



The Messenger

from St. Mark's

August/September 2016

**Vacation Bible School
Children's Ministry
Homecoming Sunday
Fall Formation Offerings**

Plans for a Future of Hope

The Rev. Beth Knowlton

“11 For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. 12 Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. 13 When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart.”

— Jeremiah 29:11-13

It is hard for me to believe that this August I will have been serving in this community for two years. In some ways it is impossible to believe that much time has passed. In other ways, it seems like I am rooted in a way that would indicate a longer tenure. I decided to take my vacation early this summer, and it has been a good decision. I came back to July rested and ready to engage in serious planning for the coming year. Whenever I get too serious about planning, I also have to remind myself to hold those plans lightly. Too many times in life our plans shift and change and while we can actively discern where we think God is calling us, the plans of God often reveal themselves in ways we do not imagine.



I am increasingly comfortable when plans change, because it is often a chance for me to more deeply believe the words of the prophet. The God we love is one who has plans for our welfare and wants to give us a future of hope. This has been abundantly clear in the St Mark's community this past year. We were able to engage in a parish-wide process of Study, Prayer, Teaching, and Conversation around same-sex marriage. Our Vestry was able to come to a consensus about what steps best fit our community and our Bishops have supported that process. While not everyone is in agreement about this issue, we were able to have a thoughtful and respectful conversation that honors the community of St. Mark's. We are stronger for having done this with one another.

We have also been engaged in a lot a planning for ways to strengthen and enhance our ministry to families and children. What was merely a hope for a plan last summer, has resulted in a new full-time priest. Because of a willingness to hope we were able to hire The Reverend Matthew Wise and to pay down a third of our outstanding capital debt. We are moving forward into a future that is solid financially and spiritually as we attend to the needs and hopes of our community. We have engaged with Ministry Architects and come up with an integrated plan to form our children and youth. While I had hoped to hire a full time children's minister, it turned out God had planted a much better solution in our midst. So, we now have two beautifully committed children's ministers, Rachel Doyle and Shea Pollom, who will make sure we are ready for a strong start in the fall.

Based on our articulated hopes for greater community time with one another, we've restarted Dinners for Eight and have found increased time for community fellowship. So, what is next for the coming year? While holding plans lightly, I hope the coming year is one where we turn our energy and attention outside of our four walls and seriously engage our call to serve the city of San Antonio. We have wonderful plans for new Lenten Offerings. We'll have Music and Lunch in Travis Park and a Parish-wide day of Prayer and Service. Make sure you come to Homecoming Sunday on August 28th. You can find out about all the many plans we have, meet representatives from the agencies we support through the Outreach Grants Committee, and get a first look at our brand new website. As always, I am grateful to be called to this place. It is going to be a year where we continue to seek God with our whole hearts. I can't wait to see what unfolds!

Peace,

Beth+

Homecoming Sunday - Ministry Fair

So You Think You Know St. Mark's?

Are you equipped to share what St. Mark's has to offer with your friends and family? We're not talking about the E word, you know.....Evangelism. We're asking you to think about how you would represent St. Mark's to the people you know and love (ahem...or at least like). How would you convey what resonates with you about this community? And could you draw a picture for others that would convey something of the strengths and character of this community?

Well, never fear, the Ministry Fair is here! Join us Sunday, August 28 during the formation hour at 10.10am for a chance to re-engage with fellow parishioners and challenge yourself to learn a few things about this community you didn't know.

Think you know all there is to know? Wonderful. Come anyway and test your knowledge. We promise to keep it fun. And for those who fill out the 9-section St. Mark's bingo card correctly, your name will be entered in a drawing to win one of five amazing prizes offered by your fellow parishioners including an estate planning review, dinner for six, goodies for your pets, and gift certificates. There's something for everyone! If you don't know all the answers, just ask a ministry or St. Mark's staff person. Intrigued yet or need more? Drum roll please.....

