



# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



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**REV. ELIZABETH EKDALE  
LEAD PASTOR**

“And be thankful!” St. Paul wrote in his letter to the Colossians those three simple words that will transform your life and mine. These three words will re-prioritize one’s day and life and are as relevant today as they were when they were written. There are just 13 characters in these words which is hardly a tithe of a Twitter message.

The Greek words used for “thankful” is eucharisto. We understand that word to be the call to the dinner table of Jesus where we give thanks for all the

gifts we have been given. We eat a thanksgiving meal each time we receive the body and blood of Christ.

Author Brene Brown writes, “We hold the key to lasting happiness in our own hands. **For it is not joy that makes us grateful; it is gratitude that makes us joyful.**”

Gratitude, as Brene Brown so aptly reminds us, is a key source of joy. Gratitude and joy go hand-in-hand. With a grateful and joyful heart, I look back on our year of ministry together in 2016 with amazement for all that we accomplished and the seeds which were planted for next year’s ministry.

I am grateful for the partnership of Pr. Tita Valeriano who has served us with a generous and joyful heart. She has brought energy and vision to many St. Mark’s ministries and has been a wonderful support to the staff and leadership at St. Mark’s. I am thankful for her.

In addition to the ministries described on the following pages, I look back and am filled with gratitude and humility for all the work we have done together: the discernment of the Call Committee, installation of sanctuary floors and stained art windows and the dedicated volunteers on our F.E.W. (floors, elevator, windows) committee; for baptisms, house blessings, animal blessings, and worshipping outside feeling the dirt between our toes!

I am thankful for the oompah filled auditorium for our Oktoberfest – rain and all; for welcoming new staff and new members to the St. Mark’s community, for studying Luther in our adult forums, and meeting our missionary, Rev. Kate Warn from Rwanda; I am grateful for groceries handed out at the Interfaith Food Pantry, and weary men welcomed to our homeless shelter by St. Mark’s members; for celebrating God’s Work Our Hands Sunday by deepening our relationship with Lutheran Social Services in the Tenderloin, for children welcomed into the nursery and Sunday School, and youth welcomed to Confirmation and lunch outings with Pr. Tita, for the service of the church council and Martin Luther Tower board and their faithful work on complicated issues – I am grateful to you.

For Martin Luther Tower residents and staff, and praying with parishioners and residents in the hospital and nursing home; for knowing the staff is being prayed for by the Mutual Ministry committee; for welcoming our teaching parish student from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, and rejoicing in the healing of the ill – I am grateful.

For celebrating the lives of the saints and grieving with families whose faith has upheld them in their loss; for the San Francisco Interfaith Council which holds monthly meetings in Heritage Hall and all the music which flows through our sanctuary on Sundays led by our Director of Music, choir, and guest musicians, I am thankful.

For concerts in the sanctuary and volunteers in the church office, for all our volunteers who serve behind the scenes and out front, I am thankful. For our Forward in Faith – Lifted by Love2 campaign and our dedicated stewardship team; for the privilege of serving on the ELCA Church Council and attending the Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans, for worshipping in the auditorium for three months and enjoying the coziness of the space; for representing St. Mark’s on the Essential Housing Task Force and guest hosting the Mosaic television show – I am thankful.

For welcoming visitors and strangers each Sunday in worship who soon become part of the Body of Christ at St. Mark’s, I am thankful. For all of you who mentor and support and care for Hans and Grace and myself, thank you.

With a grateful and thankful heart, I reflect on 2016 with joy and thanksgiving. Thank you for partnership in our ministries at St. Mark’s and Martin Luther Tower. With thanksgiving, I will continue to serve in the upcoming year with joy and hope confident in the steadfast promises of God.

I invite you to journey with me at St. Mark’s, remembering St. Paul’s words today and everyday – “And be thankful”.

With gratitude,  
Pastor Elizabeth Ekdale  
Lead Pastor

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



**REV. TITA VALERIANO**  
**INTERIM ASSOCIATE PASTOR**

Associate Pastor. Needless to say, we have been discerning together. Having ministered in various contexts where vocation is an important part of my ministry, my journey with you has been a time of learning, re-learning and unlearning, mindful of God's guidance. Even though the following highlights are more action-oriented, they are all grounded in God's call in our baptism, centered on community building, advocacy and justice, deepening spirituality, strengthening protection of the creation and growing in witness.

## II. Highlights

### A. Word and Sacrament

- Presided and preached with Pastor Elizabeth
- Supported the planning and implementation worship services especially during major church events
- Helped in recruiting worship leaders from youth, young adult and a few of new comers
- Helped in promotion of our worship services in our neighborhood (see Outreach)
- Led Mid-week services with Pastor Elizabeth

### B. Youth Ministry

#### a. Confirmation

- Prepared for one student confirmed in Pentecost 2016. We currently have eleven youth in the class with three new for the year 2016-2017. We hope to confirm five students this coming Pentecost.
- Prepared a new three-year curriculum starting for 2016-2017 based on the Sparkhouse's Colaborate curriculum. Implementing this general resource needs contextualization.
- Accompanied four youth to a spring Jr. High retreat at Mt. Cross ministries

## I. Introduction

When I met with Pastor Elizabeth in October 2015, I was re-discerning where God is calling me. Jennifer, my wife, had just started a new position in seminary that made me also stop my process to serve in a congregation in another synod. I was excited to take the primary role I was given: to support the ministry leadership while St. Mark's went through the discernment process of calling a new

- Accompanied three students to the Shalom Confirmation Retreat last summer. One more youth attended the Beach Summer Camp during the same week of Shalom. During the Shalom retreat, all adult companions served as mentors and resource people where we led each class and worship services throughout the retreat.
- Encourage and supported our confirmation youth service through the Interfaith Pantry and Homeless Shelter. We had one joint community service with St. Mary and St. Martha at the Interfaith Pantry.
- Prepared and accompanied our confirmation students for an overnight lock in. We spent time for community building and learning more about the challenges of immigrant youth here in the US and the photos of Palestinian youth.
- This month, we also finished two welcome banners for SF Habitat for Humanity for those receiving their new homes this year.

I am thankful for the parents who support our ministry through providing snacks, preparing them for class and most especially praying for them. Some of the parents also assisted in refurbishing our room with new chairs and tables, cabinets. Also thanks to John Burton, our former teaching parish student, who helped in teaching the class.

#### b. High School

- It takes a while to build relationships with our HS youth with their hectic schedules in school. We had two Sunday lunches after worship service and unfortunately missed one lunch scheduled with St. Mary and St. Martha's youth. I have been building up relationship with this congregation and also with Marin Lutheran for future joint events and community services.
- Preparing for HS youth to join the Western Regional Youth Gathering in July 2017 at California Lutheran University. I appreciate their continued presence in worship service as acolytes and exploring more leadership role with them.

#### c. College Students

- Assisted in preparing for a send-off for our college students last Fall.
- Sent them a small care package during finals during Advent and communicated with their parents from time to time

### C. Young Adult Ministry

We finally had an enjoyable dinner evening with seven young adults in November where we also talked about new possibilities for the group as it slowly gets organized. I hope that this will continue

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

in the future. Young Adults are very transient but also the ones actively seeking a community in the city where they moved either for work or school.

## D. Welcome/Promotional Outreach Ministry

- Helped in connecting with our guests and visitors. One of the joys of my ministry is to send the first greeting of gratitude and/or hope for strengthening relationship with first time visitors via postcard and/or an email/phone call.
- Partnering with our Journeys of Faith Team on following up with those who have expressed interest in becoming a member by participating in JOF class starting early this year.
- Assisted in creating a new visitor/guest card. We are still learning to use this form that is also for members to be more connected to various ministries. We are now working on a welcome card for our Children's ministry.
- Assisted in sharing our fliers to our two neighboring apartment buildings, coffee shops and groceries. Coordinating with our communication staff, we also have sent information to newspapers or community news websites for free advertisement.

## E. Other

- Shared with Pastor Elizabeth and Pastor Chuck in giving pastoral care to members in need
- Shared resources on becoming a Multicultural/Anti-Racist Community with our Council during their retreat early last year
- Increased awareness about the challenges for immigrants in our midst and those at the margin in our society
- Supported the Justice committee in promoting the ELCA's AMMPARRO and supporting your work with Stars of Bethlehem
- Began to help with the opening devotional time in Sunday School in the Fall
- Contributed to the planning and implementation of the 2016 Interfaith Council Worlds AIDS Day Service
- Supported various major programs such as the Christmas Pageant, Easter Vigil etc. where youth also participated
- Supported the ministry at Martin Luther Towers as needed. I am always blessed to be with our elders, for their wisdom and witness.
- Attended the Regional Border Immersion Event in El Paso/Juarez as one of the 5 representatives of the synod, together with Allana Helland.

## III. Conclusion

When I came to St. Mark's, I only expected to support its leadership for six months. I have been blessed to serve with you for over a year where I also grew as a person, both in my vocation and passion. I am sure that I made mistakes along the way or fell short in my service, for which I ask for your understanding. Thank you very much for a year of growth and for the opportunity to serve this vibrant and steadfast faith community. Thank you very much for Pastor Elizabeth, for her partnership, mentorship and friendship. Thank you very much for all the staff, leaders and members who supported and taught me. I will continue to pray for and with you, your leadership and your calling as you continue to be Christ's light here in the city and beyond. It is indeed exciting to be the church.



