

December 3, 2017 Announcements

Announcements, not to exceed 150 words, are to be submitted to bulletin@stmarks.net by 5:00 pm on the Tuesday proceeding the Sunday you wish the announcement to run.

Official Parish Calendar online at: <http://www.stmarks.net/connect/calendar/>

From the Vestry and Parish Leadership

1. Christmas Festival Fund Donations. The Christmas Festival Fund supports the special Christmas music and professional musicians that Jeff Kempeskie and the choir provide for the Christmas services. The Festival Fund also supports St Marks' financial contribution to a charitable organization, this year a children's pre-kindergarten non-profit Bright Beginnings, in addition to modest decorating of the Nave. St. Mark's does not budget for the special Christmas service music or charitable contribution. If you would like to contribute to the Christmas Festival Fund and also remember, honor, or give thanks to a special person, you can contribute online at the St Mark's website, complete a donation form and put it in the Sunday service collection plate, or mail the form and check to the parish. **Contributions must be received in the Parish Office no later than Monday, December 17.** Donation forms are in the tract racks, Sunday bulletin, or available from Michael Knipe haroldknipe@gmail.com 202.487.3990.

2. Canvass 2018 Coming to an End! It's a shorter Canvass period this year and we're winding it up today with Celebration Eucharist services for the morning services. For the 5:00 PM service, we will delay the celebration one week until December 10th due to the Service of Lessons and Carols, which won't have an Offertory or Communion. We look forward to having all of you joining in the celebration with everyone who has committed to "carry it forward." Questions? Send them to seniorwarden@stmarks.net.

Music & Arts

3. Advent Lessons & Carols: The St. Mark's Chancel Choir and Boys & Girls Choir will once again offer beautiful, seasonal music, alternating with hymns and readings, at the annual Advent Lessons & Carols Service **TODAY Sunday, Dec. 3 at 5:00 pm in the Nave.** Please join us.

4. Carols & Cheer Dec 13th at 6:30 PM: Come sing your favorite Christmas Carols while enjoying tasty beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) and some snacks. We will take requests! We'll be joined by special guest Andy Barnett, a priest and jazz pianist. **Please bring a snack or beverage to share or \$5. Located in the Nave.**

5. An Evening of Carols Dec 16th at 5:00 PM: Normally in residence at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the **21st Century Consort** has chosen St. Mark's as its venue to present Jon Deak's recently composed work "Passion of Scrooge or A Christmas Carol" for voice and 10 instrumentalists. This free event, which will be professionally filmed, will also include a performance of Britten's "A Ceremony of Carols" by the Girls of the Washington National Cathedral. **A pre-concert discussion will begin at 4:00 pm. Located in the Nave.**

6. Sing in a Choir! Singers of all voice parts are needed in the **Chancel Choir (rehearses Thursdays 7:30-9:30)** and the **Boys & Girls Choir (rehearses approximately every other Sunday 11:00am-12:30pm)**. The **Handbell Choir** is also looking for people to ring handbells (rehearses approximately **every other Wednesday 6:45-8pm**). No prior experience is required. Questions? Contact Jeff Kempeskie, Director of Music: jeff@stmarks.net

7. Music Lessons. The St. Mark's Music Studio has two new teachers! Annie Simon (simon.annie@gmail.com) now offers voice lessons in addition to Adam Caughey (adamcaughey@gmail.com). Stephanie Ng (stephanien217@gmail.com) now offers piano lessons in addition to Jeff Kempeskie (jeff@stmarks.net). Students of all ages and experience are welcome. Learn more about our new teachers at stmarks.net/music

Youth & Family Ministries

8. TODAY Dec. 3 - Christmas Pageant Sign Ups Begin- Starting Sunday, December 3 children of all ages are encouraged to sign up for this year Christmas Eve Pageant, 4pm on Dec. 24! We need shepherds, angels, animals, wise people, a holy family, and readers. Kids of all ages are encouraged to participate in this well-loved tradition. See the **sign-up sheets on the downstairs bulletin board** for more information or email Caroline.

9. Advent Family Coffee Hours:

* **TODAY Dec. 3 Coffee Hour- Advent Wreath Making** Join us after Sunday in Baxter Hall for snacks, coffee and 99 cent Advent Wreath making! These personalized mini Advent wreaths are fun to make and will bring so much joy this season. Please bring \$1 to contribute to wreath supplies.

* **Dec. 10 Coffee Hour- Nativity Craft** After Sunday School on the 10th we will meet in Baxter Hall to learn how to make clay sheep for a nativity display in the Nave!

* **Dec. 17 Coffee Hour - Christmas Cookie Decorating** After Sunday School on the 17th we will have our annual Christmas Cookie Decorating party! Please bring 1 dozen un-iced cookies per child (they don't have to be homemade) and we will provide the decorations. These cookies will be served at our Pageant Cookie Reception on Christmas Eve, so come help us!

