



Saint Mark's
Episcopal Church

the Messenger

Volume 52 | Number 2 | February 2012

From the Rector:

Lent Is About Letting Go

“Faith is a catch and release sport. And standing at the altar receiving the bread and wine is the release part”

- Nora Gallagher in *The Sacred Meal*

Lent may traditionally be about discipline and penitence and giving something up but we often get the point of all that penitential stuff all wrong. Our faith is always about a choice to be cynical or to be hopeful. Simply put, Jesus, though he knew how to sacrifice, knew more deeply how to be hopeful, loving, kind and caring. The sacrifice was never an end unto itself...only a necessary way to be compassionate and just. So the question I would like to pose as we approach yet another Lenten season in our pilgrimage is this: What will move us to be hopeful? How do we become more aware of blessings so that we might be thankful and be inspired to celebrate compassion?

Nora Gallagher, in the book quoted above, tells this story...

“Twenty-five years ago, my friend Harriet left her husband only weeks before Thanksgiving. It had been brewing for a long time, and although it was not the best timing in the world, the time had come. So, that year, her children went to her husband’s family for the holiday, and Harriet notified her friends that she would not be celebrating. She would lie low and get through it. A friend invited her over and Harriet accepted, but they both said there would be no festive feast. Harriet arrived at her friend’s house, walked outside, and was standing in the backyard when she looked up and saw a large white thing falling out of the sky toward her. It landed a few feet away from her shoes. It was - I am not kidding - a large white goose, dead as a doornail, probably shot by a hunter some miles away. Harriet stood there, dumbfounded, and then, being who she is, picked it up and called out to her friend, “We’re having Thanksgiving after all.”

How do we interpret the world around us? Are we able to see the goodness, the blessing, beyond the unavoidable curses, difficulties, and injustices? I hope this Lent is a time of letting go, of releasing yourself to celebrate the good, a time of being increasingly aware of grace.

Please join us in this Lenten season as we all strive to do so. Please make time for your own soul this holy season to find a way to be released. When you do so the season will, indeed, be sacramental and lead to new life.

In Christ,

In This Issue:



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Medicine Disposal Day sponsored by PAMF

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Looking Ahead

Sunday, February 5
Annual Meeting
(NO 8am Service)

Friday, Feb 10 - Sunday, Feb 12
Friends of the Groom
Events

Sunday, February 12
Forum: Faith & Science
Medicine Disposal Day

Tuesday, February 21
Shrove Tuesday

Wednesday, February 22
Ash Wednesday

Lentevents

Sunday Morning Lenten Series 2012 Eclipsing Empire: Paul, Rome and the Kingdom of God

11:30 am-12:30 am, Kennedy Room

Filmed on location in the Middle East with renowned New Testament scholars John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg, this DVD series traces the emergence of the Christian movement in the shadow of the Roman Empire. Each week we will watch two 20 minute episodes to learn about, ponder, and discuss Paul's alternative vision of community, politics, human nature, and God's coming reign. Join us!



February 26

Empire/Jesus (*Dan Clendenin*)

March 4

Paul's Mission/Paul's Vocation
(*Ken Bencala*)

March 11

Cities/Paul's Letters
(*Rebecca Lyman*)

March 18

Paul's Ethics/Paul's Theology
(*Louise Gulda*)

March 25

Paul's Eschatology/Eclipse
(*Salying Wong*)

Ash Wednesday

February 22

Forty weekdays before Easter, we come together to mark the beginning of the Lenten season with Ash Wednesday. This is a devout service of remembrance. We kneel and pray as we remember our own humanity, our tendency to fall and be lifted by God's love, and the source of our beginning and end as we hear the words "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." The symbolic marking of our foreheads with burnt ashes is taken from the traditional Jewish sign of penitence, and becomes a doorway through which we pass to enter the Holy Season of Lent.

Join us on this sacred day, Wednesday, February 22 - 12:15pm in the chapel, or 7:30pm in the church.