**DR. TIMOTHY ZERLANG**  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

How oft, in making music,  
we have found a new dimension  
in the world of sound,  
as worship moved us to a  
more profound  
Alleluia!  
(Fred Pratt Green, ELW 850)

A few months ago I realized that I have served as a professional church musician for 35 years, the last seven here at St. Mark's. I am still astonished after all this time how true the words of the hymn quoted above are for me. To participate in the leadership of a community's song of faith, to contribute to the transformation of a moment into something beyond our every-day experience, to spark a memory of something or someone, to bring comfort in a time of sorrow or enliven a joyful occasion, these are all gifts that I receive repeatedly as a church musician for which I am truly thankful.

Just to reduce the year to a short list:

104 Sunday Services  
38 Wednesday Evening services  
10 additional services  
Weddings  
Memorials  
40 Choir rehearsals  
600+ hymns  
140+ choir anthems, psalms, preludes, and postludes

I am grateful for St. Mark's support of my continuing education and support for my professional development. I attended the Grace Gathering in New Orleans this past Summer, which was a wonderful opportunity to observe the national ELCA in action, as well as the regional conference of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians held in Sacramento.

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

This past year saw us worshipping in the Auditorium during the floor project in our sanctuary. Thank you to all who took on additional tasks to make that transition smooth and the worship experience meaningful. A special thanks to the FEW Committee for dealing so wonderfully with my concerns about the stability of our organ during the floor and window projects. I eagerly anticipate the completion of the elevator portion of the recent renovation project. I was extremely pleased by the acoustical results of the floor project – as John Boody, one of our organ builders said to me when I described to him what was going to be done, “That is going to make a good room even better.” The room is more reverberant with the harder floors, which has enhanced not only the sound of the organ and other music performed in our sanctuary, but our congregational singing as well.

The Taylor and Boody organ continues to attract attention of organists from across the country and beyond. I am called upon to show the instrument to visiting organists almost monthly. This past year we also hosted, together with the San Francisco Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, a masterclass and recital featuring Dr. David Yearsley of Cornell University, and our organ was featured as part of the youth organ-crawl event, sponsored by the SFAGO.

So has the church, in liturgy and song,  
in faith and love, through centuries of wrong,  
borne witness to the truth in ev’ry tongue:  
Alleluia! (Fred Pratt Green, ELW 850)

This year, will see two events that I will never see again in my lifetime — a total solar eclipse (John and I will be at my sister’s home in Oregon to experience that in August) and the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther’s 95 theses and the events that followed. I have set myself the task of exploring Martin Luther’s work as a hymn writer and composer this year, both on the organ and with our choir. If our music during worship seems even more Lutheran than usual as we approach October 2017, that will be the reason. It continues to be a pleasure and privilege to serve with our clergy and administrative staff. My particular thanks go to Pastor Elizabeth Ekdale and Pastor Tita Valeriano. Finally, I thank the small but dedicated group of volunteer musicians that make up our choir (there is room for you, consider joining) and contribute so much to our worship here at St. Mark’s; I thank Greg Gomez for his help contracting instrumentalists for me; I thank Phyllis DeSpain for her help with the music library; I thank Gary Schilling for his willingness to serve as our unofficial “Associate Organist.”

Let ev’ry instrument be tuned for praise;  
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise;  
And may God give us faith to sing always:  
Alleluia! (Fred Pratt Green, ELW 850)

Respectfully,

Dr. Timothy Zerlang  
Director of Music



**MATT HELLAND**  
**COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

The ELCA reminds us that we are “Always Being Made New” – and that is so true at St. Mark’s. This was a year of exciting change and new opportunities. We created new ministries and we strengthened old ones. We welcomed new leaders and celebrated those who led us throughout the year and in years past. And we look forward to exciting new ministries and opportunities on the horizon.

We conduct this Annual Meeting in a sanctuary adorned by new floors and (some) new windows, with more new windows – and a new elevator – to come in 2017.

Members of St. Mark’s pledged hundreds of thousands of dollars to these projects, showing this community’s commitment to protecting and improving our sacred space as a vehicle for future generations to experience God’s Grace.

After a period of change in the church office, we were excited to welcome Winnie Heslin, our new Director of Operations. We now look with anticipation towards a fully staffed church office! At the same time, we thank the many members who worked and volunteered to keep the church office running over the past two years.

We are thankful for the ministry of Interim Associate Pastor Tita Valeriano in 2016. She and her family strengthened our faith, challenged us to explore new ministries, and blessed us with their caring presence. Pastor Tita helped us all explore ways to be made new, including the exciting AMMPARO ministry we will discuss at the Annual Meeting. St. Mark’s will always have a special place in our collective heart for Pastor Tita.

We also look forward to calling a new associate pastor in 2017. The call committee’s steadfast work over the past 18 months leads us to a Special Congregational Meeting consider calling Pastor Ronald Moe-Lobeda as our new associate pastor. If we choose to extend a call, Pastor Moe-Lobeda will bring with him a lifetime of ministry experience and gifts that will enrich the St. Mark’s community. We are thankful for the Holy Spirit working through the Call Committee to bring Pastor Moe-Lobeda to St. Mark’s for our consideration.

Even our existing ministries remind us of the importance of Always Being Made New. Responding to a request from Mayor’s office to the Interfaith Council, St. Mark’s extended its participation in the men’s homeless shelter from three weeks to four weeks, after expanding from two to three weeks a few years past. St. Mark’s has long supported Christians in Palestine, and in 2016 we hosted the United States premiere of the “Humans of Palestine” photography exhibit.

In 2016 St. Mark’s submitted a proposal to the Mayor’s Office of Housing to develop affordable housing on our property. Although

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

the request for funding was unsuccessful, the process of developing plans for affordable housing reminded me of our incredible resources here on St. Mark's Square. St. Mark's will continue to explore development, even as we strengthen our existing ministry at Martin Luther Tower.

We also thank new leaders in many ministries, including the Food Pantry, the FEW (Floors, Elevators and Windows) Committee, Parents with Kidlettes, and the Human Resources Committee. I am continually amazed by, and grateful for, the commitment of this congregation.

In a time of great uncertainty at home and abroad, the role of the Church must continuously evolve. St. Mark's remains actively involved in our local community through our leadership on the San Francisco Interfaith Council and our many local ministries. Our presence in the Sierra Pacific Synod evolves and grows with our involvement in AMMPARO and other social ministries. And with Pastor Elizabeth's leadership on the ELCA churchwide council, St. Mark's has evolved and grown with the nationwide church. We look forward to another year of Always Being Made New in 2017.

## MARTIN LUTHER TOWER, INC.



**OMER VOSS**  
**MLT BOARD PRESIDENT**

financial and other support to St. Mark's and The Square.

In the ULC, MLT offers affordable offices for non-profit organizations and meeting facilities for many community organizations, arranged ably by St. Mark's Office staff. At the Tower, MLT provides affordable rental apartments, a well-managed building, friendly and effective staff, an active Residents Association (RA), and a convenient location. Services for residents include: onsite property management; onsite social services, chaplaincy, and pastoral services; Senior Center outings and field trips in conjunction with the RA; Brockie Lounge (wide-screen TV, DVDs, games); a computer room; laundry facilities; a reasonably-priced Guest Suite (available to St. Mark's members); the Bock Fund for residents' special needs (donations welcome); a non-profit produce market open to all; exercise classes, and more!

Martin Luther Tower, Inc. (MLT) was incorporated on August 7, 1961, during redevelopment of the area. It oversees our St. Mark's Square including the 121-unit Tower, the Urban Life Center (ULC), the parking lots, and the Plaza – everything except the Church itself. For 50 years, the Tower has been an independent-living, affordable-housing community for seniors aged 62 and over. In 2005, MLT accepted a \$10 million debt to provide the funding for St. Mark's retrofit. MLT continues to provide

Some residents at the Tower are members of St. Mark's, and two residents (Barbara Bock and Jo Chadwick) are on MLT's Board of Trustees. The Board consists entirely of St. Mark's members. The Trustees work closely with MLT's property management company, The John Stewart Company (JSCo), with its social services provider, the Institute On Aging (IOA), and with St. Mark's Council and staff to coordinate activities and services.

Highlights of MLT Corporation's busy 2016 include:

- Paid its pledge of \$250,000 to St. Mark's Capital Campaign;
- Worked long and hard with the City and our partners to develop The Square and affordable housing initiatives;
- Completed 90% of capital projects to overhaul the Tower's central air, heating, and boilers;
- Completed energy-efficiency upgrades of lighting and insulation throughout the building's common areas and all apartments, with support from PG&E's energy programs;
- Conducted two retreats for the Board and Council, led by Jeff Kohler and Paul Peninger;
- Initiated plans to renovate the Tower's elevators with JSCo and consultant VDA;
- Managed transitions of property management and social services staffs while retaining 99% occupancy rate at the Tower;
- Met budget objectives and financial responsibilities of the Tower and Corporation;
- Passed all property inspections and the many housing-compliance audits – all with zero defects;
- Improved security at MLT, the Church, and The Square, and joined with the Archdiocese on a new local-area security initiative; and,
- Co-sponsored the Oktoberfest with St. Mark's, JSCo, and Thrivent.