Top 10 Reasons to Come to the Ministry Fair:

- 10) Meet someone new to you!
- 9) Learn three new things you can share with friends and family about St. Mark's.
- 8) Learn what we actually spend on outreach and how much of the annual budget is supported by endowment.
- 7) Get connected with a new volunteer opportunity.
- 6) Meet with some of our outreach grant recipient agencies.
- 5) Get a first look at St. Mark's brand new website – with a member portal.
- 4) Kitchen Ministries makes great food. (We would never have a reception without food!)
- 3) Pick up Your 'Hot Off the Press' Parish Life Handbook for 2016/2017.
- 2) Win one of the 5 great prizes in our drawing.
- 1) Because everyone else will be there!





For the 2016-2017 program year, our Formation theme will be *Let the Same Mind be in You that as in Christ Jesus*. We will have several opportunities to dive more deeply into this theme during the year.

Rector's Forum - The Mind of Christ in Community

The Rev. Beth Knowlton and The Rev. Dr. Jane Patterson

"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus - Philippians 2:5"

This ten week class will look at Christian Community as an embodied practice of the ways of Jesus. We will have four major themes: conversation and discernment; care for the suffering; freedom and holiness; and justice and generosity.

To have the mind of Christ Jesus is to engage traditions and practices of conversation and community discernment. We will look at how the early church viewed moral conversation and how scripture currently informs a moral life. We will look at our community tradition of care for the suffering. What does scripture have to say to us about how we care for one another? Do changing scientific understandings of illness impact how we embody this care? As incarnate people, how do we understand a call to freedom and honoring the body? Finally, when we think of generosity and the use of our resources, how does having the mind of Christ Jesus impact our decision making?

The format of the class will include short essays available for study, group conversation, and practices during the week to inform the study materials.

Exploring our Faith Together

The Rev. Matt Wise and The Rev. Carol Morehead

A second track called Exploring our Faith Together will also be offered this program year. Designed to build on the Core Competencies identified at the Children and Youth Formation Summit held earlier this year, this unique formation opportunity ties the programming in our Children's ministry into our Adult Formation, allowing families to find common ground. Throughout the year, this track will spend several weeks studying the same Bible stories which the children's formation classes study, looking at the stories through an adult lens and offering families a chance to explore common themes in age-appropriate settings. While this second track will be geared toward families and parents, all are welcome to attend. Interspersed with the blocks of Bible stories will be topics of particular interest to families, including a look at parenting in the fall and instruction about the Eucharist especially for families in the Spring.

Throughout the year, addition opportunities for formation abound. In Advent, Adult Formation will join forces with our Music and Children's programs to offer inter-generational activities for all. With a combined services at 10.00am during Advent and formation at the 9.00am hour, this time will allow all members of the parish to join together in expectation and waiting for the coming Christ. Spring will include Adult Confirmation classes. Both Advent and Lent will have Quiet Days for reflection and retreat. Weekly formation will continue with Time Out Bible Study, the Art Class, the Gift of Years class, and the addition of Education for Ministry (EfM) beginning in the fall. Other offerings may also be added throughout the year.

Look for all the details in the Parish Life Handbook which will be available on Homecoming Sunday, August 28 in Gosnell Hall during the 10.10am formation hour.

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Children's Ministry

We are excited to be working as the Co-Directors of Children's Ministry this year, and we're looking forward to helping make this year a great one for St. Mark's children and families. Many thanks to the Children's Ministry Renovation Team (Elizabeth Raney, Katie McDonough, Greg Merritt, Jennifer Allison and Dell Villa) for their continued support and dedication to this ministry.

Vacation Bible School 2016: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace was a big success! The children spent time in Joseph's prison cell and in Pharaoh's palace learning about the gifts God gave Joseph on his journey: hope, special abilities, wisdom and forgiveness. Through music, creative crafts and activities, and time with their Egyptian families, the children learned that God gives each of us gifts to share. The children also participated in an outreach project and learned about intentional giving while collecting items for the Good Samaritan Food Bank. It was a joy to see the children having fun and building relationships with each other. Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers and families who helped bring Egypt to life at St. Mark's!



Shea Pollom and Rachel Doyle

The Episcopal Diocese of West Texas is conducting two Safeguarding God's Children Workshops at St. Mark's this summer. The first session was held on Saturday, July 23rd, and the second one will be Monday, August 15th from 6.00pm - 9.00pm. Dinner and childcare will be provided. It is a requirement that everyone who will be volunteering with children and youth at St. Mark's attend one of these training sessions. To sign up for the workshop, please send an e-mail to children@stmarks-sa.org.

