

The Messenger

from St. Mark's

August/September 2017

Fall Formation
Vacation Bible School
Youth Update



Choosing the Life of Community

The Rev. Beth Knowlton

“See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess.” - Deuteronomy 30:15-16

It is hard to believe that our regular programming will soon resume and we will be off to another full year here at St. Mark's. Last year saw real growth in our offerings, and I think this year we have the opportunity to continue to refine and offer opportunities for us to live our core vocation. As we offer the Bread of Life to our community, we are finding ways to make sure we are nurtured and sustained in our common life together in this parish. Scripture reminds us that our God is one who offers us choices. We can choose to live in a way that supports life and prosperity, or we can choose to live in a way that leaves us despondent or without hope. We are encouraged, and I believe God wants us to choose abundant life. The only way I know to do that is through an active and engaged community life. We cannot operate in isolation and expect abundance. It is only through the common offering of sharing ourselves and our resources that we discover fullness of life.



We have actively been planning for fall programming and this Messenger will start to give you a taste of our plans. To really find out what is in store for us, mark your calendars for Homecoming Sunday on August 27. We will return to our regular service schedule and host the Ministry Fair during the formation hour. We will have baptisms, learn about new offerings, sign up for ministry opportunities, and pick up the latest copy of the Parish Life Handbook. As I mentioned last year, other than scripture and the beloved Book of Common Prayer, this overview of the coming year contains all things necessary for salvation...or at least good information about what is happening here in the coming year!

I am particularly excited about the fall as we start the year with Abby Richards and Meredith Rogers, our two new full-time staff members in children and youth ministry. They have been busily planning and working over the summer to make sure we are ready to start engaging more fully the vision we have been working towards for the past three years for our families. It is exciting to see our dreams of a fully integrated program becoming reality.

Our formation theme this year comes from Hebrews 4:12 and is *The Word of God is Living and Active*. This emerged from a real sense that living our core vocation is becoming more intentional and evident each year. As we live God's vision here at St. Mark's, we want to take the time to notice all the ways in which we are embodying this in our community.

One new highlight for the coming year emerges from the diligent work and discernment of our Outreach Grants Committee. Thanks to them and the Reverend Matt Wise, this year we've initiated a new three-year grant. It is called the "Bread of Life Grant" and offers us three years to engage with and build real relationships with a specific organization and their work in the city. Through a grant of \$20,000 a year for three years to one recipient, the "Bread of Life Grant" takes our outreach to another level: providing the inroads for our St. Mark's community to make a deep impact. The recipient of this triennium grant is Communities in Schools-SA. Through this organization, we will be working with the students, families, teachers, and staff of Crockett Elementary school, just 2.5 miles away from St Mark's, all in the effort of furthering the reach of our core vocation. They were extremely enthusiastic about ways in which we will be able to collaborate through many volunteer opportunities, and I look forward to seeing what emerges from this new venture.

As always, I remain incredibly grateful for this community and our bold willingness to see where God is leading us. Choose life! Come and join us!

Peace,

Beth +

Formation

What makes you come alive? This program year promises to be an opportunity to delve into that question, looking at our life in God and God's word as we deepen our common life of faith as St. Mark's church, in our families, our relationships, and our selves. Our overall adult formation theme will be *The Word of God is Living and Active*, from Hebrews 4. What better way to describe our lives in Christ: alive, energetic, dynamic, vital.

The Rector's Forum will once again dig into the theme from several angles, with offerings in the fall led by the Rev. Beth Knowlton and the Rev. Dr. Jane Patterson. Spring will bring a series for Epiphany, Lent, and Eastertide.

Track II classes, led by the Rev. Carol Morehead and the Rev. Matt Wise, will once again include a series of Holy Eucharist Instruction for 2nd & 3rd graders and their families, an Episcopal Basics class, and other shorter series that explore our theme, with emphasis on conversation and interaction.

Weekly adult formation offerings will continue as well, including Time Out Bible Study on Thursday mornings; Centering Prayer on Wednesdays; Daughters of the King book studies on Wednesdays; and Gift of Years studies in October and March. EfM classes will continue this year, with one on the weekend and one on weekdays. Additional options will be our Advent and Lenten Quiet Days and a Grief in the Holidays class. New additions to this year's formation will be a film class that will look at images of the divine in film and Community of Hope classes.

