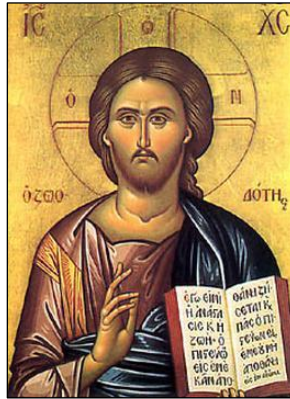
The Stewardship Committee



Church members serve up pancakes, eggs and other savories on Easter Sunday.

Adult Baptism

If you are interested in Adult Baptism or making St. Mark's your spiritual home then journey with us! For more information on the various ways on how to become a member of this community speak to Pr. Christian or email catechumenate@stmarks-sf.org.



Parish Life Night

Thursday, June 5, 7-8:00 pm

All Parish Life Chairs and the members of the parish life committees, as well as anyone interested in the various parish life committees are invited to come to the Parish Life Night on Thursday, June 5 at 7:00 pm in Heritage Hall. Join Parish Life Night to share about the various ministries and programs and events of your ministry team or committee. Parish Life Night invites people new to the St. Mark's community and anyone interested in the various ministries of this parish.

For more information and to RSVP, please email Pr. Jennert at jennert@stmarks-sf.org

The Feast of Pentecost Sunday, May 11

Pentecost celebrates the conclusion of the 50 days of the Easter season. While Jesus departs from the world's physical sight on Ascension (the 40th day of Easter), his promise of the Advocate and Comforter, the Holy Spirit, is realized on Pentecost. The disciples are touched with tongues of fire and given great power of prophecy. They are no longer disciples (followers) but apostles (ones sent), and they now go into the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

On this day, we encourage parishioners to wear red in keeping with the spirit of celebration. New members will be received on this festival as well.

Sunday School Curriculum and Schedule

April 27th: Big Group Pentecost Lesson

May 4th: Community of Prayer

May 11th: Life Giving Spirit

May 18th: NO SUNDAY SCHOOL-BAY TO BREAKERS

May 25th: Wrap-up Bible Study

June 1st: Last Day of Sunday School-PARTY!!

Sunday School will resume on Rally Sunday, September 7.

The schedule is always posted on the Sunday School door as well as the main Bulletin Board. Note that someone will always be at the Starr King door entrance to Urban Life Center/SS rooms until 9:50 am. If you arrive after Children's Time, please enter Sunday School at Starr King entrance.

Social Ministry News

Good News about Poverty! You can help on June 1

"Taking the five loaves and the two fish, Jesus looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. And all ate and were filled." -- Mark 6: 41-42

With five loaves and two fish offered in faith, Jesus fed thousands. When we turn our faith into action, God uses our voices. Our actions are multiplied.

School books, farming tools, basic medicines, and clean water – these resources are helping the world's poorest people in Africa and elsewhere to break the cycle of poverty and build new lives for their families.

This is happening because people of faith have been writing letters to their representatives in Congress. They've told their elected officials that helping our neighbors – whether near or far away – is the right thing to do.

Real progress has been made in reducing hunger. Still, nearly one billion people live on less than \$1 a day. In 2000, every nation of the world, including the United States, pledged to work together to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), ending extreme poverty by 2015.

Bread for the World's 2008 Offering of Letters campaign urges our nation's leaders to keep this promise. Specifically, Bread for the World is calling on Congress to provide more funding for anti-poverty assistance - an increase of at least \$5 billion, which would

be invested in agriculture, education and health care.

Bread for the World is also seeking better development assistance - by urging passage of the Global Poverty Act. This historic legislation would coordinate U.S. assistance so that the greatest possible benefit is most effectively reaching those in greatest need.

We at St. Mark's will have an opportunity to write letters to Congress to help create hope and opportunity for hungry people in Africa and elsewhere. We will write letters on Sunday, June 1, 2008. In the meantime, you can read more about the good work being done to end poverty at www.bread.org or www.elca.org/hunger.

We must end hunger in our time!

Knit for the Streets!

It can be cold on the streets of San Francisco! San Francisco Night Ministry serves one of the neediest "congregations" on the streets of the city. The Welcome Ministry serves people with many of the same needs on the streets during the day. St. Mark's hosts 70 homeless men for two weeks during the coldest part of the San Francisco winter.

