



# St. Mark's Episcopal Church

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315 East Pecan Street, San Antonio, TX 78205-1819

April 19, 2022

Dear People of St. Mark's,

Alleluia, Christ Is Risen!

The season of Easter continues as we celebrate the Great Fifty Days between Easter Day and the Feast of Pentecost. What a glorious Holy Week and Easter we experienced together. Our joy was palpable as we engaged in these well-loved services and gathered in fellowship after so much disruption. We have a number of happenings on the horizon that we invite you to make space for in your spring and summer plans. Reconnection and spiritual renewal are gifts we can experience through community life at St. Mark's.

As many of you know, our beloved youth minister, Meredith Rogers, is leaving to begin seminary at the Virginia Theological Seminary in the fall. Not only has she served with love and care during her five years here, she was baptized and raised as part of the St. Mark's community. We are so grateful for her and want to send her off with a generous purse to help fund her studies in the coming years. Please consider making a financial gift to wish her well. You may write the check to St. Mark's with "Meredith's purse" in the memo field, or use the Give page on the website. We will celebrate her and our youth at 10:10 am in Gosnell Hall on Sunday, May 8, 2022. Meredith will be joining with some of our graduating seniors to offer reflections during the services that day as well. We will luckily have her with us through the end of June, but we want to celebrate her before people begin their summer travel.

On the following Sunday, May 15, we switch to our summer schedule, with a 7:45 am service and a 10 am combined service. Following the 10 am service we will gather for a send-off celebration to commence my sabbatical this summer. I will be away from the parish from May 16 through Labor Day. I am grateful to have received funding from the Lilly Endowment which enables me to travel and engage in some important renewal activities. Our diocese encourages regular sabbatical leave for its clergy, and I am excited about travel, reflection, and reconnecting with friends and family.

Our sabbatical committee developed a wonderful schedule of activities for the parish to engage in while I am away. Your wardens and I are also inviting the staff to renew themselves with vacation time away, and our church offices will be closed on Fridays from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Our wardens, George Spencer and Laura Sellitto-Wickham, share a variety of parish renewal opportunities in their enclosed letter. I hope you will engage in these as times of refreshment and fun!



When we were writing the Lilly proposal, it was clear to me that the things that feed my soul are those elements that drew me to St. Mark's when I was called to be your rector eight years ago. Our core vocation is focused on feeding others with the bread of life. To be able to do that individually and as a community means we need times of intentional sabbath during which we ourselves are fed.

My sabbatical activities will include cooking classes in Oaxaca, Mexico, and Quito, Ecuador. I'll explore local folk traditions also. I'll enjoy the beauty of creation in many settings, including my lifelong dream of going to the Galapagos Islands. I will have extensive time at Green Bough House of Prayer and visit with my family and dear friends. All of this will give me sabbath time away to connect with God and the things I love so that I may return refreshed and ready for the next season of ministry here at St. Mark's.

Our senior staff and wardens are well prepared to manage things in my absence. In the Episcopal Church, the senior warden has the authority to act in my absence in the unlikely event that any emergencies arise. Best practices encourage a full stepping away, so I will not be available by phone, email, or social media during this time. I will look forward to sharing deeply with all of you in a fall formation series and hearing what you have discovered in your engagement of these renewal activities. I am profoundly grateful for this. And I trust that this time away will allow me to see things in deeper and more reflective ways. I am thankful to all for the support I have received.

Peace,



The Rev. Elizabeth C Knowlton

Dear friends,

A year ago, while we prepared the proposal seeking funding for Beth's sabbatical from the Lilly Endowment, we were not certain if awarded the grant that Beth would actually be able to use it between the challenges of COVID and construction. This is precisely why we are so excited that Beth's sabbatical can go forward as we prayed and planned!

St. Mark's is in a very good place as Beth begins her time away. Reconstruction of our facilities, other than Gish Hall, is virtually complete, and your collective generosity has enabled the parish to thrive financially even as we were separated by the pandemic.

Equally exciting are the events we've planned for the parish in the coming months which parallel Beth's activities and travels: cooking classes led by top local chefs and our own kitchen staff, hiking, and gardening. As we read the reflections in the Annual Report, we noticed the themes of separation, grief, seeking, gratitude, and hope. And we've heard from many of you that these reflections resonated with you. We invite you to engage in our sabbatical activities as a way of reclaiming joy and community life as we establish our new day-to-day rhythms.

Our prayerful hope is that we will all start the new program year in the fall genuinely renewed.

Blessings,



George Spencer  
Senior Warden



Laura Sellitto-Wickham  
Junior Warden

### Parish Sabbatical Events

Sunday, May 8	Meredith's send-off celebration (10:10 am), Youth recognition Sunday
Saturday, May 14	Rev. Mike Marsh trains lay leaders as reflection facilitators for sabbatical activities
Sunday, May 15	Beth's send-off celebration (after 10 am service)
Saturday, May 21	Cooking Demo: Mole w/Clementine Chef de Cuisine Carlos Martinez (11 am-1 pm)
Sunday, May 22	Bishop's visit, Confirmation, parish picnic in Travis Park
Saturday, June 4	Gardening/butterfly workshop at Sinkin Eco Center (San Antonio College)
Sunday, June 5	Feast of Pentecost
June 6-10	Vacation Bible School at St. Mark's (half day)
Sunday, June 12	Holy hike/birding at Incarnate Word Headwaters Sanctuary with Mark Menjivar
Monday, June 20	Cooking Class: w/Pharm Table Chef Elizabeth Johnson (11 am-1 pm)
July 7-10	St. Mark's at Mustang Island Family Camp with Matt Wise and Ann Fraser
Monday, July 11	Cooking Class: with Gwendolyn Group's Michael Sohocki (5 pm-7 pm)
Saturday, August 6	Cooking Class: Cavatelli w/Clementine Chef John Russ (11 am-1 pm)
Thursday, August 18	Cooking Class: Desserts with Chuy Mendoza and Richard Maldonado (5pm – 7pm)
Sunday, September 11	Welcome Back reception (10:10 am); evening picnic with music
October 14-16	Rededication Weekend: parish-wide celebration, reconsecration, music, outreach

Look for the parish sabbatical sign up on the website for more information and to register.