



# *St Mark's* LUTHERAN CHURCH **VOICE** QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF REFLECTION & NEWS



***Fall 2016***  
**SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER**

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***WHAT'S INSIDE***

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*Pastor's Reflections - Page 1*

*Blessing of the Animals - Page 3*

*Oktoberfest - Page 4*

*Flooring, Elevator, & Windows Update - Page 7*

*ELCA Churchwide Assembly - Page 13 & 14*

# ELCA Churchwide Assembly

## A passion for grace and a commitment to justice

### Pastor Elizabeth's reflections

As pastor, parent, spouse, global citizen and ELCA Church Council member, I was inspired by the actions of our church to protect the planet. As someone who has witnessed the yearning for peace and justice in the Holy Land, it was heartening to see the potential for action that might positively affect the lives of Palestinians and Israelis. As a person born into white privilege, I was moved by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's words to us, "We know that it exists, and our eyes are open, we are complicit if we don't do something to change laws and attitudes so that there is a level playing field in this country and so there is liberty and justice for all."

We are Lutheran Christians whose lives are reformed by Word and Sacrament and the cross of Jesus Christ. We gather weekly to be "refueled" by worship and one another in order to go back out into the world to live as God's faithful disciples.

During the Churchwide Assembly, we worshiped every day – it was fantastic! We were led by Jazz and Dixieland band musicians for some of the services; on other days, we heard the voices of a local gospel choir and the National Lutheran Choir. One lively worship service featured Cajun music! We prayed and worshiped first and then we moved into action as the church.

Bishop Eaton told us on our final day, "We have work to do. God will give us energy and the courage and the will to do it. Let's go, church."

We too have work to do at St. Mark's. We will listen to the Holy Spirit, be fed by Word and Sacrament, and then, as Bishop Eaton charged the assembly, we will go and do and be the Body of Christ in San Francisco and beyond while we feed the hungry, house the homeless, teach the young, shelter the Seniors, provide safe space for community groups, welcome GLBTQ visitors and friends, invite all colors and nationalities to worship, advocate for the immigrant, consider development on the Square, and so much more.

There is a lot on our plate that God is calling us to do. Almost too much . . .

I'm clear about what to do first and I invite you to join me.

Before we go and do, let us worship first, be fed at the table first, pray and listen to the Holy Spirit, first.

Then, all of our doing in the name of Christ can become our true joy.

See you in worship.

In Christ,  
Pastor Elizabeth



Pr. Elizabeth presiding at a "Pre-assembly" worship service for all Bishops and staff.

# God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday

## Sunday September 11, 2016

Join us as we serve our community together with thousands of other ELCA congregations during the ELCA wide day of service. Come to worship on this Sunday with opportunities to participate after each service.

**God's work.  
Our hands.**

- **Personal Care Kits Assembly and Honoring our First Responders**

Everyone is welcome to join us on the square after each service, Sunday school children too, as we assemble personal care kits that will be distributed to San Francisco citizens in need. This September 11 marks the 15th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the United States. A station to offer prayers and make thank you cards will be set up after each service to remember those first responders who rush in to protect us. The cards will be delivered to our local first responders after the event.

- **Service Project at Lutheran Social Services in the Tenderloin**

Join us after the 11 o'clock service as we walk over together and provide grounds clean up and painting for LSS. LSS provides much needed case management, financial management, housing services and training for those in need. Help us support this wonderful organization.

Please contact Cristin Owens (cristinowens@gmail.com) or Clovis Curl (clovisameliahs@gmail.com) for more information.

Sign up today for one of the service project opportunities offered throughout the day:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/409of4badab2aabfdo-gods1>

## ST. MARK'S ADULT FORUM KICKOFF ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 16 & 23 WITH DR. BARBARA PITKIN OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Barbara Pitkin specializes in the history of Christian thought, with a particular emphasis on the religious developments in late medieval and early modern Europe. She received her B.A. in German language and literature from Carleton College and her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago Divinity School. Dr. Pitkin teaches courses on the history and future of Christianity, sixteenth-century reformations, the history of biblical interpretation, and women and religion. She also serves as the faculty / grad colloquium coordinator and supervises undergraduate outreach and research for the Department of Religious Studies.

### OCTOBER 16

She will talk about the 95 Theses in the context of late medieval Christianity. In 2017, Lutherans and others will mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's 95 Theses. What did Luther hope to achieve by drawing up the 95 Theses and how did his aims fit within the context of Christianity at the time? How did this event come to be understood as the birth of the Reformation?

### OCTOBER 23

She will widen the scope and talk about the Reformation as more than Luther. Even though many of Luther's contemporaries—both supporters and critics—identified Luther as the Reformation's first champion (or heretic, depending on your point of view), the movements for religious reform that sprang up across Europe and England had their own local and unique points of origin. Who were some of these other Reformers and how did these men (and, occasionally, women) contribute to the massive changes to Western Christianity 500 years ago?

# St Mark's

LUTHERAN CHURCH



## BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

SUNDAY OCTOBER 2, 2016 AT 9:00AM & 11:00AM

### A CELEBRATION OF ST. FRANCIS

Calling all friends, neighbors, coworkers, and animal enthusiasts alike! Everyone is welcome to bring their pet and celebrate Blessing of the Animals.