In 2008, we at St. Mark's will "Knit for the Streets". Our goal is to make knitted scarves for the homeless and people ministered to on the streets of San Francisco. We hope to knit over 600 scarves to be shared by the Night Ministers, the Welcome Ministers, and in our homeless shelter next year.

All knitters are encouraged to participate. The patterns are varied

and simple. We have lovely donated yarns and needles, or you can knit from your own yarn.

Talk to Marge Okuley or Mary Ritter (mlrpeds@aol.com). Feel free to take yarn, and then return knitted scarves. Sign the pad in the "Knitting Closet" to let us know you are knitting.

Our knitting can make a difference again!

SMART Event in May ~ An Evening in Hayes Valley ~ Wednesday May 28

Come explore Hayes Valley with us. Please RSVP on the Evite invitation, or to be added to our invitation list so you can RSVP for this event, email allanahelland@yahoo.com. If you are not online much, call Allana at 415-673-0484 to RSVP. Our plan for the evening follows:

5:30 pm ~ Rose and Radish (460 Gough, NE corner of Gough and Ivy) for a gallery talk. This venue is part gallery, part retail shop, and all creativity.

6:15 pm ~ Stelline Italian Restaurant (330 Gough, NE corner of Gough at Linden) for a delicious dinner at a cozy neighborhood restaurant.

7:30 pm ~ Citizen Cake Patisserie (399 Grove, SE corner of Gough at Grove) for after dinner cupcakes!

All SMART events are open to members, friends, guests, partners and spouses! For more info on SMART events contact Allana or call Pr. Christian at 415-928-7770 x. 226.

Adult Forums

Members and friends of St. Mark's meet Sunday mornings at 10:00 in the Fireside Room in the Urban Life Center. We welcome all to join in learning and exploring together. Our forums for the coming Sundays are:

May 4

"God's Work, Our Hands" Report on the Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly

Voting members from St. Mark's – Pastor Ekdale, Pastor Jennert, Margaret McLean, Geri Bailey and Aaron Greig—will report back on the work of the larger church. Come and learn about what happened at this year's Synod Assembly, held April 25-27 in Oakland.

May 11 & 18

Close Reading of Poems by 17th Century Devotional Poets Dr. Peter Weltner

Shortly after the Second World War, the violinist and humanitarian Yehudi Menuhin and the composer Benjamin Britten visited several of the German death camps. For Britten, the horror of this journey led him to compose his Holy Sonnets of John Donne. George Herbert has also been an inspiration to numerous twentieth century composers, most significantly, perhaps, Ralph Vaughan Williams. In brief, the devotional poets of the English Renaissance remain to this day important aesthetic and religious figures. In these two sessions, we will want to look at just a few of these two poets' poems:

May 11 - John Donne's Holy Sonnets (in the Clements numbering)

2, 4, 6, 9, & 10.

May 18 - George Herbert's Prayer (I), The Agony, The Templer (I), and The World.

May 25

Reflecting on Our Faith Suzanne Smith

Come and share your thoughts and comments on ideas of Faith and Reason raised in an interview with Richard Rodriguez by Bill Moyers. Where do you go to listen to God? What does prayer mean for you? Are you torn between the pronouns of I and We?

June 1

Healthy Communication with Healthy Boundaries Dr. Caroline Hollnagel

Dr. Caroline Hollnagel, a psychologist and member of St. Mark's, will lead us in exploring healthy communication with boundaries.

Adult Forum will take a summer vacation after June 1 and resume on Rally Day, September 7.

Sacred Acts at St. Mark's

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

Sunday, April 6

Baptism of Jayden Avery Rose Parcel

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (W-ELCA)

The women of St. Mark's and St. Paulus invite you to join them on the second Tuesday of each month from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. The meeting is held in the Fireside Room at St. Mark's Urban Life Center. Bring your sandwich or salad for lunch. Dessert and coffee are provided.

PLEASE JOIN US for prayer, bible study, fellowship and fun. If you would like more information please contact Geri Bailey at (415) 391-8234 or geribailey@comcast.net or Nadine Robinson at (650) 735-5036 or sfonLR@aol.com.



