

December 10, 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 Kempskie 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.

Youth & Family Ministries

2. TODAY through Dec 17th - Christmas Pageant Sign Ups Continue. 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.

3. TODAY and Dec. 17- Alternative Gifts for Sale to Support Nicaragua Service Partner-- Stop by **Baxter Hall** this Sunday and next to check out several items for sale to support our High School Service Trip partner, Fabretto Children's Foundation in Nicaragua! We will have coffee, baskets, and jewelry all made in the small town of Cusmapa where we worked this summer. All the proceeds will go directly to the Education Centers in that area.

4. Advent Family Coffee Hours:

* **TODAY 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!

* **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

5. TODAY 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

6. 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.

7. Annual Christmas Party for Capitol Hill Group Ministry supported families is Monday, December 18th in Baxter Hall at 6pm. Sign up to bring a veggie side or salad for the dinner. Or donate a few dollars toward the turkey and ham. Santa will distribute gifts wrapped by our teens. Lisa Ramish will lead holiday art project for the kids. Cookies will be decorated; carols will be sung. Come for the fun! Sign-up sheet is located in the Foyer or contact dinner coordinator Lynn Kneeder (elkneeder@gmail.com) or Susan Sedgewick (jssedgewick@gmail.com) or Stephanie Deutsch (scd@his.com)

8. Advent Gifts from Bethlehem and the W. Bank – through December 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

9. 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

10. December 15 Film Club – “Miracle on 34th Street” (1947) - Please join us for the perennial holiday classic, directed by George Seaton, starring Edmund Gwenn, Maureen O'Hara, John Payne, and Natalie Wood. Gwenn won the Best Supporting Actor Oscar for his portrayal of a charming old man with a white beard who is hired as to play the Macy's department store Santa Claus. **Friday Dec 15th 7:30 PM, 1321 Geranium Street, NW, Washington, D.C.** Bring snacks/desserts/potent potables to share. For further info., contact Alicia Ruble, 202-420-9256, blurbologist@hotmail.com.

11. 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. This week's addition to the Advent Art Installation in the Nave is a tribute to families affected by the hurricane in Puerto Rico by Tracy Councill and Marilu. Please take some time to explore the creations and read the artists' statements. Contact: Tracy Councill tracy@tracyskids.org.

12. 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.

13. 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.**

14. 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).

15. 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.**

16. 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

17. 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.

Worship

18. 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

19. 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 (lberbe@yahoo.com (301) 541-5133)

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

Music & Arts

20. 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.**

21. 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.**

22. 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 hand bells (rehearses approximately **every other Wednesday 6:45-8pm**). No prior experience is required. Questions? Contact Jeff Kempeskie, Director of Music: jeff@stmarks.net

23. 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