

The Messenger

from St. Mark's

February/March 2019

Lent at St. Mark's
Christmas to the Street Recap
Member Spotlight



Following and Seeking

"It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."
- Deuteronomy 31:8

We have a longer than normal Epiphany season this year, which means this issue of The Messenger is evenly divided between a season of following the star and seeking the gifts of the desert in Lent. And while Lent is typically a penitential season, the arrival of The Rev. Ann Benton Fraser on March 1 is filling me with joyful anticipation. The desert is always better with good companions. It's a good reminder that while our liturgical seasons mark and form us, our feelings or experiences are not automatically aligned with them in any given year.

The invitation I hear strongly for our community in this season of both the glory of Epiphany and the sparseness of the Lenten desert is to be both seekers and followers. We look within ourselves, our lives, and our communities for the abundance that is promised in the faith of the magi looking for the holy child they see promised in the stars. And, we trust so deeply in that child that we are willing to follow wherever He leads us.

We are beautifully positioned, through your generosity, to ponder the deep questions of where we are being led in the coming years. With the retirement of our remaining renovation debt, we can look towards intentionally welcoming fellow travelers and seeking Christ more fully in our city. We will gather in the coming months to listen to one another about where we are called to more fully embody our Core Vocation. *Feeding San Antonio with the Bread Of Life* is a reminder of our deep identity forged through 160 years of seeking and following.

We also look to what might be the new manifestations of that calling. As our city changes, as the role of the institutional church encounters new challenges, we remain people of hope. We can be curious rather than defensive. We can be nimble rather than trapped in an overly narrow idea of what God hopes for us. We trust that if we seek we will find. And like the Israelites following a pillar of cloud and fire, we are reminded that it is indeed the Lord who goes before us.

I am excited about what will emerge from our small group conversations in the coming months. We have already seen the power of these gatherings in our recent past. Having a third full time clergy person, addressing our debt, engaging more intentionally in parish fellowship, and imagining a great witness in our city all came from the desires of our community. So, what is next for us? We will only discover this with one another. So join in the conversation by signing up online or calling the office. Invite others. It will be a continuation of the great story of the people of St. Mark's!

Peace,

Beth +



The Rev. Beth Knowlton

2019 Wardens

St. Mark's is delighted to announce the appointment Ann Leafstedt as Junior Warden. Paul Allen will complete the second year of his term as Senior Warden. The Wardens serve two-year terms, to provide more continuity. The terms are overlapping, so each calendar year one of the wardens will be entering their first year of service. Please join us in thanksgiving for Paul and Ann!

The Messenger, USPS 514-020
Vol 19, Issue 1, Published bi-monthly

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Article Deadline: 2nd Friday of month
preceding bi-monthly issue

Postage paid in San Antonio, TX
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to St.
Mark's Episcopal Church
Rector: The Rev. Beth Knowlton

Christian Identity In An Increasingly Polarized World - The Rector’s Forum 2018-2019

The Rev. Elizabeth Knowlton, The Rev. Mary Earle, The Rev. Dr. John Lewis, and The Rev. Dr. Jane Patterson

“Once when Jesus was praying alone, with only the disciples near him, he asked them, ‘Who do the crowds say that I am?’ They answered, ‘John the Baptist; but others, Elijah; and still others, that one of the ancient prophets has arisen.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’”

- Luke 9:18-20

As followers of Jesus Christ, we believe that modeling our lives through our baptismal promises is a primary way we are formed as Christians. With so much division and polarization in our world, there can be a tendency to step away from practices that form us, and instead try to label and judge our identity in ways that do not allow for individual discernment and the particular expression each of us is called to offer to the world. This year we will explore in depth the promises we make and reaffirm in our baptismal covenant. The hope is that further reflection on these promises gives us a clearer understanding of who we are as Christians and why it makes a difference to us and our world. We will explore the history, theology, practices, and habits that help us to live a life that embodies an “inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, and a spirit to know and love God, and receive the gift of joy and wonder in all God’s works” (adapted from the service of Holy Baptism, BCP p. 308).

Part IV: How do we seek Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves?

January 27 - February 24

Part V: How do we strive for justice and peace?

March 10 - 31

Track 2: Planning for Life’s Seasons

“As in Adam all die, also in Christ shall all be made alive”.

- I Corinthians 15:22

In this class, we will look at a theology of life and of death and how that shapes our understandings of health and wellness. The eight week class will also include sessions on getting things in order at different life stages, medical directives, estate planning, death and dying, considerations for funerals, and an opportunity for asking questions of experts in these various areas.

