



St Mark's  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

# VOICE

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF REFLECTION & NEWS



## *What's Inside*

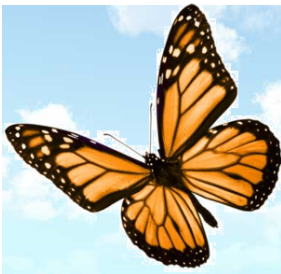
*Devotion by  
Pastor Noel ILAGAN*

*Thanksgiving for  
Pastor Bekah*

*Knitting Retreats*

*Parents and Kidlettes*

*Sierra Pacific Synod  
Highlights*



## A Borning Cry and a Heart Ailment

By Pastor Noel ILAGAN

St. Mark's Ministry Parish Student in 2001



Jasmine Eve is my first granddaughter and my third grandchild, the first two being both boys. I arrived in Manila, Philippines four (4) days after she was born and immediately visited my daughter; then I went to the neo-natal intensive care unit with my son-in-law and took a look at Jasmine through the glass window. I was not there when Baby Jasmine cried the first time; but I believe God was there. *"I was there to hear your borning cry"* writes hymn writer John Ylvisaker describing God's presence at Jasmine's birth.

Two (2) days later while Esther and Jasmine were still in the hospital I myself had to go to the ER of another hospital due to shortness of breath and rapid pulse rate. I do not know what caused it – perhaps a confluence of anxiety and excitement, the tropical heat and humidity, the long flight from Dallas to Manila, and so on. I was admitted to the hospital and after a few days of various tests, observation via telemetry and medication the doctors discharged me. The discharge sheet said I had a mild heart attack. (To be fair, I had the heart attack before I got the hospital bill!) A close friend accompanied me and stayed with me during my confinement. (Philippine hospitals permit a companion to be with and assist a patient while confined, most likely a cultural thing.) The good news is that at this time my heart ailment can be treated through medication. *"I will be there when you are old"* says the second line of the hymn. That line has assumed a new significance for me. But what about the times in-between the borning cry and old age?

*"If you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as one, I'll be there to make your verses rhyme from dusk 'till rising sun.*

*"In the middle ages of your life, not too old, no longer young, I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun.*

*"When the evening gently closes in, and you shut your weary eyes, I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise."* Adam and Eve tried to hide from God, but failed (Gen. 3:8ff). Jonah tried to avoid a task God had given him but confinement inside the belly of a fish belly forced him to communicate with God (Jonah 2:1ff). David realized that whether he went up to the highest heavens or the deepest depths, God was there (Ps. 139:8). Paul (then Saul) was pursuing and persecuting Christians, not knowing that he himself was being pursued by Christ (Acts 9:3ff). Paul sums it all up later -- nothing, nothing at all, can separate us from God and God's love in Christ! (Rom. 8:38ff).

This is how much our God cares for us. God never lets go. Regardless of where we are in life's timeline we can rest in the assurance God is and will always be there with us. Praise the Lord!





## Thanks for Pastor Bekah

On June 7, we expressed our appreciation for Pr Bekah's two and a half years of ministry at St. Mark's.

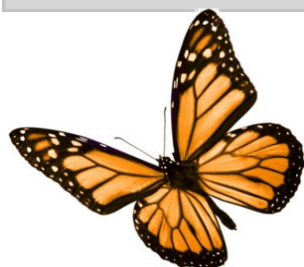
She has resigned her call as Pastor in order to focus on her treatment and recovery for Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

In her time as Associate Pastor, she has blessed us with many gifts including preaching, teaching, pastoral care, social ministry and ministry with our youth. We will deeply miss her pastoral presence among us. She received many cards and letters of appreciation. In addition, the council purchased a iPod nano and iTunes gift certificate in order for her to enjoy music during her recovery.

In the weeks ahead, we will post information about how the congregation can assist Pr. Bekah through her treatment and recovery.

Susan Sall, the chair of the Mutual Ministry committee is coordinating these efforts and can be reached at [14susansall@gmail.com](mailto:14susansall@gmail.com)

Please hold Pr. Bekah in your prayers.