Finding Faith at the Movies Lenten Film Series 2012

We continue our engaging Lenten Series this year with five evenings in February and March. Join our discussion of Christian spirituality as we look at contemporary films. A simple supper of soup and bread and an evening of film clips and a discussion led by friends of St. Mark's, Grace Lutheran Church and Companions on the Journey. Join other spiritual pilgrims for holy conversation and nourishment at the 2012 Lenten Series held at Grace Lutheran at 3149 Waverley Street

Wednesdays in Lent at Grace Lutheran Church

6:00 p.m. Supper

6:30 p.m. Presentation

7:45-8:00 p.m. Prayers

February 29th

The Tree of Life

with Rev. Matthew McDermott

March 7th

The Help

with Prof. Margalynne Armstrong

March 14th

Of Gods and Men

with Rev. Salying Wong

March 21st

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part 2

with Rev. Matt Smuts

March 28th

The Social Network

with Vicar Ivar Hillesland

Adult Formation



Sundays, February 12 & 19
**Intriguing Forums on
 Faith and Science**

On Sunday, February 12, Helen Brooks, St. Mark's parishioner and member of the Stanford English Department faculty, will offer a Forum at St.

Mark's on the subject of "faith and science" as it relates to her recent research and writing on the Early Modern poetry of John Donne, who also served as Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London for ten years prior to his death in 1631. More recently, the study of literature and other arts has been influenced by developments in the fields of neuroscience and cognitive psychology, beginning with the view that the arts are products of human consciousness. But how can a literary, or aesthetic, form activate our responses in keeping with its spiritual impulse? Donne seems particularly adept in creating such texts for his readers. We will look at some of his religious poetry in the context of developments in science in Donne's own era as well as in the field of cognitive studies today, with a view to his poetry's success in enriching one's own spirituality or faith.

The following week, Sunday February 19, we have a double-header. Mark Richardson, the new Dean at Church Divinity School of the Pacific and a specialist on science and religion, will preach at both our 8am and 10am services. Then, at our 11:30 am 50 Minute Forum, he will be joined by our own Francis Everitt, whose forty years of work at Stanford as the Principal Investigator on the Gravity Probe B experiment earned him the NASA Distinguished Public Service Medal in 2005.

Helen, Francis, and Dean Richardson will illuminate the sacred nexus of Faith and Reason. Join us for these engaging discussions!

Inquirer's Classes

What? This class is an introduction to the Episcopal tradition and the St. Mark's community: its identity, its ministries and its historical context. These evenings will help you understand who we are and what we value.

Who? Any newcomer, new member or member who has not previously attended Inquirer's classes.

When? Tuesday evenings
 March 12, 19 and 26
 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Where? St. Mark's Kennedy Room

How? Please RSVP to the church office by Sunday, March 4 (326-3800). Let Rev. McDermott know if childcare would be helpful.

Save the Date!

St. Mark's Presents: Varieties of Contemplative Prayer

Saturday March 24th, 8:30 AM to 1:30 PM

Here's a great chance to hear about and experience some of the many wonderful ways to practice contemplative prayer. In our too busy and stressful lives, contemplative prayer is a place to strengthen our faith and spiritual depth. We'll hear about and have a chance to experience a variety of contemplative practices: Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina, Ignatian Prayer, Anglican Rosary, walking prayer and labyrinth walking, and more. We'll share food, information, and practice with others from many parishes. Come and join us for a convivial and powerful gathering!

For more information, or to sign up, contact: Dick Tingey, dtingey@aol.com



The Children and Families Commission Presents (for All Ages):

SHROVE TUESDAY FESTIVITIES!



On Tuesday February 21st St. Mark's will gather for our annual pancake supper and fellowship to ready ourselves for the coming of Lent. Shrove Tuesday is the day immediately preceding Ash Wednesday and is a particularly special holiday in the United Kingdom (my other home!), where it is often called Pancake Tuesday. This is because ingredients such as sugar, fat, and eggs (all necessary in a proper pancake) were traditionally restricted during the ritual fasting of Lent. Shrove Tuesday, also commonly known as Mardi Gras, was the last celebration before this solemn time.

Watch out for the giant sign-up sheet in the Narthex, so you can help us prepare for this important annual tradition at St. Mark's. It is sure to be an event not to be missed, with good food, entertainment, crafts for kids, games, and lots of fun. Please join us on February 21st for this intergenerational celebration!