The Board appreciates JSCo's excellent management team at MLT, including: Steve McElroy, VP; Lavinia Marlin, Senior Regional Director; Ian O'Leary, Property Manager; Lydia Lau, Assistant Property Manager; Phil Hunter, Maintenance Supervisor; and Sonia Jimenez, Administrative Assistant.

The Board acknowledges the fine social services work of the IOA led by Josh Martin and Ardath Grant in their important roles providing invaluable social service support to the Tower's residents.

The Board thanks Pastor Elizabeth and Pastor Tita for their work to enrich the lives of the Tower's residents through their devoted chaplaincy, personal support, and leadership of activities at the Tower community. We also thank Matt Helland and Andrew Sallach for their work with the Board as well as Winnie Heslin and Stefani Lawrence for their valuable support.

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

The Trustees are especially grateful for the tireless work by the joint Development Task Force of Jon Moeller, Barbara Engmann, Jeremy McClain, Andrew Sallach, Matt Helland, and Pr. Elizabeth Ekdale along with our development partners JSCo and CCDC with the Mayor's Office of Housing. The Trustees also extend their deep appreciation to Jeff Kohler for his guidance in supporting MLT and the Board during 2016.

And, of course, we appreciate the good work of MLT's Residents Association and its 2016 officers: Randy Hicks, President; Ted Hege, Vice President and Treasurer; and Rev. Genie Kinney, Kathi Sparkes, and Diana Rhodes, Secretary.

The highlights above and so many other accomplishments at MLT in 2016 took significant amounts of time, commitment, and thoughtfulness by the Trustees. They balanced work on multiple initiatives and demands of membership on several Board committees throughout the year. As President, I am particularly grateful to the Corporation's officers: Adrienne Brown, Vice President; Jerry Lundblad, Treasurer; Barbara Bock, Secretary; and, to its Trustees Pastor Elizabeth Ekdale, Aron Bohlig, Jo Chadwick, Shannon Cheng, Barbara Engmann, Jon Moeller, and Scott Taylor.

Please consider bringing your talents to the Board of MLT Corporation and furthering St. Mark's and MLT's ministries to seniors, the community, and affordable housing. Talk with either me or Pastor Ekdale.

Interested in being a resident at the Tower? You, family, or friends, 62 and over? See the flyer in the Annual Meeting's materials, and complete an application for the Tower's waiting list. Contact the Tower's Property Office at 1001 Franklin Street, 1-415-885-1084 (TDD 1-415-345-4470) or use MLT's website <http://www.mltinc.org/>.

Omer G. Voss, Jr.  
President



**WINNIE HESLIN**  
**DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**

updating internal documents and procedures.

Since joining the St. Mark's staff in late September, it has been a joy to be part of such a vibrant community as I work hand in hand with our office staff, along with our many active and committed members. As I become acquainted with St. Mark's, Martin Luther Tower and ULC, I have been working with our staff to identify the strengths and opportunities within our office so that I can effectively tackle the needs that we may have. On the top of the list of priority items since my arrival has been streamlining and managing the workflow within our various departments and

In my short time here, I have partnered with our staff to accomplish a variety of items, which includes:

- Introduced new "Welcome" and "I Give Through Simply Giving" pew cards
- Addressed facility maintenance issues such as the HVAC, plumbing and lighting
- Installed a ramp outside of the ULC Auditorium
- Facilitated moving the congregation back into the Sanctuary
- Navigated a staffing change
- Organized and completed a CPR/AED certification course for St. Mark's and MLT staff
- Updated the office reception space

ULC and St. Mark's continue to be a vital part of the community, as we hosted a total of 98 groups in 2016. We witnessed the marriage of 7 wedding couples, hosted 23 recurring groups and have 8 office tenants, amongst the many musical groups and nonprofits who perform and gather at our facilities. These groups and individuals serve to provide significant financial support to the mission of St. Mark's. In addition to the outside groups that we host, our campus provides space for MLT activities such as the Produce Market, exercise classes and Senior Center luncheons. This winter, we continue to open our doors and fulfill our commitment to the Interfaith Winter Shelter, which we are hosting for 4 weeks.

I look forward to 2017 and the opportunities that await us in the upcoming year. I'd like to extend a heartfelt gratitude to the warm welcome the congregation has gifted me, as we've hit the ground running since my arrival. It has been such a pleasure running along side with you all and the mission of St. Mark's. Your support has been truly felt and appreciated. A special thank you to the Pastor Elizabeth, the office staff and volunteers, as well as the various Council members and Committee Chairs for your encouragement and support as we made this transition together.

Our deepest gratitude to our office volunteers who have faithfully dedicated their time and energy to helping our office run smoothly: Jane Borg, Phyllis DeSpain, Jeremy McClain, Steve Ernst, and Marlo Tellschow.

We are currently in great need of office volunteers. If you are looking for an opportunity to serve St. Mark's in 2017, please contact Jane Borg at [janeborg@att.net](mailto:janeborg@att.net).

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

## TREASURER'S REPORT, SMLC & ULC

FIRST LET US REMEMBER--

"St. Mark's Lutheran Church 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." - St. Mark's Mission Statement "Our faith is built around a strong belief in God as made known to us in Jesus Christ. Through worship, service, and education, we practice our faith, grow our relationship with God and experience God's grace in our lives. We also work hard to put our faith into action and strive to make a difference in practical, realistic ways." - "About Us" from St. Mark's website



**STEVE ERNST**  
TREASURER

Our mission statement drives what we do as a congregation. The Operating Budget presented to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting is a plan for allocation of our financial resources toward those activities and ministries. It also sets forth estimates of financial support required to fund these activities.

As we review together the budget we agreed to for 2016 and the plans developed for 2017 remember that the members of the congregation make the final decisions.

First, here are the highlights of 2016:

1. FEW -- Flooring, Elevator, and Windows. Last year at this meeting--after due deliberation--we decided to go ahead with these major upgrades to our distinctive and historic church building. The FEW project is headed up by Tim Bohan and Gary Schilling, who will report progress and plans.
2. General Envelope Income of \$422,388 is 4% more than we budgeted. Thank you.
3. However total income was 3% below plan largely because events that produce income could not be held while the flooring in the sanctuary was renewed. Also contributing to the shortfall was the absence of an effective Events Coordinator following the departure of Chiara.
4. Expenses came in about 3% under budget mainly due to salaries and related costs while key positions were vacant.
5. The bottom line is within 1% actual versus plan, a tribute to the care taken developing last year's plan.

Looking ahead, here is the proposal for how we'll use our resources in 2017:

### **Support for our Synod: \$40,000**

St. Mark's is part of the ELCA, a community of faith that shares a passion for making positive changes in the world. We pledge 10% of general envelope giving to support the Sierra Pacific Synod. Recall that the word synod comes from a Greek word meaning "to travel a common road--to walk together." We also pledge \$1,000 to PLTS, our local seminary, to support the development of future clergy.

### **Worship and Church Property: \$143,000**

We gather as a community of faith to celebrate God's presence. Our pastors, working with our Director of Music, Worship Committee, and choir, prepare the weekly worship services. The Property Committee is responsible for the maintenance and stewardship of the physical property of St. Mark's Lutheran Church.

### **Church Property: \$114,000**

**Worship and Music: Liturgy, Music, Flowers and Supplies: \$29,000**

### **Service to the Community: \$16,750**

St. Mark's is active in many ministries providing support to the community, both locally and globally. The Social Ministry Committee coordinates much of St. Mark's participation in activities focused on providing assistance to those of need in our city. As a member of the San Francisco Interfaith Council (SFIC), we participate with other churches and organizations in the annual Winter Shelter for Homeless Men. We also support the Night Ministry working mainly in the Tenderloin, and provide cash management for the homeless. Other activities include providing worship services at a nearby nursing home, participation in a fund raising walks for various organizations, and providing funds and volunteers for the Interfaith Food Pantry. The Committee also provides financial support to our missionary in Rwanda and Cordero de Dios in El Salvador.

The Endowment Committee oversees the Endowment Fund, designed to encourage charitable giving to support the mission and goals of St. Mark's. Gifts to the Endowment Fund, which is separate from the St. Mark's operating budget. Gifts to the Endowment Fund are maintained in perpetuity in a fund of funds, administered in accordance with the bylaws for the Endowment Fund, which is separate from the St. Mark's operating budget. "Dream it! Make It Happen!" was the theme for the 2016 grant cycle. The Committee disbursed \$3,600 in grants to three impactful projects, all of which deepen the congregation's existing local and global relationships. The Committee plans to use its 2017 allocation for donor recognition and education events.

### **Social Ministry Committee: \$13,000**

### **Endowment Committee: \$1,500**

### **SFIC, MLT Senior Events: \$2,250**

Discipling, Outreach and Stewardship: \$16,070. We are called to spread the good news. Seeking to continue growing St. Mark's membership, we have allocated \$5,400 to publicity and miscellaneous evangelism expenses, including programs such as Journeys in Faith for those new to the faith and seeking membership.



# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Our Hospitality Committee enhances our time together outside worship and helps visitors and new members feel the welcoming presence of the church. Hospitality has a budget of \$6,250 for 2017 to pay for food and drink and other supplies for various fellowship and social events.

Our Stewardship Committee raises funds to sustain our community of faith and on a deeper, more spiritual level our committee's intent is to promote and encourage Christian generosity, faith and charity. As such, Stewardship oversees the annual stewardship pledge drive, which focuses on raising funds to support the mission and ministry of St. Mark's throughout the 2016 calendar year. The Committee is key to raising the money for FEW. The Committee is allocated \$4,420 of which \$1,500 is for our Endowment Committee outreach for educational and other awareness campaigns as well as recognition events.

### **Education and Youth Ministries: \$8,100**

The Education Committee is responsible for designing and running a comprehensive education program for the St. Mark's community. It aims to create an environment that presents every child, youth, and adult with opportunities to grow in a vibrant relationship with God and God's creation and to serve as witness as Christ's disciples. The Committee envisions St. Mark's as a teaching and learning community fostering experiences and relationships that enhance each person's faith and action through prayer and study. St. Mark's provides safe and convenient child care in our Nursery during worship and certain other events. The committee certified staff in first aid and CPR in 2016, and hired a dedicated nursery supervisor Ms. Johnson.

### **Staff Salaries and Benefits: \$413,000**

This is our largest expense category and the focus of greatest attention. Thanks to the support of the congregation, we hired Winnie Heslin as Director of Operations and are in the final stages of calling a new Associate Pastor. We are still searching for an Events Coordinator, a position crucial to filling our church with weddings, concerts and other money making events.

### **General Administrative Expenses: \$88,400**

General Expenses include various business and other administrative costs such as telephone, photocopiers and paper, Professional fees for our bookkeepers and payroll services are included here as are staff costs relating to Building Use Income and follow on activities such as security, clean up, organist surrounding weddings and other program activity.

### **Operating Income: \$583,000**

As in past years, our main source of income is General Envelope Income, which is primarily pledges, estimated to be \$400,000 in 2017, and comprising 69% of total income. For 2017 additional income from Building Use and the parking lot are expected to bring in \$113,000 or 19% of total income. As in prior years, St. Mark's will receive a subsidy from MLT sufficient to cover the costs of chaplaincy and other events and services benefiting the residents of MLT.

In closing, 2016 was a good year despite the challenges. You have been very generous and supportive. We can look to 2017 with confidence that we will have a new associate pastor, renewed windows, the beginnings of our much needed elevator, a strong operations

manager in Winnie and hopefully --with divine guidance--a new events coordinator.

However, as a newcomer myself I want to leave you with a sobering caveat: St. Mark's has weathered many storms, most recently Loma Prieta. We have had good years and bad, to put it more romantically, we have fallen under the shadow of the hawk but yet survived--many times.

We need your financial support. The revenue projections for 2017 are not the best; we haven't heard from some of our long time sustaining members yet. I ask all of you to do all you can to support St. Mark's. Please remember us in your will. Please explore the non-cash ways to give Thrivent offers. Recall that St. Mark's is the original Lutheran church west of the Mississippi--let's keep the faith.

My thanks to the many members who have helped make 2016 a financial success and for the guidance and support of Pastor Elizabeth, Matt Helland, Marisa Lee and Jeremy McClain.



## **ST. MARK'S CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**

Two years ago, during St. Mark's 2015 annual meeting, the congregation voted to proceed with a capital campaign to raise funds to install an elevator in the church building. The project was later expanded to include the originally proposed elevator, plus the installation of new hardwood flooring in the sanctuary, plus the repair and restoration of the stained glass windows in the sanctuary. A second vote was later required to authorize proceeding with the project and spending the funds raised by the capital campaign. One year ago, during St. Mark's 2016 annual meeting, the congregation overwhelmingly approved proceeding with the entire project. Financial pledges to the capital campaign have come from a variety of sources, as indicated below:

### Sources of Campaign Funding

Pledges from members/friends: 56%

One-time large gifts/pledges: 32%

Bequests: 7%

Campaign kick-off gifts: 4%

Donations not associated with a pledge: 1%

Misc. Donations: 1%

Year-end 2016 accounting indicates that the total sources of funding to the capital campaign amounts to just over \$1.1 million. Funds received thus far are running ahead of schedule, primarily due to

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

the receipt of several large one-time gifts, along with gifts given early to the campaign during the campaign's kick-off period. Total funds pledged to the capital campaign and received to date are as follows:

Total Pledges/Gifts/Bequests  
\$1,109,394

Funds Received To Date  
\$662,998

Campaign Funding Status  
Ahead of schedule

Year-end 2016 marks the conclusion of the first full year of funding in the capital campaign's three year life span. Two additional years remain. Members and friends of the congregation who have not pledged are encouraged to prayerfully consider joining those who have already stepped forward with their personal pledge of support to this project. New pledges made to the capital campaign can be spread over the remaining two years of the campaign and can be made on-line at St. Mark's website, or by submitting a pledge card, or by contacting the church office.

The Capital Campaign Committee would like to express its gratitude and thanks to everyone who is helping to make this worthwhile project a reality. May we all go "Forward in Faith...Lifted by Love".

Roger Ostrem  
Capital Campaign Committee, Co-chair

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE FORWARD IN FAITH...LIFTED BY LOVE2

"Although some think of stewardship as only a financial response to God's love, stewardship encompasses so much more than money. It is about how we use all that God has entrusted to our care — our time, our talents and our treasures — to love God and our neighbors, both inside and outside of the church walls and our homes." ELCA

The Stewardship Committee at St. Mark's embodies this. Each of us is so blessed in our lives; blessed with family, friends, jobs, faith and life itself. Our fall campaign, Forward In Faith...Lifted by Love2, we invited the community in a six-week meditation on what it means to be a steward, by pondering three questions: 1) How do I SPEND my life? 2) How do I SPEND my time? 3) How do I SPEND my blessings?

Our fall pledge drive at St. Mark's consisted of a six-week campaign that started on October 23 and ended on Celebration Sunday November 27, where we held a festive Thanksgiving dinner to celebrate the culmination of our campaign and return our pledges for 2017. Our campaign theme Forward In Faith...Lifted by Love2, is a continuation of last year, as we are entering the second year of our capital campaign.

Our Sunday temple talks focused on the three questions of how one spends his/her life, time and blessings. We were uplifted by the talks from...

...Tim Bohan, chair of the FEW (floors, elevator and windows) committee, shared what it means to be a steward;

...Mila Sall shared that at 15, she knows this is a loving community that has known her almost her entire life and cares for her;

...Rev. Brian Stein-Webber, Interim Chief Administrative Officer and Director of Seminary Relations at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS) in Berkeley, shared what it means to be a steward;

...Mary Ritter shared an inspirational story of women who have been lifted by love through the PICO Rwanda project.

Our congregational gifts this year were handmade crafts from the women from the PICO Rwanda project, thanks to Mary Ritter. Gifts consisted of animals, jewelry, bags and toys. What a wonderful way to remember these women whose life and time were blessed by God's love.

To date, the congregation has pledged a total of \$370,224 with 100 pledges to the general fund. This amount compares with \$386,646 pledged last year with 114 pledges. There are 13 new pledgers this year. The total number of people who pledged last year was 59% of the congregation, as compared to 53% this year.

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank all of the members and friends of St. Mark's for their personal gifts of stewardship... your time, talents and resources. Thank you as well for your ongoing involvement in strengthening relationships that exist within our community of faith, our neighborhood and beyond. It is with gratitude and celebration that we embrace our love of our community, and continue to be lifted by love at St. Mark's!

Stewardship Committee: Roger Ostrem, Greg Jahnke, Jane Borg and Mary Birkel

## EDUCATION

### JOURNEYS IN FAITH

Journeys in Faith is a team-based ministry of accompaniment for those seeking Baptism or Affirmation of Baptism. Journeys in Faith groups are open to anyone who desires to renew and grow in their faith, but are especially for those discerning if they wish to become members of St Mark's. We gather weekly over the course of a few months, reading scripture and reflecting together



LIV BECK

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

on questions about our faith and the church.

In 2016, Journeys in Faith offered a complete cycle, welcoming one individual in baptism and three who affirmed their baptism. In 2017, we are starting the next group who will be invited to discern if they wished to be baptized or affirm their baptism at the Easter Vigil on April 15.

The ministry of Journeys in Faith would not be possible without the entire congregation. Thank you to all who continue to work together to welcome new people into our midst. Every time you greet someone new or refer someone to a Journeys' team member, you help us in remarkable ways. Thank you for offering encouragement to those participating in Journeys in Faith. The prayers of the congregation support the participants. We are also especially grateful to all those who have served as sponsors for Journeys during this past year.

Current Team members are: Matthias Will, Suzanne Smith, Kyle Schiefelbein and Liv Beck. In 2017 we hope to add new members to our team. We would love to have you join us in this ministry.

## ADULT FORUM

Through much of the year, on Sundays at 10:00am, the ULC auditorium opens up for people in the St Mark's community to engage in a variety of topics relevant to our shared life of faith.

