



*St Mark's*  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY 26, 2020

# Lead Pastor Update

REV. ELIZABETH EKDALE



*"Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."*

**Ephesians 4:1-4**

Our calling as Christians is needed now more than ever. In a world of divisions and vitriolic speech, St. Paul reminded the congregation in Ephesus and reminds the congregation of St. Mark's of what we as Christians can offer. We are called to care deeply about the world, work for justice, and protect all of creation. We are called to be in relationship with our neighbors, make connections with those on the margins, and ask the bigger questions while using our imagination and creativity in serving the world on behalf of Jesus Christ. We are bold but not arrogant in our service; gentle and yet strong, patient and at the same time urgent in our calling to serve, all the while being accountable to our community of faith and bearing with one another in love.

Our life together at St. Mark's is our faithful effort to live out our calling as Christians. Our meaningful worship services nourish and encourage us to live out our calling in the world. The 2019 Annual Report describes that to which we have been called by God. Lives have been transformed by God's grace and goodness through these faithful ministries. In the following paragraphs, I will share with you about my calling as your Lead Pastor and look forward to hearing about your calling. I encourage you to read the entire Annual Report; in so doing, I am confident you will be inspired and energized in your own calling as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

## **PUBLIC MINISTRIES:**

In partnership with Pr. Ron, we actively sought to strengthen our relationships with the San Francisco Interfaith Council, Calvary Presbyterian Church, Catholic Charities, Project Homeless Connect, Institute on Aging, First Unitarian Universalist Society, Mt. Cross Lutheran Camp, our District 5 Supervisor, the Faith in Action local team, Lutheran Social Services and others.

In May, I was elected at the Synod Assembly to serve a three-year term as Dean of the San Francisco Peninsula conference of the Sierra Pacific Synod. This opportunity connects us with congregations and ministry colleagues of our conference.

I serve on the ELCA 50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Clergywomen planning team. This opportunity connects us with the larger church.

I participated in many public and Interfaith events: preaching at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, co-hosting the MOSAIC television show on KPIX, and providing leadership at interfaith gatherings.

## **INTERN AND TEACHING PARISH MINISTRIES**

Supervised teaching parish student Libby Pfaff from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. Supervised Pastoral Intern Sonja Pilman. These opportunities ensure that St. Mark's continues to shape and form future leaders of the church.

## **SENIOR MINISTRIES**

Attend monthly lunches for St. Mark's and Martin Luther Tower seniors.

Plan and participate in outings for seniors (Filoli, Palo Alto, Burlingame, Half Moon Bay, etc.).

Lead the weekly Aging and Spirituality group for all seniors

Provide pastoral care to residents of Martin Luther Tower including presiding at Memorial Services and Funerals, hospital visits, nursing home visits, and pastoral visits. These ministries are part of providing chaplaincy services to Martin Luther Tower.

## **STEWARDSHIP, HOSPITALITY, HUMAN RESOURCES, ADULT EDUCATION, WORSHIP, AND MINISTRY TEAM LEADERSHIP MINISTRIES:**

I work with the leadership and members of these teams providing guidance and counsel as we support the annual goals of St. Mark's.

## **MARTIN LUTHER TOWER MINISTRIES**

I serve on the Martin Luther Tower board, participate on the Development Team, coordinate our chaplaincy services to residents of Martin Luther Tower and continue to work on governance changes.

## **OPEN QUESTIONS AND GOALS**

We have completed our first cycle of working toward three annual goals and deliberating on three open questions. These intentional efforts are part of our governance changes. A separate report will reflect on our 2019 efforts, which were very successful considering this was our first year in doing so.

## **SABBATH MINISTRY**

Thank you for the gift of a sabbatical over the summer. During this time, my heart, faith and spirit were energized and refreshed; my gifts and skills for ministry were rekindled; my love for St. Mark's and Martin Luther Tower deepened.

## **FALL FAIRS AND CELEBRATIONS**

On my first Sunday back after sabbatical travel, St. Mark's Ministry Team leaders hosted a fabulous Ministry Fair

on Sept. 8. In October, we held our annual and beloved family-friendly Oktoberfest. In November, we recognized and celebrated Dr. Timothy Zerlang's 10th anniversary of service as our Director of Music. And, thanks to Pr. Ron and others, we hosted an Advent Fair on Nov. 24. The month of December was filled with Advent and Christmas worship and celebrations—each of them expressing our joy and thanksgiving in being together.

## Associate Pastor Update

REV. RON MOE-LOBEDA



Every day is a new day at St. Mark's—full of such variety and sometimes unexpected developments. I find myself continually exploring ways for us to build and nurture our faith community as well as to become more visible in our neighborhood community. As of this past summer, we experienced

a major transition in our Sunday School ministry as Jenny Hart and Gail Culp retired after many dedicated years of service. Adrienne Brown has stepped up to coordinate this ministry and we have been laying the groundwork for ways that more adults will be involved in this ministry.

We confirmed 5 young people in June. They are Violet Battaglia, Gabrielle Reed, Nick Reed, Alison Schieber, and Nate Semonian. Cora Rose was my co-teacher, and together we had a wonderful experience guiding these young people toward the re-affirmation of their baptism. We also reinstated a regular gathering (twice/month) of high-school and middle-school youth this fall on Sunday mornings. The Young Adults (now known as 20s/30s Fellowship) had a resurgence this fall and have taken on more initiative in reaching out to visitors on Sunday mornings and inviting people over to their homes for a shared meal and conversation.

The Parents' Group has met twice this fall on Sunday mornings, and will continue to meet at least every other month to check in with each other and discuss pertinent topics. Our Nursery continues to be a very stable presence on Sunday mornings under the guidance of Edda Mai Johnson and Delia Whitfield, along with occasional volunteer help from parents.

We held a Men's Retreat again this spring and spent 24 hours at Mercy Center focusing on "How Our Faith Relates with Various Aspects of Our Lives." The 14 participants had a meaningful time sharing their faith journey and talking about their relationship with the Church throughout their lives. I had the opportunity to lead a Bible Study at the Adult Forum on II Timothy, and delve into the expectations and challenges of those who decide to follow in the way of Jesus.

As I look forward to another year of ministry, I am filled with gratitude for the call to serve as your Lead Pastor in partnership with Pr. Ron and all of our staff. I deeply appreciate our lay leaders and volunteers for their commitment and leadership to our many and varied ministries.

With gratitude,  
**Pastor Elizabeth**

I had the privilege again this year to travel with members of St. Mark's to visit the members of our sister parish in San Salvador. We spent 6 intense days accompanying our siblings of Cordero de Dios and Santa Fe communities, including attending a graduation ceremony of many people who had completed a 5-week cooking class, participating in a day-long retreat at a local park, and sharing in the Sunday morning worship and celebration, at which I had the opportunity to preach about "What Advent Means to Me."