WHAT

Pancake Supper

WHEN

February 21
6:15 pm

WHERE

Parish Hall



upcoming
events

February 5

Children's Instructed Eucharist

February 10-12

Friends of the Groom

February 12

Love and Logic Faithful Families

February 19

Love and Logic

February 21

Shrove Tuesday

February 26

Love and Logic

Reflections on the Lenten Season

Lent is happening early this year. Less than two months after Jesus' birth, we are already preparing for his betrayal, crucifixion, and resurrection. As a teenager, I always associated Lent with unnecessary self-deprivation. Obediently I would try to think of the least painful thing I could give up, just so that I could say I was doing it, and inevitably fail even to do that.

All that changed for me when I went to college and learned from my minister what her Lenten tradition was. Instead of giving up something for Lent, she would take something on. She'd add a daily Bible reading to her schedule, put aside 20 minutes for meditation and prayer, or even committing to do a random act of kindness every day. For her, Lent didn't mean denying herself enjoyment, but rather seeking a deeper presence with God.

That year, I decided to give it a try. It was my first ever "successful" Lent. Committing myself to taking the time to connect with God more deeply soon became a defining feature of my Lenten experience, and one which made Lent one of my favorite times of the liturgical year. For some, the fasting and self-denial of Lent represents a powerful way to connect with God in the suffering of Christ. But if you are not one of those people, I invite you to try a new way of experiencing Lent this year.

- Kelsey

upcoming dates

February 5

Bibles and Bagels
Youth Group

February 12

Youth Group

February 19

Bibles and Bagels
Youth Group

February 24-26

Tahoe Trip

March 2-4

Happening at Church of the
Epiphany, San Carlos

Youth Scavenger Hunt Recap

Our first Youth Group of 2012 featured the annual Scavenger Hunt around Palo Alto, where 4 cars raced around town to find over a dozen local sites in less than 90 minutes. This year was an especially challenging one, as participants not only had to direct their drivers to the various destinations but also figure out a crossword puzzle in order to know where to go. The winning car was driven by Jonake Bose and was guided by Anna Wang, Abigail Schmidt, Zelia Sims, and Stina Pinsky. Many thanks to Herman Schmidt for arranging the event, as well as to our wonderful volunteer drivers!



Tahoe Trip February 24-26

Get ready for some snow as Youth Group heads to Tahoe this month. We leave Friday night and will be back late Sunday afternoon. Contact Kelsey for more information or to reserve a space: kelsey@saint-marks.com or (802)309-0407.

Something to Ponder

"Do not waste your time bothering whether you 'love' your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this, we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone, you will presently come to love him"

- C.S. Lewis

Outreach and Community

A Rare Opportunity in Our Own Backyard

We, in the Peninsula, have a wonderful opportunity to attend a conference that hopes to shed light on the situation in the Holy Land today. "Breaking the Barriers to a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine" offers two days of educational talks, workshops, food and entertainment. The goal is to inform you of the existing barriers (from a Palestinian perspective); consequences of them, people challenging them; and what you can do. A wide range of topics will be covered including physical barriers, economic restrictions and developments, along with what the media says and what it doesn't.



The conference will be on March 23 & 24, 2012 at Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church at 728 W. Fremont in Sunnyvale. Please check the web site for more information and registration: www.barriers-conference.org

All are welcome. Please come with open hearts and minds. For more information, contact: Martha Meyer at marthameyer@sbcglobal.net; Craig Cornelius at svenoly@earthlink.net; and Fuad Nijim at fuad.nijim@yahoo.com.

Deanery Doings

Our Peninsula Deanery met on Saturday, November 12 at Good Shepherd Church in Belmont. We elected officers for 2012, and our own Rev. Rob Keim was elected to the diocesan Committee on Nominations. Claire McKeefry, our current Youth Presence representative, reported on her time at the recent diocesan convention, characterizing it as a lot of fun, and great for youth to experience, not just to hear about. She also thought that the overnight stay (part of the Youth Presence program) was very beneficial.

A new diocesan committee on campus ministries has been established, with representation from our deanery. Church Growth workshops occurred in November (fundraising/rev-enue growth) and December (technol-

ogy), with more workshops expected in the future. These are part of the diocesan Church Growth program (<http://churchgrowthprogram.com>).

At our next meeting (February 11), representatives to the Diocesan Department of Congregational Development will be appointed, as well as Youth Presence and Alternate representatives to the diocesan convention next fall. These people do not need to be deanery representatives; if you are interested, talk to one of the St. Mark's deanery representatives (Gretchen Emmons, Lorna Paisley, Margalynne Armstrong, Michelle Gallagher, Teresa Downing, Terry Moore) to get your name added to the list of potential appointees.