All pets and their humans are welcome!  
Please ensure that pets are safely in carriers or on a leash.  
Photos of animals unable to attend are also welcome.

JOIN US FOR THIS ST. MARK'S TRADITION ON  
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2, AT 9:00 AM OR 11:00AM  
WORSHIP SERVICES!

1111 O'Farrell Street • San Francisco  
415-928-7770 • [www.stmarks-sf.org](http://www.stmarks-sf.org)



*St Mark's*  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

# Oktober Fest

Sunday October 16, 2016

12:30pm - 3:30pm on St. Mark's Square (1111 O'Farrell Street)

Traditional German meal with vegetarian options  
Libations ■ Games ■ Bouncy House ■ Music  
Lederhosen and German dress are encouraged!



Invite a friend and come join us for this fun German inspired fall festival. It is a wonderful celebration of life on St. Mark's Square and a great opportunity for us to get to know each other better. We will serve beer, apple cider, wine and German food (with vegetarian bratwursts too!) Entertainment for all: music by the German community band Deutscher Musikverein, games, crafts, and a bouncy house for children. Wear your lederhosen too. Don't miss this family friendly community event.

Join St. Mark's and Martin Luther Tower members for a festive afternoon. This event is free for Martin Luther Tower residents, with a suggested \$10 donation for St. Mark's members and friends of the community.



**THRIVENT**  
FINANCIAL

**MARTIN LUTHER TOWER**  
San Francisco Senior Community on Cathedral Hill



THE  
**JOHN STEWART**  
COMPANY

# Confirmation Class 2016-2017

From July 10th to 15th, four confirmation students, joined 49 other youth at Mt. Cross for the yearly Shalom retreat. It was a time of fun learning, community building and friends making and most especially faith deepening. It was my first time too and I had a great growing and renewing time from both youth and adult participants. The counselors including our very own Kilian Benson made the experience more fun and memorable. Another of our youth joined the beach camp. We hope that more confirmands would join the retreat in the coming years. Here are two of the reflections of their experiences at the camp:

Last month I went to Mt. Cross for a week. First off it was really fun, we did a ropes course, a creek walk, archery and more. It was also eye opening, with bible studies in the morning and worship throughout the week, it got you to understand your faith more, and it gave you an entire week in which to question yourself about your own actions, beliefs, and words, to think, and maybe even answer those questions. At the end, I felt more comfortable in my faith, and still with so many questions, now, I search for answers.

-Katherine Lam

My experience at Mt Cross Confirmation Camp was amazing. The week long sleep away camp was perfect, filled with fun activities, lots of singing, bible studies, great meals, wonderful prayers and more. It is a camp for incoming seventh to ninth graders, so everyone there is your own age group. People come in groups, usually with a chaperon from their church from San Francisco, California all the way to Phoenix, Arizona! You get to stay in a cabin with your church group and, possibly, another one with two counselors and a CIT (Counselor in Training). In the camp you can make so many great friends and do lots of fun activities, such as high ropes courses, creek walks, archery, arts and crafts, swimming in the pool and hiking trips. I was a little nervous to be going, but by the time the last day rolled by, I didn't want to leave.

-Katja Jackson



Our confirmation class will start September 18, 2016, 10:05-10:55 am, in the Youth Room located inside Urban Life Center. All continuing and incoming students and parents will also gather for orientation and fellowship. Please stay tune for the date, time, and place of this gathering. For any parents who would like to inquire about our Confirmation Ministry or enroll their child to the class, please contact Pastor Tita Valeriano at [valeriano@stmarks-sf.org](mailto:valeriano@stmarks-sf.org).



Journeys in Faith is for people who are considering Baptism, Affirmation of Baptism, or becoming a member of St Mark's. In weekly gatherings over a period of a few months, we explore questions such as:

Who am I?

What is the role of faith and church in my life? How does my faith impact what I say or do every day? What does it mean to be part of a faith community?

A new group is forming this Fall and you are welcome to join us.

If you're interested, please contact

Liv Beck (beckliv@gmail.com) for more information.

## Sunday School at St. Mark's

All children are invited to join St Mark's teachers to experience how much God loves our world and our children. Crafts, singing, bible stories, drama, games and snacks will be enjoyed by all children. Sunday School occurs every Sunday from 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 in the Sunday School rooms (first floor of Urban Life Center) unless otherwise noted. Ages 3 years to 5th grade  
Questions: contact Jenny Hart at hartx4@hotmail.com

## Welcome to our New Events Administrator

We welcome J. Jeff Badger as our new Events Administrator. "J. Jeff," as he is mostly known, has a rich and varied background in performing arts administration and management. In addition to his position with St. Mark's he also serves as the Executive Director for San Francisco Renaissance Voices, the Bay Area's only professional mixed-voice ensemble dedicated to the a cappella music of the Renaissance. He managed the independent concert series, Seventh Avenue Performances for ten years and served as Director for The SACAS (The Seventh Avenue Center for the Arts and Spirituality) for Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church. He has held positions with San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Symphony, and American Bach Soloists. A talented baritone himself, he sings with San Francisco Renaissance Voices and has performed with the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Carmel Bach Festival, California Bach Society, and the Kronos Quartet among others.