After spending over a year reaching out to service providers in San Francisco and inviting them to consider using our Urban Life Center for their program/ministry, we finally learned about Project Homeless Connect needing a new space for their organization and invited them to "check us out." After a few months of negotiations, they moved into the ULC in August and have made this place their home base for their organization and operation. I continue to participate with the MLT Development Team in discerning how we best can utilize any current and future facilities in a way that is consistent with the mission of St. Mark's.

This past year, I had the privilege of supervising Evangeline Dai, a teaching parish student from PLTS. It was a joy to watch her grow into her role as worship leader and to support her in her efforts to engage with members of the congregation in many new and different ways. Thank you to her Support Team: Marisa Lee, Tom Benson, and Jennifer Sun. While Pastor Elizabeth was on sabbatical this past summer, I also appreciated the opportunity to supervise our Pastoral Intern, Sonja Pilman, whose energy and desire for learning enabled her to delve into many dimensions of our congregational life. Pastoral care continues on an as-needed basis, and special attention has been given to those whose conditions prevent them from coming to church on a regular basis.

As I complete my third year at St. Mark's, I am eternally grateful for the call to be your Associate Pastor and for the opportunity to be in partnership in ministry with Pastor Elizabeth. As we journey together into this next year, I invite your calls for pastoral care, welcome your suggestions and feedback, and anticipate all of the ways that we will be able to deepen our relationships with each other and with our neighboring community.

Peace,  
**Pastor Ron**

## Director of Music Update

DR. TIMOTHY ZERLANG



On September 1, 2019, I completed my tenth year as Director of Music here at St. Mark's. It was with happiness and gratitude that I celebrated that anniversary with you all last November. Thank you all for your kindness and generosity, and special thanks to all those that work so hard to make such a memorable day happen. The years have flown by, and my appreciation for this community, its leaders, and the worship and music culture nurtured here continues to deepen.

As Director of Music, I have been privileged to help lead approximately 150 liturgies this past year. Those liturgies range from our loud, festive, Easter Sunday celebration with orchestra, guest singers and many visitors, to quiet, intimate gatherings around the altar on Wednesday evenings. While quite different, all of these liturgies contribute to the rhythm and vitality of our worship life here at St. Mark's.

One of the highlights for me this past year was the visit of the Madrigal-

chor Kiel in October. This visit was a continuation of the musical exchange that began last year with my recital in their home town, Kiel, Germany. It was wonderful to hear the Madrigalchor during our 11 am liturgy and to hear their wonderful concert later that day. It was thrilling to hear the combined choirs, the Madrigalchor and our own St. Mark's choir joining forces for a beautiful rendition of the Psalm for that day. I wish they could join us every week! I am honored to work each week with the small, but dedicated group of volunteer musicians that make up the St. Mark's choir, but we are always in need of more singers, and I would welcome any of you that wish to join us in this very meaningful ministry to the St. Mark's community.

This past summer, my husband and I spent nearly a month in Paris. Along with many other adventures, we made the acquaintance of some wonderful musicians, one of them the organist at St. Gervais, which means she is the custodian of the organ that was played by the great organist and composer François Couperin and successive members of his family for over 200 years. I hope to return to Paris this summer to work with her and spend some time with that historic organ.

I continue to teach full-time at Stanford, where I also serve as University Carillonneur.

Respectfully,  
**Dr. Timothy Zerlang**  
Director of Music

### THE YEAR IN NUMBERS:

- 104 Sunday Services
- Wednesday Evening services
- 11 Additional services (Christmas Eve, Christmas, Triduum, etc.)
- Weddings
- Memorials
- 40 Choir rehearsals
- 600+ Hymns
- 140+ Choir anthems and psalms
- Advent Lessons and Carols with St. Mary's Cathedral Choir
- Serving as host to the Madrigalchor Kiel
- Choral favorites and a work for brass written for St. Mark's on Christmas Eve

### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- Pastor Ekdale, Pastor Moe-Lobeda and the staff for making St. Mark's such a wonderful place to work
- Our choir for all their dedication and hard work
- Greg Gomez for his help organizing instrumentalists for special occasions
- Phyllis DeSpain for her help with the music library
- Gary Schilling for his willingness to accompany the choir and fill in for me on both organ and piano

## Council President Update

MARK SEMONIAN



Three years ago, we began a journey to improve the way the Council does its work. A Governance Task Force was established, and working with a consultant, Dan Hotchkiss, and in coordination with the Council, began looking at our procedures, documents, and relationships.

Our first big improvement was changing the way Council meetings were run. We adopted a consent agenda format. Under this new plan, rather than spending our time on the minutiae of written reports, complete with following the Robert's Rules of Order for each separate report, approving the agenda, minutes of the previous meeting, membership changes, etc., we approve those as one item.

The great benefit to this new way of doing business

(aside from much shorter meetings!), was that its freed Council to focus on longer range plans, and to think much more deeply on our vision for the St Mark's.

Out of this more visionary organization rose our annual goals and questions. Each year, at our annual retreat Council get together and carefully discern, discuss and formulate these goals and questions. Our goals are meant to inform and guide Council, staff, and ministries in their work for the upcoming year. Our list of questions is formed to invite conversation and to engage the congregation in these conversations.

We engaged legal counsel to help look over our governing documents and contracts. Efforts were taken to for-

mally establish long running arrangements which had been put in place in years past. In these efforts we have worked closely with the MLT Board, strengthening and deepening our relationship with that board.

I believe all of this hard work has paid great dividends. Our Council is much more visionary, and efficient. Our procedures and working documents are professional, and our relationship with our Council members, clergy, staff, ministries, and congregation have grown and strengthened.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Mark Semonian**

## Martin Luther Tower Board Update

The Board of Trustees of Martin Luther Tower, Inc. (MLT) is pleased to report on the 2019 activities. Most are in the category of the important-yet-mundane. One is exciting and mission-driven.

- 1** Martin Luther Tower continues to be wonderful residential facility with chaplaincy and activities provided by St. Mark's, social services provided by the Institute on Aging, and in 2020 expanded services with an Activities Director and Health Educator. Continued investment in the facility such as the window replacement project and apartment maintenance ensure our stewardship of the tower.
- 2** We continue to be in compliance with the host of regulations and agreements that again focus on the sustainability of the project.
- 3** The Urban Life Center has taken on a new vitality with the welcoming of Project Homeless Connect as a major tenant providing important social services that energize the nature of "St. Mark's Square". For 2020 we look to add additional organizations in reconfigured space to expand the mission of the church.
- 4** We have formalized our organizational operations started in 2018 under the leadership of Omer Voss, the past president, with a structured meeting calendar, accountability systems, and both a short-term and long-term planning process.

