

THE MARKER

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
3051 Putnam Blvd. Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

May 2017

Greetings friends of St. Mark's!

**“Then you will know the truth,
and the truth will set you free.” John 8:32**

These words from the Gospel of John show up in lots of places. On the pediments of college buildings, on university seals, and above library entrances.

When you read them in context (John 8: 31 - 40), it appears that the quotation on buildings and seals omits something important -- namely, that before the truth will make you free, there's a pretty good chance it will make you mad.

At least that is what happens in John 8. Jesus told people that his word would free them. They took offense, pondering "Who in the world does this guy think he is? Claiming he will free us! We don't have a problem; it's those other people who have the problem. My family has belonged to this church for decades!"

It sounds a lot like someone who is confronted with an addiction, but denies that they have any problem. Like, "What are you talking about, I don't have a problem -- you're the one who has the problem."

Before the truth frees us, there's a good chance it will make us mad. Because the truth is, among other things, that we too have some issues to face, some stuff to deal with. The truth is that we are sinners in need of grace, captives in need of liberation.

We imagine that we have arrived, that we are the smart, the strong, the good and the successful. But face to face with Jesus, we find that maybe we have made a little too much of ourselves. We are imprisoned by our self-image, by our complacency, our arrogance. The truth that frees is that we are sinners in desperate need of grace. The good news is that grace is available in Christ Jesus. At first, it might make us mad, perhaps even very mad, but that's the life-giving truth that sets us free.

Blessings to you this beautiful May,

Pastor Bekah

Council News: *Highlights from the February meeting*

The Church council was happy to have Mark Pitzlin as a guest at our March meeting. Puppets of Praise is an ongoing ministry here at St Marks. Mark welcomes all of St Marks to continue to support the puppets of praise and the work they do in the community. Puppets of Praise has reached out and are now doing some theater. Your continued support will make this a lasting ministry.



March Financials

	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Giving	16,971	17,535	53,987	52,605
Monthly Outreach Giving	900		3,035	
Total Expenses		17,535	52,605	

Current financial statements and council minutes are available in the binder on the shelf in the back of the sanctuary.

Sharing Social Ministry for May



The Rainbow Community Center of Contra Costa County envisions a society that embraces acceptance, safety and equality for all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. The Rainbow Community Center (RCC) builds community and promotes well-being among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQ) people and our allies (Vision and Mission Statement from the RCC Website). The RCC provides professional services, peer support, referral services, social opportunities and educational programs of interest to our community as well as to the community at large.

They also run a thrift store located at 2095 Pacheco St. Concord, CA 94520. Hours are listed on their website rainbowcc.org.

St. Mark's is a Reconciling in Christ congregation and supports the Vision and Mission statements of the Rainbow Community Center.

A Forum regarding this ministry is planned for Sunday, May 21st at 9:45 am in the meeting room. More information to come via our worship folders.

Looking Ahead: During the months of May and June, we will be collecting items in preparation for a project for Lutheran Social Services, providing Transitional Housing Baskets for residents of Mi Casa (transitional housing program for homeless, former foster care youth) who are being transitioned into their own homes. Items needed include soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste, towels, washcloths, laundry detergent, cleaning supplies, and other items that will help ease the transition.

More.....

Do you know that as of last year the income from our St. Mark's **Endowment Fund** has been donated to struggling non-profit organizations in our community? These gifts were made in support of these ministries as well as in the hope to create an ongoing connection with our congregation. Recipients of quarterly funds include: Pillars of Hope, Puppets of Praise, Doctors without Borders, Fire victims in Northern CA (via LSS), Monument Crisis Center, Mt. Cross Lutheran Campus ministry, the ELCA Global Mission Fund (sponsoring the Rev. Rachel Eskesen and her spouse), and Youth Homes.

And then....

Now your input is needed: if you know of an organization that serves the needs of others and should be supported by St. Mark's, give your ideas to any council member or the office. Support them with your thoughts and prayers – let your heart decide where your personal efforts and monetary gifts should go....

Check out the various letters of thanks from supported organizations – posted in the meeting room.