J. Jeff will be responsible for calendaring all events in the Church and the Urban Life Center, as well as handling all wedding, concert, and other event inquiries on behalf of St. Mark's. Please contact him at badger@stmarks-sf.org or (415) 928-7770 ext. 2290 if you need to reserve space for a ministry meeting.



Jon Moeller, who serves on the Martin Luther Tower Board, invited his spouse Vanessa, Pr. Elizabeth and friends to a "meet and greet" with Mayor Ed Lee.

Jon spoke passionately to Mayor Lee about ministry at St. Mark's and Martin Luther Tower - thank you Jon!

# FLOORING, ELEVATOR & WINDOW UPDATE

The F.E.W. (Floors, Elevator and Windows) Committee is pleased to share the latest news about the three projects that St. Mark's approved at the Annual Congregational Meeting earlier this year.

## NEW WOOD FLOORING

As recommended by the F.E.W. Committee, the Church Council has approved the installation of new wood flooring at the nave and chancel. In January, the congregation approved installing new wood floors at both the main level and the balcony and the Committee and Council have endeavored to realize this goal, but the final cost of the total project – nave, chancel and balcony floors – would have exceeded the budgeted amount of \$380,000 by more than 40%. Limiting the flooring scope to the main level will allow us to work within the approved budget and concentrate our efforts on the areas that are most seen and experienced by the congregation and general public. Plant Construction is now working in the church building to complete the project in October, allowing us to return to our historic building by Reformation Sunday.



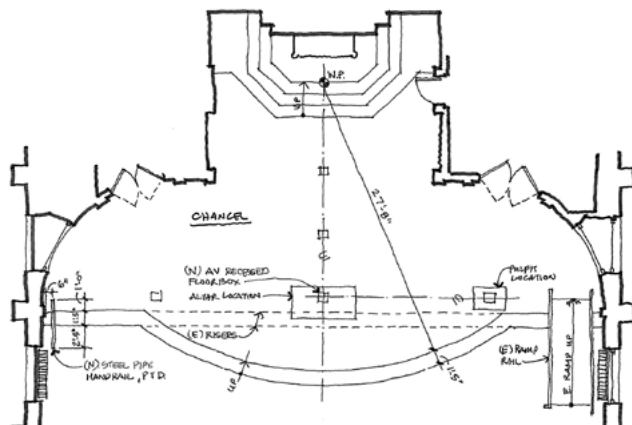
The budget and the bid results have allowed us to include an alternate design that was first considered over 15 years ago (see sketch): extending the central portion of the chancel platform forward by approximately five feet and gently curving the central two-thirds of the chancel steps to parallel the pew curvature. This change will have multiple benefits:

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

Thanks to Marisa Louie and the many volunteers who helped us move temporarily from the church building to the Urban Life Center for worship while the new flooring is installed. While Plant is working in the Sanctuary, Cal and Gail Culp are taking this opportunity to touch up the paint on the pews that are now stored in Heritage Hall. Thank you Gail and Cal!

## ART GLASS WINDOW RESTORATION

This project, coordinated by Jeremy McClain, continues to move steadily ahead with stunning results! The artisans at Hyland Studio have methodically removed one window at a time, transporting each window to their shop in Santa Clara where they clean and repair the glass; replace the lead strips and then reinstall the restored window at its original location. While the flooring project is in progress, Hyland Studio has removed the southeast and southwest windows at the chancel, the two most visible windows in the Sanctuary. They plan to reinstall those restored windows when the flooring is complete, thereby maintaining the beautiful appearance of the chancel area for worship, concerts and weddings when we return to the building.



## ELEVATOR ADDITION

In May, we reported that the San Francisco Planning Department's Historic Preservation Commission had approved the design of St. Mark's elevator addition. This was a major milestone! Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has moved ahead with the preparation of construction documents for the project and submitted drawings to the Department of Building Inspection (DBI). With so much construction in the city, DBI's review could take several weeks – or months – to complete. Given this schedule, starting the project shortly after Easter (April 16, 2017) will allow adequate time to secure the building permit, finalize contracts and give the builders advance time to order long-lead products like the elevator.

We will keep you apprised of our progress as we move forward. If you have questions, please feel free to speak with us.

## The F.E.W. Committee

Tim Bohan (Chair)

Pastor Elizabeth Ekdale, Deborah Halladay, Matthew Helland

Jeremy McClain, Nadine Robinson, Gary Schilling, Omer Voss



# PARTNERSHIP STORIES FROM THE SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD

Here is a story about some productive and delight-full partnerships. It is a good story, as partnership stories usually are. And your congregation is or could be part of the story.