Adult Forums help our community connect to the church seasons. Early in 2016, Dr. Kyle Schiefelbein gave us a thoughtful invitation to the season of Lent, and during Lent, Pastor Elizabeth Ekdale and Pastor Tita Valeriano guided us through a powerful reflection on hunger, hope, and God's love in a world of both abundance and need using the ELCA World Hunger's 40 days of Giving.

Adult Forums help our community learn about other faith traditions. In the Spring of 2016, we had a four week series on Islam. Dr. Jennifer Snow led the opening forum providing a clear and informative introduction to Islam, helping us to become familiar with some of the concepts, people, events and religious commitments that shape Muslim life. For the next three Sundays, guest speaker Karen Leslie Hernandez led three engaging forums: an overview of Christian-Muslim relations, a forum on Daesh, Al Qaeda and Boko Haram, and a forum on theological responses to religious extremism.

Adult Forums help our community reflect on our Lutheran heritage and contemporary local and global Lutheran identity. As we began the year of commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we welcomed Dr. Barbara Pitkin of Stanford University for two excellent forums on Reformation History. In the first, Dr. Pitkin talked about the 95 Theses in the context of late medieval Christianity. In the second, she widened the scope to talk about the Reformation as more than Luther. Following Dr. Pitkin's teaching, Pastor Elizabeth Ekdale, Dr. Kyle Schiefelbein, and Dr. Margaret McLean, led an outstanding six week series using the book *Together by Grace: Introducing the Lutherans*. This interactive series engaged participants with questions like, "Who are the Lutherans and what do we believe? How do we live out our faith in the world?"

Adult Forums help our community learn about our relationship

with communities in other parts of the world. In the Spring, we welcomed Rev. Kate Warn, who shared with us stories and pictures from her experiences working as the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) coordinator with the Lutheran Church in Rwanda. In Advent, we welcomed Rev. Mark Stanger from Grace Cathedral to share about his stories about Christians in the Holy Land from his travels and time living in Jerusalem. The following week, Linda Krauskopf facilitated a discussion following a viewing of a video conference with the Rev. Mitri Raheb of Christmas Lutheran in Bethlehem talking about Christianity in the Holy Land and challenges to its future there. In the Spring, with Pastor Tita Valeriano, we learned more about global church music. As she reminded us, one of the gifts we receive from our companion churches all over the world is their music, but since we are also a city of immigrants and diversity, we find some of these same songs and music around us.

Adult Forums help us look at difficult issues in our cities. In the Spring, Rev. Deborah Lee led a forum on faith responses to recent migrants in the Bay Area. We learned about the immigration challenges and possibilities for ministries with the immigrants in the Bay Area and in California. In June, Mary Ritter facilitated a showing of the *Confronting Racism* Webcast with ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and William B. Horne II.

Adult Forums help our community, and they depend on the help and contributions of many in the St Mark's community. Thank you to all who attended and participated in Adult Forums, helping our community wrestle with important questions about our congregational life, our Lutheran Heritage, our relationship with other faith traditions, our connections with other communities in different parts of the globe, and more. A special thanks to all who led Adult forums in 2016. While we welcomed several guest presenters, we also benefited from the gifts and teaching of members of the St Mark's community. A special thank you to Pastor Ekdale, Pastor Valeriano, Jennifer Snow, Tim Zerlang, Kyle Schiefelbein, Margaret McLean, Mary Ritter, Linda Krauskopf, and members of the church council. In 2016, the Adult Forum ministry team also welcomed two new leaders, Shannon Cheng and Pamela Coxson. Our thanks to their leadership.

We look forward to another year of being inspired, challenged, and engaged by adult forum presentations.

## WOMEN'S STUDY GATHERINGS

FIRST TUESDAY BOOK GROUP continues to meet on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. All women are invited to come for study, dessert and fellowship. This year we read and discussed a variety of books including Don Stuart's *I'm Listening as Fast as I Can: The Night Ministry in San Francisco* which gave us insight into the



SUZANNE SMITH

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

history of the Night Ministry and its four Leaders, the Rev.'s Don Stuart, Don Fox, Church Lewis and Lyle Beckman. We journeyed with Bryan Stevenson in Just Mercy looking at the justice or rather, not justice of a prison system that led to his founding of the Equal Justice Initiative and followed Liz Carlisle in looking at farmers in America in the Lentil Underground: Renegade Farmers & the Future of Food in America.

We were challenged by Krista Tippett's *Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Act of Living* to explore her life and the lives of others to have the strength to meet the world and work to make it better. And Barbara Brown Taylor in her *Learning to Walk in the Dark* led us to an appreciation of the DARK. We continued to look at authors who shared their thoughts on how to live from Dietrich Bonhoeffer in *Life Together in Hitler's Germany* to *A Walk at Midnight* with Catherine Y Wanjoel and abused African women journeying towards inner dignity & wholeness to *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans & Their Epic Quest for Golds at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Daniel James Brown.

The mystery for January was *In the Bleak Midwinter* by Julia Spencer-Fleming and we delighted in reading Annie Lamott's *Stitches*. This was another interesting year of meeting and discussing and learning about ourselves through companionship with each other and Books. This year we will meet in the Conference Room and invite any women interested to join us. For more information, please contact Suzanne Smith at 415/285-7438 or [suzathome@comcast.net](mailto:suzathome@comcast.net).



**NADINE ROBINSON**  
WELCA CO-CHAIR

## WOMEN OF THE ELCA (W-ELCA)

In 2016, the Women of the ELCA of St. Mark's and St. Paulus continued their monthly meetings. The meetings are held in the Fireside Room on the second Tuesday of each month from 11:00 AM until 1:00 PM. We each bring our own salad or sandwich and take turns providing desert and beverages. It is a time of bible study, prayer, fellowship and support with our fellow sisters in Christ.

As is our tradition, we distribute our benevolence gifts to charitable organizations, many of which provide services to women and girls. This year we gave funds to the Salvador Pastor's Pension fund, Safe House for women, Kerry's Kids, Rwanda School Project, Augusta Victoria hospital, and the NE-MN Synod Phoebe project. The Phoebe project is to provide a solar energy source for Phoebe Hospital in Liberia. Currently the only energy source is a diesel generator that sometimes fails, or the trucks with fuel are unable to get through due to weather and poor roads. The hospital uses 90,000 gallons of fuel annually at a cost of \$4.50 per gallon. We also made a memorial gift to the elevator fund in honor of Lee Bryan.

This year the group did two new activities. We held a missionary breakfast with Pastor Kate Warn. She gave us all a much clearer picture of the role of YAGM's in Africa, particularly Rwanda.

Our second activity was gathering and delivering 50 kits of art supplies to the 50 children whose lives were affected by the fires around Clear Lake. These camps are organized by Lutheran Social services of Minneapolis. We had assistance from other members of the congregation, the generous support of the members of St. Paulus, and a Thrivent Action Grant. We felt it was important to something on a local level, and the folks in Minnesota were quite surprised that we were willing to do all 50 kits.

In July of 2017, Geri Bailey and Nadine Robinson will be attending the triennial gathering in Minneapolis. Please ask us for information if you would like to attend this event. All women are welcome to attend.

Submitted by  
Nadine Robinson  
W-ELCA Co-President

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Attendance:** Our average attendance this year was 13 students.

**Volunteers:** We have 3 wonderful teachers again this year:

Here are the current Sunday School teachers:

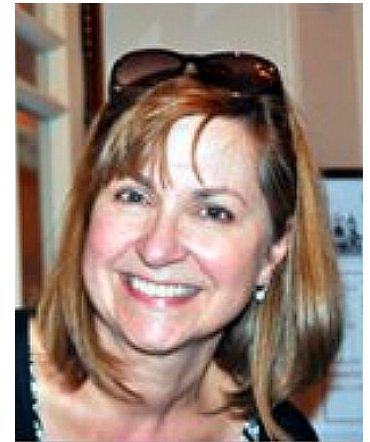
- Elise Semonian-Preschool
- Adrienne Brown-Kinder-3rd grade
- Gail Culp-4th- 6th grade

We are very lucky to have 3 distinct grade levels, which keep all of our students engaged in developing their faith.

**Jenny Hart** is filling in as the Chapel Leader with lots of help from Bill Mooney, Brandee Marckmann and Pastor Tita. We are actively looking for volunteers to take over this position.

**Curriculum:** This year we have switched to curriculum called "**Witness**", published by Augsburg Fortress. We have used this curriculum before and all decided to try something different this year.

**Big Group Activities:** We meet about once a month as a Big Group (all age groups together) and celebrate a holiday or do community service. This year we have been meeting even more often as a Big Group. Over Advent the Pre-K and K-3 grades met for Advent



**JENNY HART**  
SUNDAY SCHOOL  
COORDINATOR

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

and Christmas lessons. Elise, Adrienne and Gail all developed hands-on curriculum for our students. Elise Semonian tells us, "We played a game where we had two colors of balloons inflated and each balloon had a slip of paper inside and two teams had to pop all the balloons and then race to draw what was on the paper in the balloon (king, donkey, Jesus, Mary, Angel...). It seemed like a big hit. We also made Chrismon ornaments from glitter and felt, and now I know Gail, and a lot of other people, don't like Chrismons, although I think of them fondly :)". This culminated in the K-3 class retelling the Christmas story to their teacher in their own words. This is just one example of the time and thoughtfulness that goes into lesson preparation.