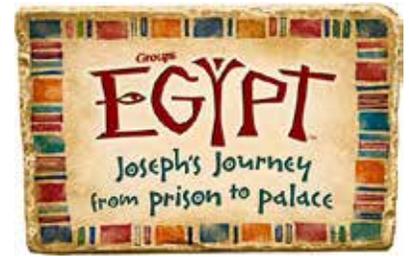
We will be taking a year off from Godly Play and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd during Sunday School. We love these programs and love what they have taught our children thus far. However, each of them requires intensive training of teachers and volunteers - something that we want to take the time to be intentional about. We will spend this program year reassessing both curricula and how we might best implement them here at St. Mark's. In the meantime, we have an exciting new curriculum for Sunday School this year! Based on the Core Competencies that came out of the Christian Formation Summit held in May, St. Mark's has chosen the Spark curriculum for children age 3-5th grade. This curriculum provides a broad experience of biblical knowledge, while also including fun, meaningful activities to be used during class time and at home. We can't wait to see these lessons in action in our Sunday School classrooms.

A new opportunity for families is also in the works for the coming year. Our St. Mark's clergy will be conducting a Eucharistic Training series for children and parents. The purpose of this training is to provide children with a deeper understanding of the Eucharistic symbols and liturgy and to prepare parents to support children at church and at home. Eucharistic Training will be held during the Sunday School hour in the spring of 2017.

Sunday, August 28th is Homecoming Sunday at St. Mark's. After the 9.00am service, we will gather as a parish for a ministry fair and to kick off the 2016/2017 school year. This is a great opportunity to meet your Sunday School teachers, so please make plans to attend!

Vacation Bible School

We were busy in June as over 30 children deepened their understanding of God through God Sightings, just ask a VBSer. In the Marketplace (Gish Hall), we made bricks, sugar cube pyramids, clay lamps, bread, and Pharaoh Headdresses. Everyone had a great VBS, just have a look!



We would like to thank those who gave so generously of themselves to bring VBS 2016 to life: Renee Faulk and Rachel Doyle as co-chairs, and our wonderful volunteers of all ages, Sam Clements, Paula Chalk, Jacob Schenk, Callie Sanchez, Abel Agueros, Jacob Mena, Ann Marie Fuentes, Ariana Hamza, Amanda Byrd, Kate Van Zandt, Katie McDonough, Margo Worley, Maddie Merritt, Christina Fisher, Claire Tracy, Ariana Falcon, Robin Voight, Neel Scott, Barbara Ward, Linda Addington, Doug Addington, Don Doyle, Kim Casey, Lou Taylor, Meredith Holmstrom, Joe Causby Bobby Stubbs, Magda Hamza, Kristin Roach, Elizabeth Herrera, Dell Villa, Tripp Voight, Julie VanZandt, Catherine Diel, Shea Pollom, Micaela Mangan, Ethan Pollom, Caroline Vassar, Tyler Kuykendall, Lynne Miller, Laura Butterfield, Denise Dahm, Michael Dahm, Andrew Dahm, Braelyn White, Jana Smiley, Amy Wise, Susan Wilson, Bunny Matthews, Deens Smith, Derek Shively, Chuy Mendoza, Richard Maldonado, Leah Thomas, John Aranda, Ruby Merrill, Priscilla Briones, Eric Nelson, Dina Aboul Saad, Janet Carrizales, Estella Devora, Mary Helen Sarabia, Renee Puledo, and Ruby Alderete.



Vacation Bible School



Youth News



Happening #134; Friday-Sunday, August 5-7 at St. George - San Antonio Happenings are spiritual renewal weekends for high schoolers in grades 10 through 12. The diocese sponsors three weekends each year in various locations, with the next Happening at St. George - San Antonio. For more information about the upcoming Happening weekend contact Todd Allison at tallison@stmarks-sa.org or sign up online at www.dwtx.org/happening.

