



The Messenger

from St. Mark's

August/September 2019
Homecoming Sunday
Vacation Bible School
Pathways to Hope
Crockett Academy

Living the Fullness of God's Invitation

It is hard to believe the summer months are already drawing to a close and we are preparing to enter into another full program year. After five years serving in this community, I am starting to internalize the rhythms of our common life. This past year we spent some good time together in small groups looking and listening again for God's invitation to us as we live into our Core Vocation. It also provided an important time to see all that we have been able to accomplish. This has been an essential complement to the leadership work our Vestry has been engaging in the past year. I'll be hosting an adult forum prior to the official kick off of formation. Plan to join me in Gish Hall on August 25 at 10.10am to hear more about these gatherings and add your thoughts to our findings. Whether you were able to attend a gathering or not, this is an important time to stop and pay attention to what we might be imagining for our common future.



The Rev. Beth Knowlton

One theme that emerged in several gatherings was a desire for more interfaith dialogue. In an increasingly diverse world, understanding how we experience God becomes important as we imagine how to engage in our city and with one another. I am excited that after some conversations with Rabbi Mara Nathan, at Temple Beth-El, starting in October we will have a joint bible study of the Book of Exodus. It will meet monthly, alternating between St. Mark's and Temple Beth-El. Looking at a common text with one another, sharing fellowship, and gathering in one another's places of worship will provide an important engagement with our sisters and brothers. The schedule will be posted in the Parish Life Handbook, so make sure you pick one up.

Where you ask? At Homecoming Sunday! Please join us as we return to our regular worship schedule on August 18! During the 10.10am hour we will have our annual Ministry Fair. Shea Pollom, who has been hard at work already as our new Outreach and Membership Coordinator will be there specially to greet people that are newer to our community. Personally, I plan to spend extra time with visitors and people seeking a place of worship this year. Matt and Ann will be exploring some new methods and themes in their formation offering in Gish Hall, while I'll plan some more informal conversations for those newer to our community or new to their Christian walk. We plan to have more formation content available on the website, as we come to understand that this is more and more the first place people "visit," long before they attend a worship service.

We are continuing to manage the transition in our Children's Ministry and will be making an announcement about the plans for next year well before Sunday School commences. Transition is part of our community life, and we have demonstrated before that new staff members bring new gifts and insights. The summer is always an important time of planning and creative musing about what we might offer in the coming year. I always come away from this time energized and excited about the new year. Join us! And invite your friends!

Peace,

Beth +

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Adult Formation

Wrestling Required

Beginning Sunday, September 8

10.10am

Gish Hall, 3rd Floor

Led and facilitated by The Rev. Ann Fraser and The Rev. Matt Wise

This fall, our adult forum class will use a new format focused on small group discussion. Each week one of our clergy (or guest clergy via video clip) will lead a 15-20 minute teaching and then facilitate small group response through intentionally designed discussion questions. Each week will offer a self-contained class and we will cover a variety of topics that will include subjects like biblical interpretation, the sacraments, social justice, spiritual practices, communal life, and walking the way of love. Please look for a more detailed schedule in the Parish Life Handbook. We hope you'll consider joining us in Gish Hall for this adult forum.

All Sermons and Formation classes are recorded each week and available on the website to listen to or download. These recordings are also available on the Stitcher App.

Ministry Fair

It's that time of year again, and the Ministry Fair is upon us! On Sunday, August 18, at 10.10am in Gosnell Hall, we'll have the opportunity to learn about many of the ministries that happen in and throughout our St. Mark's community. We'll also get to meet many of the people who work with the non-profits that our Outreach Grants helped to fund this year. The Ministry Fair is the best opportunity to sign up to participate in a new ministry, to re-commit to the ministries we're already a part of, and to learn about volunteer opportunities through our Outreach Grant recipients. Be sure to pick up your handy-dandy Parish Life Handbook during the fair.

• **Reconnect** • **Learn** • **Eat** • **Participate** • **Discern**



Upcoming Events at St. Mark's

Sunday, 8/18	Homecoming Sunday Blessing of the Backpacks Return to 7.45am, 9.00am, and 11.15am worship schedule Ministry Fair (10.10am)
Sunday, 8/25	Meet your Sunday School teachers (10.10am, 2nd Floor) Adult Forum on Small Group Findings (10.10am, Gish Hall)
Wednesday, 9/4	Wednesday Evening Programming resumes (check the website for a more detailed schedule)
Sunday, 9/8	Formation Resumes (10.10am)

St. Mark's Children and Youth at RSCM

The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) is a Christian music organization that promotes music in worship and is based in the Anglican tradition. The Voices for Life curriculum is workbook based and what we use at St. Mark's. Each chorister works with a mentor learning skills and techniques for singing, music theory, and liturgy. Each chorister wears a colored ribbon and medal representing their progress and accomplishments. Nine members of the youth and children's choir attended the RSCM Gulf Coast Course and three members attended the RSCM Pacific Northwest Course. Below and on the next page, you will find reflections from some of our youth. Check out both RSCM Facebook pages for more pictures and videos of the Evensongs.