10. Dec. 10 & 18 - Teens at Capitol Hill Group Ministries Family Night: Middle and High School youth-- We will once again purchase, wrap, and help pass out gifts for the shelter families at Capitol Hill Group Ministries! Join us **on the 10th from 11am-1pm** for the gift shopping and wrapping party and again **in Baxter Hall on the 18th at 5:30pm to serve** as Santa's helpers for our Capitol Hill neighbors.

Questions regarding these activities? **Contact Director of Youth and Family Ministries Caroline McReynolds-Adams** caroline@stmarks.net

Outreach

11. Gun Violence Vigil and Remembrance Event: St Marks hosts the Nationwide vigil and remembrance event on **December 6th** to #EndGunViolence. The vigil is in **the Nave** from **7-9pm** in honor of the five-year mark of the Sandy Hook Tragedy, as well as the 500,000 American victims and survivors of gun violence since December 2012. St. Mark's is hosting this nationwide tribute in partnership with the Newtown Foundation, Newtown Action Alliance, Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, Everytown Survivor Network, Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, Organizing for Action, States United to Prevent Gun Violence, and the Women's March.

12. Outreach Support of CHUMC Meals Program. Today, please **pick up a casserole pan** (which contains an easy recipe, a date label, and detailed delivery suggestions) **on the table near the High Altar**. The pans are provided to the congregation on the first and second Sundays of every month. Parishioners are encouraged to prepare one or more casseroles and **deliver them in person to the Capitol Hill United Methodist Church** (CHUMC) located three blocks from St. Mark's Church. CHUMC, in turn, feeds our needy and hungry neighbors on the hill throughout the week. Need more information? Please contact Jack Richards (703) 751-1456.

13. 2017 Pilgrimage Report – Sunday, December 10th 6 - 8 pm. All are invited to a simple Palestinian supper and conversation in **Baxter Hall after the 5:00 pm worship service**. It's an opportunity for experiencing a taste of the Middle Eastern cuisine as well as stories and reflections on the journey from some of the travelers. Suggested donation for the meal and beverage - \$10.00 Contact: Karen Getman karen.getman@gmail.com

14. Advent Gifts from Bethlehem and the W. Bank - Dec. 3 - 24 after all services.

Olivewood crèches, ornaments, and Canaan Fair Trade olive oil. A 20% donation from the sale will be contributed to the Diocese of Jerusalem schools and clinics. The Middle East Working Group manages the sale (with assistance from the Pilgrimage Groups)/ As usual we will have the true extra virgin olive oil and tapenades from the Canaan Farm Co-operative. Pilgrimage groups from 2013, 2015, and 2017 visited the Co-op and many were hosted by farm families who benefit from the co-op sales and community action initiatives. Buying olivewood products strengthens bonds of goodwill with the farmers and carvers and the charitable work of the Jerusalem Diocese in the W. Bank and Gaza. **Give a gift that gives twice!** Questions? Contact: Karen Getman karen.getman@gmail.com

15. Thank you! Thanksgiving Baskets for Capitol Hill Group Ministry Families: St. Mark's members donated **over 50 Thanksgiving baskets** last week! That's a fabulous turnout and show of support for the families as well as the organization. On behalf of the Outreach Board, THANK YOU! As always (year after year!), we appreciate your participation in the effort, from purchasing the items, to packing and dropping off at the church. When we delivered the baskets to CHGM on the 19th, they were busy making room for everything and making preparations for three full days of distributing food to the families they work with throughout the year (finding housing, providing emergency assistance, offering laundry facilities, being a place of respite, among other services). Again, thank you for bringing food to the table for our neighbors this Thanksgiving! Contact: Jane Rutherford janerutherford419@gmail.com.

16. Alisa Earnest – Seeking 20s/30s Pen and Phone Pals and an Update: – Alisa Earnest was arrested and jailed more than two years ago. She's now at Greensville Correctional Center (Jarratt, VA), and expects to be released in 2025. We particularly need 20s/30s to be in touch with her by phone, email, or letter, especially if you share her interests in science fiction, LGBTQ with emphasis on T (trans), mental health/relationships, or mechanical and automotive engineering. For more on Alisa, parish support, the legal effort and the giant birthday card, see the 2017 status report: <http://j.mp/aestm171028> or contact Christoph Berendes (berendes@netalyst.com).

Parish Life

17. The Bob Hahn and Crane Miller Memorial Bird Watching Trip to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge will take place on **Saturday, December 9**. We will **meet at the MacDonalDs on Route 50** (after crossing the Severn River and before the Bay Bridge) at **8:30 AM**. We can form car pools there. Bring a bag lunch, binoculars (some spares available) and dress appropriately for the day. A visit to the nearby Harriett Tubman Museum is also included. An optional dinner stop at The Narrows Restaurant ends the day (bring cash). For questions or **to "sign up" please contact: Jane Miller** (jlm104@earthlink.net) 202-669-2528 **or Gretchen Willson** (gretchenwillson943@gmail.com) 202-362-4417.