- January 13 - 20 Living Between Alpha and Omega
- January 27 Health and Wellness: The Care and Feeding of Your Brain
- February 3 Downsizing and How Adult Children Can Help (or Not)
- February 10 Estate Planning – What You Need to Know
- February 17 Health and Wellness: Your Body is a Temple
- February 24 Preparing for Successful Retirement

Track 2: An Altar In Your Heart – Lent 2019

James Dennis, OP, The Rev. Mary Earle, The Rev. Mary Margaret Mueller

March 10 - 31

This four week Lenten class will look at *An Altar In Your Heart: Meditations on the Jesus Prayer* by The Rt. Rev. Robert B. Hibbs. Using the Jesus Prayer as a framework for meditation, Hibbs invites us into a special Lenten discipline, allowing for a deepening in knowing Jesus as we continue to seek to know who we say Jesus is. In the 20th Anniversary Edition of the book, The Rev. Mary Earle writes, “Twenty years after the first edition of this book, we live in a culture beset by distraction and phenomenally shallow life. As this fragmented, distressed version of the human psyche predominates, the Jesus Prayer offers us an alternative. As Bob points out, we come home to ourselves. Our truest selves. We come home to the fact of ever being in the loving presence of the Risen Christ, who holds our very cells in being. We come home to the awareness that there is no place where God is not. We come home to the stunning truth that we are never, ever alone, for the Risen Christ is the One in whom we live and move and have our being.” This class will explore that invitation to come home again.

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.

Music from St. Mark's

FEBRUARY 10
SUNDAY, 5.00PM

ORGAN CONCERT

Jon Johnson, St. Mark's Organist & Choirmaster, performs a concert on our Austin/Kegg Pipe Organ.

MARCH 3
SUNDAY, 4.30PM

PRE-EVENSONG RECITAL

SOLI Chamber Music Ensemble

MARCH 3
SUNDAY, 5.00PM

CHORAL EVENSONG FOR THE LAST SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

Sung by the St. Mark's Choir under the direction of Jon Johnson.

APRIL 28
SUNDAY, 5.00PM

FIESTA CONCERT: THE FEAST OF ST. MARK

The St. Cecilia Guild presents Fiesta Concert featuring the St. Mark's Choirs and orchestra. This concert will include John Rutter's *Gloria*, and Flor Peeter's *Toccata Festiva*.

Welcome The Rev. Ann Benton Fraser

The Rev. Ann Benton Fraser comes to St. Mark's after serving as Rector for nine years in the Diocese of Mississippi at St. Paul's Church in historic Corinth. She looks forward to joining the people of St. Mark's in ministry to San Antonio, and discovering what God is calling us to imagine in Outreach, Pastoral Care, and Parish Life.

A native of south Louisiana, Ann received a degree in public relations from LSU and worked in development for a nonprofit education resource center in Baton Rouge. After receiving her MDiv at Sewanee's School of Theology, Ann was awarded a Lilly Fellowship to serve at St. James' in Manhattan for two years. In the Diocese of Mississippi, Ann served in roles including President of the Standing Committee, the Commission on Ministry, and as a co-director of a family camp session of Camp Bratton-Green. Ann is a contributing writer at Forward Movement's Grow Christians blog, and has served on two General Convention deputations. In Corinth, she moderated a racial reconciliation fellowship, was an active Rotarian, and worked in several ecumenical partnerships.

She and her husband Andrew are parents of two lively girls, Susanna (7) and Eleanor (5). Ann loves to spend time reading, getting to know people, being active outdoors, and making things. She is loosely affiliated with two cats.

We are very excited to welcome the Frasers. Please pray for them as they prepare to transition to St. Mark's and San Antonio! We will have a reception on Ann's first Sunday, March 3, at 10.10am. Please make plans to join us in welcoming the Frasers to St. Mark's!



Shrove Tuesday Talent Show

Tuesday, March 5

5.30pm Dinner, 6.00pm Talent Show

This event is one of the social highlights of the year! Don't miss this opportunity to showcase your talents and have lots of fun with fellow parishioners. Bring your family and friends. If you have an act you'd like to share, we want to hear from you. Contact Meredith Rogers at mrogers@stmarks-sa.org.