Pictured at the April '08 WELCA meeting are: (front row) Lucy Walda, Dolores Fletcher, Loretta Litke, Ramona Jacobsen, Earline Bryan; and (back row) Suzanne Smith, Pam Ruh, Nadine Robinson, Eunice Childs, Geri Bailey, Marlo Tellschow, Marilyn Grimstad, Darlyee Sandrock, Mary Ferguson

Senior Center Luncheons

The Senior Center luncheons cost \$4.00 per person and are hosted in Heritage Hall on the first floor of St. Mark's Church. Each MLT resident or St. Mark's senior is allowed to bring one guest. Please RSVP to the MLT office as seating is limited.

Upcoming Senior Luncheons

Senior Center Luncheons take place from 12:00 to 1:30 pm in Heritage Hall. Upcoming Luncheon dates are:

**Wednesday, May 28 and
Thursday, June 19**

Senior Trips

Sign-ups for all Senior Trips take place at the MLT Office on the first floor of Martin Luther Tower, and are on a first-come, first-served basis. The number of participants varies depending on drivers' availability. Any trip may be subject to cancellation. Please be at Martin Luther Tower or the Ellis Street Parking Lot 10 minutes before departure.

Crissy Field

Friday, May 23

The restored Crissy Field is a favorite with locals and visitors alike, a place to walk or bike on a flat, hard-packed promenade by the bay and to bring the family for a class, exhibit, or performance at the Crissy Field Center. A wide, fully accessible trail slices through Crissy Field between Marina Green and Fort Point and is perfect for an easy walk, jog, or bike, or for strollers and wheelchairs.

We will enjoy the stunning views of the SF Bay and Golden Gate Bridge, get a snack at the Warming Hut café, and stop by the Marine Sanctuary Visitor Center to touch a sea otter pelt or a live sea star.

Departure: 10:00 am from MLT Parking Lot

Attention: Due to the nature of this trip, all participants need to have good-moderate mobility as some walking will be involved.



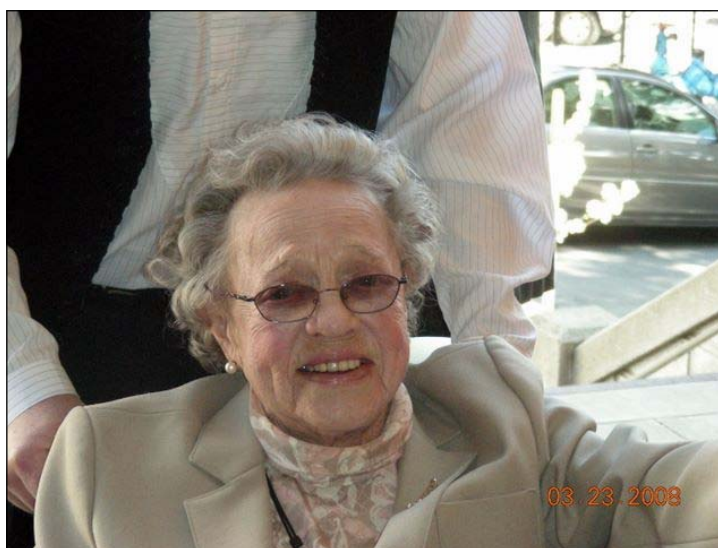
San Francisco's Crissy Field abounds with spring flowers and breathtaking views of the Golden Gate.

Barbara's Fish Trap Friday, June 13

Join us for a beautiful drive down the coast to Half Moon Bay, followed by a scrumptious lunch at Barbara's Fish Trap, "a seafood lover's dream"! Renowned for its **clam chowder, fish and chips**, and a variety of **seafood tempuras**, Barbara's has a relaxed atmosphere and sits right on the water in the little hamlet of Princeton.



Easter wreath graces the balcony.



Longtime member Hilda Pope attends Easter 2008 services at St. Mark's. Hilda peacefully passed away on April 2. She was 90 years old.

From Gretchen Kell—

Dear St. Mark's family,

My daughter Anna and I have been members of St. Mark's for many years -- I joined in the late 1980s while I was a reporter in San Francisco for The Sacramento Bee, and Anna was baptized at St. Mark's several months after I adopted her from Russia in 1997. We know many of you well after all these years.