RSCM Gulf Coast Course



RSCM Gulf Coast Course is a very important part of my life. I started going to RSCM Gulf Coast Course when I was nine years old. This course has taught me a lot about music and embracing who I am with God alongside me. It is a very educational, loving, and emotional experience because your peers become like family. It is always good to have a loving community surround you. I feel like I can be myself around these girls and proctors. RSCM Gulf Coast Course has given me the confidence and training to succeed in life. I originally found out about RSCM Gulf Coast Course when I joined the St. Mark's Choir in first or second grade. I came in without knowing how to read music. With the help of Dr. Causby, I quickly learned how to read music and understand it. Overtime the St. Mark's Choir influenced who I am today. Since becoming involved in the St. Mark's Choir and attending RSCM Gulf Coast Course, music has been, is, and will always be a part of my life. I encourage anyone, at any age, to be a member of the St. Mark's Choir and share their God given talents for all to hear. I also encourage young girls to attend RSCM Gulf Coast Course because it is an incredible experience that will help them to see the more spiritual side of music.

- Submitted by Samira Maus

RSCM is not only a camp but a family and a home. I still remember my first year. I was 10 years old and my roommate, Christina, was the only person I really knew at camp. As soon as we got there, we were greeted by all of our new and soon to be friends. Soon enough Christina and I found ourselves surrounded by young girls just like us. To be perfectly honest I had no idea what was coming. I was shocked when we had our first rehearsal, this was going to be one long week. RSCM is a very intensive course where young girls learn to be the best choristers they can be. The hosts of RSCM know that the course they designed is hard work, and they are always there for you whenever you need. I'm not the kind to get homesick but once in my first year I fell running down the halls of dorm rooms. I skinned my knee and was crying so one of the older girls took me to Mrs. Anna Teagarden and she bandaged me up and comforted me. She is so amazing, and I can't imagine what RSCM would be like without her. But let's not forget the balance of work to play. After at least four hours of rehearsals in the morning we are met with a much-needed rest period and after the afternoon rehearsals they always have something fun planned. It's a perfectly designed day for young aspiring choristers. This was my fourth year attending RSCM and I plan to go back in the years to come. I can't wait to see all my friends again next year. And even though we are spread out all over the gulf coast, the bonds that are made there will remain stronger than ever.

- Submitted by Kate Van Zandt

St. Mark's Children and Youth at RSCM

RSCM Pacific Northwest Course



One part of the RSCM organization is the summer trainings. These are weeklong camps held throughout the country each summer. A nice part of RSCM camps is that they livestream all of the Evensongs. Each camp is a little different, but centers around the evensong liturgy. Bailey and I just got back from the RSCM Pacific Northwest course in Seattle, Washington. We (over 50 choristers) spent the week rehearsing for an Evensong at St. Mark's Cathedral in Seattle and Sunday services at Christ Episcopal Church Tacoma. While there was a lot of singing, we made new friends, played games, and spent time in musical electives.

- Submitted by Tripp Voight

What is Your Theology of Giving?

Belonging and the benefits of community come when you feel supported, have opportunities for growth, and contribute to making those opportunities possible. St Mark's pledgers and annual financial donors experience transformation through the fullness of giving generously.

Grounded in community, we work out the teachings of Christ and how to apply them to the daily challenges we all face.

Together we seek to live our best lives, to develop what is good

and life giving. St. Mark's offers worship, formation, parish events, and outreach opportunities to guide your journey.

You are invited to share your story/theology of giving in print, video, or by offering a Sunday morning testimonial.

What is your story about giving and the role money plays in your life?

What prompted you to make your first financial gift to the church?

What does joyful and fruitful giving look like for you and your family?

How do you talk about money with your children, friends, and neighbors?

How do thankfulness, forgiveness, anxiety, or fear play a role in your relationship with money?

If you would share your answers to any of these questions, let us hear from you. Contact Dina Aboul Saad at dsaad@stmarks-sa.org or 210-226-2426.