We hope that there is something for everyone in the coming year. Full details on these classes will be in the Parish Life Handbook, available at the Ministry Fair on Sunday, August 27.

**Fall Sunday Service Schedule
Resumes Sunday, August 27
Homecoming Sunday**

**Formation Resumes
Sunday, September 10**

**Weekday formation offerings
begin at various times. Be sure to
check the website and Parish Life
Handbook for all the
details and times.**

The Rector's Forum "Walking in Love: The Word Made Flesh"

10.10am in Gish Hall

The Rev. Beth Knowlton and the Rev. Dr. Jane Patterson
September 10 - October 29

This class is a practical exploration of this year's formation theme from Hebrews, *The Word of God is Living and Active*. Using insights from the Ignatian tradition, we will use scripture and the imagination to explore ways in which we might focus more intentionally on embodying the creative love of God in our relationships, communities, and workplaces. The class will use reflection on our daily habits as a way to discover areas of growth and challenge, and will also look to the daily experiences and practices of early Christians as a helpful counterpoint and guide to living faithfully in a world of competing values.

Ministry Fair

It's that time of year again and the Ministry Fair is upon us! On Sunday, August 27 at 10.10am in Gosnell Hall, you'll have the opportunity to learn about the ministries that happen in and throughout our St. Mark's community. The Ministry Fair is your best opportunity to sign up to participate in a new ministry or to re-commit to the ministries you're already a part of. You can also pick up your handy-dandy Parish Life Handbook during the fair.

- **Reconnect** with familiar faces after a long summer and meet a few new faces
- **Learn** about this year's Outreach Grant recipients and how you can become involved with the good work they are doing
- **Eat** a fabulous, free breakfast and win prizes
- **Participate** in the excitement and energy around the start of a new program year
- **Discern** the impact your time and talents can have in one of the many ministries at St. Mark's

Children's Ministry

What a joy it is to be welcomed so warmly to the St. Mark's family this past spring! I am continuously grateful for this new journey with the kiddos and families of St. Mark's and am deeply excited for where God will lead and guide us this year. We have had a fun summer already, getting to know each other during Children's Chapel on Sundays and at VBS.

We will hold two upcoming Safeguarding God's Children (SGC) training sessions at St. Mark's on Sunday, August 6 from 11.30am-3.30pm and Wednesday, August 9 from 5.30-9.00pm. It is a requirement for all who plan to work with the children and/or youth of St. Mark's to attend one SGC training session every five years. For those who have already taken SGC, please contact me (arichards@stmarks-sa.org) if you are unsure when your five years expires.

Children's Sunday School at St. Mark's will continue to use the Spark curriculum for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year. This creative and engaging curriculum will lead the children through the stories of the Bible, follow the Lectionary, and give the kids a chance to interact with God and each other through fun games and activities as well as meaningful questions and

conversations. The children will bring home a Learner Leaflet each Sunday with activities and readings for families to do together during the week. We hope your kids will join us for formation starting September 10 at 10.10am on the 2nd Floor!

We will be having a Sunday School teacher orientation on Sunday, August 20 from 9.00-10.00 am. All volunteers for the upcoming school year are asked to attend this meeting. We will take a look at our curriculum and its online tools as well as plans and procedures for our Children's Ministry during the 2017-2018 academic year.

Children's Chapel at St. Mark's is a chance for our youngest parishioners (ages 3-2nd grade) to attend their own service during the first part of the 9.00am worship service. We will begin each Sunday with Miss Abby in Jerusalem Chapel. Here we will pray, sing, and learn about the current week's Gospel lesson. Then, we will head over to our activity tables for a craft that will reinforce our lesson. After our time in Children's Chapel has come to an end, the children will be led to the Sanctuary and back to their parents during the Peace. We hope you'll make Children's Chapel a regular part of your Sunday morning routine!

We are looking forward to Homecoming Sunday on August 27. This will be a great opportunity for all of us, new and seasoned members, to come together and celebrate the ministries of St. Mark's. We will also have a Blessing of

the Backpacks at the 9.00am service that Sunday, so don't forget to remind your children to bring their backpack to church. Immediately after the 9.00am service we will enjoy our annual Ministry Fair in Gosnell Hall. Ever wonder exactly what goes on in the life of our vibrant parish? Come learn all about the many, many ministries going on here, and where you can get plugged in!