Now for the excitement for which you will hear more from Jeff Kohler, our Executive Director.

Under the leadership of two board members, Barbara Engmann and Jon Moeller, along with Jeff, there is a realistic opportunity in 2020 to bring to the congregation a development proposal for what we call the "Ellis Street parcel" which is the parking lot behind the church. The following is from Jeff's most recent executive director's report that best describes our possibilities.

### ELLIS STREET PARCEL

The committee continues to work on two options for this

parcel (both are essentially the same structure as an 8-9 story building with approximately 75 units) as follows:

#### Senior Moderate-Income

Boldt (the developer of the Van Ness Sutter is refining their development proforma to serve the moderate-income senior community, meaning at Area Median Incomes (AMI) at 50%, 80% and 120%. Their team will be presenting their revised proposal at the January Development Committee meeting. A revision to their team is that Boldt is now using the architectural services of SmithGroup architects.

#### Senior Tax Credit Lower-Income

John Stewart & Co. (JSCo) our current property management company is updating the previous proposal that we submitted to the Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH). This project would serve the lower-income senior community, meaning AMI levels of 30%, 40%, 50% and 60%. JSCo is already in discussions with MOH and we have learned that 1) the Prop A monies have already been dedicated to Permanent Supportive Housing projects and 2) that the potential equity contribution by the housing oriented foundation into our project makes this project feasible as a possible one-off project that MOH could support since the City's contribution to develop affordable housing would be at lower levels than projects without such private financial support. It is important to note that this lower AMI scenario is the option that the foundation is most interested in. MLT staff met with the foundation's representative on January 9th and they are very supportive of this option, including allowing our team to represent a \$5M commitment towards development costs (this is the FIRST time that they have offered us an amount to use and represents a BIG step forward in our ongoing partnership).

We are looking to have both of these proposals completed early in Q1 or 2 2020 so that the Board/Corporation can make a decision on which one best serves our collective missions and financial needs."

As these options develop we will keep the congregation informed.

**Jerry Lundblad**  
President, Board of Trustees

## Director of Operations Update

WINNIE HESLIN

Happy New Year, St. Mark's! I cannot believe we are already at 2020! Reflecting on our 2019 year here at the church office, I found us in a year of change and transition and am always grateful for the flexibility and adaptability of our staff as we embrace the challenges set out before us.

In 2019, we welcomed several new members to the St. Mark's team. Over the summer, we made a change in our accounting department and welcomed Bethy Ronces, as our Controller, along with Yune Truong, who has been serving as our Interim Accountant. Transitioning accounting work is no small feat, and I thank them for their expertise and meticulous work. In addition, we also began contracting with Juan Paniagua, who is serving as our Facilities Manager. Juan brings with him a varied background of property and construction management and he has been indispensable as we tackle the many maintenance needs of our beautiful building.

As we all know, change is often also bittersweet and this year we said goodbye to our Communications and Media Coordinator, Stefani Lawrence, after 4 years with us here at St. Mark's. But in light of Stefani's departure, we also began working with Cory Schoolland, who has joined our team as our Graphic Designer this fall. Cory has been designing all of our print materials, such as bulletins, announcements, Christmas materials, the Voice and this very report you're reading right now. It has been such a joy to partner with Cory—someone who is not only a very talented designer, but also someone who has a love for St. Mark's.

This year, we also saw the transition of the management of the Urban Life Center and the Square to Martin Luther Tower, Inc. as they filled their staff this year. It has been such a highlight to partner with Jeff Kohler, MLTI Executive Director and Sandra Campos, MLTI Operations Manager, as we welcomed Project Homeless Connect into the Urban Life Center and made changes to the Square. I have learned so much from the MLTI team as we partnered together to care for St. Mark's Square.

Speaking of caring for the Square, Carl Storey recently passed his 15 year anniversary with us here at St. Mark's! A familiar face to everyone on Sundays, Carl has been an indelible fixture here at St. Mark's, keeping the property and

congregation safe and sound. His affection for St. Mark's and its members and guests are at the forefront of every conversation I've had with Carl and we could not be more grateful for his presence.

St. Mark's and the Urban Life Center hosted numerous groups and concerts throughout the year, as our Events Coordinator, Deidre Rettenmaier is hard at work to fill our space, as well as coordinates the various church events we have throughout the year. If you've attended one of the many concerts hosted at St. Mark's this year, you've no doubt seen our Event Hosts, Curtis Huth and Jeremy McClain buzzing around. They have the very important work of caring for the church property and guiding our groups during their time with us. Many thanks to our Events Team and all the work that you do, seen or unseen.

And as always, our Office Volunteers are the glue that holds our office together—Jane Borg, Phyllis DeSpain and Jeremy McClain have been faithfully at the helm of our front desk every single week. They have answered phones, guided guests and probably stuffed more envelopes and announcements than they care to count, to name just a few of the very important tasks they fill here at the office. We are all so grateful for you—you all make our days brighter with your very presence in the church office.

After almost 3 ½ years, January 31st will be my last day at St. Mark's. I'd like to thank the congregation, Church Council and Martin Luther Tower Board for your trust and support throughout these past few years. It was a privilege to have partnered with you in the changes, challenges and celebrations here at St. Mark's. Thank you for allowing me into your spiritual home and inviting me to share in such an important facet of your lives. I will treasure so much of my work here, but I will hold the relationships that I have built here closest to me.

I'd also like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Pastor Elizabeth, Pastor Ron and Tim Zerlang for your guidance and support as we have worked together these past few years. I have learned so much from your leadership and love of St. Mark's. And to the team that I had the privilege of leading—thank you, thank you, thank you for your tireless efforts and trust in me. It has truly been my honor.

## Journeys In Faith

LIV BECK

Journeys in Faith is a team-based ministry of accompaniment for those seeking baptism or affirmation of baptism. While the process is especially for those discerning if they wish to become members of St. Mark's and further engage in parish life, gatherings are open to anyone who desires to explore the gifts of the church.

In 2019, Journeys in Faith offered a complete cycle, welcoming 6 new members by affirmation of baptism. In November of 2019, we started our newest group with a Saturday retreat including a behind the scenes tour of the church building. In December of 2019 we started our weekly gatherings on Wednesday nights after the midweek

supper and service. This current group will be invited to baptism or affirmation of baptism at the Easter Vigil on April 11, 2020.

While we gather weekly as a small group, reflecting on scripture and discussing the church teachings, another important part of the experience of Journeys in Faith happens during our congregation's worship services. In several blessings during worship the entire congregation is invited to pray for those who are participating in this journey. In turn, the congregation is invited to reflect on their own identities as children of God and awaken anew their baptismal identities and promises.