Vacation Bible School

Over the past week, we've had the privilege of hosting 47 children from the ages of 3 years to 5th grade at Vacation Bible School. This year, through the hard work of Abby Richards and Meredith Rogers, we created our own curriculum and scope for the week basing everything on the core theme, *being created in the image of God*. We spent each day focusing on a different aspect of what it means to be created in the image and likeness of God and what the implications are for each of those aspects in our daily lives. Each day also had an element from our Eucharistic liturgy tied into the teaching, grounding all we learned together in our principal gathering of thanksgiving.

YOU ARE CREATED FOR WORSHIP was the focus on Monday and the children learned all about what it means to worship – that any action that brings honor and glory to God is an act of worship. At the Craft Station, they decorated prayer journals as tools to help them reflect on their learnings, either through writing or drawing, and each day of the week had its own home-made stamp depicting the

American Sign Language sign for that day's focus. At the Outreach Station, each child helped make a fleece blanket to donate to the Linus Project so that children in need might be comforted and surrounded by their prayers and love. We talked about the reality that all of us make choices that dishonor God, and that when we do, one of the most important acts of worship we can offer is confessing our sins. In doing so, we experience God's forgiveness. Liturgically this is lived out in the Confession, Absolution, and Exchanging of the Peace.

YOU ARE CREATED FOR LOVING was the focus on Tuesday and we had great conversations about what it can look like when we love each other well. We talked about the Offertory Sentence, "Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself as an offering and sacrifice to God," and how walking around in love means striving to do everything from a place of love. It's not an accident that this is the invitational line the clergy say to transition the service's focus to the altar and communion. At the Craft Station, the children painted reminder rocks that read, "You are Loved." These are another tool to help everyone remember that because we are created in the image of God each and every one of us is worthy of love and belonging. We talked about how one of the times everyone has felt very loved was at their own birthday parties. So we put together Birthday Boxes at the Outreach Station that contain cake mix, frosting, candles, a birthday banner, a small gift, and a card from the kids as an outreach project for children who may not get to have a big birthday party as a way for them to also be reminded that they are loved.

YOU ARE CREATED FOR SERVING was Wednesday's focus, conveying that we are created in the image of God. We read both the story of Mary anointing Jesus' feet and of Jesus washing the disciples' feet from the Gospel of John. We talked about different ways that Jesus and his disciples served others and how serving others helps us be more like Jesus. At the Craft Station, the children decorated bamboo serving trays as a tool that might help them serve others in their homes, and they made dog chew toys from strips of fabric at the Outreach Station to donate to the San Antonio Animal Shelter as a way of serving even the dogs in our community! We were reminded that every week near the end of the Eucharistic celebration we say the post-communion prayer, asking God to "send us out to do the work you have given us to do; to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart." This means that our life and work as followers of Jesus is not contained by the walls of our church – that we have lots of work to do out in the world serving so that everyone knows the joy of being created in the image of God.

(continued on the next page)



Vacation Bible School

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YOU ARE CREATED FOR COMMUNITY was our focus on Thursday. Paul's letters to the Corinthians and the Romans gave us the Body of Christ metaphor to build on – each one of us has unique and wonderful gifts that we bring together in community to make an even more whole image of God. We talked about how each one of us has a part and a place and that even the youngest members of the body are vitally important. Community is built over time and only in relationship and that can be hard and intimidating work for which we need each other. We realized that in loving and in serving others, we are forming holy relationships and we looked for ways to support the connections we have with friends and family members. At the Craft Station the children made board games to play with a partner, this created the opportunity to get to know a new friend. For their outreach project, each child wrote a letter or drew a picture to be delivered to one of our St. Mark's members who is in the hospital or is home-bound – a loving act of service that helps us foster community.

The whole week culminated in an abbreviated and age-appropriate instructed Eucharist wherein the kids all gathered around the altar to learn about the different vessels and linens we use. They helped set the table and we learned that in the Episcopal tradition this liturgy is our central act of WORSHIP that feeds and nourishes this COMMUNITY so that we can be sent out into the world to SERVE others and to walk around in LOVE. The day concluded with another celebration on a giant waterslide.

A special word of thanks to all of our volunteers - youth and adult - who helped out as small group leaders, craft leaders, outreach project leaders, snack leaders, and behind-the-scenes workers. We could not have done any of this holy work without your help. It was a wonderful, fun, silly, holy, and life-giving week spent practicing what it means to be created in the image of God.



Pathways to Hope

Once again, St. Mark's is a beneficiary and supporter of a dynamic conference on mental health, happening right next door. The 2019 Pathways to Hope conference will be held at the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts on August 23 and 24. The conference will feature an outstanding group of speakers and offer nineteen different workshops to help continue the community-wide conversation on how faith communities can provide support for individuals and families affected by mental health issues.

