



St Mark's LUTHERAN CHURCH VOICE

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF REFLECTION & NEWS



Summer 2019

JUNE - AUGUST

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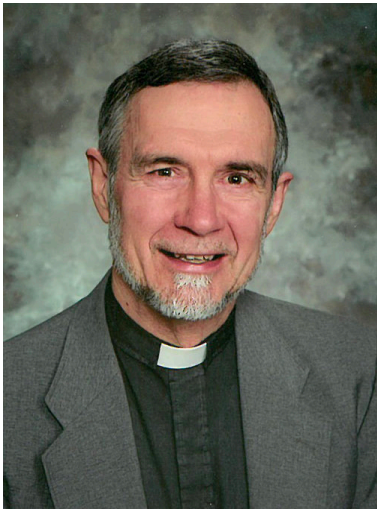
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THE GIFT OF COMMUNITY

As I write this devotional for our summer newsletter, I am still processing the news this week about the death of Jean Vanier, the founder of the world-famous L'Arche community for those who are mentally challenged and for those who care for them. Based upon his experience, Vanier wrote the book, "Community and Growth: Our Pilgrimage Together," in 1979 and later published a revised edition in 1989. This book has served as one of those primary resources in my life that has contributed to my basic formation as a person, a theologian, an activist, and a leader in the church. Many of you already have experienced my use of this book for opening devotions and for more in-depth group conversations at retreats.

The essence of this book became even more influential for me earlier in my life as Cynthia and I were engaged in conversations about establishing an intentional Christian community on some undeveloped land in the shadow of Mt. Rainier. That endeavor eventually fizzled (another story for another time), but one of the couples of this community went on to be fully engaged in the L'Arche community in Tacoma, Washington. Also, while we were still engaged in these formative conversations, our Second Mile Community (as we were called) planned and organized a "Peace Conference" to be held at Pacific Lutheran University, and invited Henri Nouwen to be the keynote speaker. Three of us spent a couple of days in retreat with Henri prior to the conference. As a result, we stayed in touch through the years and followed Henri's eventual decision after much soul searching to live in a L'Arche community until he died in 1996.

We can never talk enough about community—that gift of God that comes in so many shapes and sizes throughout our lifetime. Especially in this day and age when the breakdown of community is so well documented in books like "Bowling Alone" by Robert Putnam (2000), we are challenged to look for and find community wherever we may have an opportunity. In truth, homeless people do establish a semblance of community on the streets. Gangs are another form of community. AA and NA meetings definitely are a place where people experience community. Then there is the PTA group at your child's school or the comradery that develops on the soccer field not only among the players, but also among the parents.

The question arises, "Where does the church fit in and with all of these various 'communities' that occupy our lives?" Whereas the church used to be a primary focus for people in towns and cities as people moved from the East Coast, settled in the Midwest, and eventually found their way to the West Coast, this scenario has all but disappeared. Especially in the "None Zones" of the West Coast (places where people profess to be spiritual but not religious), there even is an anti-church attitude that favors finding community anywhere else in the world except in the church.

In the midst of these cultural dynamics, we ask ourselves, "How can St. Mark's nurture and sustain the community that we have been given by God? What can you offer to help our base of community remain strong and grow in ways that create a place and holy space for everyone to feel welcome and have a sense of belonging? During these summer months when we take time to vacation and pursue time for relaxation and refreshment, how will I keep St. Mark's in the forefront of my mind and heart as one of the primary communities of my life to which I pledge my presence, support, and commitment?" As we celebrate this gift of community together, I pray that you have a wonderful summer for rejuvenation and renewal.

Peace,

Pastor Ron

CONFIRMATION

Five of our youth will have reaffirmed the vows of their baptism on Sunday, June 2 in the rite of Confirmation at the 11:00 a.m. worship service. They are: Violet Battaglia, Gabrielle Reed, Nick Reed, Alison Schieber, and Nate Semonian. These young people have completed an overview of the Bible and have examined the parts of the catechism during the past 2 or 3 years, while also exploring other topics like worship, the church year, the purpose of the church, the meaning of discipleship, the care of creation, and other pressing social issues of today. As we affirm these youth for their diligence in this education, we also rejoice with them in their decision to continue in the call of their baptism to live among God's faithful people, to hear the word of God and share regularly in Holy Communion, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people in the way of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

Youth

MT. CROSS MINISTRIES SUMMER CAMP



From June 23 to August 2, there are so many opportunities for many age groups to experience the outdoors and have fun at Mt. Cross Camp, our Lutheran site for outdoor ministry in the region. You can learn all about these opportunities by going to www.mtcross.org. Here is a sample of some of the individual camps:

June 23 – 28	Adventures on the Coast for Youth, Grades 6 – 12
July 7 – 12	Pathfinders for Youth, Grades 3 – 5
	Trailblazers for Youth, Grades 6 – 8
	Voyagers for Youth, Grades 9 – 12
July 14 - 19	Explorers for Youth, Grades 1 – 3
July 28 – Aug. 2	Surf 'n Turf for Youth, Grades 6 – 8