Notes from the Music Staff



by Jim Welch

Last month I wrote about the 1982 Episcopal hymnal, with its exceptional variety of hymns and other resources. I have a collection of hymnals from other denominations as well, and I enjoy looking through them for ideas. Each of them has a preface which talks about the purpose of music in that particular denomination. Sometimes it's valuable to step back and consider what exactly is the purpose of music in worship.

I like this opening scriptural reference in the hymnal from my home church: "For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads." The preface continues, "The hymns invite the Spirit of the Lord, create a feeling of reverence, unify us as members, and provide a way for us to offer praises to the Lord. Some of the greatest sermons are preached by the singing of hymns. Hymns move us to repentance and good works, build testimony and faith, comfort the weary, console the mourning, and inspire us to endure to the end. Hymns can lift our spirits, give us courage, and move us to righteous action. They can fill our souls with heavenly thoughts and bring us a spirit of peace."

These are just a few of the things music can do for us in worship. I'd be happy to hear some of your thoughts.

Annual Meeting & Brunch

Sunday, February 5

All parishioners, longstanding and new, are invited to attend and participate in St. Mark's annual meeting on Sunday, February 5, 2011 in the Church, at the conclusion of a combined 10:00 a.m. service. No 8:00 a.m. service will be held that Sunday. Childcare will be provided during the meeting. A potluck lunch will be held in the Parish Hall following the meeting. Please bring a dish or beverage for ten to twelve persons as assigned by the initial of your last name. (If you have more than one last name just choose which initial to use!)

Brunch assignments are
(by last name):

- A - B..... Drinks
- C - J Fruit or Salad
- K - P..... Bread or Muffins
- Q - ZMain Dish

A Weekend with Friends: Theatre and Fun

February 10th-12th



Friday Evening (7PM):

Dessert & Hor d'oeuvre Potluck and Theatre with Friends

The Case Of The Missing Bodies

What would happen if Sam Spade, the detective from the Maltese Falcon, met Simon Peter from the New Testament? Come see Friends of the Groom Theater Company perform from the Book of Acts, chapter 12 in the style of a 1940's Humphrey Bogart detective movie.

"...[T]he refreshing combination of excellent acting, direction, and unusual material".

- Cincinnati Magazine

"...[J]ust the right combination of lightness and probing stimulation..."

- Calvin Reber, United Theological Seminary

Saturday (9AM-12PM):

A Retreat Workshop with Friends

Are you interested in moving forward in your faith? Do you want to get to know others in the congregation better? Don't miss this exciting day for all ages with a theater company that specializes in making the Christian message challenging and fun at the same time. There's something for everyone: The performances, talks, and small group activities are designed to help each person grow in Christ and to build a sense of community. Along the way, the group will use theater and storytelling to bring scripture and worship alive. Come and enjoy this delightful time with friends old and new!

Sunday Morning:

Worship with Friends

Come experience Friends of the Groom in our Sunday services as they use theater to bring worship alive in a new way. During Agape Coffee Hour, join us as Friends of the Groom present stories for the whole family. Guaranteed multi-generational fun!

Make a Creation-Caring Difference... Every Day!

It's never a bad day to manifest your faith through an act of environmental stewardship - big or small! So, the Commission on the Environment (COE) is offering some helpful suggestions in February - and throughout the rest of Lent - to help us all think of various ways to care for God's creation in our thoughts, words, and deeds. Come join in the fun parish-wide February efforts to be good stewards of God's beautiful earth every day!

Medicine Disposal Day Sunday, February 12

For the third consecutive year, the COE, is excited to hold a Medicine Disposal Day, led by COE Co-chair Simon Binns and Dr. David Clark. Help protect our water, soil and children from antibiotics, hormones and other pharmaceuticals by bringing unwanted medications to the 8am or 10am services for proper, safe and legal disposal courtesy of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation.

Questions? contact Simon Binns: binsssimon@gmail.com

Acceptable

- ✓ Any prescribed medication
- ✓ Any 'over-the-counter' medication
- ✓ Vitamin tablets & supplements
- ✓ Pills, Tablets, Gel caps, Capsules, etc.