In the summer of 2009 the Word and Sacrament Discipling Team (part of our synod's volunteer structure) invited congregations to a training workshop on the catechumenate at the San Damiano Retreat Center in Alamo, CA. An ancient process for preparing candidates for baptism and integrating new converts into the congregation, the catechumenate process has been in recent years adopted by many Lutheran congregations, perhaps because it is an appropriately Lutheran way of doing effective evangelism. Leadership and resources for the 3 day event came from several congregations already utilizing this process: St. Timothy, Monterey (Pr. Clark Brown was the coordinator); St. Mark's, San Francisco; and Bethlehem, Auburn. Former Bishop David Mullen, a key proponent of the catechumenate process, also participated. "Learner" congregations paid a fee to participate, but other costs were covered by the Discipling Team which, in turn, was funded by the mission support gifts congregations share with the synod. So there's a good chance your congregation is part of this partnership story!

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Reno, one of the "learner" congregations, sent a pastor and three lay leaders to the event. They learned much, and returned home eager to develop this ministry in their congregation. First came a year of preparation. The catechumenate is a thorough process, involving almost weekly gatherings for 4-6 months, meals (usually) each time, four distinct "stages," a sponsor for each candidate, and several public liturgies to celebrate the candidates and mark their progress on the journey. A year of preparation is, therefore, necessary. Each congregation adapts and modifies the process to fit its own culture and context. Good Shepherd calls its process "Journey with Christ," initially meeting Sunday mornings but later moving to Sunday evenings for 2 hour sessions that included a light dinner. Each session also includes a brief large group teaching time, more time in small groups for personal reflection on a Bible reading assigned for the week, and one-on-one time for candidate and sponsor to share and pray together.

The best part of Good Shepherd's story is the impact this process has had on candidates, sponsors, and leaders. Listen to this sampling of testimonials.

Most important to me was the sense of community, being close to everyone and knowing that we all were sharing a part of ourselves on our journey to find our

place with Christ. We have created bonds with each other that have brought deep friendship and love for one another. (Former candidate, current leader)

I was delighted to discover that someone, and actually many people, cared about my faith and were willing to help it grow. Together we studied the Bible. They listened as I shared my doubts and joys, helped me meet others from the congregation, prayed with me and for me, and helped me learn. That all mattered so much more to me than just going to church on Sunday and having people say, "It's so nice to see you here." (Former candidate)

The Bible study is the key to the spiritual part of the process. It is amazing to see the text in a new light, as other journeyers may have completely different interpretations of the passage. If you have an open mind it is very enlightening. (Former candidate, current leader.)

The process builds a strong foundation in faith for people new or returning to the church. It makes you feel connected to the congregation; if you make a 6-8 month commitment to the process, you are going to be invested in the community. (Former candidate, current leader.)

After going through the process I care so much more about my church. I participate more and serve as a leader, and I love doing it! (Former candidate, current leader)

I want to say how incredibly grateful I am to have been a part of this process. It truly changed my life. (Former leader, on original team)

This process is an appropriately Lutheran way of doing evangelism: not knocking on doors, but worshiping, learning, and serving together. Over time congregation members learn that they are inviting a friend not just to a worship service, but also to the possibility of participating in this process.

Too many well-intentioned congregations try to attract new people, "seekers," by tinkering with worship music, but have no plan for what to do with those people if they do show up. How will we help them learn faith basics? Grow in faith? Be integrated into the congregation? No idea! The catechumenate process facilitates a productive and delight-full partnership between congregation and those new to the church, creating many new, good partnership stories.

"If you build it, they will come," for this is also a partnership with God the Holy Spirit, who calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the church.

# Update from the Call Committee:

In the last issue of *The Voice*, you were introduced to the Patels—Ravi searching for a life partner as his sister, Geeta, camera in hand, probes his thoughts on his place in the world, his inherited culture, and his future hopes. After Ravi flops at dating, his parents become matchmakers, creating a “bio-data” sheet to be faxed near and far.

Like Ravi, St. Mark’s is searching for a partner, not a life partner but a partner in ministry. Our “bio-data” is the Ministry Site Profile (MSP), which puts to paper who we are and who we hope to become, including congregation and community demographics, our gifts, and the challenges we perceive in living out our vision for God’s future. The MSP describes the ministry partner we seek—someone who will help us become better ministers to our neighbors near and far; someone who will work with us to enhance our ministry to children, youth, and families; someone who embodies joy and a passion for the gospel.

The Ministry Site Profile has gone near and far through the Sierra Pacific Synod, our companion in calling an associate pastor. The Synod is sending Rostered Leader Profiles, “bio-data” sheets from those interested in learning more about us and exploring joining us in ministry. Through the power of Skype, the Call Committee is interviewing fascinating people, listening carefully and discerning the tug of the Spirit.

As St. Mark’s seeks a ministry partner, author Frederick Buechner reminds us that: “The first ministers were the twelve disciples. There is no evidence that Jesus chose them because they were brighter or nicer than other people. In fact the New Testament record suggests that they were continually missing the point, jockeying for position and, when the chips were down, interested in nothing so much as saving their own skins. Their sole qualification seems to have been their initial willingness to rise to their feet when Jesus said, ‘Follow me.’”

We ask for your prayers as we discern where the Spirit is urging us as St. Mark’s seeks a leader who will respond—and help us to respond—to Jesus’ call to “follow,” moving off the Square into the community in which God has planted us.

