



The Evangel

May—June 2007

St. Mark's Lutheran Church ✦ *In the heart of the city for ministry to the world*

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Easter Reflection

"Alleluia, Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed, Alleluia!" is the traditional greeting of the church throughout the season of Easter. We



may not think much of it, but this greeting is more than a pious exclamation—it directs us to the very heart of our Christian faith: The resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. From the earliest times Christians have celebrated the resurrection every Sunday, remembering that death shall

not have the last word as Jesus overcame the grave to bring life and light.

As I am writing this, I can see the cherry blossoms at the trees in my backyard and new leaves sprouting from the plants. The hills are still covered in green, before the sun of summer and fall transforms them into a golden brown. Dying and rising is not only part of our liturgical calendar; creation also dies and rises in an annual circle. The longer we live, the more we recognize that winter is always followed by spring. As Christians we naturally see God's mercy in bringing new life out of death. Dying and rising happens continually in our bodies. Medical science tells us that old cells die off and new cells are brought into being. As Christians we are baptized into Christ's death and resurrection. Luther reminds us to remember our baptism whenever we wash our faces. This is to be a daily pattern, an integration of allowing what needs to die in us to do so, and making space for what Christ is calling forth through the power of his resurrection. Here lies the deepest mystery of our faith: that even in the midst of pain and suffering God in Christ is with us allowing new things still to happen.

May you experience the hope, joy and new life that comes from the resurrection this Easter Season and throughout the year!
Pastor Christian

Fling Wide the Doors

May Event

Organ Recital by Charles Rus

**Sunday, May 27, 2007
3:00 pm**

Works by Bach, Buxtehude, and Böhm, and featuring Bach's "Prelude & Fugue in E Minor (Wedge)"

Charles Rus is musician at St. John's Episcopal in San Francisco. He is also an organist for the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, having recorded with them and toured extensively in Europe, Asia and the US.



A recent CD of Mr. Rus at the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam is available for sale.

Suggested donation: \$10 (\$5 seniors/students)
No one turned away for lack of funds.



Sabbatical Book Study

During Pr Ekdale's sabbatical leave, all members are invited to participate in a study of "Listening for God" a volume of *Contemporary Literature and the Life of Faith*. Pastors Beckman and Jennert will facilitate 10 study sessions during the months of June and July, as follows:

Sundays, June 10, 17, 24 and July 1, 8 (10:00 am in the Fireside Room)

Tuesdays, June 12, 19, 26 and July 3, 10 (7:00 pm in the Fireside Room)

If you have not picked up a copy of the book for your household, please do so at the Church Office.

Please speak to Pastor Beckman or Pastor Jennert for more information. All are welcome!

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY NEWS

Help Thrivent Financial for Lutherans build homes with Habitat for Humanity! Be part of the H4H/Thrivent fundraiser at Chevy's - 590 Van Ness @ Golden Gate Ave., on **Thursday, May 17th** from 4:00 to 10:00 pm. Pick up a coupon in the church office, or clip the coupon below. When you present the coupon to your server, Chevy's will donate 25% of total to **H4H-SF!**

Then, mark your calendars for St. Mark's Build Dates: **Saturday, June 2nd** and **Saturday July 21st**, 8:45 am to 4:30 pm. Volunteer to make lunches, paint, garden, hammer or encourage! Everyone can help. Financial contributions also welcomed! Sign up at www.habitatsf.org or contact Denise Burpee at denise@habitatsf.org. Reference Thrivent!



HAVE FUN, RAISE MONEY...
Make a Difference

Please Join Chevys At Our Fundraising Event For

Invite all of your friends and family to dine with us and Chevys will donate 25% of the proceeds to our fundraising partner!

Present this coupon to your server...
Thursday, May 17th
4:00 pm to 10:00 pm
590 Van Ness @ Golden Gate Ave.
San Francisco

It's just our way of giving back to the community!

Sacred Acts at St. Mark's

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

Sunday, April 1
Baptism of Takuma Robert Renslo

GREET THE NELSONS!

A potluck on Friday, May 18th

Drs. Tim and Holly Nelson will return to the U.S. and visit us at St. Mark's on **Friday, May 18th at 7:00 pm** for a potluck dinner in Heritage Hall. Everyone in the congregation is invited. Come to greet them and their family and to hear stories of their work as **ELCA medical missionaries in Cameroon**. To ensure a variety of foods, we're asking attendees to contribute a dish based on the first letter of their last name, as follows:

- A-F** Entrée
- M-R** Side Dish
- G-L** Salad
- S-Z** Dessert

Join us on May 18th! See Mary Ritter for details!