Safeguarding God's Children Training
Sunday, August 6, 11.30am-3.30pm
Wednesday, August 9, 5.30-9.30pm

Sunday School Teacher Orientation
Sunday, August 20, 9.00-10.00am

Blessing of the Backpacks
Sunday, August 27 at the 9.00am service

Formation Resumes
Sunday, September 10 at 10.10am



Vacation Bible School

We had a wonderful VBS to kick off the summer! The children experienced the sights, sounds, tastes, and activities of ancient Nazareth. The main theme of our week was, "Hometown Nazareth - Where Jesus was a Kid." Each day we focused on one area of Jesus' life as a child and how we experience the very same things in our lives! Our daily themes were: "Jesus had a family... we do too"; "Jesus had a name...we do too"; "Jesus had a home and went to church...we do too"; and "Jesus served others...we do too".

We began and ended each day with Opening and Closing Celebrations. Here, the children enjoyed learning songs, motions for the songs, and the daily Bible Verse and lesson taught by the clergy. These times where the whole group gathered were full of laughter, energy, and excitement.

Our day was full of many fun, engaging, and creative ways for the children to experience the theme of the day. Each group rotated through the five activity areas in and around the Marketplace - music, crafts, games, story time in Mary's House, and a group activity time together as a tribe. Some of our activities included: making stone necklaces, eggshell mosaic frames, olive oil and essential oil sugar scrub, tie dyed bandanas, clay lamps, and baked fresh bread. They also enjoyed time in the Prayer tent, Nazareth food stall, and Outreach tent. On our last day, we stomped real grapes and enjoyed a petting zoo!

At the end of each day, during Celebration Time we shared our "God Sightings", the ways that we felt or saw God in our lives, during and outside of VBS. Each group wrote their "God Sightings" on a slip of paper, and wove it into our loom at the front of the church. Feel free to drop by the 2nd floor and check out the loom - it's a beautiful reminder of how God is truly at work among our children.

We were able to be "God Sightings" to others through our VBS Outreach project. Toward the end of the week, the children packed the art supplies collected into binders and sealed them with a "Made with Love by..." sticker. The children assembled a total of 55 art kits for the Kendall County Women's Shelter! It is our prayer that the children receiving these kits will see and feel God's love in a deep and meaningful way.

We want to say another THANK YOU to all of the many volunteers who helped to make this week such a success: Doug Addington, Linda Addington, Becky King Balter, Katrina Bondari, Amanda Byrd, Don Doyle, Christina Fisher, Ali Fowler, Elizabeth Herrera, Travis Holmstrom, Cori Kurth, Ariana Maldonado, Micaela Mangan, Samira Maus, Katie McDonough, Maddie Merritt, Lynne Miller, Becca Morgan, Patrice Oliver, Marissa Peterson, Stephanie Pollom, Neel Scott, Lou Taylor, Julie Van Zandt, Kate Van Zandt, Caroline Vassar, Dell Villa, Sandra Villareal, Robin Voight, Tripp Voight, Barbara Ward, and the St. Mark's staff and clergy. A special thank you to Rachel Doyle and Shea Pollom - our amazing VBS directors. They worked tirelessly to make sure every last detail was taken care of throughout the week.



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Youth at St. Mark's

I could not be more pleased to be home again at St. Mark's Episcopal Church! I have been reflecting on the interview I had with the youth and remember telling them that I am excited to live life with them and their families. In thinking about my past work, I have been all over - college ministry, non-profit work, and camping ministry. While working in camping ministry, when I would be asked to give a reflection or preach to a parish, I would often turn to the story of the Transfiguration. When Jesus went up the mountain with Peter, James, and John, Jesus' figure changes. These are the moments I have worked through in past positions, those "mountain top experiences." We will have such moments this year with the St. Mark's Youth Group. However, we will also experience the valleys or plains together. So when I told the youth that I wanted to live life "with" them, I meant that I want to be a part of the ebb and flow of this parish family's life, the flatter terrain where there are tough questions or even just normal routines. I want to go to your sports event or to your play, to family dinner, or to be with you after a difficult day. I want to pray for you during tests or when you are expecting joyful or burdensome news. I look forward to doing that in our life together and through the programming that we have coming up this fall! Text, email, or call (210)332-3303 or mrogers@stmarks-sa.org.