Lenten Offerings at St. Mark's

Lenten Quiet Day

Lessons from the Desert: Wisdom from the Desert Mothers and Fathers

Saturday, March 2

9.30am – 2.00pm

Facilitated by The Rev. Elizabeth Knowlton

There is a particular spirituality that emerges from desert terrain. No place is this more obvious than the wisdom of the early church desert mothers and fathers who chose a life of austerity as a way of growing in closeness to God. Take some time out of your busy schedule to engage with their witness as part of your own Lenten observances. There will be time for silent reflection, sharing, nourishing food, and the fellowship we find with one another. Give yourself the gift of this time.

Ash Wednesday Services

Wednesday, March 6

7.00am

12.00pm

7.00pm

Music in the Park

As a response to the wonderful energy and excitement last year, "Music in the Park" will take place again each Wednesday in Lent (March 13 - April 10) from 12.00pm until 1.00pm in Travis Park. You are invited to pick up a soup and biscuit lunch to go from St. Mark's and walk across Pecan St. into Travis Park where you'll be serenaded

by several of our musical parish members and their talented friends. Musicians will be playing tunes from various musical genres and have been invited to intersperse their music with stories about how they've experienced the sacred -- the holy -- the divine in and through their music.

We hope you will join us.

Save the Dates

More information to come!

Sunday, 4/7	Day of Prayer and Service
Sunday, 4/14	Palm Sunday
Mon, 4/15 - Sat, 4/20	Holy Week
Saturday, 4/20	Easter Egg Hunt
Sunday, 4/21	Easter
Sunday, 4/28	Feast of St. Mark and Confirmation Sunday

Christmas to the Street

This year at the 14th annual Christmas to the Street, the high school youth gathered to prepare for the many downtown neighbors that would join us for a meal. They made sure to take care of every part of the meal, as has been their custom. But they took it one step further and spent the evening in vigil, praying for the people who would enter our doors, not knowing where they were coming from or where they would be going after they left us. During that vigil, we focused on waiting. Advent is a time to prepare and a time to wait; the space between God's announcement of new life for us, and when it actually comes to be. We thought about the neighbors who would be waiting for a delicious meal, who would be waiting to be welcomed, and worked to prepare ourselves for their arrival.

While we took turns holding vigil, the rest of the youth in attendance selflessly worked to bag 1,250 pickles and onions, packed 100 Blessing Bags, and produced 250 sandwiches that would be given out as another meal after our neighbors finished their delectable bar-b-que. While the youth were hard at work inside, our dedicated men on the Pit Crew, under the leadership of Gene Alderman, worked through the night (in the pouring rain) to cook 60 plus briskets and over 2,000 sausage links for lunch the next day. Without any prompting, three middle school youth diligently worked at one of their homes making and icing Christmas cookies just to add that extra touch of welcome.

On Saturday, the middle school youth joined us to create a welcoming space in Gosnell Hall by wrapping utensils and setting out placemats made by the children and youth of the church. Each of those placemats included this prayer for the meal: *"Give us grateful hearts, our Father, for all your mercies, and make us mindful of the needs of others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen"*

In the kitchen, our parishioners donned their aprons and started cutting brisket and preparing all of the mouthwatering sides that completed the meal. We opened the doors and welcomed our neighbors to come in from the cold and grab a warm meal. There is something different about Christmas to the Street. Our neighbors take a seat and they get to order from the youth walking around the room. Our neighbors picked their drink, dessert, and received a heaping serving of food.

As we cleaned up from hosting a few hundred within the St. Mark's walls, the next crew, led by Mike Duffey and Suzy Tackett, came in to pack up and serve dinner to over 1,250 folks at the Haven for Hope campus (through partnerships with the Society of St. Vincent De Paul and the San Antonio Food Bank). Thank you to the clergy, staff, Vestry, and parish of St. Mark's for your continued support of this ministry! With your help we were able to serve at least 1,500 meals and volunteered over 680 hours.