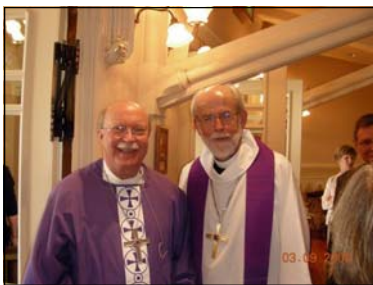
But despite our longtime membership, the time has come for us to make a change in our church home, and I feel the need to tell you about it.



David Breice proudly displays his Easter loot at the egg hunt.



St. Mark's Sanctuary came alive at Easter with lilies, tulips, hyacinth and heather.



The Rev. David Mullen, Bishop of the Sierra Pacific Synod and the Rev. Mark Hansen, Presiding Bishop at St. Mark's in March.

Anna and I have lived for the past 10 years in the East Bay, where I work for UC Berkeley and Anna's in 6th grade at Albany Middle School. Unlike my childhood in a tiny town in

Illinois, where my parents rarely needed to drive me anywhere, my urban life with Anna is often a complicated road race between school in Albany, work in Berkeley, church in San Francisco, swim team practices in San Pablo, swim meets all over creation, doctors in Oakland, friends in Alameda, and so on.

I want to raise Anna to know the joys of active church membership, but living in the East Bay and being members of St. Mark's has made that

tough. Crossing the Bay Bridge to attend Lenten and Advent services on a school night, or to hear a Sunday afternoon organ concert, or to form closer friendships with St. Mark's families living in other cities, or to work weekday mornings in the homeless shelter are examples.

With Anna about to begin confirmation class and in the "tween" years, when it's hard just to awaken her on weekend mornings, it became important to me to find an ELCA church closer to home. We found Shepherd of the Hills, a church in the Berkeley hills just outside Tilden Park and a 10-minute drive from home. We will become new members on Pentecost and already are participating there at a level we never thought possible, with our schedule, and it brings us great relief.

But that said, there is no place like St. Mark's. It is a place of uncommon ministry and sermons and music, made possible by an uncommonly gifted congregation, and it's been a gift to be with you. I also will cherish wonderful memories. Among them are the Christmas Eve pageants, Garrison Keillor's visit, the new pipe organ, our first Sunday in the renovated church building, singing and humming with Pr. Christian and others as we selected the 9 a.m. hymns, helping St. Mark's get media coverage, one-of-a-kind coffee hours, and watching my daughter acolyte and serve communion as sunlight streamed into St. Mark's gorgeous worship space.

We will miss you and think of you often and see you on a visit soon. Please feel free to write via my e-mail at gretchen_kell@yahoo.com.

Blessings,
Gretchen Kell

Volunteers Sought!

The Office Volunteer Pool needs your help! There is an urgent need for 4 or 5 more volunteers to join the fun and camaraderie in the church office. Come and lend a helping hand to Pastors Elizabeth and Christian and our friendly staff members, Jun and Ann.

- Have you ever wondered who cut, folded, and stuffed your worship bulletin with flyers and inserts for Sunday service?
- Have you ever wondered who assisted with all those mailings you receive from St. Mark's?
- Have you ever wondered who put the address label on your copy of The Evangel?
- Have you ever wondered who reviews the sign-in sheets and tracks visitor information for the pastors to follow-up?
- Have you ever wondered who sends welcome postcards to visitors?
- Have you ever wondered who sends the sermon and bulletin to shut-ins?
- Have you ever wondered how you could be someone who answers the office phone?
- Have you ever wondered how you could serve St. Mark's with a few hours of your time each week?

The reception desk in the office is the center post for the volunteers who provide administrative support and serve as receptionist. Specific duties include a variety of light office tasks, such as, answering the phone; transferring calls; taking messages; directing calls to voice-mail; monitoring door traffic; sorting and distributing mail; assisting with mailings

Church Council Highlights

Highlights from February/March/April Church Council meetings:

Elected officers for the 2008 Council Session:

- President - Margaret McLean
 - Vice President - Geri Bailey
 - Treasurer - Aron Bohlig
 - Secretary - Randy Schieber
 - Member at Large - Jan Charter
- Additional members of Council for 2008: Jerrold Allen, Dean Atkinson, Pr. Elizabeth Ekdale,

and Sunday bulletin preparation; using the copy machine, paper cutter, automatic folder, postage machine; mailing birthday cards, signing for UPS deliveries, and assisting the drop-by needy with packets of food or referrals for services.