For example, January 2019: The newest group of participants (inquirers) gathers with their sponsors outside the sanctuary doors before the 11:00 service. As the service begins, they knock at the door. The pastors and people

of St Mark's open the door with welcome. We hear their names, and with them we consider the question, what do you ask of God's church? Together, we pray for our journey with Christ in this year.

Our thanks to the congregation for the many ways you welcome people into St Mark's. Thank you for introducing yourself and offering encouragement to those participating in Journeys in Faith. Thank you for praying for those who are in this process. The prayers of the congregation are a vital part of this ministry. Thank you for being open to the gifts and ideas of new members of St. Mark's. And a special thank you to all who served as sponsors for Journeyers during this past year.

Current Team members are: Matthias Will, Jennifer Sun, Suzanne Smith, Steve Ernst, Timothy Bohan, and Liv Beck.

## Worship Team Update

SHARON REINBOTT

My first memory of church was watching my father's finger point to the words of the hymn as we sang them, and I grew up loving congregational song. As I grew older, I became interested in what happens when people sing together as a group. A particular energy is created, that didn't exist until the first notes left the collective breath. What is it that happens when people sing together?

Here's the answer. Their breathing synchronizes. If they keep singing together, their heartbeats also synchronize, so they become one heart, and one spirit, one breath, one song. Individuals join and transform into common community. This is what happens every Sunday when we gather at church and sing our opening hymn.

Over the years, I've come to believe that a community that sings together and creates ritual together—which we call "worship"—stays connected, becomes inspired, and is strengthened for service. Our worship and music at St. Mark's, a ritual which we create every Sunday, has this effect, pouring a unique piece of beauty into the world, a piece of beauty that didn't exist before.

It's not easy to do this. It takes skill, knowledge, practice and dedication. It takes time and money. It takes a lot of participation. The word "liturgy" means "work of the people", and that means that the collective, not the leader, creates it.

When you volunteer your time, your talent, and your resources, you are participating in the creation of the ritual that binds the community together and strengthens it for service in the world. There is a direct link between your giving and what gets created, a link between your participation and the strengthening of the community.

Each week, the pastors pray the readings and compose a sermon, prayers and children's time. The sacristan tidies things up, and prepares the space with the proper

paraments. Someone washes and irons the linens. The music director practices the organ and plans the music. The choir members rehearse. Someone bakes bread for communion. Someone checks to see that there is enough wine and grape juice and often makes a purchase. The flower arranger designs bouquets, purchases flowers, and arranges them. The property committee makes sure the building is in order. The assisting minister prepares the prayers of intercession. The lector prays the readings and considers how to proclaim them. The coffee committee plans what it is going to bring to the fellowship afterward. The worship scheduler has already scheduled acolytes, assisting ministers, lectors, communion ministers and altar guild. All this happens before the first note of any Sunday prelude is even played.

There are so many ways to participate in worship. Consider what you can do to help create this unique beauty that binds us together and strengthens us to work for justice and peace in the world.

On a practical note, St. Mark's is now using software called Master Scheduler Pro from Rotunda Software, to schedule worship participants. The system has a front facing web based presence, where worship leaders can volunteer, indicate their preferences for serving, and view the schedule. It is administered by two volunteers who develop the schedule using both automated and manual procedures, and maintain all the settings. The system is both powerful and flexible, and available as a set of web pages accessed through a browser, or from a smart phone app. Many of the worship leaders have indicated that it's easy to use, and it gives them information they wouldn't otherwise have. We are looking for two more people to administer it, beginning in February, 2020.

# Social Ministry Report

JOHN ELFORD AND MARY RITTER

First, thanks to St. Mark's members for walking with God's people in 2019!

St. Mark's volunteers continue to provide lovely fresh food to over 300 households at the **Interfaith Food Pantry** every six weeks on Saturday mornings at Old First Presbyterian Church in San Francisco. A team of 15 to 18 people volunteers at the Pantry from 7:30 to 10:30am. St. Mark's gives the San Francisco Marin Food Bank over \$3000 a year to support the program and buy food—fruits and vegetables, protein and packaged foods—to be distributed to many households in the neighborhood. It is an amazing project! All members of the congregation are encouraged to participate. Watch the St. Mark's Sunday bulletin for 2020 dates and contact information.

St. Mark's hosted the **Interfaith Homeless Shelter** January 13 through February 3, 2019 and will host 60 to 70 men and women again from January 19 through February 9, 2020. We provide shelter and meals in cooperation with other churches in the city. The men and women will share space in the Urban Life Center for dinner, a warm safe place to sleep, and breakfast before they head out for their day, some of them to work. Thanks to the many of you who provide breakfasts and suppers as well as monetary support. St. Mark's knitters continue to knit scarves and our Sunday School has prepared socks and toiletries for our guests.

St. Mark's members read **"Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the US"** for discussion at two Adult Forums and the WELCA Women's Book Group in 2019. St. Mark's members attended the lecture in San Jose by "Dear Church" author ELCA Pastor Lenny Duncan. Conversations continue about dismantling racism and addressing white privilege at St. Mark's. The ELCA has extended an apology to the African Descent Lutheran Association for hundreds of years of "complicity in slavery and perpetuation of racism." Watch for continuing conversation about dismantling racism and addressing white privilege at St. Mark's.

Our 2019 **Lenten Box offering of \$2666.99** was given to the church family of Paradise Lutheran in Paradise, CA. Paradise Lutheran will build mixed income housing on their property to provide rental space for community members who lost housing after the Camp Fire. Thanks to all who donated.

St. Mark's is a **Bread for the World Covenant Church** as we support Bread's important work advocating for hungry people in the US and around the world. Watch for opportunities to advocate for hungry people in California in 2020. See [Bread.org](http://Bread.org) for more information.

September 8, 2019 was **"St. Mark's Ministry Fair"**. Social Ministry tables showcased the work of the Interfaith Food

Pantry, the Winter Homeless Shelter, St. Mark's Sanctuary, Bread for the World and ELCA Advocacy, and our companion relationships with Cordero de Dios in El Salvador and the Lutheran Church of Rwanda and PICO Rwanda and Lutherans in Bethlehem.

We continue our accompanying relationship with **our sister parish, Cordero de Dios** in Soyapango, El Salvador. We hold the Cordero de Dios congregation and Pastor Rafael Menjivar and his family in our prayers. A group of 13 travelers, including 2 new travelers, visited Cordero de Dios November 26 – December 1, 2019. We had a great time visiting, renewing relationships and meeting new congregants. We were again saddened with stories of health problems and struggles with the ever-present poverty and gang violence, but we were also heartened at being able to walk with Pastor Rafael as he visited congregation members in their home. We again visited the new worship space, Santa Fe, shared by congregants who can't come to Cordero de Dios for fear of gang violence. We delighted with the Cordero congregation as they shared space and a graduation with a bakery training program supported by the work of a social worker paid by a St. Mark's Endowment grant. We continue to support Pastor Rafael as he helps members of the Cordero and Santa Fe congregations with health problems and with the day to day issues of living in El Salvador.