WELCA (Women of the ELCA)

An invitation to St. Mark's Women Tuesdays, May 8 and June 12

WELCA ladies will meet on Tuesday, **May 8th at 11:00 am in the Church Sanctuary** for a demonstration of the new church organ by Rod Gehrke. After the demonstration we will enjoy lunch and fellowship in Heritage Hall. Please bring a sandwich. Refreshments and dessert are provided.

For our **June 12** gathering, we will go out to lunch. We'll then take a hiatus for July and August.

Donna Dindia and Nadine Robinson, Co-Chairs
email: WELCA@stmarks-sf.org

REFLECTING ON SABBATICAL/SHARING OUR STORIES

House Meetings, May 6, 20 & 27

Who are we as people of St Marks, people of God? And, who has time to think about it anyway?

As Pastor Ekdale begins her Sabbatical, we have been charged as a community to light our own Sabbatical candle. How do we experience Sabbath, if at all? What does your calendar look like? Is it crammed with notes and appointments, working hours and meetings? Does time to just be with family or to listen for God feel like a luxury? How do we balance the duties that we have in our lives, the ways that we feel called to serve (in and out of the church) and the need we have for Sabbath?

You are invited to come to House Meetings after the 11:00 am service, Sunday, May 6, 20, and 27. With the above questions in mind, we will gather in small groups for an hour and share stories about our faith journeys. For more info contact Pr. Jennert at 415.928.7770 x. 226 or jennert@stmark-sf.org.

GOT A FEW MINUTES?

HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR THE POOR AND HUNGRY

1. Pray first. Ask God for guidance to help you do what you can for the hungry and impoverished in the world.

2. Global poverty?

You can give directly to--

ELCA World Hunger Appeal
PO Box 71764, Chicago, IL 60694-1764

Or send a check to St. Mark's, noting "ELCA World Hunger".

Or go online to www.elca.org/hunger/

(Giving a birthday or Mother's Day or Father's Day gift? Go online to www.elca.org/goodgifts/ for alternative gift ideas.)

3. Local poverty?

Take a SF Food Bank monthly shopping list when you do your grocery shopping. Buy an item or two, and bring it to worship – we will get it to the Food Bank. Or send a donation directly to –

San Francisco Food Bank
900 Pennsylvania Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94107

Or go online to www.sffoodbank.org to see what else you can do.

4. Advocate!

Come to the Bread for the World letter writing events at St. Mark's Coffee Hour on **July 22nd** and **September 30th** (fifth Sundays). Encourage your legislators to support reform of the US Farm Bill – it will help end hunger in our country and around the world. Learn more about advocating for the poor at www.bread.org, or at "ONE Lutheran" at www.elca.org/advocacy/one/ and then click on "Advocacy network".

PRAY GIVE SHARE ADVOCATE

Clerestory to Perform

Sunday, June 10

The outstanding new male vocal ensemble Clerestory will perform at St. Mark's on Sunday, **June 10 at 6:00 pm**. Comprised of veterans of the acclaimed group Chanticleer.



Clerestory has already established itself as one of the Bay Area's premiere classical singing ensembles, and was described by SF Classical Voice as "eight distinctive voices blending in a gorgeous sound."

The June 10 program will be the group's first-ever performance at St. Mark's, and will feature a program of meditations on mortality spanning seven centuries, from gothic Requiem mass movements to contemporary lamentations by noted Bay Area composers. "We're very excited to move to St. Mark's for our San Francisco concerts and we truly feel the space will be perfect for our sound," says singer Tom Hart.

Learn more about the group, read reviews of their past performances and listen to online recordings at www.clerestory.org.