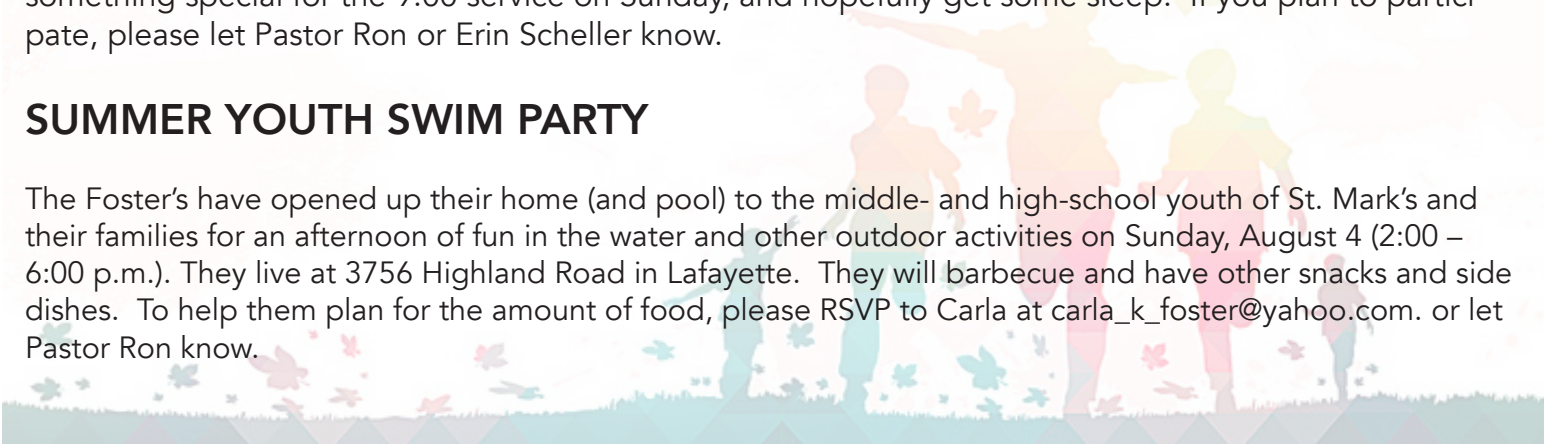
If you would have any interest in becoming a staff member at Mt. Cross in the future, there are 2-week and 3-week Staff-in-Training programs for youth, grades 10 – 12 starting July 14. You do not have to go to camp all alone. Invite a friend, a neighbor, or your cousin, and have a great time this summer at this secluded spot in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

YOUTH LOCK-IN – SATURDAY, JUNE 22

All of the high-school and middle-school youth are invited to a lock-in at church on Saturday evening through Sunday morning, June 22 – 23. We will gather at church at 6:00 p.m., share a meal together, participate in some planned activities, engage in some topical discussion, play games, perhaps plan something special for the 9:00 service on Sunday, and hopefully get some sleep. If you plan to participate, please let Pastor Ron or Erin Scheller know.

SUMMER YOUTH SWIM PARTY

The Foster's have opened up their home (and pool) to the middle- and high-school youth of St. Mark's and their families for an afternoon of fun in the water and other outdoor activities on Sunday, August 4 (2:00 – 6:00 p.m.). They live at 3756 Highland Road in Lafayette. They will barbecue and have other snacks and side dishes. To help them plan for the amount of food, please RSVP to Carla at carla_k_foster@yahoo.com. or let Pastor Ron know.



WANTED - ST. MARK'S VOICES:

Please join St. Mark's Council members during our many summer and fall events as we explore our 2019 Open Questions. The first event on Sunday June 9 will be a small group brainstorming session, "a Global Café" after each service. Council members will have treats to inspire meaningful conversation and will be facilitators at small tables. Please attend. Your ideas are very important to the Council. Council will also host an interactive sermon during one of our September services and Adult Forums in October. These events will help guide the Council in their 2020 goal setting and open question formulation.

The three open questions for Lutheran conversation:

1) **How**
shall we
make
St. Mark's
Lutheran
Church
more
visible
in the
community?

2) **How**
shall we
grow as a
congregation
while
deepening
and
maintaining
Relationships?

3) **How**
shall we
engage
with
the
dramatic
changes
in *our*
Neighborhood?

Council hopes to see everyone at as many of the summer/fall events as possible. There will also be a suggestion box in Heritage Hall after the June event for impromptu ideas related to the open questions.
God's Peace – Cristin Owens, St. Mark's Church Council

SACRED ACTS AT ST. MARK'S SINCE SPRING 2019

Baptism: Rex Dioli

Affirmation of Baptism:
Kirsten Maier
Margaret Moores
Norman and Shawn Reed
Herbert Shaw
Bryce Colby

BAPTISM

SUMMER ADULT FORUMS

June 16 - Honduras: Root Causes of Immigration

A delegation of 75 interfaith leaders from the United States, Canada, Peru, and Bolivia traveled to Honduras in March to meet with church leaders, community organizers, political leaders, and local people to learn why so many people are choosing to risk their lives and flee their homes. Sara Wilson, Associate Director of Seminary Relations at PLTS, made the pilgrimage. You're invited to come hear stories from Sara and possibly more delegates.