We encourage the St. Mark's congregation to keep our Sister Parish Cordero de Dios in our prayers. We hope to host Pastor Rafael and his new wife Briseida (one of our beloved translators in El Salvador) for a visit to St. Mark's in 2020. A group from St. Mark's will travel to Soyapango again in November 2020; consider joining the trip. Watch for information about the El Salvador Ministry.

## St. Mark's voted at the 2019 Annual Meeting to declare to be a Sanctuary Congregation.

Members of the congregation were given the opportunity prior to the Annual Meeting to express opinions about being Sanctuary, and largely were in favor of choosing to be Sanctuary, as evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive vote in January 2019.

St. Mark's Sanctuary Team went to work quickly to schedule four Adult Forums related to Sanctuary in 2019:

- "Living Into Sanctuary: Legal Issues" - led by Cora Rose
- "The Circuit" - story of a Mexican migrant boy in the 1950s - led by Margaret McLean
- "Why Do People Leave Honduras?" - led by PLTS pastor Sara Wilson
- "Sanctuary Update" - led by St. Mark's Sanctuary Team

St. Mark's Sanctuary has done **advocacy**:

- St. Mark's has participated in "Never Again" demonstra-



tions with other Sanctuary congregations and other public displays in order to advocate, especially for children separated from parents in detention.

St. Mark's Sanctuary has provided **accompaniment**:

Over 50 volunteers from St. Mark's and partnering congregations were trained at St. Mark's by ELCA AMMPA-RO Director Mary Campbell to be Guardian Angels, providing spiritual accompaniment to unaccompanied minors in San Francisco Immigration Courts. Guardian Angels participate at Court several times a month.

A small team hosted and accompanied a young Central American transgender woman during a time she needed interim housing in the Summer of 2019.

Sanctuary Team was awarded a St. Mark's Endowment Grant to pay for Spanish language translators, especially for accompaniment activities.

In August 2019 at Churchwide Assembly, the ELCA elected to declare itself a Sanctuary Church Body. Watch for additional actions by the ELCA as it lives out this new commitment.

**Next steps** for St. Mark's Sanctuary:

Design, purchase and hang a sign to welcome immigrants to St. Mark's.

Contract with Spanish speakers who will be paid a stipend from the SMLC Endowment Grant. These Spanish speakers will be recruited and paid to assist in accompaniment activities.

Develop a Sanctuary Kit for the St. Mark's staff and congregation

Recruit a St. Mark's Accompaniment Team to accompany an immigrant or immigrant family for 6 – 12 months

Continue partnership with Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity IM4humanintegrity.org.

Host an Interfaith Vigil at Immigration court in 2020

Consider new projects for the congregation, possibly writing to and supporting immigrants in detention, and possibly making origami cranes to acknowledge the detention of Japanese citizens in the US and to be sent to Washington DC in support of work to stop detention now.

We continue to include prayers for **Middle East Peace** and remember Christian friends in the Holy Land and Palestine. On December 1, 2019, Dr. Victoria Rue, formerly a teacher at Dar Al-Kalima University College in Bethlehem, spoke of her research among Muslim and Christian men and women in Bethlehem. For more information about advocacy for our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, contact Linda Krauskopf at jklk@comcast.net and also brightstarsbethlehem.org.

We continued our sponsorship of **ELCA Missionary Pastor Janelle Neubauer**, the Rwanda coordinator of the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGMs). YAGMs are young

adults graduated from college, working as volunteers in global sites around the world. You can follow Pastor Janelle's work on Facebook. Pastor Janelle will visit the Bay Area and St. Mark's again in April 2020 and will participate in the annual SPS Rwanda Connection meeting in Sacramento on April 25, 2020. Watch for details about Rwanda Connection and Pastor Janelle's visit.

The **Lutheran Church of Rwanda** celebrated its 25th Anniversary in October 2019, remembering their first worship service on Christmas 1994 after the end of the Rwandan Genocide. ELCA Missionary Pastor Janelle and the newest group of YAGMs participated and hosted visitors to the 25th anniversary celebration, including a delegation from the Sierra Pacific Synod.

We continue to support the work of **Rwandan Lutherans with People Improving Communities through Organizing in Rwanda (PICO-Rwanda)**. Lutheran Pastor John Rutsind-intwarane works with the poorest of the poor in Rwanda, walking with them, providing them dignity and helping them establish livelihoods. The Regina Pacis Women's Cooperative, trained by PICO organizers in Kigali, Rwanda, again provided African crafts which were shared with St. Mark's members during the Stewardship season 2019.

Our **community garden** continues to grow quietly on the sunnier south side of the sanctuary. If you are interested in volunteering in the garden, talk to Mary Ritter or John Elford or St. Mark's church office staff.

St. Mark's members chose names on a "Giving Tree" in Advent 2019 and purchased gifts and prepared a party for the annual December Christmas party for the families at **Bernal Gateway, a housing project of Lutheran Social Services in San Francisco**. Thanks to all who shared with the families and children at Bernal Gateway.

**St. Mark's knitters** continue to make scarves and hats and prayer shawls and prayer squares for San Francisco Night Ministry, our Winter Homeless Shelter guests, and a variety of recipients in San Francisco, Rwanda and El Salvador. In October 2019, 20 lovely knitted prayer squares were shared with the SPS delegation to the Lutheran Church of Rwanda 25th Anniversary celebration. In November 2019, 15 more knitted prayer squares were shared with St. Mark's delegates and with members of our companion church, Cordero de Dios in Soyapango, El Salvador.

Our "Knitting Retreats" are a joy to experienced as well as novice knitters. All knitters are welcome to participate! If you are interested, contact Marge Okuley or Mary Ritter.

St. Mark's Social Ministry will continue to walk with and minister to those in need here in San Francisco as well as throughout the country and around the world in 2020. All St. Mark's members are encouraged to participate.

St. Mark's Social Ministry  
**John Elford and Mary Ritter**  
Co-Chairs

## Food Pantry

Our St. Mark's Interfaith Food Pantry Group currently has 65 members. We are a part of the larger Interfaith Food Pantry group of five churches in San Francisco: Old First Presbyterian, Calvary Presbyterian, First Unitarian Universalist, St. Luke's Episcopal, and St. Mark's Lutheran Church.