Stewardship

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	February 2007	Year to date
Income	\$39,888	\$77,383
Expense	<u>\$44,511</u>	<u>\$85,296</u>
Net	\$ (4,623)	\$ (7,913)
	March 2007	Year to date
Income	\$44,563	\$121,946
Expense	\$41,867	\$127,163
Net	\$ (2,696)	\$ (5,217)

5 Reasons Why...

**...you, an urban Bay Area Lutheran,
will want to participate in our Offering of
Letters on the Farm Bill on July 22nd & September 30th**

1. You like to eat.

We want to support farming because someone needs to grow the food that we cannot in our city non-backyards. We want to improve the Farm Bill to change the existing commodity programs which reward a small number of farmers growing a limited number of crops to a program which provides a more equitable safety net for small and moderate-sized farms who want to grow broccoli, pears, or pecans, for example. This helps to support more farmers and encourages a diversity of good things to eat.

2. You care about the environment.

There are many ways that our food can be more sustainably farmed. We should be encouraging sustainability and the renewing of the Farm Bill is an excellent time to encourage legislators to include programs and incentives. The bill should promote conservation and improved land use to better reward good stewardship of working farms and ranches and protect environmentally fragile areas such as wetlands.

3. You carry a sense of nostalgia for small town America (even if you don't want to live there). Except that small town America is often deeply struggling, with higher rates of poverty. We can encourage our leaders to use the Farm Bill to help generate support and revitalize rural towns.

4. You want to be up on the hip topics of conversation. Think about it. What do people in the Bay Area love to talk about? Food! Restaurants, wines, cheeses... California has its own cuisine and it was started here – in the Bay Area! Food is cool, and food politics is even cooler. Some of the more popular titles for local readers: *Omnivore's Dilemma, Fast Food Nation, Fatland...* Being up on the Farm Bill puts you right in the middle of what is really going on with food politics.

5. You pray "Give us this day our daily bread" When we pray this, we pray that no one should go hungry. We don't pray, "God, give ME a full belly." We pray, "Give US this day our daily bread. Yet, many people do not have enough to eat. One way that we can address this with the Farm Bill is to make sure that there is a funding increase for the Food Stamp program (that is actually a part of the Farm Bill). A funding increase for Food Stamps would enable the program to provide better outreach to make sure that those who are eligible get the help that they need. It would also allow for benefits to include more nutritious meals. In an age of obesity we all know that calories (potato chips and soda) are cheaper than nutrients (fresh fruits and vegetables). The Farm Bill can help more people globally by changing the system so that many farmers in the developing world do not have to give up growing their own corn, for example, because the market is flooded with cheaper corn from large U.S. growers.

Liv Beck



Member-donated lilies adorn the Church Altar on Easter Morning.

GLOBAL HEALTH MINISTRY

**Knitters, bring your bandages
by May 27, 2007**

We will send a shipment of knitted bandages to Global Health Ministry in June. Please bring your completed bandages to Mary Ritter by May 27th. Let her know if they are "washed and pinned" or "not washed". Contact Mary Ritter (mlrpeds@aol.com, 510-895-0336) if you have questions. Watch for the date of the blessing and mailing. Thank you to the many knitters and sponsors!

**Nurse Midwife Kits to
be gathered September 16, 2007**

We will gather, pack and send nurse midwife kits September 16, 2007. These kits will be used for delivering babies in Africa or India. We will need the following items to complete the kits:

- 50 infant receiving blankets
- 90 clean new (or clean gently used) bath towels
- 90 clean new washcloths
- 100 infant t-shirts (not onesies)
- 100 pairs of disposable gloves
- 100 individually wrapped razor blades (to cut umbilical cord)
- 100 bars of white Ivory soap
- 100 ziploc sandwich bags
- 100 ziploc 2 gallon bags

You may also give a donation to St. Mark's, noted as "Nurse Midwife Kits". Contact Mary Ritter (mlrpeds@aol.com, 510-895-0336) if you have questions or to donate.

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

Sunday, May 27, 2007

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.

Your digital photos needed!



Please consider sending some of your choice digital photos of St. Mark's people, events, and services for inclusion in our newsletter and website! You can email them to dayton@stmarks-sf.org. Thank you!

**BREAD FOR
THE
WORLD**

**SEEDS of
CHANGE**

HELP FARMERS ▼ END HUNGER

LETTER WRITING

JULY 22nd & SEPT. 30th

Come to the "Seeds for Change. Help Farmers. End Hunger" letter writing events at the St. Mark's Coffee Hour on July 22nd and September 30th. Learn about the US Farm Bill and how revisions of this legislation can help the hungry here in California as well as around the world. Read more about this at www.bread.org. Questions? - contact Mary Ritter at mlrpeds@aol.com or 510-895-0336.