We'll show you what to do. It's easy and fun. Current volunteers who have committed to a shift every week are Eunice Childs, Geri Bailey, Pam Ruh, Jacquelyn Randich, Marge Jencks, Suzanne Smith, & Jim Benson.

There are several open shifts (for 2 or 4 hours) when your help would be greatly appreciated.

Mondays	9 to 11 am
Tuesdays	9 am to 1 pm
Wednesdays	9 am to 1 pm
Wednesdays	3 to 5 pm
Fridays	1 to 5 pm

Please contact Pastor Elizabeth at 415-928-7770 or Marge Jencks at 510-845-5404 to learn more about how you can offer your assistance. Marge will be happy to have you drop by the office on any Thursday morning to familiarize yourself with the office and see first hand what happens there!

Marge Jencks, Pr. Christian Jennert, Adam Renslo, Susan Sall, Suzanne Smith and Debra Varian

- Established a team to examine and make recommendations regarding how we structure lay leadership and volunteer opportunities at St. Mark's
- Discussed continued efforts and training opportunities to ensure congregational compliance with our Safe Congregations policy
- Discussed personnel issues

Stewardship

Financial Summary

	February 2008	Year to date
Income	40,064	75,674
Expense	<u>43,125</u>	<u>84,007</u>
Net	-3,061	-8,333

	March 2008	Year to date
Income	56,581	132,256
Expense	<u>47,788</u>	<u>131,795</u>
Net	8,794	461

Forward in Faith Update

Pledged to FIF:	765,768
Received:	559,937
Shortage:	205,831

Thank you for your continued support!

Church Office Closed

The Church Office will be closed on May 26 for Memorial Day.



Jan Charter at April '08 WELCA meeting.

The Evangel

Green Idea: If you would prefer to receive your Evangel via email, please send that request to dayton@stmarks-sf.org.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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May - June 2008

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

1111 O'Farrell Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

Church Office Hours

9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday-Friday
Summer Office Hours (Jun. 1-Aug.29)
9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Mon-Thu, 9-12 Fri
Phone: 415.928.7770
Fax: 415.928.8534
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 or 415.826.3124 or speak to one of the pastors.

St. Mark's is a growing Christian community rooted in tradition and open to new expressions. Responding to God's compassionate love, we reach out in service to the community and the world. With openness of heart and spirit we welcome all.

Staff

The Rev. Elizabeth E. Ekdale, Lead Pastor
The Rev. Christian Jennert, Associate Pastor
Jun Ranches, Director of Church Admin. and Ops.
Ann Dayton, Administrative Assistant
Tina Haner, Facilities Coordinator
Cheryl Garcia, Bookkeeper
David Auerbach, Interim Organist/Choir Director
Duc Huynh, Buildings and Grounds Supervisor
Carl Storey, Weekend Custodian
Elvira Markov and Gladys Pozo, Nursery Assistants
Jenny Hart, Sunday School Coordinator
Jeremy Fuerst, Teaching Parish Student

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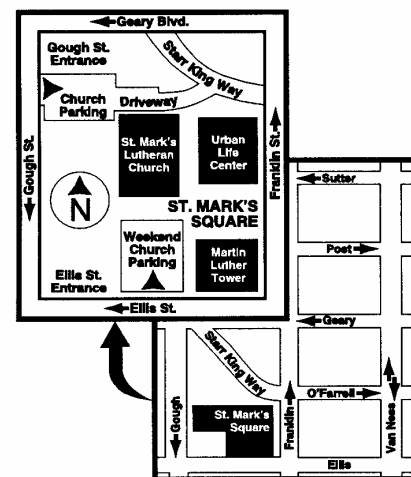
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x. 268
x. 229

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

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, Presiding Bishop
The Rev. David Mullen, Bishop, Sierra Pacific Synod
The Rev. Daniel Solberg, Dean, San Francisco Conference



Sister Parish

Cordero de Dios (Lamb of God) Lutheran Church in Soyapango, El Salvador