We welcome all children over the age of 3, or younger with a parent. We are truly blessed at St. Mark's with a wonderful Sunday School program. If you're not currently on our e-mail list and want to be, please let us know, hartx4@hotmail.com

Submitted by Jenny Hart, Sunday School Coordinator

## NURSERY COMMITTEE

St. Mark's nursery committee works hand-in-hand with the nursery coordinator, nursery attendants and pastors to ensure that our nursery is a safe and welcoming ministry for children ages 6 and under. The committee is comprised of Amy Brendel, Beth Dioli, Aaron Greig, Joe Haller, Cristin Owens, and Brandee Marckmann (chair). We are thankful for the partnership we have with our safe congregation training leaders Mary Ritter and Dr. Margaret McLean. We encourage parents of children who are served by nursery and as well as all members of the congregation to seek us out with any questions you may have about the nursery.



**BRANDEE MARCKMANN**  
NURSERY CHAIR

Our highlight of 2016 was the hiring of Edda Mai Johnson as our nursery coordinator. The nursery coordinator position is a new position at St. Mark's. Edda Mai has worked as a preschool teacher in Lutheran primary schools, has completed Master's degree work in childhood development, and has over 30 years of experience working with infants and young children. We are very blessed to have Edda Mai and are excited about the ways in which she is taking our nursery ministry to a new level.

In 2017 we hope to create a small, simple altar area in the nursery that can be used during story time. This is a part of an effort to help nurture our children's awareness of Christ's presence in our nursery.

In the spring of 2016 a member of our nursery committee attended the Sierra Pacific Synod's anti-racism workshop at Christ Lutheran

Church in El Cerrito. We hope that the principles of anti-racism can be more fully expressed in the nursery décor, our toys and books, and the songs the children listen to and are taught. There are just three of a large number of things we can do to join our children in celebrating the diversity of all God's children. The nursery committee is deeply grateful for the mentorship of Pastor Tita Valeriano in this very important endeavor.

In 2017, we seek to incorporate more principles of anti-racism and inclusion into our nursery ministry. We are very eager to have other members of St. Mark's be a part of this effort, so please let a member of nursery committee know if you are interested in joining us.

The nursery committee would like to express our gratitude to all who devote their time and energy to our nursery ministry at St. Mark's.

## PROPERTY

### ST. MARK'S FLOOR ELEVATOR WINDOW (FEW) COMMITTEE

#### NEW WOOD FLOORING

This year saw the completion of perhaps our most visibly rewarding project, the new wood floors. We included the alternate design that was first considered over 15 years ago, extending the central portion of the chancel platform forward by approximately five feet and gently curving the chancel steps to parallel the pew curvature. This change realizes the multiple benefits we had hoped for:

- The altar and presiders are closer to the assembly
- The arc-shaped steps and chancel area enhance the unique curvilinear nature of our historic building
- Musical groups have a larger performance area and will not need to bring in stage extensions that could damage the new wood flooring

Thanks to the many volunteers who helped us move temporarily from the church building to the Urban Life Center for worship, and then back once the flooring was installed. Plant Construction, the contractor for the renovation of the building ten years ago, completed this project with a high level of craft and collaboration. St. Mark's paid the final invoice for this project on January 4, 2017.

#### ART GLASS WINDOW RESTORATION

This project, coordinated by Jeremy McClain, continues to move steadily ahead with stunning results! The artisans at Hyland Studio have continued one window at a time, transporting each window to their shop in Santa Clara where they clean and repair the glass; replace the lead came strips and then reinstall the restored window at its original location.

#### ELEVATOR ADDITION

The elevator, the highest priority on our "to-do" list, will provide access for all people to the three floors in the building. Approvals

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

for this project are moving steadily forward. We hope to begin construction this spring and complete the project in advance of the fall programming season. Fortunately, this project will have little impact on our ability to use or rent the building. Plant Construction has actively helped shepherd the project through the Planning Department (who has approved the project) and the Department of Building Inspection which is currently reviewing the drawings for architectural, structural, mechanical, fire protection, elevator and life safety systems. We hope to have a building permit within the first quarter of 2017.

The FEW committee will reconvene in the near future and meet with Plant and ARG to review the schedule for approvals, bidding and construction.

Tim Bohan, Elevator Committee Chairperson

## ST. MARK'S PROPERTY MINISTRY

Beyond contributing to the general maintenance and improvement of the church building and grounds in 2016, the Property Team has frequently assisted with the Floors Elevators and Windows (FEW) group projects. As in years past, Property Team members have gathered on Saturday mornings to prepare St. Mark's for significant seasons and festivals such as Advent, Christmas, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost, helping the full-time St. Mark's staff prepare the facilities to better support St. Mark's programs and welcome our congregation's many guests. Our 2016 projects have included:



**GARY SCHILLING**  
PROPERTY CHAIR

- Completing the kitchen renovation planned in 2015
- Focusing and re-lamping the theatrical lighting fixtures in the church
- Completing the installation of a light fixture to illuminate the rose window
- Helping with the move to the ULC for the flooring project and the return to the Sanctuary
- Painting the pews while they were stored downstairs during the flooring project
- Re-lamping and cleaning the globes on all the decorative fixtures in the church sanctuary, narthex, vestry and support areas
- Painting Heritage Hall
- Coordinating repairs to the boiler and heating system
- Completing a water usage survey for the City, confirming our

compliance with mandated water conservation measures

- Anchoring the column base at the building entry
- Erecting and decorating Christmas trees and assembling the Advent Wreath
- Maintaining the landscape and grounds
- Replacing plants on the east side of the church building

There are many St. Mark's members who have helped the Property Team this past year, but I especially want to recognize Gail and Cal Culp for their many days of painting the pews and repainting Heritage Hall! The Culp's are also responsible for many of the seasonal wreaths and decorations that enrich our liturgies throughout the year. Thank you, Gail and Cal!

In addition to the Culp's, our Saturday morning project participants have included (with apologies to anyone I've missed): Tim Bohan, Ed Chitty, Alvin Clark, Phyllis DeSpain, Pastor Elizabeth Ekdale, Steve Ernst, Charles & Dianne Jacobs, Allison Kaup, Debby Halladay, Philip Krikau, Mary Carlton Lull, Jerry Lundblad, Jeremy McClain, Tom Munn, Marge Okuley, Jesse & Michael Peirce, Nadine Robinson, Viknesh Silvalingam, Pastor Tita Valeriano and Omer Voss. I also want to thank the church staff for their attentive maintenance of the building, especially Winnie Heslin who has assisted with many projects at St. Mark's. Finally, I extend my appreciation to the many leaders of the congregation – Pastors, Church Council and President Matt Helland – for supporting Property Team projects.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Gary Schilling  
Property Ministry Chairperson



## ST. MARK'S ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

### Dream It! Make it Happen!

As the St. Mark's Endowment Fund enters its 5th year of existence, we are in the midst of leadership transition as the remaining founding members of the Endowment Fund are ending their terms on the Committee in 2016. Yet, thanks to the strong foundation and vision of those who established the Endowment, as well as the generous gifts of current members and those who made a gift through their estate plans, the Endowment Fund is stronger than ever in supporting projects and activities that further the mission of St. Mark's.

The Endowment Fund began with an opening balance of \$25,000, and has now grown to \$200,000, with the money being held in an account at InFaith Community Foundation. As the balance in the Endowment Fund has increased, the Endowment Committee has

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

been able to make an increasing amount available for grant funding each year: \$2,000 in 2014, \$3,600 in 2015, and \$4,000 this past year.

The number and variety of applications for grant funding have also increased each year, and we are thankful to the members and friends of St. Mark's who have taken the time and made the effort to think of new ways to further the mission of St. Mark's in the community and the broader world, and submitted proposals for grant funding. In 2016, we were extremely pleased to fund the following projects:

- **Rwanda Women's Ministry:** The Lutheran Church of Rwanda Women's Ministry will be undertaking a comprehensive assessment of women's ministry in the Rwanda Lutheran Church to identify strengths, weaknesses and potential future leaders to build a strong network for future action
- **Cordero de Dios Facilities:** The Cordero de Dios Lutheran Church in Soyapango, El Salvador, will be building an exterior wall between the church property and the street to increase security for the children and youth who come to the church and make the church more of a presence in the community
- **WELCA Saturday Morning Workshops:** Leaders of the Women of the ELCA, St. Mark's and St. Paulus, will be creating a series of Saturday morning workshops to discuss various aspects of the ELCA's Women and Justice draft social statement
- **"Humans of Palestine"** photography exhibition: In partnership with Dar al-Kalima University in Bethlehem and Bright Stars of Bethlehem, a photo exhibition by the youth of Palestine was displayed in Heritage Hall during the month of December, and will be displayed throughout the Bay Area in the coming months

Looking ahead, we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to build on the current strong foundation. We plan to continue to build awareness of the purpose and value of the St. Mark's Endowment Fund to encourage giving to the fund. We also hope to inspire new ideas to further the mission of St. Mark's that we can fund during future grant cycles.