Adult Forum



May 6

HOW MY NEIGHBOR WORSHIPS

Gail Reitenbach

Guest author Gail Reitenbach will speak about her new book, "How My Neighbor Worships: A Grand Tour of Faith Communities." Ms. Reitenbach believes that there is great value in even limited first-hand familiarity with other mainstream — and even untraditional — faith traditions. She believes that learning about other faiths and how they worship can help us look at our own traditions better, as well as provide opportunities for personal and congregational growth.

May 13, 20 and 27

THEODICY

Dr. Peter Weltner

Theodicy is a philosophical or theological argument which seeks to justify the ways of God to a suffering humanity or attempts to make some sense of human suffering in theological terms. But it is a real, even fundamental question whether such speculation is rationally or morally possible. During three adult forums in May, Dr. Peter Weltner will explore three literary expressions of theodicy: Sophocles' Oedipus the King (13), Lamentations (20), and the passion narrative in Mark's gospel (27). His argument will be that what may be speculatively impossible nonetheless remains expressively and poetically necessary as accusation, lamentation, and anguished prayer, like Jesus' last words on the cross in Mark.

June 3

THE TRINITY

Pr. Christian Jennert

As Lutheran Christians we confess the Triune God, "Father, Son and Holy Spirit". But what does that mean? How do we make sense of the Holy Trinity, a doctrine as unique to the Christian faith as it is complex. Join the Adult Forum on Trinity Sunday to look at the ancient texts as well as some contemporary interpretations.

June 10

THE LITURGY

Rod Gehrke and Choir

Director of Music and Liturgy Rodney Gehrke and the St. Mark's Adult Choir will give examples of the impact our new Taylor & Boody organ has had on our worship and music. By locating the music leadership in the balcony, we have all enjoyed many new opportunities for effective use of our worship space.



**Senior Center Ferry Boat Ride to Sausalito
with Lunch at Spinnaker's**

Wednesday, June 13

Join the St. Mark's Senior Center for a beautiful ferry boat ride to Sausalito with a delicious lunch at Spinnaker's. Enjoy the gorgeous view on the San Francisco Bay, the Golden Gate Bridge and the Marin Headlands from the Spinnaker's dining rooms. Most lunches are well below \$15.00. A one-way ferry ticket costs \$3.35 for seniors (reduced). Join us for a wonderful outing and a day to remember in the SF Bay!

We are leaving at **10:30 am** and will return at around **3:00 pm**.



UPCOMING SENIOR LUNCHEONS

Wednesday, May 23 and Thursday, June 21



Please sign up early to reserve your seats by calling the **MLT office at 415.885.1084**.

Journey to Fort Ross

Friday, May 11

Join us for a trip to Fort Ross State Historic Park. Fort Ross is a wonderful place to visit for its outstanding scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and to learn about local, California, and world trade history. The settlement of Ross, the name derived from the word for Russia (Rossia) was established by the Russian - American Company, a commercial hunting and trading company chartered by the Tsarist government, with shares held by the members of the Tsar's family, court nobility and high officials.



Today the fort has been partially restored to its former appearance. We leave at **9:00 am** and will return no later than **5:00 pm**.

All Senior trips start from the **Martin Luther Tower Brockie Lounge**, unless noted otherwise. Seating is limited. To reserve your seat, please contact the **MLT Office at 415- 885-1084** or Pastor Jennert at 415.928.7770 x. 226.



Smart

SMART Dinner at The Helmand Restaurant

Friday, June 22 at 6:00 pm

Named for the Afghan river that winds southwest to the Iranian border, this small restaurant is an oasis of good taste on Broadway's garish strip. Dishes are served in a large yet intimate room lit by brass chandeliers and small table lanterns. The menu showcases a distinctive cuisine reminiscent of India and the Middle East, but with a highly aromatic character of its own. Appetizers include mantwo (dumplings filled with sauteed onions and beef, topped with carrot sauce and yellow split peas) and kaddo borawni (sweet baby pumpkin, deep-fried and then baked, tempered with a piquant yogurt-garlic sauce). For a main course, try the tender, juicy marinated rack of lamb. Recommended by SMART member Geri Bailey, The Helmand is located at 430 Broadway (near Montgomery/Sansome). To RSVP for any SMART event, please reply to your evite or call Pr. Christian at 415.928.7770 x.226.