Pray about our journey into God’s future, discerning what it means to follow. Talk to your Call Committee—Gretchen Armstrong, Pr. Elizabeth Ekdale, Laura Evenson, Philip Krikau, Margaret McLean, Cora Rose, Andrew Sallach and Greg Jahnke.

Quote from Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC*; the definition of Minister.

## Kaffeeklatsch & Festive Organ Rededication and Concert St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church

### Wednesday September 7, 2016, 4:00 PM & 6:00 PM

Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, a German Lutheran theologian (systematic theology), has been the Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria since 2011 and became the council President of the Evangelical Church in 2014.

Bishop Bedford Strom will talk about the upcoming 500 year anniversary of the Reformation in Germany and answer questions you may have, as we enjoy a traditional German ‘Kaffee und Kuchen’ (‘Coffee and Cake’).

After the Kaffeeklatsch St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church and the German general of San Francisco invite you to the Festive Organ Rededication and Concert. There will be music by Telemann, J.S. Bach, et al Luke Mayernik.

All are welcome to attend! Please RSVP by Sunday, 9/4 by calling 415-863-6371 or emailing [office@stmatthews-sf.org](mailto:office@stmatthews-sf.org)





# St. Mark's Knitting Ministry

St. Mark's knitters are always busy. This time their generous caring hands knitted prayer shawls/blankets for the street dwellers. Partnering with Way of Grace house church across the Bay Bridge, their blankets were received with gratitude in Oakland where many street dwellers, men and women, many of whom are young adults, set up their tent houses. Even though, it is still summer, they asked for them as the temperature drops in the evening. Burrito dinners, blankets and water were all distributed. This maybe short-term help, but the people we encountered expressed thanks with a smile. We continue to pray for them as we also receive their gift of resilience in life.

Thank you, St. Mark's knitters for your time, love and generous gift!

## Creation Sunday at St. Mark's, August 14, 2016



# 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 a small team of members. Welcoming Congregations are not necessarily offering shelter or employment but merely are willing to be a church home for migrant children 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. An accompaniment team might be five people including at least one Spanish speaker who make a 6-12 month commitment to meet a migrant child or family, and support them in a variety of ways, including having dinner with them once a month, and phoning or texting them weekly.

We want you to consider joining the AMMPARO Initiative [www.elca.org/AMMPARO](http://www.elca.org/AMMPARO) and help in any of the following ways:

1. Become a Welcoming Congregation.
2. Seek housing for migrants, including transitional housing for newly arrived immigrants.
3. 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!
4. Coordinate the “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’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.
5. Advocate for public policy that will positively impact the current immigration crisis.

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, [mLrpeds@aol.com](mailto:mLrpeds@aol.com).

Ruth Cruddas and Mary Ritter  
SPS Global Missions Advocacy Team

# 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.

## First Tuesdays from 6:30pm to 8:30pm in the Fireside Room

All women are invited to gather on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:30pm to 8:30pm in the Fireside Room. You are invited to come for dessert and fellowship for the first half hour and then discussion until 8:30.

Our books for this time are:

- September 6 – Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery of Living by Krista Tippett –pp.1-100
- October 4 – Becoming Wise by Krista Tippett – pp 103 to end
- November 1 – To Be Determined at the September meeting

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

All women are invited to come for study at 11:00 and at noon to bring their sandwich or salad and share fellowship. Drinks and dessert will be provided. This autumn Bible study will center on “When God’s Not Fair.” Our program topics are:

- September 13 – “Jonah and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day”
- October 11 – “Jesus and the Evil Eye (when God Blesses the Undeserving”
- November 8 – “Paul and the Power of Failure (when God Chooses the Unlikely)”

If you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Smith at 415.285.7438 or [suzathome@comcast.net](mailto:suzathome@comcast.net).



## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PLEDGE UPDATE

| Pledges/Gifts/Bequest | Amount Received To-Date | Campaign Pledge Status |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| \$1,045,359           | \$446,861               | Ahead of schedule      |

Last year the congregation approved a capital campaign to raise funds for three projects: (1) the installation of an elevator in the church building, (2) the repair and restoration of stained glass windows in the sanctuary, and (3) the installation of new hardwood flooring in the sanctuary. We are now able to mark a significant milestone in this much anticipated project as work crews have begun the installation of new hardwood flooring in the sanctuary.

Our Capital Campaign Committee intends to provide quarterly updates on the status of campaign pledging, beginning with this report. As can be seen from the numbers listed above, pledge amounts received, as of July 31, 2016, have been significant. During the fall pledge drive the Capital Campaign Committee encouraged leaders within our community of faith to step forward with their pledges and demonstrate their commitment to the project. Many members responded in a very significant manner. We would like to highlight the board members of MLT in particular, and thank them for MLT's very generous pledge of \$250,000. Thank you!

And thank you also to all of the members and friends of St. Marks who have made a personal pledge of support to this worthwhile project. Your pledge of support makes this project a reality.