- Submitted by Meredith Rogers, Director of Youth Ministries

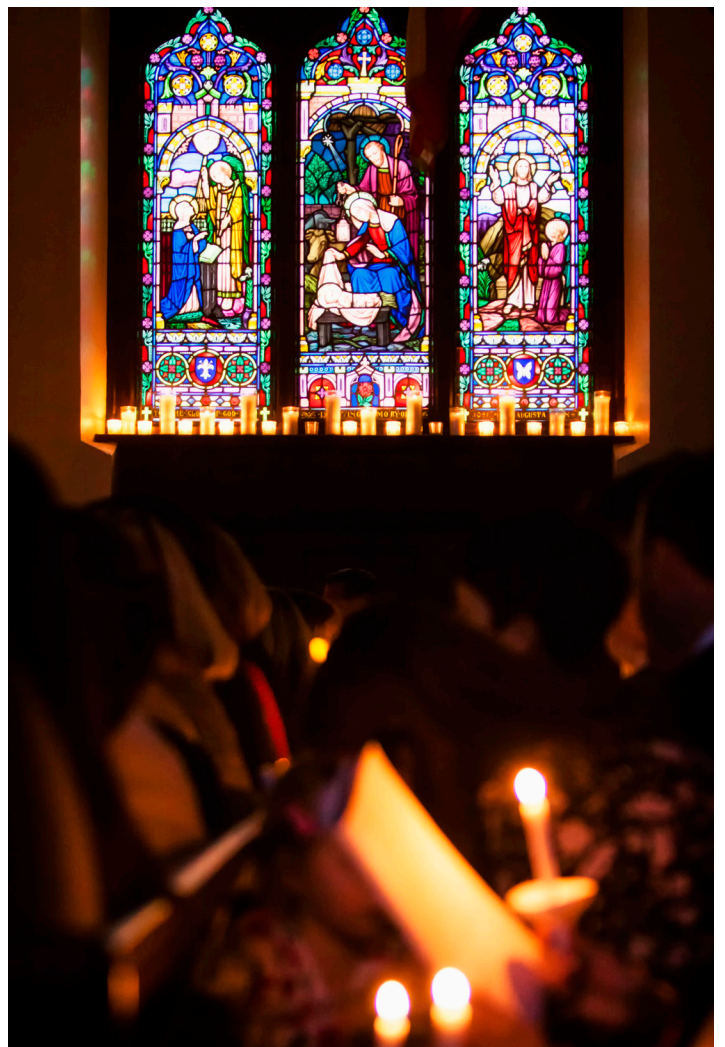


Christmas to the Street





Christmas Eve



Member Spotlight - Beverly Bryars

“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay out his life for his friends.”

- John 15:12-13

In the spring of 1961, Major General Ted Bedwell, MD was assigned the command of the Brooks Aero Space Medical Center in San Antonio. He arrived with his wife, Blanche, and their daughter, Beverly, joined them after her graduation from Bucknell University.

As was the custom then, Beverly was invited to represent the military in several clubs' social and Fiesta festivities and I was also asked to be an honoree; this was the start of a long and very special friendship. YES, even in those early days, we were mistaken for each other and asked if we were sisters and NO, we are not even distant cousins but we answer to each other's names, consider it a compliment, and are definitely FAMILY in the truest sense of the word!

Beverly started her successful career in the Social Security Office in San Antonio and through the years her promotions took her to Dallas, Atlanta, and ultimately, Baltimore. She always kept in close touch with her San Antonio friends. When she had had enough of the politics of government employment, she opted to take a lesser position in order to return “home”, much to her San Antonio friends' delight.

She was confirmed by Bishop Jones and continued her faithful service to her Lord, St. Mark's, and the Episcopal Church. She has been on the Vestry several times, served as Senior Warden the year The Rev. Michael Chalk went on sabbatical, has been a delegate to Council many times, and has been appointed to various Diocesan committees.

When we completed the remodeling of the Parish House, The Rev. Michael Chalk asked her to be in charge of furnishing it with a small budget! She worked tirelessly to find the best quality bargains in town, organized a campaign for contributions towards many of the pieces, and oversaw the refurbishing of furniture we already had. The result was a wonderful new building filled with beautiful appointments.

Beverly is active in Time Out Bible Study, St. Benedict's Workshop, the Kitchen Ministry, and the Funeral Reception Committee to name a few but she is known as the one who is always ready to say “yes” to whatever needs to be done.

In 1992, she reconnected with her Bucknell classmate, Ken Bryars and they were married at St. Mark's. He brought three children and three beautiful granddaughters into the union and she relishes the role of grandmother! She has also been an amazing godmother to my daughter, Francie. She is an avid reader, loves to travel, is a crossword and Sudoku whiz, and a prolific and very talented needle pointer.

Jane Patterson taught us that the verse in Matthew that we usually read as “lay down our lives” is really translated from the Greek as “lay out our lives”, which I think is more meaningful and relevant. I have a visual of us putting our lives into our hands and offering them out to our friends, family, and acquaintances. This is what my sweet friend, Beverly, does every day of her life, thanks be to God.