SMART

is invited to join the **Habitat for Humanity/ Thrivent Fundraising Dinner at Chevy's Thursday, May 17**

See p. 2 for details! To RSVP watch for your evite or contact Joleen Jessen at joleencaron@hotmail.com.

St. Mark's Senior High Youth (SMSHY)

SUMMER SERVICE TRIP FUNDRAISERS

This July, St. Mark's Senior High Youth (SMSHY) will be heading east to Copperhill, Tennessee to learn about life in the Appalachian Mountains, and to serve the rural community through social and environmental service projects. We are asking for your support to send us there!

From now through July, we are raising funds to cover transportation, lodging, and food costs. You are invited to take part in our journey to Tennessee by participating in the following fundraising events:

Saturday, May 19 5pm

Babysitting Night in Heritage Hall

For \$8 per child per hour, we will babysit your kids and kidlettes for an evening! The SMSHYs are experienced and responsible babysitters who will be supervised by their adult counselors. Semi-healthy dinner and snacks provided. Please RSVP in advance to Marisa at marisalouie@gmail.com.

Sunday, June 10 During Coffee Hour

Pasta Feast in Heritage Hall

Enjoy a scrumptious pasta lunch following the I am service. For \$10, you'll be able to eat your fill – and then some – in support of the SMSHY's.

Saturday, July 21 10am-4pm

Car Wash in Lower Ellis Street Parking Lot

Haven't had your wheels shined since last year's highly successful SMSHY car wash? Well, here's what you've been waiting for – the annual SMSHY "inside-and-out" car wash! We wash and dry all cars by hand, and we'll get the dirt, crumbs, and spare change shop-vacuumed out of your interior, too – for just \$15.

You may also make a direct donation to the SMSHY Summer Trip Fund. Please contact the church office for more information.

Thanks to the St. Mark's community for your prayer and encouragement as we prepare for the summer! Any questions? Please contact SMSHY adult leader Marisa Louie at marisalouie@gmail.com or 650.303-3111.



Pastor Ekdale addresses Confirmands Alexandra Baum, Christian Gehrke, Michelle Jacobsen, and Wilhelmina Ocker at the Easter Vigil.

Summer Church

Office Hours:

St. Mark's Church Office Hours will be reduced slightly during the summer.

From June 4 through August 31, the office will be open from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

We will resume regular hours (9:00 am to 5:00 pm) on September 4th.

NARTHEX GREETERS SOUGHT

The church council, in an effort to enhance the hospitality of our congregation, is asking members to consider joining a new group of folks whose primary task is to be stationed in the narthex throughout the service. One person at each liturgy will welcome people and give direction to, especially, newcomers. Since the doors between the narthex and nave now have glass and since we have loudspeakers in the narthex as well now, greeters will still have a close connection with the liturgy while providing a "first face" to worshipers and enhanced security for, particularly, the nursery downstairs. If you would be willing to be a part of this group, please speak to one of the pastors or to Rodney Gehrke. Thanks!

To RSVP for any SMART event, please reply to your evite or call Pr. Christian at 415.928.7770 x.226. If you don't yet belong to the SMART Yahoo! Group, there's no better time to join than NOW! Send an email with your name, phone # and preferred email address for receipt of SMART communications to Pastor Christian at jennert@stmarks-sf.org and you will receive all evites for SMART events. Looking forward to seeing you there!

The Evangel

May - June 2007

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
1111 O'Farrell Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION

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www.stmarks-sf.org

*St. Mark's is a
"Reconciling in Christ"
Congregation.*

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.

Please contact us if you wish to be removed from our mailing list.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Staff

The Rev. Elizabeth E. Ekdale, Pastor
The Rev. Lyle Beckman, Interim Lead Pastor
The Rev. Christian Jennert, Associate Pastor
Rodney P. Gehrke, Director of Music and Liturgy
Jun Ranches, Office Manager
Ann Dayton, Administrative Assistant
Cheryl Garcia, Bookkeeper
Duc Huynh, Buildings and Grounds Supervisor
Carl Storey, Weekend Custodian
Elvira Markov and Gladys Pozo, Nursery Assistants
Gail Culp, Sunday School Coordinator
Chris Ode, Teaching Parish Student
Jeremy Fuerst, Teaching Parish Student

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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