Acolyte Training - Sunday August 13, 11.30am-2.00pm - Anyone 6th grade through 12th grade who wishes to serve the church in this capacity will be required to attend this meeting. Volunteer hours will be given for each semester of work. There will be one make up training available on August 16, 5.30-8.00 pm. Please let Meredith know which training you will be able to attend.

Wednesday Night Fellowship - Resumes August 23, 6.00-8.00pm

Sunday Morning Formation: Making It Real and Relevant - Resumes September 10 at 10.10am

Youth Leadership Weekend - Friday, September 22 - Sunday, September 24. Juniors and Seniors of the St. Mark's Youth Group are invited to attend the annual Leadership Weekend. Stay tuned for more information in the Youth eNews.

Youth SOW

In June our youth served the community of San Antonio far and wide during the Summer Outreach Weekend. To begin the weekend, we received a tour of the expansive Haven for Hope complex (www.havenforhope.org). Then we were led into their Donation Warehouse to match 1,000 different pairs of shoes and sort hundreds of outfits for our San Antonio homeless neighbors. We then returned to St. Mark's to assist in the transformation of Gosnell Hall into Jesus' Hometown of Nazareth. Saturday morning, we went to Camp Capers (www.dwtx.org/capers) to help them prepare for their summer season. At Capers, the youth put 192 mattress covers on cabin bunks, spread 30 cubic yards of mulch, and tended to the 10-bed garden. Saturday evening, they rounded out their service by feeding dinner to 250 homeless men and women through the Taking it to the Streets ministry (www.takingittothestreets.com). The St. Mark's Youth embodied the service that Jesus speaks of in Matthew, selflessly giving up a weekend to joyfully serve others. *'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'* -Matthew 25:35-36.



RSCM Gulf Coast Course

During the month of June, ten girls from St. Mark's and St. Paul's Montessori School participated in the seven-day Royal School of Church Music Course in Houston. The week involved many hours of rehearsal, singing services of Evensong and Holy Eucharist, and fun times with friends from all over the country. The course was led by Richard Webster, from Trinity Church Copley Square in Boston. This is a world class course with which we are fortunate to have a long-standing relationship. The next large RSCM event will be in the winter, when St. Mark's, St. Paul's Montessori School, and several Houston churches gather to hold the Midwinter Festival at Church of the Good Shepherd in Austin.



Music from St. Mark's 2017-2018

September 17 - Jazz Mass

October 22 - Harpist Paula Page

November 12 - Concert for Remembrance Day

December 17 - Christmas Pops Concert

January 8-13 - Alamo Baroque Festival

April 29 - Bernstein 'Chischester Psalms'

June 10-14 - Association of Anglican Musicians

Be on the lookout for the Music from St. Mark's mailing for a full list of music offerings.

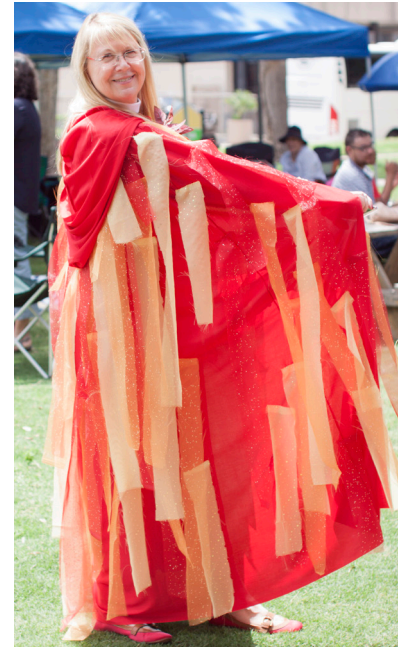
Choir Pilgrimage to Durham Cathedral and St. Alban's Abbey

62 members from the St. Mark's Choir of adults and trebles enjoyed the privilege of singing a week's services at Durham Cathedral, and two days at St. Albans Abbey (just outside London). Over 90 people from St. Mark's made the journey to the northeast of England - the home of St. Cuthbert and St. Bede. Our own Joe Causby was organ scholar of Durham from 2008-2009.