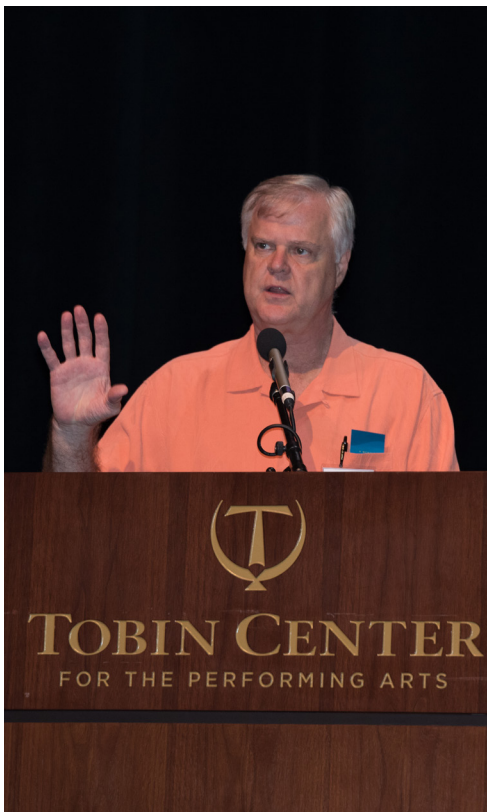


Some of the main speakers this year include:

- Pete Earley, a nationally known mental health advocate, Pulitzer Prize finalist and author
- Dr. Mark Salzer, Director of the Temple University Collaborative on Community Inclusion of Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities
- Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroeder, founder of Mental Health Ministries and a leading national advocate for the involvement of faith communities in providing mental health support
- Pastor Frank Pomeroy and members of the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs
- Dr. Brenda Richardson-Rowe, Director of the Harmony Counseling Center at Concord Church in Dallas and a leader in establishing mental health programs in African-American churches

The workshops will follow four tracks: (1) Mental Health, (2) Peer Programs, (3) Therapy/Counseling, and (4) Faith Community Support. The conference is FREE to all attendees.

Register online at www.pathwaystohope.net to reserve your place.



Pentecost Parish Picnic



Crockett Academy

St. Mark's is beginning the third year of a three-year partnership with Crockett Academy, through Communities in Schools of San Antonio. The Bread of Life Grant from St. Mark's includes funding spread across those three years, along with a commitment to invest in the school through a variety of volunteer opportunities. One-time and longer-term opportunities are available. Liz Chiego was one of several St. Mark's members who mentored a student this past academic year and shares this reflection below.

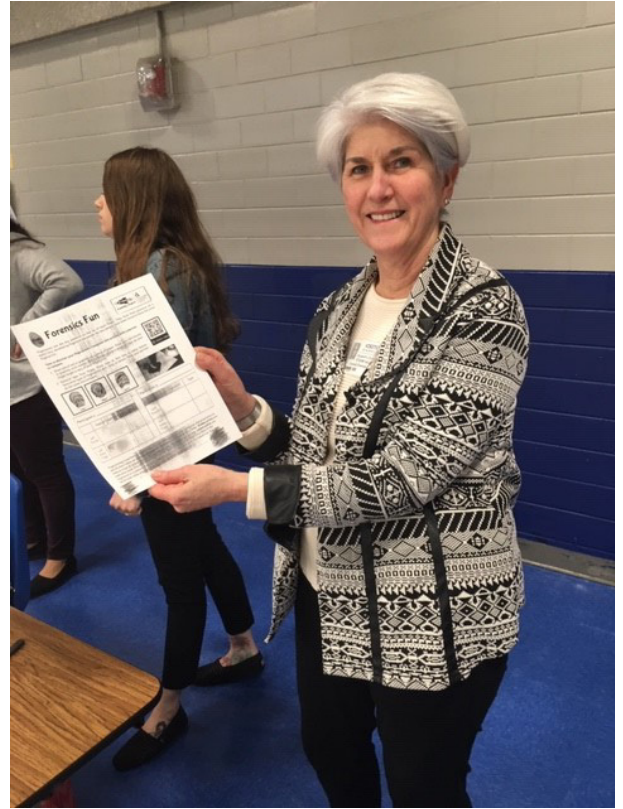
I love Communities in Schools (CIS) and I love St. Mark's. I have previously mentored at Twain and Roosevelt, but when I heard that St. Mark's was "adopting" Crockett Elementary in the 78207 zip code in conjunction with CIS, I was elated and signed on.