As we wrap up 2016, I want to sincerely thank the current members of the Endowment Committee for their leadership and efforts during the year. These members include Becky Burad, Allana Heland, Robert Rathmell, Barbara McCormick, Catherine Hurley, and Marisa Lee (Council Liaison). And I want to especially recognize Gregory Jahnke and Debbie Varian, who will be leaving the Committee at the end of 2016. With the other founders, Gregory and Debbie had a dream that St. Mark's would one day have an Endowment Fund, and through their countless hours and outstanding talents, they made it happen! We owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

Respectfully submitted,  
Randy Schieber  
Chair, St. Mark's Endowment Committee

## SOCIAL MINISTRY

First, thanks to the congregation for the support of our many projects for the hungry, poor and needy in 2016.

- We continue to provide lovely fresh food to over 300 households at the **Interfaith Food Pantry** every six weeks on Saturday mornings at Old First Presbyterian Church in San Francisco. A team of 12 to 15 people volunteers from 7:30 to 10:30am. St. Mark's purchases over \$3000 of healthy food from the San Francisco Food Bank – fruits and vegetables, protein and packaged foods – to be distributed to many households in the neighborhood. It is an amazing project! All members of the congregation are encouraged to participate.
- St. Mark's again hosted the **Interfaith Homeless Shelter** in January 2016 and again in December 2016, and will host 60 to 70 men from January 15 through February 5, 2017. We provide shelter in cooperation with other churches in the city. The men will share our space in the Urban Life Center for dinner, a warm safe place to sleep, and breakfast before they head out for their day, some of them to work. Thanks to the many of you who provide breakfasts and suppers as well as monetary support. St. Mark's knitters continue to knit scarves for the men, and our Sunday School has prepared socks and toiletries for our guests.
- Social Ministry in partnership with Adult Forum sponsored the ELCA webcast with Bishop Eaton entitled **"Confronting Racism: A Holy Yearning"** which looked at perspectives on the U.S. criminal justice system. Our focus in these conversations is on the interrelationship of racism and poverty and hunger. We hope to engage many members of St. Mark's in this continuing conversation.
- St. Mark's members sponsored the annual Christmas party and gifts for the families at Bernal Gateway, a housing project of **Lutheran Social Services in San Francisco**.
- Several St. Mark's members walked to the Lutheran Social Services office at Golden Gate and Leavenworth in San Francisco on **"God's Work Our Hands" Sunday, September 11, 2016**. They scrubbed and sanded and painted the reception area. Others wrote letters of thanks to first responders (firefighter and police). Several drew pictures and wrote letters to legislators encouraging swift gracious care for migrant children in detention centers. Our hand did a lot of God's work!
- We continue our accompanying relationship with our sister parish, **Cordero de Dios in El Salvador**. We have continued to hold the Cordero de Dios congregation and Pastora Norma's family in our prayers. Her husband, Pastor Rafael Menjivar, has been asked by the Cordero de Dios congregation and the Salvadoran Lutheran church to be pastor of Cordero de Dios in addition to his congregation Apostoles de Cristo. We continue to meet via Skype with Pastor Rafael and members of Cordero de Dios congregation as well as the pastor and members of Cross of Life and members of St. Peter's Lutheran in the Greater Milwaukee Synod, other sister parishes

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

of Cordero de Dios and Pr. Rafael's other parish Apostoles de Cristo. In early January 2017, we hope to host Pr. Rafael and four youth from Cordero de Dios and Apostoles de Cristo. In a visit to San Francisco. Our ministry and partnership promises to continue and grow! Watch for information about continued engagement with our Sister Parish and keep Cordero de Dios in your prayers.

- In 2016, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly resoundingly adopted the **AMMPARO strategy – Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities**. ELCA congregations are accompanying migrant children and families in detention centers, in communities where they are settling, and through the immigration court process. St. Mark's members have begun to learn about the work of Welcoming Congregations and court accompaniment and hope to begin working with migrant children and families in 2017.
- We continue to include prayers for **Middle East Peace**. In December 2016, St. Mark's hosted a photography exhibit, "Palestine: Unlimited", prize winning photos by Bethlehem media students from Dal Al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture in Bethlehem.
- St. Mark's members advocate with Bread for the World for the poor and hungry. St. Mark's is a "**Bread for the World Covenant Congregation**" as we write letters to legislators encouraging support of hunger and poverty legislation.
- We continue our sponsorship of ELCA Pastor and Missionary **Pastor Kate Warn**, the Rwanda coordinator of the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGMs). Pastor Kate visited St. Mark's in May 2016 and shared stories of her work and work of the YAGMs with the Lutheran Church of Rwanda. The YAGMs are young adults graduated from college, working as volunteers in global sites around the world. Pastor Kate sends occasional reports of the work of the YAGMs, which we have featured in the VOICE newsletter.
- Our **community garden project** continues to grow quietly on the sunnier south side of the sanctuary. If you are interested in volunteering in the garden, talk to Mary Ritter or John Elford.
- We continue to support the work of Rwandan Lutherans with **People Improving Communities through Organizing in Rwanda (PICO-Rwanda)**. Pastor John Rutsindintwarane, the Deputy Bishop of the Lutheran Church of Rwanda, works with the poorest of the poor in Rwanda, walking with them, providing them dignity and helping them establish livelihoods.
- Our 2016 **Lenten Box offering** was given to Lava Mae, a San Francisco nonprofit that brings mobile hygiene services to the homeless in the city. Learn more about them at [www.lavamae.org](http://www.lavamae.org). Thanks to all who donated.

- **St. Mark's knitters** continue to make scarves and lap robes and prayer shawls and baby blankets for Central Gardens, San Francisco Night Ministry, our Winter Homeless Shelter guests, and a variety of recipients in San Francisco and El Salvador. In September 2016, we sent 50 lovely knitted scarves and hats with a Thrivent Build project in Macedonia. Our "Knitting Retreats" are a joy to experienced as well as novice knitters. All knitters are welcome to participate! If you are interested, contact Marge Okuley or Mary Ritter.

St. Mark's Social Ministry will continue to minister to those in need here in San Francisco as well as throughout the country and around the world in 2017. All St. Mark's members are encouraged to participate.



## **AMMPARO: ACCOMPANYING MIGRANT MINORS WITH PROTECTION, ADVOCACY, REPRESENTATION AND OPPORTUNITIES.**

Violence, poverty, and economic hardship are every day issues for our brothers and sisters in El Salvador and elsewhere in Central America and Mexico. In 2012 and 2013, we heard heart-wrenching stories about migrants, including unaccompanied children and families, making the dangerous trip north to escape the violence, only to be held in miserable detention centers and often deported to the danger they had just left. Many of those immigrants were brought to detention centers in California.

The ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August 2016 has voted overwhelmingly to support the AMMPARO Initiative – Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities. The Sierra Pacific Synod Global Mission Advocacy Team (GMAT) is now working with other Bay Area organizations to establish a network of Welcoming Congregations – congregations which make a commitment to welcome and minister to migrant guests in the community.

Becoming a Welcoming Congregation does not require a commitment by the whole congregation but rather a commitment by the pastor and teams of members. Welcoming Congregations are not necessarily offering shelter or employment but merely are willing to be a church home for migrant children and individuals and families in the same way that congregations of several generations ago welcomed Lutheran migrants from Europe and helped them navigate life in their new home.



# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Here are ways congregations can support migrants through the AMMPARO Initiative:

1. Become a Welcoming Congregation.
2. Pray for migrants and their families.
3. Invite migrants to join in the life of the congregation.
4. Form accompaniment teams which might be five members including at least one Spanish speaker (if working with a Spanish speaking migrant) who make a 6-12 month commitment to meet a migrant child, individual or family, and support them in a variety of ways, including such activities as having dinner with them once a month and phoning or texting them weekly.
5. Provide courtroom accompaniment at Immigration Court in San Francisco for the day. Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity in Oakland does this with volunteers. In the ELCA Southwest California Synod, the "Guardian Angel" program does this work with "Dreamers", students who are immigrants meeting qualifications for U.S. residence and are very aware of the issues faced by their migrant clients. Stories abound about the positive response in the courtroom when there is an advocate for the immigrant, even if they are not a lawyer or even a Spanish speaker!
6. Advocate for public policy that will positively impact the current immigration crisis.
7. Seek housing for migrants, including transitional housing for newly arrived immigrants.
8. Coordinate "post-release from detention". A coordinator is notified when a person will be released from a local detention center, and then works with the detainee and detainee's family to pick up the newly released migrant, feed them, and possibly give them what they might need, such as a backpack of supplies if they must travel out of the area to family.

The Global Missions Advocacy Team (GMAT) of the Sierra Pacific Synod invites you to prayerfully consider participating in this effort. For further information, contact Ruth Cruddas, [cruddasruth@gmail.com](mailto:cruddasruth@gmail.com) or Mary Ritter, [mLrped@aol.com](mailto:mLrped@aol.com).