Our shared responsibility is to distribute groceries, from the SF/Marin Food Bank, to 300+ patrons on Saturday mornings. These patrons, who come mostly from the Tenderloin and Chinatown districts in San Francisco, receive a weekly supply of groceries from the SF/Marin Food Bank, and we five churches provide the manpower to distribute these large amounts of food. We also budget a part of our Social Ministry budgets toward the purchase of the food we distribute.

Eight Saturdays out of the year, St. Mark's members, or the "Pantry@StMarks" are invited to take a turn at the distribution. The notice goes out to all 65 members, and we usually get about 20 people each time, to cover the job.

The benefits go in many directions, beyond the very necessary distribution of food. We from St. Mark's get a chance to come together in an informal setting, which is friendly and purposeful. We meet each other on new grounds, at a new location, and find that while our hands are busy, we have a chance to talk and learn about each other's lives.

We work together with all age groups. There are jobs for people who need to sit, things that children are able to do, opportunities for high school students to get their community service requirements filled, and lots of chances for people to interact across generations.

## Adult Education

Our faith keeps growing and changing throughout our entire lives. Reflection, education, and learning ensures that our faith continues to grow.

Our Adult Forums on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. offer stimulating and interesting educational opportunities in order for our faith to continue to grow. We meet in Heritage Hall and everyone is welcome.

In 2019, we offered a variety of topics during our Adult Forum hour on Sunday mornings including: Attending Seminary by learning from five seminary professors from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. Our pastoral intern, Sonja Pilman, taught several classes on "Faith and Fear" and Introduction to Liberation Theology. Pr. Ron taught a Bible study class on 2 Timothy. During the Season of Lent, both Pastors facilitated the study of Dr. Walter Brueggemann's book, "Prophetic Imagination" and discussed how to keep our hope alive in challenging times. We also

We get to meet people who do not speak our language, and yet we manage to have discussions over things like expiration dates on cartons of juice, or ways to cook strange-looking vegetables, like turnips. There is always talk about holidays, and friendly bi-lingual greetings shared over the bags of food.

We meet neighbors from the area, who come in to help, and we get a chance to answer their questions about our church. The spirit of God is present at these distributions, starting with our prayer at 9:00AM and ending with our effort to clean up and get leftover food to other sites, usually the Walden House, where rehabilitation work for drug users is the main work.

Distribution takes place at Old First Presbyterian Church on Sacramento St. between Polk and Van Ness. (Free parking is available at the Old First Garage on Sacramento St. between Polk and Van Ness.)

St. Mark's does eight distributions per year. **Dates in 2020: January 25, March 7, April 18, May 23, August 1, September 12, October 24, December 5.**

We usually divide our morning's work into 3 shifts. Volunteers can sign up for 1 – 3 shifts as follows:

- 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Unloading
- 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Distribution
- 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Clean-up

If you'd like to join the pool of St. Mark's volunteers, and receive notifications of distributions, you can email Diana Gómez at [dianamrgomez@mindspring.com](mailto:dianamrgomez@mindspring.com)

studied the book by Rev. Lenny Duncan, titled "Dear Church" which was facilitated by Sharon Reinbott and the book "The Circuit" facilitated by Dr. Margaret McLean. Pastor Elizabeth shared her Sabbatical Learnings over two Sundays. Other topics during the year included forums on "Living out our Sanctuary welcome" at St. Mark's, Justice in Palestine, the meaning of Epiphany, Lutheran Church in Rwanda, traveling in Israel/Palestine, and "Who is Maryam/Mary" in 21st Century Occupied Bethlehem?"

Thank you to the planning team of Nadine Robinson, Linda Krauskopf, Dr. Margaret McLean, and Pastor Elizabeth. We also received helpful input from Pam Coxson, Mary Ritter, Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, and Pr. Ron. If you have topics of interest, please share this information with anyone on the team. We encourage you to attend the Adult Forums on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. to keep your faith active and alive.

## W-ELCA Annual Report

GERI BAILEY

The monthly meetings of St. Paulus' and St. Mark's women of the ELCA continued our tradition of bible study, fellowship, prayer, lunch and support of our fellow sisters in Christ. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month from 11:00 AM until 1:00 PM. All women are welcome and encouraged to join us. We each bring our own salad or sandwich for lunch, and take turns bringing dessert and beverages. Each month the Bible study is led by one of our members or guest leaders. The monthly Bible study, with leader instruction, is available in the WELCA Gather Magazine.

Our bible study themes this year were "The Gospel of John" (January - June) and "No Hard Feelings" (September - December). Guest Bible Study leaders were: Rev. Valerie McEntee, Rev. Bea Chun, Rev. Ron Moe-Lobeda & Rev. Elizabeth Ekdale.

As is our custom, we distributed our funds collected at monthly collections to charitable activities related to women and girls. 2019 donations were: San Francisco Night Ministry-\$50, Kerry's Kids-\$100, SafeHouse-\$100, El Salvador Pastor's Pension-\$100, Rwanda School Project-\$100, Ammparo-\$150, Augusta Victoria Hospital-\$150, Days for

Girl's International-\$150 & Katie's Fund-\$150.

In September, Nadine Robinson, Suzanne Smith, Hiroko Nagata, Pam Dannenberg and Anna B attended the Sierra Pacific Conference held at Bishop Ranch, Healdsburg. The theme of the conference was: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" Matthew 11:28

Election of officers was held in November. The following Sisters were unanimously elected to the following offices: Gail Culp & Elaine Lanier-Bohan, Co-Presidents, Pam Ruh, Secretary, Suzanne Smith, Treasurer, Pam Dannenberg, Program Organizer & Donna Dindia, Sunshine Lady.

The knitting ministry continues. Diane Velleno and Marge Okuley make prayer squares and other member knit prayer shawls, scarves and other

Please consider joining us at one of our meetings. I believe the support of our fellow sisters in Christ can be a very positive step on any woman's faith journey.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Geri Bailey**

## Women of the ELCA's Book Group

SUZANNE SMITH

The W-ELCA book group met alternatively between the first Tuesday of the month and the second Saturday. In 2020 we will be meeting on the second Saturday of the month from 10:00am to noon in the Conference Room of the ULC. All women are invited to come for study, discussion and fellowship. This year we read and discussed a variety of books including *Resisting Structural Evil* by our own Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda. We were privileged to have the author with us.

We looked at racial and poverty issues in *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child* by Francisco Jimenez, and *Dear Church* by Lenny Duncan. Along with *Dear Church* we also focused on religion with *Why Religion?* by Elaine Pagels and *Shameless* by Nadia Bolz-Weber. The range of human responses to life brought much

discussion from the following books: *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover, *The Great Believers* by Rebecca Makkai and *Kingdom of the Blind* by Louise Penny. But our most lively meeting involved sharing our favorite novels around the list from the survey of PBS on America's 100 most favorite novels.