## Knitting Retreats

The Knitters at St. Mark's are holding a series of retreats this summer, on June 20th, July 18th and August 15th, from 10 AM to 2 PM. Anyone who knits or crochets, or who wants to learn how, is welcome.

- June 20th - Knitting Prayer Shawls
- July 18th - Knitting for the Streets
- August 15th - Comfort Knitting



Each retreat will be in Heritage Hall. Each participant is encouraged to bring a bagged lunch and a snack to share. Questions should be directed to [Knitters@stmarks-sf.org](mailto:Knitters@stmarks-sf.org).

## Parents and Kidlettes

Parents with Kidlettes is growing by leaps and bounds with all the new baby arrivals this past year! In fact we have welcomed 5 newborn members into our congregation as we rejoice in many healthy births since just November.

This year we have met the first Sunday of each month as a parent community to share in thoughts about child rearing, summer vacations, the nursery program, and more. Parents with kidlettes brings together parents of babies and school aged children to visit while our children enjoy our fabulous Sunday School.

A special thanks to Caroline Massad Francis who capably assumed facilitating the group as Lara Dickinson went on "maternity leave."

This summer we will host our 5th annual St. Marks camping trip at Bothe National Park in Napa. We have a great time camping, playing games, hiking, cooking great food, and even having our own Sunday worship.

Please contact Aaron Bohlig at [abohlig@gmail.com](mailto:abohlig@gmail.com) or Lara Dickinson at [larajdickinson@gmail.com](mailto:larajdickinson@gmail.com) if you would like to sign up for the trip.





**St. Mark's Delegation**

## **Sierra Pacific Synod Highlights**

**May 29th—31st**

The Sierra Pacific Synod met in Assembly under the theme "Connections" and the story of Ezekiel and the valley of the dry bones.

Of the 561 individuals present at Assembly, 470 were voting members. Of that group, 291 were lay persons and 179 were clergy. Thirty six were either persons whose primary language is other than English, or were persons of color. American Sign Language interpreters were available for those with impaired hearing, as well as English to Spanish translation

services. Assembly chaplains were Pr. Craig Minich and Pr. Holly McHale-Larson.

We welcomed Bishop Ying-ping (David) Wu and his spouse, Nancy, Director of Mission Pr. Samuel Cheng and his spouse Pr. Gloria Cheng, from the Taiwan Lutheran Church. Bp. Wu brought greetings to the Assembly, presided at worship on Friday night, and he and the delegation from Taiwan engaged in conversation during the Open Space Conversations on Saturday afternoon.

Keynote addresses were presented by The Rev. Dr. Colleen Windham-Hughes, a member of the faculty at California Lutheran University. The Rev. Jeffrey Thiemann, President and CEO of Portico Benefit Services presented the Bible Studies and brought greetings on behalf of Portico. The Rev. Elizabeth Ekdale, St. Mark's, San Francisco and a member of the ELCA Church Council, introduced The Rev. Ron Glusenkamp, Director of the Always Being Made New Campaign for the ELCA.

### **Save the Dates:**

**Aug. 23:** Updates after each worship service on elevator progress, information on restoration of stained glass and replacing the sanctuary flooring. There has been exciting progress made from the Elevator

Committee - come and hear what is happening as we plan for an elevator installation in our church building - making our building accessible for all.

**Aug. 30:** Special Congregation meeting in between worship services at 10:05 to vote on moving forward with a Capital Campaign and hiring of the James Co. as our campaign consultant. Please attend this brief but important congregation meeting.





## St. Mark's Summer 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

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 4:00 pm

### Staff

The Rev. Elizabeth E. Ekdale, Lead Pastor

Dr. Timothy Zerlang, Director of Music

Audrey Potts, Office Manager

Stefani Lawrence, Communications and Media Coordinator

Chiara DeJoy, Events Coordinator

Carl Storey, Security

Elvira Markov & Johanna Najera, Nursery Attendants

Jenny Hart, Sunday School Coordinator

The Rev. Chuck Lewis, Visitation Pastor

Jeremy McClain, Church Council President

### 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.



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