Not Acceptable

- ✗ Bio-Hazard waste
- ✗ Blood Products, Syringes etc

Creation Care / Carbon Fast Calendar February 22 through Easter Sunday

Check out over 40 locally and globally-oriented suggestions for sustaining our precious planet by giving something up or doing something new every day this Lent. Some are as simple as turning off a light bulb when you leave a room while others offer ideas about long-term rewarding investments in high efficiency appliances or special community events.

We'll provide options for parishioners to openly or anonymously log their contributions to see if we can get even closer to our parish goal of 400 creation caring acts in Lent 2012.

Questions? check Community Life or contact Kate Dreher (kate.dreher@gmail.com/650-468-6512).

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St Mark's Episcopal Church Sunday Schedule

- 8:00 a.m. The Holy Eucharist (*St. Mark's Chapel*)
9:00 a.m. Adult Education Hour (*Kennedy Room*)
10:00 a.m. Choral Eucharist (*Church*)
Children's Programs
6:00 p.m. Youth Group (*Parish Hall*)

Church Office Telephone (650) 326-3800
Fax: (650) 326-2186
email: info@saint-marks.com

Church Staff

Rector: *The Rev. Matthew McDermott*
Associate Rector: *The Rev. Salying Wong*
Children, Teen & Family Ministries Coordinator: *Kelsey Hanf*
Deacon: *The Rev. Richard Peterson (Emeritus)*
Assisting Clergy: *The Rev. Rob Keim, The Rev. Dr Rebecca Lyman,*
The Rev. Joanne Sanders
Music Director: *Rebecca Maggi*
Church Organist: *James Welch*
Office Administrator: *Elyce Smith*
Business Administrator: *LeeAnne McDermott*
Treasurer: *Maureen Kennedy*

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Saint Mark's Calendar

Ongoing Events

Sunday

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (*St. Mark's Chapel*)
9:50-11:30 a.m. Child Care (*Eastside classroom 2*)
9:00 a.m. Adult Education Hour (*Kennedy Room*)
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist w/Music (*Church*)
Godly Play Infant Care and Toddlers (*Parish Hall, east side*)
Preschool (*Parish Hall, east side*)
Kindergarten & First grades (*Parish Hall, west side*)
Second & Third grades (*Parish Hall, west side*)
Fourth & Fifth grades (*Church-wing classroom*)
6:00 p.m. Youth Group (*Parish Hall, Youth Room*)

Monday

- 1:00 p.m. Centering Prayer and Meditation (*Kennedy Room*)

Tuesday

- 7:30 p.m. Compline (*St. Nicholas Chapel*)

Wednesday

- 8:30 a.m. Centering Prayer and Meditation (*Kennedy Room*)
12:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist with Healing Rite (*St. Mark's Chapel*)

Thursday

- 7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal (*Church*)

Friday

- 8:30 a.m. Centering Prayer and Meditation (*Kennedy Room*)

Special Events

Sunday, February 5 Annual Meeting (ONE 10am Service)

- 10:00 am Annual Meeting followed by brunch
10:00 am Youth Group Bibles and Bagels (*Youth Room*)

Friday, February 10 - Sunday, February 12

Friends of the Groom weekend (*see page 7 for details*)

Sunday, February 12

- Medicine Disposal Day (*Both 8am and 10am services*)
11:30 am Forum: Faith and Science (*Kennedy Room*)
11:30 am Love and Logic (*Library?*)
4:00 pm Faith-Full Families (*Parish Hall*)

Sunday, February 19

- 10:00 am Youth Group Bibles and Bagels (*Youth Room*)
11:30 am Forum: Faith and Science (*Kennedy Room*)
11:30 am Love and Logic (*Library?*)

Monday, February 20 President's Day

Holiday - Office Closed

Tuesday, February 21 Shrove Tuesday

- 6:15 pm Pancake Supper & Celebration! (*Parish Hall*)

Wednesday, February 22 Ash Wednesday

- 12:15 pm Imposition of Ashes (*Chapel*)
7:30 pm Imposition of Ashes (*Church*)

Friday, February 24 - Sunday, February 26

Youth Group Tahoe Trip

Sunday, February 26

- 11:30 am Forum: Eclipsing Empire (*Kennedy Room*)

Wednesday, February 29

- 6:00 pm Lenten Film Series "The Tree of Life" (*Grace Lutheran*)