We were elated to celebrate the coming of another member in Serafina Cheng's birth with a book shower for her. On February 8 we will read *How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi. Please consider joining us!

If you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Smith at 415.285.7438 or suzathome@comcast.net.

# St. Mark's Endowment Committee Report

RANDY SCHIEBER

## THE MINISTRY OF THE ENDOWMENT

The St. Mark's Endowment Fund is a ministry of the congregation which entitles members and friends to permanently continue their financial support of the mission and the ministry of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, as well as support of organizations and ministries with similar values in the San Francisco Bay Area, across the country and around the World.

Established in 2014, the Endowment is a permanent fund to receive bequests and estate gifts. All bequests from wills, life insurance, trusts and other estate gifts, unless otherwise designated, are placed in the Endowment. The assets of the Endowment are invested conservatively and with socially conscious funds. A small fraction of the Endowment's assets—approximately 5%—is spent each year in grants to ministries and organizations.

## THE ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

The Endowment and its operation are governed according to the St. Mark's Lutheran Church by-laws. The Endowment is led by six people, who are elected by the Church Council, as well as one liaison from the Council. Committee members make recommendations regarding the investment of funds, make recommendations for grants and invite and encourage members and friends of St. Mark's to include the Endowment in their estate plans. Any of the committee members would be happy to tell you more about the Endowment. If you have end-of-life planning needs or other pastoral needs, Pastor Ekdale is available to meet with you privately.

Current committee members are:

- Randy Schieber, Chair
- Becky Burad, Treasurer
- Allana Helland
- Catherine Hurley

- Marisa Lee
- Nathan Francis
- Jane Borg, Council Liaison

## ENDOWMENT GRANTS FOR 2019

During the application period (June 16 – Aug 25, 2019), we were pleased by quality of the funding requests. The Committee carefully reviewed and discussed the applications submitted using the prioritization criteria contained in the Committee Distribution and Allocation Policy and enthusiastically recommended the following seven grants, totaling \$8,500:

\$300 to **St. Mark's Sunday School** to purchase games and equipment for the children to play with during the period immediately before Sunday School begins

\$2,000 to **St. Mark's Sanctuary Team** for legal, bilingual speakers to assist with accompaniment of immigrants

\$500 to the **2019 Sierra Pacific Synod Delegation to Rwanda** to assist with travel expenses

\$1,000 to **Lutheran Social Services** of Northern California to support breakfast gatherings at the Folsom Dore supportive housing site for formerly homeless individuals in San Francisco

\$3,000 to **Farming Hope** to support the job training program that increases economic opportunity and self-sufficiency for formerly incarcerated and homeless community members in San Francisco

\$1,200 to the **Garuna (Grace) Foundation** to support school transportation of students from underprivileged families in Cambodia

\$500 to the **Friday Night Group** of Christ Church Lutheran in San Francisco to provide the supplies for hygiene kits to be sent to girls in

- Tanzania and Guatemala

St. Mark's Council approved 2019 grant funding and all grants have been distributed.

## GIVING TO THE ENDOWMENT

Members and friends of St. Mark's Lutheran Church are encouraged to make estate plans while they are still fully capable of deciding for themselves their end-of-life intentions. Simply put: if you do not have a will, the State of California has one for you—and the state's determination of who should receive your assets once you have passed may not align with your wishes and interests.

We ask that when you do make estate plans or have a will drawn up, that you consider including the St. Mark's Endowment as a beneficiary, either for a specific dollar amount or for a percentage of the total value. You may also designate appreciated assets, including stocks, mutual funds or real estate to the Endowment. You may name the Endowment as a beneficiary of your pension, 401K, IRA, or life insurance policy. You may also ask loved ones, family and friends to give to the Endowment in your memory. Please use this language when listing the Endowment as a beneficiary: "St. Mark's Lutheran Church Endowment, San Francisco."

## WITH GRATITUDE

We gratefully acknowledge individuals' and family commitments through the Endowment to the future mission and ministry of St. Mark's Lutheran Church and to the many local, national and global organizations and ministries the Endowment supports annually. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,



# Report to the Congregation on 2019 Open Questions and Annual Goals

The Church Council met in a planning retreat in the fall of 2018 and discerned questions and goals for the congregation for the following year. This retreat and discernment are part of the overall governance changes the council has been working on.

The council welcomed feedback from the congregation on the Open Questions via a Global Café on June 9, an Interactive Sermon on Sept. 22, and an Adult Forum on Oct. 6. The three Open Questions were as follows:

- 1 How shall we make St. Mark's Lutheran Church more visible in the community?**
- 2 How shall we grow as a congregation while deepening and maintain relationships?**
- 3 How shall we engage with the dramatic changes in our neighborhood?**

The council was very pleased with the responses, ideas, suggestions, and depth of engagement around the three questions. Thank you! Your responses directly shaped the new goals for the following year as the council deliberated over your feedback.

The three goals which the staff, ministry teams, and volunteers worked on were the following:

- 1 Establish a written understanding with Martin Luther Tower Inc., to ensure that the mission and ministries of St. Mark's Lutheran Church drive the development on the Square.**

## HR Committee Report

### BECKY BURAD

The Human Resources (HR) Committee provides advice and assistance to the Pastors regarding human resources issues, including policies, guidelines, compensation, benefits, job descriptions, staffing levels, compliance, etc. The committee meets quarterly, or as needed and submits recommendations to the Church Council on specific issues. The committee members are Becky Burad (chair), Pastor Ekdale, Bethany Dioli, and Casey Neuburger.

St. Mark's has outstanding staff who work to provide a high quality of support to our mission. Newly hired staff this year were Bethy Ronces, contract Controller; Yune Truong, contract accountant; and Juan Paniagua, part-time facilities manager. As of December, our staff consisted of two clergy, two full-time employees, and 12 part-time staff, including three independent contractors.

Tim Zerlang, our Director of Music, celebrated his 10th

The efforts on this goal included: updating a "Guiding Principles" document regarding development on the Square shared with the MLT Board and Development team; enhanced communication between Development Team and Church Council.

- 2 Develop a plan for managing the time, talents and treasures of the members and friends of St. Mark's that enables the sustainability of St. Mark's Lutheran Church**

Efforts on this goal included: updating and distributing a Time & Talent survey to the congregation; distributing the results with Ministry Team leaders; encouraging Ministry Team leaders to follow up with names of new volunteers; hosting a Ministry Team fair on Sept. 8; set a goal of 100% participation in the Stewardship Campaign. Results were 61% of giving units made a financial commitment to support the mission and ministries of St. Mark's.