June 23

Legal implications for St. Mark's now that we are a Sanctuary Congregation

LIVING WITH OUR FEARS – EXPLORING OUR FEARS IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR FAITH WITH PASTORAL INTERN SONJA PILMAN

We will be using different approaches to the topic of fear. During three adult forums we will try to understand our fears better and learn to be able to live with them in a healthy way. We will learn to use our faith and the Bible as a way to deal with our fears.

July 14

What is fear? – It is a natural response to be afraid of impending danger. It is nothing to be ashamed of. You even can argue that Jesus was afraid in the garden of Gethsemane.

July 21

Why are you afraid? What are your fears? We will explore fear as something in our lives and how it manifests itself.

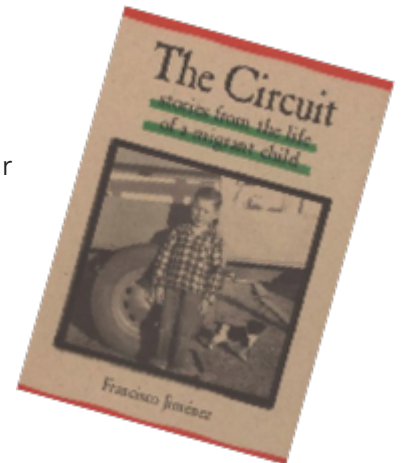
July 28

Can we trust in God with our fears? We will learn about the support the Bible can give us and share our own experiences where we are comfortable to do so.

ONE CHURCH, ONE BOOK FALL READ

***The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child* by Francisco Jiménez**

As we settle into the rhythms of fall, there seems no better time to read a book with your faith community than now. **One Church, One Book** aims to gather the congregation for conversation around a story, of a migrant child growing up on the California farming circuit, picking strawberries and grapes and topping carrots. From scrambling through a hole in the border fence in the dead of night to treasure hunting in the dump, this is a very personal story of faith and hope and childhood and family—a story that sparks our imagination about current immigration to the US and global migration. *The Circuit* has won numerous awards including *The Boston Globe/Horn Book Award for Fiction* and *The Americas Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature*.



You can get the book from your local library, order a copy or download from Amazon, or order from your favorite independent bookstore. *The Circuit* is also available as an Audiobook from Audible. There will be a couple of copies available to check out from the St. Mark's Library.

About the author: Born in Tlaquepaque, Mexico, in 1943, Francisco Jiménez came to California "under the wire" north of Mexicali. He grew up in a migrant family and spent much of his childhood traveling the circuit of farms from Guadalupe to Santa Maria to Corcoran to Fresno and back chasing the harvest. Without a permanent address or regular schooling, he went on to have a distinguished academic career. A graduate of Santa Clara University, he also attended Harvard University and received both a Master's Degree and Ph.D. from Columbia University. In 1973, he came full circuit returning to the Modern Languages and Literatures Department at Santa Clara University where he is now Professor Emeritus.



WOMEN'S MONTHLY STUDY GATHERINGS

All women are welcome to the Gatherings. There are two different groups meeting at different dates, times and using different study materials.

Women's Book Group meets in the Conference Room. Refreshments will be served. We will meet to discuss on:

Tuesday June 4 at 6:30pm - 8:30pm – "So You Want to Talk about Race" by Ijeoma Oluo

Saturday, July 13 at 10:00am - Noon – "Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water & Loving the Bible Again" by Rachel Held Evans

August - NO MEETING

Second Tuesdays from 11:00am to 1:00pm in the Fireside Room

All women are invited to come for study at 11:00. We will share lunch at noon. Please bring your sandwich or salad and share fellowship. Drinks and dessert will be provided. Our Biblical theme is: "For just such a time as this."

June 11 – Esther the Queen: Voices in the King's Court

July 9 – Summer Luncheon

August - NO MEETING

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



JOIN ST. MARK'S CHOIR!

During the month of June we see the conclusion of another choir season and take a moment to thank our singers who devote so much time and effort to enhancing worship here at St. Mark's. While our singers enjoy a well-deserved break during the months of July and August, it is time for the rest of us to consider joining them when they get together again in September. All are welcome to join us when rehearsals resume on Wednesday, September 18 at 7:30 in the Sanctuary. Get in touch with our Director of Music, Timothy Zerlang (zerlang@stmarks-sf.org) for additional information. If you think you don't know enough about music and singing, we can teach you. Come be a part of our team!



OUR MINISTRIES

MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS MEET AUGUST 22, 7:00 – 8:30

Everyone who is a chair of a committee, team, or task force or the coordinator of ANY organized ministry at St. Mark's is invited to attend the next Ministry Teams gathering on Thursday, August 22, at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. This gathering is a great opportunity to share with each other what each ministry or program currently is doing to engage members of the congregation. This particular gathering also will be a good time to solidify plans for the Ministry Fair that will be held on Sunday, September 8, in Heritage Hall.

ST. MARK'S MINISTRY FAIR, SUNDAY SEPT. 8 IN HERITAGE HALL

Everyone who represents a ministry of St. Mark's is encouraged to prepare a display/presentation of your respective ministry in Heritage Hall on this day. This event will be an opportunity not only to inform members and friends of the congregation and visitors what you are doing in your ministry, but also to enlist new people to join you in your ministry. Most importantly, this Sunday is an excellent opportunity for every member of St. Mark's to invite a friend, colleague, or neighbor to church to get a glimpse of all that we are doing within our congregation as well as in our community and the world.