Ruth Cruddas and Mary Ritter  
Sierra Pacific Synod Global Missions Advocacy Team

## HR COMMITTEE

The Human Resources (HR) Committee provides advice and assistance to the Pastors regarding human resources issues, as well as makes recommendations to Council on related matters. The committee meets roughly every quarter, or as needed, to address issues related to HR, such as recruitments, staffing needs, compensation, benefits, policies, job descriptions, personnel issues, and compliance with state and federal laws. The committee members are Susan Sall (chair), Pastor Ekdale, Becky Burad, Kurt Putnam, and Jeremy McClain.



**SUSAN SALL**

St. Mark's has outstanding staff who work to provide a high quality of support to our mission. Newly hired this last year were Winnie Heslin as the Director of Operations and Edda Mae Johnson as the Nursery Supervisor. We are recruiting an Events Coordinator, which is a part time position that manages a myriad of details associated with those using our buildings and facilities on St. Mark's Square. The rest of the staff, as well as pastors and others, contribute to ensuring daily tasks continue when there are positions to be filled. A special thank you to Marisa Lee, Jeremy McClain, and Stefani Lawrence for their work to cover responsibilities during the recruitments over this last year.

Several key staff marked another year anniversary, and we are grateful for their service. Dr. Tim Zerlang continues as our Director of Music, Carl Storey provides security on Sunday mornings, Elvira Markov and Johanna Najera are the Nursery Attendants, and Rachel Friedland continues as our contract Bookkeeper.

The HR Committee also met to discuss and develop updated policies and procedures. Some examples are updating the method for tracking paid time off, ongoing work to review consistency with synod guidelines, and clarifying our policies regarding staff retirement benefits and benefits vendor. Developing and revising documentation has been a focus to ensure that there is continuity when staffing changes or coverage is needed.

Please join the HR Committee in our appreciation of the professionalism, talent, and hard work that the staff bring to our St. Mark's community on a daily basis.

## MUTUAL MINISTRY



**MARGE OKULEY**  
**MUTUAL MINISTRY CHAIR**

The Mutual Ministry committee includes Joanne Chadwick, Elise Semonian, Brian Richards, Fred Blickle and Marge Okuley (chair). We welcome our new members Elise and Fred, and special thanks to Susan Sall who chaired this committee.

Each of us has been assigned a Pastor or staff person to check in with, provide support and encouragement and express gratitude on behalf of the congregation. The ongoing responsibility for all of us is to be

present and available to everyone. We call it scanning or taking the pulse. We discuss ideas that are important for the success of our ongoing mission to make mutual ministry work at St. Marks.

Last year we studied “Pastor and People, Making Ministry Work.” Here are a couple of highlights:

- The main place of ministry is based in community.
- True mutual ministry isn’t just for the pastor or just for the people, per se, but will always focus on the mission of the congregation.
- Mutuality exists not “between” the pastor and people but “among” all the people which includes the pastor.

“Pastor Appreciation” Sunday was October 23rd.

The congregation had a chance to participated in the survey questions:

- “What does the word “Pastor” mean to you?”
- “What is it that our Pastors have done that you thank them?”

During the service Pastor Elizabeth, Pastor Tita, Pastor Hans, Pastor Lyle and Pastor Chuck heard the results of the survey and were presented with gift certificates for Munchery and Sees Candy. The Sunday School made cards and flowers, and Sharon Reinbott composed new lyrics to a hymn.

We are here to listen for ideas that support and strengthen the mission of St. Mark’s.

Submitted by,  
Marge Okuley

## WORSHIP

Benedict of Nursia (c480-543), credited as the founder of western monasticism, in his Rule for Monasteries states, “Let nothing be preferred to the work of God.” (43.3) This admonition isn’t just meant for nuns and monks behind cloister walls. It is a call to the whole Church to put the worship of our astonishing God above all things. Our robust worship life, built upon our Lutheran catholic tradition, serves as a powerful testament to Benedict’s “prime directive.”



**RICHARD BOYLE**  
**SACRISTAN**

Our human need to come together as a community to praise and thank our loving God is met by our Sunday celebrations of the Holy Eucharist at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. and on Wednesdays at 6.45 p.m. Weddings and, yes, even funerals also provide opportunities for worship – as do our seasonal worship services during Advent and Lent. We are a community at worship. This is a good thing.

Liturgy – the work of the people; and we know that it takes people for our ritual worship experiences to happen. We owe a deep and hearty thanks to the women and men who continue to serve so lovingly at the altar. At the same time we’re always interested in adding to our ranks. Remember, it takes people. Our most pressing needs at the moment are for Acolytes and for Assisting Ministers. Yes, appropriate training is at the ready. If you’d like to serve in some other way – lector, bread maker, a member of the worship committee, those gifts would be welcome as well. If you’re interested in serving in any aspect of our worship team please speak with Pr. Elizabeth or with Pr. Tita; or you may speak with one of our sacristans (Ed Chitty, me). Prospective choristers and other musicians should speak with our gifted Director of Music, Tim Zerlang.

Richard Boyle  
Sacristan



## ST. MARK'S COLUMBARIUM

We remember and honor our Saints  
in the faith.

### FACILITY USE - PATRONS OF ST. MARK'S SQUARE IN 2016

AA Unity Day  
ABM Ampco System Park  
All Groups AA  
American Bach Soloists  
American Institute of Organbuilders  
Arizona Opera  
Augustana College  
Bais Yaakov Fax Settlement Fund  
California Bach Society  
California Bakery  
California Lutheran U  
Christ Lutheran Church  
City & County of San Francisco  
Civic Symphony Association of San Francisco  
Clerestory  
Commera Capital LLC  
Einstein String Quartet  
ELCA  
Ensemble San Francisco  
Episcopal Community Services  
Estonian Society of San Francisco  
Euan Shields  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Firefighters AA  
Food Addicts Anonymous  
General Service AA  
Golden Gate Symphony and Chorus  
Hope without Dope

Humboldt State University  
Inspired Women Concert  
Institute on Aging  
Intercounty AA  
International Orange Chorale  
J. R. Hicks  
Junior Bach Festival Association, Inc.  
Katherine Burke School  
Lutheran Care for the Aging  
Magnificat  
Marin Lutheran Church  
Mission Street Productions LLC  
MLT Services  
Musae  
MWF Groups AA  
New Century Chamber Orchestra  
New Esterhazy Quartet  
Omni Foundation for the Performing Arts  
Oregon State Choir  
Ortega Trio  
PDA -SF  
Picrow Streaming, Inc.  
Portland State University  
Presidio Chapter DAR  
Presidio Historical Association  
Ragazzi Boys Chorus  
Recovery Thanksgiving Meal  
Resound Ensemble

Roosevelt School PTA  
RTEK Solutions  
San Francisco Early Music Society  
San Francisco Youth Ensemble  
SF Choral Artists  
SF Composers Chamber Orchestra  
SF Girls Chorus  
SF Lyric Chorus  
SF Renaissance Voices  
SF Sinfonietta  
SF Women's Rehab Foundation  
Sober Saturday AA  
St. Vincent de Paul Society of SF  
Sunset Youth Orchestra  
Susan Blank  
Sutter Bay Hospitals  
Symphony Parnassus  
The 15 Association  
The Broad Highway-Women's AA Group  
The CG Jung Institute  
The Netherland-America Foundation  
Thrivent  
Tuesday Downtown AA  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
Voices of Music  
Volti  
Wednesday NA  
Young Women's Choral Project

# ST. MARK'S WORSHIP SCHEDULE

## SUNDAYS

9:00 am - Holy Communion with Children's Time  
10:00 am - Coffee Hour, Sunday School and Education  
11:00 am - Choral Eucharist  
12:15 pm - Refreshments and Fellowship Hour

## WEDNESDAYS

6:00 pm - Community Dinner  
6:45 pm - Mid Week Worship (Fall, Winter, Spring)

## CHECK OUR WEEKLY PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR MORE EVENTS AT ST. MARK'S

[www.stmarks-sf.org/blog](http://www.stmarks-sf.org/blog)  
[www.facebook.com/stmarkssf](http://www.facebook.com/stmarkssf)

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm  
415-928-7770

## STAFF

The Rev. Elizabeth E. Ekdale, Lead Pastor...x2300...ekdale@stmarks-sf.org  
The Rev. Tita Valeriano, Interim Pastor...x2460...valeriano@stmarks-sf.org  
Dr. Timothy Zerlang, Director of Music...x2330...zerlang@stmarks-sf.org  
Winnie Heslin, Director of Operations...x2250...heslin@stmarks-sf.org  
Stefani Lawrence, Communications & Media Coordinator...x2260...lawrence@stmarks-sf.org  
Jeremy McClain, Interim Events Administrator...x2290 events@stmarks-sf.org  
Rachel Friedland, Bookkeeper/Accountant...x2320...accounting@stmarks-sf.org  
Carl Storey, Security  
Edda Mai Johnson, Nursery Coordinator  
Elvira Markov & Johanna Najera, Nursery Attendants  
Jenny Hart, Sunday School Coordinator  
The Rev. Chuck Lewis, Visitation Pastor  
Matt Helland, Church Council President...helland@stmarks-sf.org

## RECONCILING IN CHRIST

St. Mark's is a "Reconciling in Christ" Congregation. St. Mark's is one of over 500 congregations, synods and 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 speak to one of the pastors.