



THE MESSENGER

from St. Mark's

November 2020

Vestry Slate

All Saints' Day

Stewardship and Annual Parish Meeting



We begin November with a remembering all the saints who have come before us, giving thanks for the saints among us, and gathering in gratitude to reflect on the past year. Usually, this has taken place on the Feast of All Saints'. We remember those who have died, we have an ingathering of our pledges for the coming year, and we gather for the Annual Parish Meeting. This year, we have decided to extend these themes throughout the month of November. This will give us a chance to enter more deeply into a space of gratitude, and the opportunity to intentionally reflect on our calling to follow the King of Love, who is our Shepherd.

We will begin on November 1 with the Feast of All Saints'. Our remembrance of those we have lost in the past year feels particularly important to me this year. We have not been able to gather for public funerals since March. So, the sense of loss to our community, both for families who are grieving as well as the church family, seems less resolved than in past years. Please plan to participate during the 10.00am streamed service that Sunday. We will have the opportunity to pause as a community and remember with one another. Our choir performed the Fauré *Requiem* in 2018, and we will be able to use those voices to create a beautiful choral offering. We will read the names of those who have died in the past year at our altar, and we will have a chance to be grateful to God for what these saints have meant to the family of St. Mark's.

Then be on the lookout the following week for a generosity kit to land on your doorstep. Our hope is that there will be something for everyone in that package that causes us to be grateful for all St. Mark's

means to us, what we mean to each other, and what we mean to the broader community. We have a troop of volunteers who are giving of their time to help us remember that we remain connected as a community. I'm particularly excited about the treat from our faithful kitchen staff, but there is much more included!

On November 8, we will gather by Zoom for our Annual Parish Meeting. We will have the opportunity to affirm the slate of our new Vestry class. Please make sure you take the time to read the responses from the slate in this issue. I have been astounded over and over again at how God provides us with the people we need at the time we need them. As you read of this slate's commitment to St. Mark's, I know you will be overwhelmed with gratitude by their willingness to serve and the assurance of God's provision that is evident in their responses. Our meeting will also feature an update on the state of the church and a video montage from members of our community.

You will also receive our annual stewardship mailing around this time. Our theme this year is *The King of Love, My Shepherd Is*. We know that when we follow Love, our fears subside and a life of abundance is possible, even in difficult times. We will still have an opportunity to gather our pledges at the church for those of you who'd like to do so. We are planning a drive-through ingathering in our parking lot at 4.00pm on November 22. As we prepare to enter Thanksgiving week, the clergy will bless your pledge card, you will be able to pick up a mini pumpkin pie stack from our kitchen staff (what is November at St. Mark's without pie?), and also prepare for Advent by picking up materials to make your Advent wreath at home.

I continue to be inspired by the creativity and faithfulness of our community. I know that we are communicating grace to one another and serving the city of San Antonio. Please create space to join us for November. You are the saints of God here at St. Mark's! We need all of you!

Peace,

Beth +

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Please take some time to read about each of the members of the Vestry Slate (in alphabetical order). They are all well-qualified, having been recommended by the Vestry Discernment Committee. To introduce the candidates to you, they were asked to reflect on the following:

1. Why do you feel called to serve on the Vestry of St. Mark's?
2. Please describe your participation at St. Mark's and/or in the community, indicating experiences that you think will be helpful for the Vestry.
3. St. Mark's Core Vocation is *Feeding San Antonio with the Bread of Life: Feeding the hungry with real food; Feeding those who are hungry for knowledge and meaning; Feeding those who are hungry for beauty and creativity*. How do you envision the Vestry working in support of this vocation?
4. When did you join St. Mark's and what continues to draw you to this community?

Special Note:

A member of the Vestry has stepped down for personal reasons. Given the time remaining in their term, we decided to source a parishioner to fulfill the term from the Vestry Discernment Committee's most recent work. We identified Anne Schelleng as an excellent candidate; her bio is also included.