Acolyte Training and Meeting, Sunday, August 21 There will be an acolyte training and meeting on Sunday, August 21 at 8:30am. Anyone 6th grade through 12th grade (as of fall 2016) wanting to acolyte or already an acolyte must attend this meeting. Email Todd Allison at tallison@stmark-sa.org to be included in the fall roster.

Wednesday Night Fellowship (WNF) Wednesday Night Fellowship is the weekly, week night, gathering for our youth from 5.00pm-7.00pm in the Youth Suite. WNF will resume on Wednesday, August 24. All youth and friends are welcome for an evening of fun, fellowship, music and discussion. We meet for dinner at Café Kairos followed by the evening's program.

Youth Leadership Weekend, Friday-Sunday, September 16-18 Juniors and seniors of the St. Mark's Youth Group are invited to attend the annual Leadership Weekend September 16-18. The weekend will be filled with opportunities for the group to be motivated and inspired to be role models and leaders in the youth group for the coming year and beyond. Space is limited, please contact Todd for more information.

New Beginnings #3, Friday-Sunday, October 14-16 at St. Mark's - San Antonio Calling all middle school youth to participate in this unique weekend designed to respond to the issues, concerns, and needs of young people in 6th to 8th grade, with the goal of helping participants grow in their love of the Lord Jesus Christ, and subsequently, themselves. Hosted by St. Mark's, the weekend cost is \$50. For registration information, email laura.kean@dwtx.org.

Outreach Grant Spotlight

Assistance League of San Antonio

The Assistance League of San Antonio is a local chapter of the national Assistance League. Its purpose is to train and use volunteers to help those less fortunate to live a better, more meaningful life. Saint Mark's was asked to help fund their Operation School Bell project, which works with Title I schools to provide school clothes and supplies to elementary age children whose families have a hard time making ends meet. The children come from the school to the store they have at their headquarters and shop for and choose their own clothes, which come in a wide range of sizes, etc. to meet the needs of each child. All items are newly purchased or donated new; none of the items are used. The kids also receive underwear, socks, personal hygiene items, a box of school supplies and two books. The goal is to give these children the self-confidence of knowing they are appropriately dressed and have the proper supplies so they can focus on learning.

Another project is Togs for Tots, which provides clothing and other items to needy families with children who are preemies through Pre-K that are referred by a number of different agencies. In addition to personal hygiene and clothing items, they are also given age appropriate books and, for infants up to three months old, a special baby gown lovingly hand-made by member volunteers. We saw them during our site visit tour and they are beautiful!

In addition to these projects, there are five other projects and the thrift shop. The thrift shop is not only their major fundraiser but also something of a ministry in offering gently used items, including clothing, furniture, household items and jewelry at reasonable prices to their customers. (I'm hoping to get back there with plenty of time to shop!) Watch Me Grow is a bilingual guide to provide guidance to parents on developmental stages and nutrition and immunization information for children up through age five. College scholarships are offered to college students entering their junior and senior years at Bexar county four-year colleges. The Adopt a Resident project features weekly game days, monthly birthday parties, a spring fashion show and a holiday Angel Tree to residents of Morningside Ministries' Chandler Assisted Living and Chandler Health Care campuses. Enhanced Learning Awards are given to schools and individual teachers to fund learning experiences that the school's budget doesn't cover. And last, but not least, the I'm In Charge project is a safety program covering being safe when home alone, responding to strangers, gun safety, bullying and cyber-bullying presented in elementary schools by Assistance League volunteers.

Although no organization can solve all the problems the city and its poorest residents face, they are touching the lives of many, many people and covering a wide range of issues with approximately 450 enthusiastic volunteers. These women, with help from their donors and outside volunteers in 2014-15 raised \$640,000 and gave 70,000 volunteer hours to serve 70,000 people in the San Antonio community. Quite an accomplishment! The group is non-sectarian and the members probably come from a variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds. I can't help recalling Jesus telling us that when we feed the hungry and cloth the naked of the least among us, we are doing that to him and that's what these committed women are doing. Great role models for all of us. -- Submitted by Gail Harwood.