SUMMER SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Lunch and entertainment for all Seniors: **June 27 and Aug. 22.**

The cost is \$2.00 and you sign up by calling the office of Martin Luther Tower at 415-885-1084.

Location: Heritage Hall

All are welcome – bring a friend! Come and meet new friends!

AGING AND SPIRITUALITY GROUP FOR ALL SENIORS

This group meets on Monday from 11:00 – 12:00 for conversation and sharing about growing older and how our faith can be a resource to us. The location of this group is in Brockie Lounge of Martin Luther Tower. Refreshments are served and seniors of all faiths are welcome.

Note, the group will meet through June and then be on hiatus for the month of July and Aug. 5. The group resumes on Aug. 12 and all are welcome.



Martin Luther Tower and St. Mark's Seniors BBQ

4th of July BBQ

Tuesday, July 2

12:00pm to 1:30pm

in Heritage Hall

MENU: hamburgers and hot dogs
with the fixing's, baked beans,
potato salad, strawberry shortcake

Free to residents and members of
St. Mark's, \$5 for guests - sign up in
the MLT office or by calling
415-885-1084

Compliments of John Stewart Company and
the MLT Residents Association

Save the Date!

St. Mark's Hymnfest
and

Oktoberfest

Sunday, October 20, 2019

1:00 PM - 6:00 PM

German food and live music
with Deutscher Musikverein





March in the Pride Parade with ReconcilingWorks

Calling all Sierra Pacific Synod Reconciling in Christ congregations and friends to walk with the Sierra Pacific chapter of ReconcilingWorks in the 2019 San Francisco Pride Parade!

We'd love two (or more!) delegates from every RIC congregation to hold your sign (provided) and share the love of Christ.

Sunday, June 30, 2019

RSVP to receive precise meet-up location and time.

FACEBOOK <http://bit.ly/rwpride2019>

CALL/TEXT (612) 385-1779

EMAIL rose@stmarks-sf.org

Questions? Can you donate to defray costs? **Contact us!**



JOIN THE ST. MARK'S DELEGATION TO EL SALVADOR!

St. Mark's is sending another delegation to visit our sister parish, Cordero de Dios, in El Salvador this Thanksgiving. Let this be the year you join! The traveling delegation will meet at 12:30 pm on Sunday, June 23 and Sunday, July 28 in Heritage Hall. All are welcome to join these meetings. We hope to purchase tickets before the end of June! If you cannot make the meetings or would like more information, please see Mary Ritter or the Helland family.

SABBATICAL UPDATE FROM PR. ELIZABETH

In 2005, the Church Council approved a Sabbatical Policy for the Rostered Leaders and Director of Music of St. Mark's staff. Pr. Elizabeth's Sabbatical for the Summer of 2019, June 3 - Sept. 3, has been approved by the St. Mark's church council and includes the following:

Spiritual Learning:

1. Reflect, experience and read about the challenges of Urban Ministry in the 21st century and where God is leading St. Mark's and Martin Luther Tower Inc.
2. Worship at urban congregations throughout the sabbatical
3. Visit St. Martin-in-the-Fields Anglican parish while in London. They describe themselves as: a unique configuration of cultural, charitable and commercial initiatives rooted in the life of a vibrant Church of England congregation. Our vision is At the heart. On the edge. This declares that we see ourselves at the heart of London, through our location on Trafalgar Square . . . but also appealing to the heart through our long tradition of choral and classical music and our reputation for compassion gained through a century of engagement with poverty and destitution.

Renewal:

1. Travel to London – visit Cathedrals, Westminster Abby and Anglican parishes
2. Travel to Ireland – exploration of Celtic Spirituality
3. Attend Evensong Services and Sunday liturgy in London and Ireland
4. Retreat time at New Camaldoli Hermitage

Reflection on the following books during the sabbatical:

1. Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America by Ibram X. Kendi
2. White Fragility: Why It's so Hard for White People to Talk about Racism by Robin Dangelo
3. The Art of Dying Well by Katy Butler
4. A History of the United States by Jill Lepore
5. The Circuit by Francisco Jimenez
6. Grateful by Diana Butler Bass
7. Holy Envy by Barbara Brown Taylor
8. So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo
9. Beauty: The Invisible Embrace by John O'Donohue
10. Walking in Wonder: Eternal Wisdom for a Modern World by John O'Donohue

Upon my return:

Create a Mid-Week worship service utilizing components of Celtic Spirituality for St. Mark's to consider

Teach on the theology of anti-racism and facilitate discussion at St. Mark's Lutheran Church about the sin of racism

Share information with the Church Council, MLT Board and congregation about programs and ministries in urban congregations

Facilitate an Adult Forum on Sept. 15, 2019, reporting on the Sabbatical

Thank you for this gift of time away for renewal and refreshment. Warmly, Pr. Elizabeth



ST. MARK'S MEMBER IS A DEACONESS CANDIDATE FOR WORD AND SERVICE MINISTRY

You probably know that St. Mark's serves the wider church in preparing future pastors as a host site for pastoral interns and teaching parish students, but did you know we have a future deacon in our midst, too?