LEN BRILEY



1. St. Mark's has given so much to my family and I feel duty-bound to give back. This is also a critical time for St. Mark's, as I think the pandemic will force us to adapt to some new realities. I am excited and honored

to serve. **2.** I dipped my toe in as an usher years ago, and dove in with stints on the Vestry and as Treasurer. But I'm most proud of serving on the Rector Search Committee that nominated The Rev. Beth Knowlton! I'm currently serving on a local pro bono organization (SALSA) board, which is also facing challenges during the current crisis. I'm hoping my experience will provide some insight to assist us in navigating the challenges we'll be facing in the next few years. **3.** I would like to see us translate our mission into action. For me at least,

that will involve rolling up my sleeves to see how we're currently living (or not) into the mission from a programmatic standpoint. I foresee the Vestry bringing all of our gifts - our expertise, experience and creativity - to move ourselves closer to our mission, but what those things may reveal remain to be seen. I'm ready for the journey. **4.** I joined around 1996 - just after I met and fell for a life-long parishioner, Jan Jones (Briley). St. Mark's has meant everything to my family. I love its spiritual orientation, its inclusiveness, its warmth, and of course, the music!

LIZ CASIANO EVANS

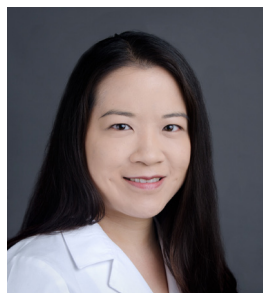
1. St. Mark's has been a part of my life for many years. I started attending when I was in middle school with my parents and sister. Now as an adult, I can appreciate St. Mark's from a different standpoint. I have been blessed with an amazing church community that has supported me through many milestones including confirmation, a scholarship to college, marriage, and the baptism of my first child. It is my turn to give back to this community and I think the Vestry is a wonderful way to do this. Being asked to serve is an honor and I'm excited to get started. **2.** I have been involved in various small things over the years. Two things I am proud of are organizing a service team to feed families at Haven for Hope and being part of the Rector Search Committee that called The Rev. Beth Knowlton. Being involved at Haven for Hope gave me a great sense of one of the great ways that St. Mark's gives back to our community. I also loved getting to know parishioners in a more personal way and spending time with them on Sunday evenings getting our hands dirty. Being part of the Rector Search Committee also gave me my first look into more of the church organization. Most recently, I have been attending the Mind the Gap events. This has been a wonderful way to get to know the younger community at St. Mark's. I think these experiences will be helpful in my perspective of the mission of St. Mark's.



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3. I think the Vestry's role is to help keep these goals the center of what we do and decisions we make. I think we are members who are actively involved in church services and activities. We bring in firsthand knowledge of these experiences that are fulfilling the mission and can also help with gaps that we see. 4. I joined when I was in middle school. I kept coming back, initially because of my family, and later because of the community. There are so many things I love about St. Mark's, the people, the staff, the music, but most of all, the sense of community I have, even now, when we aren't meeting in person. Being part of a church family is important to me and I want to raise my kids in this same environment.

CYNTHIA CHI



1. I was baptized and confirmed in North Carolina the year before I moved to San Antonio, and St. Mark's has been my spiritual home in San Antonio. As such, I've essentially "grown up" at St. Mark's with its

members as my spiritual family - a family that saw me through a career/midlife/existential crisis and kept me grounded in faith, hope, and love. Then, about a year ago, my mother suffered a major heart attack. The members of St. Mark's prayed for her health and recovery, and the clergy reached out to our family, which was such a comfort. There is no doubt in my mind that your prayers were answered, as God saved her life and restored her to perfect health. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the St. Mark's community for the care, concern, and support that y'all have shown my family and me during times of need, and I'm blessed to be able to repay that debt through service on the Vestry.

2. In my time at St. Mark's, I've participated in Mind the Gap, the Greeter Ministry, Youth Ministry, Christmas to the Street, Adult Formation (presenting "Health and Wellness Part II" last year), the Care Committee, and The Path bible study group. In the community I've co-founded the Trans-Affirmative Care Team (TACT) at UT Health San Antonio, based in its Department of Pediatrics, and we are working to provide comprehensive medical and mental health care to our local transgender community. Prior to my commitment to TACT, I served on the Board of Directors of the Innocence

Project of Texas and chaired its Fundraising and Outreach Committee. My hope is that my interest in and experience with advocacy will be of value to the Vestry. I also have volunteered at the San Antonio Humane Society since 2017 and at the San Antonio Food Bank with Team Rubicon during the COVID-19 pandemic. 3. There are (at least) eight dimensions of wellness: physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, vocational, financial, and environmental. The current and incoming members of the Vestry all have unique gifts that can help us to collectively promote each of these facets of wellness for our St. Mark's community. I look forward to learning more about our parish's needs and strategizing, as a team, ways in which we can meet those needs - and I would love for us to develop more opportunities for all of our members to actively engage in our Core Vocation. Working together, I am confident that we can continue to sustain but actually grow our commitment to service - within St. Mark's and throughout San Antonio.