If you have not already made a pledge to the Capital Campaign, our committee would encourage you to prayerfully consider doing so. Please remember that this is a three year campaign and your pledge can be spread over that same three year period, so it's definitely not too late to join in. Pledges can be made on-line at [www.stmarks-sf.org](http://www.stmarks-sf.org) or by contacting the church office at 415-928-7770.

# PALESTINIAN CHRISTIANS GARNER STRONG SUPPORT AT ELCA ASSEMBLY

Voting members, both lay and clergy from ELCA churches nation-wide gathered at the tri-annual ELCA ASSEMBLY in New Orleans in August and took a bold stance, voting overwhelmingly (82%) to actively support Palestinian Christians in their struggles for justice, peace and human rights in the occupied Holy Land.



[NOTE: On the next page of the VOICE, you can read a complete report of actions taken by that ELCA Assembly. Here, we report on how St. Mark's is developing programs to follow up on these commitments that were made by our ELCA Assembly to stand for justice in the Holy Land.]

ST. MARK'S IS RESPONDING to these challenges! A special project is coming to St. Mark's during Advent: We are partnering with Bright Stars of Bethlehem and other Bay Area churches to sponsor a photography competition at the Lutheran Dar Al-Kalima (DAK) College of Arts and Culture in Bethlehem. St. Mark's will host this special exhibit in Heritage Hall throughout December, offering an appropriate, thought-provoking setting for our Advent focus on the significance of Christmas.

"Humans of Palestine" will feature students' photos depicting Palestinians' daily lives as they cope with military occupation and the Separation Wall. Through their creativity, these young Palestinian photography students aim to humanize the image of their people and life through their art. We hope it will also stimulate scholarship donations to the College, founded by Lutheran Pastor Mitri Raheb after Israelis constructed the Wall surrounding Bethlehem. This innovative college educates and empowers youth in Bethlehem (both Christian and Moslems) to be tolerant, creative citizens who contribute positively toward a more peaceful society and world. For more information check: [www.brightstarsbethlehem.org](http://www.brightstarsbethlehem.org).

Look for other opportunities this Fall to learn, discuss and act on Holy Land issues through a variety of ways, e.g., Adult Forums; topical books (do you have one to share?); joining in the world-wide Jerusalem prayer; Advent devotions; service, travel and study opportunities in the Holy Land; Lutheran ministries in



Pr. Elizabeth with other ELCA church council members at the churchwide gathering

Jordan and Palestine; advocacy efforts guided by the ELCA's Peace Not Walls and Advocacy programs and by the interdenominational Churches for Middle East Peace in Washington. Here are two good sources to check: [www.ELCA.org/peacenotwalls](http://www.ELCA.org/peacenotwalls) and [www.CMEP.org](http://www.CMEP.org).

Please think about how you can participate and help such events happen for us all.

You can make a difference in the lives of fellow Christians in the Holy Land! For more information and to become involved, call the church office and ask to join the Palestine-Israel mailing list; or contact Linda Krauskopf at (415) 285-4424 or email: [jklnk@comcast.net](mailto:jklnk@comcast.net)

# 2016 ELCA CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY AND GRACE GATHERING

The triennial Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and the in-augural Grace Gathering were convened in New Orleans the week of August 8-13, 2016 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. Pastor Ekdale, Pastor Jim DeLange, St. Mark's Director of Music Tim Zerlang, Ed Chitty and Jeremy McClain from St. Mark's attended.

## WORSHIP

Assembly and Grace Gathering attendees worshipped together daily. Styles of music varied from traditional to Dixieland to Gospel, displaying the wide diversity of liturgical expression with the ELCA. Each renewed the many individuals into a single body of Christ brought together to do the Church's work.

## A NEW VICE PRESIDENT

William B. Home II of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Clearwater, FL, was elected vice president of the ELCA by the assembly and installed during the closing worship. The position of vice president is the highest a layperson can hold in the ELCA.

## LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

Being the highest legislative authority of the ELCA, much of the assembly's time was spent on measures setting the church's stance on well over 100 social justice, diversity, environmental and church administration issues. A summary of the legislative actions is provided on [St. Mark's Website](#) along with the complete Legislative Update from the assembly.

## GRACE GATHERING

Grace Gathering was an opportunity to prepare for observances of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, reflect on how the Reformation can guide us today. Workshops separate from the Churchwide Assembly were presented August 10-12, considering the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and exploring issues ranging from interfaith and ecumenical relationships, diversity within the ELCA, the future of the ELCA, Social Ministry and Justice, Music and the Arts. Grace Gathering attendees also participated in daily worship and Assembly plenary sessions.

Keynote Address: Leymah Gbowee  
Nobel Peace laureate Leymah Gbowee, who led Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace helping end the Second Liberian Civil War, addressed the combined Assembly and Grace Gathering. Her story of daring to be "a troublemaker" challenged all to step forward and speak out whenever and wherever injustice is found.



Jeremy McClain, Pr. Elizabeth, Tim Zerlang and Ed Chitty pause in front of the Easter Paschal Candle in order to catch their breath after joining the closing worship parade led by a rousing rendition of "When the Saints Come Marching In" Daily worship was a highlight at the ELCA Churchwide Gathering in New Orleans.