Cora Rose was "entranced" for Word and Service ministry in fall 2018, beginning the ELCA's formation process to become a deacon. Deacons are rostered ELCA leaders who act as a bridge connecting the church with the needs of the world, and equip others to actively live out their baptismal vocation in care and service.

In addition, Cora is on the path to becoming a member of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA/ELCIC. She learned about the Community at the 2018 ELCA National Youth Gathering as the adult leader accompanying our high school youth who attended. The Gathering experience lived up to its theme and "Changed Everything!" Thanks to the connections made at the Gathering, Cora learned about ELCA deaconesses, who are "compelled by the love of Christ and sustained by community," to devote their lives "to proclaiming the Gospel through ministries of Mercy and Servant Leadership" with particular service in a field of specialization such as nursing or music. For Cora, an attorney, that specialization will be in justice and advocacy.

This spring, Cora went through the Rite of Accompaniment with the Deaconess Community. In former centuries, that would mean that Cora would now be wearing traditional black and white "garb" of a Lutheran sister and trial living at a motherhouse for a period. Today, it means she's wearing a distinctive Deaconess cross necklace and keeps in touch with the sisters daily through emails, video chat, newsletters, and a mentor as the Community accompanies her through deacon formation and training. (Find out more at www.deaconesscommunity.org)

Cora now begins theological studies at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary as part of formation for candidacy for ministry. You are welcome to ask her about the Deaconess Community, what a deacon is, to see her Deaconess cross, her plans for ministry, or your idea for how the church can equip Christians to serve the world's needs! You can donate to a St. Mark's congregational scholarship for Cora's educational expenses that will go directly to California Lutheran University (parent organization for PLTS) which will match St. Mark's donations up to \$2,500.

If you would like to make a contribution, please make your donation payable to "St. Mark's Lutheran Church", with a designation towards "Cora Rose". You may also make a donation online, at www.stmarks-sf.org/giveagift. All donations must be received in the church office by July 15 2019.





ST. MARK'S ENDOWMENT FUND

ENDOWMENT GRANTS INNOVATE AND BRING NEW IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Have you heard? The St. Mark's Endowment Fund disperses grants to support worthy projects that are outside of the congregation's annual budget. These grants are a vital extension of our church's mission. The 2019 grant application cycle opens on June 16. In preparation, the Endowment Committee has been checking in with some of our 2018 grantees' inspiring stories:

St. Mark's Community Garden received a grant to refresh the garden beds, renovate the irrigation system, and to purchase new plants. Kris Iversen, one of the garden's volunteers, reports that the new garden beds are fantastic. If you're curious, you can see the results in the bounty currently growing right outside our doors.



Reconciling Works Sierra Pacific – Cora Rose reports that the grant has funded Reconciling Works t-shirts for church members and "friends of the synod" who RSVP to march in the San Francisco Pride Parade on Sunday, June 30. The team is also procuring stickers to hand out to the crowd during the parade and they are dreaming up ideas for colorful streamers and signs to wave while marching. This is the embodiment of our Endowment slogan – "Dream it, make it happen!" and all are welcome to participate.



Rukundo Foundation in Rwanda received a grant to support basic school supplies to street children like Fred and Console:

Console Tuyishime is a 15-year-old girl who, along with her three siblings, was orphaned and homeless in Kigali. At the age of 14, Console did not know how to read or write. Rukundo Foundation helped the family rent a small room to keep the siblings together and they are now able to attend school. Console is in primary two and very proud of her education. She is very committed to changing her life.

Rukundo Foundation started working with Fred Ndayishimiye in 2017. Now 17, Fred spent around nine years living rough on the streets of Kigali. Through the Rukundo Foundation, he fell in love with going to school and he is ready to chase his dreams for a new education and new life. Just look at that smile!



St. Mary & Martha Lutheran Church received a 2018 grant for their mission that provides assistance to immigrants. The program recently helped Victor, a 27-year-old father, and his three-year-old son, Eliseo, settle into the Bay Area after arriving from Honduras. The family received clothing, a cell phone, enrollment for child care and legal help with the immigration process. Endowment funds also helped sponsor a "Rainbows Not Walls" event organized by the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity. And finally, funds went toward St. Mary and Martha's immigration information workshops, "Saber es Poder/ Knowledge is Power."

2019 St. Mark's Endowment Grant Funding Calendar: Do you have an idea for a project that's not currently covered in our church budget? Dream it! Make it happen! As you can see from our 2018 grants, this is an amazing opportunity to fund diverse projects in the local community, throughout the synod and around the world. If you have a dream for a special way to serve others, but you need some financial support to get your project off the ground, this grant could make it happen. Stay tuned for more announcements at www.stmarks-sf.org/endowment.



- June 16 - Aug 25, 2019: Grant application period
- End of Sept 2019: Grant decisions announced

How to donate to the St. Mark's Endowment Fund: Once again, a very special thanks to our generous donors over the past 6 years. Our Endowment Fund gives donors the opportunity to create a long-lasting legacy to support the ministry of St. Mark's into the future. The St. Mark's Endowment Fund Tax ID Number is 94-1418294. Donations may be sent directly to St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Attn: Endowment Committee, 1031 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109. If you would like to speak with someone about including a bequest to the Endowment Fund in your estate plan, please send an email to endowment@stmarks-sf.org.