18. Advent Art Installation: The St. Mark's Arts Council is sponsoring a progressive art installation during Advent, organized around the theme "Holy Families." Individual artists have created art pieces interpreting the theme, built into salvaged dresser drawers meant to suggest the household altars or shrines you see in many parts of the world. For Advent 1, we have "Saint Adea," by Elin Whitney-Smith, and "Star Dancers," by Chuck Divine. Please take some time to explore the creations and read the artists' statements. Contact: Tracy Councill tracy@tracyskids.org.

19. Advance Greening Help: The most time consuming task for the greening is winding lights around the columns. So we would like to do it early (**Sunday, Dec 17th from 12:30-2:30pm**). Note: This is not the full greening. It is just to get the lights up. So we need people willing to go up on ladders. **Please email Lisa.ramish@gmail.com if you can help.**

20. Deck the Halls: we have a very short window to green the nave for Christmas this year because Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday. That means **we need as many people as possible to lend a hand**. We will be in **the Nave from Noon to 3pm on Sunday, December 24th**. No artistic talent is necessary. We are mostly moving in plants and things. Email lisa.ramish@gmail.com with questions (or reassurances).

21. Degreening: Please help us take down the greening decorations on **Sunday, December 31st** from **12:30 to 3:30pm** in the **Nave**. It is New Year's Eve day but we would love to have the decorations down in time for Epiphany. Many hands can make light work! **Please email Lisa.ramish@gmail.com to let her know she can expect you.**

22. St. Mark's Reading Group meets on the **third Wednesday** of every month in the Dozier Library at **12:30 p.m.** Feel free to bring your lunch. We decided **not to meet in December. January 17** we will discuss *The Spectator Bird* by Wallace Stegner, **February 21** we will discuss *Everyone Brave is Forgiven* by Chris Cleave. Contact: Linda Ewald, llerbe@yahoo.com 301-541-5133

23. Registration Open for Anxiety and Joy Guild Summer Seminar: July 7 – 12, 2018 Registration has begun for the Guild for Transformational Studies' Summer Seminar on Anxiety and Joy to be held at **Roslyn Retreat Center in Richmond, VA from July 7 through July 12, 2018.** To ensure a space, please **register before December 31, 2017.** Jakob Boehme says, "The Holy Spirit leads us by anxiety to a new birth." What might this mean? Is anxiety itself the push of the new being? What orientation of heart and mind might be needed to explore the creativity that is within anxiety? What might be the relationship between the difficult symptoms we experience and freedom and joy? In this seminar, we will use discussion, writing/journaling, art expression, movement, music, silence and above all our own experience and self-reflection to explore the many sides of anxiety and joy. Please email susanlynnthompson@gmail.com for a registration form and further information. Scholarships are available.

24. 11th Annual Cathedral Christmas Simulcast Service with Bethlehem: On December 16, 9:30 a.m. at the Washington National Cathedral, there will be a live Simulcast Christmas Service with Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, Palestine. Choirs, readings, and carols alternate in English and Arabic between the two places. Livestream at cathedral.org. Open to the public and people of all faiths. Announcement submitted by Tom Getman tom.getman@gmail.com.

Worship

25. 11:30 Bread and Wine Volunteers: We are so grateful that December Sunday's have been filled (12/31 provisionally). I will post January after Thanksgiving. For future reference, my email is cecbill@me.com. The website is <https://is.gd/stmbw2017winter>. Thanks as always. Cecilie and Bill.

26. Help Welcome Worshipers on Sunday! Ushers are the first contact people have when coming to worship at St. Mark's. This is your opportunity to provide a warm and inclusive atmosphere to ALL worshipers, whether new or familiar to our community. Welcomers are responsible for greeting parishioners when they arrive for services. You may serve as often or as little as your schedule permits. The **Ushers do not have monthly meetings, sign-up is handled via email and time commitment per Sunday is approximately 35 minutes** (25 mins to "welcome" and distribute hymnals, 5 mins for offertory, 5 mins to "clean up" hymnals, etc. immediately following service). **If you would like to join our team of welcomers, please contact Mary Ellison** mary.c.ellison@gmail.com (952-657-4615).

Christian Education

27. Ongoing Christian Education. These groups meet weekly and are open to newcomers:

* **Wednesday Morning Bible Study, 11:00am-12:15pm, Elders Room** (Brown bag lunch until 1pm) Studying The Dream of God by Verna Dozier.
Leader: Peter Mosley Coordinator: Raiford Gaffney, rgaffneydc@gmail.com

* **Sunday Morning Bible Class, Sundays, 10-11 am, Penniman Room**
Studying the Book of Amos Convener: Bob Ewald (llerbe@yahoo.com (301) 541-5133)

* **SMCC Meditation, Mondays 7:30-9pm, the Nave.** Contact: Collie Agle chagle@washpathfind.com