4. I joined St. Mark's in 2016, and from day one I have appreciated how welcoming and affirming it has been for people from all walks of life. Now, more than ever, we need examples and models of inclusivity in our society, and I am thankful to be a part of a church community that provides a safe space for all who seek fellowship and wish to worship.

BILL FISHER

1. To be technical (lawyer that I am...), I am answering the call of the Vestry Discernment Committee to stand for Vestry. And having served on that committee in prior years, I trust the process



by which they identify slates of candidates. The reason I answered their call is that I am moved to deepen my service to St. Mark's, especially at a time of great disruption/opportunity. 2. My participation in St. Mark's deepened significantly after attending the Duncan Park retreat led by The Rev. Dr. John Lewis and The Rev. Matt Wise. Shortly afterwards I joined the Finance Committee and am just wrapping up a full term. Also, I served on the first two iterations of the Vestry Discernment Committee.

Continued on the next page.

2. (cont.) My wife Mariana and I have been engaged with the Mind the Gap group and we have also experienced the youth programs vicariously through the experience of our children, Christina and Maxwell. These activities have brought me in contact with various sectors of the St. Mark's congregation, clergy, and staff and familiarized me with many of our current programs, in addition to our decision-making processes and style. The community activity of most relevance to Vestry service is my longtime association with the San Antonio Public Library Foundation, for which I currently serve as board chair. That Foundation's practice of needs assessment, goal setting, and consensus building will translate well to Vestry service. **3.** I see the Vestry's role as listening closely to the rest of the congregation and working with the clergy to explore how to continue to serve our Core Vocation in greatly changed circumstances. I feel that the various hungers that we seek to satisfy have all intensified during the pandemic and that we will require new and creative ways to continue feeding them. **4.** I was baptized at St. Mark's almost five decades ago. But I joined the community by choice upon my return to San Antonio as an adult. What initially drew me to St. Mark's then was that my parents, Lewis and Mary, belonged. But the draw intensified after I got to know other members of the community, and especially after marrying and starting a family. Mariana and I have found the various avenues of youth engagement, especially through the music program and youth group, of great importance to our family. And it has been a joyful experience to belong to and interact with community that is so diverse, thoughtful, and caring, not to mention fun to be around!

AMY PHIPPS



1. As a cradle Episcopalian who was raised in a different church, I found St. Mark's only in midlife, and my gratitude is profound. The community here is beyond price, and the opportunities for service have been beyond

rewarding. I have served on governing boards for various nonprofits during my career and have always found that level of involvement to be a genuine opportunity for deep impact. It is a privilege to be invited to serve and be part of St. Mark's further growth. **2.** At St. Mark's, my first and primary involvement has been with the choir (18 years now!). I love being part of this community that

is a such key part of our worship together. I've also served on the "Attitude of Gratitude" committee, the Outreach Grants committee, the Vestry Discernment Committee, and the Commission on Ministries. I have been a part of the Crockett Academy volunteer team for the last three years. All of these experiences gave me greater knowledge and appreciation for the depth and breadth of life at St. Mark's and how we extend ourselves into the larger community. In that context, I believe I will bring to the Vestry my experiences in the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors of San Antonio – as a nonprofit leader, foundation executive, and now philanthropic consultant. I am eager to do so, especially during these times of change and crisis, as we contemplate how to continue to live out our Core Vocation to *Feed San Antonio with the Bread of Life*. **3.** I am so grateful to the Vestry members of the past who shaped the Core Vocation and have charted the course at St. Mark's using it as a guide star. Centering ourselves around this well-articulated vision helps us all to understand our "who, what, where, when, why, and how." I believe that, by coming together under its umbrella, we can exercise discernment in how we go forward as a community and beyond. **4.** Three things drew me to St. Mark's: the music, David Phipps, and 9/11. When he and I began seeing each other, I was not affiliated with a church, but as a lifelong musician, I very much enjoyed the evensongs and special services like Lessons and Carols to which David invited me. Then, the week after 9/11, when our country was paralyzed with grief, St. Mark's had a special service. I slipped into a back pew, knelt in prayer, and never looked back. I joined the choir that spring, was confirmed in May 2002, and David and I were married here in June 2003 (thank you, Mike Chalk!). The deep comfort that being in this community gave to my soul was profound and continues to be so.