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS: WINTER/SPRING 2019

- Please visit the Council bulletin board (across from the nursery) to read the approved Council minutes. New postings are added toward the end of each month.
- Council welcomed Emma Grey, youth member, to the Council in 2019 and Rick Seefeldt as Treasurer. The following members were elected to the executive board: Mark Semonian (President), Dr. Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero (Vice President), Cristin Owens (Secretary) and Nadine Robinson (Member-at-large).
- Council began each meeting with a meaningful devotion prepared by a different member each month. Topics this quarter have included: reflections on the voice of God in the Earth, Christian literature readings such as a passage from Teilhard de Chardin "Trusting in the Slow Work of God." and passages from "The Message" by Pr. Eugene Peterson. Also included were talks about justice not yet realized and the inspiration for the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. memorial in Yerba Buena Center inscribed with the words "Let justice roll down like water."
- Council welcomed Cora Rose to our April meeting for an educational session about legal issues related to becoming a Sanctuary Congregation.
- Council continues partnership work with the St. Mark's Square Development Committee and supports the Guiding Principles document that provides a Lutheran framework for development. Bolt (Developer) spoke at the MLT, Inc. Board meeting and provided a plan for development that is hopeful and supports the mission and ministries of St. Mark's Lutheran Church.
- Council continues review of Financial and Treasurer's reports, which note that we are currently on track with our 2019 budget, with total income coming in at 99% of budget and our expenses 11% below budget.
- Council diligently prepares to host many events to explore with the congregation our 2019 Open Questions. The first event will be a Global Café after each service on June 9. Please join us for this meaningful important conversation. Future events will include an interactive sermon and fall Adult Forums.

Respectfully Submitted, Cristin Owens, Church Council Secretary

SUMMER GIVING TO ST. MARK'S

Thank you for your gifts and pledges to St. Mark's through your regular offerings. Your gifts flow through St. Mark's and around the world through our varied ministries. If you are not able to bring your offering to worship, you can always mail it to the church office or give on-line via PayPal or the church website: www.stmarks-sf.org and click on the GIVE tab. Thank you!

2019 General Fund Giving Commitments			
Number of Commitments	Total Pledged	Pledges Received Jan - Mar 2019	Difference
113	\$441,021	\$150,772	\$290,250

SONJA PILMAN – PASTORAL INTERN

My internship at St. Mark's is approaching its halfway mark. It has been a wonderful experience and an intense time. Easter was early this year which meant that Lent came early too in my internship. I enjoyed the midweek Lenten services. I felt a sense of community and closeness with the attendees that was meaningful to me. To me, reflecting together during that time deepens my faith and brings me closer to God. I can strongly recommend to you to come to the services next year. After each Lenten service, I did a Bible study on the texts for the upcoming Sunday. We studied the texts but we also talked about our own faith journey. We made a deeper connection to the texts and to each other.

I also have preached three times at St. Mark's and enjoyed it very much. Another opportunity to learn and try things out was the Adult Forum where I taught on Liberation Theology. Thank you to everyone who came and for the great questions and additions people had.

I am going to teach a series on "Living with Our Fears" at the Adult Forum this summer. On July 14, 21, and 28 at 10am in Heritage Hall, we will explore our fears, what they are, where they might come from and what the Bible says about fear. Fear has its purpose and is not bad in itself. The Forum will focus on understanding our fears better, how we will be able to live with them in a healthy way, and how our faith and the Bible can help us with it. Each of those three forums will be part lecture and part experiential learning.

In the fall there is going to be a group on "Millennials - the Age of Anxiety" where we will explore the anxieties of a generation who is old enough to understand the problems they are facing and young enough to understand they will suffer the consequences. With community topics such as student loans, climate change, the economy, and so on, we are going to share our thoughts and how we are effected. If you feel the term "Millennial" applies to you (typically ages 20-38), you are invited to this three-part series on October 23, 30, and November 6 at the St. Mark's Urban Life Center, in the Fireside Room. We will start at 6:30pm with having dinner together, I will give a short reflection, and then we will have a discussion and time of sharing.

If you are interested or have any questions about the series, please email me at: pilman@stmarks-sf.org.



Sonja Pilman installed as St. Mark's Pastoral Intern

GUARDIAN ANGEL TRAINING

On Saturday May 18, the program Director of the ELCA AMMPARO strategy, Mary Campbell, looked out at a crowd of over 60 participants gathered in Heritage Hall at St Mark's. She congratulated the group because this was the largest group yet for a Guardian Angels training.

St Mark's is an AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities team) Welcoming Congregation, and hosted this training on behalf of the Sierra Pacific Synod AMMPARO team. Participants came from a variety of congregations, both from the Sierra Pacific Synod and other denominations to learn how to be a Guardian Angel, offering spiritual and physical accompaniment of unaccompanied migrant children and families through their immigration court process.