A number of St. Mark's Outreach Grant recipients will attend the Ministry Fair on August 28 to share their stories and offer volunteer opportunities.

Youth Renovation Team News

The Youth Renovation team has been hard at work implementing recommendations from the Ministry Architect's youth report. As a result, they have created four new volunteer opportunities:

Youth Ministry Baristas - Are you creative and "in-touch" with the latest trends in breakfast foods and drinks?

Hot Topic! Facilitators - If every time you open the Bible it teaches you something new, then this may be a position for you. Sunday morning and Wednesday evening opportunities.

Youth Ministry Wranglers - Your goal is to encourage youth who are attending church services, but not participating in Youth Ministry Sunday Formation activities, to begin to participate.

Check-In Managers - Are you a "social organizer?"

Read about these transforming new ways to engage at St. Mark's with our youth and sign up online at stmarks-sa.org. Questions can be directed to Don Lucas at dllucas@alamo.edu.

Commission for Women's Ministries

Amidst the showers of April, the newly-renovated Camp Capers activities building was the site of the Spring Gathering of the Commission for Women's Ministries. Some 70 women from all areas of the Diocese of West Texas met to greet old friends and meet new ones.

Our theme was "Here Am I," referencing Paul's message in Romans 12:6-8 where he tells us that each of us has been given particular gifts to be used to glorify God's grace. As Paul describes these gifts, they are prophesy, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, and mercy. We all have one or more of these gifts, and Paul directs us to use them.

The next Gathering is October 14-17 and our very special guest will be Bishop Laura Ahrens, Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of Connecticut. Our chaplain will be St. Mark's own Rev. Carol Morehead.



Through a survey format, we were able to discern our own personal special gifts, called "charisms," divinely-conferred talents. Much of our discussions centered on how we can use our charisms through our faith in our daily lives. This activity was the core of our Gathering, but there were other events - some fun, some serious - that made for a totally spiritual weekend. There were prayer sessions and quiet times. A history area displays pictures of past Gatherings before Camp Capers was transformed into

the beautiful place it is today and nostalgic pictures of those who are no longer with us. Afternoon tea was enjoyed, complete with lovely hats available for all. Plenty of free time was provided for naps, walking the grounds of the camp or down by the river, and just visiting with friends.

The Rev. Jane Patterson, our chaplain, led a healing service on Saturday evening and a Eucharist on Sunday morning.

This was my first C4WM Gathering, and it certainly won't be my last. I returned from the Gathering with a renewed spiritual awareness and an insight into my own deep feelings of faith. Memories of the camaraderie shared among the attendees, the love of our Lord that was evident within each session, and the enjoyment of each other in this beautiful setting have stayed with me.

The next Gathering in October promises to be a blessed weekend, and all St. Mark's women are encouraged to attend. The new activity center is lovely, as are the lodges with private double rooms. Cabins are still available for those who like it a little more rustic. Registration is now open at dwtx.org/events.



-- Submitted by Dee Whiteside

Upcoming Music from St. Mark's

August

August 14 at 5.00pm, Choral Evensong for the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary at St. Mark's. It will be sung by the Youth Choir, Choral Scholars, and Staff Singers featuring music from our Evensong at the Washington National Cathedral!

Responses: Malcolm Archer

Canticles: Bryan Kelly 'Evening Service in C'

Anthem: Benjamin Britten 'Rejoice in the Lamb.'

September

A service of Taize will be offered by the choirs of St. Mark's at the Mother House Chapel, located on the campus of The University of The Incarnate Word. Time and date will be posted on the website at stmarks-sa.org and in upcoming Announcements and eNews issues.

Announcements

Pathways to Hope - Breaking the Stigma of Mental Illness

A community-wide conference on mental health, "Pathways to Hope: Breaking the Stigma of Mental Illness," will be presented at the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts in San Antonio on Friday-Saturday, August 26-27. St. Mark's is one of the sponsors of this free event. Featured speakers are Kay Warren, Dr. Dan Morehead, Dr. Matthew Stanford, and Joe Padilla. More information can be found at www.pathwaystohope.net.