We are very grateful to all who helped make this pilgrimage possible - through your prayers, your presence, and your gifts. Being granted the opportunity to sing in an English cathedral is life-changing, and we hope to share what we have learned with you all.

If you would like to see the schedule of their time at Durham Cathedral, visit www.stmarks-sa.org/music.

Pentecost Parish Picnic



Vacation Bible School



Anglican Order of Preachers

August 9-12, the Anglican Order of Preachers (Dominicans) will be meeting at St. Mark's for Chapter, the annual meeting of the Order: teaching, preaching, worshipping, and working with the poor. On Wednesday, August 9, James Dennis O.P., member of St. Mark's, will be installed as Master of the Order during the 6.00pm service.

The Order of Preachers was founded by St. Dominic in the 13th century. The Anglican Order of Preachers was founded much more recently, in the late 1990's, and has spread across the United States, Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. It includes clergy and laity, men and women.

Like St. Dominic and his early followers, we serve as preachers and teachers wherever we live and work. As Dominicans, we take vows of simplicity, purity, and obedience. We keep a Rule of Life which includes prayer, study, preaching and teaching, and living in our widespread community. We pray the Daily Offices, attend Eucharist regularly, and engage in contemplation and intercessory prayer. We study the Bible and other theological works. We preach and teach in a variety of ways, according to our circumstances and callings.

Our Order includes fully-professed members, who have undergone a training and discernment period of at least three years, and Oblates and Associates, who uphold in prayer the Order, its members, and its mission. Becoming a Dominican involves a change of life, and a new focus in our spiritual growth. It is our way of serving God and our neighbors within and beyond our Christian communities.

For more information about the Dominicans, you can visit www.anglicandominicans.com.

- Gillian E. Cook O.P.



Care Committee Survey Results

In May, the Care Committee conducted a survey of St. Mark's members to help understand perceptions of pastoral and community care, connection to available resources, and opportunities for growth in caring for one another. The survey yielded more than 125 responses and important insights. Over half of the respondents were over 65, and over 90% of respondents either live alone or with one other person. Overall, the survey revealed that St. Mark's meets the majority of the parish pastoral care needs. When pastoral care is provided, it is well received by most. The clergy addressed 90% of reported needs; the remaining 10% of reported needs were addressed by lay members. For those who personally experienced pastoral needs, nearly all felt these needs were being addressed. 16% of respondents said that when they had a need, they did not notify anyone in the parish or did not feel the need for pastoral support. Given the results of the survey, St. Mark's clergy and lay members function effectively as pastoral caregivers. We seem to be doing well as a parish responding to pastoral needs that we are made aware of, with the clergy handling most of these needs. Those who felt their needs were not fully met, through their comments and insights, offered ways in which St. Mark's can be more responsive to needs as they arise.

Our next phase is to combine the survey results with the research done last fall about best practices and systems in order to streamline processes, utilize technological advances for better record keeping and tracking of needs, offer further training in pastoral caregiving for lay members, and expand our overall options for connecting with one another. This will include:

- More opportunities for seniors to connect and to stay connected across the various stages of life
- Support during grief and life transitions
- Support and education around mental health and wellness
- Ways for members to make connections between generations

The goals of the committee include better tracking, clearer communication of options, proactively being in contact with members who may no longer be able to attend regularly, and innovative ways to continue to encourage and support one another through connection and care.



The Rev. Carol Morehead

Dinners for Eight & Outreach Grant Recipients

A new round of Dinners for Eight will begin in September with signups available online or in person, beginning with the Ministry Fair and on the two Sundays following (September 3 and 10).

Dinners for Eight is a social, community building effort that gathers eight adults (with or without children) together regularly for a shared meal. These gatherings usually happen in group members' homes as everyone takes a turn "hosting," but groups can also share dinners out. There is no official program or agenda for these gatherings other than simply building relationships and getting to know other members of our community. There will be another round of Dinners for Eight in the spring, and there is also a "rolling" group for those who miss the signups but would still like to participate. For the fall round, we will have a kick-off dinner at the church on Sunday, September 24, where participants will find out who is in their group and have their first dinner together. We hope you will join in on this great community building opportunity!