The training included valuable background information about migration from Central American countries and immigration court. Slides covered migration statistics and descriptions of why people might be faced with a life or death choice to leave their home country. The alphabet soup of laws and court terms was broken down for participants to better understand what happens in court. Participants even learned some court etiquette. But, the heart of the training was what to do in the waiting room and the courtroom, how to offer to walk with people with dignity.

By the end of the training, more than 60 people were trained to go in pairs and offer this ministry of accompaniment, expanding the Guardian Angels program now to its newest city - San Francisco.

Thank you to all who participated in the training, but especially to those who helped organize it: St Mark's members Cora Rose and Mary Ritter, and Pastoral Intern at St Paul's in Lodi, Frances La Bas. Thanks to Mary Campbell of the ELCA for providing the training, and for the many volunteers who went to court, shared flyers, stuffed folders, and prepared food.



HOLY LAND MINISTRY - LOOKING BEHIND THE SEPARATION WALLS

Last December our Adult Forum featured a **"Journey to Palestine" with Gisela and Doug Daetz** (Immanuel Lutheran Church, Los Altos) as they shared an impactful slide presentation of current Palestine. They had participated in a Leadership Tour sponsored by Bright Stars of Bethlehem and led by Mitri Raheb and John Lindner, which revealed to them (and through their slides and narrative, to us) the sobering life of Palestinians under Israeli military occupation. But their stories and photos also demonstrated the resilience, determination and heart-warming hospitality of the Palestinian people, who stubbornly refuse to desert their land, the Holy Land, and rather choose to stay and maintain the Christian presence there, despite the great hardships they endure.

The Daetzes also spoke enthusiastically about the exciting programs at **DAR AL-KALIMA UNIVERSITY (DAK) in Bethlehem**, and encouraged our support of it. St. Mark's regularly participates with Bright Stars of Bethlehem/Bay Area in fundraising for Dar al-Kalima. Amazingly, last year's Advent-Epiphany fund drive realized **\$50,000** from Bay Area churches and generous individual donors! The money was directed toward student scholarships; these grateful students thank you for your generous donations! They are the future leaders of Palestine and are privileged to study in this unique academic institution. Do you remember the **"Palestine: Unlimited"** photo exhibit we hosted in December 2016? It's still traveling around to Californian and mid-western churches and schools more than 2 years later, raising awareness and connections to Bethlehem's talented young people!

Great news! One of the **DAK** students of photography and film was selected to be a finalist in the **Cannes Film Festival** competition. As the Bright Stars newsletter "Constellations" announced, Wisam Al-Jafari's short film, *Ambience* was one of 17 films selected out of 2,000 international submissions for a Cinéfondation award, a prize given to emerging filmmakers and prestigious recognition for him and Dar al-Kalima. The jury will award three Cinéfondation prizes on May 23 at the Palais des Festivals Buñuel Theatre. Stand by - we'll try to bring this creative film (and some others) to St. Mark's for viewing. If you are inspired to travel to Palestine, check out the Bright Stars website for information on a variety of tours: www.brightstarsbethlehem.org. The Year 2020 might be an especially good year to travel there; Bethlehem has been designated as the Cultural Capital of the Middle East, so logically, many special events will be happening in honor of that. But in any case, be sure to choose a Palestinian tour group, or you won't see much of Bethlehem behind the Separation Walls, nor learn of the Palestinian people's stories!

In May, we "journeyed" again to the Holy Land at the Adult Forum with renowned travel guru Rick Steve's video "The Holy Land: Israelis and Palestinians Today." This presented the narratives of both Israelis and Palestinians, some major cultural and religious sites, plus an overview of the obstacles to peace and the challenges to changing the current oppressive situation.

Later in the Fall there's excitement ahead: Bright Stars of Bethlehem will mark its 15th anniversary! Rick Steves will come IN PERSON to the big celebration and fund-raising event on SEPTEMBER 22! SAVE THIS DATE in the afternoon for a big Palestinian extravaganza at Grace Lutheran Church, Palo Alto, with tasty Palestinian food, live Palestinian music, and featuring Rick Steves - a Lutheran, by the way - speaking on "Travel as a Political Act". (Look in the bookstore for his latest book of the same title.)

Victoria Ruh, Lecturer at San Jose State, will share her teaching experiences at Bethlehem's Dar al-Kalima University, and her interesting project interviewing Christian and Muslim women's views of Mary and Maryam, and the changing roles of women in present-day Palestine. Having taught at DAK as a Fulbright Fellow during Fall Semester last year, Ms. Ruh will also update our knowledge of contemporary Holy Land - and inspire us to visit there too!

Come to our table at the Ministry Fair on September 8 for the latest and more information about Holy Land ministry. Stop and chat, and sign up to share your talents in learning about and serving the people of the Holy Land, birthplace of our Lord.

SUMMER 2019 CONCERTS AT ST. MARK'S

Chanticleer ***Sacred Ground***

"Holiness is all around us." We sing, as we have for forty years, about the joys of the kingdom, especially as they may be found on Earth. The Hebrew tradition says that Yahweh told Moses to take off his shoes, for "this is holy ground." The African-American spiritual assures us "My God is a Rock," and composers from Hassler to Victoria, Palestrina to Dufay have found musical comfort and inspiration from texts such as "Upon this Rock shall I build my church" or "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." The great English carol says, "King Jesus hath a garden." Ours is filled with music from the Spanish Renaissance to Anglican chant, from Hebrew psalms to early American hymns. Keep your shoes on if you like, but know that we will be on holy ground.