ANNE SCHELLENG

1. I am deeply committed to St. Mark's and continually seek ways to engage in this community that provides richness to so many. This call comes at an opportune time and I am fully prepared to serve and help shape the realization of our Core Vocation.



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2. I have been a member of the St. Mark's Choir since 2010, participated in two pilgrimages to the United Kingdom with the choir, and co-chaired the Organist & Choirmaster Search Committee in 2018. I have served at Lenten Luncheons, participated in Dinners for 8, weeknight formation, and other ad hoc gatherings, and am active in Mind the Gap. 3. My background as a nonprofit executive in San Antonio has afforded me the opportunity to witness firsthand the great work of our parish from the other side. The Vestry's work is vital to sustaining and growing our impact -

ensuring that we are responsive to the needs of our community, adaptable in a changing landscape, and effective in our utilization of resources and gifts. 4. I received a call to join a St. Mark's choir pilgrimage in 2010 as a last-minute 'substitute' and never left. What drew me in still applies today: a sense of home in the inclusive and multi-faceted culture; the articulate and thought-invoking preaching; the opportunities to learn and grow in my faith; the people, programs, the list goes on. And, of course, the music.

All Saints' Day - November 1, 2020

10.00AM HOLY EUCHARIST STREAMED ONLINE

Each November 1, we come to the liturgical year's final Principal Feast in All Saints' Day, a part of Allhallowtide, a three-day commemoration including All Hallows' Eve (Halloween), All Saints' Day (All Hallows' Day), and All Souls' Day. So, what is this feast day all about and how will we commemorate it this year at St. Mark's?

During the Middle Ages, "saints" came to be defined quite narrowly as that word was applied primarily to persons of heroic sanctity, whose deeds and exemplary witness to the Gospel were being recalled with gratitude by later generations. While those saints identified over the centuries by the church are still honored and celebrated with their own feast and fast days during the liturgical year, we now use All Saints' Day for remembering "saints" as the New Testament describes them - the entire membership of the Christian community, the whole Body of Christ. On this day, we rejoice in the communion of all the saints, here and now: the folks who have been beacons of Christ's light in our own lives, and the person who sits in the pew next to us (even if six feet away). And that word "communion" is an important one to note as well. We believe that as we pray and sing, as we participate in the Eucharist, and as we strive to live our lives according to Christ's teachings and example, that we "saints" are in spiritual union with one another, with all those who came long before us, and with all those who will come after us. So, this feast of All Saints' is our liturgical commemoration and reminder that you and me are not in this alone, that we are encouraged and

supported by a great cloud of witnesses, and that the Body of Christ is infinitely bigger and broader than me and you.

As we celebrate this year, you'll notice some special offerings for this feast day. We'll use a different Eucharistic Prayer than we are used to - Eucharistic Prayer D. Not only does it include the petitions we'd typically hear during the Prayers of the People, but also provides space for the prayerful recitation of the Necrology. Gathered around the altar, you'll hear our clergy name out loud all those who have died and that we have prayed for since last All Saints' Day. By calling these names and tolling the bell, we remember that they join us around Christ's table, and that we continue to be surrounded by their witness and holiness in our lives. You'll hear the St. Mark's choirs sing the liturgical settings of Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem* (more information on the next page). In our own homes we'll sing some favorite hymns including *For All The Saints*, *Who From Their Labors Rest*, and *Ye Holy Angels Bright*. And we will all have the opportunity to renew our Baptismal promises in the Covenant that binds us all together in this communion of saints. I pray you'll be able to join us online at 10.00am. *But lo! There breaks a yet more glorious day; the saints triumphant rise in bright array; the King of Glory passes on his way. Alleluia! Alleluia!* (For All the Saints, William Walsham How)

-Submitted by The Rev. Matt Wise

**Requiem Eucharist for the Feast of All Saints'
featuring Gabriel Fauré's, Requiem
Sunday, November 1, 2020 at 10.00 am**

As we find ourselves in this season of fall, the liturgical year provides rich opportunities for various seasons and feast days. During this time of pandemic, the staff has explored and discovered opportunities to offer worship in fresh and creative ways. This year, All Saints' Day, happens to fall on the first Sunday of November. This glorious feast day in the church year is dedicated to remembering all the faithful departed in the past year, and all those who have gone before us. It is especially fitting and meaningful for the choir to sing a setting of the *Requiem*, Mass for the dead.