Second Annual Haven for Hope Book Fair

Start saving your books for the Haven for Hope Book Fair! Bring your books to the Parish House through Sunday, October 2. We are particularly in need of spiritual and uplifting books. We seek bibles (new, if possible), history books, self help, classic fiction, biographies, science fiction, mysteries, poetry, children's books, and westerns. AA and Alanon books are also welcome. All books need to be in good condition, and paperbacks are preferred. Please, no textbooks or romance novels. For more information, contact Susan Guess at 210-415-3473 or Trinka McGehee at 210-416-9272.

Financials

Make gifts toward your pledge at www.stmarks-sa.org, click on Pledge/Give; or make your gift by mail. Contact Priscilla Briones at pbriones@stmarks-sa.org or 210-226-2426 with questions about your giving to date. Contact Dina Aboul Saad at dsaad@stmarks-sa.org or by phone to discuss stewardship, annual and endowment gifts, and planning giving.

2016 FINANCIAL REPORT as of 6/30/16

50% of annual budget	Actual (YTD)	Budgeted (YTD)
Pledge Revenue	\$1,033,275	\$1,094,389
Non-Pledge Revenue	\$97,042	\$84,935
Open Plate/Seasonal Giving	\$22,497	\$21,369
Other Rev (parking lot, fees, carryover)	\$261,480	\$242,045
Endowment/Fund Revenue	\$186,814	\$133,305
Total Revenue	\$1,601,109	\$1,576,043
Total Expenses	\$1,298,013	\$1,312,701
Over/(Under)	\$303,096	\$263,342

\$1,610,771 in 2016 Pledges • 323 Pledges • Average Pledge is \$4,987 • Median Pledge is \$2,700

Clergy at St. Mark's

Parish Clergy: The Rev. Elizabeth Knowlton, Rector; The Rev. Carol Morehead, Associate Rector for Liturgy, Adult Formation, and Pastoral Care; The Rev. Matthew Wise, Associate Rector for Outreach, Family Ministry, and Parish Life

**24 hour pastoral care
emergency phone
210-507-0256**

Making a Gift of Their Service: The Rev. C. Douglas Earle, Assisting Priest; The Rev. Mary Earle, Assisting Priest; The Rev. Dr. John Lewis, Co-director, St. Benedict's Work+Shop; The Rev. Dr. Jane Patterson, Co-director, St. Benedict's Work+Shop



In Remembrance and Thanksgiving (thru July 25, 2016)

Memorial Fund

Patrick Butler III by Susan Frost
Jimmy Cavender by Sue Bain, Betty Chumney, Judy Cavender,
Reagan Houston IV, Jimmie Thurmond III
Christine Deep by Anthony and Careme Deep
Robert Maceo by Claudia Maceo
Hallie & Maston Nixon by Patricia Steves
Victoria Vasquez by Olga Raygoza

Special Gifts

To Carol Morehead's Discretionary Fund in thanksgiving for her
ministry to adult confirmands by Polly & George Spencer

To Children's Music Program in honor of Joseph Causby and
Robert Brewer by Beth and Bob Brown
To St. Mark's in honor of Bill and Kathy Wassberg by Ellen Dickson

Cafe Kairos

August 24-25

Pene Pasta Bolognese
Sautéed Green Beans
Garlic Bread Sticks
Caesar Salad
Cobbler

Aug 31-Sept 1

Pasta Alfredo with Chicken
Sautéed Broccoli
Garden Salad
Garlic Bread Sticks
Cake

September 7-8

Cheese Enchiladas with Chili
con Carne Sauce
Corn Bread
Refried beans
Tossed Salad
Tres Leches Cake

September 14-15

Traditional Lasagne
Sautéed Green Beans
Caesar Salad
Garlic Bread Sticks
Cheesecake

September 21-22

King Ranch Chicken
Garden Salad
Dinner Rolls
Apple Crisp

September 28-29

Asian Chicken Stir-fry
Steamed rice
Tossed Salad
Cake

Photos in this Issue

Cover photo: Elizabeth Herrera

Photos in this issue provided by: Eric Nelson; Rachel Doyle; Todd Allision; Patrice Oliver, and Jane Ahuero, Commission for Women's Ministries President