Sat, Jun 8, 2019 • 7:30pm

www.chanticleer.org

San Francisco Choral Artists ***Castle, Court and Chamber: Harpsichords at Home***

Sacred and profane, old and new, we offer music for the spiritual enhancement and entertainment of both royalty and regular folk. Featuring internationally known harpsichordist Jillon Stoppels Dupree and cellist Paul Hale. Enjoy the works of Baroque and 20th/21st century composers famous and anonymous including Bach, Handel, Hildegard, Imogen Holst, Kogler, Mendelssohn, Monteverdi, Alice Parker, Schütz, and world premieres by Composer-in-Residence Jean Ahn and Composer-not-in-Residence Robinson McClellan.

Sun, Jun 9, 2019 • 4:00pm

www.sfca.org

International Orange Chorale ***Re-Set: New Takes on Classic Texts***

Featuring contemporary compositions by Ola Gjeilo, Graeme Langager, Frank LaRocca, James MacMillan, Frank Martin, Stephen Paulus, Brian Schmidt, Urmas Sisask, Nicholas Weininger, Eric Whitacre, and David Wikander, and the premiere of "Te Puse Collares" by our 2019 Composer-in-Residence, Robin Estrada.

Admission is free, though donations are gratefully accepted.

Sat, Jun 15, 2019 • 7:30pm

www.iocsf.org

SF Choral Society Rehearsal and Silent Auction

Sat, Jul 20, 2019 • check website for details
www.sfchoral.org

Fog City Singers

Thu, Aug 1, 2019 • 8:00pm

Sat, Aug 3, 2019 • 2:00pm
www.fogcitysingers.com

Contact the Music Groups directly for ticket and performance information





The Moral Voice: Faith Speaks Out on Gun Violence Monday, June 10 at 7 p.m.

Join leaders from across the city and across the faiths to hear how their beliefs impact their stance on gun violence. Together we can imagine and build a safer San Francisco and a safer country.

The Rev. Canon Dr. Ellen Clark-King (Grace Cathedral) will moderate a panel with Imam Abu Qadir Al Amin (SF Muslim Community Center), Supervisor Catherine Stefani, Sensei Elaine Donlin (Buddhist Church of SF), Fr. George Williams SJ (Roman Catholic chaplain of San Quentin) and Rabbi Jason Rodich (Temple Emanu-El).

Free and open to all, but please RSVP to congregation@gracecathedral.org

Co-Sponsors: SFIC, Temple Emanu-El, Temple Sherith Israel, Temple Beth Sholom, Calvary Presbyterian Church, Buddhist Church of San Francisco, Pacifica Institute, The University of San Francisco

NEXT VOICE DEADLINE

The next Voice deadline is **August 7, 2019**, and will cover September, October, and November. Please send all submissions to Stefani at lawrence@stmarks-sf.org by August 7 to include your submission in the Newsletter. Thank you!

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF REFLECTION & NEWS

ST. MARK'S WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays

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

Check our weekly Parish Announcements and our Facebook page

www.stmarks-sf.org/blog

www.facebook.com/stmarkssf

For more events and activities at St. Mark's!

Church Office Hours

Monday through Friday - 9:00AM to 5:00PM

415-928-7770

Staff

Extension

Email

The Rev. Elizabeth E. Ekdale, Lead Pastor	2300	ekdale@stmarks-sf.org
The Rev. Ron Moe-Lobeda, Associate Pastor	2460	moe-lobeda@stmarks-sf.org
Dr. Timothy Zerlang, Director of Music	2330	zerlang@stmarks-sf.org
Winnie Heslin, Director of Operations	2250	heslin@stmarks-sf.org
Stefani Lawrence, Communications & Media Coordinator	2260	lawrence@stmarks-sf.org
Deidre Rettenmaier, Events Administrator	2290	events@stmarks-sf.org
Bookkeeper/Accountant	2320	accounting@stmarks-sf.org
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Edda Mai Johnson, Nursery Coordinator		nursery@stmarks-sf.org
Delia Whitfield, Nursery Attendant		
Sonja Pilman, Pastoral Intern		pilman@stmarks-sf.org

Carl Storey, Security

Adrienne Brown, Sunday School Coordinator

The Rev. Chuck Lewis, Visitation Pastor

Reconciling in Christ

St. Mark's Lutheran Church is a Reconciling in Christ congregation. We are one of over 800 worshipping communities, 29 synods, and nine organizations across the ELCA and 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.

Sanctuary Congregation

St. Mark's is a Sanctuary Congregation. We are committed to a ministry of continuing education about the plight of immigrants in this country, to serve as people who will accompany those in the process of seeking asylum, and to advocate for those whose lives are oppressed or endangered by this process.

Other Important Numbers

Martin Luther Tower	(415) 885-1084	mltinc.org
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary	(510) 524-5264	http://www.plts.edu/
ELCA (national office in Chicago)	(800) 275-3522	https://www.elca.org/
SF Interfaith Council	(800) 638-3522	http://www.sfinterfaithcouncil.org/