On November 4, 2018, the St. Mark's adult and treble choirs performed a concert for All Saints' featuring Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem*. Thankfully, we recorded that concert, and we are now in the process of using each movement from the requiem to create a full celebration of All Saints' in the context of a Choral Eucharist at 10.00am. A unique part of the virtual choir experience is pairing images and footage of our beautiful church, the people gathered in it, musicians, and the clergy celebrating the Holy Eucharist. There are many hours and several layers to this process, creating a spiritual and meaningful experience for all. I would like to thank Jessie Lopez, a volunteer choir member in the adult choir, who has given his time and talent to help produce these special virtual choir offerings, and Samuel Gaskin, Assistant Organist & Choirmaster, who has a large part in the weekly filming and editing process. The requiem is a prayerful lament for the dead



Thank you, Jessie Lopez!

originating from early Christianity. Originally, these compositions were intended to be performed in a liturgical context with monophonic chant. Eventually, the dramatic character of the text began to appeal to composers to an extent that they made the requiem a genre of its own, and the compositions of composers such as Berlioz and Verdi are recognized as concert pieces rather than liturgical works. Fauré originally referred to his composition as a *petit requiem* which is divided into seven movements: *Introit et Kyrie*; *Offertoire*; *Sanctus*; *Pie Jesu*; *Agnus Die*; *Libera Me*; and *In Paradisum*. If you are not already familiar with this sublime requiem, you'll at least recognize the last movement, *In Paradisum*, due to its cinematic popularity.

Fauré's *Requiem* is most likely a musical tribute to his father, who died in 1885, two to three years before work on the Requiem began. In a 1902 interview with Fauré, he said, "Everything I managed to entertain by way of religious illusion I put into my Requiem, which moreover is dominated from beginning to end by a very human feeling of faith in eternal rest." His Requiem, unlike many others, is characterized as calm and serene. Fauré's original version, from 1888, was scored for a choir of about 40, and accompanied by a small orchestra of solo violin, violas, cellos, basses, harp, timpani and organ – that is what one will experience from our 2018 recording. It was first performed in Paris's Madeleine Church at the 1888 funeral of architect Joseph Lesoufaché, and it was performed at Fauré's funeral in 1924.

I give thanks, not only for our wonderful music ministry, but, for all the members of our St. Mark's community. Please join us on Sunday, November 1, for this special virtual choir offering.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jon Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jon Johnson
Organist & Choirmaster



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING & STEWARDSHIP

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Sunday, November 8
11.15am via Zoom

Make plans to join us on Sunday, November 8 at 11.15am for our Annual Parish Meeting. We will hear from our Rector, Wardens, Treasurer, and see what we've been up to this year! You can find more information about this important event in the weekly eNews.

GENEROSITY KITS

Be on the lookout November 5-8 for a delivery on your doorstep! We invite you to engage with the items in this kit as a practice in generosity with your families, with your neighbors, and with each other as members of the St. Mark's community. These items are meant to be both playful and centering, and to remind us of God's generosity to and through us.

PHOTO CREDITS

Cover photo: Eric Nelson

Photos in this issue provided by: Len Briley, Liz Casiano Evans, Cynthia Chi, Bill Fisher, Jessie Lopez, Natalie Matthews, Amy Phipps, Anne Schelleng

STEWARDSHIP INGATHERING

Sunday, November 22
4-5pm in the St. Mark's parking lot

Pledge cards will be mailed in early November. Plan to bring your pledge card to the drive-through pledge ingathering on November 22 from 4-5pm at St. Marks.

If you can't join us in person, we invite you to pledge online at stmarks-sa.org/give or use the enclosed return envelope.

At the ingathering, you'll be greeted by clergy as you offer your pledge cards. Our kitchen staff will be sharing a pre-Thanksgiving treat, and Advent wreath kits will be available for pick up. Look for details in upcoming eNews.