# David Yearsly's recital at St. Mark's

## Saturday, November 12, at 7 pm

J. S. Bach was the greatest organist of his or any other age. He also trained all of his sons in the art of playing the King of Instruments. This program brings together music by four Bach brothers — Wilhelm Friedemann, Carl Philipp Emanuel, Johann Christoph Friedrich, and Johan Christian—and frames them with a towering Prelude and Fugue of their mighty father.

David Yearsley was educated at Harvard College and Stanford University, where he received his Ph.D. in music history. He is author of the widely-praised *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint* (Cambridge, 2002) and *Bach's Feet: The Organ Pedals in European Culture* (Cambridge, 2012), which received the Ogasapian Book Award from the Organ Historical Society. Among his honors as an organist are all major prizes at the Bruges Early Music Festival. He has been an Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Fellow at the Humboldt University in Berlin, a Wenner-Gren Foundation Fellow at the University of Gothenburg, and recipient of an American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship. His recordings include a double-CD album of J. S. Bach's organ trio sonatas and *Songs and Sonatas from Baroque London* (with Martin Davids), both on the Musica Omnia label. Mr. Yearsley has been music critic for the Anderson Valley Advertiser for more than a quarter century; his weekly column can also be read at [counterpunch.org](http://counterpunch.org). A long-time member of the pioneering synthesizer trio Mother Mallard's Portable Masterpiece Company, he teaches at Cornell University.



## Special Musical Guest

# Jonathan Rundman

## REFORMATION

## SUNDAY

## October 30

## 9:00AM & 11:00AM

## Worship Services

On Reformation Sunday we will have the opportunity to sing some of the great songs of the Reformation in a reformed way with Jonathan Rundman, a gifted songwriter and performer, an artist that has the gift of encapsulating the Gospel in memorable songs, and engaging believers and non-believers alike.

Born and raised in the isolated Finnish-American communities of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Jonathan Rundman has been writing songs and performing across the country since he was 18 years old. He emerged on the national music scene as a Chicago-based touring artist, generating rave reviews in *Billboard*, *The New York Times*, *Performing Songwriter*, *Paste*, and countless regional publications. Now living in Minneapolis, he continues to tour and record. Jonathan's songs can be heard on radio stations across America, in Scandinavia and England, and have been featured on television's *Ellen Degeneres Show* and *CBS This Morning*. He has performed live on NPR's *Mountain Stage Radio Show*, and on Iowa Public Television.

In 2015 Jonathan Rundman released a new album titled *LOOK UP*. It marks a mature new phase in Jonathan's critically acclaimed discography. These ten songs explore themes of technology, linear time, and optimism, and draw from Rundman's diverse musical influences including Americana, Nordic folk music, and '80s New Wave pop.

Jonathan be with us all morning - come early and stay for both services. Bring your family, friends, and neighbors, and all the Lake Wobegon exiles you know.



# NOW IS THE TIME

Now is the time to think about becoming part of the music ministry here at St. Mark's by joining our choir. Our dedicated choir members are ready to welcome you, and help you become a part of this lively, vital ministry as part of our worship leadership. If you are a soprano, we need you. If you are an alto, we need you. If you are a tenor, we need you. If you are a bass, we need you. If you are not sure what you are, but you know you are interested and willing, we need you. The choir sings at the 11 am service September through May, and at most festivals. Contact our Director of Music, Timothy Zerlang for information. Timothy would be happy to meet with you and answer any questions you might have, or review music skills you feel you might be lacking.

The choir's first rehearsal will be Sunday, September 8 @ 10:00 am, and regular Wednesday rehearsals will begin Wednesday, September 21. Contact Tim Zerlang: [zerlang@stmarks-sf.org](mailto:zerlang@stmarks-sf.org)



## Calling All Angels and Shepherds!

It's already time to begin casting for our special Christmas Eve Pageant at St. Mark's. This family-friendly narration of the events surrounding the birth of baby Jesus includes a wonderful cast of angels and shepherds of all ages and wise men and their assistants. The Christmas Pageant will be on Christmas Eve, December 24th at 5pm. There will be two rehearsals on Saturdays, December 10th at 9am and December 17th at 9am. Be sure to mark your calendars! There are many roles available including stage crew and costuming. If you are interested in being a part of the Christmas Pageant, then please email Mari Tuominen at [maridesigns@earthlink.net](mailto:maridesigns@earthlink.net).