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED
2017 May Friendship Day



KINDLING
NEW FIRES
OF

Welcoming the immigrant

Learning from the
immigrant

LOVE

Understanding the immigrant

You Are Invited

Date: Friday, May 5, 2017
Time: Registration 10:30 a.m. Program 11. Pot luck salad lunch noon.
Place: Shell Ridge Community Church, 200 LaCasa Via, Walnut Creek
Contact Person: Lenita (925) 672-1053



Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County

**World Diversity Day Celebration
and Fundraising Concert!**

Sunday, May 21st from 3:30 to 6:00 pm.
Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church
55 Eckley Way, Walnut Creek, CA

**3:30 pm Reception, Silent Auction &
Raffle**

4:00 pm Interfaith Concert

5:30 pm Final Auction & Celebration



This year we begin with a silent auction/reception,
featuring wine, beverages and tapas with classical music. In
celebration of World Diversity Day, our concert will feature:

- Hazzan Risa Wallach – B'nai Shalom
- Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church Chorus
- White Horse Chorale – Sufism Reoriented
- Poetry from Deema – San Ramon Valley Islamic Center
- Phillip Scott – Native American drumming and chants
- "One Heart, One Mind" – original Interfaith dance
composed by Mischa Muse and danced by the
Consortium of the Arts.

For more information, contact Loel Bartlett Miller
(loelsworld@gmail.com) or Rev. Will McGarvey (eye4cee@gmail.com).



PLEASE COME TO THE "KNOW YOUR CONFIRMANDS" FIESTA ON MAY 6TH!!

Have you been wondering where Pastor Bekah actually goes after the second service every week? You've heard there's a confirmation class, but have you ever seen proof of these kids' existence?

Well, wonder no more because the confirmation class (with the help of a donation from Thrivent) is putting on a special dinner for the entire congregation on **Saturday, May 6th at 5pm** at St. Mark's. Because it is the day after the Cinco de Mayo, the kids will prepare a delicious taco bar with all the fixings (under careful supervision of our very own Chef Candice Snyder). In addition, once we explain to the kids who the Beach Boys are, they will perform one of their songs for your entertainment. Finally, we will play a group game of "Know Your Confirmands" during a fabulous dessert where you can actually win prizes – yay!

Please rsvp as soon as you can, so we know how much food to purchase. There will be a sign up sheet in the narthex this Sunday (April 30th), or you can call or email Candice Snyder at (973) 945-4363 or snyders5.candice@gmail.com, or call/email Debbie Wilson at (707) 853-5462 or Mommymook1@comcast.net. Hope to see you there!!

We will register as a group. Deadline is May 26th! Let Pastor know if you want to go!

Youth News

Shalom Camp at Mt Cross

July 16-21, 2017

Bring your friends, youth do not need to be St. Mark's members to attend



**Youth
Program
Fee: \$435.00
Scholarships
are
available**

SHALOM is a dynamic, weeklong confirmation camp made possible by a partnership between pastors, youth workers and the Mt. Cross Staff. Campers spend their mornings participating in faith-building talks and activities specifically designed for confirmation students. Afternoons are spent enjoying traditional camp activities, and evenings are filled with special activities and worship opportunities only offered to our SHALOM campers.

WELCA News

(Women of the ELCA)



78 quilts, 11 adult bibs, and 28 pillows are being donated by The Women of St. Mark's to local help agencies (Hospice, STAND, Youth Homes, Bay Area Crisis Nursery, Lutheran Social Services and the Martinez homeless shelter). We thank Crestwood Healing Center for stuffing pillows. The pillows will go to local convalescent homes. Also Thank you to everyone involved in this effort for their time and service.

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation

3051 Putnam Blvd. Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

(925)934-6114 ☐ www.sm-lc.net ☐ officeadmin@sm-lc.net

Pastor: Bekah Davis

Cell: (415) 335-3599

Office Administrator: Karen Klingelhafer

Directors of 2nd Service Music: Sherry & Mike Doyle

Choir Director/Organist: Joyce Porter

Pianist: Lisa Farnitano

Martha Circle Bible Study

Martha Circle – Tuesday, May 2, 2017 -- 1:30 p.m.

The May session of the Bible study consists of *"...10 reflections from 10 diverse women of many generations, sharing what it means to trust God, who knows us completely, with our joys and our struggles. Much like the many women's circles that engage in 'Gather' Bible studies each month, may these authors' warm, personal stories, shared Scriptures and prayers embrace you with a sense of fellowship, Christian hope and the knowledge that you are not alone.*



Please join us in the meeting room. All are welcome.

Bible study leader: Sherris H.

Refreshments: Lois M.

For Prayer ⚡ Visitation

We pray for Prayers for Pastor Lyle in the loss of his sister, Joyce's brother-in-law Bill, Ann's friend Robbie, The Doyle's niece Crystal; Adam McCullough; Tom; Ed; Lee, Jan; Sean; Lupe's wife Judy and Geoff's family

If you would like to be included in the prayer chain or if you have a prayer request, you can email the office at: officeadmin@sm-lc.net