- 3 Increase opportunities for members and friends of St. Mark's community to deepen in faith.**

Efforts on this goal included: supporting the Neighborhood Group gatherings; planning mid-week dinners and worship during Lent and Advent; hosting mid-week dinner and conversation for millennials; Men's Retreat; Property Team work-day events; Knitting Ministry retreats; Young Adult social gatherings; Parent Group gatherings; Aging and Spirituality weekly group.

anniversary of employment this year, and we are grateful for his service and his many contributions to our community and to our worship services.

During 2019 the HR Committee advised staff on documentation of procedures for each position to enable smooth transitions for staff changes. We assisted in finalizing staff evaluation procedures, and monitoring progress on the shared services agreements with Martin Luther Towers. We also advised staff and clergy as needed in dealing with HR issues which arose during the year. As needed, we assist in the search for new employees when there is a vacancy.

Please join the HR Committee in our appreciation of the professionalism, talent, and hard work that the staff bring to our St. Mark's community on a daily basis.

## Sunday School

After many dedicated years of service as Sunday School Coordinator and Sunday School Teacher, Jenny Hart and Gail Culp retired from these positions in May. We thank these two women for all that they gave to guide and sustain our Sunday School ministry. Adrienne Brown stepped forward and volunteered to take on the role of Sunday School Coordinator. Since it was very challenging to find one person to take a class for an entire semester (or year), a schedule was established to allow for adults to sign up for the number of weeks that they would like to teach or lead activities. We shall see how this new system works out after this year.

In terms of the program, last spring the decision was made to begin Sunday School with an activity (usually in the auditorium) that allowed the children to burn off some energy before settling down into their classes. There is a good nucleus of children for the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten – 2nd grade classes. The 3rd – 5th grade class has fewer potential participants. Several Sundays out of the year, a whole group lesson/activity is planned to provide an interlude for the teachers.

The Confirmation class completed their 2 – 3 year program in May, and 5 young people affirmed their baptisms on Sunday, June 2. Cora Rose and Pastor Ron taught this class. The confirmands are Gabrielle Reed, Nick Reed, Nate Semonian, Alison Schieber, and Violet Battaglia. There is no new confirmation class this year. However, we will have a good number of young people eligible for this program in the fall.

## Nursery

The Nursery Ministry has been very steady and dependable this past year. Under the leadership of Edda Mai Johnson and Delia Whitfield, the young children of St. Mark's always have their own space on Sunday mornings to play, read books, and rest. Parents occasionally are called upon to assist with this ministry. Recently, Katie Grouse has agreed to provide oversight of this ministry and will be assembling some members to provide direction for the nursery in the future.

## Hospitality

LINDSEY CARLIN

In 2019, the hospitality committee successfully hosted our two main events:

**Easter Vigil Reception** - A small group of volunteers prepared and served a variety of fresh sweet and savory treats for 75 people immediately following the annual Easter vigil.

**Oktoberfest** - The Hellands and numerous other volunteers hosted Oktoberfest on a Sunday for the first time in 2019. Over 100 people attended and enjoyed traditional German food, beer, and live music.

# Supporting Our Ministries – Stewardship Committee

In this Stewardship season, we invited all to participate in sharing the gratitude you have received in giving to God your time, talents and financial support towards St. Mark's ministries. Our Stewardship season began on October 20th, in which we are focusing on a "Slice of St. Mark's," highlighting our ministries. We invited you to reflect on the ministries that you are grateful for at St. Mark's, knowing that it is our financial support and our time & talents that help enable these ministries to inspire, support, bring comfort and joy, and make a real impact to so many!

Over our 5-week Stewardship focus, a member of our congregation shared an insight into the impact of a specific ministry. As we know, the richness of the impact goes much further than can expressed in a Sunday announcement; the impact is experienced throughout the entire year. To help give insight to the breadth of our ministries, we included a sampling of ministries within our slices of St. Mark's: **Worship & Music, Education & Pastoral Care, Social Ministries & Outreach, Staff & Administration and Property & Our Community.** A special thank you to Mary Ritter who brought the hand-made gifts from a women's cooperative in Rwanda. These gifts were shared with the congregation during our Stewardship season.

Our goals this year are to celebrate *100% participation and increase financial commitment from prior year.*

As of January 23, 2020, we have *56% participation.* This includes 4 new commitments from last year. We also received *38 commitments* which increased their financial commitment from prior year.

**Great appreciation to all who have participated—thank you!**

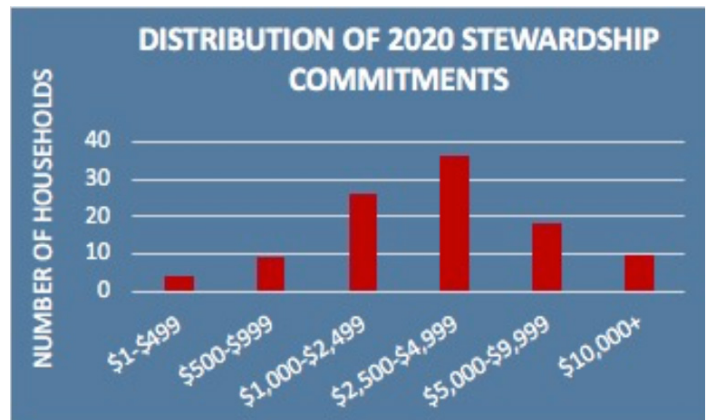
**And a special appreciation for the 38 giving units who have increased their financial commitment in 2020!**

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank all of the members and friends of St. Mark's for their personal gifts of stewardship... your time, talents and resources. Thank you as well for your ongoing involvement in strengthening relationships that exist within our community of faith, our neighborhood and beyond. It is with gratitude and celebration that we embrace our love of our community at St. Mark's!

**Stewardship Committee:** Jane Borg, Greg Jahnke, Steve Ernst, Laura Evenson, Pastor Elizabeth and Mary Birkel



| General Fund                     | 2019      | 2020             | Difference |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------------|------------|
| Total Commitments                | \$440,521 | <b>\$450,734</b> | \$10,213   |
| Number of Commitments            | 113       | 107              | -6         |
| Number of Possible Giving Units  | 188       | 190              | 2          |
| % of Commitments to Giving Units | 60%       | 56%              | -4%        |



# St. Mark's Worship Schedule

## SUNDAYS

**9:00 am.** . . . . . **Holy Communion with Children's Time**

10:00 am. . . . . Refreshments, Fellowship Hour and Education

**11:00 am.** . . . . . **Choral Eucharist**

12:15 pm . . . . . Refreshments and Fellowship Hour

## Stay Connected

For more events and activities at St. Mark's, Check our weekly Parish Announcements and our Facebook pages:

[stmarks-sf.org/blog](http://stmarks-sf.org/blog)

[facebook.com/stmarkssf](https://facebook.com/stmarkssf)

## Church Office Hours

Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**415.928.7770**



1111 O'Farrell St. | San Francisco, CA | 94109