When I paid my first visit to Site Coordinator, Naedean Herrera, at Crockett for my interview, I drove the neighborhood and knew this was going to be the best. Even entering the school with the wonderful posters in the halls was a revelation. Then, to find that the shelves in Naedean's office were filled with paper, notebooks, and so many student essentials courtesy of "Stuff the Bus" donations from St. Mark's really was impressive.

I met my mentee a few weeks later for our first meeting in Naedean's office. She wanted to play a game and we chatted about her life. She told me about where she had lived before moving to San Antonio and that she had relatives in Africa and other places. I thought that we could look at maps to see all of these places and we squinted at a Rand McNally on the shelf in the office. For our next meeting I asked Naedean if it would be okay to bring a globe in. My mentee had never seen a globe and it became a fixture as we talked or played games. This spring I found inflatable globes online and donated them to Naedean's chest. Coincidentally...I was at a house sale and there was a much better globe and I grabbed it. For our final meeting we had two globes. One more detailed than the other and then an inflatable globe. My mentee actually did not want to play a game but compare globes! I look forward to our continued discussions...and hope the globes are still there next fall!

- Submitted by Liz Chiego

Serving as a mentor is a powerful way to have a positive impact in a student's life. Mentors meet with their mentee weekly on the Crockett campus. If you would like to become a mentor for a Crockett student this year, visit www.cissa.org/get-involved to complete the Online Volunteer Application. Questions? Email Maria Acosta, CISSA Field Manager, MAcosta@cissa.org, or look for the Crockett Academy table at the Ministry Fair on Sunday, August 18.



Liz Chiego at Crockett Academy's STEAM Night

Vestry Slate

The Vestry Discernment Committee is excited to share the slate for the Vestry class of 2022! Be on the lookout for their bios and pictures in the October/November issue of The Messenger.

David Byrd
George Spencer
Veda White
Laura Wickham
Lucy Wilson

Paul Allen and Robert Pollom, co-chairs of the Vestry Discernment Committee, would like to thank all of the members of the committee for their time and dedication.

In Remembrance and Thanksgiving (thru July 14, 2019)

MEMORIALS

Ross Brackett by Ann and Eric Casstevens, Meg and Patrick Conner, Charlene and Ralph Fregosi, Arch Gilbert and Paul Vrana, Almeda and Ned Hodge, Lance Lahourcade, Madelon Leone and South Texas Money Management, Mrs. and Dr. Joe McFarlane, Terry and Marvin Quin, Hans and Christina Rohl
Lt. General Frank F. Ledford, Jr. by Ann Reeks

ST. CECILIA FUND

Donna Palmer by Ann Coiner

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MINISTRY

Mrs. Nelda Reneau by Chere' Reneau

ALTAR FLOWERS

Pauline Gillespie Gossett by Robert F. Gossett

SPECIAL GIFTS

To Children's and Youth Ministries in **thanksgiving for Margaret Raney** by Nance and Ben Haney

Financials

2019 FINANCIAL REPORT as of 6/30/2019

50% of annual budget	Actual (YTD)	Budgeted (YTD)
Pledge Revenue	\$948,735	\$967,453
Non-Pledge & Open Plate Giving	\$93,751	\$133,500
Seasonal Giving	\$12,799	\$10,000
Other Rev (parking lot, fees, carryover)	\$276,763	\$279,666
Endowment/Fund Revenue	\$135,885	\$152,856
Total Revenue	\$1,467,933	\$1,543,475
Total Expenses	\$1,376,309	\$1,460,704
Over/(Under)	\$91,624	\$82,771

\$1,666,230 in 2019 Pledges • 308 Pledges • Average Pledge is \$5,410 • Median Pledge is \$2,789

Clergy at St. Mark's

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

Making a Gift of Their Service: The Rev. Michael Chalk, Rector Emeritus; 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. Mary Margaret Mueller, Assisting Priest; The Rev. Dr. Jane Patterson, Co-director, St. Benedict's Work+Shop

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



Cafe Kairos, Wednesdays and Thursdays 5.00pm-6.30pm

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

SEPTEMBER 4-5
Chicken Alfredo with Penne
Pasta
Fresh broccoli
Garlic Breadsticks
Garden Salad
Dessert

SEPTEMBER 11-12
Beef & Chicken Chalupas
Mexican Rice
Charro Beans
Chips & Salsa
Garden Salad
Dessert

SEPTEMBER 18-19
Chicken Parmesan with Pasta
Fresh Broccoli
Garden Salad
Garlic Breadsticks
Dessert

SEPTEMBER 25-26
Chicken Enchiladas Verdes
Mexican Rice
Charro Beans
Chips & Salsa
Garden Salad
Dessert

Photos in this Issue

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