Outreach Grant Recipients

Bread of Life Grant - 2017-2020 Recipient: Communities in Schools-SA

Core Vocation Grant - For the 2017 grant cycle, we focused on programs/projects aimed at "Feeding the hungry with real food," though we considered applicants with programs/projects in the other two vocational areas. The 2017 recipients are Alpha Home, Café Corazón, Children's Shelter of San Antonio, Lifetime Recovery, Morningside Ministries: Art is Ageless, Morningside Ministries: Virtual Dementia Tours, San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic, San Antonio Clubhouse, and Youth Orchestra of San Antonio.

We look forward to working with these recipients in the future!

Financials

2017 FINANCIAL REPORT as of 06/30/2017

50% of annual budget	Actual (YTD)	Budgeted (YTD)
Pledge Revenue	\$991,876	\$1,022,064
Non-Pledge & Open Plate Giving	\$101,553	\$126,000
Seasonal Giving	\$10,339	\$10,000
Other Rev (parking lot, fees, carryover)	\$213,637	\$216,239
Endowment/Fund Revenue	\$167,006	\$186,866
Total Revenue	\$1,484,411	\$1,561,169
Total Expenses	\$1,302,008	\$1,407,284
Over/(Under)	\$182,403	\$153,885

\$1,672,270 in 2017 Pledges • 319 Pledges • Average Pledge is \$5,242 • Median Pledge is \$2,700

Clergy at St. Mark's

Parish Clergy: The Rev. Elizabeth Knowlton, Rector; The Rev. Carol Morehead, Associate Rector for Liturgy, Adult Formation, and Pastoral Care; The Rev. Matthew Wise, Associate Rector for Outreach, Family Ministry, and Parish Life

**24 hour pastoral care
emergency phone
210-507-0256**

Making a Gift of Their Service: The Rev. C. Douglas Earle, Assisting Priest; The Rev. Mary Earle, Assisting Priest; The Rev. Dr. John Lewis, Co-director, St. Benedict's Work+Shop; The Rev. Dr. Jane Patterson, Co-director, St. Benedict's Work+Shop



In Remembrance and Thanksgiving (thru July 6, 2017)

MEMORIALS

Phyllis Beinhorn by Laura and Weir LaBatt III, Patsy Steves
John C. Cammack by Joan K. Borden
Minta Cook by Susan McIntyre Goodman
Light Cummins by Jill and George Vassar
Barbara Holder by Sally Armstrong, Alice and Tripp Bennett, Deems and Bill Smith
Betty LeFlore by Jill and George Vassar
Great Grandfather "Big Daddy" by Margaret and Miller Raney
Mark Judson by Robert Buchanan, Barbara and Michael Gentry, Patrice and Joey Oliver
Fred Lynch by Richard Lynch

Bill Parker by Mollie and Bartell Zachry
Ann Tiner by Darlene Freels, Camilla Parker

RENEW FUND

Light Cummins by Jean and Paul Parker

ST. CECILIA

Phyllis Beinhorn by Ann Coiner
Light Cummins by Norma and Raymond Baird, Ann Coiner
Mark Judson by Ann Coiner

SPECIAL GIFTS

To St. Mark's **in thanksgiving for Mary Lynch** by Richard Lynch
To St. Cecilia **in honor of Patrice Oliver** by Deems Smith

Cafe Kairos, Wednesdays and Thursdays 5.00pm-6.30pm

Cost: \$8.00 adults | \$6.00 children (under 6 yrs old)

AUGUST 23-24
Roasted Chicken
Mashed Potatoes
Corn
Garden Salad
Brownies

AUGUST 30-31
Beef Enchiladas
Charro Beans
Spanish Rice
Tossed Salad
Tres Leches Cake

SEPTEMBER 6-7
Lasagna
Green Beans
Garlic Bread Sticks
Caesar Salad
Cheesecake

SEPTEMBER 13-14
Pizza
Salad
Cookies

SEPTEMBER 19-20
Chicken Alfredo
Broccoli
Garlic Bread Sticks
Caesar Salad
Italian Cream Cake

SEPTEMBER 26-27
Chicken Fajitas
Charro Beans
Chili Con Queso
Salsa & Chips
Garden Salad
Cake

Photos in this Issue

Cover photo: Eric Nelson
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