## Fall Concerts at St. Mark's

### NOVEMBER:

AGO - Organ Crawl and Concert  
Saturday, November 12, 2016 | 9:00am & 7:30pm

Alex Keitel Recital - 8pm  
Saturday, November 12, 2016 | 8:00pm

SF Early Music Society Concert  
Sunday, November 13, 2016 | 4:00pm

Omni Concert  
Saturday, November 19, 2016 | 7:30pm

### DECEMBER:

Cal Bach Concert  
Friday, December 2, 2016 | 8:00pm

SF Lyric Chorus Concert  
Saturday, December 3, 2016 | 7:00pm

SF Lyric Chorus Concert  
Sunday, December 4, 2016 | 5:00pm

Musae Concert  
Saturday, December 10, 2016 | 4:00pm

International Orange Chorale Concert  
Saturday, December 10, 2016 | TBA

Sunset Youth Orchestra Concert  
Sunday, December 11, 2016 | 8:00pm

Voice of Music-Concert and Recording  
Saturday, December 17, 2016 | TBA

SF Choral Artists Concert  
Sunday, December 18, 2016 | 4:00pm

## Attention all photographers

RIGHT NOW - from August 27-November 27 - the Main Library in San Francisco, Jewett Gallery, is offering a wonderful photography exhibit called "Home Away From Home...Little Palestine by the Bay" which explores the question "What does it mean to be Palestinian in America?" This multimedia exhibit juxtaposes recorded oral histories from The SF Bay Area Palestinian community with 27 black and white photographs curated by Najib Joe Hakim. A cultural highlight of the exhibition, "A Palestinian Poetry & Music Event" features Arabic music by violin virtuoso Georges Lammam and dramatic poetry by Lorene-Zarouj-Zouzounis and Tarik "Excentrick" Kazaleh on October 25 at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Library's Koret Auditorium, Lower Level. The San Francisco Main Library is located at 100 Larkin Street (at Grove); Civic Center BART station.

## Join us for Night Ministry's Annual Fall Gala

The members of the Governing Board of the San Francisco Night Ministry invite you to attend their Fall Gala under the theme "1001 Nights around the World: An International Extravaganza".

Proceeds will support the ministry and outreach of Night Ministry which has offered pastoral care, counseling and crisis intervention every night of the year between the hours of 10:00 PM and 4:00 AM for the past 52 years!

Saturday, October 8, 2016, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church (Urban Life Center)  
1111 O'Farrell Street, San Francisco CA, 94109

Reception, program, live music, small plates from around the world, beer and wine bar, soft drinks, with silent, live and reverse auctions

\$104.00 General Seating at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2589844>

Sponsorships available upon request by contacting Night Ministry at [Office@sfnightministry.org](mailto:Office@sfnightministry.org)



## Online Synod Gathering & District / Conference Fall Meetings September 17th at Grace Lutheran in Palo Alto at 9:30am

We will gather regionally, in person and via video conference at multiple sites: Ascension in Citrus Heights; Emanuel in Modesto; Cross and Crown in Rohnert Park; Grace in Palo Alto; Our Savior's in Lafayette; Advent in Morgan Hill

## Farewell to our College Students



# Council Meeting Minutes

## May 2016

- Met with Pastor Kate Warn, our missionary in Rwanda who manages the Young Adults in Global Missions (YAGM) program there
- Designated Matt Helland as an authorized representative for St. Mark's Deutsche Bank accounts
- Previewed the agenda for the joint MLT/St. Mark's retreat on May 21
- Received updates on filling vacant staff positions, including the hiring of Edda Mai Johnson as Nursery Coordinator
- Received an update from WELCA via Nadine Robinson about the delivery of Camp Noah Kits to the Middletown camp site

## June 2016

- Received reports from Nadine Robinson and Steve Ernst, two of our voting members to the Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly
- Introduced replacement reserves study project to budget for equipment replacement projects; Jeremy McClain is establishing this study.
- Expressed gratitude for the work of the FEW Committee, accepting its recommendation to move forward with the replacement of the sanctuary floor and addition of the proscenium, and to refrain from replacement of the balcony floor; to retain Elizabeth Tippin to provide legal services as directed by the FEW Committee; and to approve the organ protection contract with Hupalo and Repasky
- Announced Nominating Committee formation; Lee will serve and is looking for an additional Council member and a non-Council church member to serve on this year's committee.
- Discussed results from the January congregational meeting survey regarding resources devoted to various ministries and uses of the Urban Life Center.
- Solicited leadership for God's Work Our Hands Sunday; Owens and Curl volunteered to help with planning

## Sacred Acts at St. Mark's

Baptism of:

Ashley Claire Angella Owens, July 3, 2016

Ezra Divyan Vikneswarra Silvalingam, August 21, 2016



# St. Mark's Worship Schedule

## Sundays

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

## Wednesdays

6:45 pm.....Mid Week Worship (Fall, Winter, Spring)

## Check our weekly Parish Announcements

(<http://www.stmarks-sf.org/blog/>)

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

## Church Office Hours

Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

415-928-7770

## Staff

The Rev. Elizabeth E. Ekdale, Lead Pastor...x 2300...ekdale@stmarks-sf.org

The Rev. Tita Valeriano, Interim Pastor...x2460...valeriano@stmarks-sf.org

Dr. Timothy Zerlang, Director of Music...x 2330...zerlang@stmarks-sf.org

Rachel Friedland, Bookkeeper/Accountant...x 2320...friedland@stmarks-sf.org

Stefani Lawrence, Communications & Media Coordinator...x2260...lawrence@stmarks-sf.org

J. Jeff Badger, Events Administrator...x2290 badger@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.

## Other Important Numbers

Martin Luther Tower...(415) 885-1084

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary...(510) 524-5264

Sierra Pacific Synod...(800) 275-3522

ELCA (national office in Chicago)...(800) 638-3522