- Submitted by Martha Monier Steves



Financials

St. Mark's ended 2018 in a solid financial position for a variety of reasons attributable to you, the parish. Total giving and income generated for the operations supporting our community was very close to what we budgeted, while expenses were slightly less than budgeted. In other words, we finished the year in the black (revenues greater than expenses). Thanks to all of you who make and meet your pledges, as well as to those who give without pledging. All household giving is critical to our fiscal well being. Pledging continues to be the primary indicator of member support. Thanks to all who have already pledged for 2019. We are slightly ahead of last year's pledges when compared to this time last year. With 280 pledges in hand, we are hopeful that we will exceed the 304 pledges received in 2018.

Gratitude also goes out to all of you who contributed to our debt repayment challenge in the fall of 2018. You will remember that an anonymous donor pledged to match up to \$250,000 of contributions made by the end of the year earmarked to repay St. Mark's debt. The response to the challenge was widespread, indicative of our "can do" attitude. A sincere thanks to the St. Mark's community who participated not only in the debt challenge, but also in the Future Directions and Renew campaigns. Due to your generosity, all of St. Mark's renovation debt has been completely repaid. Now we can turn our attention to growing the endowment funds for St. Mark's future.

With much appreciation,
 Joey Oliver, Treasurer
 Dina Aboul Saad, Director of Advancement



Joey Oliver



Dina Aboul Saad

2018 FINANCIAL REPORT as of 12/31/2018

100% of annual budget	Actual (YTD)	Budgeted (YTD)
Pledge Revenue	\$1,669,049	\$1,734,000
Non-Pledge & Open Plate Giving	\$318,913	\$252,000
Seasonal Giving	\$21,470	\$30,000
Other Rev (parking lot, fees, carryover)	\$409,833	\$417,319
Endowment/Fund Revenue	\$414,644	\$407,346
Total Revenue	\$2,833,909	\$2,840,665
Total Expenses	\$2,657,960	\$2,820,944
Over/(Under)	\$175,949	\$19,721

\$1,599,694 in 2019 Pledges • 289 Pledges • Average Pledge is \$5,535 • Median Pledge is \$2,860

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**



In Remembrance and Thanksgiving (thru January 18, 2019)

MEMORIALS

Dorothy Marie Dix by Eleanor Johnson
Dan Lane by Gail and John White
Hawley Holder by Melinda and Kelly Cook
Edward Douglas Muir, Jr. by Laura and Weir LaBatt III, Eleanor and Scott Petty
Paul & Sally Parker by Amy Parker, Ray Hoveida
Jean Rumsey by Almeda and Ned Hodge
Joella Smith by Almeda and Ned Hodge, Mr. and Mrs. John Steen, Barbara Wood
The people who lost their lives in the fires in California by Adelina Rodriguez

ENDOWMENT FUND

Willard Simpson, Jr. by Elizabeth J. Simpson, David V. Simpson, Mary S. Reinke, Elizabeth S. Wheeler

ST. CECILIA FUND

Willis McClung by Annabelle McGee
Carolyn Parchman by Cary and Walter Bain, Sue Bain, Patricia and John Brooke, Barbara and Jim Cummings, Linda and Philip Jacobs, Annabelle McGee, Carol and John McGuire, Ann and Jeff Rochelle, Jill and George Vassar
Ted Walker by Annabelle McGee, Carol and John McGuire

SPECIAL GIFTS

To Beth's Discretionary Fund **in honor of Nancie Sutter and Clytie Phelps** by Chica Younger
To the Garden Fund **in honor of Deems and Bill Smith** by Patrice and Joey Oliver
To the Building Fund **in honor of Elsie Steg**, on her birthday, by Beachie Kampmann
To the Debt Reduction Fund **in memory of Carolyn Parchman** by Joyce Carothers

Cafe Kairos, Wednesdays and Thursdays 5.00pm-6.30pm

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

February 6-7
Traditional Lasagna
Green Beans
Garlic Bread Sticks
Garden Salad
Dessert

February 13-14
Chicken Tetrazinni
Sautéed Broccoli
Garlic Bread Sticks
Garden Salad
Dessert

February 20-21
King Ranch Chicken
Charro Beans
Tortilla Chips & Salsa
Garden Salad
Dessert

February 27-28
Pizza
Garden Salad
Dessert

Cafe Kairos will serve the weekly Lenten soup, garden salad, and dinner rolls through Lent.

Photos in this Issue

Cover photo: Eric Nelson

Photos in this issue provided by: Rachel Dugger, The Rev. Elizabeth Knowlton, Eric Nelson